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2016-06-08
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THE HISTORICAL CONSTRUCTION OF POLICY AS DISCOURSE: THE REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON TECHNICAL EDUCATION AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA 1945-1948.

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A research report submitted to the Faculty of Education, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education.

Johannesburg, 1999

I declare that this research report is my unaided work. It is submitted for the degree of Master of Education in the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any other degree of examination in any other university.

Marian Baker

28 day of April, 1999.

Dedication

I wish to dedicate this dissertation to the memory of my mother, Joan Patricia Hart Baker and to my father, Melvin Henry Baker.

Acknowledgements

I wish to thank Linda Chisholm for her guidance, help and support throughout the planning and development stages of this Research Report.

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ABSTRACT

The following research report presents an outline of the De Villiers Commission Report of 1948, and contains biographical information concerning its authors. The Report intended to refine and establish policy guidelines for technical and vocational education in the 1940s. The research will attempt a review of the relevant literature which examined the Report and its historical context. In addition, it will be argued that the limitations of some of the literature can be countered by reflecting on the discursive production of educational knowledge in South African policy. Furthermore, it will be proposed that two areas of concern, namely race and gender, are categories that are often under-investigated in relation to an analysis of official documents. It is hoped that this account will contribute to the continued debate concerning what is frequently perceived as the dichotomous relationship between vocational and "general" education.

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

A study of the De Villiers Commission of Inquiry is interesting and important for a number of reasons. Just as the current moment of transition is marked by a rethinking of, amongst others, the relationship between general and technical and vocational education and their relationship in turn to the wider shape of society, so too the De Villiers Commission of Inquiry was an attempt to rethink these relationships in the post-war South African context. It was deeply informed both by the post-war social democratic consensus on education pertaining to countries such as the United Kingdom, and by local approaches to the "resolution of the native question" in South Africa. It sought state control of black and technical and vocational education; believed deeply in the supposed benefits of education to economic growth, thus prefiguring a human capital discourse which became prominent in decolonising African countries in the 1960s; saw a separation of general, technical and vocational education as necessary, and sought institutionally-specific arrangements for this vision. Trade Unions (white) were considered important players to consult. Likewise girls and black people were constituted in specific ways in relation to the discourse of technical and vocational education. Whereas white girls were recognised only in commercial and domestic education, black girls were almost entirely invisible in relation to the discourse. Particularly noteworthy is the way in which a report on technical and vocational education made a point of writing about black males not specifically in relation to technical and vocational education, but in relation to the "native question". As such, the Report was concerned with promoting compulsory schooling as a means of socialising urbanised black youths. In so far as the Report was of a piece with wider liberal discourse of the period, it was concerned both with conceding such rights to black people in urban areas and with reconstituting the reserves as a locus for the exercise of skills which were perceived to be in excess of those needed for industry.

These debates are useful to document, partly because they cast light on the "mentality" of a period displaying segregationist and liberal "mentalities", and partly because they throw into sharp relief contemporary debates. The state still is seen as the most important provider of education, but currently, much more weight is attached to "partnerships" between the state and industry and the role of the private sector in the provision of training.

In one important respect, contemporary approaches differ from those of the De Villiers Report. Instead of arguing for a separation of general, technical and vocational education, the direction of current policy is for the integration of these fields based on the nature of contemporary industry and the need for a different and higher level of skill amongst workers. Interestingly enough compulsory schooling for black pupils was not introduced for more than forty years after the De Villiers Report. As such, it can be argued that the De Villiers Report was ahead of its time. Compulsory schooling has become a reality now, and in the context of an overarching vision of the political emancipation of black people. This is probably the principal difference between the De Villiers Report and present day discourses. While the latter are framed in terms of a discourse of political and economic rights, the former was framed in terms of the ultimate political subordination of black people.

In one extremely significant area, the De Villiers Commission differs markedly from contemporary approaches. Although the De Villiers Report genuflects in the direction of women's participation in the public sphere, in practice it endorses a wholesale relegation of women's work to gendered, low-skill and low-wage spheres linked to the home and women's subordinate position to men. Today, there is much greater focus on women's participation in public spheres. Nonetheless, it is salutary that the construct of the black male worker has replaced the construct of the white male worker in the conceptualisation of technical and vocational education.

In as much as the De Villiers Report can be examined in relation to the present, it

also needs to be examined in relation to the past, and in its own specific context. The chief rival, at the time, in terms of policy vision, was the Eiselen Report which subsequently was tabled as the Bantu Education Act. The De Villiers Commission was the major statement from the United Party camp: that the concern was economic growth, modernisation and technical and vocational education as opposed to recognition of cultural difference (as in the Eiselen Report) is telling. It defines to this day the main lines of rupture between the different elements comprising present educational debates. A study of the De Villiers Commission of Inquiry thus casts light on both the past and the present. It deserves careful analysis.

The stated purpose of the 284 page Report was to enhance the status of what Malherbe termed the "unhappy tradition" of technical and vocational education. (Malherbe, 1976). The Commissioners also sought to give clarity of definition to technical and vocational education by specifying that,

Vocational education means instruction and training in commerce, agriculture, housecraft or any trade or industry (De Villiers, 1).

The Commission viewed the Report, which specifically focused on technical and vocational education, as providing a document which proposed "...suitable methods of training for industry with special reference to the role of apprenticeship and learnership in industrial training" (De Villiers, 2). The terms of reference of the Report included the question whether greater provision for vocational education should be made in the schools which provided a "general" education. Likewise, they attempted to determine the scope of vocational and technical education in institutions established for that purpose. Furthermore, the Commission's terms of reference included the investigation of the "parts that should be played by the Union and the provincial education departments respectively in the matter of vocational and technical education" (De Villiers, 1). To this end, the Commission referred to the desirability of co-ordinating the relationship between State and Provincial Departments. The Commission cited changing economic conditions and the

transformation in social structures as informing the necessity to revise the education system and to upgrade training. In relation to this the Commission noted:

> The almost revolutionary social and economic changes of the last few decades have resulted in such profound changes in the structure of society that not only is there urgent need for revision, reconstruction and adaptation, but these new trends have also caused a shift of greatly increased responsibility onto our educational institutions.
>
> What makes it so necessary to stress this new responsibility falling on the schools is the profound change that has come over our national life. Urbanisation, the passing away of a closely unified family life, the immense scale and high specialisation of industry and the ceaseless movement of the population have transformed the relatively simple and stable community life of earlier times into a vast, complex in which the adolescent is often lost (De Villiers, 21).

To address the problem of the "vast, incoherent complex", the De Villiers Commission proposed that the growing urban black working class be stabilised by increasing opportunities for schooling. Black children were not excluded from the definition of technical education and the Commission recommended compulsory education for black children. In 1939, only 2,24 % of black children were in post-primary classes (Cross and Chisholm, 1990). Clearly, by the 1940s the need became more pressing for the extended provision of schooling. Such a strategy, it was believed, would provide a measure of social control over the " delinquency problem" and would provide for the acquisition of skills.

Finally, the Commissioners were preoccupied by the distinction between a liberal or general education on the one hand and technical and vocational education on the other. There was a rejection in the Report of the notion that technical and vocational education had a place in the established secondary schools. Instead, the solution of maintaining the academic tradition in secondary schools was upheld. Simultaneously, specialised technical and vocational schools were to provide a

balanced combination of general education and technical training which would prepare students (including girls) to become adaptable and competent citizens and to equip them for employment.

In the 1940s, the two branches of general and vocational and technical education fell under two different structures: the Union Government was responsible for technical education and the technikons, whereas general and vocational education was the concern of the provincial governments. The De Villiers Commission stressed the importance of the standardisation of the educational system and to this end, recommended that technical and vocational education be centralised under the Union Government.

The De Villiers Commission was essentially an urban response to the restructuring of capital and the rapid technological developments in industry during the Second World War. Its concerns were to bring education and training of pupils, both black and white, in line with changes at the level of production which required a higher degree of skill.

The need to address the urban crisis facing South Africa in the 1940s was associated with certain liberal sectors which had shifted away from the concept of total segregation and the development of the Reserve economies and had begun to concentrate more upon raising living standards of the black urban proletariat.

However, in the case of the De Villiers Commission, this approach embraced parallel institutions situated within the "separate but equal" paradigm which Rich argues was integral to the liberal position in the 1930s and 1940s (Rich, 1984). In fact the De Villiers Commission demonstrated a complex response to black education which is evident in the Commission's call for the upgrading of the Reserves which were perceived as forming an important part of the strategy used to deal with the contemporary "native problem". The De Villiers Commission gives some substance to Rich's argument that in the 1940s liberals, "looked, as did the government itself, via a strategy of territorial segregation, to the rural reserves as the main repositories for African political and economic rejuvenation" (Rich, 1984).

By calling for the compulsory education for black children the De Villiers Commission more or less recognised the permanence of "urban natives" both economically and as a potential social "problem". However, as will be outlined, different strategies were used in the Report towards black and white education and towards the education of girls. This research, although not attempting to reproduce these distinctions, intends to outline the specificities of this differentiation and in so doing the focus is upon two essential areas in the Report: the chapter which falls under the rubric of "Native Education" and the chapters specifying the education of girls. This focus is an attempt to demonstrate how these discourses were inserted into the Report and how their treatment was a poor reflection of the meta-narrative of white male education evidenced in the Report as a whole.

Historiographical context of the research.

Theoretically, this research is informed by accounts of educational history in South Africa, particularly in the field of revisionist discourses surrounding the De Lange Report published in 1981. Currently, there has been more emphasis on examining policy documents as texts with an emphasis on the discourse analysis of official documents. This investigation is an attempt to examine a comprehensive policy document discursively without losing sight of the specific social and economic context within which the document is located. However, it is also an attempt to understand the Report as a discourse. Within its specific historical context, the Commissioners strove to give a particular vision of education which included categories such as race and elided over others such as the position of girls within technical and vocational schooling. An attempt will be made in this text to examine complicities between liberal and segregationist policies, for the Report displayed important continuities with segregationist discourse, as well as displaying disjunctures with liberal policy documents.

Even though the De Villiers Commission was a response to changes in secondary industry and to the needs of the industrial middle class, it also reflected more complex preoccupations which included the crisis in black education and the

phenomenon of urbanisation. In addition, the Report displayed compromises between inherited interests and an emphasis on new interests. This is evidenced in the De Villiers Commission's commitment to the "inherited" interests of what they termed "liberal" education which they maintained was the cornerstone of a general education. The "new interest" was to be a more specialised technical /vocational education which would be provided after Std 8. The Commission's terms of reference included the opinion that technical and vocational education could not meet "modern-day demands of industry, commerce and agriculture " without a foundation of primary education and a "general" secondary education of at least two years.

One task of this work is to plot the parameters of the historical context of the Report and to examine the structural limitations of the economic and political forces which characterised the post-war 1940s in South Africa. However, other descriptors are necessary when giving an account of policy. Ball's definition is useful, as it states that policies are,

> ... pre-eminently statements about practice - the way things could or should be - which rest upon, derive from, statements about the world - about the way things are. They are intended to bring about idealised solutions to diagnosed problems (Ball, 1990, p4)

In this sense policy is seen as providing definition to education and of laying emphasis upon what is deemed valid by the group that authorises the constellation of descriptors. The "idealised solution" to the putative education crisis that the Commission hoped to legitimate through the official policy document was that of extending technical and vocational education to all members of the population.

Literature Review

As well as being located within the framework of discourse theory, this investigation will examine the structural limitations of education in South Africa in the 1940s. To place this location into context, it is necessary to review approaches used by the

differing schools of liberal and revisionist historians of education, the latter being particularly pertinent to this study. A review of approaches to technical and vocational education is also necessary, particularly in their assessment of the De Villiers Report.

In the literature, liberal accounts of educational history to a large extent documented the conflict between " the white races to effect a fair adjustment of the education system to their respective national demands" (Malherbe, 1976). As Cross has pointed out, liberal accounts in terms of their methodology, were often descriptive in their approach and did not contextualise historical events within a broader social, political and historical analysis. This characterises much of the literature on technical and vocational education up to 1976. This approach is born out in the work of McKerron, who although writing in 1934, reflected many of the concerns which were to be expressed in the De Villiers Commission. She highlighted the uncertain status of technical and vocational education which was also to be a central concern of the De Villiers Commission Report.

From a different perspective, Pells's book *Three Hundred Years of Education* (1954) gives a brief overview of technical education in South Africa. However, the text is overridingly concerned with white education and Pells's theories are deeply influenced by Christian National Education. Writing about the De Villiers Report his central comment is that the Report :

> ...fails to see that excessive concentration on learning how to make a living and to amass material goods may result in a complete failure to learn how to live and achieve spiritual good (Pells, 1951, p94.)

This statement is illuminating as it places the De Villiers Commission outside of the Christian National Education discourse which Pells espoused and brandishes it as being associated with modernisation and technology which ultimately would erode the values which Christian National Education was espousing at that time and which were compelling in the Eiselen Report.

More specific liberal writing includes work by Behr and MacMillan (1964), Rose and Tunmer (1975) and Malherbe (1976). *Education in South Africa* (Behr and MacMillan, 1964) gives a short account of the De Villiers Commission and isolates the Commission's concern about the lack of correlation between training and occupational demands of the country. The text fails to provide the vocabulary or conceptual tools to present an analysis of the Commission.

A central feature of *Documents on South African Education* (Rose and Tunmer, 1975) is the selection of extracts from the De Villiers Commission. The authors consider the De Villiers Report's exposition of the debates concerning the issue of central or provincial government control of education to be its most significant contribution to education. Although Rose and Tunmer's focus is limited to one aspect of the De Villiers Report, their contextualising paragraphs provide pointers to the background of the Commission and to the influencing discourses which underpinned the Report.

Malherbe's *Education in South Africa*, volume 2, (Malherbe, 1976) provides useful background material to this study. However, his theoretical focus is limited in relation to this report as his account does not pay serious attention to how the discourse of technical and vocational education emerged in its particular form in the 1940s.

The revision of liberal and conservative accounts took place in the post-1976 period when the major historiographical thrust became conceptually aligned to schools of political economy and historical materialism (Collins and Christie,1984). Revisionist historians presented a significant challenge to liberal normative understandings of the history of education, thus enabling the formation of an educational discourse which included the contextualisation of social, political and economic factors. In the seventies, there was an attempt by this school to provide an account of the emergence of mass schooling which was being legislated by the Nationalist Government. Analytical emphasis was laid upon the social consequences of industrialisation and urbanisation. Historians of education paid

attention to the differential provision of schooling in accordance with the class, race and gender status of the pupil. Within this light, mass schooling was viewed as a means of social control of the working class and urban poor (Christie and Collins, 1984).

Reproduction theory was particularly influential in the interpretation of social conflict and its containment. Althusserian accounts stressed schooling as a site for reproducing capitalist social relations and for the acquisition of skills and attributes which corresponded by and large with structures in the workplace. These accounts were challenged on a number of counts, one of the strongest reactions coming from those historians who argued that reproduction theory failed to give an adequate account of student resistance in South Africa (Chisholm and Molteno, 1984). Accounts using reproduction theory, it was argued, dealt in a systematic way with ruling class power and its structures but did not address how this power was shaped by resistance from the ground. Further responses to reproduction theory focused on critiques of the functionalism inherent to such an approach. Revisionist texts often failed to take into account the specificity of the educational apparatuses under scrutiny and often reduced the complexity of the class struggle to a simple contradiction between capital and labour.

A second, though contemporary school of educational history followed a social history approach in which less emphasis was placed on a broad sweep of analysis entailing study of state, capital, class (Bozzoli, 1977; Gaitskell, 1990; Bonner, 1990). More focus was placed on the examination of the lives of ordinary people or family structures in their social milieu. Social history approaches were often enriched by the inclusion of gender studies, an approach frequently neglected by those texts more concerned with an analysis of the state and education.

More recently, historians such as Dubow have focused on the specificities of government and policy-making. In *Racial Segregation and the Origins of Apartheid in South Africa, 1919 - 36,* (Dubow, 1989). Dubow presented an account of the detailed workings of the Native Affairs Department. His insight into liberal

segregationist theory as being "...a compromise between "identity" and "assimilation " on the one hand and "repression" or "subordination" on the other," is pertinent to the liberal reformist discourse displayed by the Report (Dubow, 1989). His examination of the historical specificities of the internal contradictions of governmental bureaucracies, as opposed to providing a broader sweep of historical events, has provided a useful focus for this study.

Ashforth's work, *The Politics of Official Discourse in Twentieth - Century South Africa*, (Ashforth, 1991) is central to this examination of the De Villiers Commission in that his focus is specifically on official discourse and the structural continuity of segregation in the formation of the South African state. He argues that during "critical junctures" in the formation of the South African state, a new discourse concerning the "Native Question" had to be formulated. The legitimating structure of such a discourse was the commission of enquiry which devised a coherent policy which attempted to address a particular problem when social, political and economic forces demanded a reappraisal of existing policy.

This analysis is pertinent to an understanding of the De Villiers Commission, for by examining the " terms of reference " of the Report one can attempt to elucidate whether the De Villiers Commission was a major departure from segregationist discourses prior to and in the 1940s. The Second World War led to an enormous increase in the urban population and a change in capitalist labour relations. As a consequence, the view that segregation was no longer viable in the light of the integration of black and white workers in a unitary economic system became more frequently aired. The De Villiers Commission reflected this shift in discourse and concomitantly focused on modes of social control of black youths in the urban context.

However, as will be more fully discussed, the chapter in the Report entitled "Native Education", displayed a continuity in segregationist discourse by giving credence to the Reserve system, in that it proposed the extensive rehabilitation of these areas. In relation to this, Rich suggests that the question to be asked of 1940s liberalism

was how far white liberals were prepared to move outside of the contradiction of white party politics in order to extend their power base and to advance the cause amongst non-voting black population. In part reply to the question Rich poses, the De Villiers Commission essentially makes reference to social change in terms of a "separate but equal" discourse which did not fundamentally shake segregationist references.

In order to deepen the understanding of the educational processes in the 1940s, this study will attempt to examine the gendered categorisations within the De Villiers Commission and how the official discourse included or excluded girls. How state official discourse shaped the gendered meanings of the period will also be considered. In her exposition of the state and gender, Manicom examines the notion of the state by questioning its monolithic character and proposing that,

> The focus of historical investigation than becomes not what the state did to African women but how and why different social concerns got taken up in policy in terms of particular constructions of gender and how gender difference and subordination were being regulated (Manicom, 1992, p458.)

She also argues that although women have become more of the focus of historical investigation, their position vis a vis the state remains under-theorised. She suggests that processes such as migrant labour and urbanisation which are represented as gender-neutral in texts are in fact "structured by gender relations and differentially experienced by men and women" (Manicom, 1992).

What this study attempts to do is to investigate how the De Villiers Commission constructed the identity of girls and how this discourse was inserted into the text. This is an effort to go beyond Ashforth's analysis of official discourse which demonstrates a failure to analyse Reports as gender-constructed discourses. His central thesis of the continuity of segregation is in fact diminished by the omission, as a scrutiny of how the state was formed along gendered lines would highlight certain consistencies of policy. As Manicom points out, these Reports made mention of black women and positioned them outside of the category of "native", a

structure which confirmed their status as subordinate to men as well as being categorised as the "Native".

Through an examination of the Commission's policy, which aimed to give substance to and legitimate a reformed educational discourse, issues of discrimination based on race and gender can be traced. This research report explores how these issues were addressed in the De Villiers Commission and what limiting structures shaped these accounts. The official discourse of the De Villiers Commission was influenced, and limited, by the trajectory of capitalist development and the structures of labour control. It also was written at a particular political juncture which positioned it between the growing nationalism of the black population and the increasingly cohesive force of Afrikaner nationalism.

Objectives of the De Villiers Commission

This research report seeks to examine the Report on Technical and Vocational Education which was initiated in 1945 "by command of" the officer administering the United Party Government – in - Council, Jan Hofmeyr. The Report was finally published in 1948 an event which coincided with the election defeat of the United Party. The Report was considered to have reflected a confidence in the " positive value of education to rebuild the post -war period" (Rose and Tunmer, 1975).

The Commission comprised five "Hofmeyr men" who were chosen not necessarily for their educational expertise, but for their abilities in the field of science and technology. As the Report states,

> Three of the five members of the Commission are laymen and inexpert from the point of view of the educationist and teacher. They are practical men of affairs who had to acquire an intimate knowledge of our general system (or systems) during the course of the enquiry (De Villiers, 4).

The claim that two - thirds of the members were laymen tends to obfuscate the fact that at least three of the five members who altogether comprised Francios De Villiers (who was appointed chairman of the Commission which later became

associated with his name), John Orr, Alexander Sinton, Clifford Crompton and John Badham were part of the elite intelligentsia network of the 1940s. As their histories indicate, their career paths intersected at times; a factor which denoted common interests and political involvement.

Francois De Villiers (1898-1980) who is described as a scientist and industrialist (Beyers, 1987) was born in Paarl and matriculated at the high school there. He proceeded to the University of Cape Town and completed a BSc in 1918. He continued his studies in America and obtained an MSc in Chemistry at the University of California and a PhD at Cornell University. When he returned to South Africa in 1924, he worked at the Elsenberg Agricultural College before gaining a DSc in Chemistry in 1925. In 1938 he was appointed an industrial advisor in the Department of Trade and Industry, where he held the post until 1958. He was involved in the establishment of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) in 1945, a project which Hofmeyr clearly perceived as important, for in 1946 he increased the Government grant to the CSIR significantly (Paton, 1965).

De Villiers also became the president of the newly constituted South African Bureau of Standards in 1945. This body had been preceded by the South African Standards Institute, of which John Orr had been president for 37 years. De Villiers showed an abiding interest in educational concerns as is evidenced in his position as chairman of the De Villiers commission. He also served on the Council of the University of Pretoria (1947-57) and served as Chancellor of UNISA for twenty years.

John Orr (1870-1954) was born in Scotland and trained as an engineer in the Royal Technical College in Glasgow. He came to South Africa in 1897 to work at the South African School of Mines in Kimberley. In 1903, he was appointed to train students in engineering at the Transvaal Technical Institute. During the First World War, Orr was Commander of the Central Organisation of Technical Training (C.O.T.T.) whereby nearly 20 000 people were given a basic training for the army and war industries. Clifford Crompton was to become Secretary of the C.O.T.T. in

the Second World War. Webster notes that the role of the C.O.T.T. was to provide a model for technical training in industry in the 1940s (Webster,1985). In 1922, the University of Witwatersrand was established with Orr as head of the Department of Mechanical and Electrical Engineering. He became the Director of the Witwatersrand Technical College in 1925. His objective was to establish a chain of colleges in each town of the Reef. In 1945 this objective was to come to fruition when technical colleges were set up in Randfontein, Krugersdorp, Roodepoort, Maraisburg, Germiston, Boksburg, Benoni, Brakpan. Springs, Nigel, Klerksdorp, Witbank, Vereeniging, Vanderbijlpark and Venterspos.

Clifford Crompton (1911-1984) was born in Standerton in the Transvaal and trained as a moulder in the metal industry. He became president of the Iron Moulders Society in 1941 and was later elected as general secretary in 1944. He was to serve on the executive body for 31 years. He was trade union representative on a number of bodies in the 1940s, such as the Mining Unions Joint Committee, the Transvaal Apprenticeship Committee and the South African Trade Union Assurance Society. During the War years he was one of the three members of the Controller of Manpower Board. He was also an executive member of the Trade and Labour Council from 1944. Between 1947 and 1950, he was a member of the Technical College Board. In his biographical notes to TUCSA, in the 1960s, he describes his involvement in the De Villiers Commission in the following manner,

> Was one of five men appointed by the late Jan Hofmeyr at the time of the Smuts Government - for De Villiers Technical, Vocational and Educational Commission; 1947-1950 (sic). C. H. Crompton was the only Trade Union Representative (Iron Moulders Society File: D 30/84)

Alexander Sinton, like Orr, was born in Scotland (1875-1954). He was involved in education in the Cape and assisted in the establishment of Alexander Sinton School in Cape Town. In his will, Sinton established a trust which would be paid to the Management Committee of the school. Sinton was at pains to specify that if the school ceased to exist, the trust money should continue to benefit the education of

pupils who are " coloured (not white) " and thus to " assist in promoting higher or secondary education for Non-Europeans or to assist an individual in his or her higher education, to qualify for some calling or profession" (Sinton Will, Pt. 6).

Leonard Badham, born in England in 1900, trained as technical engineer at the University of London and came to South Africa as a technical engineer and advisor. At the time of the Report he was director of the Switchgear and Erection Company. His other involvements included the presidentship of the Steel and Engineering Industrial Federation of South Africa and the Electrical and Allied Industries Association. He sat on governmental committees such as the Apprenticeship System Revision Committee and the Liaison Committee of the Bureau of Standards, where he would have met De Villiers. His biographical notes state that he was the author of numerous papers and articles on Electrical Engineering.

Contrary to the Report's statement that only two members were educationists, most of the members, with the possible exception of Crompton and Badham, had a broad involvement in education and were well-equipped to comment on technical and vocational education in the 1940s. Crompton and Badham representing labour (predominantly white) and capital were evidently selected for their insights into the "real world" of commerce and industry. This attempt to situate vocational and technical education in its practical sphere was a consistent strand throughout the discourse of the De Villiers Commission.

The primary focus of the Committee was to establish the methods of training for industry; to investigate the provision of vocational education in primary and secondary schools and to investigate the scope of education in the specialised technical institutions. Although the Report had an effect upon educational thinking, its recommendations were never directly translated into action through legislation. (Rose and Tunmer, 1975). Probably the most notable reason for this was that the De Villiers Commission appeared at a juncture when the emergent discourse of Afrikaner Nationalism was about to dominate educational policy for the next four decades.

This research report will also outline what the Commission deemed as possible in the field of technical and vocational education. The Report proposed that technical education be extended to all race groups and presented a more unitary approach to education in that "natives" and "girls" were included in the discourse. However, in many instances, the official discourse reproduced racial and gender divisions. It is intended to probe the impact of policy on black schooling and to analyse the strategies used in the shaping of the category of the black male/female adolescent as presented in the discourse. Through disaggregating the discourse, light might be cast on the continuity of segregation within education and how as a "representation of the real" the Report served "in the organisation of political subjection within the state " (Ashforth, 1991). The intention is to examine the representation of technical and vocational education in the text and not to look at the concrete operation of the schools/institutions themselves.

Chapter Outline

In Chapter 2, an attempt will be made to establish the historical context of the De Villiers Commission which was a discourse structured in the 1940s under the aegis of the United Party. A central question will be on how the document intersected with social and political forces in the post-war context. The study will seek to examine how the De Villiers Commission, which was essentially an urban industrial response to educational change, represented segregation and how it differed from discourses which focused on bolstering the Reserve system.

Chapter 3 makes explicit consideration of gender issues in the Report. The object of enquiry here is not only how the document omitted girls but also how they were defined in the text as un/technical subjects. Also under scrutiny will be how their role as domestic subjects was legitimated in the text. The Report in fact validated a segregationist approach by proposing a type of "adapted education" for black girls

with a strong emphasis on manual and domestic work.

Chapter 4 focuses more specifically upon the continuity/discontinuity of segregationist discourse in the Report. This chapter makes special reference to the Report's section on "Native Education". This aspect of education was not addressed in its totality in the De Villiers Commission and in fact formed a small part of the Report. However, it gives important evidence in terms of the different strategies expressed with regard to white/black education. Although De Villiers proposed equal education in principle, when closely read the Report demonstrated marked inequalities in approach.

CHAPTER 2

Introduction

This chapter attempts to situate the De Villiers discourse within the social and economic context of the 1940s. This is not an effort to give causal precedence to the economic. However it will be argued that it is possible to trace social mechanisms and theoretical chains that legitimate and influence policy-making. The chapter will seek to identify the modernising theoretical framework employed by the Commission, as well as examining the approach to academic and vocational education which reflected the racial division of labour evident in South Africa. Finally, the intention is to situate the De Villiers Commission in relation to other Commissions of Enquiry which at the time had a broader brief.

Writing of vocational education in the seventies, Ball suggests that the structural crisis of social reproduction that characterised the decade had the effect on education that,

> ...produced claims and the articulation of visions about both what was being lost and what might be achieved. The old humanist vision (and both the neo-liberal and neo-conservative elements of the New Right, in their different ways) looked backwards to the nineteenth century, to Victorian values, to laissez-faire economics, to a moral, imperial curriculum, to authority, standards and order. In contrast, the industrial trainers' vision was forward-looking towards the twenty-first century, to meritocracy...to a technological, enactive and inductive curriculum, rather than fixed subjects (Ball, 1990, p4).

These contrasting hegemonic versions, although reflecting a British educational discourse of a later decade, sum up part of the debate that the De Villiers Commission

located in its Report. Without wishing entirely to discard the " old humanist vision" of a liberal or general education, the Report sought to introduce an educational system that was compatible with flexible work practices, skilling for industry and for mobility (although limited for black workers and even more so black women workers) within the workforce.

Although the De Villiers Report displayed elements of colonial "adapted education " in its policy, it considered basic education as the foundation for the provision of skills necessary for work and later training, and prioritised the efficiency of existing vocational institutions.

The processes of repositioning post-war education in relation to the economy were multifaceted: the De Villiers Commission's brief was to articulate the industrial lobby but not entirely to subordinate the principles of education to the needs of the economy. The De Villiers Commission was a response to a substantially restructured economy, which was characterised by shifts towards mass- production and mass- consumption, and the rapid urbanisation which occurred as a consequence of the Second World War. The formulation of the Report was influenced by the wave of optimism that followed the War which exhibited a confidence in the state to involve itself more comprehensively in the education and the social upliftment of the population through state welfare schemes. To this end, the Commission also emphasised the centralisation of education and made calls for provincial control to be attenuated. According to the Report provincial control created a division of educational activities which was frequently the cause of a lack of co-ordination between existing departments and which led to a consequent decrease in the level of executive efficiency.

The De Villiers Commission was established within the context of a period of rapid growth in the South African economy during the Second World War. The Gross National Product, for instance, rose from 395, 600, 000 pounds in 1939 to 666, 8000,

000 pounds in 1946 (O'Meara, 1983). There was also a transformation in the structure of capitalist production during this period. Prior to the Second World War, the South African economy had relied almost entirely upon mineral and agricultural exports. This was to give way to a growing industrial sector which focused on the production of engineering, metal products and the chemical industries. By 1944/45 the value of the gross output of the manufacturing sector was 304 083 000 pounds, nearly treble the 1938/ 39 figure of 140 587 000 pounds (Lewis, 1984). In 1943, private manufacturing outstripped both agriculture and mining and accounted for almost a quarter of the National Income in 1950 (O'Meara, 1983) This increase has been attributed in part to the greater demand for munitions, mostly ordered by the Director of War Supplies in South Africa. Hofmeyr's Defence Budget reflected this increase when it was pegged at an unprecedented amount of 80 000 000 pounds in 1941. This amount rose to 102 500 000 pounds in 1944 (Paton, 1965).

The change in capitalist development led to a restructuring of the labour process in the 1940s. Mass production techniques were employed by many of the industries which led to a dilution of labour and the breakdown of the jobbing system with its allied unskilled/skilled labour hierarchy which had been a feature of the South African economy prior to the War. Webster points out that employers took advantage of the shortage of skilled labour in South Africa by linking the employment of unskilled emergency labour (often white women or black men) with an increase in mechanisation (Webster, 1985).

In the 1940s, attempts by the manufacturing industrial sector to reorganise the productive process were frequently framed within the discourse of scientific management. A central tenet of this discourse was the "separation of the tasks of conception and execution within the productive process" (Lewis, 1985). This discourse was associated with Taylor's time and motion studies which were directed at increasing efficiency and productivity. The Board of Trade and Industry in the 1940s summarised it

thus: planning was basically to be divorced from the functions of execution. The "planning functionaries" were to analyse each objective and determine the most favourable means for its realisation. The workers were merely meant to carry out the tasks in accordance with the specifications that were detailed (Lewis, 1985).

The consequence of this strategy was that the planning and co-ordination of tasks previously exercised by craftsmen was to be determined by a management structure divorced from the actual production process. The composition of capital led to increased job-fragmentation and the emergence of management and technical positions which were counterposed by repetitive and standardised work in the same industry. Concomitantly, owners of capital invested in new technology to raise production and by so doing, exacerbated shortages of skilled labour in certain sectors of industry. Changes in industry led to the reskilling of workers who were required to have a certain level of technical expertise. It was in this area that the De Villiers Commission was concerned to expand technical colleges and to reform the educational system.

The De Villiers Commission was not a direct, unilinear response to changes in the industrial process, rather it reflected an economy which purported to create an emergent management sector and a class of technically skilled workers. In addition to this, in employing a discourse centrally concerned with technical and vocational education its intentions were more deliberately focused on the economy and the realignment of the relations of production. In this sense its recommendations often paid attention to the workplace in a more direct way than educational discourses concerned with general education.

A strand in the discourse of the Report was the importance attributed to the inculcation of values of discipline and compliant worker attitudes, as well as the transmission of

particular skill competencies. The accelerated economy in the 1940s called for a more stable and flexible workforce and schooling was seen as a means to increasing the productivity of future workers. In this regard, the De Villiers Commission presented a differential educational process which aimed to provide education which was specific to the needs of urban areas (and to the needs of the different urban class structures and race groups) while also recommending a specific type of education adapted to the rural areas.

Urbanisation and youth unemployment, however, were central to the De Villiers discourse concerned with "native education". Schooling was presented as being a major factor in generating correct social dispositions and in the control of what was perceived to be a growing "juvenile delinquency" problem. In reality, it was not only economic necessity and social control that informed the revision of the education system as proposed in the Report. The Report was also an indirect response to the more coherent political resistance of the black community in the 1940s. This was evidenced in the growth and radicalisation of the African National Congress, which became increasingly critical of structures such as the Native Representative Council. The latter had been established in 1936, and consisted of chiefs and other nominated members under the chairmanship of the Secretary for Native Affairs. By 1947, after a prolonged dispute, the body became effectively defunct. Channels for directing political activity now focused on bodies external to the government such as the African National Congress and the emerging black trade union movement.

As a consequence of the War, the number of black workers employed in secondary industry, mainly as semi-skilled operatives, increased by nearly 43% (Lewis, 1985). In an article published in 1945 in the *South African Journal of Economics*, W. H. Hutt indicates that the percentage of black workers employed in private industry on the Reef increased from 55% to in 1933/4 to 63% in 1944. White worker employment dropped from 43% in 1933/4 to 34% in 1944 on the Reef (Hutt, 1944).

Industrial growth demanded a large stabilised urban population and as a consequence certain sectors attached to secondary industry increasingly advocated the relaxation of pass laws and influx control. These calls were made in the context of the unviabilty of the Reserve economies which had become overcrowded and unable to maintain the migrant workforce effectively.

Concurrently, the Fagan Commission which was instituted by the United Party in 1948, gave legitimacy to such demands by recommending an ease in influx control and the establishment of a permanent labour reserve in the urban areas. It also advocated the fostering of a black middle class which reflected the need of industrial capital for a permanent, stable workforce. De Villiers, in tandem with the Fagan Commission, represented part of a strategy that aimed to establish a stabilised urban working class through a centralised education system which aimed in the long term to provide education "equal" to that of the white population.

The recommendations made by the Fagan Commission were not necessarily indicative of a dominant political discourse; rather they highlighted conflicting discourses within the capitalist class itself. Industrialist interests competed on the one hand for increased social security for urban black workers, whereas mining and agriculturist sectors demanded the perpetuation of the migrant labour system and the more rigorous implementation of the pass laws.

Different solutions were proposed by the Sauer Report of 1947, in which a much more restrictive approach to black urbanisation was proposed: the migrant labour system was to be consolidated and the black middle class was to develop its base in the Reserves. At this time, segregationist discourses (often linked to a commitment to white supremacy) were increasingly associated with the term apartheid. By 1948, O'Meara claims that the notion of apartheid had already,

> ...crystallised and condensed the responses of various class forces to... the social transformations wrought by capitalist development during the war... It reflected the farmers' concern over their declining labour supply and inability to compete for labour against the high wages paid in industry and commerce. It encompassed the concern of emerging Afrikaner business for a cheap labour policy to ensure their own accumulation and it pandered to the fears of a specific stratum of white workers at being displaced in the new industrial division of labour by cheaper African labour (O'Meara,1983, p 173).

Furthermore O'Meara argued that agriculture was the dominant fraction within the mobilising force of Afrikaner capital. The class interests of Afrikaner industrialists were linked to those of agriculture which provided the capital within the economic movement to advance Afrikaner business. O' Meara proposed that apartheid primarily sought to secure a stable workforce for agriculture in the face of the continuous movement of workers to the urban areas.

By the late 1940s, new forms of state intervention were required to preserve the social order and protect the political status quo which was being threatened by a constellation of social forces. The expansion of manufacturing during the war years had increased the demand for urban labour and led to a rapid increase in the size of the urban proletariat. The consequent burden of overcrowding and poverty which afflicted the black urban working class fuelled rising political expectations and accounted for the formation and growth of more militant trade unions and for the mounting disaffection within black political movements such as the African National Congress. The state faced new challenges from the black urban population. O'Meara estimates that by 1945, more than 40% of the black workers in the industrial sector were unionised. Demands were made by the unions for minimum wages, an end to influx control and recognition under the Industrial Reconciliation Act. A total of 145 522 workers went on

strike between 1940 and 1948, action which was to result in a 50% increase in the real wages of workers (O'Meara, 1983). Organised strikes, however, also led to repression and in 1946, state action against striking mineworkers led to nine workers being killed.

Interested fractions from industry and agriculture were divided in their views as to how far the state would have to go to control the influx of black workers into the towns and the growing resistance of the black working class. For an institution such as the South African Bureau of Racial Affairs, the concept of "total segregation" held sway. This included the economic as well as political segregation of blacks from the urban areas; economic integration entitled black workers to permanent residence and this could endanger white economic progression by the withdrawal of labour power that trade union rights would engender. The only solution to this would be the total exclusion of blacks from " white" areas and the increasing dependence of industry upon white workers and mechanisation rather than the utilisation of labour intensive processes. The extrication of black labour from the general economy was recognised by the Bureau as a long-term process: it was argued that the Reserve system would have to be developed sufficiently to absorb the previously urban, semi-skilled population.

On the other hand, the Afrikaanse Handelsintituut's conception of the political and economic segregation differed substantially from that of the Bureau of Racial Affairs. Total segregation was perceived as unworkable for the profitability of industry which was essentially dependent upon a supply of cheap black labour. However, the Handelsinstituut upheld the system of state control over the influx of black workers to the towns and supported the notion of allocating "excess" labour from the towns to the farms. They claimed that,

> Fundamentally we are against migratory labour...Where you have an established industrial community such as you have on the Rand, such labour

must be drawn from permanent residents and not from migratory labour (Posel, 1987, p130).

Where did the De Villiers Commission position itself in these discourses? The De Villiers Commission in its terms of reference was aligned to the urban/industrial enclave which supported the growth and stabilisation of the black working class and which opposed total segregationist discourses. Although its discourse was set within the parameters of liberal notions of segregation (as will be discussed at greater length in Chapter 4) its response to the political crisis in the 1940s differed substantially from the groupings aligned to the discourse of apartheid. United Party strategy was to foster a settled labour force in the urban areas, as opposed to a migrant labour force. Through selective reforms, it was hoped a number of black workers could be incorporated into the urban labour force without unduly disrupting prevailing social and economic patterns. Education was one such intervention. Here the De Villiers Commission recommended the rationalisation of the existing system in an attempt to make it more compatible with the manpower needs of industry.

Whereas black schooling in the 1940s was largely in the hands of the missionaries, the De Villiers Commission proposed a system of centralised state-run compulsory education. However, their budgetary proposals reflected a differential system for black, coloured and Indian pupils which had been maintained by the United Party Government. In 1945, for the first time in the history of black education, Hofmeyr not only raised the budget but also put it on a new basis. The black education budget was no longer to be derived from the African general tax, instead it was to be drawn directly from the Consolidated Revenue Fund. Although this was an improvement on the previous system, it did little to alleviate the real discrepancies between white and black education. In 1945, the annual costs of education per pupil were as follows: 38.5.10 pounds for whites; 10.16.2 pounds for Coloureds and Asians and 3.17.10 pounds for Africans (Horrell, 1963).

Hoernle, writing in 1945, emphasised the fact that although education for whites was compulsory and free until the age of 16 years, there was no coherent state school system for black children (Hoernle, 1945). The majority of schools (approximately 3250 in 1935) were maintained by state - aided missionary bodies. Other contemporary accounts of education highlighted the poor working conditions of black teachers, salaries being on average 2-8 pounds per month for 80% of the teachers (Transvaal Education News, 1944). In 1944, the Minister of Native Affairs appointed a Commission of Enquiry which recommended salary increases for teachers and a national uniform salary structure. Nevertheless, the Commission's recommendations were only implemented in 1948. In this context, then, the proposals of the De Villiers Commission were farsighted.

Background to vocational and technical education in the 1940s.

Before examining the provisions for the revised education system as proposed by the De Villiers Commission, a brief background to vocational and technical education prior to the 1940s will be outlined.

Initially, both vocational and technical education were introduced for black pupils in the Cape Colony in the 1850s by Sir George Grey who had established schools for the transmission of basic skills and for the recipients to learn "the dignity of labour". In 1891, an Education Committee was established to inquire into the provision of technical and vocational education for black pupils in the Cape. As a consequence of the investigation, it was recommended that practical subjects such as woodwork and needlework be included in the curriculum of ordinary schools and that industrial schools be established for black pupils.

In 1893, special provision was made for children by the establishment of industrial

schools where manual instruction took precedence over academic subjects. These institutions were specifically directed towards the training of indigent white children and grants similar to those given to black children were allocated for this purpose. By 1917, provision was made in a Government Ordinance to establish hostels for "poor white" children in the ordinary schools. Children from these hostels who had reached the age of 16 could be transferred to industrial schools attached to the hostels until the age of 18. Five of these schools were established for boys and one for girls. The position of vocational education remained the same until 1925 until the Union Government assumed responsibility for technical and vocational education.

Vocational education in the other provinces followed similar trends, in that it was initially largely in the hands of the mission schools and directed towards black pupils. Later, it became associated with "poor whitelsm". As the De Villiers Commission pointed out;

> It is evident ...that vocational education in all the Provinces until 1925 had its origin largely in the depressed economic conditions and poverty of a large section of the European population (De Villiers, 55).

Technical education was more closely linked to industry and to state institutions such as The South African Railways. In the Cape Province, the De Beers Corporation in conjunction with the South African Railways, initiated evening classes for technicians in 1890. Evening classes were not compulsory and were often indifferently attended (De Villiers, 61). It was only until the promulgation of the Apprenticeship Act of 1922, that attendance improved throughout the country.

In the early twentieth-century Transvaal, a number of trade schools were established "which were conducted on a higher level than the industrial schools" (De Villiers, 66). These schools were to provide a three - year course for white boys of at least 13 years of age and with a Std 6 qualification. The course was recognised as being preparatory

to apprenticeship and not intended to supplement training at the workplace.

In 1925, the administration of technical and vocational education was refined when the Union Government assumed responsibility for technical and vocational education and took control of 19 state, 23 state-aided institutions and a number of part-time courses. All industrial schools attached to the hostels were closed. Technical and Commercial Schools and evening classes on the Witwatersrand, Port Elizabeth, Pietermaritzburg and East London were incorporated into technical colleges.

The transfer of vocational and technical education to the central government saw an increase in the field of education: in 1926/27 there were 7 technical colleges, this number rose to 11 in 1946/47, the number of students for the same years rose from 15, 668 to 38 403. Vocational school numbers rose from 2013 in 1926/27 to 6420 in the mid- 1940s as part of an on-going upliftment scheme for poor whites.

The De Villiers Commission acknowledged the significant development of technical and vocational education under the Union Government and the "rising status of the vocational high schools" (De Villiers, 1967). However, an important focus in the Report was the issue of the status of these schools and of the lack of co-ordination between the ordinary high schools and the technical and vocational schools. By the 1940s, the Commission was concerned with what it termed the "unwholesome" relationship between general and technical and vocational education. The De Villiers Commission was born mainly out of the need to clarify and consolidate this relationship by proposing a system of schooling which led through general education to technical and vocational education in the last two years of schooling. The Report stated that its major concern was that of the white school-going adolescent (from 12 to 18 years) and the majority of the recommendations in the Report dealt with the revision of the secondary education system.

Curriculum Choices.

At the time of the Report, there were nine technical colleges in the Union, which offered part-time and full-time courses. Amongst the courses offered were: "...commerce, arts and crafts, physical education and in the engineering building and other trades for boys and in the homemaking trades for girls" (De Villiers, 73). These gender-specific courses led to National Certificate and Diploma examinations.

Whereas the urban areas were served by the technical colleges, rural areas had less adequate educational facilities available in the vocational high schools which offered commercial, agricultural, housecraft and technical subjects. In 1946, attendance figures for these schools were the following for full-time students:

Technical: 2138 Commercial: 794 Housecraft: 895
Agriculture: 402 (De Villiers, 79).

The Commission recommended that the existing vocational high schools be enlarged to provide for " as many courses as may be required "but not established in areas served by technical colleges. By proposing that these institutions be enlarged, an attempt was being made to enhance their status and bring them more in line with the urban technical colleges. At this time, the Vocational High Schools, usually linked to hostels were seen as a repository for poor white children.

In evaluating vocational education, the Commission recognised a number of "defects" in the system. The Commission emphasised that vocational education could only be built on a form of general education. They stated that,

> The Commission is convinced that no pupil could be regarded as well-prepared for the greatest majority of vocational training courses without having

had at least two years of full-time general education at secondary level (De Villiers, 534).

To this end, Junior High Schools were presented as an alternative to the existing system. The reconstruction of the education system was based on the premise that general education (which was defined by the Report as "not designed to meet the specific demands of a particular occupation" (De Villiers, 107)) and vocational education did have a satisfactory relationship in the existing schools. The conflation of the two categories of education formed a "hybrid" about which the Commission commented thus:

> It is true that many high school teachers, both of "academic" and "vocational " subjects, direct their teaching towards broader objectives such as general culture, citizenship and character. In spite of the efforts of such teachers, however, present high school education appears to be neither general nor vocational, but a mixed breed which may best be described as academically plus vocationally biased education (De Villiers, 109).

In order to obviate the confusion such education was considered to engender, the Commission recommended a revised structure which would provide for an adequate measure of "full-time foundational general education"; adequate facilities for the "specialised training youth may need"; a rational distribution of pupils at the close of full-time education towards more specialised education, and finally the provision of adequate facilities for this specialist training (De Villiers, 110). The system was intended to be implemented in the white schools, however, the Commission also made it clear that a similar system would have to be initiated for black pupils.

The revised education scheme proposed took the following form for white pupils from "nursery school " until tertiary level. It included a "diversified" secondary education

system:

Age of pupil:	Full-time education
3-6	Nursery school
5-12	Primary school
12 plus -15 plus	Junior High School
15 plus - 17 plus	Senior High School
15 plus - 17 plus	Vocational High School
15 plus	Technical College
17 plus	Agricultural College
18 plus	University

(De Villiers, 126).

Within this structure, the Commission recommended that full-time education be compulsory and free between the ages of 6 and 16 (for white pupils, compulsory education for black pupils was recommended until 14). At around 12 all pupils would be transferred to Junior High Schools which would provide further general education with a view to pupils "discovering their interests and aptitudes". Junior High Schools were designed to displace Std. 6, 7 and 8 and the "many vocationally biased courses of training" and would aim to provide "a minimum of full-time foundational general education" for pupils (De Villiers, 237). The Commission felt that the Junior High Schools should not provide organised vocational education of any form.

Transfer to the Junior High Schools was to be age-specific and not dependent upon the attainment of a school standard. For this reason the school population would be heterogeneous and would have to make provision for a range of aptitudes. From the junior high schools, pupils would be transferred to senior high school, vocational schools or technical colleges.

The rationale given by the Commission for the new the scheme of education was amongst others, " the increasing complexity of the school's task " which was perceived as extending into the realm of the "whole person" (De Villiers, 161). This included the fostering of the pupil's internal world: that which the Commission termed the pupil's "desires, wants and aspirations". Education was perceived as having to meet the demands of society so that the pupil could aim to find "...his place as a member of a family as a citizen of a community and of the State and as a world citizen" (De Villiers, 164). In this way, the Commission was proposing the provision of a wider education for pupils, than to the narrow transmission of skills. The implication was that the school was to play an ever -increasing role in the socialisation of pupils thereby supplementing the traditional role of the family.

Simultaneously, education was increasingly seen as an important arena for the utilisation of human resources and the concomitant economic benefits to the State. The Report frequently made reference to the "modernising" aspects of education and to its role in the development of the state. The post-war period saw the tangible justification for increased educational expenditure to be able to demonstrate that education and training were meeting existing or projected manpower needs. The Report made a direct correlation between vocational education and increased production by arguing that vocational education increased the "national income" by making the best possible use of its human resources (De Villiers, 162).

What was the amalgam of forces which encouraged the De Villiers Commission to focus on training and perceived manpower shortages? Firstly, the growth in the economy was an important factor and by extension, predictions of growth which were based upon the development of skills acquisition through a revised educational system. The resulting prosperity of the economy was seen as being dependent upon a supply of trained workers.

The intention in the Report was that both white and black pupils should be trained to become competent at skilled and semi-skilled work. Admittedly, the discourse of liberal reform demonstrated in the Report was informed by the imperative of continued economic growth and increased profitability of industry. However, the education system devised by the Report was not seen merely in terms of a functionalist tool in the reproduction of labour power and in the making of a more pliable workforce. Liberal reformist rhetoric also construed education as having the ability to enlighten and be morally uplifting to pupils. Education was seen as being an investment in the future both in the training area and as indispensable to the disciplining of the urban population. De Villiers was a response to the social crisis of the 1940s which included the urbanisation of the black population, overcrowding and what the Report termed a "juvenile delinquency problem". The Report explicitly addressed notions of social containment through educational practice. This reflected an on-going reliance upon the tenets of Adapted Education for black pupils.

The Report, in fact, gave limited responsibility to industry in the training of its future employees. It proposed instead that the state should carry the responsibility for vocational education, likewise the cost of schooling should be borne by the state. The two major directions the Report proposed for industry were the provision of in-service training facilities and the "co-operation" of industry with vocational training institutions. This would take the form of liaison of staff from technical colleges with industrial representatives and the provision of refresher courses for teaching staff at the colleges. Industry, it was felt, could also play a role in the loan and replacement of equipment at training institutions.

The Commission also recommended that trade unions should also be consulted at all stages of the preparation of vocational education programmes. To this end, the Commission proposed that the South African Trade and Labour Council Charter which outlined principles of free and compulsory education, vocational guidance and

apprenticeship training should be "observed by educational authorities" (De Villiers 93). This was an significant inclusion as, according to Lewis, the Trade and Labour Council was a non-racial union composed of an alliance between traditional craft unions and the newer industrial unions (Lewis, 1985). The Commission gave weight to this involvement by quoting from an International Labour Organisation Report which called for the close collaboration between technical and vocational schools and industry by the inclusion of employers and workers in the governing bodies of the schools.

The Commission presented a legitimating discourse for the proposed system by extrapolating from projected population figures and urbanisation trends to provide a basis for the revision of technical and vocational education. In 1946 the population figures were given as consisting of 2 373 000 "Europeans" and 9 019 000 "Non - Europeans". The Commission estimated that by 1956 the total population would be nearly 14 500 000, of which 2 800 00 would be "Europeans". They noted the decline of the white population: which they attributed to the to the declining birth-rate and the rising income of that group. On the other hand, the black population was increasing, a phenomenon which to some extent justified the increase in educational provision for black pupils. Additionally, education of black pupils was linked to the importance of increasing future productivity levels amongst black workers to the greater benefit of the economy. They note,

> As the average industrial productivity of the European is very much higher that that of the non-European, this proportionate decrease in population may cause a serious decline in the average output of the nation unless the productivity of the non-Europeans can be considerably increased (De Villiers, 506).

Manifest in the Report is the implication of "backwardness" of the black population which had to acquire skills to bring it in line with the advance of capital. According to

Malherbe, very few black people had formal technical training by 1948, even though certain technical institutions had been open to blacks until 1962 when they became segregated under National Party rule (Malherbe, 1973). By 1955 there were only 2239 blacks attending technical and training classes. Major reasons for this were the colour bar (which was criticised by the Commission as being restrictive); white working class protectionism and the lack of opportunities for training (Muller, 1984).

A second significant trend given in the Report in regard to the provision of technical education was the urbanisation of the South African population. Urbanisation was accompanied by a shift in occupational trends from primary to secondary and tertiary industry. The Commission noted the "inevitability" of the movement of "non-Europeans" to the towns and acknowledged their permanent presence in the urban areas. As will be discussed in Chapter 4 schooling did not entirely correspond to the need for increased productivity, but also played an important role in the social control of the black " youth" in urban areas.

Social control also based on the Commission's vision of gender: Black male youths were often "deemed" unruly, whereas black girls were peripherialised in the text as will be outlined in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 3

Introduction

The following chapter will present the argument that even though the De Villiers Commission strove to incorporate girls into its discourse of technical and vocational education, the inclusion frequently perpetuated specific roles such as "home-making" and presented stereotyped versions of femininity. It will also be argued that the De Villiers Commission reinforced notions of separate spheres for boys and girls as future participants in the workplace: technical education being the terrain of male pupils whereas girls were assigned to the home or to employment related to the domestic arena.

Research into the gender-specificity of the De Villiers Commission has raised the issue of whether gender studies should be constituted as a separate field of research or whether they should be integral to the study of history. This focus also problematises the theoretical and contextual paucity of the requisite chapter on gender issues found within textual accounts. Joan Scott notes that separate studies of women run the risk of marginalising women's experience within a particular historical context. By including a chapter on women within a more generalised study, the notion of "separate spheres" for men and women is perpetuated. She writes:

> The effect is to endorse a certain functionalist view ultimately rooted in biology and to perpetuate the idea of separate spheres (sex or politics, family or nation, women or men) in the writing of history. Although gender in this usage asserts that relationships between the sexes are social, it says nothing about why these relationships are constructed as they are, how they work, or how they change (Scott, 1989, p32).

Gender is thus construed as a social construct which is historically variable and subject to change. What is significant to note in the De Villiers Commission is how the category of adolescent girl has been constructed and inserted into the discourse of technical and vocational education. As will be discussed at greater length in this chapter, gender relations are historically variable and there was a specific meaning attached to the notion of the "girl" in the mid-1940s post-war period. This category had shifted to include aspects of a "new" girl who required a number of vocational skills, but who simultaneously was expected to subscribe to "new "discourses of domesticity and femininity. The limited understanding of technical education for girls embodied in the De Villiers Report provided expression for a new process in the economy which associated female workers with clerical and semi-skilled industrial work. This excluded women from attaining marketable skills and reinforced their marginal position in the labour market.

Within this study, gender largely has been descriptively associated with events related to women and in many usages has becomes co-terminous with women. There are reasons for this. Firstly, Scott proposes that this trend denotes a quest for legitimacy of historical texts concerning women's issues. "Gender" as a term is less stridently political than "women's history" which proclaims its politics by insisting on the inclusion of women into historical discourse. Contrary to this, the notion of gender, "includes but does not name women and so seems to pose no critical threat" (Scott, 1989). She proposes the notion of gender instead of being narrowly focused on women is capable of widening its net to include information about men; a factor mitigating against the notion that the experience of one sex is entirely differentiated from that of the other. In this way, gender becomes useful in denoting cultural meanings attached to the acquisition of what are understood as appropriate sex roles within an historical context.

This study does not wish to reinforce the notion of distinct spheres by including a separate chapter on gender issues, neither does it wish to deny the inter-relatedness of

Gender is thus construed as a social construct which is historically variable and subject to change. What is significant to note in the De Villiers Commission is how the category of adolescent girl has been constructed and inserted into the discourse of technical and vocational education. As will be discussed at greater length in this chapter, gender relations are historically variable and there was a specific meaning attached to the notion of the "girl" in the mid-1940s post-war period. This category had shifted to include aspects of a "new" girl who required a number of vocational skills, but who simultaneously was expected to subscribe to "new "discourses of domesticity and femininity. The limited understanding of technical education for girls embodied in the De Villiers Report provided expression for a new process in the economy which associated female workers with clerical and semi-skilled industrial work. This excluded women from attaining marketable skills and reinforced their marginal position in the labour market.

Within this study, gender largely has been descriptively associated with events related to women and in many usages has becomes co-terminous with women. There are reasons for this. Firstly, Scott proposes that this trend denotes a quest for legitimacy of historical texts concerning women's issues. "Gender" as a term is less stridently political than "women's history" which proclaims its politics by insisting on the inclusion of women into historical discourse. Contrary to this, the notion of gender, "includes but does not name women and so seems to pose no critical threat" (Scott, 1989). She proposes the notion of gender instead of being narrowly focused on women is capable of widening its net to include information about men; a factor mitigating against the notion that the experience of one sex is entirely differentiated from that of the other. In this way, gender becomes useful in denoting cultural meanings attached to the acquisition of what are understood as appropriate sex roles within an historical context.

This study does not wish to reinforce the notion of distinct spheres by including a separate chapter on gender issues, neither does it wish to deny the inter-relatedness of

female/male experiences. However, the structure of the De Villiers Report focuses specifically upon girls and women in the chapter which falls under the rubric of "Homemaking". In examining this text, it is intended to elucidate how women are constituted within an official discourse and how this discourse contributed to the legitimisation of separate spheres within educational policy.

By allocating a chapter to gender issues, it is hoped to focus on concerns which might be lost in the possible generalisation of a more inclusive approach. This particular trajectory focuses on the specificities of how girls were constituted within the text and how they were included and excluded in the discourse which often manifested an insistence upon gender distinctions and which exhibited the rhetoric of domesticity. The exclusion of girls in the majority of chapters in the De Villiers Commission is glaringly obvious. In relation to how women are constituted within the state, Manicom points out,

> Women are not present in the state in more ways than one. Debate around the state in progressive South African history has been dominated by the question of whether and how race and/or class have structured the apartheid state. The quickest of glances will show that women, historically and today, have been negligible in state structures, that state policy has discriminated against women, and that indeed, the historical development of apartheid was predicated on state-enforced gender subordination (Manicom, 1992, p 444).

As a state policy document, it can be argued that the De Villiers Commission enforced gender subordination and discriminated against girls and women in a number of ways. If policy documents can be construed as discourses which crystallise how the state presents itself and play an important legitimating role, then the De Villiers Report portrayed deeply embedded hierarchical and differential notions of gender. In fact, the official discourse of the De Villiers Commission can be said to be "organised by gender

(and race) difference and subordination at its formation" and not merely as reflecting patriarchal ideology (Manicom, 1992). For instance, there are assumptions inherent to the Report concerning skills acquisition. It was considered appropriate for boys to work in industry and to acquire related skills, but girls were not alluded to in this context and in this sense the identity of girls was shaped by their exclusion from the discourse.

The redefinition of notions of skill is especially important in an exploration of vocational and technical education, as technical training has been seen as a means of acquiring skills to provide access to high-status employment. The exclusion of girls from attaining these skills and their inclusion in domestic and low-status work suggests how technical education has contributed to socialising girls into gendered employment, as well as accepting the sexual division of labour and lower wage rates.

In addition to this, the study calls for some perspective which will explain continuities and discontinuities for persisting gender inequality in education in the first half of the twentieth century. Gender inequality cannot be universalised as a concept which is predicated upon a notion of "womenhood" without being nuanced by the inclusion of categories of class and race. How women are constructed in the discourse at specific historical junctures has to be addressed. For instance in the mid-twentieth century black women were constructed around questions concerning their spatial relationships to the Reserves or to the urban areas, their marital status, their sexuality and their economic situation which was usually construed around domestic work or around the more "unruly" informal sector. When black women were referred to in the De Villiers Report their position within the discourse was marginalised primarily to that of domestic labour and agricultural work in the Reserves.

The position of white women was similarly fixed in the discourse of domesticity and notions of "femininity" which were used as justifications for the gentrification of white working class women who attended the housecraft schools. White women were not

totally excluded from the workplace, but the text positions them primarily in relation to their spatial relationship within the home (and not within the homelands which were specified for black women). For white girls "Home" was constituted as the "white" cities and rural areas. Black women were still in the process of being defined in terms of their space as urban residents where their position was insecure. It was in the Reserves that they were perceived to have a more fixed status by the Commission.

Developments in gender history

In South Africa, women's studies have largely attempted to analyse the relationship between race, class and gender and to plot the differential and hierarchical aspects of state policy and practice. Further revisionist studies have focused on the concept of resistance in relation to women's experience. Manicom proposes that South African history written under the rubric of "radical" or "revisionist", in the late seventies and early eighties demonstrated aspects of recuperative history which strove to redress gender imbalances in the historical narrative and which aimed to fill the lucunae evidenced in work where women had been omitted from the text (Manicom, 1992).

One of the main analytic paradigms characterising gendered South African history was that of Marxist feminism. Feminists writing within that paradigm, such as Wolpe and Kuhn in the 1970s, made an important contribution to rejecting the essentialism which permeated much of the work of radical feminists who based their thesis on the premise that reproduction and sexual difference led to the oppression of women by men. Their critique of the biological determinism inherent in such an approach, stressed the social nature of women's oppression.

Relatedly, Marxist feminists placed emphasis on a material explanation for gender and on the notion that patriarchy developed as a function of the relations of production. Feminists such as Wolpe and Kuhn placed their theoretical focus upon the notion of

materialism, and the location of women vis a vis the relations of production that characterised a particular economic system. They argued,

> The materialist problematic is based on a conceptualisation of human society as defined specifically by its productivity: primarily of the means of subsistence and of value by the transformation of nature through work. United with this is a conceptualisation of history as the site of he transformation of the social relations of production and reproduction. As far as an analysis of the position of women is concerned, materialism would locate that position in terms of the relations of production at various moments in history (Wolpe and Kuhn, 1976, p7).

More recently, Scott has argued that the analytical power of gender is reduced by "treating gender as the by-product of changing economic structures" (Scott, 1989). Patriarchy in this sense becomes subordinate to that of capital accumulation, suggesting that shifts in patriarchies are epiphenomonal and not constitutive of economic forces. Within the context of the state and gender relations, Manicom proposes that Marxist categories often narrowly conceived women's oppression and led to a functionalist interpretation of the state in relation to the subordination of women. For instance, she cites Harold Wolpe's article (Wolpe, 1972), that argued that the function of the Reserves was to subsidise and ultimately contain workers who sold their labour in the urban areas. Within the parameters of this thesis, women located in the Reserve areas contributed to the accumulation of capital by providing the conditions for the reproduction of the urban, migrant working class. The position of black, rural women was projected as being functional to the needs of capital in a way that occluded the "gender relations of domination and subordination within the "family", or within the reserves" (Manicom, 1992). Generally, the situation of these women, in a procrustean manner, was being made to fit into existing theories of the accumulation of capital and notions of the state which were implicitly unmediated by gender and which concealed

the historical specificity of the position of women. In this context, attempts to explain occupational segregation and the gendered stratification of the labour force were seen to be based upon the requirements of the labour market itself and did not take into account the relations which perpetuated gender differentiation.

In a critique of the functionalism inherent to this approach, Bozzoli questioned the neutrality of constructs such as migrant labour and urbanisation and attempted to problematise the differentiation of gender roles in the migrant labour system. Within this analysis, she places patriarchal relations within the terrain of "domestic struggle" between men and women. The domestic struggle resulted in the historically specific subordination of women which played a role in the shaping of the capitalist state. By locating patriarchy within the domestic sphere, however, Bozzoli tends to reproduce dualist notions of separate domestic spheres which exist in opposition to the public domain as exemplified by the economy and the state which are assumed in this context to be gender-neutral constructs. Manicom argues that Bozzoli did not acknowledge sufficiently how gender is shaped by the structural constraints imposed by the state and how the state itself is

> ...being defined by and in relation to the "domestic" where state practices and categorisations define, delimit and assign gender through constructions of "the domestic" – be it the household, the family, the tribe. These designations are not once-off events that can explain women's subordination but are ongoing and shifting constructions, varying between class, race, culture and state policy. If an analysis of state formation is to avoid reproducing or casting its theory in terms of the prevailing normative gender and ideological meanings of the "domestic sphere", it would need to explore and explain the historical constitution of this category, not assume it as pre-given (Manicom, 1992, p 450).

Manicom's critique of Bozzoli's thesis is significant in terms of this study because she

emphasises that the differential implications of state policy are not due to the impact of a neutral state upon existing patriarchal relations. Instead, she argues there is a "mutual constitution of women and the state in the historical process" (Manicom, 1992).

An historiographical approach which more or less coexisted with materialist feminism was that of social history. In recent years, social historians have focused on the experience of women in their daily lives, their families and their place of work. A criticism of this approach is that it can reproduce the notion of separate spheres for men and women in their social milieu. More importantly for this study, because the focus of social history accounts has been on local, decentralised issues, this has meant in gender terms that the domain of "high" politics (wars, diplomacy, state politics and policy) has often been in the hands of historians who were not concerned with gender issues. This has important consequences for this thesis in that little attention has been paid to the shaping of gender constructs in relation to the state policy.

State Policy and the Meaning of Gender.

As a point of entry, it is necessary to provide some explanation concerning how state policy shaped the meanings attached to gender. The De Villiers Commission, as a state policy document was deeply shot through by notions of gender differentiation. In spite of this, the question whether the state always has some material gain in the control of women and by the specification of their roles is not always so clear. However, in relation to the De Villiers Commission, sexual difference to some extent reflected shifting patterns of employment which resulted in more clearly demarcated arenas of vocation and domesticity in relation to women. This denoted a trend after the Second World War, as the jobs that had often been filled successfully by women (and black men) during the War, were increasingly being retrieved by white men. In tandem with this, the logic of domesticity became more pronounced in the appeals for

population growth after the war. However, there was also a greater demand for women to gain employment in the burgeoning commercial sector. It was in these two areas that the De Villiers Commission most effectively encoded gendered meanings as normative and organised hierarchical structures within official educational discourse which perpetuated inequalities between boys and girls, both black and white.

The De Villiers Commission tended to universalise the category of "pupil" as white and masculine; in the same way "youth" was monolithically male. However, in certain instances the category was expanded to include young black men, particularly with reference to the social control of the "unruly youth" or "delinquents" of the urban areas.

The need to examine the categories of "men" and "women" is to obviate the assumption that women and men have inherent characteristics, based on sexual difference and to affirm rather that differences are socially defined and variable. Furthermore, the socially-defined spaces assigned to men and women, for instance, the home and the workplace, were not immutable constructs. Disaggregation of these categories can uncover their heterogeneity by revealing that oppositions are not fixed and that their hierarchical nature (in that one part of the dichotomy is usually more visible and dominant) can be deconstructed to reveal the exclusions and inclusions that characterised official discourses such as the De Villiers Commission.

The problematisation of the categories of "boys" and "girls" is particularly pertinent to how they are constituted within a discourse concerned with technical education. Throughout the De Villiers Report, gender categorisation is established by the exclusion of girls from the discourse. This is particularly evident in the division of labour which is perpetuated in the Report. The Report consistently proposed that vocational education "be kept in line with economic development...and thus provide a means of continually adjusting the employment market to the needs of the economic system" (De Villiers, 516). This is reflected in unequal access to curriculum choices. In regard

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to the courses offered at contemporary technical colleges, it was stated that they offered "advanced courses in commerce, arts and crafts, physical education and in the engineering, building and other trades for boys and in homemaking trades for girls" (De Villiers, 520). In this sense, the notion of "separate spheres" remained fixed: building and engineering were careers that were seen as exclusively for boys, whereas the "home-making trades" were perceived to be the domain of girls. The subjects taken in technical education courses were: English and Afrikaans, mathematics, drawing or physical science and trade theory and workshop practice related to the trade selected, for instance, that of electrician or boilermaker (De Villiers, 525). The choice for those pupils taking the domestic science course was the following: English and Afrikaans, three courses from cookery, housewifery, laundrywork, needlework, physiology and hygiene.

An important theme in this area is the social construction of skill and its relation to gender. Preservation of the role of men in certain skilled and semi-skilled positions in industry has been recorded by a number of British studies which have analysed the persistence of sexual hierarchy throughout the technological changes of the twentieth century (King, 1990). Not only were traditional gender roles articulated by the industrial management, but there is evidence that men in the workforce played an active role in exclusionist strategies against women. The De Villiers Commission was sensitive to white union opinion and as a consequence, the Report tended to entrench traditional gender divisions in its construction of skill in relation to technical and vocational education.

Commercial Education.

Commercial education offered girls the opportunity to develop vocational skills other than those associated with the domestic realm. After the Second World War, commercial education was offered to white, coloured and Indian students via the

technical colleges and commercial high schools (which were state-run) and the private commercial schools. These private institutions played a major role in the tuition of commercial subjects. In 1945, of the 35 000 candidates who sat for the National Commercial Examinations, approximately half were entered from private institution. The Commission noted a significant increase in the enrolment of students in these courses. In 1935 14 000 students had enrolled at commercial education institutions and by 1946 this figure had risen to 38 000. The majority of students took bookkeeping, commercial arithmetic, shorthand and typing. Curriculum choices were deeply gendered:

> For boys the training should lead mainly to general clerical office work and to occupations in distributive businesses. For girls the training should provide preparation for the occupations of shop assistants, stenographers, and general clerks. (De Villiers, 966)

There are basic assumptions concerning skills acquisition encoded here. It is appropriate for boys to be trained in skills which will equip them for work in industry and in the commercial sector. In this context, the identity of girls is influenced by their exclusion from the discourse of skills acquisition and constituted instead in the domestic realm or in marginalised commercial work. It is apparent that these schools were to produce female workers who were trained towards a place in the "office pool of typists", whereas boys could fulfil a number of flexible roles within the commercial sector.

Nevertheless, commercial education did give extra opportunities and the popularity of the courses seems to indicate a growing trend for women to find employment in the commercial sector which offered more middle-class employment for girls in a country where paid domestic work was not perceived as entirely suitable for white women. The De Villiers Commission was premised on the assumption that adolescent males had to

be educated towards becoming the primary breadwinners in society. This tended to result in the valorisation of technical (male) education in the Report and the insertion of female education in a specific text in the form of a chapter on homemaking education.

Homemaking Education

In the section on "Homemaking Education" (subtitled, Woman - her Vocation and Training), the following introductory paragraph recognised that there should be no distinction in the education given to girls and boys. However, in an attempt to alleviate gender bias in technical and vocational education, it can be argued that the Report reinforced notions of domesticity and sought to define "individual difference" by perpetuating the idea of separate spheres:

> In this report no distinction has been made between men and women in formulating a new national scheme of education. Educational systems of the past have been called "man-made", and enlightened women have charged educational authorities with neglecting the particular needs of the girl in educational institutions. In regard to this matter, it is the Commission's fundamental thesis that the guiding principles formulated in the chapter on Basic Considerations apply to the education of women as well as the education of men. For women, as for all individuals, the ultimate aim of education is self-realisation. The principle of equal opportunities for all, and the principle of the observance of individual differences, should be upheld in the education of girls as thoroughly as in the education of boys (De Villiers, 841).

Although official policy stated that educational facilities should be made equally available to boys and girls, the form and content of education remained deeply gender-specific. The Commission reinforced this by proposing that the "...special task most women will find it their privilege to make, lies in the field of home management" (De

Villiers, 841). The Commission based this assumption on the statistic that between "60 and 70 percent" of white girls would become housewives within ten years after they have left school. Thus the notion of "dual vocational responsibility" comes into play. The Commission noted that it had to confront "women's rights to the same vocational training facilities that have in the past been provided for men" but also to recognise the "...women's need for special preparation for the unique contribution they will have the privilege of making to our national life" (De Villiers, 845). In this way, the De Villiers Commission represented an acceptance of the need to prepare white girls for economic survival and did accommodate changing notions about what were "correct" female spheres by proposing that girls should not only be trained for homemaking, but also "some wage-earning pursuit outside the home" (De Villiers, 845). Yet the technical skills and vocational education provided for girls in the Report, developed a restricted notion of skilled work and perpetuated a discourse which was inclusive of normative notions of "femaleness".

Homemaking Courses.

This was particularly evident in the proposed "homemaking" course which the Commission felt should be included in the general education component of the schooling system devised by the Commission. The Commissioners considered this aspect of women's lives to be of such importance that they recommended,

> ...homemaking courses should be required on a pre-vocational or practical arts basis for ALL (their italics) girls (De Villiers, 850).

They also recommended that homemaking courses should be included in the vocational education curriculum which was to follow on from the general education stratum. In an attempt to elevate housework and to make it acceptable to girls, (particularly white, middle-class girls), homemaking was given a scientific bent: "girls

who look upon the kitchen as a laboratory, who understand the chemical, bacteriological and physiological principles entailed in all that takes place there, and who regard cookery and whatever goes with it a fine art, will not feel they are doing menial tasks" (De Villiers, 875). This approach was in line with British inspectoral reports which emerged in the 1920s and 1930s (King, 1990). In these reports it was recommended that science in girls' schools should focus on the practical and domestic aspects of the subject. An inspectoral report in 1925, complained about a lack of emphasis on "science in the home" in the science curricula of schools. The assumption was that girls were innately unable to cope with the rational and technical aspects of science, thus an "adapted" form of science was proposed which was infused with notions of gender differentiation.

An important index of technical education policy is how employment opportunities were understood within the official discourse. Although new fields of employment had become available to women in the post-war period, the range of work proposed for girls who completed the home making courses was limited. The Report suggested that the course would primarily be for girls of 15 to 18 who contemplated employment as "assistant homemakers, assistant matrons or trained employees in hotels or hostels, or for those who want to assist in their parent's homes" (De Villiers, 854). The assumption couched in the Report, suggested that girls were inherently unsuited to training in technical education, and were to be directed into low-status work with a domestic bias. The tendency to perceive the sexual division in the labour market as "inevitable" was extended to the recognition in the Report that girls were more suited to routine, low-skilled work. This notion was particularly evident in the following section on the housecraft schools.

Housecraft Schools.

In the exposition of the existing housecraft schools (of which there were ten at the time

of the Report) the Commission made it clear that these institutions were designated primarily for working class children. The housecraft schools offered a National Std VII Certificate and a National Junior Certificate in Domestic Science. There was no matriculation equivalent. The principal aims of the course included the enabling of pupils to perform domestic duties and to care for little children, " or otherwise be engaged as hospital, cafe, shop or hotel assistants" (De Villiers, 800). The Commission reported that girls who had completed the two-year domestic science course (equivalent to Std IX) frequently joined the nursing profession. The Report made it evident that although housecraft schools were rising in status, they were in effect institutions for "poor whites" drawn from the white manual working class. The Commission considered that:

> There is evidence that the type of pupil entering housecraft schools has improved during recent years, and the old stigma attached to these schools is rapidly disappearing. The fact that many pupils are admitted free or partially free is an indication that they come from poor homes, but as a rule such pupils are not inferior to their fee-paying fellow-pupils (De Villiers 885).

Nevertheless, the aims of the courses given at the housecraft schools were revealing in their intentions. The Commission indicated that schooling increasingly was perceived to be more vital to the transmission of skills that before would have been learnt within the structure of the family. The basic principles behind the course intended:

a. To equip girls with the necessary knowledge of a domestic nature and develop their manual dexterity, thereby enabling them, if necessary to earn a living by performing such domestic duties as home cooking, making and mending of clothes, tending and caring for little children or otherwise being engaged as hospital, cafe, shop or hotel assistants.

b. To train girls in home-management in order that they may be good and capable housewives and mothers by the time that they are called upon to function as such.

c. To educate them in culture refinement, and other social virtues in order that they may be an acquisition to any social circle in which they may find themselves (De Villiers, 858).

Clearly, the housecraft schools placed curricular emphasis on vocational training for motherhood and domestic work. The type of instruction prepared the girls for unskilled gender-specific work which, however, was underscored by a discourse of middle-class propriety and notions of economically dependent wifehood. Likewise, the training the girls received in these schools emphasised "skills" that might be transferred to the home and assumed that women's working lives were limited.

Schooling for black girl pupils

Although the education for domesticity offered to white and black pupils portrayed a structural unity, the opportunities open to black girl pupils were even more restricted than those deemed suitable for their white counterparts. These were outlined in an extremely truncated section in the chapter on "native" education in which the Commission reiterated the need for the provision of facilities to train girls in "homemaking" with a view to their involvement in teaching, nursing and agricultural advisors.

The Commissioners emphasised the importance of agricultural education for women. It was recommended that women study such subjects as health, sanitation, child-care, domestic science and vegetable gardening. Agricultural education was seen as essential because the Commission was of the opinion that "native women" played "a

large part in agricultural operations as they are by tradition the cultivators". (De Villiers, 1880)

By the 1930s, the migrant labour system was a dominant force in the political economy of South Africa. By 1947, more than 70% of men between the ages of 15 and 44 were migrant workers from Reserves such as the Ciskei (Walker, 1992). The composition of the migrant labour force was predominantly gender - specific and the majority of women remained "tied to the rural areas, successfully locked into homestead production" (Walker, 1992). Walker suggests women were not part of the formal migrant labour system because of their centrality to homestead production in the Reserves and as such were not recruited by employers nor were they dispatched to the towns by the traditional ruling structures (Walker, 1992).

At the same time, there was a significant demographic shift in the 1930s and 1940s which was demonstrated by the increased numbers of women moving into the urban areas. In 1936, of the 106 977 women in the Witwatersrand, approximately half were domestic workers (Gaitskell, 1990). These figures were to increase dramatically during the war years, partly because of the deterioration of the Reserve economy which led to increased urbanisation and partly because the authorities relaxed the operation of the laws controlling women migrants during the War period (Bonner, 1990). Schapera's study of 1940s migration indicated that the group most likely to leave the rural areas were women who had never married. These were followed by women divorced or abandoned by their husbands. Women who migrated were most likely to become domestic workers, washerwomen or brewers of beer (Walker, 1992). It was to the domestic worker group that the Commission turned its attention in regard to specific training:

> Provision should be made for training for domestic service as for any other form of employment. Some preliminary training may be given during the

ordinary school course, but more definite vocational training should be provided in schools for non-European girls in suitable centres (De Villiers, 1881).

Interestingly, the De Villiers Commission did not allude with opprobrium to the class of urbanised women situated on the margins of society who were often stereotyped as immoral and irresponsible. The "delinquency problem" discussed in the chapter on "Native Education" was characterised as young and male. It was to this group that the Commission gave most attention in terms of social control through education.

Conclusion.

New social forces emerged in the 1940s, the immediate context being the rapid development of the industrial economy which was evidenced in a modernising discourse such as the De Villiers Report. In relation to women, there was an attempt to harness domesticity into a management / scientific discourse in which women in practice would seek to find a career in the home.

However, in constituting the category of women the Report went further than merely functionally assigning women to the role of homemakers. It also operated discursively on the level of legitimating the state. The Commission stated explicitly that an important relationship existed between a "wholesome family life on the one hand and local, provincial and national strength and progress on the other" (De Villiers, 849).

Thus the official discourse of the Report reflected and contributed to the strengthening of the sexual division of labour in the home and in the workplace. The technical and vocational education offered to girls in the Report, while marking a new acceptance that there was a need to train girls, gave expression to the tensions within a gendered discourse which sought to normalise differentiated schooling.

CHAPTER 4

Introduction

This chapter seeks to determine whether or not the De Villiers Commission represented a major departure from segregationist discourses in the 1940s. Firstly, it will be argued that the Commission placed its focus on education and training in the urban areas as a means of social control, through the segregated schooling of black (primarily male) children. Secondly, it will be argued that its recommendations for the rehabilitation of the Reserves and the expansion of educational facilities in these areas provided an additional mechanism for the social distribution of a subject people. Thirdly, the discourse will be examined in the light of how it particularised the "Native" in the 1940s from the white male subject portrayed in the De Villiers Commission Report. In tandem with this, questions will be posed concerning the normative concepts expressed in the "Native Education" chapter about the position of the subject of its discourse, that is, the school-goer.

In addition, how the De Villiers Commission defined technical and vocational education in relation to black children will be discussed. It will be argued that the manner in which race was presented in the De Villiers Report signified specific relationships of power in the mid-1940s. Concepts of race in the Report structured symbolic perceptions of education and were imbricated in the concrete organisation of social life which led to the establishment of differential control and access to resources such as schooling.

As experts, the Commissioners took it upon themselves to find what they termed "pragmatic solutions" to the "problem" of black education and hence to speak almost exclusively for the black community and to provide solutions for the "problems"

besetting black education. As Ashforth points out, the issues comprising the "Native Question" were almost entirely spoken of by the South African state as technical matters of administration seeking technical solutions to the putative "problems" (Ashforth, 1990).

In speaking of "Native Education", certain assumptions permeated the De Villiers Commission's discourse: one of the most significant being that the efficacy of education was taken for granted. The politics of poverty and discriminatory social structures disappeared within a discourse which was officially posed as "educational". Thus established, the discourse could be presented as neutral and free of political intent. Thus, what was unpredictable and unruly in society could be submitted to a discourse which was based upon solutions which were educational. Hence the knowledge transmitted to the subjects of power was predicated upon technical command and "good sense" of the Commissioners. By arguing that the relationship between education and development was essentially a benign one, the Commission strove to suppress concerns about unequal access to political power.

How did the De Villiers Commission legitimate its stance in terms of the provision of technical and vocational education for black children? Significantly, the Commission cited the dynamics of the marketplace, the employment needs of the industrial sector and the need for skills acquisition. It was observed that training of black people was essential,

> ...not only for the industrial, mining and agricultural development of this country as a whole, but also for the rehabilitation of his own people - his community and his soil. There should therefore be jobs at all levels waiting for thousands of Natives, and wherever a sufficient demand exists for men

and women an effort should be made to supply suitable facilities for their training, preferably in the form of polytechnic institutions as recommended for Europeans (De Villiers, 1837).

Thus, the discourse mobilised around training was predicated firmly upon separate-but -equal educational provision. Significantly, the Commission focused its practical recommendations upon the training of black youths as opposed to the "liberal" or general education of this category. The emphasis on training signified the transmission of specific skills and aptitudes which were often compatible with semi-skilled work and which were to lead to the formation of a new category of "industrial people". The vocational impetus provided by such training was to find expression in areas which did not intrude overly on the preserve of the white working class. Connected to this, the development of the Reserves was given an additional dimension by the following point:

> The scientific understanding of social reality produces an objectified account of "native" identity which is tied to specific places - the Reserves (De Villiers, 82).

The call for "development " and the notion of a "native identity" thus accrued far greater political significance than the request by the Commission for the improvement of living conditions for rural blacks. In this regard, the Commission portrayed a structural continuity between their approach and the later thrust of Nationalist policy in the homelands.

Approaches to segregation

Various approaches to segregation have unfolded over the last few decades. What is of relevance to this study is how knowledge has been produced around the

discourse of segregation and to what extent these approaches have informed this examination of the De Villiers Report.

Liberal accounts have attributed the origins of segregation to the "frontier tradition" which was characterised by land appropriation and isolationist attitudes in the nineteenth century. These attitudes were associated primarily with a group of "white supremacists" who upheld the notions of purity of race and identity, and presented a discourse justifying segregation which was informed by Calvinist doctrines of predestination.

As Christie and Collins point out, liberal discourse frequently reduced social conflict to,

> ...a clash between two ideologies: apartheid with its concomitant notions of baaskap (dominance) on the one side and the liberal ideal of integration on the other (Christie and Collins, 1984, p162).

Drawing on Marxist historiography, revisionist historians have extensively discredited liberal notions of "integration" and have been critical of liberal interpretations which frequently reduced South African history to ideological struggles between the white race groups. Proponents of the revisionist school argued that liberal and conservative historical discourse bore more similarities than differences, in that their discourses were often descriptive and took little cognisance of the wider social, political and economic context of South African history.

Writing in the early 1980s within the revisionist school, education historians such as Christie and Collins, placed the reproduction of labour for capital as central to their understanding of the education system. By establishing a relationship between education and the economy, they highlighted the reciprocity between schooling and

capitalism. Drawing on Althusserian notions of reproduction, they stated:

> The reproduction of agents, as capitalists and as workers, needs to be secured for the continued functioning of capitalism. Not only do workers need to be adequately trained and skilled, they need also to have the appropriate work ethic, attitudes and willingness to participate in capitalist exchange relations. The state has played a significant role in the reproduction of labour suited to the needs of capital in general (Christie and Collins, 1984, p163).

Christie and Collins argued that segregationist structures were intact before the 1948 Nationalist party victory and education measures introduced prior to 1948 were as much a response to the needs of capital as post-1948. Urbanisation of large numbers of blacks in the 1940s, according to Christie and Collins meant that more people had to be incorporated into capitalist social relations as people were no longer part of a rural "tribal" structure. Schooling, thus became a crucial structure in the social control and making of the working class. Not only did it provide a place for working class children, it also taught them the "correct attitudes" such as punctuality and diligence.

However, as Christie and Collins point out there was not necessarily a correspondence between capital and the provision of education. Most schools for blacks in the 1940s were dysfunctional because of administrative disorganisation, lack of state control (the majority of schools being mission - controlled), shortages of funding and resistance within the schools from both teachers and pupils. Within this context, it could be argued that the De Villiers Commission moved to become more in line with the reproduction of an urban working class by proposing that black education should be centralised under state control. They also recommended a system of compulsory education for all black children up to the age of fourteen and

for the extension of skills acquisition through increasing the provision of industrial schools.

While the approaches centred around the reproduction of labour through educational structures do carry some relevance to this study, in that this research takes cognisance of the structural constraints of the social, political and economic context of the 1940s, the discursive thrust of this essay is also articulated around approaches which are critical of the functionalism inherent to this account of segregationist theory.

Shula Marks broadened the perspective given by functionalist accounts, by conceiving of segregation as a "set of policies specifically designed to cope with the strains of a society undergoing rapid industrialisation" (Marks, 1986). In this way she placed more emphasis on segregation as social containment rather than bearing a direct, often reductionist, relationship to capital.

Dubow suggested that the relationship between segregation and capital should be interpreted in a "weak" more generalised sense. In this interpretation, Dubow argued segregation did not necessarily reproduce the relations of production as it was not the most efficient manner in which to secure capitalist accumulation. Dubow suggested that segregation had as much to do with the legitimation of white domination as with fulfilling the needs of capital. This study will also focus on the "weak" formulation of segregation *vis a vis* capital, in that the notion of segregation as conveyed in the De Villiers Commission was centrally concerned with legitimating the establishment of a permanent, urban workforce and its social containment.

In spite of this, the De Villiers Report can be considered to be broadly compatible with capitalist development. Although the discourse presented by the De Villiers Commission did not embody the voice of industry in a pure sense, the presence of a

growing secondary industrial sector represented a decisive influence in terms of the policy document. In this regard, one of the De Villiers Commission's major proposals was that skills shortages (which were perceived to have become more pressing) should be addressed by a reformulation of the technical and vocational education system. Vocationalism in the Report gave a voice and an authority to one amalgam of interests - industry - while stifling and controlling other opposing discourses which represented the black subject population and the nascent trade union movement.

As well as attempting to avoid the pitfalls of functionalism, this chapter will also seek to address the discursive thrust of segregation. A central text in this regard is Paul Ashforth's *The Politics of Official Discourse in Twentieth Century South Africa,* (Ashforth, 1990) which presents a deconstruction of South African official discourse and which attempts to elucidate the nuances of meanings imbricated within official discourse. To this end, he examines how policy was written, how metaphor fixes meaning and the constitution of social categories within a particular discourse. He attempts to advance a more critical understanding of how knowledge is processed at specific historic moments, and how it informs institutions and social practices.

This study will also attempt to focus on details of the De Villiers Commission which indicate a number of discursive practices intersecting to legitimate the state at a point of crisis. One of the objectives of examining the De Villiers Commission is to cast light upon its relationship to segregation and to review the mixture of change and conservatism which was a feature of the Report.

The De Villiers Commission attempted to present doctrines of efficiency and uniformity in education to resolve the crisis in education in the 1940s. Uniformity was invoked to justify a centralised, educational system and a uniform bureaucracy which would result in stricter control of the schools which were then under the aegis

of a haphazard mission- school system. The Commission proposed that black education was a "national" affair, the consequence of which would lead to greater centralisation and more efficient control (De Villiers, 1765). However, this recommendation was coupled with "pragmatic" decisions to pursue the policies of increasing educational facilities in the Reserves. That the "native question" could not be dealt with in isolation from Union policy as a whole is made clear from the following quote, which forms the introductory paragraph to the section on " Native Education" in the Report:

> While its terms of reference do not specifically require the Commission to investigate or report on *non*-European education and training, it was realised that the education of this section of the community forms such an important part of the whole national scheme of education, that the Commission felt that it should give due consideration to it especially as regards vocational training, although it must be admitted that we were not able to carry out our investigations in such detail as in the case of the Europeans (De Villiers, 1765).

Ashforth notes that at "critical junctures" in the realignment of the state, the " Native Question" becomes significant in official discourse. He also notes that "new understandings of the place of "natives" within the political economy had to be devised" (Ashforth, 1990). The crisis facing the De Villiers Commission in relation to the "Native Question" rested largely on the rapid industrialisation of the country and the increasing urbanisation of black people who had migrated from the Reserves. One of their strategies of control was to recommend compulsory schooling for black pupils up until the age of 14 and the institution of workcamps for unemployed, black, male "youths".

It is useful to note at this juncture that the Commission's notion of "national ", was

both inclusive and exclusive of the black community. The De Villiers Commission demonstrated contradictory visions of what constituted "national" and in many ways perpetuated segregationist discourse. As Rich points out, segregation as a discourse was largely formulated by liberal thinkers who believed they were proposing a "middle road" between total segregation and integration (Rich, 1984.) This observation is pertinent to the De Villiers Commission, for the Report did not reflect the National Party assertion that different " nations" within the South African state had to determine their own affairs: an account which assumed a deeply fragmented concept of nationhood. For instance, the Eiselen Commission of 1951, emphasised that black education should be segregated and educational institutions should convey a "black cultural heritage". The De Villiers Commission, in contradistinction to this, proposed an educational system which suggested that a similar curriculum should be transmitted to black and white pupils, in separate -but- equal institutions.

Overview of black education in the 1930s and 1940s.

The chapter on " Native Education " in the Report drew on an overview of black education in the 1930s and 1940s. The Commission drew largely on the Interdepartmental Committee Report on Native Education of 1936 for this survey. During this period, pockets of black education were under the control of the Provincial Councils, which acted as legislative authorities. However, the majority of schools were state-aided mission schools. State aid took the form of the provision of teachers' salaries and a number of grants for equipment and educational facilities.

As the following table indicates, the number of state schools in 1946, with the exception of Natal, was minimal:

State schools		State-aided schools
Cape	18	2094
Transvaal	2	1114
OFS	0	489
Natal	201	794

(De Villiers, 1778)

Although state -aided mission education was clearly the predominant form of schooling offered to black pupils, the Commission made the point that school buildings were often in poor repair and the standard of education was inadequate. In addition, even though school administration varied on a provincial level, (the Cape having the best record) segregation and inequality remained structurally a consistent feature. Hunt Davis suggests that in all the provinces the black schools curricula did not diverge significantly from the white curriculum; instead, the education offered was a diluted second-rate reflection of white education (Hunt Davis, 1984).

Already in 1922, in an attempt to bring black education closer to full state control, the Financial Relations Fourth Extension Act No 5, empowered the Government to make grants for the improvement and extension of black education in all the Provinces. Such grants were to be derived from revenue accrued from the direct taxation of blacks. A more uniform system of taxation was introduced by the Natives Taxation and Development Act No 41 of 1925 which abolished previous taxation systems in the Provinces and imposed a uniform taxation system for the whole Union.

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black education be transferred from the control of the Provincial Councils to the Union Government and its administration and financing be placed under the Union Education Department. They also proposed that because black education was a national responsibility, the financing of black education should become the responsibility of the Union Exchequer.

By 1939, the Minister of Native Affairs intimated that the Government was considering taking full control of black education. This proposal was shelved after the outbreak of the Second World War. However, a further step towards the centralisation of black education was taken in 1943, whereby the whole of the Native General Tax was made payable to the South African Native Trust Fund. Four-fifths of the sum was to finance black education.

The Native Finance Act of 1945 provided that financial provision would be made to the Provinces directly from the Consolidated Revenue Fund for the purposes of extending and improving educational facilities. A Union Advisory Board on Native Education was also appointed in 1945 and took a number of resolutions one of which requested the establishment of non-denominational industrial and technical schools at "various suitable centres". The Board also favoured the introduction of compulsory schooling "when compulsion becomes practicable and when the necessary funds are available" (De Villiers, 1789)

The De Villiers Commission noted that there had been a considerable growth in state expenditure in black education over the decade 1935-1946. The budget was quoted as 684 232 pounds in 1935 and by 1946 had risen to 2 670994 pounds. Likewise, Union enrolment figures nearly doubled from 353 134 in 1935 to 640 638 in 1946. The Commission considered this to be evidence of,

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> A considerable advance in Native primary and secondary education and felt confident that further progress, both quantitative and qualitative would be much more rapid that in the past (De Villiers, 1791).

Nevertheless, the Report called for a review of the position of black education and attributed its endemic ineffectiveness to the following factors:

1. financial starvation
2. the low economic condition of blacks with its concomitant problems of malnutrition, child labour.
3. ineffective teaching
4. the "wastage factor", that is, pupils leaving school before having completed a sufficient number of years (De Villiers, 1793).

These factors, which the De Villiers Commission argued contributed to the dysfunction of black education, exhibited a continuity with previous Commissions of Enquiry, most notably the Native Economic Commission (NEC) of 1930-1932. The NEC Report, which propounded an economic "expertise" on the South African situation, was quoted by De Villiers to give both substance and legitimacy to their own claims. It is not surprising that the NEC Report featured in the De Villiers Commission, as it made substantial reference to black education as a means of "developing " the "native" population. For instance, the Commissioners quoted from the NEC to legitimate the claim that a permanent, black population in the urban areas was "unavoidable" and to the advantage of capital:

> In the interests of the efficiency of urban industries, it is better to have a fixed urban Native population to the extent to which such a population is necessary that the present casual, drifting population (De Villiers, 1833).

Following in the steps of the NEC, the De Villiers Commission also recommended that the state take control of black education to consolidate the fragmented approach of the Provincial Councils. However, like the NEC, the De Villiers Commission approached the question of "native" education from a number of perspectives. Their solution to the question lay not only in providing education for urban blacks who were now a "fixed " feature of the urban landscape, but also to provide education for rural blacks and to this end to bolster the failing Reserve economies. Where the De Villiers Commission made a significant shift from the NEC was in their recommendation that:

> ...structurally the education system should be the same for Europeans, and (the Commission) is confident that the Board of Native education will take due cognisance of the scheme outlined in this Report in regard to Europeans (De Villiers, 1795)

This is a significant statement of intent, for on the one hand the Commission was suggesting a system of education which exhibited the same structure (funding, buildings, teacher training facilities), but which retained separate educational institutions and maintained the legitimacy of power structures such as Board of Native Education. Although "native" education was spoken of as part of the national scheme it was still maintained as subsidiary to the concept of "nationhood" which was fundamentally construed as white.

This was particularly evident in what the Commission deemed suitable education for black pupils. In speaking for the black population, they dismissed the demands that blacks themselves were making in relation to education which centred on the demand for the "same school courses as are provided for European children" (De Villiers, 1798). The Report stressed a diminished emphasis on the "three R's" and an alleviation of what they termed the "dualism" found in learning, which was

evidenced in the disassociation of schoolwork from "the life problems of the Native outside the school" (De Villiers, 1797). Again, these recommendations echoed those made in the NEC Report, which had also stressed the application of what they termed "social education", which focused on hygiene, elementary agricultural methods and practical courses. Likewise, the Commission opined that education should be based on the principle "learning while doing", rather than the emphasis being placed overly on abstract learning. Although this approach had methodological validity, in substance, a form of "adapted" education was being proposed, as was demonstrated by the following recommendation:

> We think it is essential that the native child in order to help it adjust itself to new conditions of living, should also be taught ordinary manual dexterity, the use of simple tools and accurate measurements. And having regard to the fact that the great majority leave school before the completion of Std 111, it is of greatest importance that practical subjects, such as nature study and gardening, simple woodwork, needlework and other manual crafts should be introduced at an early stage in the primary school (De Villiers, 1798.)

It was also recommended that rural schools have a "strong agricultural bias" which would prepare pupils for manual work. With the emphasis on practical subjects, the Commission retained the category of black subject as worker.

Compulsory Education.

The De Villiers Commission expanded the educational discourse of the NEC by recommending that primary education be made free and compulsory for black children of seven to fourteen. They stated:

> Although it has frequently been emphasised in this report that no effective vocational training is possible without a sound foundation of general education which is one of the main reasons why it will be necessary to ensure not only a certain minimum of general education by compulsion as soon as possible but also to raise this level gradually, we would point out that several witnesses urged the necessity of compulsory education for Native children, at least up to Std 1V, and the Commission cordially concurs in the opinion of the Social and Economic Planning Council that "primary education should be made free and compulsory for the great majority of non-European children from ages 7 to 14 as part of a 15-year programme (De Villiers, 1803).

However, the Commission outlined crucial "limiting factors" which would have to be taken into account in the execution of such a proposal. They attributed these " factors" firstly to the shortage of school buildings, and secondly to the fact that less than 50% of the school-going population were at school. Figures given in the Report estimated that only 240 000 (40%) from approximately 600 000 7 - 14 year olds were attending school. It was calculated it would take 6 million pounds to accommodate the remaining 360 000 children (De Villiers, 1804). Teacher shortages would also have to be rectified. It was estimated this would take at least 20 years to train teachers and build sufficient teacher training facilities as the number of teachers needed would have to be doubled.

In the light of this statistical information, the Commission suggested that compulsory schooling would have to be phased in and that existing schools and conditions would have to be improved before accommodation could be provided for those pupils not at school. Importantly, it was recommended the start was to be made in the urban centres, thus situating the Report firmly within the field of inquiries which were responding to the growing urban crisis faced by the State.

The Commission advocated that the schools established in black areas should become more closely integrated with the "life and activities" of the community surrounding it. This approach they ascribed to the " modern view" of education. In fact, the type of social education envisaged was to be specific to the community, thereby perpetuating notions of segregated schooling. Secondly, quoting from the Interdepartmental Committee on Native Education, the school was posed as an institution which would help,

> ...to breakdown superstition, to promote better homes, to improve the health of the people, to secure the more wholesome use of leisure (De Villiers, 1813).

Thus, the Commission reinforced perceptions of "backwardness" and cultural inadequacy amongst the black community which could be rectified by the "correct" procedures in education (De Villiers, 1813). Deeply imbricated within this discourse were the binary oppositions of traditional and modern culture, black superstition and "European" rationality. These dualisms were perpetuated throughout the chapter on "Native" education and directly influenced what sort of education that was seen to be suitable for black children in the 1940s. In this regard, the Commission stated,

> The Native generally, we find, insists on the same school courses as are provided for European children. There is no doubt, however, that for their present stage of development they profit much more from practical subjects than from the more academic subjects (De Villiers, 1798)

The trajectory of " advance" implicit in this statement was that black children had to adapt to notions of "western" education. The black pupil had to negotiate a gap between the "kraal" on the one hand and the schools with their "exotic symbolism "

on the other (De Villiers, 1816). The theme of "otherness" of the black pupil was established within the Report largely by way of the type of education deemed suitable for black pupils. The key to the modification of the "native" child's mentality was the transmission of basic skills such as literacy, and numeracy, but also the teaching of hygiene and "practical" subjects such as agriculture. In this way the "European" and "native" were educationally differentiated even though the Report called for " equal" education. This in itself was not necessarily inherently inconsistent, for as Foucault points out, social power is not unified, coherent or centralised, but dispersed and discursively constituted in ways that often appear contradictory (Foucault, 1978). In this regard, the De Villiers Commission called formally for compulsory education for black children and for the provision of a similar curriculum as that offered to white children, but the content of the courses, especially in regard to technical and vocational education, remained vastly disproportionate.

The bridge between the (De Villiers defined) education of black children and their "backwardness" was to be the teacher. The Commission considered the teacher as a key figure in the "upliftment" and education of black people and a central to the community education approach. They recommended better training methods for black teachers. Furthermore it was felt better salaries should be paid to encourage people "of the right kind" to go into teaching (De Villiers, 1817). It was recommended that the level of teacher training be raised and that teachers be in possession of a Senior Certificate before teaching. It is difficult to envisage that clause being implemented with any ease seeing that matric students in 1946 constituted only 0, 4 % of those pupils in Std 1 (De Villiers, 1790)

Industrial Training for Black Pupils.

The following quote partially explains why the focus in the De Villiers Report was

upon outlining existing educational opportunities for black children and on the expansion of these services:

> It may be emphasised here that the place which the Native should occupy in the industrial life of the country is an economic and political problem, rather than an educational one. And only when the former has been determined can a comprehensive educational policy be laid down, and any marked improvement in the demand and provision of vocational training be expected (De Villiers, 1802)

In fact the Report was remarkable for its limited emphasis on technical and vocational education per se for black pupils. Their reconstruction of technical and vocational education rested on a repressed or negated representation of the "native" who was excluded from the main discourse of technical and vocational education but included into a compulsory education system which was to train black children to become more "civilised" and ultimately to stimulate labour production. Therefore, the representation of the "native child " in the Commission Report cannot be essentialised, but should be seen in terms of a category that is unstable and hierarchical. The "naming" of black children had shifted in the 1940s: they were to become pupils, but this appellation, contrary to the argument in the Commission Report, was predicated upon notions of a politically defined aggregation of people who were recipients of a differentiated education.

Other reasons for the lack of focus on technical education in the Report could be found in the inadequacy of existing schooling for black pupils. It can be argued that the Commission prioritised improvement of essential services rather focusing on vocational and technical education; the provision of which was notoriously expensive. Additionally, because vocational education by definition was associated with the economic realm it was connected to the net of job distribution, colour bars

and employment needs. Thus the need to provide a " nucleus" of trained workers coincided with the "problem" of extending educational opportunities to black pupils whose er loyment opportunities were limited.

Ashforth argues that the black population in the 1940s was distinguished from the "European" sector by its functional position in society which placed it in the position of an industrial, semi-skilled labourforce "Other" workers were on the farms or were agriculturalists on the Reserves; a third group (outside of the mainstream) comprised the unemployed. Writing about the Fagan Commission which was more or less contemporaneous with the De Villiers Commission, Ashforth states, that when engaged in labour, "Natives" were construed as as part of a machine and thus were designed to perform basic and necessary functions. When they were not engaged in labour, they were constued as part of "nature" upon which the "productive machinery of society must act". The "Natives" were, therefore, no longer seen as a socially homogeneous group. Instead, they were protrayed as "internally differentiated" on account of their position within (or outside of) the economy (Ashforth, 1990).

In order to evaluate how the De Villiers Commission differentiated the functional status of the black population, it is necessary to examine the concrete issues of black, industrial training that the Commission addressed. The Commission introduced the Industrial Training section by outlining the contemporary position in regard to black pupils and noted that little progress had been made in that area. The numbers of pupils in the 46 vocational schools for black children in 1946 did not exceed 2015 (De Villiers,1843).

The courses offered at these schools were both class -based and gender -specific. For instance, boys learnt printing, book-keeping, carpentry, wagonmaking, building construction, leatherwork, motor mechanics and agriculture. For girls, the courses

offered focused on needlework, cookery, laundry and housework.

The Commission attributed the lack of progress in industrial training to the fact that the trained black worker had limited outlets to apply his/her skills. Consequently the incentive to train for skills was absent. In this regard the Commission alluded to the Colour Bar but did not name it as a vital retarding factor in this area. The Commission adopted the approach that was growing amongst certain liberal sectors in the 1940s that it was within the national interest to equip black workers with more " manual and technical" skills. They drew a correspondence between skill and efficiency on the one hand and an increase in national output and wealth on the other. In fact, lack of skill in the housing, health and agricultural sectors was perceived as being " an expensive feature in the national economy" (De Villiers, 1926).

The Commission noted that most urban dwellers were employed in industry as unskilled workers, however, they remarked that many aspired to become "semi-skilled workers and operatives". In the light of this the Commission felt that "much greater scope should be given to the development of aptitudes and talents" of workers (De Villiers, 1836). They proposed that the development of these aspirations should take place at training institutions such as polytechnics which would have to be stabilised to cater for the increased demand for training.

An important aspect of the De Villiers Report was the recognition of the function of education to inculcate values of discipline and compliant worker attitudes as well as particular skill competencies. The accelerated economy called for a more flexible workforce; schooling was seen as a means to increase the productivity of future workers. Furthermore, in the light of growing political activity, the escalation of working class organisation, urbanisation and black youth unemployment in the 1940s, it can be argued that a major factor in the schooling of pupils was to

generate correct social dispositions. This meant that the focus of education was primarily one of social control and not of creating employment opportunities for black people in the skilled sector, unless these skilled workers could be accommodated in the Reserves.

Training for industry.

The largest grouping that required training for industry was that which the Commission termed the "semi- skilled" worker. The Commission reported that there was "wide scope" for semi-skilled labour in the "European sphere", especially since the War. In fact, this phenomenon was used as a justification for the training of workers, as the Commission stated that during the War "native operatives" had "proved" that they were competent at doing "operative work of a repetitive nature" (De Villiers, 1870).

It was recommended that black workers who entered industry should have some training in basic skills and that pre- employment workschools should provide this training. The training and training facilities, qualification and certification should be "broadly along the lines envisaged for European workers" (De Villiers, 1872). These courses would be made available by the proposed Industrial Training Centres. While these courses would approximate the courses made available to whites, it was argued it would depend on "local requirements" to determine the type and duration of the course.

As it was, the presence of large numbers of permanently settled blacks in the towns created a series of problems for the municipalities and the State, and for those branches of the economy whose labour supply was diminished by this influx to the towns: the mines and the farms.

Additionally, the De Villiers Commission was acutely aware that by differentiating industrial workers from the rest of the workforce, by virtue of their training, they could disrupt the existing labour distribution amongst black and white workers. Thus an emphasis was placed in the Report upon industrial training for specific "occupational opportunities" (De Villiers, 1882); this would attempt to ensure that only where there was a shortage of white semi-skilled operatives would black workers be trained.

In spite of this balancing act between skills training and the demand for skilled workers, the Commission clearly indicated that there existed some scope for the expansion of skills acquisition and for occupational opportunities for trained black workers. They based this assumption on the evidence that there was a skills shortage in the secondary industry sector which could only be addressed by upgrading the existing black workforce. However, the question of where to channel "excess" trained workers remained an issue. Again, the Commission found the solution to this problem in the Reserve system. The Reserves were considered to be potential outlets for the skills that workers were to acquire in the urban training centres. The Reserves were described in the report as an "untouched market" in which

> ...natives can and should work for their own people in many ways to raise their standard of civilisation, in making better homes and creating a better standard of living all round (De Villiers, 1862).

Quoting the Secretary for Native Affairs, the Commission reported that,

> The Government's policy of developing the Native areas as far as possible with Native labour is an important consideration here. There are a number of highly intelligent and legitimately ambitious Natives for whose energies it

is quite definitely in the national interest to find suitable outlets. Otherwise they must inevitably become thwarted, and divert their talents to stirring up trouble (De Villiers, 1871).

This reference articulates a theme which was to become a refrain in the official discourse of the De Villiers Commission: that educated black people could become a political threat if no "outlet" was allowed for their heightened consciousness. Precisely because of their education, black people could present a challenge to existing educational discourse and speak for themselves and in so doing pose a social threat to the state.

Social Control of Black Urban Adolescents.

Under the rubric, The Preparation of the Adolescent Native for Adulthood, the Commission proposed a number of strategies which were to do with the social control of the group constituted as adolescent. Within this context, the category of adolescent excluded children who would be legitimately in school until the age of 14 and sought to include those black children of 14 years and more whom the system did not contain in formal education. These members of society, the Commission was at pains to emphasise, were the potential unruly and disruptive sectors on the urban landscape. The Commission noted that the age of 14 was the " most dangerous stage at which to abandon the young adolescent " and recommended that an organisation should be established which could involve youths of 14- 18 years. To this effect, the Report quoted the Planning Council of the Union Government which advocated that:

Such an organisation would aim at providi continued academic instruction, but would also have the broader aim of furthering physical and mental development through regular hours and meals, a healthy

> environment and mental and physical exercise and subjection to discipline. It would also play an important part in the rehabilitation of the Reserves. ...while it is more particularly concerned with boys the Council suggests that it might later be found desirable to establish some form of scheme for girls, where they can be taught such subjects as housewifery, domestic science etc (De Villiers, 1822)

The De Villiers Commission also reported that " juvenile delinquency" amongst black (male) adolescents, especially on the Reef was assuming alarming proportions (De Villiers, 1823). It was considered that compulsory schooling would reduce the incidence of delinquency. Above all, the category of delinquent was predominantly male. When not referring to such a category, the Report spoke explicitly of "native girls or women" who were the recipients of a differentiated curriculum.

The Commission included in its category of the "juvenile delinquent" someone who was of low economic status and someone who was alterable only by the benefits of a formal education system. The "unruly" were those who were not employed in the formal sector, those who were young and not in the schools. The compelling issue of delinquency, the Commission opined, could largely be controlled by the social institution of schooling (It is ironic that the educational system became the locus and motor of resistance in later decades). However, in the 1940s, education was perceived to justify systems of control and to lead to the solution of social "problems", as is adumbrated in the following quote:

> The Secretary of Social Welfare in evidence before us declared that there exists a serious problem amongst youths of the non-European races. The absence of compulsory school attendance for non-European children, for whom there is no suitable employment gives rise to the "scolly" problem

and social maladjustment amongst Native children, particularly in urban areas where there is a need for a differentiated curriculum, having special reference to such practical matters as social and personal hygiene (De Villiers, 1824).

Underpinning the De Villiers Commission discourse lies the fixed binary opposition which unequivocally asserted the category of the native as delinquent. On the contrary, white pupils, although perceived as the subjects of a modernising society with its concomitant problems, were never classified as delinquent in the text. The Commission felt bound to investigate the forces shaping the "native adolescent", for in taking into account those characteristics that could be construed as idle or industrious, they could constitute a new category of "native" and construct a new system based on the skilling of black adolescent. In speaking of the existing vision of the urban black population, the Report entrenched the categ[illegible] "native adolescent" as someone who was constitutionally unruly and whose proclivities had to be contained. In this context, sanitation ("social and personal hygiene") became a metaphor for the political and economic segregation of the "demoralised" sectors from the "respectable" classes. The process of "othering" is inseparable from the contradictions of the Commission's position; in the text, the image of the "native adolescent" is given back to him/her as backward and unsanitary. By excluding black girls from training as clerical workers, for instance, and confining them to domestic work and agricultural labour, the Commission presented them with even fewer options than those made available to black male adolescents.

Camp Training: the Locus of Social Control.

So as not to neglect adolescents at "the crucial stage in their development" the Commission included a section on camp training centres for unemployed "native youths". These Camps were seen as being primarily attended by those pupils who

had completed compulsory schooling at 14 and had not found employment, but were also intended for those who were unemployed and who had not gone through formal schooling.

The Commission borrowed the proposed system from the American New Deal camps and from various models used in Europe during the Great Depression and the Second World War. As an introductory paragraph, the Commission outlined the "need" for the camps:

> Adolescent youth should not be abandoned at this stage - but, as in the case of Europeans, society should care for all its youth until at least the age of 18, in order to prevent that large sections of children grow into adulthood ill-prepared both educationally and socially for life and work with inevitable adverse effects upon the human resources of the country. and its social and economic development.(De Villiers, 1935)

The Commission's alternative to formal schooling was grounded in institutions such as the Civil Conservation Corps in the United States of America which was inaugurated in 1934 during the New Deal period. In the United States, dams, roads and water systems were constructed by trainees. Other countries also developed their own schemes. For instance, the Report cited Wales as an example where trainees converted slag -heaps and mine -dumps into recreation centres for miners. The education programme of the camps aimed to increase the trainees' capacity to profit from their training. Lectures were given on theoretical aspects of various trades and proficiency rather than creating skilled workers was the guiding principle. In the 1940s, according to the De Villiers Commission, more emphasis was laid on the educational aspects and less on "labouring". The educational objectives included vocational health, leisure, citizenship, religion and " worthy home membership" (De Villiers, 1903).

The Commission proposed that the system be applicable to both "Europeans and non-Europeans" in South Africa. The Commissioners proposed a minimum of general education, including basic literacy and social education, that was to assist,

> ...the native in negotiating as safely as possible the difficult transition from his own tribal life to the complex life of civilisation by providing the necessary training in citizenship (De Villiers, 1905).

Physical health and exercise were also prioritised. Traditional school methods were to be avoided and courses were intended to be short and practical. Each camp was to be organised on a Community basis. In terms of evaluation, record cards were to be kept in connection with the trainees it was recommended that these cards be sent to a centralised occupational bureau. It was also proposed that the trainees should be remunerated according to the work completed by them. Youths leaving the camps should "go directly into employment either in the Reserves or, in urbanised areas into industry etc" (De Villiers, 1916).

It was intended that the camps be set up for black male trainees, however, the Commission gave examples of camps specifically established for black women. The European examples portrayed the limited scope of these institutions for women as the emphasis was on the traditional roles of household work, which included nursing, sewing, weaving and bookbinding. The Commission proposed that two such camps be set up as an experiment for women in South Africa.

Reserve Policy

By proposing strategies for increasing the productivity of urban workers and differentiating semi-skilled and skilled black workers from an otherwise

homogeneous population, the De Villiers Commission had to face the paradox of extending political rights to this grouping, which had the potential to be elevated to the category of permanent urban resident and consequently could be justified in demanding the same rights and treatment as white workers. Additionally if black workers were to be "developed" through education and to garner skills in industrial training schemes, their material conditions had the potential to compete with those of white workers.

The Commission had to face the issue of extending or deflecting political and economic rights. The approach they took was to advocate a functional approach to the workers, based on the logic of supply and demand. Industry demanded a stable, population domiciled around the points of employment. However, the De Villiers Commission stressed the importance of training people in skills "where the need existed". This would ensure that the jobs of white skilled and semi-skilled workers would not be affected significantly. In addition to this the supply of labour also had to be allocated elsewhere: to the mines and to the farms. This distribution of workers would entail a fine-tuning of economic forces, as a balance between rural and urban labour requirements was sought which would also require the reorientation to and retention of groups in the Reserves. The Reserves were also seen as being important areas where the worker could apply his skills "for the rehabilitation of his own people" (De Villiers, 1837). Hence the Reserves were put forward in the Report as the legitimate locus for at least part of the black workforce.

As the Reserves were acknowledged to be incapable of sustaining a growing black population, the De Villiers Commission proposed that skilled blacks be utilised in the newly instituted "villages", where trained builders and tradespeople such as tailors and carpenters could be utilised. Furthermore, it was suggested in the Report that the Reserves and villages would provide a buffer against the frustrations felt by skilled and educated people who were unable to gain employment in the "European

sphere".

The utilisation of the Reserves was unchallenged by the De Villiers Commission, who reported that the Native Affairs Department was considering setting aside 100 000 pounds (De Villiers, 1838) to restore the agricultural conditions and improve housing and living standards in these areas. The Native Affairs Department had also devised a scheme of encouraging village settlements such as Hammanskraal, as existing land could not accommodate the increased population as agriculturalists. .The Commission saw the village centres as important areas to deploy skilled and semi-skilled workers such as tailors, builders and carpenters. They also considered the villages to house a nucleus of " officials, such as clerks, teachers, medical and health assistants, agricultural and veterinary assistants" (De Villiers, 1855).

CONCLUSION

In speaking for " Native Education ", the De Villiers Commission posed solutions to changing social conditions by articulating the principle of compulsory education for black children and by proposing a system of industrial training for adults. In a major way this represented a search for a solution to the reskilling of the urban labour force. The Report also sought to contain the burgeoning urban crisis, from which was emerging a subculture of underprivileged "youth" who were frequently denoted as delinquent in the official discourse of the De Villiers Commission. This category of "youth" : variously named in the Report as "scolly" or juvenile delinquent, was essentially designated male. (As in most of the recommendations given in the Report, the subject, in relation to technical and vocational education, was male, unless defined specifically as "native girl" or "native women" in the discourse). These appellations attempted to control a diverse social reality by differentiating the urban black population, on the one hand, into essentially a workforce of semi - skilled operatives and on the other hand, into an unemployed " problem" that required a system of social control which would be provided via formal schooling and the informal workcamps.

Despite the fact that the Commission spoke on behalf of the black population, the Report did represent a shift in educational discourse by proposing a state - controlled, compulsory education system which threw up a number of contradictions vis a vis the black workforce. Firstly, by acknowledging permanent residence for blacks in the towns, workers there had the potential to be recognised as subjects of a unitary state. On the basis of the skills acquisition and the social mobility that education offered, workers were also better placed to demand rights of citizenship in the urban areas.

The De Villiers Commission attempted to resolve these dilemmas by proposing the

extensive rehabilitation of the Reserves which could provide a home for "educated natives" and for those groups such as female "agriculturists" who, in the light of the Report, had no legitimate place in the urban areas.

In this sense, the Commission did not present the Reserves as a permanent seat of residence for all blacks. Instead, it proposed a scheme of partial segregation which recognised the establishment a permanent, stable urban workforce, but which also accepted the Reserves as the locus of certain categories of worker, especially agriculturalists, and for the aspirant black middle class who were to fulfil their potential through employment as skilled workers.

There were a number of reasons underlying the "partial segregation" approach which characterised the Report. The urban population of black workers pointed to the impossibility of total segregation. Yet, in the same document the Commission drew the conclusion that the Reserves and village settlements should be developed according to segregationist formulae. The Reserves were the spaces where educated blacks could find political expression and remain legitimately silenced from the mainstream workings of the state. Secondly, according to the Report, educated black workers could put the skills acquired through the compulsory education system to use in the Reserves and village settlements. A factor which would undermine the potential threat of undercutting the jobs of "European" workers in urban industries.

In fact, the prevalence of the Report was one of its strengths. In its own terms, it developed a practical educational response to a multifaceted crisis and directed its efforts successfully in the continued segregation of the various populations in South Africa while maintaining the stance that training opportunities should remain equal.

In the end, unable to face the challenge of Afrikaner nationalism in the 1948, the

United Party lost state power and the De Villiers Commission, in terms of many of its recommendations for the education of the black population, became a residual discourse. Later educational discourses which centred around the Bantu Education Act of 1953, emphasised a centrally planned, uniform education system which propounded a segregationist discourse based on "cultural " differences and which was aimed at educating blacks towards unskilled work. Much of the ethos of the De Villiers Commission, with its emphasis on skills training, had to wait approximately forty years to re-emerge in the 1981 De Lange Report which was more closely constitutive of liberal reformist discourse.

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Author: Baker M.J
Name of thesis: The Historical construction of policy as discourse- the report of the commision on technical education and vocational education in south africa 1945-1948

PUBLISHER:
University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg
©2015

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