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Editorial Correspondence:

Faculty of Education, University of the Witwatersrand, PO Wits, Johannesburg 2050, South Africa

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Editorial Policy

The policy of the editors of *Perspectives in Education* is to promote rigorous critical discussion and debate about education (in the broadest sense of the word) particularly in the context of Southern Africa, through the publication of academic articles based on original theoretical and empirical research and analysis. *Perspectives in Education* attempts to reflect the variety of perspectives current in the field, and publishes both discipline-based and inter-disciplinary research. In order to ensure all articles are of the highest quality all contributions are submitted to at least two referees before acceptance for publication and decision to publish is based on their recommendations.

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

Students, *Tsotsis* and the Congress Youth League: Youth Organisation on the Rand in the 1940s and 1950s

Clive Glaser

University of the Witwatersrand

This paper examines the organizational strategies of the Congress Youth League (CYL) from 1944 until 1955. Until 1948 the CYL was self-consciously a tight clique but from 1948 onwards attempted to become a mass movement. Its central aim was always to expand its influence within the African National Congress (ANC) and thereby, advance the cause of African Nationalism. The CYL never succeeded in becoming a mass movement largely because its constituency was limited almost entirely to African high school children. High school children were a marginal element amongst the broader youth constituency in Johannesburg's townships. The CYL made no systematic attempt to organize and "convert" the far larger, and culturally pervasive, constituency of *tsotsi* youth gangs. Certain CYL individuals, however, established informal links with the urban youth gangs and enjoyed sporadic success in drawing them into organized political resistance. On the whole, the CYL organised only amongst a marginal element of Johannesburg's youth population. The gangs were seen as incorrigibly a-political and anti-social. In contemporary South African struggles youths clearly constitute the most militant and politicized section of the urban African population. Youth congresses and Student Representative Councils (SRC's), firmly affiliated and aligned to national movements such as the United Democratic Front (UDF), abound. Nevertheless, "the youth" are by no means a homogenous constituency. Huge sections of the youth remain unorganized while largely a-political criminal elements have a powerful presence. A number of questions remain unanswered about the relationship between organized and unorganized youth in the townships as well as about the nature of contemporary youth mobilisation. This paper attempts to lay the foundations for addressing these questions by tracing the origins of urban African youth mobilization in Johannesburg. This will involve an analysis of the work of the African National Congress (ANC) Youth League (CYL), the first significant resistance organisation which attempted to organise youth as a specific constituency.

The Congress Youth League (CYL) started out in 1944 as a militant pressure group within the African National Congress (ANC) and made few attempts at largescale recruitment. In 1948, the leadership of the CYL began to realise that they needed more signed up members in order to become a more effective internal pressure group and commenced a vigorous recruitment drive. Once the CYL effectively seized control of the ANC in 1949 and many of its leaders took up leadership positions in the senior body, the CYL continued to operate more as a youth recruitment wing of the ANC than as a distinctive organisation. Most informed observers of the Youth League today recognize that the organization operated within a fairly narrow social framework, and that it was not particularly successful in establishing a genuine mass base amongst the youth. The urban African youth on the Rand in the late 40s and 50s were divided into two distinct worlds. On the one hand, there was the Christian-literate world which was generally school-going. On the other hand, there was the semi-literate, *tsotsi* dominated world which generally rejected schooling. The latter constituency was substantially larger than the former. The edges of these categories were often blurred. Many youths passed from one world into the other, while some managed to

live in both simultaneously. But the worlds were, on the whole, clearly distinguishable from one another and crossed class lines. The CYL, I argue, because of its institutional connections and intellectualism, operated almost entirely within the Christian-literate, school-going world.

In the first section of this paper I will briefly examine the CYL's established organisational networks during the late 1940s and 50s. In the second section I will move to a more grassroots perspective in attempting to create a picture of the African youth constituency on the Rand in the 1940s and 50s. Finally, I will assess the extent to which the CYL, as the wing of the national liberation movement most concerned with African youth, penetrated the African youth constituency organizationally.

The Congress Youth League in the schools

High school students were the Youth League's key constituency. Young educated Africans looking forward to widening their stake in a future South Africa provided an obvious recruiting ground for the CYL.

Many of the original Youth Leaguers first became politicized as school students, for example, Anton Lembede and A.P. Mda. Anton Lembede was the first leader of the CYL and, in many ways, the founding father of the "Africanist" tradition. He was a powerful and influential ideologue who died in 1947. A. P. Mda, the natural successor to Lembede, was also an influential figure ideologically who led the CYL after Lembede's death until 1949 when he resigned owing to ill health. Congress Mbata, William Nkomo and Raboroko, founding members of the CYL, were all prominent in the Transvaal Student Association (TSA) prior to the formation of the CYL. "So we could say that products of the students organisations became the nucleus for organisations like the Youth League..."² The TSA was not an overtly political body in the 30s and 40s. It was more of a "social" organization than a "political" one. Nevertheless, a great deal of political discussion took place within the TSA and it is likely that the political ideas of Lembede, Mda and their colleagues were formulated in this grouping. The Youth Leaguers must have been particularly familiar with the mood and internal workings of student associations and schools. Moreover, they understood that students were highly receptive to politicization. The CYL used this familiar network to reproduce itself: Most of the "second generation" CYL activists who operated in the 50s were influenced by, and incorporated into, the CYL while attending school.

Students on the Rand, and particularly in Orlando, were heavily influenced by the Youth League. The CYL staged numerous meetings on the Rand during the 1940s which were well attended by students.³ Godfrey Pitje, who became president of the CYL in 1949 largely because most of the important leadership figures in the CYL became leaders of the ANC, recalls the high level of politicization amongst school children when he taught at Orlando High in 1945:

One of the things which struck me was the advancement of the average student politically compared to us on the staff ... I didn't realise it then, but I know now, that it was because they were under the influence of the Youth League. They were attending meetings by the likes of Lembede, A. P. Mda, Oliver Tambo, Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu...⁴

Es'kia Mphahlele during the recollection of his teaching on the Rand in the 40s confirms this impression of Pitje's. When Mphahlele was teaching in the 40s a number of senior students "were very much interested in the Youth League and were talking about it in class". He recalls that one senior student got up in class to announce the death of Anton Lembede in 1947. Lembede was highly praised and there was great interest in the classroom.⁵

Teachers formed an important component of the CYL in the Transvaal. This is not to suggest that most of the teachers on the Rand were Youth Leaguers or even Youth League sympathisers. In fact, teachers were a largely a-political constituency. Nevertheless, a number of prominent Leaguers were teachers at one stage or another. Oliver Tambo and Godfrey Pitje were teachers before they became lawyers, and Robert Sobukwe, Zeph Mothopeng and Es'kia Mphahlele were all teachers on the Rand during the 50s. These teachers used their profession as a platform for politicizing their students, despite their vulnerability as employees of the Transvaal Education Department.

Teachers with strong Youth League connections, such as Sobukwe, Tambo and Pitje, were very influential in their classrooms. Sobukwe, in 1949, invited Ntatho Motlana, who was an active CYL organiser at the time, to come and speak to his students at his school in Standerton. Sobukwe took many risks to politicize his students and became "a tremendous influence in his area."⁶ During his brief teaching spell on the Rand in 1950, Pitje made an effort to "revive the spirit of African culture" in his classroom. He would instil in his students a love of the "traditional ways of doing things". He would tell them about a proud African history and call them by their traditional African names rather than their Christian names. Students perceived Pitje as different from the other teachers and they became "very receptive" to his kind of teaching. Pitje rejected subservience to "Western ways". He recalls that instead of praying in the traditional Christian way, he would praise African historical leaders. At assembly prayers, Pitje would put his fist in the air and pray to "The God of Chaka, the God of Sekhukhune". Students were initially surprised by this behaviour but, ultimately, accepted it warmly.⁷

When Dume Nokwe and Kathrada returned from their visit to China, Pitje organized for his senior pupils to go and speak to Nokwe at a meeting where "they spoke freely about Mao Tse Tung". Pitje was also able to introduce ANC slogans to the school such as "Mayibuye!" and "Africa to the Africans!". Pitje refused to be obsequious towards white officials. He treated them as equals, to the great delight of his students. Pitje recalls:

... when a white inspector came to my school, instead of cringing like the average principal, the average teacher ... I [would act] as naturally as I could ... And the students loved this, they hero-worshipped us for doing this kind of thing ... Mothopeng was hero-worshipped at Orlando High.⁸

The CYL often used teachers to penetrate the schools. It would "find sympathy with one or two members of the staff and in that way build [its] base".⁹ Teachers were generally a-political in the 40s and 50s but there was usually a small core of politicized, CYL-sympathetic teachers at every school on the Rand. At Mphahlele's school, Orlando High, four teachers out of a staff of 35 were politicized; two of these belonged to the Youth League. At other schools on the Witwatersrand, there was also "always a small minority of teachers who were politically vocal and politically conscious and talked politics in the staffroom". Nonetheless the small group of politicized teachers were highly influential amongst the students.¹⁰ Thus, teachers were able to have some wider impact on the rest of the community. "The students", comments Pitje, "... were well placed in the community to sow the seeds of this new political solution [African Nationalism]".

Although the teacher-pupil interaction was important, the CYL did most of its organizing amongst school students outside of the school environment. School authorities were consistently hostile to any form of political penetration. Students, teachers and outsiders involved in politics could be victimized or removed with ease. "Political teachers" had to tread very cautiously.¹¹ Student Representative Councils were non-existent on the

Rand in the 40s and 50s.¹²

For Motlana, student associations provided the most useful avenue for making contact with school students. Because of the hostility of the school environment, Motlana would do most of his organising through student associations during the holidays. According to Motlana this was the most common method of organizing for Youth League activists. Motlana's "beat" was the East Rand, stretching from Germiston to Nigel. He would go around forming little pockets of CYL supporters and then try to get them to establish an autonomous branch which could then expand itself and spread the programme and ideology of the CYL. The period 1950 - 1952, according to Motlana, was a period of great activity for Youth League branch level activists. Once a core group of around ten new activists had been established they were considered large enough to set up a new branch. This would involve electing their own secretary and treasurer and acting autonomously from other branches.¹³

Another method of spreading CYL influence in the schools was through pamphleteering. This was safer than personal organising as pamphlets could be left around the schools anonymously.

The CYL then, had several ways of appealing to school students and establishing new branches amongst them. Individual politicized teachers were influential in the classroom, while hundreds of students were attracted to the mass meetings conducted by high profile CYL leaders. Most importantly, branches were set up through links with student associations.

The only coherent constituency of the Youth League was school students. Apart from schools, the CYL's only significant area of operation was Fort Hare University. The Youth League established, at best, personalized, ad hoc relations with church groups, professional associations and local community movements. The CYL appears to have been unadventurous in building links with potential constituencies. It was also hamstrung by its limited number of activists. It organized within the section of society it knew best, the section from which the CYL leadership itself emerged. During the 1950s, the CYL failed to explore new avenues of potential mobilization amongst youth. Instead, it spent most of its energy on popularizing ANC campaigns. To the extent that it did organize youth, it continued to operate almost entirely amongst school students.

Youth on the Rand

High school students represented by no means the majority of urban African youths on the Rand. (By "youths", I refer to those aged roughly between 14 and 21.) Most students dropped out of school at an early age, while thousands never attended school at all.¹⁴ Schooling was not compulsory in the 1940s and 1950s, nor was it affordable for the majority of urban African families. Schooling was a luxury. Nevertheless, amongst the Christianized elements, schooling was "virtually compulsory".¹⁵ Most Christian parents, whether petty bourgeois or working class, revered western-style education and sent their children to school at all costs. Numerous non-Christian parents also prioritized education. But parents did not always have sufficient control over their children to ensure their attendance at school. Schooling, especially amongst the non-Christian elements, was far from an accepted way of life for African youths. Even those youths who did undergo a substantial amount of schooling found it extremely difficult to find employment afterwards. A huge section of the unemployed and non-schoolgoing youths drifted into youth gangs. "By the early 1950s the culture of youth gangs was one of the strongest currents running through the locations."¹⁶

The Roots of *Tsotsi* Culture

Three factors contributed to the prevalence of youth gangs on the Rand: low levels of school attendance amongst urban youth, massive youth unemployment and the instability of family life. All three factors, of course, had deeper roots in state policies: migrant labour, influx control and the hopelessly inadequate allocation of social welfare resources to the African townships.

In the year 1949 only 6 533 African children attended secondary school in Pretoria and on the Rand. I have no comparative figures for the 1950s. However, it is likely that this figure remained fairly stable throughout the decade. The total Union secondary school attendance figure in 1949 was 46 314.¹⁷ By 1960 the Union total had actually decreased slightly to 45 598.¹⁸ Unless Pretoria and Rand school attendance patterns were drastically different from those of the rest of the Union, it is safe to assume that African secondary school attendance on the Rand and in Pretoria remained below 7 000 throughout the 1950s. Schoolgoers, then, represented an extremely small proportion of the African urban population aged between 14 and 20. Attendance at junior and primary schools was much greater. Roughly 10% of African scholars were high school students. School attendance dropped off rapidly in each progressive year of schooling. On the Rand and in Pretoria in 1949 there were 18 478 Sub A pupils, 10 899 Sub B pupils down to 3 770 Standard Five pupils. There were only 820 Standard Seven pupils and 63 matriculants.¹⁹

There were three basic reasons for low school attendance and early school leaving. First, schooling was not compulsory and there were far too few schools to accommodate even those children who did want to attend school.²⁰ Secondly, the quality of education was low. Children rejected inferior, unstimulating schooling. The de Villiers Louw Commission of 1950 recognized this. The standard of schooling was so bad, the commission complained, that children preferred to join youth gangs.²¹ Moreover, schooling was impractical. A school education did not necessarily improve a school-leaver's employment opportunities. The de Villiers Louw Commission recognized this too. The commission recommended that schooling should provide skills more immediately necessary to the economy. Children would then be employable once they left school and they would recognize the value of attending school.²² Thirdly, most urban African families could not afford to send their children to school. Children were pressurized from an early age into becoming economically active. Parents often preferred to have their children contributing to the family income rather than wasting their time at school. Thus "children were either rejecting schooling as useless, or were compelled by economic necessity to find work".²³

A Native Youth Board Investigation in 1950 estimated "conservatively" that the number of unemployed youths of employable age (14-20 years) in the Johannesburg area was over 20 000. This apparently amounted to almost 80% of Johannesburg's African juvenile population in 1950.²⁴ In a thesis written in 1952, W.J. Kieser, a Principal of Diefkloof Reformatory in the 1950s, computed that there were "about 120 000 Native children of school-going age idling away their days in the streets or standing aimlessly about the locations of the City and the Reef".²⁵

Probably the most important reason for urban youth unemployment was the competition urban youths faced from migrants on the job market. Employers on the Rand, despite influx control legislation, preferred to employ migrants rather than local youths. Migrants tended to be more acquiescent, "respectful" and reliable than their urban counterparts. They were also more amenable to hard physical work. Furthermore, they were prepared to accept lower wages. Employers of both industrial and domestic labour tended to feel this way.²⁶ An

official letter to the Johannesburg Regional Employment Commissioner, written by W.J.P. Carr in 1955, Johannesburg's Manager of Native Affairs, stated that:

Native juveniles who are urbanized, are often unreliable, work-shy and selective in their choice of a job - many prefer to exist by gambling and other nefarious means, and make little or no contribution to the maintenance of their families ... Employers because of these facts, are unwilling to employ native juveniles.²⁷

There was clearly some truth in these allegations but the unemployment problem was exacerbated by these very impressions of the employers. Employers were usually prejudiced towards urban youths and unwilling to give them a chance.²⁸ Employers often by-passed local labour bureaux and employed directly through contacts in the countryside. Throughout the 1940s and early 1950s municipal authorities throughout the Pretoria Witwatersrand and Vaal Triangle (PWV) generally turned a blind eye to these breaches of influx control in order to avoid discouraging local industry.²⁹ Domestic employers, like industrialists, preferred to employ rural workseekers, thus restricting the chief avenue of employment open to female urban youths.³⁰ In general, both male and female urban youth found it virtually impossible to penetrate the industrial and domestic labour market in any significant way. The greater the influx of rural work-seekers, the smaller was the potential job market for urban youths.

First, urban youths had very little experience of, and were apparently less willing to do hard, physical work. Secondly, the Wage Board fixed wage levels for juveniles. Industrialists might have been more amenable to employing urban youths if they could have paid them wages below the levels fixed by the Wage Board. Since wages were fixed, employers were determined to find the most productive possible workers.³¹

The attitude of urban youths towards employment was also influenced by youth gang culture. Tsotsi culture rejected job discipline, hard work and "respectable" employment. Moreover, youth gangs provided an alternative means of survival for urban youths. The need to find employment was therefore less urgent. Unemployment and youth gang culture mutually reinforced one another. Unemployment was a far more conceivable option for urban youths with the existence of youth gangs. Simultaneously, unemployment swelled the ranks of the tsotsi gangs. The Viljoen Report of 1951 noted a direct causal link between unemployment and the prevalence of tsotsi gangs. "Juveniles out of employment develop spontaneously into Tsotsis in order to find an outlet for their energies as well as a means of earning a livelihood by illegal means". The phenomenon of early school leaving also swelled the ranks of youth gangs. Not only did it add pressure to the unemployment problem but it ensured that young children came into daily contact with "undesirable types". Moreover, children were more susceptible to tsotsi influences when they were no longer subjected to the disciplinary effects of the school environment.³²

Throughout the 1940s and 1950s urban African families were tremendously unstable. Several factors contributed to this. First, workers were constantly on the move, looking for new or better-paid jobs. African workers were generally unskilled which ensured a high job turnover. Secondly, the migrant labour system and the implementation of pass laws often broke up family units. Thirdly, there was a disproportionately large population of males in relation to females.

Relationships, then, were often casual and children rarely experienced a stable family environment. Parents, even if they retained a commitment to their children, were usually at work all day. The Viljoen Report pointed out that there was also an absence of tribal youth control mechanisms which both kept youth "in their place" and imbued them with a sense of

social responsibility.³³ *Tsotsi* culture was boosted by the lack of parental attendance and guidance. As Bonner puts it: "For a significant proportion of [urban youth] the normal socialising and disciplinary agencies were either atrophied or absent ... Into this moral void stepped the gangs."³⁴

Tsotsi Culture

By the early 1950s, African locations on the Rand were riddled with *tsotsi* gangs earning a livelihood through criminal activities. They emerged during the 1940s in the old free-hold townships of Sophiatown, Newclare and Alexandra. The phenomenon rapidly spread to other townships. During the 1950s practically every African township on the Rand was terrorized by local *tsotsi* gangs.³⁵ There were several large and famous gangs such as the *Americans* of Sophiatown, the *Berliners* of Newclare, the *Spoilers* of Alexandra and the *Torch Gang* of Orlando. But most of the gangs were small splinter gangs. In Orlando, there were apparently small "peer group" gangs on practically every street corner.³⁶ In Alexandra alone there were six major gangs with a combined membership of over 500 youths, as well as numerous smaller gangs.³⁷ Individuals had to prove their loyalty before becoming full members of gangs. They were first drawn into the gangs' patronage networks and gradually initiated.³⁸

By 1951 *Tsotsi* gangs had "developed a distinct counter-culture".³⁹ The Viljoen Report of 1951 explained the term *tsotsi* as follows:

Tsotsis are gangs of Native juveniles, the members of which are predominantly unemployed and are characterized by the fact that they wear the same distinctive clothing, make use of the same secret language, have strong group consciousness, and live largely by illegal means.⁴⁰

Tsotsis rejected schooling, parental authority and "western civilized values". Mr M Thalakula, the principle of an African high school in Springs, described the average *tsotsi* gang in his area:

The group consists of boys ranging from 15 years to 20 and more, and their chief characteristic is their refusal to work for a living. Even in their own homes they refuse to take part in any ordinary family activities except eating.

In order to get pocket money they gamble and pick the pockets of their own people by night and those of European shoppers during the busy hours of the day.

From their class come the future criminals.⁴¹

The gangs then, developed their own distinctive leisure time activities, social norms, hierarchies, language and means of subsistence.

Gang culture was influenced by cowboy and gangster films. *Tsotsis* spent a great deal of their time loitering around their local cinemas. They often fought other gangs to establish territorial rights over cinemas. Movie images deeply influenced their style and behaviour.⁴²

Tsotsis were distinctly anti-social. They rejected all forms of authority and parental control. The de Villiers Louw Commission grumbled that "they thrive on disorderliness and are famed creators of disorder".⁴³ In 1956, W.J.P. Carr commented: "... *tsotsi* gangs ... flout authority and frustrate the efforts of parents and advisory board members in their attempts to rehabilitate the youths".⁴⁴

Tsotsis did not threaten the authorities alone. By the late 1940s *tsotsis* preyed on their own communities.⁴⁵ According to Mphahlele, "they really threatened the whole fabric of society, wherever they were, wherever they lived ... At night time people always wanted to be in their houses before dark". They molested people in the streets and mugged people in trains and trams throughout the Rand. They showed little concern whether their victims

were whites or Africans, rich or poor. Gangs also preyed on each other. Inter gang warfare was common. They fought and competed amongst each other over women and "territory". Gambling often sparked off inter-gang violence. Most frequently, they fought over crime monopolies. For instance, they would fight for exclusive rights to rob from a certain section of domestic servants or visitors who would enter the locations on the weekends.

By the early 1950s the state, both local and central, became increasingly anxious about the youth problem of the Rand. It recognized that welfare organizations were inadequate to cope with the problem. Large scale state intervention was needed. The de Villiers Louw Commission of 1950, which was appointed to investigate acts of African violence in Krugersdorp, Newclare, Randfontein and Newlands, identified youth gangs as major catalysts of violence in all these locations.⁴⁶ In 1951, the Inter-departmental Committee on Native Juvenile Unemployment was established. This committee was aimed at investigating the extent of, and the reasons for, juvenile unemployment on the Rand and in Pretoria. The committee established that there were direct links between juvenile unemployment and "*tsotsism*".⁴⁷

The central state apparently identified African juvenile unemployment, which led to "*tsotsism*", as politically threatening. Following the Viljoen Report, the central state showed tremendous interest in finding employment for African youth on the Rand. It attempted to provide the Johannesburg municipal government with active assistance in this regard. In February 1953 the Director of Native Labour and representatives from the Central Labour Bureau met with local state officials to discuss the issue. Central government officials called for greater co-ordination between local and central state.⁴⁸ The central state was eager to handle the problem in a forceful way. It offered assistance to local labour bureaux wherever possible. The central government was convinced that the *tsotsi* problem could best be combatted through overcoming African juvenile unemployment.

At the 1953 meeting between local and central government labour officials, the state decided to embark on a three-pronged strategy, based largely on the recommendations of the Viljoen Report, to combat juvenile unemployment on the Rand. First,

... it was the intention of the Minister of Labour to grant to those industries employing juveniles exemption from the various wage instruments to allow of (sic) the payment of a lower wage than that applicable to adults.⁴⁹

It was hoped that more local juveniles would be employed if Wage Board instruments were removed. Second, the Department of Labour committed itself to exploring avenues for juvenile employment in commerce and industry "... and to endeavour to persuade commerce and industry to give preference in filling such vacancies to location youths in preference to youths from the rural areas or Native Territories".⁵⁰ Finally, the central government intended to place the allocation of jobs on the Rand more firmly under Central Labour Bureau control. All workseekers had to be officially registered at the local labour bureaux which, in turn, had to supply the Central Labour Bureau with regular reports on job registration and job placement. This fitted into the Central Labour Bureau's plan to screen out illegal migrant workseekers and encourage the employment of urban juveniles.⁵¹

In mid 1953, the Johannesburg Department of Native Affairs launched a juvenile employment drive. Initially, it had some success. Of the 17 987 African juveniles (16 to 21 years of age) registered as unemployed, between September 1953 and April 1954, 15 197 found employment.⁵² The official surplus was only 2 790, but of course thousands of youths managed to avoid registration.⁵³ The figures for 1955 showed a marked increase in the official surplus. Between February and October 1955, 38 695 urban juveniles were officially

registered as workseekers, while only 23 396 were placed in employment. A balance of 15 299 failed to find employment.⁵⁴ These figures probably indicate a tightening up of registration procedures between April 1954 and February 1955, rather than a deterioration in juvenile employment over this period. In fact, the number of job placements was significantly higher during 1955. Nevertheless, the Secretary of Native Affairs, van Rensburg, was angry and perplexed about the 1955 juvenile unemployment figures. He demanded an explanation and more details from the Johannesburg Registration Officer.⁵⁵

It seems likely that the state's need to curb the *tsotsi* gangs contributed to the general tightening up of influx control in the early 1950s. Youth gangs seriously hampered the state's ability to control the townships. Moreover, the authorities strongly suspected that youth gangs could become dangerous political tools of the liberation movement.⁵⁶ Throughout the 1940s, even under National Party leadership after 1948, the state never seriously challenged industrialists in the PWV area who employed workers from the rural areas. More accurately, local government turned a blind eye to those employment practices. The central state lacked the resources to intervene directly. Municipal governments in the PWV came under pressure from the Department of Native Affairs to tighten up on influx control but were generally able to resist this pressure. When *tsotsi* gangs started to present a serious control problem in the townships in the early 1950s, municipal governments started to clamp down on the influx of rural workseekers. In Johannesburg, the central state also took firmer control over the municipal Council's influx control practices. The state encouraged local industrialists to absorb the available pool of local juvenile labour.⁵⁷ It hoped that this would curb the growth of *tsotsi* gangs. *Tsotsis*, it seems, were a big enough issue to influence influx control strategies in the 1950s.

Tsotsis and the Congress Youth League

"Youth gangs", comments Bonner, "were street-wise, anti-social and suspicious, but they represented a potentially powerful political resource for any aspiring political leader".⁵⁸ According to Mphahlele and Motlana, the political potential of these street gangs was minimal. "Basically they were out for themselves ... They had to learn how to survive and make a living and also to create a power structure of some kind in the crime world". The gangs had little interest in politics.⁵⁹

The authorities, however, were convinced that *tsotsis* were mobilized politically. The de Villiers Louw Commission provided evidence of youth gang involvement in political activities. During the Newlands tram boycott of August-September 1949, for instance, "tramway officials reported ... that Native youths were stoning all tram cars". Youths apparently assaulted several Newlands residents who attempted to use the trams.⁶⁰ In October 1949, riots broke out in Krugersdorp in response to police liquor raids and the extension of passes to women. Here, too, the Commission was convinced of youth gang involvement:

The clearest evidence was placed before the Commission that organized gangs of youths took a leading part in acts of violence during the riots. They acted in concert and achieved definite results. No evidence was adduced as to whether these youths had leaders who instructed them but evidence generally seemed to point to *tsotsi* gangs - gangs of youths who propagate lawlessness and disorder.⁶¹

The Commission then went on, inevitably, to attribute these acts of violence to "communist instigation". Communists "clandestinely and in places of vantage urged irresponsible youths and scholars to acts of violence".⁶²

There is some evidence that youth gangs were involved in these kinds of activities throughout the 1950s.⁶³ Clearly, then, tsotsis did involve themselves in political activities. But could they be politically mobilized? Bonner comments:

Would-be mobilizers had to strike a responsive chord in the collective consciousness of the gangs, and this was not necessarily easily accomplished by the intelligentsia leading most of the political groups. The most effective mobilizers were predictably those who were schooled in street culture themselves.⁶⁴

The Congress Youth League saw itself as a mass youth movement and, on an official level, expressed interest in linking up with every type of youth organization. In its 1944 Manifesto the CYL stated that it would be "a co-ordinating agency for all youthful forces employed in rousing popular political consciousness and fighting oppression ...". It committed itself "to win over and persuade other Youth organizations to come over to the ANCYL".⁶⁵ In an official document published in June 1954, the CYL reiterated its commitment to establish contact with as many youth organizations as possible.

Where such bodies already exist it is our task to co-operate with, strengthen and give guidance to such bodies. Branches should keep personal and active contact with all established Youth Organisations in their locations.⁶⁶

To what extent did the CYL carry out this commitment? Were tsotsi gangs even recognized as "Youth Organizations"?

Bonner provides the best evidence to date of co-operation between the CYL and youth gangs. His evidence is based on the oral testimony of a certain "AB". AB was involved in youth gangs throughout the 1940s and early 1950s. AB was an exceptional tsotsi in that he took education seriously. He studied at night school and in 1946 he was employed by a Benoni attorney. He became a widely respected youth gang leader on the East Rand, largely as a result of his leading role in anti-Indian violence. In the early 1950s AB was apparently approached by a prominent ANC leader, who recognized AB's leadership qualities and drew him into the local CYL branch. He soon moved into a leadership position in the Benoni CYL. AB was in a unique position of having contacts in both the youth underworld and the educated political elite.

AB was able to convince several Benoni gangs of the importance of political involvement, and proceeded to draw them into the ANC.

AB ... brought his gangs firmly within the orbit of the ANC and they provided the shock troops for much of the rest of the decade. Operating under the name of Thaka Enyane (Young Black Soldiers) they were mobilized into most of the ANC's later campaigns. Between 1953 and 1955 the ANC in Benoni became rejuvenated.

AB's gangs were heavily involved in the 1954 Bantu Education boycott in Benoni. In April 1954, they were active in preventing children from attending school. The Bantu Education boycott was particularly successful in Benoni. "AB, the Youth League and the youth gangs were at the centre of its organization". AB was eventually deported but youth gangs continued to operate effectively within the ANC in Benoni until 1960.⁶⁷

Despite this evidence of CYL-youth gang co-operation in Benoni, the CYL never made any formal contact with youth gangs.⁶⁸ While Motlana was secretary of the Youth League, from late 1949 until 1952, no official approaches were made to the gangs. "No attempt was made to get at them and ... redirect their ways. In those days we just regarded them as criminals".⁶⁹ In fact, the issue was never openly discussed at Youth League meetings or

placed on meeting agendas. Mphahlele and Motlana, however, were aware of occasional informal individualized contact between the CYL and gangs. Pitje also acknowledged that contact may well have been made at the branch level "without his realizing it". Motlana knew of incidents in which CYL members approached individual *tsotsis* and attempted to "change their ways". Mphahlele recalls that individuals were occasionally informally criticized within the ANC and CYL for "meddling with *tsotsis*" in the early 1950s. Most ANC members recoiled from the idea "because *tsotsis* couldn't be controlled ...".

In 1952, some young unemployed youths, often with *tsotsi* connections, did get involved in the Defiance Campaign.⁷⁰ The CYL made some localized attempts to link up to youth gangs during the Defiance Campaign. "There was an attempt to recruit them." Branch leadership spoke to gang leaders but, although a few individuals were recruited, success was "minimal". Whatever contacts were made during the Defiance Campaign were not sustained. They seemed to "peter out".⁷¹

According to Mphahlele and Motlana, the ANC's most sustained attempt to politicize gangs occurred during the 1954 Sophiatown removals. CYL activists went out to woo these gangs consciously. Branch level leaders certainly saw some potential in mobilizing these gangs against the removals. Robert Resha, a member of the CYL executive, spoke to several Sophiatown gang leaders at the time. There was a certain amount of co-operation between the CYL and gangs during the removals but the alliance was a transient one. The gangs were never really politicized; they were "a whole lot of undisciplined youth" who recognized a temporary convergence of interests between themselves and the Youth League.

Prior to 1954 Youth League activists in Sophiatown actually participated in the establishment of a local civil guard aimed at combating *tsotsi* activity. Crime was a major concern of older generation township residents in the early 1950s. Motlana and Resha helped to organize the civil guard, which was led by a man named Mathebe. Vigilantes patrolled the streets regularly. Crime was temporarily removed from the Sophiatown streets. Interestingly, then, Youth League activists saw crime as an important local issue. Clearly, they abandoned their youth constituency in Sophiatown. Instead of trying to redirect local *tsotsis* into political, more socially orientated activities, Motlana and Resha joined forces with the older generation residents in their attempt to crush *tsotsis*.

Tsotsis were not considered as potential political allies in Sophiatown until the 1954 removals. Although the CYL recognized that the social environment was responsible for crime in the locations, the most coherent stand it took on the crime issue was to complain that the South African Police were not taking strong enough action against *tsotsis*.⁷² Pitje, Motlana and Mphahlele all confirm that *tsotsis* often involved themselves informally in ANC campaigns. During the Western Native Township, Sophiatown and Martindale tram boycotts, for instance, *tsotsis* "could be trusted to board a tram and beat up those who were on the tram and in that way help to make the tram boycotts more effective".⁷³ According to Motlana, elements of unemployed youths would often form the "storm troopers" of boycott campaigns and stayaways. But they all stress that *tsotsi* involvement was spontaneous. *Tsotsis* obviously identified closely with certain campaign issues and took their own initiatives to enforce adherence to boycotts. The Youth League never consciously attempted to organize *tsotsis* as "storm troopers".

The general failure to politicize youth gangs can be attributed both to the anti-social nature of *tsotsi* culture and to the inability and unwillingness of the CYL intelligentsia to organize youth gangs. The CYL operated in a different cultural framework from that of the *tsotsis* who were identified as anti-social, a-political, aggressive outsiders. AB was an exceptional Youth League leader. Because he had grown up as a *tsotsi*, he was able "to

strike a responsive chord in the collective consciousness of the gangs". AB's story certainly demonstrates the political potential of youth gangs in the 1950s. Their sporadic and spontaneous involvement in political campaigns suggests an awareness of, and an interest in, political issues. Gangs had to be mobilized and redirected sensitively. AB showed that it was possible. The main body of the CYL, however, preferred to concentrate its activities amongst school students, a youth constituency which was much smaller than those youths who were situated broadly within the *tsotsi* cultural framework.

Conclusion

The CYL appealed to a relatively small constituency. They made little headway amongst the uneducated and semi-literate sections of the urban African population. Congress Mbata, one of the founding members of the CYL, acknowledged this:

... looking back at it now of course we inevitably quite unconsciously concentrated on people with education and the tone and perhaps content of our manifesto - one thinks now it couldn't have meant much to the masses at the time. It was good to speak of Africa for the Africans but the man in the street would say well yes, Africa for the Africans, so what? And we didn't have the answer to that 'so what?'

The CYL made an impact on a limited section of "the younger people". Motlana concedes that the CYL's appeal was largely confined to well-read students. The CYL's political ideology "was high-falutin, high class stuff, intellectual stuff. Very attractive to young students like ourselves but it probably didn't seep through to the ordinary workers". Motlana, assessing the CYL's impact amongst semi-literate and unemployed youths, comments:

... the movement, I think one can say honestly, did not reach out to the ordinary young people who left school, who did not receive any education at all, who did not read the Rand Daily Mail ...

Apart from AB's individual success story in Benoni, the Rand youth gangs remained largely isolated from African Nationalist politics during the 1940s and 1950s. It is probable that the Communist Party and the Pan African Congress made some attempts to mobilize the gangs politically, but more research needs to be done in this area.⁷⁵ The youth gangs were not entirely a-political. It is clear that they had at least some political potential. A co-ordinated and culturally sensitive attempt was required by political movements to utilize this potential.

Today, township youths are extraordinarily politicized and militant. Not only are they politicized but they have tended to align themselves closely with national political movements. In fact, it is safe to say that youths are the key political actors in contemporary South African politics. Youth congresses have emerged throughout the country which draw on support from youths across the economic and educational spectrum. The scenario, then, is very different from that of the 1940s and 1950s. Why is this? What has happened during the last two or three decades to bring about such a radical change in urban African youth culture?

The historical connections between 1950s youth mobilisation and contemporary youth politics remain speculative. One possible explanation lies in the massive growth of Bantu Education. In 1960 about 46 000 Africans attended secondary school across the country. By 1970 this figure had risen to about 122 000 and by 1980, a startling 577 000 Africans attended secondary school. In 1984, there were just over one million African high school students, nationwide.⁷⁶ Bantu Education had two important effects. First, schooling became

much more available to African youths. Second, African schooling was brought under tighter state control. The quantitative expansion of schooling was not matched by a qualitative improvement in educational standards. African schooling became widely discredited amongst students. Under Bantu Education, it seems likely that two distinct urban youth cultures were drawn together in common defiance of the political order. *Tsotsi* culture was marginalized in the 1960s as a result of more accessible schooling as well as a massive state clampdown on Rand youth gangs in the late 1950s and early 1960s.⁷⁷ *Tsotsi* culture must have been more or less absorbed into the schools. In the 1970s the potential job market for school leavers contracted, thus compounding the growing frustration of the school-going population.

The fusion of youth cultures in Bantu Education schools during the 1960s requires a great deal of historical investigation. I would argue that the style of African youth politics today displays characteristics of both the Youth League tradition and 1950s *tsotsi* culture. The CYL tradition infused modern youth politics with a national movement and national programme orientation. *Tsotsi* culture, it seems, has helped to infuse youth politics with an anti-establishment aggression which was virtually absent in 1950s liberation politics.

Notes and References

1. W. Nkomo, interviewed by T. Karis, Pretoria, April, 1964, Carter and Karis Collection, Reel 13A.
2. C. Mbata, interviewed by G.M. Carter, 19 February 1964, Carter and Karis Collection, Reel 12A.
3. G. Pitje, interview with author, Johannesburg, 23 September 1986; J. Hyslop, "The Orlando Teachers' Struggle Against Bantu Education 1951-3, and the Subsequent Development of the Politics of the African Teaching Profession in the Transvaal", (unpublished paper, 1986), 12.
4. Pitje.
5. E. Mphahlele, interview with author, Johannesburg, 29 September 1986.
6. N. Motlana, interview with author, Johannesburg, 2 October 1986.
7. Pitje. Pitje's use of African symbolism does not necessarily imply a departure from Western culture. He was, like most of his CYL colleagues, a highly westernized individual. It should be noted that Pitje was often identified as belonging to this Black Consciousness wing of the ANC which consistently emphasized the use of traditional African symbolism and imagery.
8. Pitje. Mothopeng, recently elected leader of the PAC, was active in the CYL in the late 40s and early 50s.
9. *Ibid.*
10. Mphahlele.
11. Mbata; and Motlana.
12. Mphahlele..
13. Motlana.
14. See, Inter-departmental Committee on Native Juvenile Unemployment Report, 1951.
15. Pitje. By "Christianized" I do not necessarily mean that they were practising Christians. Rather, I refer to those elements of society which accepted Christian values.
16. See, P. Bonner, "Family, Crime and Political Consciousness on the East Rand 1939-1955" (unpublished paper presented at a conference on "Culture and Consciousness in Southern Africa", University of Manchester, 23-26 September 1986).
17. Inter-departmental Committee on Native Juvenile Unemployment Report, 1951. This figure is computed from a table headed "Number of Bantu Children in each Class in the Union and on the Rand and in Pretoria", 8. (Secondary school refers to Standard Six to Standard Ten.).
18. C. Bundy, "Street Sociology and Pavement Politics: Some Aspects of Student/Youth Consciousness during the 1985 Schools Crisis in Greater Cape Town" (unpublished paper presented at a conference on "Culture and Consciousness in Southern Africa, University of Manchester, 23-26 September 1986). This figure is taken from a table "The Expansion of

- African Education since 1960", 9.
19. Inter-departmental Committee on Native Juvenile Unemployment Report, 1951, 8.
20. As early as 1944 this problem was recognized in an article on the front page of *Umteteli Wa Bantu*, 11 March 1944. A new Anglican Mission school was opened in Orlando with a capacity of 495. Hundreds of children apparently had to be turned away. In this article the newspaper complained that schooling was hopelessly inadequate on the Rand. In the early 50s the Eiselen Report reiterated the shortage of schools for Africans throughout the country.
21. Report of the Commission Appointed to Enquire into Acts of Violence Committed by Natives at Krugersdorp, Newlands, Randfontein and Newclare, chaired by J. de Villiers Louw, 1950, UG 47/1950, paragraph 189.
22. *Ibid.*, paragraph 190.
23. Bonner, 15.
24. Inter-departmental Committee on Native Juvenile Unemployment Report, 1951, 3.
25. W.W.J. Kieser, "Native Juvenile Delinquency" (M.. Ed.. thesis, University of Potchefstroom, 1952), quoted in Freed, "The Problem of Crime in the Union of South Africa." (D. Phil. thesis, University of the Orange Free State, Bloemfontein, August 1958).
26. Inter-departmental Committee on Native Juvenile Unemployment, Report, 1951; Bonner; and M. Chaskalson, "The Road to Sharpeville" (unpublished paper for African Studies Institute Seminar, September 1986).
27. W.J.P. Carr, letter, Manager to the Regional Employment Commissioner, 22 December 1955. File 401/25/1, "The Youth Problem, 1952-1961", WRAB Archives, Intermediary Archives Depot, Johannesburg.
28. Bonner, 12-13.
29. Chaskalson, 7
30. Inter-departmental Committee on Native Juvenile Unemployment, Report 1951, 3-8.
31. Bonner, 12-13.
32. Inter-departmental Committee on Native Juvenile Unemployment, Report 1951, 3-8.
33. *Ibid.*, 5-6.
34. Bonner, 16.
35. See Freed, "The Problem of Crime in the Union of South Africa" (D. Phil. thesis, University of the Orange Free State, Bloemfontein, August 1958), 156-206. Freed provides a detailed and systematic account of the gangs in about a dozen Rand locations.
36. Mphahlele.
37. Freed, 157-8.
38. Report of the Commission Appointed to Enquire into Acts of Violence Committed by Natives at Krugersdorp, Newlands, Randfontein and Newclare, paragraph 192.
39. Inter-departmental Committee on Native Juvenile Unemployment Report, 1951, 7.
40. Bonner, 19.
41. Clipping of article from *Rand Daily Mail*, 16 January 1956, file 401/25/1, "The Youth Problem, 1952-1961", WRAB Archives, Intermediary Archives Depot, Johannesburg.
42. Bonner, 18-19.
43. Report of the Commission Appointed to Enquire into Acts of Violence Committed by Natives of Krugersdorp, Newlands, Randfontein and Newclare, paragraph 88.
44. Carr, letter, Manager to the Native Affairs Commissioner, Johannesburg, 17 October 1956, file 401/25/1, "The Youth Problem, 1952-1961", WRAB Archives, Intermediary Archives Depot, Johannesburg.
45. Bonner, 19-20.
46. Report of the Commission Appointed to Enquire into Acts of Violence Committed by Natives of Krugersdorp, Newlands, Randfontein and Newclare.. Youth gang involvement is mentioned on practically every page of the report.
47. Inter-departmental Committee on Native Juvenile Unemployment Report, 1951, 7-10. See previous references to this commission in my discussion on unemployment.
48. Letter from Acting Deputy Manager to the Acting Manager, Johannesburg Department of Native Affairs, 19 February 1953, file 401/25/1, "The Youth Problem 1952-1961", WRAB

Archives, Intermediary Archives Depot, Johannesburg. This letter contained a report on the meeting held earlier that month.

49. *Ibid.*
50. *Ibid.*
51. *Ibid.*
52. Registering Officer, Monthly Reports, City of Johannesburg, on Juvenile Unemployment. These figures are computed from the monthly statistics, file 401/25/1, "The Youth Problem", WRAB Archives, Intermediary Archives Depot, Johannesburg.
53. W.J.P. Carr, himself, admits to this in a letter written in October 1957. Carr, letter, Manager to the Native Commissioner, Johannesburg, 17 October 1956, file 401/25/1, "The Youth Problem 1952-1961", WRAB Archives, Intermediary Archives Depot, Johannesburg.
54. Carr, letter, Manager to the Regional Employment Commissioner, 22 December 1955, file 401/25/1, "The Youth Problem 1952-1961", WRAB Archives, Intermediary Archives Depot, Johannesburg.
55. Van Rensburg, letter, Secretary of Native Affairs to the Registration Officer, Johannesburg, 24 November 1955, file 401/25/1, "The Youth Problem 1952-1961", WRAB Archives Intermediary Archives Depot, Johannesburg.
56. See, Report of the Commission Appointed to Enquire into Acts of Violence Committed by Natives at Krugersdorp, Newlands, Randfontein and Newclare.
57. See, Chaskalson, 8.
58. Bonner, 21.
59. Mphahlele..
60. Report of the Commission Appointed to Enquire into Acts of Violence Committed by Natives at Krugersdorp, Newlands, Randfontein and Newclare, 3.
61. *Ibid.*, paragraph 86.
62. *Ibid.*, paragraph 172.
63. See, interviews with Pitje, Mphahlele and Motlana. This did not alter their observations that youth gangs were essentially "a-political".
64. Bonner, 21.
65. "CYL Manifesto", March 1944, Carter and Karis Collection, Church of the Province Library, Wits University. Reel 2B.
66. Trial Exhibits, "Programme for the Building of a Mass Youth League", June 1954, File Ea3, Treason Trial Collection, Church of the Province Library, Wits University.
67. Bonner, 22-29.
68. Pitje, Mphahlele and Motlana.
69. Motlana.
70. *Ibid.*
71. Mphahlele
72. Motlana.
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74. Mbata.
75. The de Villiers Louw Commission, Report of the Commission Appointed to Enquire into Acts of Violence Committed by Natives at Krugersdorp, Newlands, Randfontein and Newclare, would provide a good starting point for further research in this area.
76. Bundy, 9. (These figures are rounded off.)
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Colonial Education in Natal: The Zwaartkop Government Native School, 1888-1892

Peter Kallaway

University of Cape Town

Industrial education sought to adapt the education curriculum of colonised peoples to the "realities" of the labour market by abandoning an academic curriculum in favour of a focus on practical arts and agriculture. Ambiguous in their intent, institutions established on this basis were often the centre of heated controversy - whether viewed as potential labour reservoirs for settler farmers, progressive experiments in practical knowledge or centres of inferior education for colonised peoples. Natal provided a laboratory for missionary endeavours in this area from the earliest years of British rule. In the 1880s the colonial government made a bid to promote such policies by establishing a Government Industrial Native School at Zwaartkop near Pietermaritzburg. It closed its doors only five years later. This article explores the history of the institution and asks why this promising experiment, like many others of its kind in colonial Africa, proved to be a failure.

"To improve the barbaric mind, it is as necessary to induce industry as to teach morality." (Theophilus Shepstone, Secretary of Native Affairs to Rev. H. Pearse, 13 November 1858).¹

"It is infinitely preferable to train the young Kafir now than to exterminate him hereafter." (ref. Natal Native Commission, 1853).²

"I would define (the scope of our educational work) as being to qualify the Native youth for the effective discharge of their probable duties in life. These, for the present generation of school children, are those connected with the stable, kitchen, nursery, wagon and farm." (Robert Plant, Inspector of Native Education, 1889).³

Introduction

Industrial or vocational education had a special place in colonial ideology relating to the "civilisation" of African peoples in the latter part of the nineteenth century.⁴

Expressed loosely in a wide variety of educational experiments such as those connected with the *Slojd* in Scandinavia,⁵ the "Country Life Movement" in the USA,⁶ and the development of the "special" or "adapted" education for Southern "Freedmen" associated with Booker T. Washington and the Tuskegee Institute,⁷ the industrial education movement aimed at a fundamental reform of the school curriculum in a rural context. In keeping with the ethos of the early Progressive Movement in the USA,⁸ formal book learning was considered to be inappropriate to the needs of rural life. At precisely the time that changes in agrarian relations were propelling large numbers of people off the land, an argument in favour of a schooling that was directly relevant to the environment and life chances of rural children acquired a certain degree of academic respectability and common sense resonance among educationalists, missionaries and administrators.

Experimental educational projects in Africa drawing their inspiration from these sources were to be found as far apart as Achimota in the Gold Coast⁹ and Lovedale in the Eastern Cape.¹⁰ Debates regarding the need for working people to receive a relevant or utilitarian

education "appropriate to their station in life" had a lineage from Plato to Kerschensteiner.¹¹ On the one hand, such arguments were framed in terms of the need to secure "educational rights" of "non-slave" peoples, and, on the other, they emphasised the provision of a "different" or "adapted" "special education" for "primitive peoples". These policies were strongly influenced by Social Darwinism, and aimed at an education for colonial peoples which secured the efficient execution of their appropriate tasks within the "natural order". Equally, as this paper will show, it provided part of colonial state strategy to satisfy the demands of settler farmers for the provision of adequate supplies of wage labour.

It was precisely that ambiguity that gave ideological and political significance to the call for industrial education wherever it was heard, and it helps to account for the widespread resistance to such policies by colonial peoples in Africa.¹² The small and isolated British colony of Natal provides a fascinating laboratory for enquiry into the development of industrial education policies in South Africa during the nineteenth century, and the resistance to such policies. This essay seeks to explore those developments during the period 1880-1900 at a time when agriculture in Natal was undergoing the transition to capitalist production and when the labour market of Southern Africa was undergoing dramatic changes under the impact of the industrial and commercial expansion that followed the mineral discoveries.

The following account of one educational experiment, the Zwaartkop Industrial School, is offered in full recognition of the diversity of responses to colonial educational initiatives, and the need for caution when attempting to generalise about them. It is also important to emphasise that the archival base from which the evidence is drawn is rather limited, thus leaving many questions unanswered. The speculative nature of this paper therefore reflects the necessary tentativeness of explorations in the history of education in this country at the present time and the necessity for caution when attempting to reconstruct that history. It attempts to take one case study of educational change and innovation in the field of industrial education and to understand its internal and external history in the light of the changing political economy of Natal at the beginning of the last decade of the nineteenth century.

Natal 1843-1893: The context of industrial education

Early industrial education for the indigenous population of the British colony of Natal focused on the so-called "civilising" potential of the habits and skills associated with the "virtuous labour" of the workshop. The imparting of the 3Rs and the teaching of skills such as carpentry, masonry and agriculture were associated with the "upliftment" of African life and with the provision of appropriate labour for colonial farmers. Industrial education experiments in Natal took root in the context of a colony in the transition to capitalist production in agriculture and the emergence of a relatively economically independent indigenous population. In the 1880s the emergence of a modern economy stimulated the demand for industrial skills as they enabled Africans to move into the labour market on advantaged terms. Yet in so doing black artisans came into conflict with the increasing number of working class white immigrants who were offering the similar skills in the market place. The emergent conflict between these two groups, and the politics associated with the introduction of various policies intended to promote or retard industrial education form the basis of this investigation.

From the time of the annexation of the colony of Natal by Britain in 1843, the politics of the region were dominated by the bare fact that the population comprised over 100 000 Africans to less than 5 000 colonists. In the period under review, the colonial state began an

assault on the independence of the African peasantry with a view to securing a reliable source of labour for colonial farmers in the interior, and for the new sugar estates along the coastal plain. A pre-condition of accumulation in agriculture was the dislodging and integration into the colonial labour market of the independent peasantry. This gave rise to conflict between settler and colonial government interests. The imperial government, intent on collecting taxes and ruling as cheaply as possible, while accommodating to the realities of power, opted for the "Locations Policy" put forward by Theophilus Shepstone, the Secretary of Native Affairs. This policy sought to keep the majority of Africans in "reserved" areas where they would remain under the influence of traditional frameworks of custom and politics, while subordinated to British rule through the strict control of the chiefs. It sought to incorporate the political influence of the local pre-colonial rulers, while ensuring that they were kept isolated from one another to "prevent combination".

Shepstone's policy had ambiguous intentions. It was to keep the African population as separate from the settler society as possible in the interests of "security". It simultaneously intended to encourage the "extension of civilisation" among Africans through the promotion of industry and the cash economy, the encouragement of peasant farming and cash crops, the promotion of Christianity, and the general extension of colonial norms and values through education. The goals of such an education were summarised by Shepstone in 1858,¹³ when he placed the teaching of morality (or the fundamentals of the overt and hidden curriculum) on an equal footing with the need to "induce industry", which could be taken to mean encouraging the norms or values of the Victorian work ethic, as well as the actual acquisition of work-related skills.

The settlers were opposed to the Shepstone system right up until the 1870s. It proved to be a constant source of conflict between them and the imperial government. The settlers argued repeatedly that the large reserves provided too much economic and political independence for the indigenous population and prevented Africans from entering the labour market in sufficient numbers at rates that would make commercial farming viable in the colony. This, they argued, retarded the progress and prosperity of the colony. Interestingly, the one point on which they did agree with Shepstone and the Colonial Office was in their support for industrial education. Indeed, in order to ensure that the youth of the reserves was liable for compulsory farm labour once they reached the age of fifteen, they were even keen, from the time of Representative Government in 1856, to enforce compulsory education. The tone of these recommendations is succinctly captured by the second quote at the head of this article, taken from the notorious Natal Native Commission of 1853.

Although little was actually done in the way of implementing these proposals, even after the amount of £5 000 was made available for the purpose of "native education and welfare" at the time of the granting of Representative Government in 1856 (the so-called "£5 000 Native Reserve Fund"), these ideas continued to inform government thinking on the link between education and labour.¹⁴ Rev. Allison's education experiments at Indaleni and Edendale near Pietermaritzburg, and the proposals of Bishop Grey for the introduction of a number of industrial missions were to provide the background to the establishment of a chain of industrial institutions, mostly run by the Wesleyan missionaries, that were flourishing in Natal during the 1860s.¹⁵ These initiatives received generous funding from the government in comparison with other types of mission schools. This policy is to be understood as part of the general government policy of the time to promote the formation of a class of Africans who would stimulate the commercial and cultural values of the colonial world.¹⁶ The following table, drawn from the limited evidence available, provides an

overview of that situation in the 1860s.

Table 1. Returns of the expenditure from the Native Reserve Fund in relation to the field of industrial education in Natal, 1857-1870

Den	School	Year 1857	1858	1861	1864	1865	1870
Wes	Zwaartkop	£360	£80				
	Lower Umkomanzi	£146	£392				
	Edendale		£183	£220	£200	£200	
	Indaleni		£100	£200	£200	£200	
	Verulam		£100	£300	£200	£200	
CofE	Bishopstowe		£275	£320			
	Lower Umlazi		£ 28	£ 50			
	Springvale					£200	
	(Upper Umlazi)			£200	£200		
	Springfield		£283				
	St Mary's (Pmb)			£ 50			
	Umgababa				£100	£100	
ABM	Umtwalume		£100	£100	£100		
CSA	St Faith's (Dbn)		£50				
Total Expenditure		£406	£1441	£1490	£1000	£1000	

Abbreviations: Den-Denomination, Wes-Wesleyan, CofE-Church of England, ABM-American Board Mission, CSA-Church of South Africa.

Despite this apparent progress in the field of industrial education, the late sixties marked the end of a phase of government support for industrial education in Natal. Most of the initiatives had come to an end by the close of the decade as Warwick Brookes, the Superintendent of Education, withdrew government funding for industrial education institutions.

Although the reasons for this shift in policy remain to be researched in detail, it is clear that the drying up of state funding was matched by missionary disillusionment linked to the financial costs of this form of education and the question of "consumer resistance" from African parents and students.

Only as the seventies and eighties ushered in a new era in the history of Natal was there a partial revival of these ideas linked to the need for artisans and semi-skilled labour in an expanding economy that was centred on the Diamond Fields, the construction of railways to the interior and the emergence of plantation agriculture in the sugar areas of the coastal plain. The Anglo-Zulu War (1877-78) must also have had a considerable effect on stimulating the need for the kinds of skills offered by the products of these institutions, and paved the way for a further demand for such skills. Yet the missionaries now became extremely reluctant to invest their resources in this kind of education, given the history of state ambivalence in this area and the cost of such enterprises. A considerable outlay was required for buildings, equipment for workshops and the employment of trained artisans to teach the required skills.

Yet, as the newly established Natal Council of Education turned its attention to the field of "native education" during the era of post-war reconstruction in the early eighties, a new

policy emerged which drew the state into providing a lead in this area. The Inspectors of Native Education were given the task of promoting industrial education and to this end the Zwaartkop Government Industrial Native School was established in the vicinity of Pietermaritzburg. The philosophy behind the new policy which should be understood in the context of the emergence of a more stridently conservative trend in settler politics in the wake of the Anglo-Zulu war, was expressed by Robert Plant in his "Report on Native Education" to the Council of Education in 1887.¹⁸ This turn towards an overt policy of alternative or adapted education specifically designed for Africans drew much of its inspiration from a similar set of ideas that had emerged in the Southern States of the USA during the post-Reconstruction era, policies which formed the basis of what later came to be called "the skills colour bar", which reserved certain kinds of industrial and artisanal skills for whites. It should also be noted that a key problem noted world-wide relating to the notion of industrial education is that even where colonial peoples do manage to gain industrial skills, the skills provided tend to be anachronistic and as such disadvantage trainees in the industrial labour market.

In this context the Zwaartkop experiment failed to endure. After a short life of only seven years the institution was closed down in the face of resistance from the local African community, parents, and students as well as strong opposition from white colonists. The reasons for that failure form the subject of this investigation.

Zwaartkop Government Industrial Native School: An experiment in industrial education, 1886-1892

The Zwaartkop Government Industrial Native School which existed between 1887 and 1892 represented a unique experiment in state sponsored native education in nineteenth century Natal. After the collapse of the initiative, the administration was not to venture again into the area of direct educational provision for Africans until after Union. (The first government school for Africans in Natal opened in Durban in 1917).¹⁹

Zwaartkop came into being at the behest of the newly established Native Education Committee of the Council of Education²⁰ with the intention of promoting the revival of industrial education in Natal. "The Council wanted a government school for natives as soon as possible"²¹ to meet dual demand for a more appropriate educational policy which would demonstrate the good faith of the colonial government in the reconstructionist era following the recent Anglo-Zulu War (1877-1878), and a policy which would at the same time meet the demands of the settlers for an adequate supply of labour.²² The Natal Native Commission (1881-2) and the Report of the Select Committee on Education (1882-83) provided the immediate background to the legislation of 1884 - "*For the Promotion of the Elementary Education among the Children of the Native Population* (Law 1 of 1884). This law aimed at the provision of compulsory education for all African children between the ages of six and fifteen years and stipulated that such schooling should necessarily include "elements of industrial training".²³ The aims of that schooling were to ensure that African youth were drawn into the sphere of colonial life on a social and cultural level in order to ensure their loyalty to the colonial state, while preparing them appropriately for their place in the labour market.

Up to 1887 the funds available for the purpose of industrial education had always been in the form of grants to missionary organisations. Despite state encouragement of such work during the 1880s it became clear that a combination of circumstances were making the missionaries increasingly reluctant to engage in this sphere of activity.²⁴ As pointed out above, key reasons for that withdrawal relate to the expense of such institutions, the

difficulty of obtaining adequate instructors, and the resistance from students, parents and communities to this form of education. The pending threat of missionary withdrawal from the field of industrial education probably explains this hasty initiative on the part of the Council of Education. In order to demonstrate to the missions what could be achieved, the government wished to establish a model institution which could provide a training ground for the future development of industrial education.

In July 1885 the first Inspector of Native Education in Natal, Fred B. Fynney, was appointed. He drew up a scheme for a "Model Farm" which represented the basis of a report to the Council of Education. The report received official approval and the Colonial Engineer was instructed to prepare plans for the new school to be sited at Zwaartkop Location, not far from the Wesleyan mission station and industrial school at Edendale, near Pietermaritzburg. The Natal Native Trust granted 52 acres for the purpose, and the Council made available £600 for capital outlay on the project. The school buildings were completed in April 1886 and the school was officially opened in August of that year with Samuel Gibbs²⁵ as Superintendent at a salary of £150 per annum. As assistant teacher, Timothy Zuma, and an industrial teacher, Luke Kumalo (a carpenter and wagon builder), were soon appointed, the former at £30 per annum and the latter at £360 per annum - indicating perhaps the market value of their relative skills as black teachers with "academic" or "industrial" background. (Board and lodgings were included in each case). Kumalo's wife seems to have been expected to act as matron "and take charge of the kitchen and the housework". Despite the death of Gibbs, the appointment of a new supervisor, Robert Smith, and the dismissal of Zuma for reasons that I have not been able to establish (Elias Kumalo being appointed in his stead) the school eventually opened in January 1887.²⁶ During the following five years, until it closed in December 1891, the school had an uneven history which raises classic questions about the place of education in colonial society, and the role of industrial education within that process.

For most of the time there were between ten and twenty students.²⁷ The sources are entirely silent on their origins or motivation for attending the school, though the majority seem to have come from neighbouring mission communities and not from the surrounding location. Teenage boys (perhaps ten to fifteen in number) who boarded at the school accounted for the major part of the student body. A few girls also appear to have attended. At times when the numbers on the roll were low quite small children were also accepted, although they were excluded from the obligation to do manual work. Day scholars were present at all times, but they do not seem to have played a key role in the life of the school or taken much advantage of the training offered in the workshop. Attendance figures given in the published reports are as follows:

Table 2. Zwaartkop Student Attendance Figures: 1887-1891

Date	Total Students	Boarders "from neighbouring kraals"	Day Scholars	Average attendance
1887				
1st term	12-13	1?		
2nd term	19	14	5	17
1888				
1st term	21	15	6	
2nd term				

Sept	20	9?	11	
Dec	10	0	10*	
1889				
1st term				20
2nd term	21	10	11	21
1890				
2nd term	21	10	11	21
1891				
June	30	14+	16#	30

*In 1888 four of the ten remaining students were the children of the industrial teacher.

+ In July 1891 only two students were left in the workshop.

A good proportion of these were small children who were not eligible for workshop classes.²⁸

The reports of the inspectors of Native Education, Fred Fynney (1887) and his successor, Robert Plant (1887-1892), the only published documents on the school that I have been able to trace, are fascinating, if confusing for what they include as well as for what they omit. In 1887 Fynney reported that "an inspection of the school premises showed the different departments to be well and neatly kept". The dormitory was reported to be "somewhat crowded" with 12 students in one room! True to the ethos of his successors of later years, Fynney was concerned that uniforms be provided for the students at the considerable cost of 12/6d each. He spoke well of the academic performance of the school in examinations conducted by him in September 1887, when 8 students passed Std III, 4 passed Std II, and 4 passed Std I. Subsequent reports also expressed satisfaction with the formal schoolwork. These figures indicate that most of the students had previously attended other schools and had transferred to Zwaartkop for reasons that are not at all clear from the evidence available. The implication is that they came with the specific intention of acquiring the industrial skills that provided the rationale for Zwaartkop's existence. Yet although much of the history of the institution remains hazy, there is very clear evidence that whatever else was achieved, the imparting of marketable industrial skills was not to be recorded as one of the areas of notable success.

Given the rationale of its existence, it is not surprising that the reports on the institution emphasised the relationship between education and manual work, though it is to be noted that only the academic work was tested in the formal examinations conducted by the inspectors. The catalogue of achievements in the area of work-related education is, at first sight, impressive. In the 1887 Zwaartkop Report Fynney details the following accomplishments:

40 000 bricks made;

water has been led onto the premises from a distance of nearly two miles;

the land attached to the school (52 acres) was enclosed by wire fencing;

a new workshop was erected (48' x 18' x 10' high) with iron roof and verandah (the door and window frames were made at Zwaartkops);

the old workshop was converted into a dormitory;

a two roomed cottage for teachers was built;

9-12 acres of land was brought under cultivation for the purpose of making the institution self-sufficient in food; 1000 "useful and ornamental trees" were planted, in addition to 100 fruit trees.²⁹

Three and a half years later, Robert Plant reported similarly on the "varied industrial work"

he had inspected which included:

- the making and keeping in repair of some two miles of road;
- raising the roof of the teacher house; repainting the school buildings
- planting seven acres of mielies;
- planting 1000 trees;
- erecting 600 yards of fencing;
- putting up a new wood and iron building on stone foundation (45 x 15 x 9);
- sundry alterations to different rooms.³⁰

Yet for all the apparent success of this initiative, it is central to the understanding of the progress of the institution that a clear distinction be made between manual work and industrial education - a distinction which was not always obvious to contemporaries. "General routine **manual work**" or fatigue duties³¹ appear to have been undertaken by the boys, and the girls were expected to do "sewing, washing, ironing and general housework", a notable reflection of the educational practices predicated upon patriarchal models that were dominant in Britain at the time.³² Industrial education, the supposed rationale of the institution under investigation, on the other hand, presupposed the induction of students to specific areas of skills training in woodwork, wagonmaking, masonry and agriculture (for boys) and needlework (for girls), under the supervision of a mastercraftsman in a workshop situation. This distinction is central to an understanding of the history of the institution and will form the focus of much of the analysis that will follow below.

The overall impression gained from the reports of the Inspectors is that despite a number of minor hitches, the institution was gradually finding its feet by the early 1890s. It was, despite the problem of high running costs, expected to flourish in the near future. These costs amounted to something like £500 a year. Yet despite the small successes claimed, the experiment was declared a failure by the end of 1891 and the school was sold to the Wesleyans for a token figure and eventually abandoned.³³

How is the failure of this experiment to be accounted for given the initial enthusiasm of the Council of Education, the willingness of the government to fund the venture, and the long history of settler agitation for the establishment of such institutions?

Explanations for failure

The attitude of contemporary commentators and educational historians to the failure of the Zwaartkop experiment is interesting. As early as 1892, Inspector Plant argued... "that it has died so soon will astonish no one who is acquainted with the case. It has cost a considerable amount as an experiment but may have a distinct value as a lesson".³⁴ Yet he did not elaborate upon what that lesson might have been. Oscar Emanuelson, the official historian of "Native Education" in Natal, remarked that the career of the school was "characterized by uncertainty" and "perpetual efforts to adjust to difficulties" in a context where "the institution rarely ran smoothly".³⁵ Dodd, the major historian of vocational education in South Africa, locates the problems as follows: "The organisation appears to have been faulty, local support was lacking, the locality seems to have been unsuitable, and the running costs were such as to dampen the enthusiasm of the administration."³⁶ Charles T. Loram, Inspector of Native Education in Natal from 1917-1921(?), the chairman of the Native Affairs Commission from 1921, and doyen of Native Education during the early twentieth century, could only dismiss it as an "ill-starred", "fretful" experiment, despite the fact that it pointed the way to the kind of education he came to advocate for Africans during the early twentieth century in the context of the Phelps-Stokes Reports on African education.³⁷

Before we attempt to draw any conclusions from the above evidence it is important to recognise that the general historical perspective of all of the writers cited is somewhat limited because they have failed to interpret developments in the field of education against the background of the broader changes in the nature of the economy and society of Natal during the late nineteenth century pointed to above. Prior to the 1870s settler opposition to the "Locations policy" of Shepstone had often been vociferous because it was alleged that the system of segregation that it represented prevented a "free supply" of labour from reaching the market. Settler politicians were therefore often outspoken critics of the imperial government for imposing a segregated system upon the colony, when the abolition of the reserves, and the consequent integration of the society would in their opinion have created a more prosperous society, and a society more open to settler control. Yet in the wake of the Anglo-Zulu War (1877-8), and in the context of the changing political economy of Natal in the last two decades of the nineteenth century, the dominant settler viewpoint was reversed. As David Welsh has shown, Shepstone's policies were now to be adapted to conform with segregation of the kind that became familiar in the twentieth century. Now the settlers wished to use the reserves as a mechanism of political and labour control, and as a justification for white political and economic hegemony based on segregation.³⁸

A parallel process was taking place in the context of the politics of education. There had been a long history of settler agitation for industrial (or manual) education from the earliest days of the British occupation of Natal. The provision of industrial education for Africans was seen to provide a means of drawing them into the labour market and making them appreciate "the dignity of labour" in the context of the colonial economy. Not only would such an education provide the skills necessary for the settler economy and society. Yet by the time the administration was in a position to put such policies into practice in the 1880s, the pendulum of settler opinion had begun to swing in line with the general changes in "native policy" outlined above. A new class of working class whites was becoming increasingly concerned at the potential threat presented to their monopoly of skills by the training of Africans in craft skills. It is in the context of those developments that we have to attempt to interpret the climate in which the Zwaartkop experiment took place. Within that context of changing "native policy", and the gradual incorporation of Natal into the modern industrial economy of the sub-continent associated with the mineral discoveries in the interior, new forms of resistance were to emerge, and the schools were not immune from those challenges.

A number of explanations for the failure of the Zwaartkop experiment will be reviewed and evaluated. These explanations will be viewed in turn under the following headings:

- the personal or management problem explanation;
- the financial factor;
- the resistance from the local community linked to student resistance and the issue of manual labour vs industrial education.

The personality factor or management problem

The argument here is that everything would have worked out fine but for the fact that Superintendent Smith was the wrong man for the job. Emanuelson argues that the experiment "would have been a decided success if the right man had been in charge".³⁹ He hints at the inappropriateness of Smith's personality, his inability to handle staff and student disaffection, and even at corruption. After three and a half years it was discovered that "the real cause of the mischief" was that Smith was not teaching, "only supervising".⁴⁰ Yet even after this issue was recognised by the Council of Education in 1890 it did not bring an end to

the problems of the school. While Smith clearly comes in for the bulk of the criticism in this regard, there is also more than a hint of criticism of the work of Fred Fynney in the reports of his successor. Why was he not more critical of Smith's handling of the situation?

Linked to the question of the personality of the supervisor, is the question of faulty organisation.⁴¹

Smith's actions throughout create the impression of inefficiency and incompetence, poor relations with students and staff, and an overwhelming desire to please the authorities to the letter without calculating the cost. The absence of a stable staff must also be attributed to Smith's incompetent management. Though he outlasted all of the other members of staff, the reason for his survival amidst a stream of disasters and constant criticism from Inspector Plant after 1888 is hard to explain on the basis of the evidence I have been able to quarry.

Although some weight must clearly be attached to explanations of this kind, the question is: how much significance should be attributed to this factor in its own right?

The financial factor

A major factor which lay behind the official disillusionment with Zwaartkop school was the cost. After an initial capital outlay of some £600, the school's running expenses of over £500 per annum, were far in excess of any similar institution. In 1889 Robert Plant pointed out that the annual cost of keeping a child at Zwaartkop amounted to £22 18s 6d as against £1 3s 6d at mission schools.⁴² The strong official resistance to the pressure from students, parents, and the Inspector, to the waiving of the £4 0 0 annual fee for boarders in 1891 must be understood in the light of these statistics (see below). The state was discovering for the first time the nature of the financial difficulties related to industrial education that had long inhibited missionary endeavour in this area. It should be noted that the issue of cost has often been cited as a key restraint regarding the extension of industrial education in Africa right up to the present time.

Resistance from the local community

The absence of local support for the school disturbed the authorities from the outset, and this was often put forward as a key reason for the failure of the venture. Fynney had clearly not done his homework properly when he chose the Zwaartkop site for the school and the Council of Education was quick to recognise the problem. Even the most optimistic supporters of the initiative could not avoid the fact that all was not going well when the Council of Education passed the following resolution in February 1887, two months after the opening of the doors of the institution:

- 1) That the Council of Education take into consideration the fact that the Zwaart Kop Central School has not fulfilled the objects for which it was established, in so far as it has failed to meet the needs of the Natives living in the Location;
- 2) That the usefulness of the Institution be extended by the establishment of **Branch Schools under Native Teachers**, in connection with the Central Industrial School and subject to the control of the superintendent of Zwaart Kop, for the education of young children".⁴³

During the next five years the attendance from the location failed to show any marked improvement, and the project related to the establishment of feeder schools failed to materialise.

The explanations offered by the Inspector of Native Education for the non-attendance of the local children are set-pieces of official evasiveness. When Plant asked the local community leaders to send their children to the school, he was told: "Our chiefs are the

mouthpieces of the Government to us: we have not been told by them to send the children, and until we are told we shall not send them."⁴⁴ Plant further suggested that the reluctance to send their children to school stemmed from the fear on the part of the local people that they would ultimately be required to pay for the cost of the buildings, "and that therefore the only safe way is to repudiate all connection with it". Elsewhere the chiefs were reported to have argued against schooling on the grounds that "it only spoilt their children".⁴⁵ Plant commented dryly that he was sure the reasons given for non-attendance "were not the true reasons", but he did not venture his opinion on what he thought the "real reasons" were!

The only firm indication of direct parental involvement in the affairs of the school seems to have come as a result of the combined opposition to the payment of £4 per annum boarding fees that were to be instituted from June 1891. Since most of the boarders were not from the immediate neighbourhood this did not even have the positive effect of drawing the local community into the affairs of the school.

This local resistance to the school was a decisive factor that led to the abandonment of the experiment, though I must admit to having gained no clear idea of the specific reasons for that stance from the documentation available.

Student resistance and the issue of manual labour versus industrial education

As indicated above, a key problem at the heart of Zwaartkop's existence was the relationship between manual work and industrial education. The official reports cited above detail an impressive catalogue of achievements in terms of the work carried out by students in keeping with the ethos of self sufficiency subscribed to by the school. Yet how far such achievements had anything to do with education is not at all clear from the evidence available. The overriding impression is that much of the construction or repair work carried out on the school and the agricultural enterprise reported were the fruits of the compulsory manual work or "fatigue" duties, referred to above, that every student was obliged to carry out for two to three hours daily. Those duties were timetabled quite differently from the instruction in industrial education or "shopwork" where various industrial skills were taught. For those who took these courses, usually not more than half of the students on the roll, these classes lasted for four hours a day.⁴⁶

In the very first month of the school's existence a number of disputes arose between the superintendent and the students over the question of manual work and, to put it in the form of Emanuelson's delightful understatement, "the new Superintendent's methods of control were obviously distasteful to the students".⁴⁷ At the end of the following year matters came to a head when "the whole of the boarders ran away in a body, having, so they said, been badly treated by the superintendent."⁴⁸ The Superintendent countered in each case with charges of insubordination on the part of the students. It is clear that these problems seemed to arise out of the need for compulsion related to the manual work duties (especially brickmaking, road building and work in the fields). In each case the troubles that arose were not related to the area of industrial education *per se*.

The attitude of the students to the work carried out under the guidance of the industrial teacher, Luke Kumalo (1886-1888), was by no means negative. Plant reports that the students showed "every desire to learn the use of tools in the shop"⁴⁹ but they were constantly frustrated in this regard due to the fact that the workshop was only completed in 1888 when "benches and other fixtures for the workshop" were "made and erected".⁵⁰

The mass defection from the school at the end of 1888 primarily involved the industrial education students. They appear to have been supported in their action by the industrial teacher, Luke Kumalo, and a committee of enquiry of the Council of Education found him

guilty of misconduct. As a result he was dismissed. Despite overwhelming evidence of incompetence and corruption on the part of Smith, he survived the storm.

From this time onwards little in the way of industrial education was offered, since a replacement for the industrial education teacher was never procured, despite a considerable recruitment effort on the part of the Inspector. Smith was to eventually take on the job in 1891 for an extra £25 per month, but little seems to have been achieved. In effect the student action in December 1888 linked to Kumalo's dismissal seems to have been instrumental in crippling this key aspect of the school's activities.

By 1890 Plant seems to have had considerable insight into the situation. He recommended the introduction of an apprenticeship system, which would enable students to obtain a "systematic and thorough working which can only be done by apprenticeship for a lengthy period". Over a three or four year period students "hours of work [were] to be six hours per day for six days a week for industrial work, and three hours per day for five days a week for school work".⁵¹ Students who declined to be apprentices would be required to do three hours manual work on the land each day. This plan depended upon the willingness of the Council to waive all fees for students (£4 per annum in 1891) and allow board and lodgings free of charge, in return for the benefit of the higher quality work that would be produced at the school. Plant argued that the products of this work would then be marketable and would finally ensure the self sufficiency of the institution.

The additional advantage of the plan for apprenticeship in the eyes of the administrators was that it would legally bind the students to the institution for the stipulated period and avoid the recurrent problem of students who left to obtain employment as soon as they were sufficiently skilled, if not formally qualified, thus preventing the institution from benefitting from the products of their labours. Once such an arrangement had been finalised, the second major problem in relation to the workshop could be tackled - namely obtaining orders for work.

Despite the repeated commitment of officials to the principle of self-sufficiency for the school, no attention seems to have been given to the question of what was to be manufactured and how it was to be marketed. The problem of selling the materials made in the workshop was a constant source of anxiety to the Superintendent and the Inspector. In order to tackle this problem, Plant proposed the establishment of a blacksmith shop. This would enable the school workshop to manufacture carts and barrows for sale to the Public Works Department at a profit. Despite repeated pleas relating to the implementation of the apprenticeship plan and the opening of a blacksmith shop, the Council failed to respond.⁵²

The problem by the early 1890s was that the whole concept of a government controlled industrial school for Africans had come to be reconsidered in the light of the new forces at work in the modern economy. The emergent commercial revolution which introduced a new era of prosperity to South Eastern Africa attracted numbers of European immigrants who were engaged in commercial and artisan occupations. This made them rather different from the earlier rural or commercial settlers. As a result the question of the control of skills in the labour market was beginning to come onto the political agenda, even in the relative economic backwater of Natal. White tradesmen and artisans were not keen to compete with African skilled workers in the market place, so the whole question of public support for the industrial training of Africans came to be reviewed within the framework of the new political dispensation relating to the granting of Responsible Government to Natal in 1892.

Finally, as David Welsh, Shula Marks, Norman Ethrington and Jeff Guy have shown so vividly, the fragile nature of the colonial state and the weakness of the small settler community in Natal all conspired to leave a great deal of power in the hands of African

societies even after the formal military destruction of the Zulu kingdom by the British army in 1878.⁵³ Such resistance was effective in Natal during the last two decades of the century, because the fabric of African society and custom, as reconstituted under the Shepstone system, had not yet been fundamentally disrupted by the combined impact of war, colonial rule and the emergent capitalist economy. Other forces were also at work to shape the new dispensation. These significantly included the influence of the new "mission natives" (the *Amakholwa*) who were forging their own agenda within the complex web of colonial politics and economics.⁵⁴

Conclusion

The fate of Zwaartkop Industrial school was sealed by a large number of factors, which interacted with each other in a complex manner. In the end the combination of personal factors, mismanagement, prohibitive costs, local resistance from parents and students, and ambiguities arising out of the economic and political context in which industrial education policy was being framed, all provided formidable obstacles to this experiment in state education. In the last analysis, factors relating to the specific issues of local resistance by the inhabitants of Zwaartkop location, and the opposition by whites to industrial education for Africans proved of decisive importance in the history of the Zwaartkop school. Only the two last factors are able to yield the kind of explanation that takes account of structural features of economy and society in addition to factors internal to the history of education or the history of this specific institution. In each case the objectives of the Council of Education were undercut:

- (a) by the determination of the local rural African community to boycott the school, and
- (b) by the demand from students who did attend, that the school "deliver the goods" in its own terms of reference, and provide them with industrial skills that would be marketable in the changing economic climate of the nineties.

Three decades later C.T. Loram was the first commentator to study the experiment at Zwaartkop with an eye to his own practice as an advocate of industrial education. He suggested that the lessons to be learnt from this "costly failure" were as follows:

- a) the necessity for close co-operation with the mission societies in all educational work connected with the natives;
- b) the importance of inducing the support of the powerful Native chiefs in such enterprises;
- c) the need to work up gradually to such a comparatively advanced scheme as an industrial school for the natives;
- d) (the importance of recognising) the economy and efficiency of making use of the voluntary efforts of the missionaries.⁵⁵

To arrive at an adequate critical understanding of the significance of the blueprints of administrators or churchmen for educational history, it is important to recognise that such policies were not simply copied onto a blank slate. Colonial peoples, like the working class everywhere, had their own ideas about the value or irrelevance of specific educational agendas. The educational arena has recently been highlighted as a central site of political and ideological contestation for colonised peoples. In short, educational policies and educational institutions provide a key site for resistance for the dominated classes, and the struggles which surround them provide us with valuable insights into issues that are often central to the evaluation of current educational initiatives for educational reform or alternative education.

It is possible to recognise many features of twentieth century African nationalism within

the fabric of educational change and development in the latter part of the last century. Rural communities often resisted colonial ideology (whether in the form of Christianity or "western schooling") and the colonial state, in ways which had durable effects.

Clearly the lesson learnt was that the benefits to be derived by the colonial state from the pursuit of a policy of industrial education were somewhat illusory. The task of launching such an enterprise was costly and by no means readily received by those for whom it was intended. The very constituency that was earmarked to benefit from the Zwaartkop school refused to have anything to do with the initiative; those who did attend came from mission communities that, in the eyes of the authorities, were already well served with educational institutions. Although they were keen to acquire industrial skills, the school was not up to their demands or expectations. The lack of co-operation of the local "Chiefs" was a key issue, but the reasons for their resistance remains unresearched, and is probably unresearchable given the limits of the evidence available. Certainly Loram's advice regarding the need for co-operation with the missionary societies on the question of the provision and content of education was followed for many years, though the question of the provision of an industrial education curriculum was to cause as much controversy within the ranks of churchmen as it did among laymen. The factor of cost was not stressed by Loram, but this has tended to be one of the main hurdles to the establishment of industrial education facilities in subsequent years. When that problem is understood within the complex web of issues which make up the politics of the colour bar in South Africa, it becomes clear why such an initiative as Zwaartkop failed to get off the ground in Natal. (But why Lovedale and Kilnerton and Tigerkloof succeeded where Zwaartkop failed, and in what terms one needs to measure their "success", is part of the broader project that I am currently researching.)

Where Loram mentioned the need to "build up slowly" to a project of this kind, he was probably reflecting upon his perception of the history of industrial education in the South, where powerful political influence from philanthropic and church organisation had to be mobilised in order to convince Southern whites of the importance of promoting industrial education among rural blacks. Equally, the resistance from Africans in Natal needed to be dealt with through the agency of the missions rather than through direct government intervention which would tend to simply be regarded with suspicion. These perceptions reflected a sound sense of policy on Loram's part, even though his own political agenda was highly conservative and predicated upon "conflict avoidance" rather than the unequivocal advancement of colonised peoples through education.

The thrust of the argument in this paper is that there were certain factors within the history of industrial education in Natal, and within the emerging political economy of the region, that would have made the success of the project extremely doubtful even if many of the factors internal to the educational history of the period were taken into account. The key issue at stake in coming to understand the failure of the Zwaartkop Institution was that issues outside of the immediate educational policy perspective of those involved in implementing this project were to control the destiny of their work. It is hard to see how the experiment could have succeeded if those factors are taken into account!

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10. R.H.W. Shepherd, *Lovedale South Africa* (Lovedale: Lovedale Press, 1971).
11. See Bennett; G. Kerschensteiner, *The Schools and the Nation* (London: MacMillan & Co., 1914).
12. This resistance to the introduction of schemes which attempted to adapt school curricula to the supposed needs of local rural communities is well documented for the twentieth century in the East and West African context. Less work had been done on the nineteenth century and even less on South Africa. See King.
13. See the first quotation at the head of this article.
14. In terms of the Royal Charter, which provided for Representative Government for Natal, the Imperial Government retained formal control of Native education, and earmarked the sum of £5 000 for the specific purpose of prompting "Native welfare and education". O.E. Emanuelson, "A History of Native Education in Natal between 1835 and 1927" (M. Ed., University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg, 1927), 59; M. Wilson and L.M. Thompson, (eds.), *The Oxford History of South Africa*, Volume 1 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969).
15. Report of the Superintendent of Education (Natal) for 1864, T11-12.
16. See C. Bundy, *The Rise and Fall of the South African Peasantry* (London: Heinemann, 1979).
17. Extracted from the Reports of the Superintendent of Education, Natal, for the relevant years.
18. See Note 3 above.
19. C.T. Loram, *The Education of the South African Native* (London: Longmans Green, 1917), 61.
20. O.E. Emanuelson, "A History of Native Education in Natal between 1853 and 1927" (M.Ed., University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg, 1927), chapters 3 and 4.
21. *Ibid.*, 121.
22. See specifically J. Stuart, (N.N. pseudonym), *A Project for the Promotion of Education in General, as well as for the European as for the Native Races of the Colony of Natal* (Pietermaritzburg, 1859), 1.
23. Colony of Natal, Votes and Proceedings for 1884, NCP 5121 15; Emanuelson, 106-110.
24. Since 1884 the Council of Education had attempted to promote industrial education in a more systematic manner than ever before. This initiative was met by considerable opposition from the missionaries, partly because of the expense entailed and partly because of the opposition of the students to such changes. In June 1885 the Native Education Committee of the Council of Education attempted to define what it meant by industrial education in a Report presented to the Council of Education. This paved the way for the legislation of 1888 (Law 38 of 1888) which established a three tier funding structure for mission schools, with industrial schools in the most favoured category. The Zwaartkop experiment was part of the same initiative, and it was intended to provide a model for the others.
25. Gibbs had recently published "English-Kafir (Zulu) Vocabulary" and an "Elementary English Grammar in English and Kafir".
26. Emanuelson, 122.
27. These small numbers were typical for industrial education institutions of this kind until well into the twentieth century.
28. The figures drawn from the annual reports on the Zwaartkop School by the Inspector of Native Education, which were published separately to the general report of the Supervisor of Education and the Report of the Inspector of Native Education.

29. Report of the Inspector of Native Education on the Government Industrial Native School, Zwaartkop Location for the year 1887, 4.
30. Report of the Inspector of Native Education on Zwaartkop for 1890-91, 3.
31. Emanuelson, 123.
32. Report of the Inspector of Native Education on Zwaartkop, for 1890-91; For an introduction to this field of inquiry, see Deborah Gaitskell, "Race, Gender and Imperialism: A Century of Black Girls' Education in South Africa" (unpublished paper, London 1987).
33. Emanuelson, 130-1.
34. Report of the Inspector of Native Education on Zwaartkop, for the year ending 30 June 1892.
35. Emanuelson, 130-1.
36. A.D.N. Dodd, *Native Vocational Training: A Study of Conditions in South Africa, 1652-1936* (Lovedale: Lovedale Press, 1938), 62.
37. Loram, 60.
38. D. Welsh, *The Roots of Segregation* (Cape Town: Oxford University Press, 1973).
39. Emanuelson, 130.
40. Emanuelson, 128.
41. Dodd, 62.
42. Report on Zwaartkop, 1889; Loram, 60.
43. Proceedings of the Council of Education, cited in Emanuelson.
44. Report on Zwaartkop, 1889, 4.
45. *Ibid.*
46. Reports on Zwaartkop for 1889 and 1891.
47. Emanuelson, 123.
48. Report on Zwaartkop for 1888, 1.
49. R. Plant, "Report on the Zwaartkop School" dated 14 August 1890, Natal Archives: Education: ED 4/1 Letterbook on Native Education, 32.
50. Report on Zwaartkop for 1888, 4.
51. R. Plant to the Secretary, Council of Education, 18 June 1891, Natal Archives: Education ED 4/1/1 Letterbook on Native Education.
52. *Ibid.*
53. Welsh; N. Etherington, *Preachers, Peasants and Politics in Southeastern Africa, 1835-1880* (London: Royal Historical Society, 1978); S. Marks, *Reluctant Rebellion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1970); J. Guy, *The Destruction of the Zulu Kingdom* (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1974).
54. Etherington, 1978.
55. Loram, 55-61.

Speaking in Tongues: Apartheid and Language in South Africa

David Brown

University of Natal, Durban

This paper examines the relationship between language, nationalism and class in South Africa. Language is understood as a social product and it is argued further that the role of the discipline of linguistics in theorising language should be examined in the light of a critical sociology of language. A brief account of the role that language has played in nationalism as well as the relationship language has to political practices is given. Concepts of Antonio Gramsci on the relationship between language and social stratification are suggested as being useful. The main body of the paper focuses on three areas of language which are considered central to the sociology of language in South Africa. The first is the debate over the origins of Afrikaans and its significance for Afrikaner nationalism; the second, apartheid language policy and education in the 1950s, and the third is a criticism of recent writings on language policy in South Africa. The paper concludes by stating that there is an urgent need to address the language question by those educationists struggling for a non-racial united education system.

Much has been said in recent writings on South Africa about the importance of language. We are told that "the fashioning of a counter-hegemonic ideology" is the task of "organic intellectuals" rooted in the working class who are urged to "systematise the discourse" in which the struggle is conducted. This is because (we are told), "it is in and through language that the individual is constituted as a subject".¹

But how can language fashion a "counter-hegemonic" ideology in a country like South Africa? Which language/s, for example, will perform this task? Does language reveal or disguise the individual's (subject's) social and psychological constitution? Marx, in *The German Ideology*, described language as "the immediate actuality of thought" and accused philosophers of his time of taking language and thought into an independent realm which, he added, caused them to descend from language into thought and hence to life.² Language as "the immediate actuality of thought" and, more importantly, as ideology - the systematic thought of a social class or group - are both matters of considerable debate in the twentieth century. The relationship between individual and social behaviour on the one hand, and language on the other, is problematic. The investigation of language and the discipline of linguistics itself have largely developed, with a few notable exceptions, outside of historical materialist schools.

The challenge, therefore, is to develop theoretical understanding and conduct empirical investigations that enhance historical materialist perceptions of the development of languages in South Africa. Such a task necessarily involves an analysis of the social classes to which speakers, listeners, writers and readers belong.³ Further, it is necessary in such an approach to consider language in all its modes and forms as a social product.⁴ This involves a critique of the genesis of language policy and the specific forms of language nationalism that have emerged in South Africa. A critical history of linguistic theory and practice in South Africa is clearly one of the tasks of such a project, lest we believe it to be a science beyond "good sense", an exaggerated claim the discipline's scientism readily makes. For example:

He who investigates the meaning of sociolinguistics has to discover its central place in the system of social sciences when he comes to the conclusion that, properly looked at, linguistics is to the social sciences what mathematics is to the natural sciences: when he appreciates that it is precisely in linguistics that the riddles of sociology are made up and unravelled.⁵

All disciplines are imperious, but none quite as much as linguistics - it has developed close to the bosoms of priests and shamans.⁶ While many would concede that linguistics is often the most theoretically rigorous of the social sciences, this article will try to solve some "riddles" of linguistics in a critical sociology of language.⁷

I shall provide some tentative steps towards this end by focusing on three aspects of language study in South Africa. The first is an examination of the fierce origins of nationalist struggle and its effects on language nationalism, which arose in opposition to the dominance of English in South Africa. The historical origins of Afrikaans as a creole and some subsequent debates in Afrikaans historical linguistics will provide the basis for discussion here. The second is a discussion of apartheid ideology and the language question in South Africa, which focuses on the 1950s. The third addresses the assumptions underpinning recent work on the sociology of language in South Africa.

Language and Nationalism

In South Africa, unavoidably, the history of colonialism, nationalism and ethnically based language policy all interrelate with social class, making the sociology of language a difficult task. They are, however, matters that have a social history and political practice. Language nationalism can be simplistically portrayed as irrational but it remains a potent force. It is viewed distastefully by liberals but has a continuing power to recruit intellectual support. Marxists have been sceptical of nationalism per se but it has nevertheless forced from them grudging admiration, to the extent that they harness its energies in their political practice. For example, Marxism-Leninism is not opposed to the struggles that often animate nationalism. Thus nationalism within capitalist society (such as African nationalism in South Africa) is potentially a positive force because it loosens the hold of the bourgeoisie; however, in socialist states continuing nationalism should be unnecessary and forms of it are viewed as potentially reactionary. In addition, bourgeois nationalism is seen by Marxists simply as another means of oppression of the workers. The formula for combatting this variety of nationalism is "proletarian internationalism". The strength of nationalism in the face of capitalist crisis and anti-colonial struggles has muted internationalism but it remains a residual force and is challenged by bourgeois internationalism in the form of "modernisation".⁸

Whatever the political orientation of nationalism, language has been of central importance to its development. One writer who grappled with an understanding of the class forces behind nationalism and the rise of national languages was Gramsci. In writing on the significance of language, Gramsci asserted that linguistic change involved change in the hegemony of a social class or group over a society's culture. Furthermore, he insisted on the inter-relationship of linguistic stratification and social stratification, contending that every time the question of language surfaced, in one way or another it meant that a series of other problems began to emerge: for example, the formation and expansion of the ruling class and the necessity of establishing firmer ties between the leading groups and the national popular masses, that is, reorganising cultural hegemony. As a result, Gramsci thought that linguistics should concern itself with the history of languages - a diachronic study. His concern was primarily with semantics and metaphor as the more identifiably ideological factors in

language but he applied a similar dichotomy between synchronic and diachronic study to the categories used in linguistics. He favoured the fostering of the latter as integral to the investigation of culture. But he did not, according to Salamini, dismiss the structural aspects of language study.⁹

Gramsci's two concepts of "rule" and "hegemony" can be usefully applied to analysing the two dominant languages in South Africa. Rule is expressed in directly political terms, asserting a coercive and legal power of the state over groups that resist either actively or passively. Official language policy, as in the enforcement of Afrikaans in education, is an example of rule. Hegemony describes the apparently spontaneous consent within civil society of a dominant cultural form such as a language amongst dominated classes. An example is the seeming popularity of English amongst African people in South Africa, as it is often spontaneously expressed and ascertained in empirical findings and observations.

Language policy in South Africa has from the early twentieth century displayed a tendency to rely on the coercion of rule by the polity rather than hegemony in civil society. The struggle for control of mining, precipitating the South African War, is an important point of departure. One of the settlements agreed upon and then reneged on was the status of the Dutch language. The following clause was inserted into the 1902 Peace Treaty of Vereeniging:

The Dutch language will be taught in public schools in the Transvaal and Orange River Colony where parents of the children desire it, and it will be allowed in the courts of law for the better and more effectual administration of justice.¹⁰

Between 1902 and 1910, however, Lord Milner, the Governor, pursued a policy of anglicisation, treating Dutch as a medium through which English should be taught: "Dutch shall be used to teach English and English to teach everything else": a classic example of rule.¹¹ The Boers reacted to this state of affairs by establishing their own schools, which taught through the medium of Dutch.

On the creation of Union in 1910, equal status was given to the Dutch and English languages, a concession made possible by British economic supremacy, established in the aftermath of the war. Dutch, however, was no longer the language spoken by the majority of the Boers. Instead, the creolised form, Afrikaans, was the language of the newly urbanised white workers, whose peasant life had been destroyed in the war. From 1907 they were being employed on the gold mines in unskilled and semi-skilled positions. Afrikaner nationalism assimilated many social groupings: the newly proletarianised, the bywoners, remnants of a peasantry, the remaining landed peasantry and an active petit-bourgeoisie. The movement towards a common language, Afrikaans, was clearly an important process of establishing the cultural hegemony of the last-mentioned of these. The hegemony of this developing nationalism had to be cultivated and what more binding than a common language, a process well described by Hofmeyr and captured in the title of her study, "Building a Nation With Words".¹²

In this developing nationalism we see the interrelationship between linguistic and social stratification and the necessity of establishing closer and firmer ties between the leading groups, the Afrikaner nationalist classes and the "popular masses" who constituted the growing body of "poor whites". The latter's alienation through linguistic and cultural difference could not have benefited the leading strata had Dutch been retained amongst the petit bourgeoisie, who had access to education. The significance of this linguistic change went beyond white Afrikaner society. The radical linguistic levelling towards social and cultural unity affected black Afrikaans speakers too, who were, arguably, the originators of

this Dutch creole.

The continued dominant position of this language by rule for some and hegemony for others is an everyday affair in schools, on the electronic media and in some workplaces and as such requires consideration. This involves an exploration of the contemporary shamanism of linguistics in South Africa. A crucial component of the cultural dominance of any language is a politically acceptable version of its origins. "A variant of Dutch", is what most school leavers in South Africa believe they have learnt. Explanations for the origins and development of Afrikaans have been important in linguistics from early in the history of the discipline, prompting one of the earliest texts on creoles, Hesseling's *Het Afrikaansch*.¹³ What was this language, Afrikaans, and why did it emerge at this particular time? After all, it had existed for at least a century before its active promotion.

A brief excursion into the place of Afrikaans in creole and pidgin linguistics will clarify the significance of this discussion. The idea of a proto-language, the original unattested parent from which divergent languages developed because of migration, dominated nineteenth century philology. It was formalised by Schleicher in 1871, and is widely known as Stammbaum theory. Family trees of languages were seen to develop in the same way as organisms do; thus the metaphor was taken literally. The critique that languages do not reproduce genetically had not gained ascendancy.¹⁴ The dominant approach draws heavily on Darwin's theory of evolution, in that it sees similar developments in languages as in species. The discipline of linguistics, on its foundation, broke with this perception of language.

The main focus in philology in the last century was a comparison of known language states in order to establish the proto-language. Explanations of the origins of pidgins and creoles did not concern nineteenth century linguists. The racist idea that languages were pure and, as a result, that pidgins and creoles were simply the incompetence of inferior beings, predominated.

Among the first writers to counter this genetic perspective were two Dutch writers, Schuchardt and Hesseling. Hesseling's text, on Afrikaans, questioned the notion of language purity and was one of the earliest explanations of pidgin and creole languages.¹⁵ Hesseling and Schuchardt both placed emphasis on mixing (*sprachmischung*), that is, externally as well as internally generated changes which they considered to be important in the process of pidginisation. Hesseling's hypothesis about Afrikaans was that it originated as a result of the introduction of Malayo-Portuguese to the Cape. He saw Afrikaans as a mixed language - halfway to becoming a creole. Valkhoff, a creolist of recent times who turned his attention to Afrikaans, confirmed and elaborated this hypothesis.

Socio-historical factors involved in the process of the pidginisation of Dutch cited by Hesseling were the large-scale introduction of slaves to the Cape in 1658, who spoke Malayo-Portuguese and Dutch.¹⁶ Afrikaans shows many of the characteristics of pidginisation/creolisation. For example one may note the following:

1. The article "die": a demonstrative in Dutch, is presumably, in one theory of pidginisation, a relexification from the Malayo-Portuguese article "aquel", derived from the Portuguese "aquel".
2. "Ons", (we), as the first person plural pronoun, subjective and objective: Malayo-Portuguese had a single form for both subject and object position; in Dutch, by contrast, "ons" is the object pronoun only.
3. Afrikaans deletes inflections on the verb, as did Malayo-Portuguese, as shown in table 1 below:

Table 1. Simplification of Dutch verbs.

Dutch Afrikaans			
1st person sing	werk	pl werken	
2nd person sing	werkt	pl werken	werk
		werkt	
1st person sing	help	pl helpen	
2nd person sing	helpt	pl helpen	help
		helpt	
3rd person	helpen		

There is limited historical data to support hypotheses on the origins of Afrikaans, and as with many creoles and pidgins there are different and complex theories on its origins. Hesselings' views have been consistently contested by many Afrikaner academics in South Africa. One such critique by what could be described as a modern version of the philological genetic tradition, by Combrinck, clearly supports interpretations which tend to invent a continuity in cultural tradition, thus avoiding the critical processes of socialisation which bring about significant language change.

Combrinck argued that when the Dutch East India Company arrived at the Cape to establish a halfway house in 1652, the Netherlands did not have a standard spoken language. Dutch provinces differed in dialects spoken, and most of the burghers in the Cape were drawn from uneducated speakers of these. In the seventeenth century, the process of standardising the Dutch language began, but the Cape was not affected, other than in the reception of the Dutch Bible *Statenbijbel* of 1637. Differences between Cape Dutch and Netherlands Dutch became noticeable 25 years after the departure of Van Riebeeck from the Cape.¹⁷

Combrinck argued that the origins of Afrikaans were not to be found in social factors, such as the destruction of the Khoi society through war and disease, particularly after the smallpox epidemic of 1713. Khoi were driven into the employ of the Dutch burghers, and social disintegration was extreme enough to lead to the loss of the languages they spoke. Integration and miscegenation were also a social feature of this time which affected language development.

Instead, Combrinck found his explanations in the philology of Germanic languages. According to this theory the heavily inflected Germanic languages diverged in about 1600 AD. If speakers of the dialects subsequently came into contact the inflectional systems were deleted for perceptual reasons. Combrinck thus appealed to a psycholinguistic factor about the limitations of human speech perception which he believes acts uniformly across Germanic languages, thus making it a genetic theory.

By analysing the population of the Cape between 1652 and 1807 he offers the following breakdown of the origins of population.

Table 2. Combrinck's breakdown of European settlers at the Cape, 1652-1807.

Dutch	36.8%
German	35.0%
French	14.6%
Khoi & slave	7.2%
Others	2.6%
British	0.3%

Unknown 3.5%

Combrinck took this line of inquiry further and identified the dialects of Dutch that would have been represented at the Cape:

Table 3. Combrinck's breakdown of Dutch dialects at the Cape.

Locality	% of speakers in the Cape Population
South Holland	31
North Holland	27
Utrecht	18
Overijssel	7
Guelderland	6
Zeeland	5
North Brabant	4
Groningen	3
Friesland	2. ¹⁸

North and South Holland and Utrecht produced 73% of the Dutch immigrants. None of the three produced the standard dialect. There were, according to Combrinck, 18 systems of inflection at the Cape. A language contact situation led to the deletion of inflections, following logically the theory of "Germanic interdialectal noise deletion" proposed by the author. From evidence of two Dutch dialects of the present day, he argued that major grammatical and inflectional shifts in Afrikaans are no more surprising than those in dialects of Dutch. Combrinck argued against the significance of social contact in the Cape, stating that the contribution of Malayo-Portuguese was no more than 1% of the lexicon of Afrikaans, and further asserted that it was an established fact that the "lexicon is part of the grammar".¹⁹

This shying away from pidgin and creole linguistics in discussing the genesis of Afrikaans has been an essential component of the invented continuity of Afrikaner culture and neo-Social Darwinist explanations of the origins of Afrikaans, which have often dominated Afrikaans historical linguistics in South Africa. Writers such as Combrinck were engaged in establishing a "historicity" for Afrikaans based on a philological scientism rather than a social and historical linguistics. Such explanations of the social and historical origins of creoles are not uncommon but they are an invention of linguistic tradition in the desire of creole peoples to boost their sense of origin in the face of metropolitan prejudice.²⁰

Valkhoff, on the other hand, produced cogent evidence to show that Afrikaans conforms to the linguistic processes evidenced in creolisation and pidginisation. The occurrence of double negatives, a common grammatical feature of pidgins and creoles, can be understood in the light of either universal theories, or as an aspect of Khoi grammar, if one pursues substrata/relexification theories. Valkhoff, favouring the latter, found that double negatives appeared more frequently in the writing of ex-Khoi speakers in the early records. Both Hesseling and Valkhoff saw in Afrikaans the influence of Malayo-Portuguese creole and Dutch; Valkhoff, in addition, argued that Khoi languages were influential. Certainly some recent evidence supports the notion of the originators of Afrikaans being black, with the discovery in Cape Town of the earliest written records of Afrikaans in semitic script.

Hesseling's ideas about the origins of Afrikaans are still current in linguistics and he proposed the earliest version of what was to become known in creole studies as the monogenetic relexification hypothesis. He saw pidginisation as a process of foreign language learning, and this idea has contemporary variants in the theory of pidginisation.²¹

Both he and Schuchardt saw the possibility of pidgin being multilevel generative systems which underlay the creation of creoles: that is, a process of pidginisation had to take place before creolisation. More significantly, they recognised that variations in pidgins and creoles depended on social class and ethnic group, factors which modern sociolinguistics is attempting to characterise and which should form a central concern of Afrikaans historical linguistic enquiry. Debates concerning the historical nature of Afrikaans have important cultural significance for revisionist perspectives of South Africa.²² It is argued here that the genesis of Afrikaans should have a firm base in pidgin and creole linguistics and, as one of the most developed, champion the cause of these emergent languages in the face of prejudice throughout the world rather than endeavour to disguise the social and historical circumstances of its origins.

Colonial bilingualism

The imposition of English and Afrikaans as the dominant languages in South Africa has been more complex than in countries to the north where settler populations were small and the degree of social transformation was not nearly as great. The corresponding extent of linguistic transformation is irreversible: for example, the creolisation of Dutch in the Cape and the adoption of English by Indian people in Natal. But most importantly, a high incidence of "colonial bilingualism" and in some parts of the country "trilingualism" among the African majority has caused the undervaluing of the vernacular, as in many colonial societies. As Memmi so persuasively argued,

The colonized's mother tongue, that which is sustained by his feelings, emotions and dreams, that in which his tenderness and wonder are expressed, thus that which holds the greatest emotional impact, is precisely the one which is least valued. It has no stature in the country. If he wants to obtain a job, make a plea for himself, exist in the community and the world, he must first bow to the language of the master. In the linguistic conflict within the colonized, his mother tongue is that which is crushed. He himself gets about by discarding this infirm language, hiding it from the sight of strangers.²³

The "colonial bilingualism" which exists in South Africa has taken some of the forms described in Memmi's general observation. He was writing of French Algeria, where the French language was dominant. In contrast, in educational contexts in South Africa, the vernacular has played a greater role since the time of missionary control over education. As a result, the forms of bilingualism have been controlled via education for a long period and expanded under state control of education. In South Africa, a sizeable proportion of the African working class has no formal schooling the bilingualism suggested by Memmi is particularly predominant.

The difference between the native language and cultural language is not peculiar to the colonized, but colonial bilingualism cannot be compared to just any linguistic dualism. Possession of two languages is not merely a matter of having two tools, but actually means participation in two physical and cultural realms. Here the two worlds symbolised and conveyed by the two tongues are in conflict and they are those of the colonizer and the colonized.²⁴

As a result of the ambivalence inherent in such a situation, post-colonial societies, while heralding a renewal of interest in the vernacular, have for the most part retained the colonial language, often as a *lingua franca*. Simple reversion to the vernacular has seldom been a viable strategy in the nationalism of post colonial Africa.

Eddie Roux, the political activist and intellectual polymath involved in worker

education, firstly for the Communist Party in the 1930s and later independently in the 1940s, argued that English was the *lingua franca* of South Africa. Unlike East Africa, there was no Swahili to fall back on. In his attempts to make it available to the working class, he developed the earliest critical methodology of teaching adult workers English. He was, however, acutely aware of the discrepancy in communication skills between the African *petit bourgeoisie* which often, like all such classes in colonial contexts, tended to develop at best a hypercorrection and at worst a Babu of the colonial language:

The sophisticated African may be able to understand long words and complicated English, but the average rank-and-file cannot. One of the great shortcomings of the African movement (for independence) is the gap between the educated and the half-educated. It is necessary to overcome the snobbishness of the former and raise the cultural level of the latter. We cannot talk of mass education through the medium of English unless we make use of special books written in special vocabulary. These books need not be inferior in content. There is no reason why they should not be superior in many ways to much of the literature which white South Africans read.²⁵

Roux's awareness of the class factor in the distribution of bilingualism was not taken into account in Memmi's perceptions of bilingualism in colonial contexts. In addition, the South African context with its vast developing proletariat differed from elsewhere in Africa. However, Roux's dreams of spreading a *lingua franca* amongst the proletariat, which would give it access to a vast bank of print literacy and potential social and political advance, were not to be. One of the reasons, other than coercive control and the systematic restriction of Roux's and all similar subsequent efforts, was that apartheid's architects put particular emphasis on the language question by promoting the autonomy of linguistic groups, an important building block of their ideology. Few other countries, if any, have attempted through legislation to separate demographically different groups of people on the basis of their vernaculars. The vernacular became the defining feature of state nationalism.²⁶

The ideologues of apartheid were scathing of past mission education and language policy, which they viewed as paternalistic. Many of their criticisms echoed those of African nationalist movements of the time, particularly those with Africanist tendencies. In this a key role was played by the South African Bureau of Racial Affairs (SABRA), which was launched at the University of Stellenbosch in late 1948. This body was inspired by the Broederbond and had connections with the National Party.²⁷

In 1955 SABRA published a polemical pamphlet illustrating the radical rightism of the apartheid ideologues: the struggle for Afrikaans in earlier times had developed an extreme sensitivity to linguistic prejudice. The pamphlet made the following allegations against language policies in the teacher training programmes of mission education:

there was a multiplicity of Bantu languages in many of the schools and especially in the teachers' training institutions; and thus a lingua franca had to be found as a matter of expediency. English was made that lingua franca ... the teacher's knowledge of English resulted in 'one-eye becoming king in the Kingdom of the Blind', and he gained a position of local master rather than servant of the community.²⁸

This criticism of policies prior to 1948 was constructed to justify a return to the use of the vernacular as a medium of instruction in African schools. Accordingly, displacement of anglicised mission-educated teachers became a priority of the state, an aim that was consolidated by language planning and the development of the vernaculars, which were initially intended for use throughout the education system.

The state on its part initiated a movement towards the unification of the dialects with the ultimate aim of creating standard languages. The first step was to unify the orthographies. The opposition of those churches which had published church and school literatures in the different dialects, proved long and determined. It was only when Bantu people themselves became writers of books and thus took an interest in this matter, that unification of languages to create a medium of advanced education and culture became possible.²⁹

Apartheid ideologues further criticised mission classification of the vernaculars for mistaking dialects for vernaculars and emphasising the economic value of English "even to the exclusion of other more important spiritual needs."³⁰ This last criticism echoes the struggle against the prejudiced position of Afrikaans in the early part of the century.

The plans of the apartheid ideologues provide a clear example of linguistic fact as political action. The actions, however, did not receive the level of support from the African majority they hoped for. The idea of "Bantu groups ... working for the unification of languages to create a medium of advanced education and culture" was only partially achieved. However, that partial achievement was crucial to the hegemony won through the expansion of primary schooling under state control during the 1950s. The contradiction in the society that the ideologues were well aware of was the degree of appeal such a policy had to those, very often in the ranks of the depressed petit bourgeoisie or new urban proletariat, who had not necessarily benefited from mission education. By expressing similar sentiments to emerging African nationalism to the north, they were able to touch real feelings for the mother tongue. But an independent vernacular print literature in the form of educational material to support anything beyond early primary level or even newspapers outside of restricted state and commercial control, was not willingly developed or aspired to by intermediate African classes.³¹ Therefore, the initial desire by sections of the National Party for the fully spontaneous "hegemonic" cultural development of these languages in education failed. However, spontaneous vernacular vehicles did achieve a hegemony and still are effective on radio and television in the creation of "imagined communities" of a narrow ethnolinguistic kind.

During the 1950s the African nationalist movement was developing a counter ideology to apartheid. It sought to define nationalism as a more inclusive phenomenon embracing all African peoples. Up to the 1940s the prevailing attitude amongst the leadership, such as Z.K. Matthews of the African National Congress (ANC), the leading nationalist movement, had been that English should be the *lingua franca* and vehicle of a wider African nationalism. This was an approach subsequently adopted in many parts of independent Africa, where it was seen as potentially integrative and could cut across ethnic division, as for example in post-colonial Zimbabwe's language policy.³²

This conventional wisdom was challenged within the ranks of the African nationalist movement. First, Pan Africanists put forward the remote idea that Swahili should be adopted in order to extend the communication network throughout the East Coast and Central Africa. Another more plausible long term suggestion was put forward by the educationist Jacob Nhlapo, an active member of the ANC and associate of Eddie Roux. While agreeing with the use of English as a *lingua franca* he called for a unification of the Nguni group on one hand and the Sotho group on the other. He argued that the mutually intelligible languages Xhosa and Zulu could carefully and over time be unified into a single Nguni language. Similarly he envisaged the unification of the Sotho group of languages into a single language.

There need only be one grammar for Nguni and one for Sotho. Making different words for the

parts of speech in Xhosa, Zulu and so on is foolish and must stop... two basic Bantu tongues Nguni and Sotho, is something which can be done. Let it be done.³³

Yet another perspective emerged from the Communist Party. A writer in the *African Communist* argued that the diverse vernaculars in the country needed to be accepted and developed by the publication of literature and promotion of all languages. This view was endorsed by the influential Soviet Africanist, Prof. I. Potekhin. Kavanagh claims that only the Communist Party was in a position to take cognisance of both class and nationality at the same time as pressing for a socialist South Africa, evolving the historic concept of an African Republic. This was in keeping with the Marxist-Leninist position on language and nationalism. Neither Nhlapo's nor the Communist position gained any currency in the 1950s as campaigning for English seemed more in keeping with the broader aims of the ANC; supporting the development of the Bantu languages was an initiative largely held by the state. It would presumably have been confusing simultaneously to champion the cause of vernaculars and to gain wide popular appeal for the stand against apartheid and particularly Bantu education. The costs of this were, perhaps, to concede certain political ground to the state.

The African nationalist movement did not, however, entirely dismiss the idea of a vernacular revival, but simply demanded the right of the African majority to define the way in which the vernacular languages would be developed. The following quote from Chief Albert Luthuli conveys the essence of the ANC's position on the language question during the 1950s.

We were thoroughly aware of the meeting of cultures, African and European, and of the disorganisation of both, especially the African. As a result, we did not have the desire of the (Afrikaner) Nationalists that we should return to the primitive. But we have had an intense wish to preserve what is valuable in our heritage, while discarding the inappropriate and the outmoded. Our people were ill-equipped to withstand the impact of a twentieth century industrial society. Our task seemed to consist of relating the past coherently to the present and the future.³⁴

Further indication of the positive approach to the vernacular in the ranks of the African Nationalist movement can be seen in the Freedom Charter:

All people shall have equal right to use their own languages and to develop their own folk culture and customs.³⁵

Recent perspectives on language in South Africa

Some recent writings in international journals have been very misleading on this period of apartheid language planning. For example, Timothy Reagan has compared it to the Unesco policy first expressed in 1951, that the mother tongue be extended to as late a stage in education as possible both on educational and ideological grounds. Reagan states that, from an ideological perspective, National Party policies paralleled those commonly supported in developing societies as a counter-balance to Western cultural and linguistic imperialism.

He states that despite the widespread support for such programmes elsewhere, "they have been condemned in the case of South Africa as yet another example of oppression and institutionalised racism".³⁶ However, there were factors other than the fostering of the mother tongue (not substantially different from mission education) attached to language policy in education which have to be considered but which have been overlooked by Reagan. As described above, the primary attack by apartheid ideologues was on the colonial

ethos of English language dominance, against which Afrikaner nationalists had justifiably championed their *patois*, at the time a considerable historical victory. However, the subsequent imposition of two official languages together with the vernacular led to an enforced "colonial trilingualism" in African education with equal time being given to the official languages regardless of region, an unusually onerous prescription even in harsh colonial contexts. The implementation of mother tongue education alone is thus misleadingly portrayed by Reagan as being substantially different to the situation that existed in mission education. In some cases vernacular education was extended to the full period of primary education under Bantu education. It was true that the development of African vernaculars was affected by mission control but this was simply replaced by state control to produce a rigorous ethnolinguistic development and was coupled with the advance of Afrikaans in African education.

The analysis which Reagan presents is selective and does not mention the context of educational segregation on ethnolinguistic lines to the point of dividing the white educational systems into English and Afrikaans mediums. None of this portrays the spirit of the Unesco doctrines on vernacular language policy in education, which had certainly not insisted on the implementation and development of separate institutions along such lines. The Soviet Union, for example, has followed a policy of initial education in the mother tongue for some time but this has never formed the basis of educational segregation. Such benign language policies can be performed in the same institution. By excluding the ideological dimensions of the imposition of rule on the one hand and the attempt to achieve hegemony on the other, Reagan has been selective in his understanding of South African language policy. The solutions were not, as he would have us believe, grounded in "academic discourse and logical analysis"; instead, during the early 1950s, the South African Bureau of Racial Affairs, think-tank of the National Party, was concerned with a radical rightwing ideology and the consolidation of political power. It was initially more successful perhaps in articulating a clearer polemic than its opponents and was well placed to echo the sentiments of resentment at English linguistic imperialism beginning to be expressed elsewhere in Africa. This clear ideological position, it is suggested, led in turn to the situation of rule on issues of language in education and a certain degree of hegemony on the question of vernacular in education. This latter factor was sustained as a result of an appeal to the real sentiment surrounding the vernacular.

The contradiction that the apartheid planners were able to exploit during the 1950s was an awareness that the new proletariat and migrant labourers in the cities did not necessarily aspire to or have the social circumstances to develop a colonial bilingualism. Even today bilingualism is more prevalent in African languages than in one of the official languages.³⁷ For Verwoerd, a mission education created "unhealthy white collar aspirations". Clearly, English and its advance were seen as a vehicle of these "unhealthy ideas". The "social realism" of the planners in understanding the distribution of languages and its social and class role amongst African people (perhaps gleaned from the political effects of anglicisation on sections of Afrikanerdom in the process of proletarianisation) was crucial in their consolidation and promotion of ethnically "imagined communities" and in turn underpinned educational endeavours.

The resurgence of interest in the 1980s in language planning described recently by one HSRC writer as "geolinguistics" is in response to an awareness that the old formulae no longer sustain the desired social hegemony. Talk of the need for a "dynamic" understanding of the role of language in society has emerged.³⁸ This is often expressed as a desire to modernise language policy for the purposes of effective communication. Particular attention

has been given to industry and the nature of communication in industry. Reagan, on South African language policy, describes the possible effects of language planning as follows: "Language planning is more than an appurtenance to racial policy or to any other social development. It bears upon a separate dimension in the struggle for human rights and may acquire a dignity of its own".³⁹ He suggests that this "dignity of its own" was achieved in most aspects of South African language planning but needs extension and modernisation. In his HSRC publication on communication in industry he advocates a more flexible language policy in the workplace with the cultivation and identification of multilingual groupings as key communicants in industry. These he sees functioning as a bridge group in industrial situations. With this point he gives expression to the revived need by the ruling bloc to establish a "cultural hegemony" over the leading elements of the intermediate strata. A process of formalisation of this hegemony in the reconsideration of language practices and ultimately in language policy is likely. Addressing the language question anew may preoccupy different organs of the state, in the schools and in the industrial context. This could provide it with a path to "modernisation" of South African language policy.⁴⁰

Conclusion

The apartheid ideologues' failure in education has been matched by a failure by progressive educationists to articulate an alternative policy for the advancement of the vernacular in the context of an overall progressive language education policy in the current struggles for a nonracial unified education system. This is so, particularly in those struggles waged within institutions by slowly awakening teacher organisations. A sensitivity of both national and class questions attached to language, as suggested in the 1950s but not clearly developed then, is now important to avoid problems emerging because of the lack of clarity on these issues. At a popular level this has led to predictable but unnecessary linguistic chauvinism. This is demonstrated by the problems encountered at the University of the Western Cape over the language question. Here bilingual policies (English and Afrikaans) have been pursued and rejected by sections of the student population demanding English. It is precisely in a nonracial educational context that problems concerning language arise and increasingly need to be addressed, not only in the tardily desegregating institutions where they suddenly occur, but also in serious intellectual endeavours. Thus we can create a contemporary critical sociology of language, a social history of language, critiques of language policy and considerations for our turbulent future. Alternative language policies in education need be voiced amidst the clamour for a new South African education system to fit a new society.

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28. SABRA *Bantu Education: Oppression or Opportunity?* (Stellenbosch: SABRA, 1955).
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HISTORY WORKSHOP PAPER

Popularizing the Precolonial Past: Politics and Problems

John Wright

University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg

The importance of history as an ideological weapon hardly needs stressing. It is a safe generalization that all political interest-groups, whether dominant or dominated, invariably seek to legitimize their particular policies and practices by seeking precedents for them in the past. In the process they will, if necessary, reshape and, if they can get away with it, invent the past to suit their purposes. At the same time they will be concerned to neutralize and, if possible, suppress or exorcize that knowledge of the past which informs the political projects of groups opposed to them. Control of the past is, in other words, always a political issue, and history is always a terrain of struggle.¹

In South Africa the political importance of history is graphically illustrated by the development of Afrikaner nationalist historiography.² It is also well recognized by those engaged in the development and social rooting of what is coming to be called People's Education. Thus among the subject committees appointed by the National Education Crisis Committee (NECC) in 1986 was one set up to develop an alternative to the official history syllabus of the Department of Education and Training.³ And thus a Soweto student involved in an informal education group could explain that the group was concentrating initially on history "because it is the one subject through which the oppressor instilled into the black people a sense of inferiority, barbarism and dependence".⁴

The self-consciously "alternative" kind of history which in the last year or so has become widely known in South Africa as People's History has its origins in the post-Soweto period of the late 1970s. It has emerged essentially as anti-apartheid history; that is, as history written explicitly as a counter to the racist and elitist stereotypes and perversions of the southern African past that have characterized the history propagated, especially in the schools education system, by successive apartheid regimes. It is "popular" history in that where apartheid history seeks to minimize and demean the historical roles played by the black people who form the great majority of South Africa's population, People's History deliberately seeks to bring the black underclasses into South African history, and at the same time is written primarily for a readership drawn from those classes.

The emergence of this genre of history in South Africa is something that should be greatly welcomed by academic historians, and the expansion of its still exiguous literature a project in which they could be playing a much more active role. Not the least contribution that these historians can make is to provide constructive criticism where it is needed. This paper aims to set out a number of critical comments on one aspect of the popular history that has emerged since about 1980 - its treatment of the precolonial period of southern African history. (By "precolonial" is meant the period before the establishment of effective colonial rule. Over most of southern Africa this took place in the second half of the nineteenth century.) Though the approaches to the period exhibited in the popular literature are by no

means always uniform, certain features emerge frequently enough in it to provide a focus for some generalized comments.⁵

The most obvious feature of the way in which precolonial history is presented in the popular literature is that, compared with colonial and post-colonial history, it gets relatively little attention. In large part this neglect is due quite simply to the absence of readily available syntheses of southern Africa's precolonial history. The academic study of the period by historians essentially began only in the 1960s, flourished briefly in the 1970s, and then went into decline in the early 1980s as the first generation of precolonial historians, together with their students, moved on to what they felt were more "relevant" fields of study. The result is that very large areas of southern Africa's past before the mineral discoveries of the late nineteenth century are still relatively unknown.

But (to anthropomorphize the more easily to generalize) another reason for popular history's neglect of the precolonial period has to do with the nature of the political paradigm in which it is produced. As already indicated, it is a history that has emerged very largely in response to apartheid history. The directness of its engagement gives it, at its best, a great cogency, but at the same time, even where its propositions are diametrically opposed to those of apartheid history, tends to lock it into the same frame of reference. Popular history, in other words, has so far tended in many ways to emerge as a reverse image of apartheid history, to define itself not so much in terms of what it is **proposing** as in terms of what it is **opposing**. Thus where apartheid history focuses primarily on post-"great trek" history, so does popular history, even if, instead of highlighting the struggles and "achievements" of white settlers, and of Afrikaners in particular, it emphasizes popular resistance to, and struggles against, colonialism and apartheid.⁶ And as apartheid history pays little attention to the history of precolonial African societies, so too has popular history thus far tended to do.

In so far as it does consider the precolonial period, popular history highlights three main themes - the establishment of Iron Age farming societies in the early AD era, the emergence of large states in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, and resistance to the intrusions of white settlers. Otherwise the period tends to be treated ethnographically rather than historically. As in apartheid history, descriptions of customs and cultures of societies defined in the vocabulary of contemporary orthodox anthropology - the Nguni, the Sotho, the Tsonga - often substitute for explanations of historical continuities and changes. The result, as in apartheid history, is the emergence of a picture of timeless, unchanging societies. Even if they are described in positive terms rather than in the negative terms of apartheid history, they do not emerge as having a real history. Precolonial history thus functions essentially to provide images of an idealized past which can be contrasted with the miseries of life under colonialism and apartheid. The restoration of a positive view of precolonial society should be an important facet of popular history, but when the dynamic element is left out the result is a stereotyping and therefore a mystification of the past. The political implications of this process will be touched on in the conclusion of this paper. To put the argument in context, three features of a common stereotype which by and large remains unchallenged in popular histories will be discussed further.

In the first place, the stereotype assumes that precolonial societies were politically united and socially homogeneous. This view fails to take into account that states such as those ruled by the Zulu, the Dlamini (Swazi), the Khumalo (Ndebele), the Kweni (Sotho), the Maroteng (Pedi), and others were composed largely of discrete chiefdoms which had been subordinated by, or had given their allegiance to, a dominant chiefdom. The nature of the relations between dominant and subordinate chiefdoms varied widely, but in all these states political tensions between the various chiefdoms provided one of the major dynamics for

historical change. Failure to appreciate this means that the political history of these states ends up as the accounts of dynastic struggles and wars with neighbours that are all too familiar from "colonial" literature.

This review also fails to take into account that in these states there were clear social divisions between an exploitative aristocracy which owned relatively large numbers of cattle and the common people who owned relatively few. These embryonic class divisions tended to co-incide with ethnic divisions. Thus in the Zulu kingdom, the socially superior chiefdoms of the *amatungwa* category were distinguished on ethnic lines from socially inferior categories such as those of the *amanhlwenga*, *amathonga*, *amalala*, *amazosha*, and others. Similar class-cum-ethnic divisions existed in the Swazi and Ndebele kingdoms, and were probably widespread in African states.

To do justice, some of the popular literature on precolonial societies does take note of the existence of class divisions. Invariably, though, it does so in an "ethnographic descriptive" rather than a "historical explanatory" context. Thus descriptions of these societies will note that there were differences in the social positions of rich and poor, powerholders and subjects, aristocracies and commoners. But when it comes to explanations of political change the role of class factors is largely disregarded, and the reader tends to be left with various determinist or even "Great Man" notions of change.⁷

The stereotype also tends to take for granted the divisions that existed in African societies on lines of sex and of age. It does not consider that relations between men and women, and between older people and younger, were sites of struggle, and therefore cannot conceive of changes in gender relations and in age-group relations such as took place with the rise and later the collapse of states such as those mentioned above. Nor can it find room for a history of the family, or of women.

In the second place, the stereotype tends to see African polities as having been united in their struggles against the establishment of white domination and colonial rule. This is a view which derives largely from ideologies developed in the course of political struggles in the late nineteenth and the twentieth centuries. At many times and places the struggle against colonialism did strengthen unity within and between African societies, but at other times and places it brought about disunity and political fragmentation. The stereotype obscures the fact that in the precolonial period, relations between Africans and whites were far more fluid and flexible than they became in the twentieth century, when they took the form essentially of relations between a dominant boss class and a subordinated worker class. It is a distortion of the evidence to see Africans in the nineteenth century as all arranged together on one side of a frontier, with all whites on the other. This view which is common to apartheid history and to anti-apartheid popular history alike, gives no idea of the complexities of cross-frontier political alliances, especially in the period before the 1880s. In what is now the eastern Transvaal region, whites sought alliances with black allies against other whites, as well as against other blacks; and blacks sought alliances with whites against other blacks as well as against other whites. Further south, the factions within the Zulu leadership frequently sought to make alliances against their rivals with either the Boers in the Transvaal or the British in Natal.

In the same vein, the point needs to be made that in probably every war that white people have fought against black people in southern Africa, they have had other blacks fighting on their side. The British regulars who fought a long succession of wars against Xhosa-speaking people in the nineteenth century were invariably assisted by Xhosa-speaking and other black auxiliaries. Natal Africans fought on the side of the British against the Zulu in the war of 1879. Swazi soldiers played a major role in the British defeat

of the Pedi in the same year. Numerous other examples could be cited. The various groups of people who defined themselves as whites should be seen not as a homogeneous group of conquerors sweeping across the land but as intrusive communities, themselves often internally divided, that intervened in, or were drawn into, pre-existing patterns of political conflict. In the process, subordinate groups in African polities often made alliances with white groups against the established leadership. African politics in the nineteenth century need to be seen in their own terms, not in terms of the very different politics of the twentieth century.

In the third place, the stereotype sees colonial rule as having been imposed and maintained primarily by force. At a reductionist level this is true: some of the most violent and destructive wars in Africa's history were fought to establish European colonial rule in the southern part of the continent, and the maintenance of white domination in South Africa has always depended on the use of violence against black people. But the stereotype fails to take note of the articulation between precolonial and colonial forms of domination and exploitation. Colonial administrators in southern Africa, as in the rest of Africa, were not usually in a position to rule by force alone: they often relied heavily on policies of divide and rule which took advantage of pre-existing political and social cleavages within African society. Thus they took advantage of succession disputes to make alliances with one faction against another. They exploited pre-existing forms of ethnic discrimination to split subject groups off from rulers and to create out of them new and often co-operative administrative "tribes". As is well known, they very often did not assume direct authority over their African subjects but ruled them through hierarchies of "traditional" chiefs and sub-chiefs according to "native law", which was based partly on the impositions of the colonial administrators, and partly on customary law as interpreted by the collaborative collectivity of chiefs. They exploited pre-existing gender divisions and patterns of female subordination in order to thrust onto women the prime responsibility of maintaining households whose basic structures were changing under the impact of migrant labour and the penetration of market relations. They exploited pre-existing age-hierarchies in order to try to keep control over a migrant labour force composed largely of young, unmarried men.⁸

One response to the comments made above might be to dismiss them as academic, and as irrelevant - or, worse, divisive - in the context of present-day popular struggles against apartheid. In answer to this kind of charge two points need to be made. First, that for popular historians to neglect precolonial history is to leave the field wide open for annexation by the ideologues of ethnic nationalisms. In recent years ethnically based political movements in southern Africa, particularly in the bantustans but also in places like Swaziland, have moved with varying degrees of effectiveness to seize on the precolonial past in order to provide themselves with a mantle of legitimacy. In the bantustans the clearest example of this is to be seen in the way in which the leaders of the Inkatha movement have for a decade and more manipulated Zulu "traditional" history.

The most effective exponent of the Inkatha version of history is the Chief Minister of KwaZulu, Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi. Throughout his political career, Chief Buthelezi has taken every opportunity of publicly proclaiming a version of Zulu history which focuses on the nineteenth century Zulu kings as the founders and guardians of a unified Zulu nation and as the leaders of a heroic resistance to the establishment of colonial domination. In this view, the present-day Zulu royal house and its close associates, including Chief Buthelezi, are, by virtue of their genealogical and "spiritual" links with the past kings, the natural and therefore legitimate leaders of Zulu people today, wherever they are to be found, and whatever their walks of life. Lacking as he does a national political base, Chief Buthelezi

has successfully exploited a localized ethnic past to help provide himself and Inkatha with a strong regional base.

The Inkatha version of history can be seen as "popular" in that it is produced primarily for consumption by a section of the oppressed people of South Africa; but in that it focuses on great men, and does not recognize a division of interests between leaders and led among Zulu people either in the past or in the present, it is in effect strongly elitist. It makes powerful emotional appeals to working-class Zulu people, but it does so by celebrating an imaginary unity of the Zulu "nation" now and in the past, and by recalling the military "glories" of the Zulu kingdom. It thus appeals to their "Zulu-ness" rather than to their common membership of a nationally oppressed and exploited working class. It belongs to that brand of ideology which Stuart Hall has called "authoritarian populism",⁹ and, because of its ethnic exclusivism, can be seen in the context of South African national politics as a profoundly divisive force. It seems hardly necessary to argue the case that popular-democratic (to use Hall's term again) historians need to contest it on its own terrain of precolonial history by bringing out the role of the underclasses in the history of the Zulu kingdom; and by revealing how Zulu ethnicity, like all ethnicities, was not something primordial and fixed, but was created and continually refashioned - as it continues to be today - by sectional political interests.

Secondly, to downplay the existence of social and political divisions within and between African societies in the precolonial past is in effect to discount the importance of the struggles in those societies of subordinate groups and of common people, and to give legitimacy to a view of history which highlights the role of dominant groups. It is also to obscure the ways in which, in the course of those struggles, ethnicities were shaped and reshaped, and thus in effect to leave unchallenged the enormously pervasive view that ethnic groups are not so much products of history as part of the "natural" order. On both counts it is a partial surrender to apartheid history, in that it is to accept elitism and ethnicism as largely unproblematic. It is to accept the terrain of struggle as apartheid history defines it, instead of seeking to shift the site of the struggle altogether. A genuine People's History cannot develop in South Africa until its exponents extend their concern with issues of class and ethnic conflict in the more recent past to include the precolonial period.

It is entirely appropriate - and necessary - that popular history should take as its starting point the popular struggles being waged against apartheid in the present. But if it is to be history for liberation rather than history for continued oppression then it needs to recognize more clearly that these struggles are in many ways shaped by forces that have their origins in the precolonial period of southern Africa's history, and to address itself to portraying the nature of those forces to its readers.

Notes and References

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2. See T. Dunbar Moodie, *The Rise of Afrikanerdom* (Berkeley & Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1975), xvii-xviii, 1-11, 18-21, and chapters 2,9; L. Thompson, *The Political Mythology of Apartheid* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1985); J.M. du Preez *Africana Afrikaner: Master Symbols in South African School Textbooks* (Alberton: Librarius, 1983).
3. *Sunday Times*, 7 December 1986; *The Star*, 8 December 1986; *Weekly Mail*, 5-11 December 1986.
4. *Weekly Mail*, 17-23 October 1986.
5. The comments that follow are based on a reading of the following sources (listed in order of

publication): Learn and Teach, *History of South Africa* (Johannesburg: Learn and Teach, 1979-1982), chapters 1-16; L. Callinicos, *Gold and Workers* (Johannesburg: Ravan, 1980); *Learning Post*, series of history articles, 9 March - 19 October 1980; *Upbeat*, vol. 1, No. 1 (March 1981), onwards; Prezanian Comix and Environmental and Development Agency (EDA), *Vusi Goes Back* (Johannesburg: EDA, 1982); Turret Correspondence College African Studies Course, Book 3, part B, *Colonialism in Africa, 1880-1930*, Book 4, parts A and B, *Resistance to Colonialism* (Johannesburg: Turret College, 1981-82); *FOSATU Worker News*, series on the making of the working class, 24 (August 1983), onwards; *New Nation*, People's History series, issue of 23 October - 5 November 1986, onwards; Dept of Education, University of Cape Town, *Precolonial South Africa and The Mfecane* (Cape Town: UCT Press, 1986); Economic History Research Group, *The Struggle for the Land*, South African History series, No. 1 (Cape Town: UCT Press, n.d.). Useful critical points are to be found in H.E. Webster, "Some Thoughts on Popularizing Precolonial History" (Paper presented to workshop on precolonial history, University of Cape Town, 1986).

6. Thus the series of articles on People's History currently appearing in *New Nation* was advertised as intending to focus specifically on "the struggles of the people in urban and rural areas"; see the issue of 9-22 October 1986.
7. The same point applies to some of the avowedly socialist schools text books which have been published in Zimbabwe since independence. See, for instance, M. Sibanda and others, *The African Heritage* (Harare: Zimbabwe Educational Books, 1982); P. Garlake and A. Proctor, *People Making History* (Harare: Zimbabwe Publishing House, 1985).
8. An "alternative" history which does challenge some of the stereotypes outlined here is Turret Correspondence College's African Studies Course, *Resistance to Colonialism*, Book 4, part A, where the treatment of "collaboration" is notably sensitive.
9. S. Hall, "Popular-democratic vs Authoritarian Populism: Two Ways of 'Taking Democracy Seriously'", in A. Hunt, (ed.), *Marxism and Democracy* (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1980), 175-85. Other useful discussions of the various strands of populist ideology are to be found in R. Samuel, "People's History", in R. Samuel, (ed.), *People's History and Socialist Theory*; E. Laclau, *Politics and Ideology in Marxist Theory* (London: New Left Books, 1977), chapter 4. See also the comments of J. Cronin in "The Question of Unity - A Reply", *SA Labour Bulletin*, 11, 3 (1986): 31-2, on populism in the current South African context.

HISTORY WORKSHOP PAPER

*The Struggle for Control over the Voices of
the Past and the Socialising Role of
Precolonial History: Perspectives on the
Production of Precolonial Education
Materials*

*Carolyn Hamilton and Helen Webster
Swaziland Oral History Project*

"... my poetic for history begins with an exploration of two declarations. One declaration is that histories are not the past but all the varied ways of knowing the past. The other is that histories as ways of knowing the past are the socialising process insofar as that process is conscious and symbolic. (Greg Denning, "A Poetic for History").¹

Introduction

The *Swaziland Oral History Project* (SWOHP) is a research programme on precolonial history. The chief aim of the project is the collection, preservation and analysis of oral traditions about the precolonial period of south-east African history. The project is based in Swaziland as Swazi oral traditions are amongst the richest in all of southern Africa. The project is making its collection of oral tradition and its research findings available in published form to the wider community.²

Published precolonial history

The "popularizing" and publishing activities of SWOHP are a response to the need throughout southern Africa for more easily accessible African history. They are also informed by the need to continue to counteract still prevalent racist myths about pre-white Africa and the ideological manipulation of tradition by power-seeking "tribal authorities".

The most significant reasons for the near-absence of published precolonial history are to be found in the ideological needs of the apartheid regime from the 1960s onwards - justification of white monopolization of the land and of white domination, through reference to the historical myths that the interior of southern Africa was largely empty of people when the first white settlers arrived, and that blacks were "a savage, ignorant and heathen people" who gained access to civilization, technology and religion through subordination to white rule.³

The historical justification of apartheid underwent a shift in emphasis with the institution of the policy of "separate development" and the creation of the self-governing homelands. These policies are legitimated through reference to the historical myth that, since time immemorial, the Bantu-speaking inhabitants of southern Africa have been divided into separate and mutually antagonistic ethnic identities. It is argued that it is only the firm hand of white control that prevents deeply-entrenched historical differences from plunging the

sub-continent into "tribal" conflict and chaos. These claims about immutable ethnic diversity are used to justify the establishment of the Bantustans apart from white South Africa, and each other, and underpin South Africa's notorious migrant labour system. Obsessively promoted, these myths and various mutations thereof, are responsible for the particular biases of precolonial history as it appears in many ethnographic histories, school textbooks and other official or semi-official publications.⁴

In the last decade and a half, historians working within more Africanist and/or Marxist paradigms have begun to challenge these myths and to provide alternative and more historically accurate accounts of the precolonial past.⁵ The existence of farming communities south of the Limpopo as early as the third century AD is now well known. Detailed studies of the technology and socio-political systems of the early hunter-gatherers, and the later arrivals, the Bantu-speaking pastoralists, have finally dismissed the image of the "simple native", at least from the pages of academic studies.

While these advances have begun to correct the more notorious of the racist historical myths, many recent accounts of the precolonial past continue to be dominated by notions of ethnicity and ethnic categorization; to focus on the origins and early migrations of "ethnic" groups; and to reproduce the history of prominent historical rulers and great battles. The work of the radical historians on pre-twentieth century history is, moreover, largely concerned with the processes of colonization, and black-white interaction. There are few detailed and comprehensive studies of precolonial societies in their own right. Problems of this kind also characterize more popular accounts of precolonial history where they are compounded by the tendency to romanticize pre-white life in southern Africa. Rulers and ruled are represented as living in harmony; chiefship is depicted as being responsible and responsive to the people; poverty and need are unknown, and life is one long rural idyll.

Some of these limitations reflect the nature of the available evidence. Oral traditions are the single most important source of evidence for the period. On the whole, they tend to be framed in ethnic terms, and to be concerned with the history of past rulers and epic battles. It is not surprising to find this material shaping the historians' accounts. The corpus of relevant oral data is itself not extensive. The problems faced by the guild historians are compounded for the popularizers or textbook writers of this history; for the most part the historians' discussions of evidence are highly academic; recourse to evidence drawn from other disciplines (archaeology, linguistics, demography, ecology, etc.) to augment the oral data demands a command of a variety of technical vocabularies. The result is that written precolonial history is often slender, tedious and complex.

Oral traditions and precolonial history

Oral traditions lie at the heart of the reconstruction of precolonial history. They invest it with narrative coherence and interest, making it come alive. Of course, like written precolonial history itself, they are not objective, true representations of the precolonial past. They are affected by the vagaries of human memory, and are often repeatedly subjected over time to manipulation in the pursuance of specific interests.

Nor do oral traditions exist in a value-free context in the present. Today, oral traditions are largely the preserve of either the elders of rural communities (often people without any formal education), or the modern tribal authorities. Oral traditions related by the former group are frequently dismissed as "fireside tales", myths or "primitive mumbo-jumbo". A pervasive view amongst school teachers in particular is that written history is more authoritative and reliable than oral history.

Oral traditions actively promoted by tribal authorities or institutions such as Inkatha are

used to justify their monopoly of power and resources. In such cases, oral traditions are presented as intact survivals from the past. These relics are considered to be accurate and unchanging accounts of the remote past.

Both of these views of oral traditions are unsatisfactory and need to be taken account of in the promotion of precolonial history. The first view of oral traditions as a load of "mumbo-jumbo" ignores the valuable core of historical data contained in oral traditions. It implicitly reinforces the racist stereotype that Africans have no history.

The second view of oral traditions as authoritative accounts of the remote past fails to acknowledge that oral traditions are open to political manipulation, selective promotion and the depredations of faulty memory. The particular accounts of the precolonial past advanced by these tribal authorities are often difficult to challenge, as alternative versions of past events are repressed and critical content analysis is made difficult. This situation is exacerbated by the ease with which official traditions and accounts of the precolonial past gain for themselves the mantle of "progressive" history because precolonial history is largely free of white activity.

The writing of popular or textbook precolonial history needs therefore to challenge both of these views of oral traditions, to offer analytical tools for people to assess both the strengths and the weaknesses of the oral traditions with which they are confronted in daily life, and which form the primary sources of precolonial history.

Accessible alternative precolonial history aims, among other things, to counter the yet pervasive view that southern African blacks had little history worth recording before the arrival of the first whites; and to demonstrate clearly that precolonial societies were not "static", "inferior" or "simple" societies by illuminating the complex relationship of precolonial societies to their environments, the interface between different societies at different points in time (such as the interaction between Khoisan and Bantu-speaking peoples and the widespread processes of the incorporation and absorption of the former by the latter). This focus moves away from a preoccupation with the processes of colonization to reclaim a long and rich African history. It suggests that the very term "precolonial" is an inadequate description of its content, for the term collapses together many different eras and epochs, and implicitly asserts that the moment of European colonization is the major marker in African history.

Accessible alternative "precolonial" history must go further however and challenge the essentially romantic and racist ideas about the "precolonial" past which suggests that life in Africa before the advent of the first whites was a rural idyll. It must explore rather than obscure the differences between rulers and ruled in "precolonial" times and illuminate the processes whereby the ruled came to be subordinated to and, indeed, exploited by their rulers. It can show something of the processes behind the emergence and dissolution of ethnic identities (many now no longer known) in "precolonial" times, and of the roots and development of the ethnic identities now current. This emphasis on development and change can provide an important corrective to the pervasive idea of modern ethnic identities as fixed and historically immutable, situating the phenomenon of ethnic mobilization in the constantly shifting contexts of competition over time for resources.

The significance of the focus within "precolonial" history on evidence, and on oral traditions in particular, is that instead of being presented with an alternative account of the past, readers and students are stimulated to consider versions of history critically. This approach opens up an opportunity for the construction of "history" to be shown to have multiple locations. One such location becomes that claimed by the readers and students themselves through activity. This approach focuses attention on the contests and the

research that produce, reproduce and change historical knowledge.

Producing texts on "precolonial" history for use in schools

Motivated by the concerns outlined above, the SWOHP investigated the feasibility of producing two kinds of texts on "precolonial" history: inexpensive booklets for the general readership; and/or materials for use in schools. On the whole, the channels for the distribution of popular history booklets which exist in South Africa (trade unions, literacy groups, women's organisations, community organisations) are not available, or not favourably disposed towards this kind of project in Swaziland. The absence of an appropriate distribution network for adult material, coupled with a movement towards a revised Schools History in Swaziland, led the SWOHP to concentrate on the production of materials for use by secondary school students.

Revision of the Swazi secondary school history syllabus is necessary as only 6% of the present syllabus deals with Swazi history (and of that, the percentage of the amount allocated to the "precolonial" period is minimal). Southern African history as a whole is more comprehensively treated, but the overwhelming emphasis of the syllabus is on colonial and European history. Teachers and students experience considerable difficulties in coming to grips with the enormous body of foreign history. Furthermore, the section on Swazi history makes little attempt to engage with notions of tradition and culture which are pervasive in Swazi society, and which are taught as a separate school subject. The deficiencies of the existing syllabus are widely recognised, but changes have been slow in coming because of the absence of suitable and better teaching materials.

The materials which the SWOHP is producing are likely to provide the basis for a major revision in Swaziland. These materials will significantly increase the amount of "precolonial" and Swazi history taught in schools. The focus of the materials on oral tradition will attempt to make Swaziland's rich heritage of oral traditions accessible to students, at the same time providing a basic understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of oral traditions as historical sources, and of the role which oral traditions play in modern Swazi society.

The latter, more methodological purposes of the project's materials suggested that the publications should not take the form of **additional** teaching materials, but rather that of the **prescribed** textbook. In the form of additional materials, published oral traditions run the risk of being taken at face value (of ending up being used in the "tradition and custom" class rather than the history class); of being treated as myth; or of being read solely for entertainment. An already weighty history syllabus in which teachers struggle to complete the textbook leaves little opportunity for the use of additional materials. In addition, the Swazi education system places the burden of purchasing additional materials on the teacher. The textbook is provided free of charge. Swazi history teachers are, on the whole, undertrained and lack the necessary confidence and motivation to use new material. The Ministry of Education, in turn, is reluctant to introduce and promote additional materials. The result is that additional materials are seldom used in Swazi schools. Finally, the existing textbook lacks both the necessary substantive content and methodological focus to provide an adequate context for the kind of material produced by the SWOHP. These considerations prompted the SWOHP to undertake the production of a "precolonial" history textbook for Form 1 pupils.

Problems particular to the writing of a "precolonial" history textbook

Perhaps the most striking features of most accounts of the "precolonial" past is that they are

boring and complex. The SWOHP is attempting to enliven the proposed textbook through the reproduction of numerous oral texts to illuminate points of method or of historical substance. For example, a split in a family that occurred in remote "precolonial" times is explained in the oral traditions but a number of versions exist as to how the split occurred. In the one account, a contest between two brothers, Hlubi and Dlamini, is arranged to determine who will be their father's heir. The contest takes the form of a beast-skinning competition. But the father favours Hlubi over Dlamini, and gives him a sharper knife. Soon the smoke is rising over Hlubi's camp - his beast is skinned and being cooked, and his people are celebrating his victory.

In the second version, a young boy, Hlubi, is described as being the rightful heir. A plot is hatched to kill him, and replace him with his brother, Dlamini. In a bid to save her relative, Hlubi's aunt scorches his right hand with a burning coal. A left-handed person cannot accede, so Hlubi loses the succession, but remains alive.

The two stories make lively reading, and ultimately pose the question of how and why they differ. This raises simple methodological issues for students. Exercises centered on the two stories explore these issues. The students are introduced to the informants from whom the two versions emanate, and learn how they are articulating conflicting claims about seniority relevant to modern-day political office-holding.

Swazi oral traditions are perhaps uniquely rich amongst the corpus and oral traditions in southern Africa. They deal in detail with events and processes that go back well into the eighteenth century. Differing regional traditions exist which illuminate the pre- and early state formation periods of Swazi history from many new angles. These traditions form the basis for lessons about the processes of historical change and serve to introduce local rather than the better-known royal historical actors. In summary, the oral traditions bring the "precolonial" past to life, filling it with interesting characters and exciting events that happen at places locatable on a map. They illustrate vividly some of the drier issues of historical analysis such as strategies of political incorporation ("it is well-known how the Mkhonta people joined the Swazi. It is the story of our name 'Mkhonta'. To *khonta* is to come and give allegiance. It happened like this..."); processes of disaggregation ("the Nhleko people under Hlekwako rose up against the Mamba chiefs. The *impi* of Hlekwako fought and defeated the Mamba. The Mamba want to lift up the blanket of (to ask help from) the king, Mswati. Mswati sent an *impi* to harrass Hlekwako. Mswati's *impi* returned with the cattle, those which had been taken by Hlekwako, the rebel. After that, there came a great famine. Just then, a hippopotamus was found inside the cattle byre at the Nhleko place. 'Awu' called the Nhleko people, 'Let us eat it'. Not long after that, Hlekwako fell ill and died. Then all the people got scattered. Some went as far as Ngozi, in Zululand; some went up here, past Ntubane and on up to Ngwavuma..."); or of land settlement ("so it was that Sibanze found our grandfather Ndzatu, and that is how we got the land. He found him making a fire on the hill. Sibandze said 'Who is that lunatic making a fire on the hill at night? Catch him for me!' The men caught him and brought him down from the hill. Our grandfather Ndzatu said 'I have something special to alleviate pain and suffering'. So Ndzatu was taken to the king who was ill. He helped him. Then Ndzatu returned to the hill. But the king wanted him nearby. So he gave him this land. There are many other stories about Ndzatu"!)

Another problem of particular seriousness for the production of a school textbook is the complete absence of contemporary visual images from the "precolonial" period. There are no illustrations or photographs of people or places of the early nineteenth century. Nor are there any contemporary descriptions.

Isolated illustrations and descriptions exist for the period after 1830, but in many cases they are framed through the eyes of early European travellers and need to be used with caution. A temptation exists to use images from a later period to illustrate an earlier period. In an attempt to avoid suggesting continuities over time which may be inaccurate, the SWOHP has used two different strategies to provide a richly illustrated text. The first is to provide photographs of the evidence which survives in the present - the caves where the historical actors hid, the mountain fortresses which they occupied, or the pottery shards which were used in the past. In some cases, the pictures are powerful images and are self-explanatory. In other instances they need to be made more interesting and understandable through artistic intervention (for example, drawing in the rest of the pot of which only a fragment survives). Where considerable artistic license is necessary, the device of providing two different artistic reconstructions of the same feature or event underscores the point that the evidence is fragmentary and that the image is not "true" but rather illustrative and has been interpreted. This device underlines the approach of the whole textbook; to present history, not as a narrative of past events, but as a study of the way in which the past is reconstructed in the present.

The second device employed by the SWOHP to provide visual hooks for the text is to attempt to produce carefully researched illustrations that avoid the use of anachronistic details and which strive for historical accuracy. The artistic style is an important element of these illustrations, at once easy to interpret yet eloquent in human drama, and vibrant with action. Numerous maps and diagrams add to the corpus of visual material. Finally, the layout design used (borders and section dividers) are not just designs, but patterns made up of objects from the text (for example, types of archaeological evidence - bones, artefacts and figurines.)

Many of the difficulties concerning the provision of visual material are repeated in the provision of historical narrative. The historical reconstruction of the "precolonial" past is, at best, patchy. At this stage, the available evidence is such that many questions remain unanswered, many details unknown. Moreover, ongoing research is liable to alter the historical picture. Teachers and students accustomed to the detailed, unbroken narratives of history and itemized causes and results do not adjust easily to the paucity of "facts" about the "precolonial" period, the gaps in the historical story, and the speed with which historical reinterpretation and new data replaces older accounts.

The SWOHP approach to these problems is to centre the textbook on the concept of historical investigation, explicitly anticipating that new finds and information will alter the picture of the past. The narrative thread and the continuity in the textbook is provided, not so much by the events in the "precolonial" past, but rather by the activities of modern-day investigators of the past.

The SWOHP found that different kinds of oral traditions survive concerning different periods of Swazi history. Obviously, oral traditions about the pre-nineteenth century past tend to be much more fragmentary than traditions about the nineteenth and twentieth centuries; official traditions are richest for the reigns of the more successful kings, while regional and resistance traditions survive better for periods of less centralized rule. These kinds of differences in the type of available oral evidence lend themselves to different kinds of treatment in the textbook. Each section of the textbook therefore explores slightly different methodological points about oral traditions, and the blend of method and substantive content varies across the text. For example, oral traditions about the remote past rely heavily on the device of the textbook's modern-day investigator of history for their contextualisation and explication. Traditions about nineteenth century Swaziland can be

interpreted more literally and tend to be more complete. In the latter case, the interventions of the historical investigator are less necessary to render the traditions coherent, and are less frequent. Where they continue to occur, they serve to reinforce the methodological points introduced in the opening chapters. They are a reminder that historical reconstruction is a process, not an accomplished fact: That historical knowledge of the past is a contested terrain and that new research continually alters the picture of the past. The body of oral traditions about the later period of Swazi "precolonial" history is much denser than that available for the earlier period. It is possible to use a range of oral traditions from different points of view to get a bearing on events of the period. Still closer to the time of colonization the availability of written sources increases, and these can be used in conjunction with the oral traditions. These features demand a somewhat different way of presenting the traditions relevant to different periods of Swazi history.

One of the primary aims of the textbook is to encourage students to engage actively in the process of reconstructing history, and to handle tradition critically. In the opening chapters of the textbook, the students are introduced to the experiences of a group of students just like themselves who researched and wrote up the history of their school. There are photographs of the students conducting their research, and an account of their difficulties and their successes. Likewise, throughout the book, the investigators of history are personalities familiar to the students with whom they can easily identify. These devices suggest that it is possible for ordinary people like themselves to gather history. The final exercise of the textbook is the completion of a history project in which the students are asked to research and write their own history, for example the history of their school, a famous landmark, or that of their family.

The final aim of the textbook is not to present a dry set of "facts" about the "precolonial" past, although it does provide a strong sense of the changing world of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries in south-east Africa. Rather, it seeks to animate students in the study of history and to teach through experience. Suggestions for skill-building exercises and classroom games abound in the textbook. The games teach points about oral tradition and history through the medium of student activity. One example is the broken-telephone game which illustrates vividly the way in which oral messages alter through transmission. A group of students listen to a message passed in a whisper down a line. The first person then compares the original message with the final product. The results are startling, and often hilarious. In one case, trainee teachers discussing the problems of the oral transmission of evidence played the game. The original message was "the cows are milked in the evening and not at dawn". The final result was "History should be written down"!

The other emphasis of the textbook is on evidence. Through its focus on oral traditions, the textbook seeks to introduce students to historical evidence, helping them gain some of the necessary skills to handle evidence confidently and critically and to process the past outside the work of the guild. History as an activity, rather than the presentation of alternative facts to passive recipients, can move beyond the countering of centuries of propaganda, to empower people to act creatively in the present, to achieve a control over the way that they know the past, and thus of the socialising process insofar as that process is conscious and symbolic

Notes and References

1. G. Denning, "A Poetic for History" (paper presented at the Fifth International Round Table in Anthropology and History, Paris, 1986)
2. A high school text book on precolonial Swazi history has been accepted for publication by Macmillan Botswana, and a collection of Swazi old traditions is presently being edited and

annotated for publication.

3. See, for example, S. Marks "The Myth of the Empty Land", *History Today* (January 1980): 8-12; and R. Cope, "The History of Land Occupation in South Africa - Myths and Reality" in *Some Basic Issues*, (1981): 9-23).
4. For the latest comments on the "Myth of the Empty Land", see the work of J. Cobbing, "The Mfecane as Alibi: Thoughts on Dithakong and Mbolopo", *Journal of African History*: forthcoming issue; and J. B. Wright, "Political Mythology and the Making of Natal's Mfecane" (unpublished paper, Pietermaritzburg, 1988)
5. In published form, see, for example, P.L. Bonner, *Kings, Commoners and Concessionaires* (Ravan: Johannesburg, 1988); P. Delius, *The Land Belongs to Us* (Ravan: Johannesburg, 1983); J.B. Peires, *The History of Phalo* (Ravan: Johannesburg, 1981).

Schools, Unemployment and Youth: Origins and Significance of Student and Youth Movements, 1976 - 1987

Jonathan Hyslop

University of the Witwatersrand

The centrality of student and youth movements in the South African conflict has been a salient feature of the period since 1976. In this paper, I will suggest that the social basis of those movements can only fully be understood by taking into account the conjunction of a set of economic, institutional and demographic factors that have affected South African youth in this period. I will argue that since the mid-1970s, employment opportunities for blacks have viturally stagnated. But at the same time, the numbers of black youth passing through the school system have soared, roughly doubling in the last decade, while the numbers in secondary school have almost quadrupled.

School expansion has been partly the result of a very drastic turn in state education policy since the early 70s. During that time there has been an attempt to restructure the schooling system so as to provide more black semi-skilled, technical, clerical and junior managerial employees. This technocratic approach has been reflected in the considerable expansion of secondary and technical education. It corresponds to changes in the labour requirements of an economy in which, while the overall number of jobs is fairly stable, the proportion of unskilled labour required is dropping and the proportion of semi-skilled and skilled labour rising. But the other factor in the expansion of education is surely that the state, confronted by a demographic change in which a larger and larger proportion of the black population is young, has viewed the social control benefits of keeping a large proportion of youth in school as out-weighing the economic and administrative costs of doing so.

To assert that such a shift in policy has taken place is not to suggest that the basis of educational policy is no longer racial, or that what has occurred is a "liberalization". Self-evidently, school education remains segregated. But it is also clear that the Verwoerdian formulation of apartheid ideology has been displaced by a version of apartheid in which a more technocratic and less overtly racial discourse prevails. This shift has coincided not with greater state flexibility in the political sphere but with greater centralisation in policy making.

Rapidly growing numbers of black youth are entering a rapidly growing school system, but on exiting from that system are faced with a stagnating labour market which offers few opportunities to most of them. Those who leave the school system and who are not able to break into the labour market thus form a very sizable group of people in their teens and early twenties. It is this social layer which, I would contend, has provided the social base of the youth movements outside the schools in recent years.

These factors have also affected those inside the schools. The rapid expansion of

numbers in the secondary system has boosted the numbers of the segment of school-goers most likely to be politicised. But the expansion of the system as a whole has been accompanied by enormous inefficiency: the Department of Education and Training (DET) provides a poor service, and improvements in the quantitative elements of that service have not been accompanied by qualitative improvements. So the state's attempts to deal with problems of labour supply and social control by expanding schools, have often simply generated new grievances. Progress in the school system is inefficacious in obtaining employment, because of the great pressure on the job market. And the big dropout rate means that few students have a chance of obtaining marketable qualifications. Thus experience constantly undermines the faith of the student in the value of participating in school. In this way, economic, institutional and demographic factors have conspired to generate the student and youth movements.

Of course this does not provide a comprehensive explanation of such phenomena. Changes in political conjuncture have been of great importance in sparking these movements. Thus, for example the events of 1976 are only explicable in the context of the fall of the Portuguese colonies, the revival of the labour movement in South Africa, and the rise of Black Consciousness ideology. Similarly, the student movement from 1984 needs to be related to the crisis around the Tricameral constitution and the upsurge of community struggles. But why youth and students played such a central role in the resulting events can only be explained by pointing to the particular factors in their situation in society which made them an explosive social force. By the same token, although awareness of the profound inequality in education is an important factor in student movement's motivation, it does not explain their existence. For twenty years before 1976 there were not significant rebellions against Bantu Education. This is accounted for partly by repression, but surely also in part by the fact that the growing job market of the 1960s and early 70s was less conducive to student frustration than the narrowing opportunities of the subsequent period. If political and ideological factors are satisfactorily to be used to explain student and youth movements, they must be placed in the context of the material conditions facing young people.

These arguments have a further implication, which I will return to at the end of my paper. This is that educational struggles can usefully be understood as part of a struggle over the conditions of urban social reproduction. I contend that the education system is itself a battlefield in which different social forces fight to impose their interests. I will argue that there are medium term possibilities that popular educational demands can be imposed on the state education system. But this would require a greater appreciation of the possibility of attaining such objectives, on the part of student movements and their allies, than has been the case before now. This implies that educational demands at a level which is *intermediate* between that of disciplinary and examination procedures on the one hand and a model for post-apartheid education on the other, might be able to attain some success. In short it implies that state education policy is, and may become to a greater extent, a contested arena.

I will now try to delineate the structural features of the economic, demographic and educational crisis affecting black youth.

Employment

The South African economy has been marked, over the last decade, by the stagnation of the overall level of employment. The general tendency in that period has been for employment to hover around the levels reached in the mid-1970s.

The 1960s boom saw phenomenal increases in employment. In manufacturing, the

number of employees of all races soared from 653 000 in 1960 to 1 069 000 in 1970.¹ As the boom began to tail off in the early 70s, growth in employment was less spectacular, but nevertheless still showed a strong upward trend. The Central Statistical Services' figures for formal sector, non-agricultural employment of African people rose from 2 137 000 in 1970 to 2 659 000 in 1976.² However since that time, catastrophic changes have taken place in the employment situation. After 1976, economic and political crisis pushed employment figures down. The brief mini-boom of the early 80s brought only limited increases before employment dropped again. Between 1976 and 1985, the highest figure for *total* employment given by CSS was 4 916 000 in 1982, which was less than 300 000 above the 1976 figure. During 1985, employment was running almost 100 000 down on 1982 at about 4 823 000.³

What is particularly striking about these figures however, is that overall employment for Africans seems to have been more stagnant than that for other ethnic groups. Total African employment, according to CSS, was in 1985, at 2 679 000 actually below the 1976 figure of 2 685 000. And Africans did not benefit proportionally from the early 80s boom which added, temporarily, only about 100 000 African jobs.⁴ The point is clear too if we look at the manufacturing sector, where 1985 employment was about 19 000 higher than 1975, but African employment was 19 000 lower.⁵

It should also be noted that in some key sectors of the urban economy, the employment levels of 1975/6 were never again approached. In construction 342 000 African workers were employed in 1975. But even in the mini-boom, the figures never again passed 300 000 and by the mid-1980s were only a shade above 200 000.⁶

For certain sectors of black employees job opportunities have improved somewhat during the 1970s. About 150 000 more African women are in formal sector employment than in 1977, although from a low starting point.⁷ There has been, because of the internal restructuring of the workforce, a growth in opportunities for those with secondary qualifications. But even here there has been a slow-down in some fields of opportunity since the mid-1970s. To take the example of clerical work; in this sector the number of African employees rocketed from 37 000 in 1969 to 99 000 in 1977.⁸ But in the subsequent period, the rate of growth was much slower, reaching 121 000 African employees by 1985.⁹

In general however the picture is clear: while there has been a substantial restructuring of the job market in favour of the semi-skilled and skilled, and against the unskilled, the overall number of jobs available to African people has largely stagnated since 1976.

The growth of the school system

Now, this crisis of the job market has taken place at exactly the period in which a major shift was taking place in the social position of black youth. There was an enormous expansion of the numbers in the school system; thus more and more people were being educationally "prepared" for a job market which afforded less and less opportunities. In 1955, the year of the introduction of Bantu Education, there were only about one million African school students. But the state's understanding of the education system as one which could act as an effective means of social control over black youth led it into a course of continual educational expansion (whether this course was effective for the state is of course another question; I would argue that in fact in the long run school expansion helped to mobilise and unite black youths by placing them in a common institution with a common set of problems).

The first ten years of Bantu Education saw a 100% growth of student numbers to two million by 1965. Almost as fast was the growth of the next decade. By 1975, on the eve of

the outbreak of the first mass student movements there were 3 700 000 African school students. Growth continued to 4 800 000 in 1980 and to over 6 000 000 in 1985.¹⁰

This astounding growth also involved a growth of the weight of the school students as a force within society. In 1955 only 10% of the African population was in school. By 1975 21% were school students. Today about one in four of all African people is a school student.¹¹

The expansion of the school system represents not only the state's option to cope with and economically channel black youth through the education system, but also a very important demographic change. The age distribution of the African population is taking on an increasingly "pyramidal" shape. In other words, the proportion of younger people is constantly growing in relation to the proportion of older people. It is estimated that around 45.5% of the total African population is under twenty,¹² but some analysts put the figure much higher.¹³ The enormous increases in the size of the school-going population are crucial in understanding why it is that student movements have been so much to the forefront of political developments in South Africa in our period. The sheer numerical weight of school-going and other youth in society, has put youth at the centre of the crisis of urban social reproduction which has developed in our cities. One might suggest too, that the changing numerical balance between the generations has played a part in the undermining of parental authority which has been such a feature of recent times.

The expansion of the school system has been particularly intense in the secondary sector. Given that secondary students are far more likely to be politicised than younger students, it seems reasonable to conjecture that the growth in this sector has fuelled the intensity of student movements. The 1976 uprising in particular followed a rapid expansion in this part of the school system. Up to the mid 1960s the state put little effort into building up the secondary schools: by 1965 there were a mere 67 000 African secondary school students. In this period, there was a deliberate state attempt to retard the growth of black urban secondary schools, so as to stem the tide of urbanization. Largely Bantustan based growth permitted the secondary enrollments to rise to 122 000 by 1970. However in the early 1970s the state moved to a more pragmatic interpretation of apartheid, and the expansion of urban secondary schools was permitted, in response to industry's increasingly complex labour needs. The result was that between 1970 and 1976 secondary enrollment more than tripled to 389 000.¹⁴ The tensions and pressures within the school system thus generated were part of the explanation of 1976: by squeezing larger numbers of older pupils into an under-resourced school system, the state itself generated the culture in which rebellion grew. However both new labour needs and calculations as to social control led government to continue to expansionary policy. When the second wave of student revolt broke out in 1980, there were 555 000 African secondary students¹⁵ and by the time the third and greatest schools crisis of 1984-6 erupted, there were more than a million.¹⁶ The recent growth rate in African secondary education is running at around 8.2%, more than three times the growth rate of primary education.¹⁷ The total secondary involvement for 1986 stands at 1,291,000,¹⁸ roughly a tenfold increase in fifteen years. This expansion was accompanied by an attempt to push up levels of qualification, with matric statistics rising from 15 000 candidates and 11 000 passes in 1978 to 100 000 candidates and 51 000 passes in 1986.¹⁹ (The declining pass rate suggests the costs in quality of education involved in this transition).

Institutional strains

The rapid growth of student numbers in the context of a limited resource base has led to a very ineffective education system, in terms of most conceivable measures of welfare or

cost-effectiveness. This is most striking if one looks at how the education system is unable to provide for educational continuity. The system fails to hold its students: as a rule of thumb one could say that of 100 African pupils starting first year in the mid 1970s, about 50 would have completed primary school, ten would reach Standard 10 and one would pass matric.²⁰ (To give more precise figures: of those starting in 1974, 45.9% survived to Standard 5 and 12.2% to matric.²¹ Even in the first year of school it is estimated that 166 000 did not re-register at the end for the next school year.)²²

The interrupted character of education compounds the internal strains in the system. Teachers have to cope with impossibly wide age ranges in the same class, and the high number of older pupils in relatively junior classes creates tense disciplinary relations. If we consider 1986 Standard 6 enrollments, for example, we find that only 38% of African students were in the "normal" age range of 12-14. 41.5% were in the 15-16 age group; 17% were 17-18 and 3.5% were 19 and older.²³ Few of these older pupils can have much chance of attaining their educational aspirations, and thus the potential for explosive frustration is obviously great.

Interestingly, women students show far greater staying power than men. At all levels of the secondary school system, they greatly outnumber men: for example, in 1986 there were 215 000 women but 179 000 men in African Standard 6 classes.²⁴ This may be due to greater social pressures on males to drop out of school into either political rebellion, work seeking, or crime.

Youth and unemployment

When we place together the major trends discussed above: the stagnation of employment opportunities: the growth of student numbers: and the inability of the school system to provide the resources to enable many students to complete their education satisfactorily, the dimensions of the crisis facing youth starts to become clear. More and more people are completing school and finding themselves chasing less and less jobs. As of 1986 around 750 000 young African people flowed out of the school system every year, either because they had completed their studies or because circumstances did not permit them to re-enrol. If we make the crude assumption that most of those who dropped out in primary school were either too young to work or would re-enter the school system at a later date, but that those dropping out of or leaving school in the secondary system or at the end of primary school are effectively on the job market, we can then say that roughly 350 000 school students are becoming job-seekers each year. If we assume that a proportion of those dropping out of primary classes are older potential job seekers as well, our guesstimate could go much higher.²⁵

As those who enter the job market in a period of stagnation, the youth are clearly faced with enormous obstacles in finding work. CSS surveys indicate that throughout the eighties well over half of all African unemployed have been in the under 29 age group.²⁶ Currently there are around twice as many unemployed 20-29 year olds as 30-39 year olds, and four times as many unemployed 20-29 year olds as 40-49 year olds.²⁷

A recent survey by Moller and others indicates something of the desperation felt by both urban and rural African youth over the employment question. In this survey, youths expressed considerably greater discontent over the lack of employment opportunities than they did over either political or educational grievances. Amongst township dwellers under 29 only 18% expressed any degree of satisfaction with the employment situation.²⁸

The unemployment and the education situations are thus intertwined. The school system is ejecting hundreds of thousands of unqualified youth onto a labour market which does not

demand their services. The young unemployed have little hope of a job. But those who stay in the school system have little chance of surviving long enough to get a qualification which can get them a job.

Student movement and social reproduction

The crisis in education has been part of crisis of urban social reproduction, arising out of the collapse of the classical apartheid model of social relations, in the economic malaise and political turbulence which has prevailed since the mid-1970s. As inflation, rising rents, declining social services and government attempts at political restructuring have impacted on the lives of urban dwellers, social movements contesting these issues have grown up. The labour movement, contesting the pivotal issue in social reproduction, the wage, has become increasingly drawn into conflicts involving other aspects of workers economic survival. Movements uniting labour and the community over issues of urban life constitute a distinctive type of social movement, to which parallels may be found in many other semi-peripheral industrializing countries. The student movement can be seen as such a phenomenon. Since education provides the key to the very limited employment opportunities available, and since it is the site of socialisation and daily existence for masses of working class youth, it is understandable that it should become an arena of contention over scarce resources. As in other sectors of urban life, we have seen an alliance in recent times of students with communities and labour, battling over state policy in this sphere. I would argue that student movements have largely represented an attempt by urban working class youth to impose their priorities and needs in a crucial sphere of social reproduction. The educational system has been made into a contested terrain in which both state and popular movements try to impose their interests.

When I stress the urban character of the reproductive crisis and the student movement, some may balk. But while acknowledging the existence of some rural student movements, and the difficulty of analytically separating out peri-urban and urban areas, it seems clear empirically that the student movements have been urban based. If we consider matric statistics for 1985 and 1986, the height of the student movement, this seems apparent. In the predominantly urban areas controlled by the DET, the number of candidates and passes collapsed to a fraction of the 1983 level. Yet in all but one of the Bantustans, there was substantial growth in these statistics, suggesting a far less disrupted system. (The exception was the largely peri-urban Ciskei).²⁹

There is a strong tendency to oppositional discussion on education to see all changes in state policy as merely cosmetic and superficial, and as arising only from the need of the state to make its rule more palatable or of capital to produce new types of labour. But such a view in a curious way sells short and underestimates the achievements of student and other educational movements in remoulding state policy. In fact the state has had to remodel the education system and redirect resources substantially toward black education precisely because mass movements have redefined the social terrain. Minister de Klerk's policy of a ten year transition to equal per capita spending within a still-segregated educational system, is a world away from popular demands for equal and non-racial education. But it nevertheless represents an attempt by the state to accommodate such demands, which has been forced on the state against its earlier convictions. As the crisis in black education has deepened, state spending has grown very rapidly in an attempt to contain it. Spending by DET on African education in "white" areas rose from R143 million in 1978/79 to R1157 million in 1986/87.³⁰ All this did not signify an outburst of governmental generosity, but rather an attempt to restructure a sphere of social life in which government was fast losing

the initiative.

The outstanding example of a social movement around education has been that led by the National Education Crisis Committee (NECC). Let us briefly look at some implications of the NECC experience.

The NECC and its strategy of People's Education made three very important impacts on the development of the battle around education in the 1986 period. Firstly by stressing unity between students on the one hand, and workers, teachers and communities on the other, it helped to overcome some of the divisions which had threatened to open up in 1985. During that year, the students, overestimating their own power and the state's weakness, had sometimes tried to "go it alone". The consequent lack of alliance with other sectors had sometimes resulted in youth activity degenerating into lumpen violence. But the NECC partly succeeded in unifying communities around the education issue. Secondly, the idea of People's Education addressed the development of popular conceptions of education which could pose an alternative to the State's, and encouraged the examination and development of feasible alternatives. Thirdly, in the early part of 1986 the NECC was able to draw the DET into negotiation, thus creating a mechanism through which popular education demands could be addressed to the authorities.

Given this assessment, what is the likely future of education struggles? We are not in an era where the dominant education structure is likely to be swept away and replaced by a popular one. But with little prospect of the resolution of structural economic problems, the social forces which produced the education crisis will continue, and we may expect further social movements around education to emerge. What then seems possible is for social movements to contest specific aspects of state policy in the education field. This has certain implications. Firstly, the 1985-86 experience suggests that such movements are likely to be effective if they unite students with communities and labour rather than being purely student based. Secondly, such movement can try to pull the authorities into negotiation on their demands. Although the currently dominant faction in government would not be amenable to this, other elements may favour it. If such negotiation opens up, there is the possibility of the state making specific policy changes in order to try to re-establish the credibility of the education system. But this could lead to concessions favourable to popular movements. Thirdly, while social movements in education need to address both their own long-term vision of education, and the immediate disciplinary grievances of students, negotiation would imply a level of demands intermediate between these two. In other words, it seems that at the moment demands in education are either long-term, that is around post-apartheid education or short-term, that is around discipline, the maximum school age and so on. Perhaps there is room for an intermediate approach, calling for substantive changes in broad state policy and the allocation of resources. These would be demands which it is possible to win in the context of the present education system, but which would mean a better deal for students, and which would shift the education system somewhat away from its present form, and in a direction which might make easier a later transition to post-apartheid education. Gaining such concessions would have a long-term importance. A post-apartheid state would have to start working with whatever educational system the present order bequeathed it: it is thus desirable to modify that system as much as possible in the short to medium term.

The labour movement has a particularly important contribution to make toward the formulation of such objectives in the education sphere. Based largely in education, education movements have tended to raise demands about purely internal changes in the education system. But as we have seen the crisis of youth and education is also, crucially, a crisis of employment. The unions, because of their understanding of the link between

education and labour are in a position to develop demands which address this connection.

The state's performance in providing marketable job-oriented training within the formal schooling system has been very limited. The bulk of the government's job-creation effort (about one billion Rand between 1985 and 1987) went into training schemes outside the school system.³¹ Small business development and tax breaks to encourage employers to conduct in-house training are also emphasised. Clearly the potentially unemployed school leaver is not the focus of this programme.

This seems to suggest that there are at least two issues which might be addressed in the education, job training and job creation sphere. One is that there is an immediate need on the part of youth for training resources which will give them marketable skills. Unions are in a position to pressure employers and government in this regard. Second, that unions could seek to ensure that they get a say in the education and in job-training schemes run by employers, and in local schools and training facilities, so that a more democratic character can be given to these facilities. If detailed attention is given by labour to existing government and employer education and training policy, it is not impossible that the advancing of alternatives in those spheres can take place.

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Most of the statistics given have been "rounded" to the nearest 1000, where applicable.

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University of the Witwatersrand Ltd. : Big Business Connections and Influence on the University Council

Rupert Taylor

University of the Witwatersrand

This paper is a revised and extended version of a paper presented at the Wits University-Community Workshop, 11 September 1987.

In the debate over the extent to which the urban English-speaking universities, such as the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits), can "seek to participate in the future of South Africa, rather than be dragged through it",¹ it has been argued that university Councils - given their ties to capital - serve to act as forces of restraint.² In this regard an analysis of the connections between Wits Council and big business is central to establishing the context in which Wits can act to fulfil its function and role as a liberalizing institution.

At the top of Wits University's decision-making structures sits the Council. It is a body which has the power to make statutes and regulations for the general government of the University; it is also responsible for major policy decisions and financial matters. It approves the overall allocation of funds throughout the University, must agree to all senior academic appointments and appoints the Vice-Chancellor.

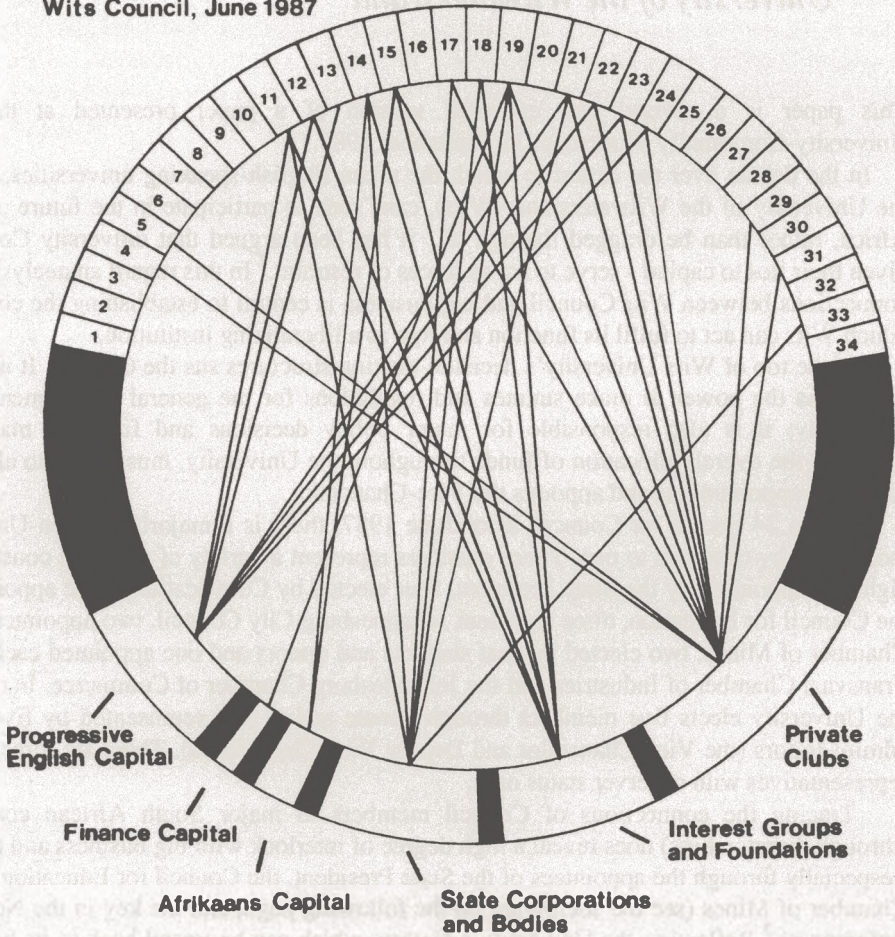
Of the 34 people on Council, as of June 1987, there is a majority of non-University members - by over two to one. These outsiders represent a variety of different constituents; eight are appointed by the State President, four elected by Convocation, three appointed by the Council for Education, three represent Johannesburg City Council, two appointed by the Chamber of Mines, two elected by past students and donors and one appointed each by the Transvaal Chamber of Industries and the Johannesburg Chamber of Commerce. In contrast, the University elects five members through Senate and is also represented by five senior administrators (the Vice-Chancellor and Deputy Vice-Chancellors). There are three student representatives with observer status only.

Tracing the connections of Council members to major South African companies (through directorships) does reveal a high degree of interlock with big business and the state - especially through the appointees of the State President, the Council for Education and the Chamber of Mines (see the sociogram on the following page, and the key in the Notes and References).³ Reflecting the University's history, which can be traced back to its being the School of Mines,⁴ there are strong links with gold mining companies. Foremost are Anglo-American, Barlow Rand and Anglovaal - the three largest non-Afrikaans companies in South Africa. Anglo-American is the largest and most powerful company in South Africa, having made a pre-tax profit of R1 952 million in 1987. This compares to Barlow Rand's pre-tax profit of R1 399.4 million and Anglovaal's R357.7 million.⁵

Links with Anglo-American are greatest; six members of Council - O'Dowd, Nisbet, von Wielligh, Anderson, Haslett and Smith - have clear past or present connections with

SOCIOGRAM: Interconnections between Wits Council and Organizations of the South African Capitalist Class.³

Wits Council, June 1987



companies that fall under the Anglo- American umbrella. O'Dowd is an alternate director of Anglo-American, chairman of the Anglo-American and De Beers Chairman's Fund and is well known as the author of "South Africa in the Light of the Stages of Economic Growth" which argues that capitalism and apartheid are incompatible and that economic growth works to undermine apartheid.⁶ Nisbet is a past and present director of a number of companies that fall under the Anglo-American umbrella - most notably Vaal Reefs Exploration and Mining Company and Johannesburg Consolidated Investment Company (JCI). JCI together with Anglo-American controls 47% of South Africa's gold production.⁷ Von Wielligh is also a past director of JCI and, like Nisbet, was Chairman of the Elsburg Gold Mining Company; both have been former presidents of the Chamber of Mines. Anderson is a past director of African Explosives and Chemical Industries (AECI); AECI is co-owned by Anglo-American and the ICI multinational. Haslett is managing director of South African Eagle Insurance and Smith is a director of the First National Bank. Both companies are part of the Anglo-American Corporation. Whilst O'Dowd and Anderson are appointed to Council through the Council of Education, Nisbet is appointed by the Chamber of Mines, von Wielligh and Smith are State President appointees and Haslett is appointed by the Johannesburg Chamber of Commerce.

The connections with Barlow Rand and Anglovaal are not as great, but they are significant. Barlow Rand have strong links through Sealey and Rosholt; Sealey is a director of Barlow Rand appointed to Wits Council by the Chamber of Mines, Rosholt is chairman of Barlow Rand and Chancellor of the University. The Anglovaal conglomerate is controlled and dominated by the partnership of two families; Hersov and Menell. C. S. Menell, deputy chairman of Anglovaal, is appointed to Wits Council by the Council of Education.

There is only one connection between Wits Council and finance capital; of the major non-state banking groups only the First National Bank is linked through Smith.

Whilst it is the progressive elements of non-Afrikaans capital that predominate there are ties with Afrikaans capital and with state corporations and bodies. The ties with Afrikaans capital are through two State President appointees - Wessels and Stutterheim - who are both connected to companies under the SANLAM sphere of influence; Wessels is chairman of Toyota Motors. There is only one major tie with a state corporation; Smith was chairman of the Electricity Supply Commission (ESCOM). As far as State bodies are concerned Stutterheim, Steyn and Jacobson have served on the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR). Rosholt and von Wielligh have served on the PM's Economic Advisory Council whilst Drummond was on the Wiehahn Commission (1977-79) and O'Dowd on the De Lange Commission (1981). Both Steyn and Drummond are State President appointees; Jacobson was elected to Council by Convocation.

Council members also have links with key interest groups and foundations. Drummond was an executive director of the metal industries employers' organization - the Steel and Engineering Industries Federation of South Africa (SEIFSA). Stutterheim, Wessels, Menell and Rosholt are all on the national board of the Urban Foundation, a foundation set up in 1976 under the initiative of Menell's wife and with the support of big business, to help establish welfare projects in black urban areas in order to encourage social stability and promote the rise of a stable black middle class.⁸ Stutterheim and Smith are both trustees of the South Africa Foundation, a foundation which aims to attract foreign investment by promoting South Africa's international image. O'Dowd, as well as being chairman of the Anglo-American and De Beers Chairman's Fund which channels money into education projects, is chairman of the Free Market Foundation which acts to foster the idea of free

enterprise.

It is also clear that in other contexts some members of Council meet each other at such exclusive places as the Rand Club and the Johannesburg Country Club. At least 11 members of Council belong to either one of these clubs, some belong to both.

In this way Wits is tied in with the structures of monopoly capital. Significantly there are no representatives of the black community on Council (this compares to the University of Natal who have recently appointed Professor Makhene to Council). Last year Dr. N. Motlana stood for election by Convocation but was not successful. As Mluleki George said at the 1986 Richard Feetham memorial lecture, "The UDF has over 700 affiliates with a non-racial membership of over 3 million. COSATU has more than half a million paid-up worker members. Yet neither of these organizations are represented in any way on the ruling bodies of the major universities of our country".⁹ It should also be pointed out that there is only one woman on Wits Council, the second in the University's entire history.¹⁰

Hence, not surprisingly, the community questionnaire undertaken by Wits academics, *Perceptions of Wits Report* in 1986, found a negative image of Wits among many disadvantaged and black community organizations in the Pretoria, Witwatersrand and Vaal Triangle (PWV) area. In particular, almost 90 per cent of respondents accepted the statement that "Wits is an institution that serves the needs of big business" and 92 per cent saw Wits as "an institution that serves the needs of the white community".¹¹

There are, however, problems in showing that because many Council members are connected to big business they actually articulate the needs and interests of big business on Council and exercise great power over the University's decision-making structures. The front image of Council is that the powers of Council appear quite narrow; as the Council Chairman has stated to the press, "Council does not interfere in the field of management although it has that right. Obviously, when it comes to academic matters the senate is much more qualified to express views than Council".¹² Outwardly it appears that power is diffuse and although, by and large, the correct University policy decision is set through discussions among a small group of senior administrators and Council members this informal network which is centred around key Council committees (such as the Executive Committee of Council, the Senior Appointments Committee, and the Finance Committee) can only exercise power to the extent that policies are channelled through a diffuse set of committees.¹³

Given the pervasive nature of this front image, and the problems of gaining access and breaking confidentiality in attempting to go beyond it, it is difficult to prove that the University, through the observable workings of its formal and informal decision-making structures is controlled by big business. However, what is significant is that Wits, like the other English-language universities, has "never risked any direct confrontation with the government".¹⁴

Another way in which to analyze power is to consider what has been termed non-decision making:¹⁵ in this respect it can be argued that the type and number of issues that can be raised within University decision-making structures is limited because of Council's reputed potential to exercise power in defence of its interests, a position which is buttressed by the fact that Council reflects wider dominant class interests that are also held by most academic staff, as Keenan has argued: "University Councils do not, and cannot, impose straightjackets on the activities of the Universities' members. But they do not need to do so ... because the majority of their members share the values and interests of the State and big business".¹⁶ In other words there is an in-built bias in favour of protecting and exploiting issues that are conducive to the interests of big business. In these terms Council

could be seen as a custodian or watchdog, making sure that the University plays its part in meeting the interests of big business. Hence the Council essentially reacts to changes rather than initiates them and for the most part, discussion in Council takes the form of exposition or explanation by the Chairman or Vice-Chancellor, rather than argument leading to decisions.

There are a number of major ways in which the interests of big business are met by the University. There is the education of white intellectual labour to man the industries and to provide middle-management, especially in the scientific-technical field where the profitability of firms is enhanced through the application of technical knowledge.¹⁷ With the increasing number of black students at Wits (see table 1) there is the education of black intellectual labour - again to man the industries but also to create a Westernized black middle-class that as well as providing a new market for big business has a stake in the economic system; this plainly ties in with the black middle-class strategy as pursued by such bodies as the Urban Foundation.

Table 1. Student enrolments at Wits University¹⁸

	Black*	White	total	% Black*
1976	273	10 556	10 829	2.5
1987	3 199	14 887	18 086	17.7

* Black includes Africans, Indians and coloureds.

When Rosholt became Chancellor in 1982 he said it was vital for black South Africans to adopt the free enterprise system.¹⁹ The University also provides a research and development capacity (notably through its science park) to boost profits - something that becomes increasingly important in the face of the mounting isolation imposed by economic sanctions.

In such ways Wits serves the needs of big business and it might also be argued that the involvement of big business in the University of the Witwatersrand Foundation for the expansion of the West campus represents the long term interests of capital. The trustees of the Foundation include Dr H.F. Oppenheimer, Gavin Relly, Clive Menell, and Mike Rosholt and much of the R21.1 million raised (to February 1988) has come from Anglo-American, Barlow Rand and Anglovaal.

In sum it is clear that the members of Wits Council are disproportionately drawn from limited sections of the white and wealthy community. The potential, however, for changing the composition of Council is not great. Although various reforms of Council have been advanced (such as an increase in the number of Senate and University appointees and full representation for students), there is a major problem: changes require parliamentary approval. Yet as long as the Council is not more representative of the country as a whole the institutional climate is unlikely to be conducive to the interests of the black majority. The idea of Council having a nominee from COSATU or from the SA Council of Churches and SA Catholic Bishops Conference might seem unrealistic, yet as Mark Orkin (Director of the Community Agency for Social Enquiry) has asked, "isn't it time we had a fully-fledged Council; one which adequately reflects the way the University is changing in its changing context?"²⁰

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REVIEW

People's Education in South Africa

Glenda Kruss, *Report No 1: People's Education in South Africa. An Examination of the Concept* (1987);

Working Document No. 1: People's Education. A Collection of Articles from December 1985 to May 1987 (1988);

Working Document No. 2: Popular Education in International Perspective. A Preliminary Bibliography (1988);

Glenda Kruss and Joe Samuels, *Working Document No. 3: What is People's Education? An Approach to Running Workshops* (1988).

By THE CENTRE FOR ADULT AND CONTINUING
EDUCATION, University of the Western Cape

Reviewed by Crain Soudien
University of Cape Town

There are two groups of literature on People's Education: there is the fount of pamphlets, speeches, polemical and analytical writings pouring out from every corner of the country;¹ and there is the first wave of academic reflections.² The publication of documents around People's Education from the Centre for Adult and Continuing Education (CACE) at the University of the Western Cape represents a contribution to the latter discussion.

The project provides a fairly comprehensive overview of the state of the discussion on People's Education. It constitutes the first survey of the origins, nature and applications of the concept of People's Education in South Africa. While it is not clear whether the pieces in the project are aimed at a specific audience, the material is presented in such a manner that it is accessible and useful at many different levels. Despite certain shortcomings, which will be dealt with in this review, the project represents a welcome addition to the genre of polemical speeches, articles, statements and so forth which dominate the field.

A theme which emerges powerfully throughout the readings is the "universality" of People's Education. This is clear, particularly in the very informative *Working Document No. 2: Popular Education in International Perspective. A Preliminary Bibliography*.³ For South African readers, and particularly for those with an interest in a new education system, this document will open new doors.

A broad range of references, in English, is brought together, covering the experience of educators in Latin American, North American and African contexts. An interesting feature of the bibliography is its inclusion of theoretical articles. A minor quarrel, however, is the omission of references to the experiences of countries such as China, the USSR and even East Germany.⁴ Another curious omission is the key text by Castles and Wustenberg, *The Education of the Future*.⁵ These problems aside, the *Bibliography* is an excellent "working" document in the most admirable sense of the word. Especially useful is the information

indicating where references are housed.

As a source work, *Working Document No.1: People's Education. A Collection of Articles from December 1985 to May 1987*, brings together major speeches, documents and reflections on People's Education.⁶ The Sisulu address to the Second National Education Crisis Committee (NECC) Conference, a minor masterpiece of political analysis, is included alongside the historic resolutions taken at the two conferences in December 1985 (at the University of the Witwatersrand) and in March 1986 (in Durban). Other articles include curriculum study foci, for example, Gardiner's interesting contribution of "Liberating Language", and Kros's very stimulating and entertaining piece on "History for Democracy". In the section dealing with "Assessment and Analysis", contributions by Hartshorne and Muller are included, of which the latter is undoubtedly seminal in nature, seeking to put the discussion in its class perspective. The student of education looking for the perspectives or contributions of oppositional groups outside of the NECC will, however, be disappointed. The Collection is silent on the role and views of organisations such as the South African Council for Higher Education (SACHED).⁷

Working Document No. 3: What is People's Education? An Approach to Running Workshops, written by Joe Samuels and Glenda Kruss, is a booklet which both students and non-students will find helpful.⁸ It is divided into four sections, namely, "What is People's Education?"; "An Approach to Running Workshops"; "Sample Workshops"; and finally, a section which deals with "Resources". The strength of the booklet lies in the practical guidance it gives to students, workers and others interested in planning, conducting and evaluating workshops. Particularly valuable is the stress on preparation through "asking the right kind of questions".⁹ The booklet deals with each of these questions in detail, although it specifically cautions that it should not be seen as a blueprint.¹⁰ An interesting publication against which to compare this booklet is that developed by Arnold, Barndt and Burke called *A New Weave: Popular Education in Canada and Central America*.¹¹ While using the same basic questions employed by Samuels and Kruss, it moves beyond the CACE publication by counterposing the different points of departure found in a workshop situation. It distinguishes the activist, the anti-intellectual and the academic within the workshop situation, but, more importantly, it shows the slippery divide between those who have the technique and who seem to be doing the correct things (participatory style in discussion, and so on) and those who recognise that techniques can be set in very different ideological frameworks serving very different political objectives.

...techniques... are important ways for groups to start democratising the organisation and the educational process, but they must never be seen as the sole answer. A technique or a tool is just that: it can be used to oppress or to liberate.¹²

The CACE booklet makes no attempt to venture into this territory. Questions dealing with the relationship between theory and practice are simply not raised. It is in this area where the booklet is possibly open to criticism.

Each document in the project is important in its own right, addressing very specific needs. The pivot of the project, however, must surely be *Report No. 1: People's Education in South Africa. An Examination of the Concept*, written by Glenda Kruss.¹³ The work comes in four sections, namely, The Origins of "People's Education for People's Power"; "What is People's Education?"; "People's Education in Process"; and "People's Education in the Future".

In the first section the watershed period of 1984/1985, in which the slogan of "People's Education for People's Power" came into being, is examined. Kruss looks at the ferment in

the schools, documenting the major shifts in the dynamic involving students, worker/parents and the state. The nature of the work precludes a closer examination of contextual detail, regional peculiarities and previous struggles and so on and thus, in my opinion, poses the wrong question: "Why did People's Education arise in 1985/86 and not at other points of state-student struggles?"¹⁴ The short answer is that alternatives to state-sponsored education have frequently been part of a popular discussion in education. These alternatives might not have been called People's Education, but they fall within the framework of that discussion. There are, to be specific, the recent examples of the 1980 educational uprising, culminating in the Manifesto of the Committee of 81, and, reaching further back, the attempt to set up community schools by the African National Congress (ANC) on the Reef in 1954.¹⁵ There is also the ongoing discussion around ideology, curriculum and methodology in the pages of various progressive teachers' journals, including the Teachers' League of South Africa's *Education Journal*. The manner in which Kruss raises the question and answers it serves to present People's Education as a concept without a past. Defining People's Education as the outcome of the struggles of 1985/86 in such highly specific terms creates the problem, perhaps not intentional, of making it a direct derivative of a particular phase of struggle as opposed to illustrating and revealing its much longer ancestry, from which many lessons can be drawn.

The dominant theme which comes out of Kruss's piece is that People's Education is not a completed or perfected theory but a process:

Because of its nature as a process, a People's Education blueprint or manual has not been neatly compiled. A useful contribution would be to outline what the major proponents mean by the concept ... and how the process has evolved thus far.¹⁶

Her objective, she says, is to outline People's Education from the perspective of its initiators, its leaders and supporters.¹⁷ This conceptualisation of the project provides a good historical ambit for the work, but, ironically, reflects the problems and ambiguities which characterise the discourse of People's Education. The ambiguity results from the frequently bland, class-blind use of terms such as "People", "organisation", "democracy", "control" and so on. These are terms which require definition and location within the context of the specific power relations of the society. They need to be given content.

Kruss, unfortunately, uses these and terms such as "control and empowerment" too simplistically.¹⁸ It is this vagueness which, *inter alia*, permits the state the possibility of co-opting the terminology to its own ends, as it has done in recent propaganda manoeuvres.¹⁹ Kruss moves towards resolving this problem in the opening lines of Section 2, when she says, "One of the interesting features of People's Education is that it attempts to make explicit the links between education and political, economic and cultural reproduction".²⁰ The point is not pursued, however. At no stage does she show what is implied by "reproduction", or the effects of "reproduction", to which People's Education is a counter-hegemonic response. Read thus, it is difficult to situate her response to the question "What is People's Education?", which is the title of this section.

The conception of "process" inferred in Kruss's work is also somewhat problematic. It emerges as a rudderless pilgrimage in search of a political holy grail, which one way or another will succeed. She says: "Through focusing of People's Education students, teachers and parents could find a way out of the educational deadlock. The intention was that people should be beginning to think through and actively participating in creating a new education system."²¹ How such a process is to take place against existing conditions within society is only vaguely suggested: "to achieve fundamental change, we need to be organised".²²

Implicit in these references, although never clarified, are notions of how the broader society reproduces itself in relation to the school, and how breakdown, conflict and change within society are manifested at the level of education.

Kruss also adopts, along with other commentators, a rather naive view of the state's concern for resolving the educational crisis. She says:

The increasing sophistication of the state's repressive apparatus, in particular the development of the JMC security system, has forced a shift in the original conception (of People's Education).²³

As a result, she argues, proponents of People's Education:

have subsequently tended to concentrate on more limited ways of changing education in the present, and through this, to lay the basis for a national education system in a post-apartheid South Africa.²⁴

The problem with Kruss's understanding of the dynamic playing itself out in the schools is that the interests of the state (and all its agencies) in disorganising counter-hegemonic initiatives, such as People's Education, are seriously underestimated. For example, tactics and strategies are discussed as if the state has no strategy of its own. This conception of the nature of the state poses considerable difficulty for determining strategy in the future.

Finally, Kruss's work seems to suffer from theoretical vagueness, political naivete, and a certain blandness of presentation which prevents the reader from moving closer to an understanding of what is happening within the social formation at large and of what is happening specifically in the schools of different regions. The open-endedness manifested in Kruss does, however, provide a point of entry for further productive debate. Is it, for example, enough to say that we have to look forward to an "educationally sound education", or do we have to go further?²⁵ Does that approach not open the door to competing class forces ready to signpost the territory with their own dominant symbols and notions?

Clearly, a next step in the discussion is called for. The first and necessary stage, that of flag-flying, is now over. An advance which is more self-consciously theoretical, which debates the assumptions and the philosophical foundations of an alternative discourse and practice, is in order. The CACE work clears the ground for some of this to take place.

In conclusion, while there is much of value in three of the CACE booklets, the piece which attempts an examination of the concept is seriously flawed, and needs much more work.

Notes and References

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 14. *Ibid.*, 6.
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 16. *Report No. 1*, 5.
 17. *Ibid.*
 18. *Ibid.*, 11.
 19. See *Argus* 22 September 1985 and *Argus* 28 April 1988 where Gerrit Viljoen and Alan Hendrickse give their approval to aspects of "People's Education".
 20. *Report No. 1*, 9.
 21. *Ibid.*, 14.
 22. Mkhathswa, quoted in *Working Document No. 1*, 13.
 23. *Report No. 1*, 23.
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 25. V. Khanyile, "Speech to ASP Conference" (Pietermaritzburg, November 1986) in *Working Document No. 1*, 90-1.

REVIEW

Alternative Education-Education for Affirmation

Edited by WILGESPRUIT FELLOWSHIP CENTRE, Skotaville
Publishers, Johannesburg (1988). ISBN 0 947009 34 5. 123 pages.

Reviewed by Michael Cross
University of the Witwatersrand

This book is a collection of conference papers discussing strategies for the design and implementation of alternative models of education and, in particular, the establishment of a people's institute for alternative models, namely the Ubuntu Social Development Institute (USDI).

Given the minor participation of black academics in social research in South Africa, the book represents an encouraging beginning, with a unique characteristic of being the first systematic reflection on alternative education. It sometimes lacks theoretical sophistication. Where empiricism has been overcome, theory is confined to the minimum necessary to make sense of the immediate reality affecting the oppressed people in SA. Theory is limited to definition of concrete strategies for solution of local problems. This is its main strength. Its major weakness is the tendency to oversimplify issues of crucial importance in alternative education and to underestimate the complexity of problems imposed by the struggle for democratic education.

The book opens with Mphahlele's note that the present stage of struggle in education involves not merely reaction to state policy but an effort to search for alternatives in those areas where there is still relative freedom of mobility and creativity. Alexander calls for realism and for sober appraisal of the present. An alternative education system cannot be set up as long as the apartheid state lasts, he argues. At most, we can encroach on the control, content and methodology of education.¹

Samuel draws some lessons from the experience of Khanya College. Firstly, he reminds us of the danger of importing inadequate models to the South African context. Secondly, he warns about the difference between the concept and the reality of an alternative model: "It is at the implementation stage where the shaping of the project occurs: for example, the teaching, methodology and content."² Finally, he underlines the need for a realistic statement of the political objectives of the project according to which the project must be constantly assessed.

This mood is broken by a somewhat technicist account of alternative curriculum design by Moletsane.³ USDI is reduced to a human resources development centre, a concept pursued in MacNeil's paper on Coady Institute in Canada.⁴ His whole argument is built on the assumption that USDI should equip "people" with a variety of skills, theory and practical knowledge that would change people's lives for the better, irrespective of whether the participants or trainees converge from rural or urban environments. This is true but one cannot ignore the fact that a rural community constitutes a different social category from an

urban one. This is a reality that any effective pedagogy cannot dismiss.

Given the widespread unemployment, Wilson sees USDI as playing a tremendous role in training community workers who work for grass-roots organizations in rural areas for creating and developing a new concept of co-operatives. This, she argues, would save much time, initiative and energy for people who could be doing many other necessary things.⁵

Abrahams urges for the simplification of the curriculum by excluding a great deal of theoretical studies which are of little use to the community worker usually overwhelmed by immediate practical problems. The curriculum, he argues, should train people to solve these practical problems using methods developed by Freire, Alinsky, and others.⁶

Dias also shifts away from Moletsane's technicism. His is a sound discussion of the theoretical bases for setting up an alternative curriculum. To reiterate what he considers the fundamental tasks to be tackled within a conception of an alternative curriculum:

1. to question and re-define the process of acquisition, accumulation, presentation and transmission of knowledge and skills in the diverse domains of language, science, mathematics, techniques and art;
- 2 to rediscover the meaning of education as a concept, process and institution and scrutinize the role of the historically developed or imposed models of education;
- 3 to envisage a societal model in which the interests of the majority are reflected and realised.⁷

Though the translation of these tasks into practice is not an easy one, they constitute indeed an essential starting point towards a meaningful form of alternative curriculum. Fundamental to this, as Dias has also pointed out, is "the real participation of people as subjects, who can articulate and determine their needs, their conceptions and their structural setups"⁸ in a process where both the conceptions of the intellectuals and the ideas of the masses are confronted in a dialectic way.

The tone set by Alexander and Samuel regained continuity in Sebidi and Vilikazi's accounts on people's education and socialist education, and, to a lesser extent, in Witbooi's "Theology and Education".⁹ The common thread in these three papers is the issue of the empowerment of the masses to be responsible for their own destiny. The papers show the connection between the idea of people's or socialist education with the question of democracy, participation and control, or ultimately, the question of power.

In general, the book can be charged with oversimplification. This is expressed in two ways: lack of "problematization" of the idea itself of "alternative education" and lack of recognition that alternative models form part of a long history with important lessons to be learnt.

The book does not discuss the meaning(s) attached to the notion of "alternative model". Nor does it address the implications deriving from its association with the ideal of liberation/affirmation. Molefe is aware of this limitation when he says that alternative models have been discussed but the benefit and disadvantages of these were not outlined.¹⁰ Thus, what prevails throughout the book is a symbiosis of a general notion of "alternative education" as any educational initiative outside the state system with the ideal of liberation/affirmation. In this sense, private schools and the so-called Christian National Education (CNE) schools (1902-7) established by Afrikaners to counter Milner's anglicization policies would possibly fall under the same category. However, these and similar initiatives fundamentally reflected hegemonic interests of the ruling class.

Oppressed classes also attempted forms of alternative education: "Night Schools", "Independent Schools", cultural clubs, and, recently, a wide range of projects from the private sector, church and community organisations. Some of them have incorporated the

ideal of liberation; most of them vanished and turned into bourgeois institutions. This tradition constitutes an important "people's encyclopedia" with important lessons that no one committed to democratic education can for a moment ignore. Surprisingly, the book remains silent about this aspect except tangentially.

The lack of problematization of alternative models poses a serious political problem. As Levin has indicated, "it is always easier to coin a slogan than to give it serious content and direction".¹¹ What is at stake are policies and projects with far-reaching implications for the lives of many South Africans which are implemented without clarification of their nature and goals.

Alternative projects can roughly be grouped in three main categories. Firstly, there is a set of programmes aimed at minimizing isolated problems faced by blacks at different levels. They are involved in what one would call "ambulance work". Their role is merely remedial. Though carried out privately, their effects ultimately reflect dominant hegemonic interests. Through them, minor state functions are transferred to private or community control. No space is left for any counter-hegemonic initiative. They are based on the principle of separation of education from politics, and on the assumption that the subject should adjust to the system and not the system to the subject. Some of them could well be funded by the Small Business Corporation. The label "alternative education" remains only a lobbying strategy or a quest for legitimacy.

Secondly, there is a set of projects constrained to address the immediacy, while reconsidering traditional practices by developing critical thinking, alternative curriculum, syllabi and pedagogy.

Finally, there is also a set of alternatives representing a radical departure from apartheid education, aimed at expanding a counter-hegemonic culture to lay the foundations of a new education system which caters for majority interests in a free, democratic and united SA. Its educational projects are radically different from the first two in that they are based on the concept of education, power and democracy as an interconnected unity. One would place the concepts of People's Education and socialist education developed by Sebidi and Vilakazi within this context.

There are strong constraints militating against the last two options. One is the fact that the territory where these models have to operate is a sphere of state control and hegemony. In fact, it can be compared to a battle ground where alternative interests are involved in a battle or bargaining process with dominant forces. Alexander puts it nicely: "This is one of the fronts on which we are doing battle in the 'war of position' against the ruling class with a view to establishing a counter-hegemonic thrust that will shift the balance of forces in our favour."¹²

However, because the bargaining takes place in a controlled territory, the demarcation between ruling class hegemonic or "people's" counter-hegemonic roles is obscured. This is a matter which requires a deeper reflection and constant assessment. Samuel suggests as a spotlight in the process a definition of a clear political statement and a constant questioning of alternative roles with reference to that statement; more precisely with regard to its meaningfulness to the oppressed masses. This is what some theoreticians have labelled "criticism and auto-criticism" by reference to the working people's needs. This questioning should include not only the structure, feasibility, function or action and the outcome of alternative models as Molefe suggests. In addition, it should also involve aims and objectives, curriculum, funding, accountability, legitimacy, control, and constraints such as certification. The practical implications of these criteria need not be spelt out here. Enough to say that this perspective would shift our conceptions from the belief that because there are

problems in the community and the state does nothing to solve them, any initiative we take aimed at solving them falls under the umbrella of alternative education/education for affirmation.

Notes and References

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2. J. Samuel, "Alternative Models for Adult Learning", in *ibid.*, 23.
3. I. Ramoshebi and M. Moletsane, "Curriculum Design for Adult Learning in Developing Countries", in *ibid.*
4. I. MacNeil, "The Coady International Institute: Third World Social Development Training based in the First World", in *ibid.*, 84.
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6. D. Abrahams, "Namibia in Focus: The Namibian People's Institute and Critical Comments on USDI", in *ibid.*, 122.
7. P. Dias, "Curriculum Design for the Third World Within the Quest for an 'Alternative' Educational Model", in *ibid.*, 108.
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9. L. Sebidi, "Towards the Enfleshment of a Dynamic Idea: The People's Education"; W. Vilakazi, "Capitalism, Socialism, and Education"; B. Witbooi, "Theology and Education: An Alternative Model", all in *ibid.*
10. E. Molefe, "An Appraisal of the People's Institute for Alternative Education", in *ibid.*, 81.
11. R. Levin, "Conceptualizing 'People' in People's Education" (Seminar Paper, University of the Witwatersrand, 1988).
12. Alexander, 23.

REVIEW

Alternative Education: Vision of a Democratic Alternative

By RANDALL VAN DEN HEEVER, Union of Teachers' Associations of South Africa (UTASA), Cape Town (1987). 40 pages.

Reviewed by Benito Khotseng
University of the North, Qwa Qwa

Alternative Education is an exciting and welcome piece of work, which adds substantially to the all too scanty literature on People's Education. Coming as it does from a teachers' association, this work is all the more welcome.

Alternative Education combines extracts from addresses by prominent educationalists, leaders of the National Education Crisis Committee (NECC) and commentary from the author. The presentation is spiced with photographs of events and activities which vividly portray the fact that the struggle in education has moved beyond protests and boycotts against apartheid education towards a positive, humanizing, non-racial and mass-based alternative.

Van den Heever starts by tracing the historical development of the concept of People's Education in South African education circles, from the first use by the Soweto Parent's Crisis Committee in 1985 and the national acceptance of the concept at the NECC conference in 1986. In the words of the author: "It is clear that the spirit and tone behind Alternative and People's Education consist of a dedication towards bringing about a liberated education system in a democratic society."¹

To depict the objectives of People's Education, Van den Heever quotes extensively from speeches of leading activists and academics, including Zwelakhe Sisulu, Ken Hartshorne and Eric Molobi. To consolidate the idea that People's Education as opposed to apartheid education, is an empowering process aimed at liberating the oppressed, he makes a connection between Paulo Freire's pedagogy of liberation and People's Education. The burning desire among people to change the oppressive and dehumanising system of education in South Africa is seen to provide the main thrust for entertaining Freire's proposals for a pedagogy of liberation.

Van den Heever then develops an analysis of People's Education by arguing a correlation between the demands of People's Education for democracy and the educational perspectives of international organisations such as UNESCO. For education to be liberating in the African context, the author maintains that the curriculum must be relevant in inspiration and content. This implies Africanisation of the syllabus. But for this to be achieved, Van den Heever argues that teachers should undergo an intensive re-orientation in preparation for alternative curricula and syllabi. Through the words of Professors Mohanoc and Eskia Mphahlele, he demonstrates the vital role played by teachers in any educational transformation. The author cites possible subjects which will require immediate restructuring, such as history. He quotes instances where history has been wrongly written

with the aim of dehumanising blacks. According to Van den Heever, authors like Peter Kallaway are already engaged in the process of writing a people's history aimed at developing critical thinking and appreciation of one's history.

Van den Heever debates the issue of the usage of what he calls "alternative Afrikaans, as a people's language". Although conflict over the usage of Afrikaans as a medium of instruction sparked the 1976 nation-wide riots, he argues that Afrikaans is used by a large section of the black people as their living language. The author quotes extensively to support the view that a lot of progressive and anti-apartheid material has been written in Afrikaans by prominent Afrikaans-speaking academics.

Lastly, Van den Heever demonstrates how the alternative approach can be applied in writing material for primary and pre-school education. Here he praises the work of the magazine *Molo Songololo* and the work of the Grassroots Educare Trust, a pre-school organisation in Cape Town. Apart from the fact that alternative pre-school education helps children to appreciate themselves, their shortcomings and possibilities, Van den Heever maintains that it is still the only area where black parents can be actively involved and take full responsibility for the education of their children free from Government interference.

While the aims of *Alternative Education* are laudable, there is room for constructive criticism to be made: Although an extensive historical exposition of People's Education and its influence is beyond the aims of the book, a fuller account would nevertheless have enriched our appreciation of this topic and its historical significance. Superficial perceptions make people miss the real enigma of this great process: the significance of the pedagogical struggle for a non-racial democratic alternative. It is important to mention that People's Education was not and still is not a mere resistance by the people against apartheid education, but represents perhaps the most significant shift in resistance strategy in this era, an unexpected turn from the politics of refusal towards community involvement in transforming the apartheid education system.

Among the steps that come to mind, is the need to specify the character of People's Education. This means moving beyond an analysis of the ideological and material conditions of alternative education to the language of possibility; in this case it means a move to the terrain of hope and urgency, to the sphere of educational struggle and action that is steeped in a vision which chooses life and offers progressive alternatives.

Van den Heever attempts to draw a distinction between alternative education and People's Education, but he fails to convince the reader that he himself understands the difference, for he only ends up with quotations purporting to show the difference. He confuses the reader further by using the two concepts interchangeably throughout the book. One may want to argue that "alternative education" refers to any alternative to existing apartheid education. People's Education does not refer to any other alternative education but a specific one - "People's Education". This failure to conceptualize the difference mars this work for it reveals Van den Heever as avoiding the concept "people", thus speaking of "alternative schools", "alternative Afrikaans" and "alternative education". Possibly the author didn't want to commit himself to a concept which has been labelled "communist" by the government and various education departments. And yet the crucial fact is that the state is devoid of any plan of alternative education with which to replace the ailing apartheid dominated one. Having run out of ideas it intensifies its attack on people's efforts aimed at providing not just any alternative, but that which comes from the people themselves.

As the character and the demands of the educational struggle broaden, people need to get utmost clarity on major questions regarding People's Education. These questions are crucial both for the future of the country and the direction of People's Education. For instance: how

can the ideals of People's Education be built and extended in the spheres of both the oppressed and the oppressor under the present onslaught? How can teachers contribute on a wider scale to the mass democratic struggle?

I want to argue that for the realisation of a pedagogy for liberation, we need all people - black and white - to accept that education at present is constituted by the state to reinforce and maintain apartheid structures; a monster we would like to see destroyed. While we accept that not all white schools would lend themselves to People's Education, we need to struggle for an approach which attempts to make People's Education a pedagogy for liberation for all people. People must be made to realise that they have a lot more to gain from it than from existing apartheid education. Unity can be built by constantly winning over the uncertain and uncommitted. It must not be simply assumed that unity is the automatic result of oppression and that those who have not been won over are to be treated as enemies.

For the purpose of the argument, it is obvious that the emphasis in what Van den Heever refers to as "alternative education" is unequivocally upon the black child. Whom then should we be targeting in People's Education? The answer is obviously every South African, for we are all what we are because of the education we have received: apartheid education has done equal harm to us all. Thus our humanization and emancipation is one of the main aims of People's Education which aspires to equip us with the skills and knowledge necessary for post-apartheid South Africa. People's Education has been restricted in its development because it has been seen as having relevance only to "township" pupils rather than to all South Africans. Thus many still refer to it as "NECC's Education", a very unfortunate situation indeed.

Rethinking the purpose of People's Education also means reformulating the social and ideological role of educators in the presence of state intervention. I believe that teachers at all levels must be seen as educators performing a pedagogical function that is eminently political in nature, a point which Van den Heever neglects to mention in his unit on the function of the teacher. If we are to fight for schools as democratic, non-racial spheres, it is imperative to understand the contradictory roles that educators occupy within various levels of schooling. It is wrong to assume that all teachers have allowed themselves to be used as tools to victimise students and other progressive teachers.

If schools are to be seen as active sites of intervention and struggle in which the possibilities exist for students and teachers alike to transform the nature of apartheid learning, then the notion of power will have to be rescued from its current usage by the state and compliant teachers. Power is at the root of all forms of behaviour as people struggle or fight for a different vision of the future. It establishes a theoretical basis upon which to develop conditions for critical learning and participation in decision making.

Underlying the notion of the curriculum serving emancipatory goals is the question of how teachers and parents can work so as to produce curricula around forms of culture and knowledge that empower students who traditionally have been excluded from the benefits of a "critical education. Van den Heever in his discussion of democratizing education and restructuring curricula seems unaware of this vital point. To my mind we would have to begin with Freire's notion that the form and content of knowledge have to be seen as part of an ongoing struggle over forms of empowerment.² Forms of knowledge that negate apartheid experiences would have to be developed. This means confirming humanizing experiences so as to give students an active voice in institutional settings that traditionally attempt to silence them by ignoring their humanness. Knowledge gained should contribute to strategies for changing all forms of domination while simultaneously pointing to more

democratic and progressive forms of post apartheid society.

The major flaw in the book is thus the complete silence about People's Education as a dialogical and transformative process, in the sense that all engaged in it, parents, pupils and teachers recognise the struggle in which they are involved. Such participants are important in that they will collectively develop workable people-based, democratic alternatives to current forms of apartheid schooling. This suggests that even teachers be prepared not only to produce oppositional forms of knowledge and social practice, but that they should also be prepared to struggle and take risks in fighting against injustices, however deeply ingrained they may be in the schools and other social spheres. As teachers begin to engage in pedagogical strategies for the future, not as outside experts but as members of the community, they will develop some clarity about what kind of curriculum is needed to build a democratic non-racial society. Such a task does not mean debunking existing forms of apartheid schooling and education theory only; it means transforming them, contesting the terrains on which they developed and appropriating from them whatever potential they might contain.

Notes and References

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REVIEW

Students Struggle for their Schools

By FRANK MOLTENO, Centre for African Studies, University of Cape Town (1987). ISBN 0 7992 11095. 212 pages.

Reviewed by John Gultig

University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg

Frank Molteno's *Students Struggle for their Schools* is a meticulous and refreshingly vivid account of the 1980 boycott of (mainly) coloured schools in the Western Cape.

The book is prefaced with the hope that it will reach the people who made the story. Certainly in terms of its accessibility this is possible; Molteno's writing is free of the turgid and doctrinaire habits that spoil so much research on South African education.

Molteno blends interviews, newsclippings and pamphlets to recreate, in an intensely involved way, one of the most "creative" school protests in South African history. Sensibly he limits his study to the boycott in the Western Cape, and particularly, coloured schools in that region. Only where necessary does he comment on trends in other parts of the country.

He zooms in and out of the boycott, framing an overview and context in which the particular, the anecdote, becomes meaningful. It is this mix of the general and specific, and especially the "behind-the-scenes" action, that gives *Students Struggle for their Schools* its ability to make the reader feel part of the action. It underpins Molteno's central notion in the book: that schools are a contested terrain in which students can transform themselves and wrest control from the authorities.

The integration of incidents like the meeting between a delegation led by University of Cape Town sociologist, Paul Hare, with Minister of Police, Louis le Grange, or the altercation between pupils and a principal over the use of a projector, help illuminate the general trends Molteno identifies in the boycott. The state is given a face and shown as rather unsure about how to respond, and certainly not as united and formidable as it comes across publicly.

Molteno contextualises the 1980 boycott within education struggles historically and the changes in the nature of struggle within coloured education specifically. He then takes us chronologically through the build-up to the boycott and the various stages of the boycott to its decline and end early in 1981. The motivations and actions of the various participants are documented within this development. Finally, Molteno considers the demands made by students and their understanding of struggle and of possible alternatives.

What emerges powerfully from the study is the difficulty of sustaining a meaningful and political boycott in a community that is organisationally underdeveloped. Despite the often inspired (although sometimes anti-democratic, according to Molteno) leadership of the Committee of 81, the energetic efforts to organise alternative programmes in schools, a community with very real grievances and the progressive effect of the concurrent red meat and bus boycotts, the protest spluttered and died at the very point at which it should have grown in depth. Some schools never managed more than rather random and aimless meetings while, at the more organised, programmes could only be sustained with the

assistance of teachers and outside sources after the first three weeks.

It is disappointing, then, that after such a thorough and lucid description of the boycott, the analysis is unnecessarily cursory and just a little triumphal. An attempt to explain why the boycott died so soon would, perhaps, have tempered Molteno's rather romantic notions about change.

This reviewer does not dispute this argument that change in schooling should be approached dialectically. Certainly schools are sites of both hegemonic and counter-hegemonic struggles and do not simply reproduce the existing relations of domination and exploitation.

But if *Students Struggle for their Schools* is to inform future action in schools, the analysis needs to be more cautious. Molteno, it seems, has allowed the "romance" of the boycott and his attempt to discredit the "reproductionist" view of schooling, to colour the rigour of his analysis.

His claim that the 1980 boycott illustrated just how powerful "students, teachers and parents with a popular base and ties to the organised working class" are in bringing about real change demonstrates this point.

First, he exaggerates the reality of a "popular base" and "ties to the organised working-class". The popular base appears to have been, at best, an aggrieved but only partially organised community that seemed conservative in its views of schooling and of change: mass support was never achieved in 1980, which is in strong contrast to the organised and popular support evident by 1985. The links to the "organised working class" were tentative and problematic, to say the least. In fact, Molteno describes clearly the important differences and misunderstanding between organised labour and students on strategies, tactics, leadership and the nature of the struggle itself.

This is not to deny the importance and significance of the links but simply to call for greater nuance in expression.

Secondly, the evidence he produces seems to suggest that although pupils were certainly able to disrupt schools across a broad front, and in certain circumstances "take control" of schools from lower level authorities, like principals, they were never able to either wrest control at any real level and were certainly not able to transform the schools.

As Molteno suggests, within a remarkably short time after the return to schools a high level of passivity was evident. Power relationships within schools returned to what they were before the protest; the curriculum and methodology in schools remained the same, not a great deal was forthcoming in improvements to facilities and SRCs all but collapsed. The power and change was illusory. Why does Molteno not explain?

To imply, then, that gains were made in the larger number of "political" students and a positive thrust towards community organisation overstates the effect of the boycott. Developments in the wider South African struggle - not least the red meat and bus boycott - would, I suggest, have played a far more significant role in this heightened politicisation.

Molteno correctly points out that there is a danger in overemphasising the structural constraints on change. Equally, there is a danger in underestimating them. Even more dangerous is overemphasising the power of students to change schools and of assuming that the rhetoric of "links with the community" was translated into real links with that community.

Further difficulties lie in that last, problematic chapter. Molteno raises for discussion old, but important, issues like the importance of democratic method in struggle, but - partly because of the brevity of the chapter - fails to cast any new light on these issues. This leads, at times, to unhealthy crudities in his analysis.

He briefly asserts, in an implicit attack on the way in which the Committee of 81 was run, that democratic means need be followed in order that democratic ends are achieved. This is a complex issue for which this reviewer has no answers. But its complexity demands more thorough discussion.

What is Molteno's conception of democracy? Is it necessarily true that "undemocratic" means exclude democratic futures? Was democratic organisation possible under the repressive conditions, or did they have to be sacrificed for more "efficient" struggle in order to achieve the very gains Molteno suggests were made during the boycott?

Molteno attacks the tactics of economic sabotage as "vanguardist" and by implication, as "insane". This begs further questions. What does Molteno mean by "vanguardist" action? Why does he use the term as one of abuse? And thirdly, why should actions that "seek confrontation" necessarily be insane? These issues need clarification.

Students Struggle for their Schools is an important work. It sets new standards, and a good example, to all of us on how academic research can and must be made lucid and accessible. It re-emphasises an important point: that schools are sites of struggle and not sterile units of reproduction. It raises important issues of strategy arising from an important school protest. But it disappoints in that so many issues are left unanswered, or worse still, are addressed in such a cursory manner. Molteno's desire to emphasise the power of counter-hegemonic struggles in the schools, I believe, skews the debate to a point where crucial issues of strategy are mystified rather than clarified.

REVIEW

Black Matriculation Results: A Mechanism of Social Control

By ELMON MATHONSI, Skotaville, Johannesburg (1987). ISBN 0 947009 35 3. 86 pages.

*Reviewed by Ken Hartshorne
Pretoria*

From about 1980, apart from the annual reports of the Department of Education and Training (DET) and those of the education departments of the Transkei, Bophutatswana, Venda and Ciskei (TBVC) territories, there have been three main sources of data on and analysis of Black senior certificate/matriculation results. They are the Centre for Social and Development Studies, University of Natal, Durban;¹ the SA Institute of Race Relations;² and the Research Institute for Education Planning, University of the Orange Free State.³ Study of the data from these three sources shows discrepancies in detail, but essential agreement on the broad trends indicated by the statistics. The collation of over-all data for South Africa has become increasingly difficult since examination (and other education) statistics for the TBVC territories have been excluded from DET annual reports. There are differences between statistics given in answer to parliamentary questions and those in annual reports, and also between DET data and the statistics provided in the individual "homeland" education reports. Moreover, during the last few years the DET has progressively discontinued the publication of first, the median marks in each subject, then the percentage of successful candidates in each subject, and finally the specific results for each region. All that is left in the 1987 annual report is a brief, generalised statement of over-all results, consisting of one line of text.⁴ Comparative studies over a number of years therefore pose serious problems for the analyst in terms of achieving accuracy. However, the general tendencies are quite clear.

A recent analysis of Black matriculation results for the period 1955-1983 is that of E.N. Mathonsi,⁵ who approaches the data within a Marxist theoretical framework of the state. In particular he applies Althusser's theory of the "Ideological State Apparatus" (ISA) which "functions to ensure the reproduction of labour power and the social relations crucial for maintenance of the dominance of capitalist classes".⁶ In this view "Bantu Education", as an ISA, "is basically part of the process of ensuring that the capitalist social formation is maintained" and "that people accept the unequal social relations of capitalism".⁷ Black senior certificate/matriculation results then serve the "political function of maintaining, reinforcing and reproducing existing class relations" and the economic function of "regulating the flow of cheap labour into the capitalist employment market, whilst simultaneously controlling and containing those whom the capitalist mode of production had no prospect of absorbing".⁸

However, he goes further than this and the central hypothesis of his study would seem to be twofold: firstly, that the government "artificially manipulates" Black matric results to suit

its own purposes; and secondly that such "manipulation" or "fiddling" bears a relationship to and is connected with the state of the economy at any particular time.⁹ In order to carry out this manipulation the government has used four main strategies:

1. The CLASSROOM strategy: teacher-pupil ratios, size of classes, unit costs, inadequate facilities, underqualified teachers, high drop-out rates and so on.
2. The marking centre, or "CARELESSNESS" strategy, which he documents from the answers to a questionnaire focussed on conditions at the marking centres.
3. The AUTHORITATIVE strategy of departmental actions, documented from the records of Supreme Court cases in which candidates had appealed against such actions.
4. The IDEOLOGICAL strategy, about which Mathonsi himself says that no clear conclusions could be drawn and which requires further investigation.¹⁰

An argument that he develops in his data base in Chapter 4 and in the following chapter on the factors influencing the results is that "there is a close relationship between the matric results of different racial groups and the economic and political forces".¹¹ What he documents here is the hierarchy of inequality and discrimination in SA education - in the "pecking order": White; Indian; "Coloured"; Black - whatever recognised education criterion is used: per capita costs, teacher-pupil ratio, size of class, qualifications of teachers, examination results.

However, the longitudinal correlation of matric results with economic cycles of development in Table 9 and Graph 13,¹² using the correlation coefficient is not argued very clearly.¹³ The intention in the paragraph was to prove a positive correlation between periods of falling off in senior certificate/matriculation results and period of downtrends in economic development. The basic problem seems to be that instead of working from the correct "r" value as given in the relevant Appendix X, that is 0,38, the case is argued from the use of the "r" value from Appendix V which is not relevant, as it deals with something quite different, pupil enrolment. Further confusion is caused by the wrong transcription of the "r" value of Appendix V as 0,434, when it in fact is -0,434 (minus), which explains the reference to a negative correlation in the paragraph. A negative correlation of course, would have meant that when there were economic uptrends there would be fallings off in Matric results, which was not the hypothesis. However, the correct correlation of 0,38 would seem at best only to indicate a possible trend and not a strictly functional relationship between the two variables. To build an argument for "artificial manipulation" of results "to suit the economic needs of South Africa" on the basis of this would seem to be somewhat risky, and certainly would require much more research evidence. A statistical analysis of this kind, even if it were based on much surer grounds, would still remain "a delicate dissection of uncertainties, a surgery of suppositions".¹⁴ Little is said in the study of the criteria on which the particular set of economic indicators was chosen, nor of the meaning of the data in Table 9; and in the end, even if there had been a much stronger correlation, the relationship is not necessarily causal.

To question this particular aspect of "artificial manipulation" in relation to economic cycles, however, does not mean that such manipulation may not take place in a much more general sense, as suggested by Mathonsi's discussion of the "carelessness" and "authoritarian" strategies.¹⁵

The evidence of the neglect, negligence, lack of supervision, irregularities and inefficiency at the marking centres, based on the 1984 questionnaire,¹⁶ is very powerful and disturbing, confirming as it does anecdotal data that has been accumulating over the years. This evidence would have been even more effective if the study had shown such data as the number of respondents involved, how many were teachers with experience, what percentage

of markers responded, how and to whom the questionnaire was circulated. Without this data, the use of statements such as "85% of teachers around Johannesburg", "60% of the sub-examiners", "56% of the teachers have been seen marking scripts under the influence of alcohol" has limited value. This weakness in the statistical presentation, however, does not lessen the seriousness of the situation that is described. When one considers that by 1986 the DET was in total handling two-and-a-half million copies of examination papers and that 4 000 people were involved at four central marking centres (full-time candidates) and seven decentralised venues (part-time candidates), marking papers from 1 200 examination centres,¹⁷ the possible results of mismanagement and inefficiency for individual candidates become frightening and demand public attention.

Whether one can then take the major step from this, (as bureaucratic inefficiency and mismanagement, "sins of omission" of the worst kind because the interests of the individual pupil are disregarded), to regarding it as being "part of the many instruments used by government to manipulate the African results according to the economic and political needs of the country",¹⁸ must remain an open question, however, certainly until more definite links between policy intentions and practice can be established. The Scottish courts, faced with suspicions of guilt of this circumstantial nature, would have returned a verdict not of "guilty" but of "not proven", leaving the case open for further investigation.

In his discussion of the "authoritative decision strategy", Mathonsi, in providing documentation of three Supreme Court cases,¹⁹ comes nearer to proving direct government/departmental intervention in the outcome of examination results. Again, however, whether this can be regarded as "manipulation of the African results so as to suit the economic development in South Africa" must remain a matter of interpretation. Is it intended, purposeful, specific manipulation of results, or the inevitable outcome of the whole education system being used as an instrument of government policy, as "a mechanism of social control"? In this particular instance,²⁰ Mathonsi weakens his argument by an unfortunate confusion between the DET (Department of Education and Training) and the TED (Transvaal Education Department). It was the latter that was challenged in the press on its "statistical manipulation" of the 1983 white matric results. This may have been less than careful proof reading, but it does leave the argument confused.

It also raises the issue, not dealt with in this study, of the extent to which the "raw marks" awarded by examiners are affected by the statistical controls later applied through standard distributions, ogive (or cumulative frequency) curves and other mechanisms, increasingly being implemented through the computerisation of results. There is also the question of the relationship between the statistical methods of intervention of the various examining bodies, and the role and effectiveness of the Joint Matriculation Board (JMB) in maintaining common standards and monitoring the results of the various examinations. It could well be asked, for example, as a theoretical question, what part if any the JMB played in the radical drop in African matric results in 1980 (a 53,2% over-all pass, compared with the 73,5% of 1979)? Had there been concern over DET standards between 1976 and 1979, and were stricter statistical controls introduced as a result? And if such intervention occurred, could it also be interpreted as government manipulation of results?

These and many other questions still remain to be answered and clearly could not all be covered in an initial study of this nature. In terms of this study under review, and the broad theoretical base from which it works, some of these questions have to be dealt with:

- the position of part-time candidates, who now outnumber full-time school candidates;
- the variations in the results from one region or "homeland" to another; in 1983, the base year of this study, over-all passes varied from 60,8% in Bophutatswana to 32,3% in

KwaZulu, from 70.6% in the Orange-Vaal region of the DET to 35.2% in Natal; matric exemption passes from 13.5% in Bophutatswana to 4.6% in KwaNdebele, from 18.7% in Orange-Vaal to 7.1% in Johannesburg.²¹ How do these statistics relate to the general thesis of the study?

- the variations between one school and another, and within schools; pursuance of the kind of work done by Alan Morris²² on the relationship between social class and matric results could also produce some useful insights relevant to the present study.

Before concluding, there are a number of matters of detail requiring comment:

Table 1: one of the major reasons for the decrease in the number of Std 10 candidates in these years was the closing of some of the premier missionary boarding schools.²³ The correlation coefficient referred to, which comes from Appendix V, is -0.4342, not 0.38 as incorrectly stated in the text: the rest of the paragraph is therefore argued on the wrong premise.²⁴ The calculation of African per capita costs is also incorrect as the author divided DET expenditure only by enrolments for both the DET and the so-called "national states"; the SAIRR Annual Survey, which the author himself uses, gives per capita expenditure (excluding capital) for 1980-1 as White R913, Indian R513, "Coloured" R252.16 and African R139.66.²⁵ The White : African ratio is therefore 6.5 : 1, not 27.5 : 1 and the whole paragraph needs revision. The discrimination still remains obvious and indefensible.

Table 8 : drop-out rates are notoriously difficult indicators to establish,²⁶ because of complications such as "repeaters",²⁷ and in this particular case because of the removal of more than 30% of the pupils from the progression, not by drop-out but because the statistical base altered as TBVC figures were removed. The table is still valid as showing very broad tendencies, but should not be used as being statistically accurate.

Conclusion

No-one has yet succeeded in making adequate sense of the inconsistencies and vagaries of Black matric results, or fully explained the dynamics of the processes lying behind these results. The facts are not in question and quite clearly the background and context is an inferior, discriminatory, politically driven education system reflecting a political and economic system, the purpose of which is to maintain the domination and privilege of the white sector of society. Just as clear is that poor facilities, large classes, underqualified teachers, unsuitable curricula, disturbed conditions in the school and community, a poor socio-economic environment and unsatisfactory examining methods, all are part of that context. Since 1980 more than half of all Std 10 pupils have either dropped out or left school at the end of the year without gaining a certificate. Nor has there been any effective attempt to offer alternatives or "second chances" to the approximately 350 000 school leavers involved. It is equally clear that the senior certificate/matriculation screening process is not effective in identifying those with potential and promise. As Duncan Innes has pointed out

If Bantu education is inadequate, it makes no sense to use its pass certificate as the sole criterion for student entry to university. Under these circumstances standards can only be maintained either by excluding all black students who have passed through the Bantu Education system or by finding some other selection criteria. Since the former obviously reproduces the blatant discrimination arising out of apartheid education, we have no choice but to devise alternative forms of selection.²⁸

Because of this, universities such as Cape Town and Wits are beginning to experiment with other criteria of selection for admission.

The introduction of new insights and new hypotheses into a consideration of this highly

complex, intransigent area of educational analysis is therefore of some importance. In spite of the technical weaknesses, all of which could be corrected in a subsequent edition, Mathonsi has made a stimulating and refreshing contribution to the debate and provided some hard evidence not previously available. The study has raised many questions which need to be pursued further and tested, for example, against more recent matric results for the five-year period 1984-1988.

In the end it may well be that no single theory is going to be adequate to make sense of what is happening: there are just too many people involved. Neither state nor government are abstracts: it is people, with different purposes, motives, acts of will, thoughts, hopes and fears, who carry out the intentions of government, or their own purposes. Government does not operate without resistance, as Mathonsi has pointed out, and educational outcomes are not always what government intended, as the years from 1976 have shown. A theory of "manipulation" is attractive and neat, and the "idea of manipulation" may well be in the minds of some of those in power, so that the theory does need to be tested further. But whether it can encompass the complexities and inconsistencies of human behaviour at all the levels from pupil and teacher through to examiner and administrator, not to speak of the politician, must remain doubtful. Femia, writing on Gramsci's stress on the active, voluntarist aspect of Marxist theory and the need to recognise the central role played by human actors, says that in practice it is difficult to "schematise" experience and that "cut and dried formulae and scientific techniques must, by definition, fail to embrace complex, contradictory and changing situations".²⁹

If ever there were a "complex, contradictory and changing" situation, then African matric results and the educational, social, political and economic context in which they exist, must be it.

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5. E.N. Mathonsi, *Black Matriculation Results, A Mechanism of Social Control* (Johannesburg: Skotaville, 1988).
6. *Ibid.*, 7.
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14. M.J. Mahoney, *Facts and Figures* (Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1964), 3
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16. *Ibid.*, Appendix U.
17. DET *Annual Report*, (1987), 139-141.
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28. D. Innes, "Rising Expectations", *Leadership*, 7.4 (1988): 80.
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REVIEW

INSET in South Africa: Issues and Directions

Compiled by M.J. ASHLEY and M.C. MEHL. Edited by G. JACKSON, Teacher Opportunity Programmes, Johannesburg (1987). ISBN 0 620 11630 7. 104 pages.

Reviewed by Ben Parker
University of Natal, Durban

In-Service Education and Training (INSET) of teachers is becoming a powerful strategy for changing the schooling system in South Africa.¹ This is a reflection of the present state of the "crisis in education" and an indication of the policies of some of the major actors in the educational arena.²

The contribution of this book needs to be seen within the context of its genesis. The book is published by the Teacher Opportunity Programmes, which is sponsored by the Mobil Foundation. The publication of the book was made possible by a grant from the Mobil Foundation and most of the authors are members of the Education Board of the Mobil Foundation, or closely associated with it. In many ways this is an in-house publication setting out the views of the board on INSET and on how to bring about a democratic change in teachers and teaching. Given that in the period from September 1986 to June 1988 the Mobil Foundation spent R1,5 million on INSET,³ the book provides an insight into the policies and principles of a major actor in education.

It is interesting to examine how the official policy of the board is interpreted and applied in detail in the book. The official policy includes a commitment to the following principles:

- *a structuralist interpretation rather than a technical view of educational change;
- *programmes which are truly enabling and assist organisations to increase their own capacity to analyse issues, set agendas, assume programme leadership and develop management and organisational skills;
- *assist those initiatives which do not perpetuate the status quo and which are part of the process leading to post-apartheid education in a nonracial, democratic and just society;
- *programmes which involve the community in every stage of development and are seen by them as relevant to their needs.⁴

These principles clearly involve assumptions about the nature of democracy. How are these assumptions spelt out in the book?

In their introduction Ashley and Mehl claim that the book should "be viewed as the first step in a process of exploring the concept (of INSET) and its meaning in the South African context."⁵ Given that the book is a collection of articles, it is a great pity that the introduction does not provide any form of guidance to the reader as to the structuring or the contents of the articles. Even a brief overview and/or contextualisation would have been useful. Instead what we get is one and a half pages informing us that INSET is "one of the most important areas of need" and a brief reference to People's Education.

The first article, by Ken Hartshorne, is a summary and discussion of the final section of

the Human Sciences Research Council Report of 1985 which covers the major areas of INSET activity. He pinpoints the major priority as being teacher qualifications, both academic and professional. In his conclusion he claims that INSET will be most effective if it is seen as part of a total teacher education strategy which is democratic, cooperative and works closely with teachers in their schools.⁶

The second article by, Owen van den Berg, looks at the assumptions about the nature of change made by INSET programmes. In his words, "In essence, any INSET activity rests upon a particular view of how change comes about or might be brought about".⁷ He provides two major typologies for identifying change strategies and argues for a basic similarity between them.⁸ This results in the identification of three basic approaches to change. The first approach emphasises the use of coercion through political, economic and administrative structures to bring about change. In South Africa this power/coercive strategy is the dominant state strategy. The second approach emphasises the importance of rationality and the centralisation of decision making, as in, for example, the research, development, and diffusion mode. The third approach emphasises the importance of values, an action research methodology and the ownership of the innovation by the teachers. The best known example of this approach is the problem-solving model. One can also link these approaches to Habermas's theory of knowledge-constitutive interests.⁹ The first approach corresponds to the technical interest which emphasises control, the second to the practical interest which is concerned with understanding and the third to the emancipatory interest which emphasises freedom.

Although Van den Bergh expresses a preference for the problem-solving model he interprets this model in a structuralist manner which undermines the model's commitment to the central role of teachers as agents. The richness of the problem-solving model that is present in, for example, Grundy's account, which draws on Habermas,¹⁰ is lost in Van den Berg's account. The principles he proposes reflect a practical interest rather than an emancipatory interest. Furthermore, in treating the categories in a mutually exclusive manner he ignores the possibilities of eclectic approaches which combine different elements. For example, the research, development and diffusion model can be combined with a problem solving-model if the research is of a democratic participatory nature.

In the argument which leads to his principles Van den Berg makes assumptions of his own about the nature of change. There is no discussion of what constitutes "change". Does it involve a change in teacher consciousness and/or teacher behaviour? How is change manifested in a school - in different teaching methods, in materials development, in relationships, or in all three? To discuss change without clarifying what one means by words like "control", and "active agents" is to provide a conception which does not come to grips with the everyday reality of classrooms in the townships and in the rural areas. In the context of South Africa it is particularly important to be able to distinguish between change as reform and change as a more radical and progressive transformation.

The third article, by Merlin Mehl, puts forward a radical proposal for People's Education. He begins with the useful point that while the underqualification of black teachers indicates the inequality of provision between races, qualifications in themselves are neither necessary nor sufficient conditions for good teaching. He then argues for the primacy of a constructivist epistemology as the foundation for improving teaching and learning. This is extended into an argument for the need to "teach intelligence" which draws on the work of Sternberg and Feuerstein. Mehl claims that "... the integration of thinking skills into the curriculum presents all teachers, qualified and 'unqualified', with a unique opportunity to work as cooperative equals in developing more relevant curriculum

materials".¹¹ He then proposes that commissions for all school subjects be established by the National Education Crisis Committee (NECC) or other organisations with a broad community support. These commissions would produce curriculum materials (and train teachers to use them) which would embody the principles developed by Sternberg and Feuerstein. This is a powerful and seductive vision. The achievement of People's Education through the implementation of a technique, "the teaching of intelligence", has an appealing simplicity. It promises to cut through all the confusion and catastrophic contradictions of black schooling.

Mehl's article is, perhaps, the best example of what is wrong with this book as a whole. Mehl makes a number of assumptions about the educational process and about the socio-political and economic context of South Africa. Firstly, he assumes that his (Sternberg's/Feuerstein's) technique is ideologically neutral and value free, that there is only one kind of intelligence. This type of positivism, the belief that knowledge comes from direct observation of a world of pre-packaged facts has been so extensively debunked elsewhere that I am not going to repeat the arguments, except to point out that cognitive colonialism is as undesirable as brutal forms of economic and military colonialism.¹²

Secondly, Mehl claims that teachers can work as "cooperative equals" in the design of curriculum materials based on the needs of pupils. This ignores the role of the experts; in this case, those who understand how to teach intelligence and who can determine the needs of pupils. These experts will dominate the process, imposing their conception of intelligence and needs.

Thirdly, Mehl's view of the possible role of the NECC (or a similar organisation) ignores the reality of the state of emergency and state repression. The state would only allow Mehl's process to take place if it saw the "change" as non-threatening. The intelligence being taught would have to turn the pupils into politically neutral scientists and technicians suitable for an industrial/technological society. Would either the pupils or the "community" see this as a paramount need?

The fourth and fifth articles, by Rejoice Ngeongo and Alex Thembela, make suitable noises about teacher participation and the role of teacher organisations. They spell out some laudable aims for INSET and make a number of useful points about teacher morale, the role of teacher centres, and the kinds of skills and conditions that are necessary for effective teaching.

Unfortunately, they do not explore how these aims, skills and conditions can be achieved in the reality of prevailing circumstances. The points about participation and the role of teacher organisations are a good example in that both authors are from Natal/Kwazulu and Thembela is (and has been for some time) the president of the allegedly INKATHA-affiliated Natal African Teacher's Union. Nowhere in the articles is the effect of violence or participation in schooling even mentioned. Nor is there any reference to the systematic victimisation of teachers belonging to NEUSA. Both articles are strong on prescription, but weak on practical implementation. What kinds of skills do teachers need to be effective in the conditions of everyday life that dominate in the townships? How do violence and ideological warfare influence processes of change?

The last two articles address the issue of evaluation. Arieh Lewy concentrates on the evaluation of training programmes for principals. He attempts to provide a "value-free and content-free framework". Unfortunately, he does not address the bizarre types of circumstances that confront principals in South Africa and this undermines the value of his instrument. To create a value- and content-free framework requires a form of universal agreement about meaning and how actions and events should be judged. For example, in his

discussion of different strategies, Lewy talks about observing the Teaching-Learning process: "Direct observation of the teaching-Learning process is an efficient means of judging the quality of a training programme. Medley and Mitzels (1963) summarised the characteristics of a variety of classroom observation schemes. Using some of these schemes the observer records events which occurred in the class. These events are classified as desirable or non desirable."¹³

Lewy approaches the processes of decision-making, whether it be the everyday decisions of a school principal or those of a curriculum planner, as though the issue of who decides and how they decide are not subject to contestation. As with the article by Mehl, this approach requires a dominant conception of rationality, of the rules that can be applied to each situation to enable judgements of what is right and/or desirable. But such a rationality loses its hold on reality when confronted by a rejection, by the majority of decision makers, of the kind of rules that Lewy assumes govern decision-making.

Jane Hofmeyr and George Pavlich provide a lengthy discussion of evaluation strategies. In their conclusion they state "We draw from the many available evaluation models certain procedures and constraints to develop an eclectic strategy for the evaluation of INSET programmes in South Africa in the belief that this would respond best to the complexities of the South African education context and the needs of the sponsors."¹⁴ This is a useful article in that it provides an overview of evaluation strategies and tries to apply them to the complexities of South Africa. An eclectic approach has the advantage of more options when deciding how to evaluate. Events no longer have to be desirable or undesirable, but the multiplicity of choices leaves open the difficulty of choosing a correct action. Here the concept of a stakeholder comes into play. Hofmeyr and Pavlich were writing a report, on which the article is based, for prospective funders. Funders are stakeholders, it is their money and they have a direct interest in the outcomes of the schooling process.

Hofmeyr and Pavlich provide an ideal model of an INSET programme which can be used as a touchstone in judging programmes. The problem with an ideal model approach is that, however appropriate the core elements, the interpretation of their application in a particular situation is interwoven with the point of view of the stakeholder which can include funders or parents, teachers, students. While an ideal model can be used by different stakeholders, giving rise to various judgements, some compatible, some not, the model can not tell us which stakeholder's interest should dominate in the choice of programmes to be implemented.

Hofmeyr and Pavlich produce an ideal model which is designed to satisfy the interest of the funder(s) who commissioned their research. The type of INSET programme which is idealised in the model will further the interests of funders, and not necessarily those of other stakeholders such as parents, teachers or students. To claim otherwise is to elevate the ideal model into a value-free instrument which will be beset by problems similar to those which undermine the contributions by Mehl and Lewy. The model is very useful to anyone seeking funding for an INSET programme as it provides a checklist of features that are designed to appeal to funders. The closer a programme corresponds to the ideal model the better are the chances of securing funding, provided that funders accept the model's interpretation of their interests. But the model does not improve our understanding of democratic processes of evaluation which are aimed at representing the interests of the oppressed.

Taken as a whole, the book and the policy of the Mobil Foundation Education Board contain a central contradiction. The policy is committed to a structuralist interpretation of education. Structuralism is notoriously incapable of providing an adequate account of agents. This is apparent in the failure of the articles to explore the pragmatic processes of

teacher action which are essential to change, to teachers as critical agents who own the programmes. But this commitment presupposes an approach which attempts to understand the nature of agency, for example, a culturalist or a critical theory approach.¹⁵ The authors and the board must either give up their commitment to democratic processes which stress the agency of teachers or change their commitment to structuralism to include approaches which can account for human agency. The problems of the book and the policy are compounded by the collapse of their structuralism into technicism. This is evident in the conception of rationality which is understood in a value-free and scientific manner. All the articles attempt to produce universal, value-free prescriptions in the form of principles and pay very little attention to the exigencies of the ideological and coercive nature of the educational terrain. Perhaps these problems emerge from the attempt to combine two contradictory interests. On the one hand the authors are concerned to represent the technical interest of the funders which is concerned with achieving an education system that will strengthen the capitalist economic system. On the other hand they want to reflect the emancipatory interest of People's Education with its commitment to democratic processes which are owned by communities. Put simply, you can not, coherently, serve the interests of both oppressor and oppressed.

Of course, we all know it is not as simple as that. The problem with this book is that it treats INSET in such a simplistic manner. The crucial areas which the book does not even attempt to address include the following:

- *the relationship between education and development;¹⁶
- *the role of ideology;¹⁷
- *the nature of democratic education;¹⁸
- *the nature of the dialectical relationship between agency and structure;¹⁹ and
- *the nature of change.²⁰

Notes and References

1. V. Gaydon, *Race Against the Ratios* (Johannesburg: SAIRR, 1987) (reviewed in this issue); Natal Education Department, *Teacher Education for the Twenty First Century* (1988).
2. J. Muller, "People's Education and the National Education Crisis Committee", *South African Review* 4 (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1987); E. Molobi and Rev. Tsele, *Report on National Consultative Conference on the Crises of Education* (University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, 1986), 28.
3. *The Mobil Foundation Report*, September 1986 to June 1988, 61.
4. *Ibid.*, 9.
5. M.J. Ashley and M.C. Mehl, *INSET in South Africa* (Cape Town: Tops, 1987), vi.
6. *Ibid.*, 13.
7. *Ibid.*, 16.
8. *Ibid.*, 16, 17.
9. See S. Grundy, *Curriculum: Product or Praxis* (London: Falmer, 1987) for an application of Habermas's theory to the curriculum.
10. *Ibid.*,
11. Ashley and Mehl, 68.
12. See, for example, P. Feyerabend, *Farewell to Reason* (London: Verso, 1987), 273-319.
13. Ashley and Mehl, 68.
14. *Ibid.*, 99.
15. For an example of a culturalist approach see B. Fay, *Critical Social Science: Liberation and its Limits* (Cambridge: Polity, 1987).
16. For a useful introduction to education and development see M. Crossley, P. Smith and M. Bray, "INSET: prospects and practice in developing countries", *Journal of Education for Teaching*, 11, 2 (1985); S.V. Rao, *Education and Rural Development* (California: Sage, 1985).

17. For a useful introduction, with relevance to this debate, see J.B. Thompson, *Studies in the Theory of Ideology* (Cambridge: Polity, 1984).
18. A. Guttman, *Democratic Education* (Princeton University Press, 1987).
19. S. Aronowitz and H.A. Giroux, *Education Under Siege* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1987).
20. W. Carr and S. Kemmis, *Becoming Critical: Education, Knowledge and Action Research* (London: Falmer, 1986).

REVIEW

Education for a New Nation

By LEN HOLDSTOCK, Africa Transpersonal Association,
Johannesburg (1987). 273 pages.

Reviewed by Don Foster
University of Cape Town

Professor Len Holdstock has been something of a controversial figure in South African educational and psychological circles. He admits as much himself when in the epilogue of *Education for a New Nation* he mentions some of his critics. Some black students, he says, have found insufficient focus in his work on the liberation struggle, while fellow psychologists have viewed his "attempts to develop an Africentric psychology as naive, conservative and mystifying",¹ with an insufficient analysis of "structural societal conditions". I am afraid that this reviewer would probably side with such critics. At the same time I suggest that there is value in reading this book.

One could provide a "clever" review. One could state that in the light of fashionable post-modernist deconstructionism which everywhere locates fragmentation, division, contradictions and decentredness, it is rather banal to be asked *a la* Holdstock to reconsider humanism, holism and inner wisdom. One could state that this book, while posing to go deep, nevertheless eschews contemporary psychoanalysis (apart, of course, from the obligatory Jungian genuflections) and therefore does not in fact go very deep at all. Similarly one could claim that while espousing holism, Holdstock does not stretch very broad at all, not much further than the individual human being in fact, while passing up the wider issues of economics, politics and nationhood. I think that such criticism would be justified; but let us examine what he does propose.

"Instead of belabouring the shortcomings of the educational system, this book dreams of what education can be, perhaps what education ought to be in post-apartheid South Africa".² He calls for a process of re-visioning education, a call for the blending of the "unrecognised and unutilized potential of Africa" with that of an entrenched Western cultural system.

Emphasis is on a shift in attitude. He tells us, quite appropriately, that the current system over-emphasises reason, control and mastery of the external environment, with too little attention given to matters such as human relations, communication, moral development, empathy, individual creativity, bodiliness and spirituality.

His solution lies in "holistic education", a concept which while defying definition is described as "an endeavour to actualise the unique potential of the individual in interaction and harmony with the larger universe of people and things".³ This trend towards holism is not merely an expression of "disillusionment with existing education but is part of a world-wide move toward holism".⁴ In defence of holism the usual catalogue of positions is paraded: quantum physics, relativity, holography, J.C. Smuts (described repeatedly as "our great philosopher of science and statesman": nary a mention of segregation and racism!), Prigogine and open systems, Ferguson's "aquarian conspiracy", along with touches of the East and biofeedback. On the educational front he cites without any surprises, A.S. Neill,

Buber, Feuerstein, "confluent education", Gerogi Losanov's "suggestopaedia", and person-centred views.

A chapter on "innovative educational institutions" gives us a quick tour of the USA, UK and SA. In South Africa schools such as Waldorf, Michael Oak, Sagewood, Woodmead, Observatory College and Mmabatho High School receive a positive nod.

Two chapters are more psychologically oriented. On firmer ground as a former neuropsychologist, Holdstock deals in one chapter with "brain organisation and education". A brief tour of some theories of brain functioning is provided. In another he reflects on his efforts at Wits to teach psychology psychologically. With apparently uneven results his approach involved experiential encounters, alternative forms of examinations using creative mediums such as poetry, painting, sculpture, dream reports and the like, and a person-centered approach. Some of the results are proudly paraded in the chapter. Typical of the "me generation" style, some of them are anything but creative.

The most significant contribution by far is the chapter on discipline, in particular his criticism of corporal punishment. Given the ubiquity of this form of barbarism in South African schools, along with the systematic opposition by black scholars to corporal punishment, the general silence in educational circles regarding this matter is rather astonishing. Holdstock, who has campaigned on this front for the past seven years, gives an excellent summary of research on negative effects. All educationists would do well to be reminded of this dark and cowardly practice. Prof. Holdstock is to be commended for his stand on this issue. We hope that others may follow his example.

The final two chapters take up the not unimportant theme of Africanisation, which he views in general as the "quest for a more inclusive humanism".⁵ In Holdstock's view, an African perspective would bring us a range of goods: living holism, spiritual meaning, *ubuntu* (a greater quality of caring), black communalism, rhythm, emotionality and proximity to earth.

The general theme, one which pervades the book, is that what is natural is good. Here also lies a problem, of course. Educationists will recognise this as an old theme. But what is it to be natural? Or human? There is hardly need to spell out the numerous competing theories on these questions.

In so far as his aim is to reintroduce a form of humanity to education, there is much merit in *Education for a New Nation*. However, there is little here that helps us deal with the overwhelming immediate problems. It is fashionable to speak of a post-apartheid society. We are a long way from getting there. What is education going to do along the route? What is the nature of struggle in education?

The space occupied by holism in South Africa is an odd one. As with holistic themes in medical and psychologically related fields, there is avoidance of the economic and political to a suspicious degree. Surely holism, precisely since it purports to be holistic, should not duck these issues. Furthermore, holism in South Africa endorses an outdated and oversimplistic cultural dualism. Cultures tend to be reified and transformed into homogeneous entities rather than analysed as complex processes involving the economic, political and psychological as much as the apparently purely "cultural". "Africanisation", a useful rallying call, means many different things to different people. There is danger in adopting the Holdstock version of it in uncritical fashion.

Education for a New Nation deserves to be read, if cautiously, particularly by trainee teachers. To dream about a more humane education cannot be a bad thing. Further, this text gives us most of what is good, and, on a critical reading, what is poor and shallow about holistic and "systems-type" thinking. However, for more probing analysis of central

concepts and assumptions employed in *Education for a New Nation* other texts should be sought.

Notes and References

1. L. Holdstock, *Education for a New Nation* (Johannesburg: Africa Transpersonal Association, 1987), 272.
2. *Ibid.*, 21.
3. *Ibid.*, 42.
4. *Ibid.*, 43.
5. *Ibid.*, 204.

REVIEW

Language: Planning and Medium in Education

Edited by DOUGLAS YOUNG, Language Education Unit and SAALA, Cape Town (1987). 229 pages.

Reviewed by Menan du Plessis
University of Cape Town

Published by the Southern African Applied Linguistics Association (SAALA), this booklet contains twelve of the papers presented at the Association's fifth annual conference held in Cape Town in 1986. As Douglas Young points out in his introduction, language planning has been the subject of a number of recent conferences: The Linguistic Society of South Africa devoted its 1985 conference to this theme, and several sessions were devoted to the same topic at the English Academy of Southern Africa's 1986 conference. Since the SAALA conference, the Department of Adult Education and Extra-Mural Studies at the University of Cape Town has hosted a course of lectures and workshops on the theme of language and national unity in South Africa. The fact that two of the papers from the SAALA booklet were recommended background reading for the last-mentioned course gives ground for hope that the proceedings of these various conferences are being synthesised. The five good papers in this collection are indeed so careful and informative that they make the booklet essential reading for anyone interested in the topic.

One of the recurrent conclusions reached by contributors is that models cannot simply be imported from one situation to another. (See, for example, the papers by Professor C. Bratt Paulston, Professor Brian Harlech-Jones and Professor K. Chick and Ms. M. Seneque). Indeed, the wisdom of the 1953 UNESCO monograph on "The Use of the Vernacular Languages in Education" comes in for repeated review, in the light of observations that factors other than pedagogical soundness can and do intervene to prevent effective implementation of "mother-tongue first" policies.

Professor Paulston puts it this way:

One reason there is no conclusive answer in the research on Black English of the seemingly simple questions whether a child learns to read more rapidly in a second language if first taught to read in his primary, is that medium of instruction in school programs is an intervening variable rather than the independent variable it is always treated as. ...Schools and schooling can facilitate existing social trends, but they cannot be a successful counter to social and economic forces.

Her contribution is to provide a taxonomy of different foci of social mobilisation by which she means varieties of ethnicity and nationalism).

In their paper, Chick and Seneque take this view as their starting point, and proceed to argue for the validity of locating language planning within the sub-discipline of "applied linguistics", precisely because it is sufficiently flexible (even eclectic) to permit the

uncovering of the variables involved. While their report reflects work still in progress, they hypothesise that the following factors will be amongst them:

- * Perceptions of the mother tongue and of the target language;
- * Social class background of the learner;
- * Attitudes of significant adults and peers;
- * Teachers' competence;
- * Extent to which the second language is used (that is actually used by teachers and by children outside the classroom) and
- * Projected needs for use of the second language.

The authors seem to assume that language planning for KwaZulu should be carried out independently. Independence either from the present South African state or from a future one is highly unlikely.

The two contributions from Namibia together provide a valuably detailed picture of the contemporary situation in Namibia. Professor Harlech-Jones succinctly discusses the conditions for effective implementation of a language policy, concluding that good policy-making should, in effect, be a "bottom-up" design.

Professor W. Haacke, who is Harlech-Jones's colleague at the Windhoek Academy, begins by situating his survey of minority languages in the education system of Namibia within the context of SWAPO policy, quoting Hage Geingob of the United Nations Institute for Namibia:

South Africa has always pursued a deliberate policy of ethnolinguistic fragmentation in order to divide the people of Namibia. SWAPO of Namibia, on the other hand, is enjoined by its Constitution to unite all the Namibians irrespective of race, religion, sex or ethnic origin into one national entity. SWAPO therefore decided, inter alia, to introduce English, an extra-ethnic language, as the official language of imminently independent Namibia. ... This decision, however, does not imply that the indigenous languages are being dismissed. Local languages have a vital role to play in society and there will be a need for an overall multilingual language planning policy ... in which the various languages are institutionalised to their greatest advantage.²

Haacke comments that while the present government is institutionalising the major indigenous languages, this process is rejected by SWAPO as serving fragmentation.

In painstaking detail, supported by tables of figures, charts and graphs, he documents the contemporary situation in Namibian schools. Not only does he survey the numbers of children being taught in which media, but he also includes a brief synthesis of recent attitudinal surveys, and incidentally corroborates some of the preliminary findings of Chick and Seneque. The African mother tongues are reportedly rejected by many Africans in Namibia as being undesirable for educational purposes even on the primary level. Citing the Nama as the best example of the "syndrome", Haacke comments that:

the language shift to Afrikaans that can be observed among [them] is a model instant of how economic conditions are the prime determining factor that causes a group to use language, ethnicity and group loyalties as resources to achieve specific ends. This means that educational reforms are to little avail, if they are not supported by a congruent socio-economic reform.

In his conclusion, Haacke states categorically that he fully endorses the UNESCO concept of mother-tongue education. Secondly, he states his belief that the key to nationhood in Namibia must be sought in a "pluralistic" society. What is needed, he believes, is the consent and grassroots participation of the language communities themselves. Moreover, there should be provision for "the crucial step of mutual enrichment through exchange"⁴ by

the device of all pupils taking one official language and at least one African minority language as subjects.

Dr. K.B. Hartshorne's historical overview is a concise but finely detailed summary of language policy in African education in South Africa from 1910 to 1985. At the end of his survey he reviews the current situation, making the observation that:

African education, then, from Std 3 upwards is an English medium system, in theory if not always in practice by choice of the users of the system, with all the implications for language corpus planning that this involves, implications that up to the present have not been faced squarely, certainly within the system.⁵

The areas he regards as being in need of serious attention turn out, not surprisingly, to be those identified by other contributors (for example Chick and Seneque, Mawasha). In his concluding paragraph he writes:

Above all, it is clear, as was recognised at a recent conference on language in African education, convened by the HSRC, that there is little likelihood of African pupils benefitting from an effective English-medium education as long as separate, vertically-segmented, racial education systems are maintained.⁶

He ends by asserting that it is this issue "to which the State must now give urgent and immediate attention, if the present crisis in education is not to turn to final tragedy".

K. Heugh's crisp paper betrays no illusions about any reformist intentions on the part of the present regime in South Africa. On the contrary, she strives to present a summary of the language policy intentions of the South African national resistance movements. While it is obviously annoying to have to receive such information at second-hand, Heugh's survey is nonetheless meticulous (and pleasingly non-sectarian). In general, there is strong accord between all groupings within the broad liberation movement that the role of English is set to be one of great significance; the role of the black languages is likely to become more prestigious; and the role of Afrikaans is likely to diminish.

This booklet demonstrates that an uneven collection may yet contain significant contributions.

Notes and References

1. D Young, (ed.), *Language: Planning and Medium in Education*, (Cape Town: Language Education Unit and SAALA, 1987), 14.
2. *Ibid.*, 184.
3. *Ibid.*, 190.
4. *Ibid.*, 195.
5. *Ibid.*, 99.
6. *Ibid.*, 101.

REVIEW

*Race against the Ratios - The why and how of
desegregating teacher training.*

By VANESSA GAYDON, South African Institute of Race Relations
(1987). ISBN 0 86982 321 3. 70 pages.

Reviewed by David Freer
University of the Witwatersrand

This short analysis is a welcome addition to the library of any serious student of the educational crisis in South Africa.

The publication's principal virtue would seem to be as a statistical resource. It includes information on the supply of newly qualified teachers for the period 1980-85 and includes projections up to 1990. Its principal weakness is that the statistics are not translated into graphically revealing diagrams and instead there is a somewhat repetitive and perhaps superfluous literary description of the eleven vital tables which appear at the end of chapter one.

The inadequacies of the present structures for producing teachers in sufficient numbers to correct the appalling disparity between white and black teacher-pupil ratios is well presented and the statistical evidence is overwhelming. Undoubtedly the desegregation of the white colleges of education could be both an economic and a statistical solution to the imbalance.

It is morally and educationally indefensible to let valuable human and material resources go to waste because of doctrinal constraints.

According to Gaydon, there are thousands of vacant places in white colleges of education and several colleges are more than willing to open their doors to black students. The only strategy that appears possible in the immediate future, is to link colleges and universities in schemes of association that would allow College Councils the same autonomy in decision-making that is currently enjoyed by the universities.

The author cites considerable evidence that there are a number of high quality institutes in non-African education that have an abundance of facilities, an over-supply of well-qualified staff and a willingness to accept students of all races into their courses. The central block to this obvious course of action lies in the division of educational responsibilities in South Africa. The white colleges are controlled by provincial education authorities who in turn are ultra-sensitive to conservative attempts to preserve so-called group identities.

The projection of school population figures for the next twelve years in Gaydon's first table estimates a relatively steady state for White, Asian and Coloured pupils. The projection for the African group forecasts an increase of three and a half million pupils if the so-called independent and non-independent homelands are included. A most conservative estimate of the increase in the number of teachers required to teach on a staff:student ratio of 1:30 indicates that an extra 120 000 teachers will be required by the turn of the century. The

most optimistic estimates of output for DET Colleges for the period 1990-2000 if account is taken of the retirement and resignations among serving teachers, suggests a teacher supply far below that figure.

A change in legislation which would enable the white colleges to help attack this deficit could yield a further 7 000 teachers in this period. It is possible that student placements in the white colleges could be pushed beyond this figure which would further alleviate the shortfall. It is almost inconceivable that such an obvious solution is not welcomed by the legislators and administrators of education in this country.

In tackling the teacher supply question alone, Gaydon's analysis implies an acceptance that an increase in output of three-year post Standard Ten teachers will automatically promote a dramatic improvement in the quality of education. This is a problem that needs to be explored. The expectations placed on students and the level of critical analysis of teaching and education in general in African teachers' colleges is variable in the extreme. Until three or four years ago, it was fairly common in African colleges for students to be required to wear uniforms and for male students to be subjected to the degradation of corporal punishment. Any attempt to solve the "numbers problem" must be accompanied by a major curriculum shift in order to introduce acceptable tertiary attitudes, methods and syllabuses into many of these colleges. In this regard, it seems imperative that the universities need to play a major role by accommodating colleges of education under their umbrella of experience. The desegregation of teacher education might then go hand in hand with new and enlightened curricula for the colleges, underpinned by the academic standards of the host university.

Gaydon's work must be viewed as an important document in which the evidence in favour of desegregated teacher education appears irrefutable in economic, social and moral terms.

DOCUMENTS

Documents on Teacher Unity, 1985 - 1988

Profile of Teacher Organisations in South Africa

In 1985 there were 146 000 teachers in African schools (including all ten bantustans)

31 748 teachers in "Coloured" schools

10 000 teachers in Indian schools

52 500 teachers in white schools

In 1985 there were 240 248 (a quarter million) teachers in SA schools. We can deduce that, by 1988, there were more than 250 000 teachers spread across racially divided education departments. There were at least 32 teacher organisations in 14 Departments of Education.

The recognised bodies are divided into:

1. African Teachers' Association of South Africa (ATASA):

- Transvaal United African Teachers' Association (TUATA)
- Cape African Teachers' Association (CATU)
- Natal African Teachers' Union (NATU)
- Orange Free State African Teachers' Association (OFSATA)
- Ciskei Teachers' Union (CISTU)

President: Frank Tonjeni

General Secretary: H.H. Dlamlenze

Membership: 65 000

2. United Teachers' Association of South Africa (UTASA):

- Cape Teachers' Professional Association (CTPA)
- Transvaal Association of Teachers (TAT)
- Orange Free State Teachers' Association (OFSTA)
- Society of Natal Teachers (SONAT)

President: Franklin Sonn

Membership: 25 700

3. Teachers' Association of South Africa (TASA):

TASA has branches in Natal, the Transvaal and Cape Province

President: Pat Samuels

Membership: 8 600

The above are all federated into Joint Councils of Teachers' Associations of South Africa (JOCTASA).

4. Teachers Federal Council (TFC):

a) English speaking:

- Transvaal Teachers Association (TTA)
- SA Teachers' Association (SATA - Cape Province)
- Natal Teachers' Society (NTS)

b) Afrikaans speaking:

- Transvaal Onderwysersvereniging (TO)

- Suid Afrikaanse Onderwysersunie (SAOU)
 - Natal Onderwysersunie (NOU)
 - Orange Free State Teachers' Association/Oranje Vrystaat Onderwysunie
 - South African Association for Technical and Vocational Education (SAATVE)
- Director: R.J.J. van Vuuren

The unrecognised, "progressive" teachers' organisations are:

1. Cape Province:

- Western Cape Teachers' Union (WECTU)
- Democratic Teachers' Union (DETU)
- Education for an Aware South Africa (EDASA)
- Eastern Cape Teachers Union (ECTU)
- Port Alfred Progressive Teachers' Union (PAPTU)
- East London Progressive Teachers' Union (ELPTU)
- Cape African Teachers' Union (CATU)

2. Transvaal:

- Progressive Teachers' Union (PTU)
- Progressive Teachers' League (PTL)
- Mamelodi Teachers' Union (MATU)

3. National Education Union of South Africa (NEUSA)

- Branches in all provinces before being effectively banned in 1988.
- President: Curtis Nkondo

4. Teachers' League of South Africa:

- Members in all provinces
- Secretary: Helen Kies

Harare Conference on Teacher Unity (4-8 April 1988)

Participants:

Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), led by assistant general secretary, Sydney Mafumadi
 African National Congress (ANC)
 South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU)
 World Confederation of Organisations of the Teaching Profession (WCOTP) led by president Tom Bediake
 Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU)
 Kenyan National Union of Teachers (KNUT)
 All Africa Teachers' Organisation (AATO) led by president Ambrose A. Adongo
 Africans Teachers' Association of South Africa (ATASA) led by president Frank Tonjeni and general secretary H.H. Dlamlenze
 United Teachers' Association of South Africa (UTASA) led by president Franklyn Sonn and vice-president Randall van der Heever
 Teachers' Association of South Africa (TASA) led by president Pat Samuels and general secretary S. Jaggernath
 National Education Union of South Africa (NEUSA)
 Western Cape Teachers' Union (WECTU)

Progressive Teachers' Union (PTU)

Progressive Teachers' League (PTL)

Democratic Teachers' Union (DETU)

Education for an Aware South Africa (EDASA)

Four major issues were discussed by the South African representatives:

1. Unity.
2. Form of the Proposed Organisation: Professional Association or Trade Union?
3. Ideology.
4. Non-collaboration.
5. The Role of the Teacher and his/her relationship to People's Education. As none of the representatives had any mandate other than to be there, fifteen points in the form of recommendations were drawn up to be used as guidelines for the discussions. Fifteen recommendations, unanimously agreed upon by representatives of all teachers' organisations present, flowed from these discussions (see below).

Recommendations of Harare Conference

1. All representatives of the teachers' organisations present agreed on the need for national unity of teachers and committed themselves to discuss this in their various organisations and to propagate the feasibility of one national teachers' organisation.
2. The representatives of teachers' organisations agreed that organisations should get together to negotiate and decide on the form which the envisaged united organisation should take.
3. The organisation should commit itself to be part of the national democratic movement.
4. Such an organisation should be committed to a unitary, non-racial, democratic South Africa.
5. The organisation should commit itself to a free, non-racial, non-sexist, compulsory, democratic education in a single education system.
6. The organisation should protect and promote the rights of teachers as workers and professionals.
7. The organisation should implement as a matter of urgency a programme of political and professional education of teachers for them to play an effective role within the community.
8. Ideology should not be a precondition for unity.
9. The representatives of organisations agreed to urge their organisations that they, as well as the envisaged organisation, would abide by the principle and practice of non-collaboration with all structures of the apartheid system.
10. Negotiations with respective authorities should only be conducted with the mandate of the constituencies concerned.
11. The organisation will commit itself to the realisation of the ideals of a People's Education in our country.
12. In the interim the representatives of organisations will urge their organisations to consult on ways to co-ordinate the various attempts and work together in formulating and implementing People's Education projects.
13. Organisations are encouraged to organise joint projects which facilitate national unity.
14. The representatives of organisations committed themselves to urge their organisations to maintain the spirit of comradeship, mutual respect and common purpose which has characterised the Harare seminar on Teacher Unity as a necessary element in the process of achieving unity.
15. The representatives of organisations agreed to urge their organisation to establish a

negotiating machinery to pursue the objectives stated in this document. They request that as a matter of urgency COSATU should convene such a machinery having consulted and agreed with the organisations about the composition and powers of such a machinery. COSATU is further requested to consult with other sectors of the democratic movement to facilitate the unity process.

Cosatu Resolution on education adopted at Inaugural Congress 1985.

This Federation noting:

1. That the present education system in South Africa is designed to maintain the working class in ideological bondage;
2. That the present education system is designed to continue and reinforce the values, ideas and practices of the ruling classes;
3. That the present education system is aimed at fostering divisions and anti-democratic values within the working class;
4. That education is vital in the liberation struggle of the working class; and
5. That education must serve the interests of the vast majority of people of the country;

Therefore resolves:

1. To establish a national, regional and local education programme for the federation to:
 - (a) ensure that this education programme politicises, mobilises and organises the working class so that they play the leading role in the liberation of our society and its transformation into an economic, social and political system that will serve the needs of those who are now oppressed and exploited;
 - (b) develop an understanding and capacity to wage our struggle by democratic means that will allow maximum participation, decision making power for workers both now and in the future society we wish to build;
 - (c) develop the human potential to the fullest and to create and transform skills and abilities so that they are accessible to the oppressed and exploited; and
 - (d) develop the understanding among the working class that their struggle forms part of the world struggle against oppression and exploitation.
2. To establish a Federation newspaper which will:
 - (a) express the views and policies of the Federation and its affiliates;
 - (b) record the struggles of the Federation and its affiliates; and
 - (c) counter the dominance of the bosses' media by popularising democratic values and traditions among the working class.
3. To organise and commemorate the important cultural events, and resistance days in the working class calendar, for example, May Day and June 16 and Federation Day.

Extract on Teacher Unity from speech by Jay Naidoo, COSATU General Secretary, at WECTU AGM, April-May 1987.

The fundamental challenge by hundreds of thousands of black students to Bantu Education represented the most serious challenge to apartheid capitalist education.

As workers we have since the 1984 November Stayaway in the Witwatersrand given our full support to the student struggles and demands: the right of students to organise their own SRCs; their right to a national organisation; their rights to make decisions. The establishment of the NECC and the democratic structures representing parents, teachers and students deepened the terrain of the education struggle. This needs to be reinforced. The programme to build People's Education becomes a vital component of breaking from the bondage of apartheid capitalist education. But a programme for People's Education cannot

be the result of some high powered commission of experts. It is a programme formulated on the battleground of mass politics and ideological struggle.

As teachers, blessed with the skills and knowledge acquired from the education system, sustained by the blood and sweat of workers, you have a duty to serve the interest of the working class. How can you do this?

Building a National Teachers' Organisation

In raising this issue I quote Cde John Erentzen in his speech to you in August 1986: "Historically teachers as a whole have been proud to regard themselves as being amongst those who have 'graduated' from the working class. The education crisis and the mass struggles of students have wiped out that myth. The vast majority of black teachers come from the ranks of the working class."

Our belief is that teachers have a critical role to play in the struggle for an alternative education system. But they are presently paralysed by the lack of any democratic national organisation with a clear programme of action. As a result even the attempts to build the progressive teachers organisations have failed to achieve anything of significance and become very issue-oriented.

As Cde John Erentzen said in 1986 what is needed is a national union of teachers based on the democratic principles and policies of the workers' movement.

In line with this COSATU has begun to open up discussions with a range of teachers' organisations. We recently agreed to meet with ATASA at its request to place on record with them our position on national teachers' unity.

Our belief is that progressive teachers who identify and commit themselves to our struggle to end racism and exploitation must stop their sloganeering and phrasemongering and get down to concrete tasks of building a viable and democratic national union of teachers that can contribute concretely to our struggle. To us, one of the most fundamental principles of socialism is achieving unity and establishing viable democratic structures that allow people to control their own lives.

Third NECC Consultative Conference September 1987 Commission 5: Teachers and Academics

Noting that:

1. there are a number of progressive teacher organisations presently in existence;
2. very little co-operation exists among them;
3. the majority of teachers are presently not organised within these progressive teacher bodies;

and believing:

1. that the present state of the National Democratic struggle in general and the education struggle in particular demand the organisation of teachers in order that they may play their rightful role as teachers in the National Democratic struggle,
- hereby resolves:

1. that an interim steering committee be established comprising of one representative from each progressive teacher organisation;
2. that the functions of this steering committee be as follows:
 - (i) to seek common ground among teacher organisations-
 - (ii) to look for means of mobilising the maximum number of progressive teachers-
 - (iii) to work towards a national conference of teacher organisations where the issue of

forming a national progressive teacher organisation is finalised-

(iv) to finalise a date for the above conference in consultation with the NECC and other progressive teacher organisations-

(v) to get participation of fraternal progressive organisations in this process-

(vi) to attempt to reach out to progressive teachers presently not organised-

(vii) to, in conjunction with the NECC, meet with non-progressive organisations to discuss the issue of national teacher unity;

3. that this conference elect a convenor for the above steering committee - whose function would be to:

(i) co-ordinate the process in setting-up the interim steering committee-

(ii) liaise with progressive teacher organisations to facilitate the discussion of this resolution.

**Extracts from speech at conference of progressive teacher organisations on
Teacher Unity, October 1987: the need for teachers' unity: towards one united
teachers' organisation: A perspective from the NECC:**

....The priority of our national democratic struggle at the present juncture is still to mobilise and to organise our people in a broad front against the apartheid state. Such mobilisation and organisation is currently evolving on a sectoral basis- workers, youth, women, etc. - and teachers, as a key sector of our struggle, need to take this strategy seriously.

There are many debates and differences among our organisations and within the progressive movement about the teachers' sector ...But one thing is for certain: we must put the goal of teachers' unity above all others, because in that unity lies our strength. We cannot allow preconditions for teacher unity which are rooted in the experience of one or other teachers' organisation to become hard and fast principles which obstruct and undermine the emergence of a single teachers' organisation... Progressive teachers must form the core of this unity. The activists who have developed in our organisations need to see their task as the organisation of the broad mass of teachers. Our task must be to isolate teachers from the working of apartheid and not from ourselves as progressive teachers. And a united, national teachers' organisation is the key to this door.

An examination of the major contending forces in the teachers' sector shows us just how urgent teachers' unity is.

On the one hand, the state seeks to win the hearts and minds of teachers with a dual strategy - teacher parity in salaries above a certain grade, benefits and in-service training for those who work the apartheid education machine, and the simultaneous victimization, expulsions, dismissals and transfers of progressive teachers. This is the area within which teachers must contest the domination of the apartheid state, and one national organisation in conjunction with the rest of the democratic movement is the only platform from which to win this terrain.

On the other hand, the challenge for People's Education and democratic control of our schools is taking shape within the broad ranks of the NECC. A single, united progressive teachers' organisation has an indispensable role to play in the establishment of People's Education in our schools...

If we do not develop strong, democratic, grass-roots structures in all our schools, then our education struggle will be stillborn. Teachers must be part of Parent-Teacher-Student Associations (PTSAs), they must be supported by a strong teachers' organisation accountable to the community at large, just as students and parents gain strength from student congresses and civics...

Teachers are in fact vital to the NECC. They are in a position to develop ideas, to

consolidate the gains and achievements of People's Education over time, to take initiatives within their classrooms and schools to further challenge apartheid education...

One of the major reasons for the weakness of teachers within the overall education struggle has been the inability of our teachers' organisations to defend their members against repression and victimisation...

But we must take heart from two recent victories which have shown us what a union might do for teachers. WECTU through its "hands off teachers" campaign succeeded in having misconduct charges dropped against their members; NEUSA negotiated with the Mabuza government to win the reinstatement and demands of striking KaNgwane teachers...

It is worth remembering the majority of teachers in our land: the thousands of systematically underqualified, exploited teachers in our schools who cannot hope to benefit from the financial perks and incentives of the "M+" teacher salary formula of the South African state, and teach for a pittance... Let us not forget that the fledgling progressive teachers' organisations in South Africa have done very little to organise or to represent the immediate interests of these teachers.

We must remain humble in our discussions... The most reliable sector of the broad national liberation movement is the working class and its organs, and it is for this reason that we strive for working-class leadership of our national democratic struggle. All teachers committed to end apartheid must find a home in a united, progressive teachers' organisation, but we must remember that teachers are not the natural allies of the working class. We need to take the leading role of working class organisations very seriously, and not allow the empty slogans and abstract principles of an isolated middle-class existence to obstruct the major goal of a united teachers' union: the organisation of the broad mass of teachers...

Notes on Contributors

Refereed Articles

David Brown is a lecturer at the Department of Sociology, University of Natal, Durban. He is currently working in the area of socio-linguistics and teaches courses on the sociology of language.

Clive Glaser is currently working on an M.A. at the University of the Witwatersrand, on youth sub-cultures in Johannesburg in the 1940s and 50s.

Peter Kallaway is an associate professor in the areas of sociology and history of education at the School of Education, University of Cape Town.

History Workshop Papers

Carolyn Hamilton is co-ordinator of Swaziland Oral History Project and her research area is pre-colonial history.

Helen Webster is currently an editor at Macmillan publishers in Basingstoke.

John Wright is a lecturer in the Department of History, University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg, working in colonial and pre-colonial South African history.

Discussion Papers

Jonathan Hyslop is a lecturer in the Department of Sociology, University of the Witwatersrand.

Rupert Taylor is a lecturer in the Department of Political Studies, University of the Witwatersrand.

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Faculty of Education,
University of the Witwatersrand,
PO Wits, Johannesburg 2050,
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For reference to a book:

1. P. Kallaway, (ed.), *Apartheid and Education: The Education of Black South Africans* (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1984), 2-5.

For a journal reference:

2. A. Simon and P. Beard, "Discriminatory Factors Affecting Woman Teachers in Natal", *Perspectives in Education*, 9.1 (July 1986): 59.

For a reference to a chapter in a collection:

3. F. Chikane, "Children in Turmoil: The Effects of the Unrest on Township Children", in S. Berman and P. Reynolds, (eds.), *Growing up in a Divided Society: The Contexts of Childhood in South Africa* (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1987), 20.

For reference to work listed directly preceding:

4. *Ibid.*, 21.

Unpublished sources:

5. N. Nook to Mann, 1 July 1857, Antioch College Archives.

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6. *South African Native Affairs Commission Report, 1903-1905* (Cape Town, 1905), 71.

Newspapers:

7. *The Star*, 3 September 1986.

Unpublished theses and papers:

8. M. Cross, "Capital, State, Missionaries, and the Foundations of a Segregated Schooling System on the Witwatersrand, 1900-1924" (M.Ed. thesis, University of the Witwatersrand, 1985), 1.

Contributions should be sent to The Editors at the Faculty of Education, University of the Witwatersrand, P O Wits, Johannesburg 2050, South Africa; but may also be submitted through any of the Associate Editors.

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