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Perspectives in Education, 7(3)

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Morrow, W. (Ed.) (1983, December). Perspectives in Education, 7(3).

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Perspectives in Education

Volume 7 Number 3 December 1983

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

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Perspectives in Education

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Editorial

Published neatly after the acceptance by a majority of white voters of the proposed consitution for South Africa, the recent White Paper on the Provision of Education in the Republic of South Africa[1] brings phase two of the post-1980 education reform to a conceptual close. This second White Paper in response to the De Lange Committee's Report[2] sets up structures for some re-organisation and upgrading of education to fit apartheid in its current guise.

The White Paper makes promises of equality in all major educational spheres within its repeated insistence upon separate education systems for the four 'population groups'. In post-referendum cant, education is regarded as an 'own affair' except insofar as financing, salaries and educational standards are concerned. The claimed goal of equality is stressed both overtly and within the coordinated structures proposed in the White Paper. When it comes to the matter of money, however, this reservation is made:

> . . . the State can be expected to ensure that there are equal opportunities and equal standards for all, although it will depend upon the community concerned to what extent education of an equal quality does in fact develop from this basis.[3]

Has a real shift from Verwoerdian education for inequality taken place? The tone is different: in place of the brutally frank espousal of inferior education underlying the original Bantu Education Act (1953) there is at least lip-service to the principle of equality; at least for Whites, Coloureds and Indians there is now a paternalistic handing over of responsibility to these 'communities', with a bland refusal to acknowledge the disregard, neglect and mismanagement which has characterised the provision of schooling for some 'communities' in South Africa from the start.That educational 'equal quality' has to be achieved by people in economic, social and political circumstances where separation has persistently meant

inequality is not acknowledged by this view of education; nor are the real questions of quality in education perceived to be pertinent factors. Various legislative measures, like the Group Areas Act and the Reservation of Separate Amenities Act, are still key features of state policy, while the underlying ethos of CNE is still embedded in 'the Christian principles and broad national character of education'[4] of this National Education Act of 1967.

The White Paper seems to have as little to do with 'Black' education as it can (since Africans are excluded from the new constitutional dispositions) except when policy for farm schools, 'non-formal' and 'career' education is announced.

In the instance of farm schools (which comprise over 70% of schools and 33% of the pupils under the control of the Department of Education and Training)[5], this White Paper takes up an issue neglected by the original Report of the De Lange Committee: that of rural education. This hopelessly under-researched and complex aspect of South African education is in need of more than the improvements which the White Paper regards as essential. Investigations into rural education — descriptions of its conditions, its nature and its situation, as well as considered thought about what it can and might be — are very badly needed if constructive educational debate is to occur.

Coordination of 'non-formal' education (a term which embraces adult literacy groups to training by the private sector) is regarded as very important by the White Paper. Here cooperation between the State and the commercial and industrial interests is most pronounced, whereas the government is still shy of permitting the private sector to have overt influence upon schooling and university education.[6] Indeed, the White Paper recoils from the technicism of the De Lange Report by saying:

> Education should contribute to the moulding of people into civilised citizens and can never be one-sidedly directed at the needs of the working world.[7]

Is such concern borne out by the White Paper? It is clear that 'career education' is to be given much greater attention than is presently the case and the roles of the technikons and those of technical colleges need very close scrutiny by those concerned with educational developments. It is in this sphere that the most powerful growth in South African education has been taking place, and where much further expansion can be expected.

Another areas badly managed in the De Lange Report[8] and which this White Paper seeks to make good is the question of teacher training. An article which explores this section of the White Paper[9] in the context of the proposed developments would be of great interest. An article which explores this section of the White Paper[9] in the context of the proposed

developments would be of great interest.

The government's repeated insistence upon apartheid in education has produced frequent reactions of outright rejection of its reformist proposals, particularly by those who remain disadvantaged, an entirely reasonable response, it would seem. In other cases, those who had previously invested high hopes in the De Lange enquiry have become disillusioned by the degree to which the retention of such basic features of the apartheid order as separate schooling systems has denied possibilities for fundamental change. Then there are those (whites) who cannot accept even the limited changes implied in the government's present initiative. Who is left to believe in the promise of present educational change? Only the bureaucrats and planners? Those who are busy with the complex task of formulating an education charter for South Africa (a task very different from supplying the state with an educational ancillary) need interpretations of the implications of the policies announced in documents like this White Paper.

The purpose of this glance at the White Paper is to encourage contributions to the discussion and articles sections of this journal. Last year we published a special issue devoted to the original De Lange Committee' Report[10] as well as artciles in subsequent issues. *Perspectives in Education* would welcome explorations of the trends which are discernible in this White Paper, in addition to investigations into areas of education or questions about education raised by the document. Except in notable instances, there have been few clearly formulated responses to the educational impact of reports and developments associated with the current reformist thrust on the part of the government.

Perspectives in Education would be happy to receive contributions on these questions for publication in 1984.

NOTES

1 Republic of South Africa *White Paper on the Provision of Education in the Republic of South Africa 1983*, Pretoria: Government Printer, 23 November 1983. Hereinafter referred to as *White Paper*.
2 Human Sciences Research Council *Provision of Education in the Republic of South Africa: Report of the Main Committee of the HSRC Investigation into Education*, Pretoria: HSRC, 1981.
3 *White Paper*, p 28. This section was first drawn to my attention by Sheryl Raine. *The Star*, Johannesburg: 23 Novembr 1983, p 6.
4 *Ibid* p 4.
5 *Ibid* p 19.
6 *Ibid* pp 11, 34 and 46.
7 *Ibid* p 34.
8 Jane Hofmeyr and John Lewin "Teacher Education and the De Lange Committee". *Perspectives in Education*, vol 6 no 1, July 1982.
9 *White Paper*, pp 41-43.
10 Special Issue: The HSRC Education Report. *Perspectives in Education*, May 1982.

ARTICLES

Apartheid, African Nationalism and Culture — The Case of Traditional African Music in Black Education in South Africa

Veit Erlmann

1 Introduction

There seems to be general agreement among students of traditional music on a few common principles of what one might all an 'applied ethnomusicology'. In particular, it is held that in a time of universal industrialisation and social change the existence of traditional musical cultures is endangered. On the other hand, it is also believed that 'development' and 'modernisation', however defined, and traditional music are compatible'[1]. Indeed, traditional music and culture are seen as vital prerequisites for national and economic emancipation[2]. Consequently, traditional music must be preserved and revived, not as a fossil, but in all its plurality as part of 'living traditions'[3]. Education, finally, is thought to play a key role in this process[4].

While I do not wish to argue against any of these hypotheses, it seems equally important to realise both the extremely complicated nature of each of these premises as well as the need for a theoretical framework in which to discuss the role of traditional music in 'complex', modern societies. Attempts to formulate coherent cultural policies in developing countries often failed to clarify ambiguous notions such as 'culture', 'tradition', or 'national heritage', and any discussion of traditional music in 'complex' societies must first and foremost reassess the value and meaning of these basic notions. In fact, in a 'complex' society such as South Africa, it is impossible to discuss the role of traditional music in such broad, quasi-neutral terms as the consensus of opinion among ethnomusicologists implies.

In the very special context of race segregation, political oppression and economic and social imbalance, concepts such as 'traditional culture', 'traditional music', 'living tradition' or 'national culture' reflect specific class interests rather than a common African consciousness. In two centuries of colonial conquest and capitalist industrialisation African musical traditions in South Africa came to signify totally different things to

various classes of the African community. Traditional music as well as Westernised forms of African urban performance culture became sites of ideological struggles which were essentially fought for fundamental political issues as recent research has shown[5]. Any attempt to discuss the role of traditional music in South Africa must therefore first take cognisance of the wider context of these struggles. More fundamentally, culture has not only to be seen as part of the superstructure, as a set of rules and meanings shaped by economic structures, but also as a process which in turn creates and shapes social structures. Power relationships — the ability or failure of individuals and classes to control natural resources, labour, means and ways of production, as well as the content of meanings inherent in culture — are the key to the analysis of cultural processes.

'Complex', 'modern' societies are not homogenous structures, but are characterised by the juxtaposition of central and peripheral sectors whose relationship to each other is guided by mechanisms of control and domination manipulated by the central sector and the search for identity and autonomy among those belonging to the peripheral sector. In South Africa, where the 'complexity' of social structure is enhanced by intersecting racial divisions, a pattern of conflict between a largely 'white', dominant culture of the ruling classes and a predominantly African, marginal culture remained fairly constant over the past two centuries. At the same time, certain shifts both in the intensity and focus of these conflicts are recognisable. In 19th century Cape Colony an essentially colonial, paternalistic assimilationist policy dominated which was widely accepted by educated Africans. In early Natal a segregationist policy became the model for a racist-supremacist Afrikaner siege culture bitterly opposed by African nationalist movements since the 1950s.

However, whatever these shifts are, a meaningful discussion of the present-day role of traditional music in South Africa and in black education in particular is incomplete without addressing fundamental questions like 'Whose culture is it that should be preserved? Who is it who would like to preserve traditional music and what are his/her interests? Who defines what is traditional culture and what is not?' I would like to take up these questions and discuss some of the answers that have been given to them in the past 200 years. I have chosen the role of traditional music in black education as an example, because like no other cultural sphere involving traditional African music, education confronts and exposes the views of opposing forces like the racist state on the one side and African nationalist movements on the other. Unlike the media which, especially since the introduction of the ethnically divided services of Radio Bantu, only invited marginal criticism the erosion of the educational system for Blacks has always been at the centre of major political crises in South Africa — most notable perhaps in 1976.

2 Assimilation and Segregation — Colonialist Cultural Politics and African Nationalism

19th century British policy in the two major Southern African colonies of the Cape and Natal, for different, mainly economic and demographic reasons, was characterised by two seemingly contradictory orientations. 'Policy in the Cape Colony . . . aimed at the change and erosion of African traditionalism and the promotion of cultural assimilation among Africans'[6], while in Natal a school of segregationalists came to recognise in traditionalism a main bulwark of white colonial domination. Both policies created important patterns of white supremacist cultural ideology as well as of African reaction to it.

Natal policy was based on the argument that culturally different people could not expect to be politically equal. Natal colonists, vastly outnumbered by Africans, gave recognition to African customary law and traditional chiefs in the hope — as one observer put it — 'to protect white civilisation from the native and to protect the native from white civilisation'[7]. Cape officials, on the other hand, insisted that a means to check the potential threat by autonomous African communities was to assimilate them on a formally equal basis, but nevertheless — to use Cape Governor Grey's words — as 'useful servants, consumers of our goods, contributors to our revenue, in short, a source of strength and wealth to this Colony'[8]. Although later the Natal line gained considerable influence on Union politics and, in 1948, was finally made state philosophy, both ideologies continued to exist among different groupings of the white minority. This explains such seeming contraditions that a Transvaal Labour Commission in 1903, for instance, saw in *lobola*, the traditional bride price, not primarily the concomitant evil of polygamy attacked by Christian colonists, but a 'considerable incentive' to Africans to enter the labour market[9].

Let us take a look at some of the consequences of Cape colonial policy for the debate on traditional music and culture among the emerging African middle-class of the late 19th century. After the completion of the military conquest of the Eastern Cape in the early 1800s and the subsequent loss of land, mission stations soon became prime sources of change and innovation among Africans. Although by as late as 1865 there were only some 3,000 African pupils enrolled in the mission schools[10], these schools offered a contradictory but powerful mixture of educational practices to a minority of uprooted Africans. On the one hand, missionaries followed British practice in emphasising industrial skills for a modernising agriculture and in discouraging writing and arithmetic, because it was 'apprehended that such a degree of knowledge would produce in them a disrelish for the labourious occupations of life'. On the other hand, the

very rural culture that was to produce Grey's 'useful servants' for the advanced economy was not allowed to express itself musically in its traditional fashion.

The missions criminalised and penalised as 'heathen' any traditional dancing and musical instruments. They were successful in educating a class of African cultural leaders like the first black minister Tiyo Soga for whom Western Christian education became a focal point of hope for social status and integration into white colonial society, and who readily accepted — as Soga put it in a newspaper article in 1863 — 'the blessings which came with the White man'[12]. For Soga and his fellow missionary and later biographer J A Chalmers 'the Kafir people as a nation are deficient in poetry and music'[13] and 'the deafening howl of . . . women making music for the dancers' was part of a 'chain of heathen customs and practices'[14]. Chalmer's opinion of his black fellow missionary's hymns — 'some of the best sacred songs yet published in the Kafir language'[15] — reveals what sacrifices the missionaries were prepared to make in overcoming the 'deficiencies' and the 'deafening howl' of traditional music:

> The hymns had to be adapted to the measure of English tunes, and the result is that, in singing, the words are not accentuated as when spoken. Where he (Soga) disregarded this natural flow and rhythm of the Kafir language (Xhosa), he was eminently successful[16].

Soga's rejection of his own cultural background was not without its ambiguity and certainly not without painful psychological side-effects, a conflict which was to characterise the subsequent history of the African elite. The first obstacle to the integration of the African elite into white society were the colonists. Because of official Cape liberalism, white settlers were violently opposed to the education of Africans because they were afraid of a decrease in the abundant supply of cheap black labour and feared the competition of independent African farmers and merchants. The musical aspirations of such communities of educated Africans must have been no more acceptable to white colonists than the economic competition itself. On the occasion of a tour of a Zulu Choir, one colonist paper, *The Midland News and Karoo Farmer* in Cradock glossed:

> The appearance of these people on the platform, their good behaviour, and the excellent and correct manner in which they rendered choice selections from Handel, Rossini, Donizetti and other lights of the great musical world, is calculated to set anyone with half a thought for the future seriously thinking. Here are 15 men and women whose immediate ancestors were 'red blanket Kaffirs', and yet after a

> couple of months training they are able to carry out a programme in a style that would be considered eminently satisfactory for a choir of white vocalists chosen from out of a large European town.

So much for the praise. The Cradock critic was however also quite clear on the consequences of such 'achievements':

> Such shows, and their effect upon the other coloured people of this Colony — together with the erroneous ideas that will be fostered by the appearance of the Choir in England — will only tend to intensify and make more difficult the race question in Africa. We take leave to doubt if the Kaffir is to be raised by means of his musical faculties, promising as they undoubtedly are. He can no more escape the primal curse than the man whose skin is of lighter hue, and we thus feel constrained to look upon . . . (such) . . . efforts — praiseworthy as they are in some points — as being on the whole detrimental to the interests of the natives themselves[17].

Such apprehensions were frequent but groundless. For, although by 1885 the number of Africans educated at the mission schools in the Cape had risen to nearly 16,000[18], it was found that little more than 5 per cent of pupils could read. Moreover, missionaries never tired of making palatable to their white brethren the real benefits of African education. James Stewart, principal of Lovedale, the first college for Blacks, proudly introducing 'A Register of Two Thousand Names' of pupils educated until 1886 was on record that 'cattle-stealing and joining in Native rebellions have not been traced to Christian and educated Natives *as a class*'[19]. According to one Cape Superintendent of Education, the schools were 'hostages for peace'[20] and the endless singing of hymns — with English or ill-adjusted Xhosas words — was one of the main disciplinary methods to keep pupils occupied. At the same time, the Western practice of aligning part singing to a four-square melodic structure straightjacketed traditional Cape Nguni musical techniques of free-moving parts in overlapping call-and-response patterns. Lovedale was at the forefront of cultural disruption and a pace-maker for black middle-class musicial innovation. This institute not only had its own choirs and brass-band, but as the first, and for a long time only teacher-training institute for Blacks, it also helped to shape and spread the values of the emerging African petty bourgeoisie to the new cities of the beginning industrial revolution. By the mid-19th century, traditional African culture and music had become thoroughly eradicated among a small, but influential group of African in the Cape.

By the 1880s, however, some African middle class leaders cautiously began to question the value of a 'civilisation' that was reluctant to accept

Africans other than as 'useful servants'. One such leader was John Knox Bokwe. A product of Lovedale, Bokwe was at the same time a newspaper editor, a writer, poet, and a musician: in short, a true 'progressive' of his time. As a composer of both sacred hymns and secular songs, he eventually became the first African composer of national stature. Most important among Bokwe's works was a collection of four hymns published between 1876 and 1884, which were based on the hymns of another famous musical innovator Ntsikana Gaba, a minor Xhosa chief who was converted to Christianity around 1816 and became the first to use traditional music 'as an authentic African expression of Christianity'[21]. Recent research[2] has shown that in his original compositions Ntsikana drew on the traditional Xhosa musical style, but introduced innovations in the literary form and abandoned traditional dance and dress. Bokwe, in his literary form and abandoned traditional dance and dress. Bokwe, in his Tonic-Solfa arrangements of Ntsikana's hymns, observed the general rules of Xhosa music such as a falling melodic line and frequent tonality shifts between the first and second degree, but he also introduced Western elements in using dominant seventh chords and in tolerating slight distortions of pitch — speech tone relationships and stolid rhythm. Most important perhaps was the fact that Bokwe confounded the lead singer's part and the chorus in Ntsikana's original composition.

By the end of the 19th century and well into the 20th century Bokwe's songs had become repertoire standards throughout the country and middle class choirs sang them in literary debating circles and political meetings in early Kimberley, as well as in mission stations in Natal. For generations to come Bokwe's songs became the daily bread for African school children. Moreover, in reassessing traditional music and blending it with elements of Western hymnody, Bokwe captured for an expanding self-conscious class of Westernised Africans, in an idiom which was later to be known as *makwaya* ('choir') music, specifically African symbols that lent meaningful expression to the growing nationalist feeling of the late 19th century. It is perhaps no coincidence that Bokwe's hymns roused nationalist feelings, for the same had been found true for Ntsikana's own compositions in 1874 by an anonymous writer in the *Kaffir Express:*

> We have heard only one Kaffir hymn, which deeply moved the congregation of worshippers. It was composed by a chief named Tsikana . . . and the Kaffirs, from the circumstances of its composition, look on it with a kind of national feeling, especially now that they droop their heads from the loss of national freedom, and the dominance of the white man[23].

Although black education in Natal, a British colony since the 1840s, developed on a much smaller scale, official education policy was in no way

different from that at the Cape. Despite early attempts by Governor Theophilus Shepstone to implement the philosophy of 'separate development' in order to prevent inter-racial economic competition, the early mission stations in Natal failed to realise the cultural 'potential' of such a policy. Although not totally opposed to segregation even within their own churches, the missionaries could obviously not claim a Christian culture for themselves and leave a 'heathen' Zulu culture for their African converts. Unlike official colonial policy which forced the African population to 'develop along their own lines' in carefully mapped out reserves controlled by artificially restored tribal institutions, the missionaries were not prepared to tolerate any 'cultural reserves'. Most if not all missionaries were also not equipped to appreciate the subtleties of Zulu traditional music, and one missionary journal was informed that:

> two musical systems cannot exist in the present world and develop along separate lines. It is an ancient law of music history that one system has to give way to the other . . . it is hence our clear duty to give our native Christians a solid base and a deep comprehension of our musical system in our sacred songs and hymns . . . We are wholly confident that our native Christians one day will build on the musical system inherent in our hymns their own folk music[24].

Until well into the first decade of the 20th century, musical education in Natal mission schools firmly adhered to this philosophy. Percival Kirby, for instance, music inspector in the Natal Education Department, later Professor of Music at the Universities of Cape Town and the Witwatersrand and author of 'The Musical Instruments of the Native Races of South Africa' stated in 1919 that 'at any rate, for the present, the musical training of the Native will have to proceed along European lines'[26].

Such views were usually shared by middle class Africans who held that,

> if there is an asssurance of civilised advancement it can be found in beautiful singing, especially in concerted singing . . . (and) . . . that the native people have a chance given them to prove to the world that they are progressive, and especially to that little world of adverse thinkers in this Southern land who would like all Europeans to suppose that the Bantu are fossils[26].

In practice, such 'civilised advancement' meant that Umzumbe Home, for instance, one of the few schools for African girls, was proud to announce in 1908 that not only were girls 'carefully watched and guarded . . . (and) . . . taught the principles and practice of the Christian life', but also that 'each week the girls learn a beautiful anthem which they sing in Church on Sunday'[27].

It was only much later that such blunt forms of the Victorian cultural ethic came under attack from early African nationalists in Natal. One of them was John L Dube, co-founder and first President of the South African Native National Congress (SANNC), forerunner of the African National Congress (ANC). Born near Durban in 1871, Dube soon realised 'the need of political vigilance and guidance, or political emancipation and rights' among Africans[28], but like many of his class he believed that this was to be achieved by 'education, and education alone'[29]. Inspired by Black American ideals of self-help and the philosophy of his 'guiding-star' Booker Washington[30], Dube opened in 1091, at Ohlange, an independent industrial school modelled on Tuskegee. Identification with Afro-America and with the achievements of black American performers in particular was the driving force of Dube's educational policy and was reflected in broad outline in early musical performances at Ohlange which usually included a mixture of Afro-American and English materials.

Later accused of being a 'willing stooge' who 'led the Zulu back to tribalism'[31], Dube was convinced that 'among all the black races found in South Africa none surpasses the Zulus in physique and intellect'[32] and in what must be been an utterly shocking statement to white colonists, asserted that the Zulus' physical features 'generally resemble those of the Aryan race, but with higher foreheads and cheek-bones'[33]. Defining the basis of an all-African racial self-pride, Dube reckoned that the Zulus, 'intellectually superior to many of the tribes of South Africa' as they allegedly were, should 'conquer these same tribes by peaceful methods and lead them to industrial, intellectual, and spiritual advancement'[34].

Although Dube was to give up his Zulu messianism in the wake of the abortive Bambatha rebellion of 1906 and the Natives' Land Act of 1913, such words settled deep in the minds of mission-educated Zulus who had witnessed the decline of the Zulu empire only 30 years before.

One of these perhaps one of South Africa's greatest musical innovators[34] was Reuben T Caluza. A product of Ohlange and later teacher at the school, Caluza not only helped to popularise a great deal of earlier *makwaya* compositions throughout South Africa but, more significantly, from about 1911 added his own compositions, many of them modelled on American ragtime, to the existent *makwaya* literature. At the height of his popularity in the 1920s, Caluza was one of the chief promoters of a reindigenisation of Westernised middle class mission school music which had far reaching effects even on working class music styles. Caluza not only drew on Black American music but also wrote his own highly topical lyrics in Zulu. Contrary to the common belief that Zulus were unable to sing semitones, Caluza's frequent chromaticism was based on 'deep' Zulu traditional materials as found, for instance, in bow music. Caluza and his colleagues at Ohlange were the first to realise that 'there was nothing put in the place of

old heathen songs of the Natives' which 'were naturally discouraged and tabooed by the missionaries'. They felt that 'any civilisation that the Natives acquire must to a large extent be imitative but in this sphere, the musical — he can afford to be original'[35].

Consequently, contemporaries not only praised Caluza's nationalist outlook, but also felt attracted by the balance between modernisation and traditionalism kept in his works. One admirer composed the following verse:

> Africa's traditions, and modes of old,
> Her cries, and passion, her appeal for light,
> In strains of sweet, patriotic songs,
> Shall now and ever live[36].

When Caluza returned from music studies at Hampton Institute and Columbia University in the 1930s he became Professor of Music at Adams College in Natal and thus teacher of the present, older generation of African high school music teachers. Inspired by the Head of Music at Hampton, Nathaniel Dett, he also brought with him ideas about the preservation of traditional music[37] at a time when Hugh Tracey was making his first field recordings. Like Tracey, Caluza deplored that 'none of the African folk songs have been collected and preserved', and with true middle class pride was confident that 'if only the right man will dedicate his mind and soul to the proper cultivation of this native talent of choral-singing from Zululand, he too will lead to fame a body of men whose unspoiled and unselfish love for musical expression will bring an inspiring and uplifting message to the world'[39]. Tracey and Caluza differed, however, in one important respect. Caluza's niece, Faith, recalls that he 'didn't get on very well with Mr Tracey, because

> Mr Tracey had this funny idea that a black man shouldn't learn the piano, shouldn't play the piano . . . He said when a person plays something that's foreign to him, and then he looses his personality, becomes an imitator[40].

In fact, in 1935, discussing the role of the proposed College of Music at Adams, Tracey wrote that,

> however beautiful and useful European music is to Europeans it can have very little importance to Africans . . . The African who manages to learn to play the piano and becomes conversant with the whole European repertoire has achieved only an imitative faculty, daily and hourly attained by thousand upon thousand of white boys and girls[41].

It is convenient at this stage to look back and briefly summarise the

development of music education until the 1920s. The African petty bourgeoisie which emerged from early mission schools in the Cape and Natal had become the main reservoir of black school teachers, whose views generally informed the practical content of music education. Educated at first to dissociate themselves from traditional 'heathen' musical culture, they only began to redefine the value of traditional music in the wake of the emerging African nationalist movements of the early 20th century. Drawing on black American performance culture and modernising traditional indigenous elements, they created a typically middle class syncretic style called *makwaya* which eventually became synonymous with African music as such. Until the 1920s music education was hardly controlled by any coherent state policy, and although education departments generally endorsed the accepted Western cultural bias that Western music was superior to traditional African music, teachers were free to model music education to suit their own middle class taste.

3 'African National Culture' and Traditional Music

By the early 1930s industrialisation on the Witwatersrand had created a permanent labour force of hundreds of thousands of Africans who developed their own distinctive urban, working class culture including their own music. Not closed off from petty bourgeois performance culture, this proletarian, highly syncretic music called *marabi*, soon became a major cultural problem for the black elite. *Marabi* was less 'a great menace to the community'[42], as one critic saw it, than a threat to middle class standards of 'civilisation' which formed the basis of their claims for social status and political rights. As a result, the African elite not only had to dissociate themselves from 'heathen' culture, but from proletarian culture as well. Yet, eager to construct an 'African National Culture' that suited all classes of the black community and was recognisable by its own 'Bantu National Music', African middle class leaders were facing the dilemma to create a culture that was at the same time national, 'progressive' and Western enough to appeal to their own class, and traditional and vital enough to please the urban proletariat. Thus began a debate on the form and content of a 'Bantu National Music'[43] which was to continue for the next three decades.

Mark S Radebe, the leading middle class music educator and critic of the 1930s set the tone in a series of highly ambiguous articles for various African newspapers. Traditional music, according to Radebe, was to play a key role in this new 'Bantu National Music'. By the 1930s, traditional music in the eyes of the middle class musicians had ceased to be regarded as inferior and 'inspired by low feelings, passions and desires'[44]. Most critics were prepared to attest 'the intense vitality, the pathetic strains, the rich idioms, structure and design of African music'[45]. Discovering 'that their primitive

dances and music have not lost appeal with their urbanised brothers and sisters'[46] middle class cultural leaders like Radebe concluded that 'the folk song of any race with its direct appeal and simplicity of art form, stands revealed as the prototype of all great music'[42]. Folk-song, Radebe thought, was 'a basic idiom thoroughly competent to express our national psychology' and 'a distinctive Bantu Music' had to 'be based on the only real Bantu music, namely, its folk music'[48].

In accordance with the prevailing middle class theory of cultural modernisation Radebe also thought that 'Bantu music is still in its early stages like the origin of all music', but that 'between the days of Ntsikana and these of the present . . . an improvement has been made in national and folk songs as being the embodiment of the feelings, the troubles and enjoyments of the general mass of the people'[49]. Among the composers Radebe credited with such 'improvement' were Bokwe and Caluza, and, in fact, Caluza had not only recorded more than 100 traditional songs for His Master's Voice in 1930, but elite critics such as Benedict Vilakazi also praised him for having transformed the 'exclamatory and primitive "oha, ojis" ' into 'refined music and tells a story of a Zulu tribe in the days of Western civilisation' without, however, losing 'that wonderful drive which puts one's feet into action and clapping of hands and bodily movements'[50].

The real problem was not only how to modernise traditional song, but also how to incorporate it into the proposed 'Bantu National Music' when much of it also survived in 'uncivilised' forms such as *marabi* among the urban proletariat. Radebe was quite aware of this contradiction, for on the one side he recognised African rhythm as the source of cultural achievements of venerated Afro-American performers such as Paul Robeson, but on the other side he also realised 'that the Africans' strong sense of rhythm gave rise to the wave of so-called jazz'[51] which 'banged and wailed out of the doors of foul-smelling so-called halls'[52]. It was only of little consolation to solve the problem by calling jazz 'a perversion of some of the remarkable syncopating rhythms to be found in the Native music of many races'[53]. The real solution to the problem was seen in a necessary process of selection in which more rural, dignified forms of music were to be separated from 'uncivilised' and rough forms of music-making that were assimilated in such proletarian styles as *marabi*. As one observer remarked:

> There is no objection to war dances, provided they are staged by the enlightened Bantu. When they are staged by the uncivilised, it is a sign of retrogression, because . . . he has no inducement to progress[54].

The selection process was eased by a process of secondary acculturation which brought both middle class and proletarian urban forms of musical

socialisation back to the countryside. Many 19th century *makwaya* compositions had in fact passed into the urban folk repertoire and were soon regarded as authentic traditional music. Purely urban dance forms such as *ingoma* or *famo* were considered rough and proletarian and inappropriate for school use, and in the same spirit, Natal education officials later only encouraged 'the less suggestive Native dances'[55].

In 1931 Radebe became the chief promoter of the first African eisteddfod. Modelled on Welsh ideas of national unity, the eisteddfod was simultaneously intended 'to abolish the "Marabi" meanace'[56] and 'to build up a new tradition of brotherhood'[57], under middle class guidance. Instead of 'an embittered attitude towards each other' the eisteddfod should offer in 'the world of song and dance . . . a finer and better method of self-expression'[58]. By stimulating 'friendly rivalries' it 'should, in the first place, do something to lessen the implacable barriers of tribalism by bringing together on a common footing, Africans who love the song and the dance'[59]. Excluding proletarian styles such as *marabi*, eisteddfod syllabuses favoured English choral material, but also *makwaya* compositions, and — as one newspaper headlines — 'spectacular displays of tribal dancing'[60]. From its nationwide acceptance in 1934, the eisteddfod became the spearhead of middle class musical nationalism. Today numerous similar provincial and local competitions take place annually which attract hundreds of choirs and form the main focus of school musical activities.

Radebe's eisteddfod not only helped to reinforce middle-class musical standards, but to some extent also gave great respectability to traditional music among black and white cultural promoters. Some of the first commercial recording musicians in South Africa were in fact recruited from eisteddford competitors and Radebe found a natural ally for his project of a 'Bantu National Music' in the record companies. Torn between the conflicting demands of modernisation and traditionalism in the service of black nationalism, Radebe praised the record companies for preserving traditional music, 'our most treasured cultural inheritance'[61]. At the same time, however, he was unwilling to accept traditional music as little more than archival evidence of the 'uncivilised' dawn. The gramophone, wrote Radebe, had 'given lastingness to the untrained Bantu voice, and in later years, when Native singers will be trained artistes, it will be interesting to note the contrast'[62]. The record companies, then, not only provided opportunities for 'improvement' in 'adulterating and breaking up Bantu original music'[63], but were 'also the saviour and preserver of that very music'[64] in supplying the archival material against which to measure such 'improvement'. In any case divided in his own opinion, Radebe, in an earlier statement, was particularly concerned about drawbacks in this movement for the preservation of indigenous music:

> (a) The recording companies look at it from a commercial point of view only. Consequently they discard, add to, or modify certain features which are not of commercial value .... What we need is a Bantu movement to undertake the work. (b) The people chosen to record are by no means the best exponents of music .... Some of our best musicians and some of our best traditional melodies are left out of the picture .... (c) The Natives engaged in recording have not taken the trouble to get out into the country to study pure Native tunes. Their enthusiasm has in some measure defeated their discretion and sense of duty[65]. Contradictory as such criticism might appear in Radebe's overall ideological orientation, it shows the growing genuine concern among middle class Africans about a tendency among liberal promoters to commercialise 'ethnic' music, which would undermine the drive for an 'African National Culture'.

Such commercial promotion of traditional music first developed in the 1930's when Bertha Slosberg took a Durban troupe of teachers, Esau Mtetwa's 'Lucky Stars' to London to perform at the Empire Exhibition. Resented by African elite critics such as H Dhlomo as 'exotic crudities'[66], traditional sketches, songs and dances such as those presented in the 'Lucky Stars' show 'An African Entertainment' did not so much keep 'close touch with Zulu grassroots culture', but rather specifically evoked nostalgic feelings among 'illiterate masses alienated from the native tribal universe'[67], presenting an idealised, intact traditional society. White promoters also hoped that the shows would enable African workers 'to break away from the influence of the cinema' and its demoralising effects[68]. White audiences, with whom the shows proved equally successful, were also to be educated, because the shows present 'to the public, scenes of native domestic life with a realism which would be otherwise unobtainable', and 'such education of the white man is a necessary preliminary to the understanding of Bantu problems'[69]. But despite such alleged educational value, the shows only reinforced in most white spectators racial stereotypes of 'savage grandeur'[70] and satisfied repressed sexual feelings, like in promoter Bertha Slosberg herself, who as a girl on the veld one night became 'increasingly aware of the sex urge' in her 'growing limbs' after watching black workers, 'their skins gleaming with the sweat and exertion, their bodies moving to rhythm'[71]. And after her visit to Durban, puzzled by the contradictions of African urban life, she wished for the hands of a sculptor to 'mould Africa as a woman, with heavy breasts and big ripe thighs'[72]. The tradition of Mtetwa's 'Lucky Stars' who disbanded in London was carried on by numerous vaudeville troupes such as the 'Pitch Black Follies' and finally developed into a veritable 'black skin

trade' with musicals such as 'Ipi nTombi' becoming major South African propaganda items.

The general trends of musical culture of the 1930s and to some extent the 1940s were increasingly reflected in musical education in black schools. Kirby was informed that until the late 1940s, there was no 'established musical policy for Africans apart from that officially imposed' by the education departments. This could however not prevent that African and white observers criticised the generally low standard of music teaching. One contributor to the elite paper *Bantu World* was particularly concerned about the social consequences of the lack of music training:

> These young Africans are . . . obliged to face the world with an insufficient equipment for their social entertainment and their moral services[74].

Despite such warnings, education officials were at first not prepared to give traditional music more than a marginal role in the syllabuses. One Natal music inspector was prepared to welcome Zulu songs in 1926, 'providing however, the words and tunes are written out'[75]. This inhibited the introduction of traditional music and attempts to publish a song book for African schools were timid and only materialised in 1946[74].

By the mid-thirties, however, in the wake of the first African eisteddfod an increased commercial interest in traditional music, there was a noticeable change. Kirby, who in 1919 was confident that 'the musical training of the Native will have to proceed along European lines'[77] now argued for 'the deliberate recognition of indigenous music by all educationists'[78] and was indeed on record that 'a certain amount of indigenous music is recognised' throughout the country[79]. And the same Natal music inspector who wanted only notated Zulu songs in 1926, now 'advocated that African and European music should be taught side by side', and like Kirby praised Adams College for its systematic encouragement of traditional music[80]. Indeed, the development of music education at Adams College near Durban during the 1930s offers an illustrative example of this change. In 1932 it was felt that formal music teaching for teachers required by the curriculum was 'somewhat forced', and one contributor to the school magazine was content that,

> students on the whole like and appreciate good music but, the music one often hears in the dormitories and round about the school campus during recreation periods shows that good music even in our school is not free from the strong competition of its rival, namely jazz music[81].

To counter this competition, school concerts until the mid-1930s usually included a great deal of Western music and some Negro Spirituals, as well

as few *makwaya* compositions. By 1935, however, under the influence of broadcaster Hugh Tracey, choirs such as W Mseleku's 'amanzimtoti Royal Entertainers' began to perform traditional Zulu songs[82], and since Caluza's return from America in 1936 and the inception of the only black school of music in South Africa, a special course in 'Bantu Music' was offered, in which 'indigenous bantu music for all grades will be collected and notated by the students'[83]. In 1938, finally, the first full-scale field work was organised which, under Caluza's guidance, involved all music students in a three day observation of a traditional First Fruit Ceremony[84].

By the mid-forties, African cultural nationalists had become increasingly aware of the dilemma over how to create a modern, detribalised African culture which, at the same time, was flexible enough to mobilise traditional elements. Most intellectuals, however, were still not prepared to question assimilationist goals. It needed the discovery that 'civilised advancement' was not rewarded with full political rights, until a new militant spirit of exclusive Africanism emerged in the ranks of the Congress Youth league. After its consitution in 1944 the Youth League developed a cultural theory which, like previous nationalist cultural theories, aimed at 'a policy of assimilating the best elements in European and other civilisations and cultures'. At the same time, it was stressed that this assimilation had to stand 'on the firm basis of what is good and durable in the African's own culture and civilisation'[85]. It was this latter basis which especially interested Anton Lembede, President of the Youth League and former student at Adams, whose 'concept of cultural nationalism . . ., had it taken hold among the intellectuals of the Youth League generation, would have represented a highly significant innovation in the development of black South African political thought'[86].

At the expense of any class analysis, Lembede argued that African nationalism had to be guided by an 'African spirit' which could 'realise itself through, and be interpreted by, Africans only'[87]. The 'African spirit' was rooted in the 'socialistic' African past of heroes such as Shaka and was 'the basis of unity among African tribes'. Regarded as a 'higher step or degree of the self-expression and self-realisation of the African spirit', African nationalism was on an 'irresistable onward surge' which was not to be stopped by 'minor insignificant differences of languages, customs etc'[88]. While Lembede's mythological cultural theory was somewhat fragmentary, it remained for the Youth League's most prolific literary thinker and aesthetician, H Dhlomo, to expand on Lembede's ideas. Dhlomo argued that it was the African's,

> main mission on earth . . . to interpret our own, living cultural heritage to the world. If we sing our own folksong, we are building a platform on which we can honestly stand and claim

> equality with the Whiteman. We thereby show that we are not merely borrowers with no background[89].

Dhlomo criticised the fact that musicians contented themselves 'with showing the world how skillfully they can render foreign members', thereby 'apologising' for the 'absence' of a national music'[90]. In this Dhlomo was in remarkable accordance with his white contemporary Hugh Tracey, who had fired him shortly before as first African broadcaster, and who founded the International Library of African Music only three years later, in 1947.

Lembede's and Dhlomo's cultural Africanism with traditionalist outlook failed to make a lasting imprint on their fellow Youth Leaguers who like A P Mda held that it was not so much a question 'whether the bantu should develop a new civilisation', but rather 'whether or not the Bantu are capable of assimilating Western civilisation upon the background of their historic past'[91]. In musical circles, it also proved difficult to define exactly what the musical symbols of the 'African spirit' were. Dhlomo, for instance, celebrated the classically oriented Durban singers Margaret Bengu and Elijah Cele as 'national spokesmen, African high-priests' who 'recognise the importance of national music by giving attention to Negro Spirituals'[92]. Another author, in the Youth League oriented newspaper *Inkundla ya Bantu*, praised R T Caluza as 'chief exponent of African music'[93].

The 'African spirit' then was chiefly seen as embodied in music that had developed as a result of secondary acculturation of black American styles, rather than in traditional music. Far more important a reason for the failure of Africanism as a significant cultural theory was the rise to power of Afrikanerdom and apartheid ideology in 1948. African nationalists immediately slammed the new dispensation for clinging 'all the more stubbornly to the goal of cultural integration'[94]. One of them was Orlando High School teacher Khabi Mngoma, who in 1950 in *The Voice*, a roneo-typed magazine co-edited by writer Ezekiel Mphahlele and journalist Walter Nhlapo, rejected statements by Hugh Tracey that,

> instead of concert halls where Africans listen to symphony, arenas should be built for them, where, half-naked and dressed in their traditional costumes, they would sing and dance to their own music. Africans are wary of such statements because they reek of apartheid with all its nefarious motives, ia oppression[95].

4 Apartheid Ideology and Musical Education

Rooted in segregationist ideology and practice which first developed in Natal the apartheid cultural ideology of 'separate development' aims at the discouragement and retardation of African unity and urbanisation in

emphasising both cultural differences among ethnic groups and the static, 'natural' character of African traditional culture. Using widespread nostalgic feelings and interest in African traditional culture among both White liberals and middle-class Africans, apartheid cultural ideologists stylised linguistic and anthropological evidence into proof that, as one education journal wrote, 'there are *seven* Bantu nations in this country, definitely not only *one* Bantu nation'[96].

The traditional performing arts, in particular, were used to support claims that black South Africans, however 'urban', were essentially and 'unalterably traditional in outlook'[92], and could therefore not logically claim any rights in a society which was not theirs. Self-appointed ethnomusicologist and 'musical mentor of Radio Bantu'[98], Yvonne Huskisson, incessantly brought it home that bound to 'pride in national identity, language and customs, which urbanisation will never fundamentally change . . . is a feeling for the "traditional".'

Just as the 'Western way of life' assimilated in the towns is but 'a surface adoption', so

> urbanisation, modern progress, involvement with Western civilisation, have . . . made a deep impact . . . chiefly in the manner and style of presentation, rather than in actual substance. The 'traditional' in Bantu music has received an urban metamorphosis'[99].

When apartheid ideology was finally applied to African education as a result of the Bantu Education Act of 1953, it 'was made quite clear that the main aim of the new dispensation was to check the assimilationist tendency of the previous educational system'[100]. Dr Hendrik Verwoerd, Minister of Native Affairs, declared that the new system would make Africans 'realise that equality with Europeans is not for them'. The child would be taught that there 'is no place for him above the level of certain forms of labour' and for that reason it would be 'of no avail to him to receive a training which has as its aim absorption in the European community'[101].

While the introduction of Bantu Education proved disastrous for African education in general, it was less characterised by abrupt changes in the more marginal subjects like music, than by a continuity of practices and ideas already widespread among the African middle class. The critical journal *South African Outlook*, while condemning apartheid ideology as 'one of the most mischievous half-truths which obscures clear thinking on the subject of African welfare', nevertheless conceded in 1948 that the formula of 'separate development' 'is pre-eminently relevant to the musical life of the African'[102]. Another example of this continuity was the on-going debate over the correct type of traditional music to be taught in the curriculum. In 1948, the National Education Department launched a

debate on 'The Preservation of African Music and Dancing'[103], which provoked expected reactions from African teachers. While some argued that traditional dancing was 'a retrograde step in the onward march of the Native people' which would 'make them a laughing-stock'[104], others were concerned about 'laxity in the matter of sex' owing to allegedly suggestive movements, dress, and lyrics of songs. One teacher preferred, for that reason, the syncretic dances of the Nazareth church of I Shembe as they were 'typical Bantu dances, which are appreciated for their cleanness and dignity'[105]. Yet another teacher, in enthusiastic reception of Dr Verwoerd's ideas, suggested that only the dance tunes should be preserved, using them 'in gardening as practice for road digging and mining'[106]. The Department, like the more traditionally-minded teachers, stressed the importance of traditional music as part of the Zulu cultural heritage, but also acknowledged the need for an 'adaptation of African dancing to conform with the ideals of Christian civilisation'. Consequently, it encouraged 'the less suggestive Native dances'[108] with the view to 'produce citizens who are socially adaptable, self-disciplined, physically fit and well-developed'[109].

It is interesting to note that, in focussing solely on *ndhlamu* dancing, a rural dance form popular among migrant workers, this debate not only ignored any urban proletarian forms but also purely traditional dance forms such as *isigekle*. Both among teachers and officials knowledge of such traditional dances was limited. In 1959 officials visited the International Library of African Music (ILAM) in search of information and found 'that Bantu Education can make good use of the services of the organisation'[110], but nothing ever materialised. (Although the ILAM under its director Hugh Tracey pursued a strictly non-racial practice and tried to keep aloof from any political affiliations, it later saw scope for common goals with Radio Bantu, *if* 'Radio Bantu is indeed encouraging this kind of musical development'[111]. But again, this never happened and none of the numerous proposals made by the ILAM for thorough education in genuine traditional music were ever put into practice).

Until the late 1970's, school syllabuses only vaguely prescribed the inclusion of 'Bantu music'. To both officials and teachers, 'real' African music was largely identical with either *makwaya* compositions or songs derived from urban folklore. Often not more than documents of phantasy in poorly equipped and chaotic schools, syllabuses prescribed religious songs by *makwaya* exponents, deliberately amputating the nationalist component. The introduction of a School Service of Radio Bantu in 1964 reinforced this trend in presenting programmes such as 'Our Bantu Composers'.

Present syllabuses for schools in Natal and Kwa-Zulu prescribed that in at least 27% of all music periods Standard 8 pupils

> must make a study of at least two traditional musical instruments, together with some of the music and/or rhythms traditionally used in each . . . If possible, these instruments should be made by the pupils. For this purpose the school should from time to time invite experts (artisans and musicians) to demonstrate the making and/or playing of the instruments. Pupils should be encouraged to play the instruments themselves. The history and usage of these instruments must be investigated and set down. Research into the history and usage of these instruments should be done and the results recorded[112].

In reality, such sweet-sounding goals are ignored. At primary schools, *ndhlamu* dancing and urban folk songs have become firmly established, while secondary schools tend to favour 'elements of choral singing' of the *makwaya* type. The lack of qualified teachers at all levels of education is, however, appalling and serious steps to improve the situation are not in sight[113]. The lack of competence is complemented by a total lack of resources: musical instruments, records, audio-visual equipment and scores are unknown objects in both primary and secondary schools. The Department of Music at the University of Zululand, apart from Fort Hare the only Music Department at one of the four segregated 'black' universities, until recently, to a large extent was dependent on overseas donations for its supply of instruments.

In the 1950's and early 1960's the education authorities found traditional music useful to imbue Africans with a belief in the uniqueness of traditional culture and its indispensability as a basis for development under *baasskap*. Since the 1970's, however, creative education became the least relevant part of black education, as the 'homelands' grew into cultural waste-lands and the minimal public funding of black schools was redistributed and diverted into technical training to satisfy the industry's demand for semi-skilled labour. Consequently, advisory music committees to the Department of Education and Training are considered, as one of its members confided, as mere mock committees where ideas and initiatives may be played around with as long as they do not require major capital investments into black music education.

5 Black Consciousness — a Cultural Revival?

Apartheid and 'gutter' education were first seriously challenged in the student riots of Soweto in June 1976. Realising the shortcomings of a non-committal, non-racial liberalism, black students who had gathered in Black Consciousness organisations had once again, in the tradition of the ANC Youth League and the Pan African Congress (PAC), started to question the

value of cultural integration into a society where 'the whites (do) all the talking and the blacks the listening'[114]. Black Consciousness leader Steve Biko believed that South Africa as 'a country in Africa, in which the majority of the people are African, must inevitably exhibit African values and be truly African in style'[115]. Rejecting 'the fact that a settler minority should impose an entire system of values on an indigenous people'[116], SASO, the Black Consciousness student organisation, advocated 'an inward-looking process' which would 'make the Black man see himself, to pump life into his empty shell; to infuse him with pride and dignity'[117].

It may be true that in the few years of legal existence of Black Consciousness organisations more was 'said about the need for a cultural revival than could be achieved'[118]. At least, it is possible to identify a lack of theoretical definition of both the social and musical constituents of 'black' culture as one of the reasons for the limited mass appeal of Black Consciousness as a cultural ideology. Steve Biko, for instance, discovered in US Soul music the adequate expression of African Black Consciousness[119]. Others, like SASO President Pityana, contented themselves with 'using colour as a determinant for effectual meaningful social change' and with the assertion that irrespective of present class structures and by virtue of black moral superiority 'a classless society will be created more easily among Blacks'[120]. It is a consequence of such concern with colour, as *Black Review* editor Mafika Gwala saw quite clearly, among 'the student, the intellectual, the theologian'[121], that Black Consciousness oriented performing groups such as 'Malombo' or Lefifi Tladi's 'Dashiki' gained popularity only among intellectuals, both White and African. Although both bands made valid attempts to blend jazz, rock and black South African 'township' styles into a genuine style, the 'common Black people' (Gwala) were less concerned with identifying the symbols of their 'blackness' in advanced musical styles than with finding an adequate musical medium giving expression to their hopes for social integration.

Confined to university campuses, and exposed to police harassment, the Black Consciousness movement failed to affect black education in more than a momentary and superficial way after the June 1976 riots. It is doubtful, as one writer believes, that the present music curricula are largely a result of a reorganisation following the Soweto riots[122]. Although interest in traditional music slightly increased, the general sentiment against traditional culture at the University of Zululand in the mid-1970's, for instance, gives the lie to former BPC President Rachidi's argument 'that the black man has an innate ability and capacity to learn, assimilate and adopt that which is good without alienating himself'[123].

6 Conclusion

Traditional African music and its role in black music education have been

problematic and relevant both as an instrument of social control and as an element of an emancipatory African national culture. Traditional culture was viewed by the emerging 19th century African petty bourgeoisie as an obstacle on the way to 'civilisation' which alone would guarantee admission to white colonial society. Conservative African nationalist leaders, frustrated with the slow progress of their integration and over-run by more and more restrictive laws, discovered the importance of popular components for a successful, mass-based struggle. Modernising traditional elements and blending them with Afro-American musical styles, however, they only created the musical idiom of a middle class nationalist ideology which, to the exclusion of proletarian and untouched rural styles, was to become for generations of African school children the main focus of music education. While the state discovered the usefulness of traditional culture as a tool of social control, it also experienced difficulties in instrumentalising it for segregationist goals in school practice. However, phasing out the critical nationalist component, official education policy before and after the Bantu Education Act of 1953 benefited from the narrow, obsolete African middle-class concept of culture in its definition of education as education for servitude.

Attempts by both the Congress Youth League of the 1940's and the Black Consciousness movements of the 1970's to redefine an emancipatory and autonomous African culture, and hence the practical content of a future education, were not successful. In the 1980's, with growing militancy and a grimmer economic outlook for the majority of Africans than ever before, Africans are again becoming aware of the need for a definition of the cultural component of their struggle. It appears that this cultural component is more and more taking urban working-class views of the world as its basis. It is up to ethnomusicology to discover the role of traditional music in this struggle.

NOTES

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The Notion of an African Philosophy

Stephen Theron

From time to time one hears of symposia on philosophy somewhere in Africa. Significantly they seem more often to be *about* philosophy rather than projected exercises *in* philosophy, and more often than not more than half of the topics seem to be focussed around such themes as the search for a specifically African philosophy or for a contribution which philosophy might make to something called development.

It is my contention that this tendency is potentially harmful to African intellectual life and is perhaps already crippling it. For the tacit premise behind the broaching, with full sense of entitlement of such themes, is the premise that every group or culture in the natural course of things produces of itself at an appropriate time both the beginnings and the future development of a genuine philosophical tradition.

But there is no evidence to warrant such a belief and no warrant for relying on the spurious authority of such *a priori* theorists as Toynbee or Peter Winch[1] in this matter. Winch's argument for relativism and, it seems implied, consequent parity of worth of all systems of thought or belief from the Greeks to the Azande has been I think sufficiently discredited (cf. articles by Flew, Meynell, McIntyre *inter alia),* but unfortunately the popular climate is such that this particular bit of mud only has to be thrown to stick.

In actual fact one can perhaps point to at most three *independent* births of a philosophical tradition, viz a tradition of reflective or critical thinking consciously aimed at explicating symbolic or veiled forms of speech and consciousness. The three births would be Greek, Indian and Chinese, to which perhaps the thought of the Jews, admiringly called by Plato a nation of philosophers, should be added.

Even here we cannot be sure that they are absolutely independent of one another. In any case Indian and Chinese thought may fairly be said to have come to a stop at a certain stage, either through stasis, as with the

Chinese, or through endlessly revolving in a pessimistic Hindu cul-de-sac of which the chief product seems to be thought's denial of itself. This philosophical suicide has not been unknown in Western philosophy, as witness the case of Hume and the ill-fated Kantian tradition, issuing principally in cynical ideologies and equivocal theologies, but Western philosophy was vital enough to shrug off these negative moments, though it be ever threatened by them. The legacy of Aristotle and the Semitic and Christian thinkers, with their belief that man is with respect to his intellect and will created in the divine image, is even at this moment enjoying one of its recurring revivals.

Now no doubt, human nature being what it is, most human beings engage in critical reflection at some time or other and so one can argue that they are all capable of coming to know certain basic philosophical truths, such as, in my view the existence of one infinite and creator God, or the efficacy of the causal principle (though acceptance of this is rather a precondition than a consequence of thought), or the validity of ethical or logical laws. But this is not to say that every culture as such makes room for this or nourishes its articulation as a tradition or properly cultural product. All cultures are explicitly or implicitly religious in form or at least in origin, and sometimes religious interests have been hostile to the growth of philosophy, even though many philosophers, such as the Greeks, anchor themselves in their native religious traditions[2]. The Azande as discussed by Winch certainly have as yet created no philosophy.

I say 'as yet'. This, for Africa, is the crux. For let us suppose, as indicated, that the Western philosophical tradition is *the* tradition, is the only one that has stood the test of time and continued to develop, issuing in sane theories of group and individual life and in true scientific discoveries. In that case progress for African philosophy, now that Africa has imbibed the very idea of progress from exclusively Western sources, would lie in engrafting itself on to that evergreen stem, consciously instead of unconsciously as it does anyway in the matter of technology and the Western thought-mould on which this depends, appropriating its riches and doubtless in the process giving it some peculiarly African twists, but nevertheless mastering it and identifying with it. It should do this instead of pretending to set up some independent philosophical tree, as if truth were not one, thus inviting from itself and everyone else hypocritical expressions of respect for a purely fictitious indigenous intellectual tradition, a claim which if pushed too far and too solemnly, as by Malcolm X during his period of tutelage to Elijah Mohammed, will rather evoke a shout of laughter. It is to Malcolm's credit that he was not afraid to renounce later what he soon discovered to be absurdities, an intellectual clarity and honesty which seems to have cost him his life.

In the rest of this paper I shall argue for the truth of the antecedent, viz,

that the Western philosophical tradition is *the* tradition, and therefore that what is of value in oriental philosophy is mostly a duplication or elaboration of this, as Confucius is echoed by Cicero, the Hindu *rta* by the doctrine of natural law. Escapist systems based on reincarnation are simply to be discarded; it is noteworthy that in Western philosophy, eg in Plato, this notion cannot be proved to have been intended literally. Thus, saying in *Meno* that the soul has 'learned everything' in a past life is simply to make the central philosophical claim that all that is is intelligible and hence that the capacity which is intellect has a certain parity with all possible nature, is in the image and likeness of its Creator.

But this claim I draw out of Plato and which is also in Artistotle, who claims that the human mind is able to know the nature of all bodies and is in fact, on one interpretation of him (the Arabic, contested by the Christian thinkers, who point out that it is *this* man who thinks), identical with the divine *nous* of Anaxagoras who has 'set all things in order,' this claim is of course found preeminently in the beginning of the Hebrew Bible, in Genesis.

The two claims are nowadays considered to have been independently made. Jewish thought had otherwise nothing in common with Greek to speak of. We are dealing not just with two different nations but with two different *races* and two different types of thinking, the philosophical critical and the religious liturgical. The two currents were destined to meet, Athens and Jerusalem to fuse together in the glory of Christian Rome. At the same time Jewish thinkers from Philo to Maimonides and beyond were to entwine themselves around the Athenian and Western tree, while many Islamic thinkers too saw the Greek tradition as their own heritage and worthy of the patronage of the mainly Semitic heritage and worthy of the patronage of the mainly Semitic worshippers of Allah.

I mention the non-signifying factor of race advisedly. It is I believe desirable to point out loud and clear in Africa today, threatened by chauvinistic racialist tendencies (I include in the scope of this threat the culturally dispossessed South African Boers and their venal supporters where they take their stand on race), that the resultant product of this traditon, what we call the West, was not and is not and is not going to become homogeneous in terms either of races or nations. For one thing the roots of it were laid not in Europe nor by Europeans exclusively or principally, but by Ionians in Asia Minor, Semites in Palestine, later on by the Cappadocians in Asia and by people such as St Augustine of Hippo, a Libyan Berber, and the Alexandrian fathers of the Church in Egypt. True, these people used mostly Latin and Greek (sometimes Syriac), Western languages, but doubtless those Africans who dream of an indigenous African philosophy are going to write mostly in English or French. What does it matter?

Even as the tradition took root in Europe itself and was hemmed in there principally by Muslim pressure, though I am arguing that they too enjoy a limited participation in the same tradition (Belloc called Islam a Christian heresy), yet there too it did not become the preserve of a racially distinct people but rather served to weld together in community peoples of many races and tongues.

> Gentlemen, let me here observe that I am not entering upon the question of races, or upon their history. I have nothing to do with ethnology. I take things as I find them on the surface of history, and I am but classing phenomena. Looking, then, at the countries which surround the Mediterranean Sea as a whole, I see them to be, from time immemorial, the seat of an association of intellect and mind, such as to deserve to be called the Intellect and the Mind of the Human Kind. Starting as it does and advancing from certain centres, till their respective influences intersect and conflict, and then at length intermingle and combine, a common thought has been generated, and a common Civilization defined and established. Egypt . . . Syria . . . Greece . . . Italy . . . North Africa . . . afterwards France and Spain . . . a great association of nations formed, of which the Roman empire is the maturity . . . not political, but mental, based on the same intellectual ideas, and advancing by common intellectual methods. And this association . . . with whatever reverses, . . . continues down to this day; not, indeed, . . . on the same territory, but with . . . such a visible continuity, that it would be utterly unreasonable to deny that it is throughout all that interval but one and the same[3].

Take the case of England. From being barbarian invaders, idolators, destroyers, worshippers of dark forces, not above human sacrifice, though possessed too doubtless of many noble qualities as expressed for example in *Beowulf*, we were transformed, largely through the missionaries, into heirs of Jerusalem, Greece and Rome and became fellow citizens of the eternal city with people like Augustine and Pope Gregory the Great, himself the successor of a Semitic fisherman building on the work of highly civilised pagans like Julius Caesar and Alexander. The first Englishmen to become of importance to history were those who busied themselves with transmitting the previously alien Roman Christian tradition, men like Bede, Boniface the apostle of Germany, Alcuin (Charlemagne's tutor) and King Alfred the Great who first unified England into the kingdom with which we are familiar and who himself translated Pope Gregory and Boethius into Anglo-Saxon.

Doubtless during this time there were many who grumbled, who perhaps felt humiliated at the implied faulting of their own native ways, as do many witch-doctors today, but such resentment has scarcely survived. Englishmen feel as identified with Western culture as any ancient Roman. True the Romantic movement brought with it some protests at the way things have developed. Many German writers a century ago, for example, dreamed of a Germanic civilisation and presumably philosophy that might have sprung up independently of Greece and Rome. But, as Christopher Dawson points out[4], there are no real reasons to believe this. Not every people has developed a higher culture, still less has it ever occurred by some sort of effortless, quasi-vegetable growth. As the poet Vergil says, it was such a great effort *(tantae molis)* to build the Roman people and society. And when Wagner gave expression to this Romantic nationalist revolt against the unifying disciplines of Western civilisation, in his great setting of the *Nibelungenlied,* he had to use forms created by Western culture to do it effectively, such as the opera which developed in Italy out of the Christian liturgy and diatonic Western music with its thematic and symphonic development, evolved from Gregorian chant and the work of Western Christian men like Bach and Beethoven. The original Lied itself was produced in its present form by that great Christian artist, Gottfried von Strasburg, and in general the heritage of the invading tribes is first given cultural significance when taken up and developed by those who bear the Western Catholic tradition within them, of whatever race. The same argument could be applied to the evolution of the musical instruments themselves. Is there anything in Africa to compare with the piano or organ? The organ was invented by Abt Vogler, a German. Did any German construct anything comparable before the Germans and their undoubted powers were harnessed by such people as St Boniface, who chopped down their sacred trees, to what we might call the *troika* of Western culture, Jerusalem, Athens, Rome.

Again, the first Frankish leader to have meaning for history is Clovis, the first to be baptised. The relevance for philosophy here is that it was the Church that was guarding tradition. It was only at a later date that Justinian closed the Academy, and then the Arabs and Persians did not hesitate to welcome the exiled Aristotelians and become pupils at their schools, as the Scholastics in Europe sat down at the feet of classical antiquity and its masters, as the very name 'scholastic' indicates.

Naturally there would have been some racial jealousy at the time. There is a hint of this in the history of Boethius, last of the noble Romans, executed on a trumped up charge by a Gothic Emperor, whose people nonetheless later studied Boethius more than any other philosopher. And so, in this quasi-Zimbabwean scenario, after Boethius the names of the philosophers become more Gothic and less Roman, such as Thomas the

son of Landolpho, or we have Abelard the Frenchman, John the Scot, while the old Romans like Cassiodorus retire from the scene and content themselves with building libraries. But the philosophical tradition remains the same whoever is in charge, and over all arches the giant figure of Augustine the Libyan Berber, he who said *'Agnosce, o Christiane, dignitatem tuam.'* Acknowledge, O Christian, your dignity, not a dignity of race or nature, not a fleshly dignity, but a spiritual dignity of religion and culture, such as is shared today by Mexican descendants of Aztecs, by Semitic Copts and by very many Africans, Chinese and people of all races and tongues.

That German nationalists revolted against the West proves the point that Europe is not a geographical or racial, but a cultural entity. Geographically it is an ill-defined peninsula of Asia with no natural defences to the East. Racially it includes Latins, Germans, Slavs and totally non-Indo-European peoples such as Finns, Hungarians, Turks and Tartars. Those residents from overseas coming in the wake of the colonial period also belong to it.

Africa's advancement in culture, therefore, as in technology, I maintain, lies in her going to school. Democratic ideology may require, even legitimately, that the new nations have equality of political status, a matter of opportunity, but this cannot be extended to status of culture, a matter of evaluable fact. Mastering the Greeks and the Schoolmen, not to mention Kant and Hegel, is hard work. I maintain furthermore that Africans need to be protected from developing racist attitudes at least as much as Europeans ('consciousness' can never long remain a mere tactic), and that the true protection is self-forgetfulness before a traditional deposit known to be substantially true and only contingently possessed by one's nation or race, rather than a Hegelian-type belief in an endless unfolding of thought tacitly identified with the biological or social condition of the race. On the non-materialist Greco-Christian theory of the mind as an infinite capacity for union with reality there is no room for hypotheses about racial intellectual inferiority, and the appearance of such theories is an embarrassing nemesis for Marxist materialist humanism. It may of course be that a certain group is less well placed genetically than another for *certain* exercises of intellect, and research such as that of Jensen is not to be howled down as if its opponents had no rational defence against it. But where is the threat? What inhuman academic snobbery lies behind the assumption that *if* American Negroes do not balance less well in certain IQ tests they will have been shown to have less human worth? Who suggested their human worth was ever in question? Here the mask of the materialists was torn off, to say no more.

We all have a variety of gifts. Let us help one another in the dissemination and appropriation of philosophical and scientific culture. I have allied this notion very closely to religion because it is historically so allied as no reader

of Plato or Aristotle, let alone the Schoolmen or Descartes, can doubt. It is natural that Africans will at times feel a certain envy but they have many achievements from which they can take comfort and in any case the remedy lies in study of the tradition, not idly marking time asking what use philosophy is for Africa. *It is for Africa to be of use to philosophy.* Such study is difficult, especially in hot weather, and demands patience and love. But there is no other way to cultural advancement (and there are grounds for hoping that material problems of poverty and tyranny would not remain unaffected). Western cultural relativists have deceived Africans by babbling about the equality of all cultures. They do not believe it themselves, but think it a unique achievement of their own culture to have achieved this relativist insight. Actually in making such a claim it becomes an anti-culture with a self-confessed lack of interest in truth and a hidden desire to dominate and crush vital human forces. Africans beware! Rationality, spirituality, is the common property of every man and those whom the developed tradition of it has first reached owe it to others to share these riches with them.

NOTES

1 Peter Winch 'Understanding a Primitive Society' *American Philosophical Quarterly*, 1964.
2 W W Jaeger *The Theology of the Early Greek Philosophers*, Oxford: Clarendon, 1947.
3 H Tristam (ed) *The Idea of a Liberal Education: A Selection from the Works of Newman*, London: Harrap, 1952, p 50.
4 C H Dawson *The Making of Europe*, Cleveland: Meridian Books, 1956.

DISCUSSION

Meta What?

Peter Kallaway

The enterprise of Fundamental Pedagogics arose out of the need to make Christian National Education academically respectable — to dress up the blantant politically chauvinist and racist nature of the earlier educational doctrines of Afrikaner Nationalist ideology in an academically respectable garb. (The history of that transformation still needs to be written!). The enterprise centred around the need for Afrikaner Nationalism triumphant (since 1948) to 'depoliticise' the field of educational studies — to find a language and a structure that would allow the appearance that the study of things educational had been taken out of the market place of ideas — of economic pressures, political conflict and ideological contestation. This was justified in terms of the need for educational studies to be 'placed on a sound scientific basis'!

It was achieved through the construction of a world of byzantine complexity — of 'disciplines' and 'sub-disciplines' with unpronounceable titles and impenetrable conceptual categories, which generations of bewildered students have had to master in order to obtain teaching diplomas, BEd, MEd, or PhD degrees at most universities in this country.

It would appear that the period of gestation for Fundamental Pedagogics is now over, that massive confidence and wisdom have been gained from the cloistered experience of the last ten or twenty years, and that the *gurus* of Fundamental Pedagogics would offer the rest of the world some of the fruits of their deliberations.

There is a need to proselytise — to engage with educational thinking internationally — to make a specifically South African contribution — and point out some of the limitations of the general practices current in the Western academic world of educational deliberations and research. In particular we are told[1] there is a need to look at the current practice of educationalists in the field of 'history of education' with a critical eye, to evaluate the utility and meaningfulness of research and teaching in this

area in the light of contemporary priorities.

Professor J H Coetzee assures us that '. . . leading agogicians in South Africa and overseas agree that the name and methodology of Historical Education have become outdated and that change or innovation is now necessary[12]. At UNISA this problem has been tackled in a zestful and enthusiastic manner. After a few departmental meetings (mainly, it would seem, revolving around such important issues as the relative merits of such terms as 'Metapedagogics' and 'Metagogics') and 'through research' (of what kind we are not told), 'history of education' was simply erased as a discipline and 'A New Discipline: Metagogics' was born.

The reasons for this dramatic change are defended in terms of the intensely empiricist nature of much work in this field ('You can't see the wood for the trees'); its lack of explanatory value; the perceived lack of utility of this area of study and research in the training of students; and its lack of relevance for an understanding of the 'future orientation of education' (ie policy). Formidable changes to be sure — and many of them ringing desperately true to anyone who has tried to grapple with the standard textbooks and lecture fare in this area. 'A tale told by an idiot . . .'

The problem that is posed by Professor Coetzee is indeed a serious one, and I identify with him in his desperation in attempting to deal with it. The issues that need to be encountered in order to deal satisfactorily with the problem would fill volumes! I would just like to make two brief points about his views with specific reference to the nature of 'history of education':

(a) It seems as if Professor Coetzee conceives of History of Education as something different in kind from 'history'. (He agrees with Viljoen that 'A lot of what has been published on this subject could just as well have been done by historians'[3]). If he sees history of education as something apart from mainstream history I am not surprised that he is disappointed with it as a subject — for a catalogue of educational acts and policies and administrative details *by definition* yields little of explanatory value!

'History of Education' (or whatever you want to call it) only makes sense when it is seen as one aspect of the overall historical process of change, conflict and contestation in society — locally, nationally and internationally. Educational practices whether initiated by the State, the Church, or private social and political groupings, only take on intelligibility if seen within a broader societal context.

The study of such educational changes only yields comprehensible and intelligible *explanations* in that context — when seen against the background of political, economic, religious, social and ideological phenomena. The lack of such contextualisation of much work in this field accounts for its boredom and lack of intelligibility. There is a striking similarity here between certain brands of 'liberal' history which want to

claim an 'objectivity' for historical studies — and the desire of Fundamental Pedagogics to construct an educational discourse that is 'scientific'. Both want to argue that they are located outside of ideology!

(b) 'History of Education' needs, then, to be seen within the domain of 'history' — but *history* itself is a highly problematical concept. Professor Coetzee seems to confuse *the past* (the story of what happened, or chronology) with *history* — the ex *post facto* ideological construction of the past by historians! Chronology has little or no explanatory value — it is just a catalogue of events that are held together by no organising principle other than their temporal conjuncture. The weakness of 'history of education' — whether it is written within a 'liberal' framework which stresses objectivity, or as an aspect of the overall enterprise of Fundamental Pedagogics — is that it ignores this truth. It wishes to construct a 'single' history of educational phenomena which fails to focus adequately on the nature of the conflicts and contexts which gave rise to 'policy'. It would make an administrative detail out of the highly complex historical events which went into the construction of educational history (a reflection of the technicist/modernisation ethos of such discourse). It would blur the conflicts of interest inherent in such a history. It would trivialise one of the key areas of ideological contestation in the modern world.

History or 'History of Education' only takes on explanatory values when linked to the mainstream of contemporary ideological discourse — even if 'the past' being dealt with is remote in time. It is not the chronological/temporal remoteness or otherwise that gives history its explanatory relevance — but the way in which concepts and perspectives can be applied to the data. The perspectives thus elucidated throw the focus of contemporary thinking onto aspects of past human activity and in turn help us to obtain fresh insights into current practices. The historian therefore arranges his material in ways that are meaningful to his contemporaries — in the intellectual milieu of his time, place and ideological perspective. This elucidates aspects of the past — but more importantly it does ideological work in the present, by vindicating certain perspectives and discrediting others. History of this kind is directly relevant to the understanding of the world about us — and perhaps the future!

Professor Coetzee's frustrations will only be met if he seriously confronts the issue of how to link explanation in history/history of education to explanation in the general domain of social science (politics, society and schooling), that would entail, for example, demonstrating precisely how political, economic and social practices of the dominant white elite in South Africa effected the construction of an educational policy designed to serve their racial and class interests within the 'national' and 'capitalist' context of South Africa since the industrial revolution. To abolish the study

of the past from the field of educational enquiry would be comfortable for those who would find it more convenient to forget their history, but it does not help us to understand the present or to contribute to the 'future perspective'. What is needed is not the abolition of the past — but an honest attempt to explain the nature of educational development in our society and thereby provide a firm foundation for future policies. A new kind of 'history of education' is needed, to be sure!

Professor Coetzee allows 'that the study or research of past educational events should not be totally abolished'. Yet he seems unconvinced that it could be of any real significance to a broader understanding of education. One wonders what he will do under the banner of 'Metagogics' to rectify matters. Will he emulate the de Lange Report and try to plan for the future without any attempt to grapple with where we came from and why we find ourselves in the desperate educational crisis that surrounds us? Only if he denies the basic tenets of Fundamental Pedagogics can he begin to break away from the frustrations he so lucidly exposes. But to do that he would have to abandon Fundamental Pedagogics itself — and presumably his job!

NOTES

1 J H Coetzee 'Metagogics: A New Discipline' in *Perspectives in Education*, vol 7, no 1, July 1983; and 'Metagogics: A New Discipline Part Two' in *Perspectives in Education*, vol 7, no 2, October 1983.
2 *Op cit* vol 7, no 1, p 9.
3 *Ibid* p 12.

'Marxism and morality': a reply

Mark F Dorgan

In the July, 1983 issue of *Perspectives*, Leon Benadé offers a critique of Tony Skillen's notion of morality and proposes what he calls 'social agapism.' I wish here to reply to him in the following way:

1 I will argue that he is in fact agreeing with Skillen, though his misunderstanding of Skillen's use of the term 'morality' leads him to believe that he disagrees;
2 I will argue that Benadé has misunderstood Skillen's account of individual agency because of his misconstrual of the account of morality discussed under (1) above;
3 I will argue that the proposal of 'social agapism' is really a reformulation of the problem, rather than a solution.

I must note at this stage that I am not arguing for the acceptability of Skillen's position in particular, or the Marxist position in general, but rather attempting to show that Benadé has rejects Skillen's account on unacceptable grounds and proposes an inadequate alternative.

1 Morality

Skillen's use of the term 'morality' is closely associated with the Marxist framework within which he is working. This framework is concerned with identifying, within a particular society, that group which is dominant (has control of the economic system) and that group which is being exploited. This is done by viewing that society within its historical context, with reference on the one hand to the relations and conditions of production and on the other hand to the dialectical forces arising out of the class struggle within that society. It is in the interests of the dominant class in that society to harness both material and ideological forces to perpetuate their position of control. One of the ideological forces in that society which can be used by the dominant class is a system of morality.

This system of morality is *particular* to the society in which it arises and is dependent in its form on the nature of the exploitation taking place, the history of that society, the dialectical forces operating and the power of the dominant class. The existence of morality, in this sense, is dependent on the class struggle in that society.

If this is the way in which Skillen is using the term 'morality', then that use is historically specific *of necessity* (contrary to what Benadé says)[1] and it is *necessarily* associated with the class system in that it expresses the interests of the dominant class (again, contrary to what Benadé says).

It logically follows from the above that for the Marxist, morality, in the sense outlined, has no place in the classless society which is his ideal, for the necessary conditions for the existence of morality have ceased to exist.

Benadé calls Skillen's 'morality' 'obfuscatory ideology' and this is not incompatible with the account given above. Skillen intends 'morality' to refer to that which obscures reality at an ideological level. Benadé may thus be seen to be agreeing with Skillen's meaning, though he misunderstands the use of the term 'morality' in Skillen's work.

Benadé's use of the term 'morality', on the other hand, seems to be intended to refer to a universal and, as he says, 'historically-timeless'[2] notion. In this sense, he says, the Marxist enterprise can be seen as a moral enterprise. I don't think the Marxist would disagree, for his task is to eliminate exploitation and create a classless society which may be said to be moral good made material.

2 Individual agency

Skillen's account of individual agency is an exploration of the form he sees morality (in the Marxist sense) as taking in the society he is describing in Marxist terms. Given the specialised use of the term 'morality' in Skillen's work, he is attempting to describe in what way this morality perpetuates the interests of the dominant class.

Because Skillen sees British society in the 1970s as characterised by a class struggle in which the dominant class is using a particular morality to disguise their unequal control of the economic system and exploitation of the working class, he sees the morality as that which removes the blame for the social conditions from the dominant class and places it elsewhere. The blame comes to rest on the individual, where the individual is seen as responsible for his own condition. This erroneous, in Skillen's view, belief leads to the control of the individual by morality.

Benadé argues that this is a very limited conception of individual agency[3], leading to the idea of the individual as 'a mere subject of ideology, a 'bearer' of functions, a faceless pawn swept along by the tide of history.'[4] But, given the specialised sense in which Skillen is using 'morality', then Skillen's assertions are the equivalent of saying that people can be

influenced to have false beliefs. That this is not *necessary* is shown by Skillen's own beliefs in Britain in the 1970s. He is not proposing an inflexible determinism, but discussing part of the dynamic nature of British society in the 1970s from a Marxist perspective.

It seems then that Benadé's misunderstanding of the meaning of the term 'morality' in Skillen's work has led him to misconstrue Skillen's account of individual agency.

3 'Social agapism'

In proposing 'social agapism' in his paper, I believe Benadé is significantly changing the focus of his paper. He returns to the notion of 'morality' as something universal and begins to argue that the position he is proposing is in some sense the absolute moral good, the moral position which best approximates to 'true morality'. I believe this is a questionable move.

Before moving into a discussion of what Benadé sees as constituting 'social agapism', I must mention that the use of 'agapism' worries me. This word is derived from the Greek *agape* which means *'divine* love'. In spite of his rejection of a religious dimension to his notion of morality, Benadé's choice of this term continues to suggest overtones of spiritual meaning. This is reinforced by the introduction of St Thomas Aquinas in the argument.

However, what is the problem to which Benadé is addressing himself and in what way does 'social agapism' provide a solution? He seems to be proposing a universal definition of what may constitute the most acceptable moral code. But his description of 'social agapism' then looks like an expression of personal belief, rather than an argument of moral philosophy. It ends where many arguments in moral philosophy begin — with a recognition that moral philosophy is concerned with 'the good'. But the form and nature of that 'good' remains a problem, the problem with which moral philosophy is concerned.

Further, it can be argued that Marxism is an attempt to define the nature of what constitutes the 'good', in material terms. Benadé, however, ends by equating this 'good' with love and recognising that there are problems regarding in what way this love may legitimately be manifested, that is, what its form and role may be. But this is merely a reformulation of the problem of what constitutes the 'good'.

Benadé has thus failed to recognise the problem to which he should be addressing himself and has offered a personal version of the problem of what may constitute the highest good, rather than entered into the debate of moral philosophy.

Conclusion

In my view Leon Benadé's paper is problematic in three areas. He has misunderstood the meaning of the term 'morality' as used by Skillen. This has led him to misconstrue Skillen's account of individual agency. Finally, his proposal of 'social agapism' is a reformulation of the problem to which moral philosophy centrally addresses itself, rather than a solution.

In this reply I have stated my case very strongly. However, on the positive side, I feel that an exploration of the notion of love may lead us in a fruitful direction, if further explored. 'Love' includes notions of intention and action which are not implicit in the idea of the 'good'.

NOTES

1 L Benadé '"Marxism and morality": a critique — toward social agapism?' in *Perspectives in Education*, vol 7, no 1, p 43.
2 *Ibid* p 47.
3 *Ibid* p 45.
4 *Ibid* p 46.

Participatory Research: Theory and Practice

Shirley Walters

Introduction

Participatory Research (PR) is a research, education and action process. It adopts a political position in which progressive social change is one of its objectives. This article sets out to develop a critique of PR by contrasting the theory with the practice. Background to PR and key aspects of its theory will be presented, followed by a description of one PR project which has been developing during the last 18 months. Important contradictions and issues which have emerged through practice will then be elaborated.

'PR' as used in this article refers to a particular body of literature which originates from the adult eduction tradition, and which is actively promoted by the Participatory Research Group Network with its headquarters in Canada.[1]

Background to PR

PR has arisen mainly out of Third World experience in which the serious incompatibility of traditional social research methods and the needs and problems of Third World societies has become very clear. Experimentation by social scientists in Tanzania and some South American countries was undertaken to explore more committed forms of research. Consciousness of the problem also grew in Europe and North America due to the dysfunctional concepts of one-way, detached research in a world of immediate and urgent problems[2]. There was thorough questioning of the means and ends of social research, the relationship between researcher and the subjects of the research, the political implications of research etc.

In the Third World questions about social research were necessarily posed in the light of basic development goals, eg increased food production, and mass literacy campaigns. Furthermore these goals were set against a background of escalating anti-imperialist struggles and

strengthening capitalist penetration. The answers to many of the questions were couched in humanist terms, but with a distinctly social focus, that looked to 'the people', 'the nation', 'the oppressed' as its subject. In this context, it was recognised, social research had to be directed towards liberation — and 'development' and 'liberation, as concepts with unspecified content, were generally seen as synonymous. The social researcher became a self-conscious actor and participant in the process of development and liberation.

There is not much comprehensive material[3] on the epistemology of PR. It seems that it has roots in pragmatism and dialectical materialism. In the various critiques of PR from social scientists within the PR tradition, charges are levelled against either its idealist, pragmatist or historical materialist leanings, depending on the theoretical framework of the critics[4]. These differences clearly effect the interpretation of PR theory and practice and debates between the different groupings permeate the literature.

Key Aspects of PR

The Research process

The research process is crucial within PR. Researchers reject the distinction made between means and ends of research, they stress both. There are three interrelated processes within PR which cannot be separated, and which some writers[5] believe gives PR 'its fundamental strength and power': social investigation, education and action.

Since PR comes of the adult education tradition, the basic principles of adult education are a central foundation. These principles assume a commitment to adults participating actively in the world, deciding what they want to learn and the best way to learn it. PR is therefore a research and educational approach which has a commitment to the learning process of those engaged in the research. It is also committed to action which demands 'involvement' rather than 'detachment' from those concerned.

The Focus and Goal of PR

The people engaged in PR all share a dissatisfaction with the existing social order, a commitment to improving the social conditions of the oppressed, and a commitment to a research and education process which involves the active participation of local people. However, there are differences among those involved in PR depending on their differing ideological frameworks. All are working towards some form of social change: for some this means class struggle leading to radical social change; for others it means dialogue and adjustment leading to social reform.

The commitment to 'improving the social conditions of the oppressed' is clearly political. Those engaged in PR acknowledge that within the debate

about the nature of social science is a view of man and society with profound political repercussions. This has important implications for the researchers, because as Webster has said: 'Questions intellectuals ask are crucially shaped by the ways in which they are linked to political practice'[6].

The unspecified nature of the social change aimed at by PR contributes to a lack of clarity and is an important criticism levelled against PR.

Relationship between the Researcher and the Subjects of the Research

One of the aims of PR is to bridge the traditional gulf between the researcher and the subjects of the research. The ideal is a form of cooperative enquiry between all involved in which:

i all, together identify the problem
ii the educational value in the process is maximised
iii the control of the research lies with the people involved
iv awareness in people of their own abilities and resources is strengthened
v those with specialised knowledge and skills, often from outside the situation, are committed participants and learners in a process which leads to militancy rather than detachment
vi critical and collective analysis that establishes and maintains control in the hands of the people and explicitly rejects manipulation is advocated.

Those engaged in PR are concerned with a more equal relationship between all those involved in the research process; however, the rationale differs depending on the framework used. One grouping stresses the importance of the subjective experience of the people involved, while the historical materialists emphasise that through the research process the mental-manual division of labour must be consciously broken down.

Critique of Participatory Research

The discussion of the theory and practice of PR will be developed by focusing on experience obtained in one PR project. A brief sketch of the project will be drawn. This will be followed by the elaboration of certain important factors which have emerged during the research process.

A Sketch of the Project

In June last year six of us decided to undertake a research and education project to develop our understanding of the theory and practice of democracy within community organisations. Five of the group are employed in a community organisation on the Cape Flats. Most of the group are community workers. One is a full-time research student. All are active members of several community organisations which form part of the broader democratic movement in Cape Town.

At the outset the group consciously adopted a PR approach to the project. This meant that we would take seriously the need to define the problem together, to integrate investigation, education and action, to analyse information collectively, to break down the division between mental and manual labour etc.

Initially we decided to meet once a month to study particular topics together. The first session was on the meaning of social research. But soon we felt the need to ground our questions about democratic processes more concretely. We decided to start by doing a case study of our organisation. The records of the organisation were studied, indepth interviews were conducted with the staff and a week of participant observation was undertaken. The data was collectively analysed. Through this process we were beginning to develop a collective understanding of the broad issues. We were also realising that if the research was to be worthwhile a great deal of theoretical work would be required. The data would need to be analysed within a theoretical framework. Our debate on the need for 'a good theory' was reminiscent of the debate in PR literature between the idealists and pragmatists on the one hand and the historical materialists on the other. The danger was that we could get stuck looking at micro issues without giving adequate attention to the broader context. At this stage tensions were also beginning to emerge. We were all very busy. Time was limited. We did not have the opportunity to share all our observations and our reading. We began to ask whether this was necessary — we needed to accept that specialisation was inevitable.

In the new year the group was reconstituted with a new member from outside the organisation. The increased workload on everyone limited time for collective analysis and decision making even further. The group decided to concentrate on short term projects in order to give a more practical focus and also to renew its energy. The short term projects became the focus. The indepth theoretical work was being done by one person. What about the erosion of the division between mental and manual labour? There was very little time for conscious educational input.

During this stage we found that through the action projects of writing joint articles for local community newsletters, running workshops etc sharing of ideas, information and resources was occurring. The educational element was therefore continuing to a degree, but in a less conscious form.

The research and education project continues . . .

Observations on PR Theory and Practice

During the last 18 months of PR practice several factors have been highlighted which point to some inherent contradictions within PR. Some of these will be elaborated here.

1 The composition of the PR group seems important — the initial stage of the research therefore is crucial. From the project the following elements seem worth noting. There were mutual benefits for us all in undertaking the project. The area of study was of central importance to the organisation. In addition we were all members of the broader democratic movement and therefore saw the intrinsic value of the work. In order to sustain energy and commitment to the undertaking it seems that there needs to be both intrinsic and extrinsic benefits for everyone involved. An additional and important cohesive factor for the group has been the common political and social goals. It is difficult to imagine undertaking a PR project, where manipulation is explicitly rejected, unless there are these common political objectives. The literature does not explore this aspect.

2 The PR practice has shown the need for specialisation. However, this presents a tension because PR advocates the erosion of the division between mental and manual work, and the bridging of the gulf between knowledge generation and its use. It has been impossible to avoid specialisation. However, through joint action projects and a strong commitment to sharing information the potential problems are being 'kept at bay'. The possibility of slipping into traditional work patterns has to be watched carefully and tackled creatively.

3 The different stages of the research have allowed different possibilities for the integration of the three elements within the PR process. Investigation, education and action have occurred more or less at different points. For example investigation and conscious self-education occurred far more in the early stages, while action and less conscious learning have been a feature recently. While the ideal of integrating theory and practice is at times difficult to attain, the gulf has through consciously striving to include the three interrelated elements within the process been lessened.

4 PR is committed to social change — the big question is, which theory of social change? Amongst democratic community organisations in Cape Town it is believed that fundamental change will only occur through popular, collective struggle. Isolated actions are unlikely to bring about progressive change. But PR literature says that the control of the research should be with those directly involved. There is therefore a tension between control by the small group and accountability to the broader movement for change. Throughout the research practice the group has found that our membership and active involvement with other organisations have been crucial so that a continual assessment of our ideas and actions can take place in relation to the broader democratic movement.

5 Control and accountability are important aspects of PR practice. There are control and accountability within the small group and within the

broader grouping. In many research situations there is also a third party in the form of a sponsor or an educational institution who will desire some control. In reality therefore it seems neither possible, nor perhaps desirable, given the need for collective struggle, that the PR group should be a fully autonomous unit which is not accountable to outside groupings.

Conclusion

PR combines research, education and action. It is an attempt to erode the traditional divisions between mental and manual work which result from capitalist production relations. Its goal is radical social change. It seems to pose the question for practitioners and researchers alike:

> How can the present be welded to the future, so that while satisfying the urgent necessities we may work effectively to create and 'anticipate' the other?[7]

Tensions between short and long term goals, between theoretical analysis and practical activity, and between the research group and the broader movement, over the question of control, all seem inevitable components of PR.

NOTES

1 Participatory Research Group, 29 Prince Arthur Avenue, Toronto, Canada M5R1B2.
2 See, for example, Budd Hall 'Participatory Research: an approach for change', in *Convergence* vol 9 no 3, 1975;
Linkoping University *Research for the People, Research by the People*, Linkoping, 1981;
P Reason and R Rowan (ed.) *Human Inquiry: A Sourcebook of New Paradigm Research*, London: John Wiley, 1981;
Rajesh Tandon and Walter Fernandez *Participatory Research and Evaluation – Experiments in Research as a Liberation Process*, New Delhi: Indian Social Institute, 1981;
Y O Kassam (ed.) *Participatory Research: an emerging alternative methodology in Social Science research*, Dar es Salaam: Black Star Agency, 1982.
3 Jan de Vries 'Science as human behaviour: on the epistemology of the Participatory Research Approach' in *Linkoping University, op cit.*
4 For example, Deborah Bryceson, Linzi Manicom, and Yusuf Kassam 'The Methodology of the Participatory Research Approach' in *Kassam and Mustafa, op cit.*
5 For example, Society for Participatory Research in Asia *Participatory Research: An Introduction*, 2 New Delhi: Society for PR in Asia, 1982.
6 Eddie Webster 'The state, crisis and the university: the social scientist's dilemma in *Perspectives in Education*, Vol 6 no 3 1982.
7 Antonio Gramsci *Selections from Political Writings (1910-1920)* London: Lawrence Wishart, 1977.

A Proposed University Admission System

Michael Gering and Lettie Zeitsman

By the time they are admitted to university, some students, through no fault of their own, will have had an inferior education; while others perhaps equally talented might not be admitted at all. Postive action is aimed at overcoming the unfairness of comparing people from academically diverse backgrounds. Since the university is the principal avenue to important and prestigious careers, positive action is also concerned with costs born by society: the uneconomic use of its talent and the social tensions caused by perceived discrimination. The need for positive action at the level of university admission and the problems it raises are discussed in the US Supreme Court ruling of DeFunis[1] and Bakke[2].

As a first step towards implementing positive action we propose that the university uses two entrance criteria. In addition to the standard state or nationwide school leaving examination, we propose a second criterion, also based on the school-leaving examination but which protects the individual with a poor academic background.

The matriculation examination is widely recognised in South Africa as being the best available indicator for success at university[3]. This is to be expected since if academic aptitude has any meaning as a theoretical construct (no-one has ever measured it), then it must correlate with academic performance[4]. By retaining a nationwide standard no student is penalised for having attended a good school.

However, some students are disadvantaged. This can be judged by the performance of their peer group (their particular school leaving class) against the national standard[5]. In the case of an academically inferior school it is proper to judge a student against the other candidates in his/her class. The second criterion uses the school leaving examination, but with the students' class as a *control group*. Although the whole class is disadvantaged, the best students have shown an aptitude for academic

work under difficult conditions. These students are *gifted but disadvantaged.*

The problem with any finite sample is fluctuations which leave a grey area, in particular when demarcating a class as disadvantaged. These statistical fluctuations are surpisingly small[6]. The grey area can be used either to establish that a class is definitely disadvantaged or definitely advantaged. This may be used to prevent academic support programmes such as the one at the University of the Witwatersrand from being flooded by students from high achieving final year classes[7].

The dual admission system uses the matriculation examination and is easy to implement either in part or in full. Matriculation results are available to the universities on magnetic tape and full implementation requires just a few lines of software. A pilot programme could easily be implemented at the University of the Witwatersrand in 1984 in view of the limited number of feeder schools. This could be run in conjunction with the existing Academic Support Programme.

The dual admission system is aimed at positive action — the removal of past discrimination without reference to race, class or creed. It gives people, who might otherwise have been denied the opportunity, a chance at a successful university career. In recognising the successful candidate as gifted, the second criterion removes the stigma attached to being labelled disadvantaged. This will improve the students' attitude to their work and the staff's attitude to the students. It will further be enhanced by the greater pass rate.

This note raises many questions, both explicitly and implicitly, while answering only few. University admittance is an important but emotional issue. We feel that it is a crucial subject for debate and invite responses to our proposal.

NOTES

1 DeFunis v Odegaard, 94 S Ct, 1974 pp 1704-1721.
L M Lavinsky 'DeFunis v Odegaard: The non-decision with a message' vol 75 no 3, 1975, pp 520-533.

2 Regents of the University of California v Allan Bakke, 98 S Ct, 1978 p 2733; 57 L Ed 2nd, p 750.
T R Morse and A J Rusciano 'Case comments. Bakke vs The Regents of the University of California.' *New England Law Review*, vol 12, no 3, 1977, pp 719-761.

3 J File 'Selection of students' *Aspects 4*, 1983.
J A van Wyk and J L Crawford 'Correlation between marks obtained in a first year ancillary Physics course at the University of the Witwatersrand and matric symbols' *South African Journal of Science*, in press.

4. The advantage of the matric in measuring several years of academic performance are sacrificed when attempting to measure academic aptitude directly. As puzzle-solving is facilitated by knowledge of similar puzzles it is unclear what is gained. There is little point in discarding the baby if the bath water has to be kept.
5 For this purpose, a typical matric class of about a hundred pupils is sufficiently large to be a statistically meaningful sample. This is the conventional wisdom, but it can be made quantitative by using, for example, a simple non-parametric test.
M Gering and L Zietsman 'University entrance in an academically non-homogeneous society', *South African Journal of Education*, in press.
6 *Ibid.*
7 Again there are obvious reasons why this should happen. While no one parameter should be used as a global criterion, the percentage of first generation students in a disadvantaged programme is an indicator of its effectiveness. It is interesting to note that the percentage of first generation students in the entire Rand Afrikaans University is comparable to that of the Academic Support Programme of the University of the Witwatersrand.
8 For an academic support programme such a selection procedure is imperative. The inclusion of undeserving students raises the class to unmanageable proportions while the knowledgeable, glib but low aptitude student has an intimidating effect on the gifted student with a poor background.

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Volume 7 Number 3 December 1983

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Contributions should not ordinarily exceed 3 000 words in length, and should be typewritten on one side of A4 paper, double spaced, with ample margins. Three complete copies should be submitted. Proofs will not be sent to authors for correction.

There is to be no separate 'Bibliography'. References should be kept to a minimum. All notes (which includes 'footnotes' and references) are to be numbered consecutively in the text (in Arabic numerals, in parenthesis, on the line of the text), and should be listed at the end of the article, as 'Notes'. Titles of papers or chapters citied are to be enclosed in quotation marks; titles of books are to be underlined. Examples:

NOTES:

1. Carole Pateman *Participation and Democratic Theory*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970.
2 PF Strawson 'Freedom and Resentment' in *Freedom and Resentment and Other Essays*, London: Methuen, 1974, pp 15-23.
3 L Althusser 'Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses' in B J Cosin (ed) *Education, Structure and Society*, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1977, see p 81.

Substantial quotations (more than about 3 lines) should be indented, shorter quotations should be enclosed in single quotation marks. Omissions from a quotation should be indicated by three dots.

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