

Incorporating human rights into the teaching of history: teaching materials

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Abstract

The Institute for Justice and Reconciliation has commissioned the publication of a series of books intended for FET teachers under the title *Turning Points in Human Rights* (forthcoming 2008). They are individually, *The Struggle for Constitutional Rights*, *The Struggled for Land Rights*, *The Struggle for Workers' Rights*, *The Struggle for Gender Rights* and *The Struggle for Youth Rights in South Africa*. I was asked to write the *Teacher's Guide* to the series. Although the series and guide were not written exclusively for history teachers, history is the subject that pays, arguably, the most attention to human rights. This article, which has its origins in a workshop at the 2007 conference of the South African Society for History Teaching, discusses some of the issues raised in this work and the classroom materials and approaches used.

Human Rights in the curriculum

Human Rights are infused into the present South African curriculum as a whole. They are a "cross cutting" feature of it, in that they go across all subjects, and should be included in all. The National Curriculum Statement (NCS) (Department of Education 2003) states that it is based on the following principles:

- social transformation;
- outcomes-based education;
- high knowledge and high skills;
- progression;
- articulation and portability;
- *human rights*, inclusivity, environmental and social justice;

These principles find expression in the statement, "The National Curriculum Statement Grades 10 – 12 (General) seeks to promote human rights, inclusivity, environmental and social justice. All newly-developed Subject Statements are infused with the principles and practices of social and environmental justice and human rights as defined in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa" (Department of Education 2003:4)

The NCS makes it clear that the curriculum is based on the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, and quotes its Preamble that includes among the aims of the Constitution, to, "heal the divisions of the past and establish a society based on democratic values, social justice and fundamental human rights".

The Content Framework for the NCS Grade 10-12 History is built upon two important questions: "How do we understand our world today?" And, "What

legacies of the past shape the present?" It continues, "In understanding our world today and the legacies that shaped our present, the broad themes of power alignments, human rights, issues of civil society and globalisation were used in suggesting areas of content" (2003:28). It is, thus, the intention of the NCS that human rights should be a theme that runs through all of the history studied. Human rights issues and debates ought to inform the teaching and assessing of history in all three grades.

Defining "Human Rights"

The *Turning Points* series begins with the following explanation:

We know that human rights are very much part of human nature. They represent the way in which people throughout history and in all cultures have regulated relations between themselves. Human rights are used by society to regulate itself, to organise relationships among the various parts of society, to protect the weak and vulnerable, to restrain the powerful, and to ensure a fair distribution of and access to resources. This is how societies are sustained. It distinguishes human beings from the animal kingdom where the law of the jungle prevails. Primitive societies operated with a sense of justice, fairness and human dignity. Communities, cultures and religions have a body of moral laws and values by which they live. (N. Barney Pitsoana, forthcoming 2008)

In the Teachers' Guide they are defined simply as, "Human rights are rights that belong to every person, or group of people. They are basic rights that everyone should be able to enjoy, such as the right to life and liberty, freedom of thought and expression, equality before the law, and many others."

The starting point is of crucial significance to history teachers and the two descriptions above lead to two different classroom possibilities. The first is that teaching about human rights in history begins with a blank slate. Through discussion and interaction and acquaintance with events of the past the teacher and class is able to build up an understanding of what they consider human rights to be. The second is that one begins with existing statements of human rights and works with them as a documentary base. This rapidly enables the class to become familiar with the range of what others have considered human rights and to understand the implications of codifying such rights (the kinds of language used, the key concepts, such as freedom of, freedom from, justice,

respect, equality, equity, the ranking and broad and narrow descriptions). It is the approach that was adopted in the *Teachers' Guide*.

The question next raised is which of the statements of rights to use. Many history teachers grew up with the French Revolution's *Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen* (in reply to which Olympe de Gouges wrote the *Declaration of the Rights of Woman and the Female Citizen* in 1791) as the only list with which they were familiar. The choice is now a very wide one, however, and learners ought to be familiar with more than one statement. The *Teachers' Guide* includes the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (1948), the *African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights* (1986) and the *South African Bill of Rights* (Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108, 1996). Other notable South African documents are the *Atlantic Charter from the African's Point of View (Africans' claims)* (1943), the *Women's Charter* (1954), and *Freedom Charter* (1955).

Content knowledge

I suggest that the major contribution that history can make to the teaching of human rights is to provide actual contexts within which to explore and discuss these rights. It is relatively easy to create exercises that introduce learners to aspects of human rights and sensitise them to them, but the impact of such exercises is often limited because they have no context and are not seem to be real. The fact that one is working with the past also makes it easier to be critical without disturbing any present sensibilities. One can help learners, for example, to see themselves differently in terms of their gender roles and interactions by making them aware of the actions and debates of people in the past. A "Surely they didn't believe that!" comment from a learner, easily becomes a "But that's not so different from what you say you believe about..." reply from a teacher. The activities presented as examples that follow have been chosen because the content lends itself to these forms of personal discovery and awakening.

Activities involving human rights in history teaching

Three kinds of activities were developed: talking, writing and source activities. Spoken/discussion activities have a specially important role to play as talking human rights is an essential way of coming to grips with what they involve. Through talking, the meaning and implications of a right become clearer, the extent to which it is universal to everyone at all times can be explored, and the consequences of people ignoring, abusing or violating the right can be better understood. A key human right is freedom of thought and conscience, belief and opinion (Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 9 of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights and Section 15 of the South African Bill of Rights). If it is not observed in the classroom itself when human rights are being taught, the learner's human rights are being violated.

Two examples each of the activities developed for talking, writing and sources are presented below:

Example 1: Talking: Workers' Rights – Migrant Labour

Read the following passages

In the chapters of this book, we can see how the demand for workers' rights developed as a result of years of struggles around working conditions and the right to a living wage. However, these struggles always took place in the greater

When men and women left their homesteads to find work in the towns they lost many rights. These included:

- the right to a home;
- the right to live with one's family;
- the right to dignity;
- the right to earn a living wage; and most importantly
- the right to be in command of one's own labour (meaning that one has freedom to accept and leave work as one wishes).

context of society as a whole, as this book will show.

In Chapter One, Luli Callinicos sets the scene by exploring the closely interlinked nature of work and family life in the homestead economy before colonial and industrial times. This

focus is important because we need to understand how very much the nature of work changed from a land-based society to an industrial society, and how much was lost in the process

Task

Work in pairs. *Imagine* that you have to give a spoken presentation to a committee of parliament that is making new laws about the rights of workers. From the list above, decide in what order to place the workers rights, and why.

Think about the following when you are discussing this between the two of you: Which will be easiest and hardest to achieve? Which is the most “human” right? Which will be the most important to workers? Which will be most important to employers? Which will be most important to the government?

Deliver your speech to the class.

Example 2: Talking: Gender Rights - 16 Days of Activism against Gender Violence

In South Africa, human rights are listed in the *Bill of Rights* of our constitution, adopted in 1996. It begins, “This Bill of Rights is a cornerstone of democracy in South Africa. It enshrines the rights of all people in our country and affirms the democratic values of human dignity, equality and freedom”.

It includes the following rights:

- The state may not unfairly discriminate directly or indirectly against anyone because of gender, sex, pregnancy, marital status, disability and so on.
- Everyone has the right to have their dignity respected and protected.
- Everyone has the right to freedom, which includes the right to be free from all forms of violence from either public or private sources.
- Everyone has the right to bodily integrity and psychological integrity, which includes the right to make decisions concerning whether or not to have children. They also have the right to control over their body.

Have you heard about the 16 Days of Activism against Gender Violence? The 16-Day campaign is a world initiative to raise awareness, to address policy and legal issues, to campaign for the protection of survivors of violence, and to call for the elimination of all forms of gender violence.

November 25 is the start of the campaign each year. This day has been declared International Day Against Violence Against Women. It was officially recognised by the United Nations in 1999.

Task

Read the information above.

Divide the class into groups of boys only and girls only (2 to 4 in each group).

The instruction to the boys' groups is to think of the best possible way of raising awareness of gender rights among girls during the 16 days, and the instruction for the girls' groups is to do the same for boys.

Each group should put forward one idea. All the boys and all the girls then meet in two big groups to hear the ideas suggested and choose one.

Two debates in class can follow:

- Half of the girls support the idea that the boys have proposed for raising awareness amongst girls, and half oppose it.
- Likewise, half the boys support the idea that the girls have proposed for raising awareness amongst boys, and half oppose it.
- Or, choose one idea and have mixed halves of the class debate it.

Example 3: Writing: Land and Worker's Rights - Mining and the South African labour system

This is a card sorting activity. "Cards" are small pieces of paper with information written on them. The idea is that learners arrange the cards in different ways in order to help them to decide how to do extended writing (long paragraphs and essays). Card sorting works best with groups of two to four learners, where the learners move the cards around and discuss the best way of ordering them. The

order of the information on the cards is then provides the structure for the writing.

Read the following extract from *Turning Points in the Struggle for Worker's Rights in South Africa*:

How did mining contribute to foundations of South Africa's labour system?

The needs of the mines created a pattern that the entire country would use in future years.

- ⊖ Town councils insisted that residential areas and shops should be racially divided. The landscape of the city included hostels and black locations, which were poorer areas because black people earned low wages
- ⊖ The pattern also included a lack of training for black workers, and reserving skilled and better-paid jobs for whites.
- ⊖ The pass laws, with their tight control over the free movement of workers, became a national policy.
- ⊖ The rural areas became poorer. Economically active men left to work on the mines and in industry. The result was that the women left behind bore the burden. Their unpaid labour subsidised the migrant labour system.
- ⊖ Above all, both colonisation and industrialisation led to a massive loss of human rights for workers, especially black workers.

Racism was used as a means for further exploitation. Black workers in particular were subjected to fundamental abuses of labour rights. The laws were either actively oppressive, such as the job reservation laws, or they failed to provide protection to black workers. Negative effects for workers included:

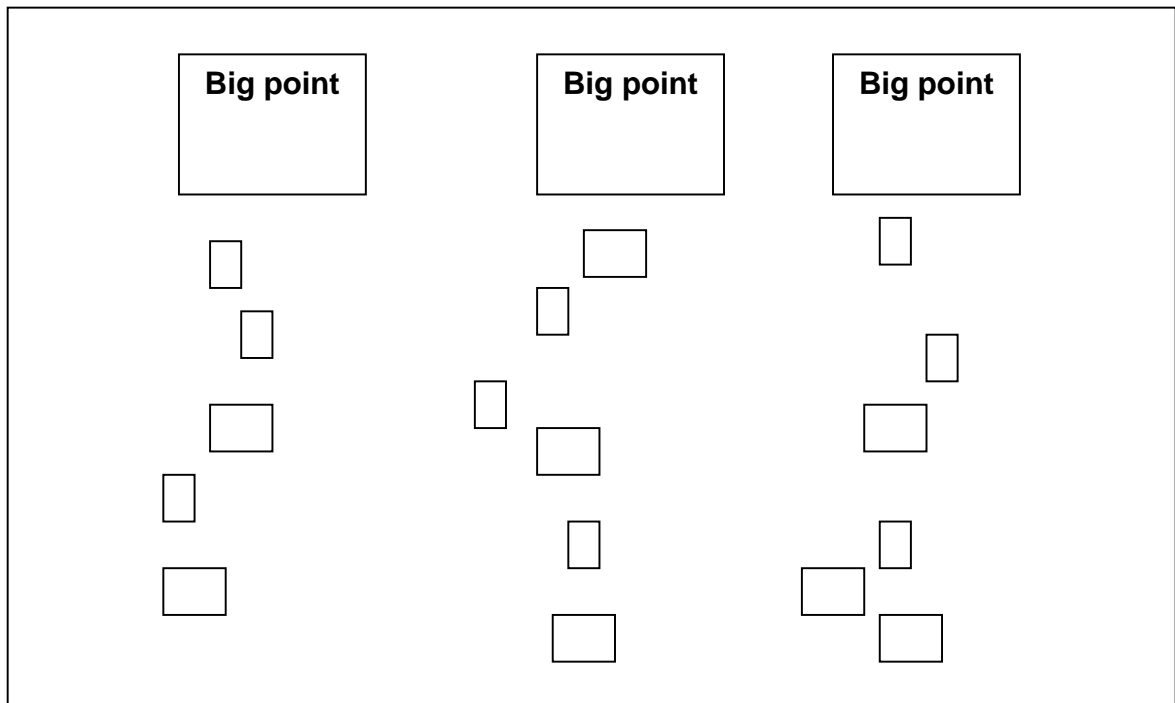
- ⊖ Black workers were not protected from instant dismissal.
- ⊖ Under the contract system, they were not entitled to paid leave or sick leave.
- ⊖ They were not protected from violence in the workplace.
- ⊖ In the early years, there was little concern about protecting the health and safety of either black or white miners.
- ⊖ Black workers were denied the right to organise into unions in order to bargain for better working conditions or higher wages.
- ⊖ The law did not give black workers the right to a living wage.
- ⊖ The law specifically denied black people the right to vote, so they had no political power.
- ⊖ Neither black nor white workers had the right to share in the proceeds of their productive work.
- ⊖ ~~The burden of women's unpaid labour increased.~~

job reservation – a system in which certain jobs were kept only for white workers and others only for black workers. The white workers got the better jobs; most supervision was done by white workers.

Task

Write a piece of extended writing (an essay) containing three or more paragraphs on the topic, "Why South Africa's labour system was racist before 1994".

- a) Choose three or more big points from the passage and write them on cards (see diagram).
- b) Write down all the other points you can find in the passage on cards. (Such as: job reservation laws were oppressive; black workers were not entitled to paid sick leave, etc.)
- c) Arrange all the cards under the big points they belong with.
- d) Write a paragraph about each big point. Include the little points that go with it.



Example 4: Writing: Gender rights - Laws that changed the position of women

This activity can be done involving the whole class by a teacher at the board, or it can be done individually.

Task

The instruction is to write a paragraph on “Do the laws introduced in South Africa between 1994 and 1998 give women what the Bill of Rights in the constitution intended?”, using the information below and the SA Bill of Rights.

Child care

- The Social Assistance Amendment Act of 1994 introduced the child support grant.
- The Maintenance Act of 1998 allows the Court to order an employer to deduct maintenance from the salary of the father, and to appoint maintenance officers who can trace the whereabouts of an absent father.

Domestic violence

- The Divorce Courts Amendment Act of 1997 gives women access to less costly divorce proceedings and makes it easier for them to leave abusive marriages.
- The Domestic Violence Act of 1998 affords greater protection against actual or threatened physical violence and sexual, emotional, verbal, psychological and economic abuse as well as intimidation, harassment, stalking, damage to or destruction of property, or entry into homes without consent.

Education

- The National Education Policy Act of 1996 provides for redressing the inequalities of the past in educational provision, including the promotion of gender equality and the advancement of the status of women.

Environment

- The Water Services Act of 1997 provides that every water service institution must take measures to realise the right of access to basic water supply and sanitation.

Labour

- The Labour Relations Act of 1995 gives basic labour rights to domestic workers and public sector workers.

Land

- The Restitution of Land Rights Act of 1994 states that priority should be given to people with the most pressing needs.
- The Land Bank Amendment Act of 1998 gives women access to financial assistance from the Land Bank.

Rape

- The Criminal Procedure Acts of 1995 and 1997 strengthen the Court’s ability to refuse bail in rape cases, especially where the perpetrator used a weapon or in the case of gang rape.
- The Criminal Laws Amendment Act of 1997 sets out a mandatory minimum sentence for serious crimes, including rape.

There are two ways to structure the paragraph: Either base it on the rights and comment on them by referring to the laws, *or* base it on the laws and refer to the rights. Choose which way you wish to do it, and then work out the sequence of the paragraph: beginning, middle and end.

Use the following writing frame:

- To me it is clear that the laws introduced in South Africa between 1994 and 1998 [fill in *give* OR *do not give*] women what the Bill of Rights intended. Two of my main reasons for coming to this conclusion are....
- One can also see that things [fill in *improved dramatically* OR *did not improve*] as a result of...
- and...
- A final strong reason [or *reasons*] for my opinion about this is...

Example 5: Sources: Workers' rights - African sugar millers and indentured labourers

Read the following sources from *Turning Point in Worker's Rights*.

Indentured Labour in the Sugar Industry

In 1859 the Natal government passed three laws – Laws 13, 14 and 15. Law 13 allowed workers north of Zululand to be brought into Natal, while Laws 14 and 15 dealt with labour from India. The Indian labourers were indentured labourers. This meant that workers were under contract to an employer for five years (three years in the early years), and this could be renewed for another five years at a fixed wage.

Many contemporary observers and scholars who have written about the indentured labour system have argued that it was very much like slavery. Planters in places like Mauritius and the West Indies had been so dependent on slave labour to grow sugar that after it was abolished they tried to devise a new system of unfree labour.

The use of indentured labour from India, begun in the 1830s, became widespread through to the first two decades of the twentieth century. Among the British colonies using indentured labour from India were Mauritius and the islands of British Guiana, Trinidad, Jamaica, St Lucia, Grenada and Fiji. The French colonies of Reunion, Martinique, Guadeloupe and French Guiana, as well as the Danish colonies of St Croix and Surinam also drew labour from India.

A. An African sugar miller tells his story:

The Umvoti sugar mill was placed here in 1861. I was a young man then. The mill was delivered by Queen Victoria to assist the natives who grow at Groutville through the Rev. Mr Grout's petition. And the mill was set here by Mr Shepstone [the Secretary for Native Affairs]. The regulation was that if we failed to plant for the mill, we should be responsible for it. From 1861 to 1882 I never failed to plant nor to deliver cane to the mill. Then, when the government saw that the mill was getting old, they left it. After a time the government delivered the mill to the natives on the condition they would take it and use it. On these grounds the mill was taken by Mlau, Makabani, Mhlonono and Philip, all of Groutville.

Source: Robert F. Osborne, *Valiant Harvest: The Founding of the South African Sugar Industry 1848-1926*. Durban, South African Sugar Association, 1964, page 137.

B. Mr Makabani, a mill owner, described the difficulties of running the Umvoti sugar mill:

When we entered the mill we bought a boiler, each of us paying £85, a total of £340. By and by Mlau died, and three remained. After a time, Mhlonono and Philip failed. The engine now wants to be repaired, also the cooling vats for the sugar, the loading house and stable, whilst batteries want to be replaced, and the wetzels pans. The other two could not do the above, so I myself removed them and replaced all the things. Then the rinderpest came. ... I have not yet paid the repairs of the mill, and where shall I get the money? The mill is right enough to crush the cane today, if there is cane. But there are no oxen, no ploughing. Rinderpest has ruined us.

Source: Robert F. Osborne, *Valiant Harvest: The Founding of the South African Sugar Industry 1848-1926*. Durban, South African Sugar Association, 1964, page 137. **rinderpest** - an infectious disease of cattle, caused by a virus. The cattle got a fever and diarrhoea, and often died.

C. Ghandi's view

"Having observed the system for nearly eighteen years, I have come to hold very strong views on the question of indentured emigration from India. Even if it were possible to secure fair treatment from the masters (which it is not) the system is inherently bad. As a solution of the problem of poverty such emigration has in no way proved helpful. As a nation we lose in prestige by sending our poorest brethren as practically slaves. No nation of free men will tolerate such a system for a moment" (Mohandas Gandhi, 1911).

Source: *Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, Vol. XI. New Delhi, Government of India, page 96.

D. Employment in sugar mills

On any sugar estate one could find indentured Indians, free Indians, local African labour, foreign African labour and some white skilled labour. In 1885 the Natal Central Sugar Company, one of the larger employers, had the following numbers:

Indentured Indians: 467 men, 9 boys, 151 women and girls

Free Indians: 143 men, 26 boys, 27 women

Africans (including watchmen): 40

In 1901 there were 8 747 Indians employed in the sugar mills compared to 552 Africans and 161 whites. Because it involved some skill, mill work paid much higher wages than field work.

Task

Compare the evidence in the sources about the situation of the African millers (Sources A and B) to the Indian indentured labourers (Sources C and D) in terms of human rights. Use the table below or make a mind map of your own:

	African millers	Indentured labourers
	Rights that they had	
Evidence you are sure of:		

Evidence you are uncertain of:		
	Rights they <i>should</i> have had	
Evidence you are sure of:		
Evidence you are uncertain of:		

List of possible rights:

- the right to a home;
- the right to live with one's family;
- the right to dignity;
- the right to earn a living wage; and most importantly
- the right to be in command of one's own labour (meaning that one has freedom to accept and leave work as one wishes)
- the right not to be held in slavery or servitude; slavery
- the right not to be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.
- the right to equal pay for equal work.

Example 6: Sources: Youth Rights – Education as a human right

Read the following extract from the book *Soweto: Black Revolt, White Reaction*, written by John Kane-Berman in 1978. pages 24-25, paying particular attention to the highlighted parts.

Khotso Seatholo, president of the Soweto Students Representative Council [said] in a press statement in October 1976:

“We shall reject the whole system of Bantu Education whose aim is to reduce us, mentally and physically into ‘hewers of wood and drawers of water’ for the white racist masters. Our whole ‘being’ rebels against the whole South African system of existence, the system of apartheid that is killing us psychologically and physically. The type of education that we are receiving is like poison that is destroying our minds. It is reducing us to intellectual cripples that cannot take a seat within the world community of academics... Twenty years ago when Bantu Education was introduced, our fathers said, ‘Half a loaf is better than no loaf.’ But we say, ‘Half a gram of poison is just as killing as the whole gram.’ Thus we strongly refuse to swallow this type of education that is designed to make us slaves in the country of our birth.” ...

One Soweto schoolteacher said that among some pupils alienation went so deep that it involved a total rejection of the white-controlled political economy. Some of the more radical pupils did not want any kind of job in the white man’s economy, which they saw as racist and exploitative. Education was not seen as a means of furthering themselves within the economy, but as a way of acquiring the knowledge to change or overthrow it. Another teacher said that teachers were jeered at when they asked pupils to study, and that many were now coming to school not for the formal instruction but to discuss among themselves the ‘political situation’ and the ‘liberation struggle’ It was also reported that many children in Soweto were saying that the only way they would get equality in education was to go to the same schools as whites.

Relentless everyday experience is as important a factor in the education of black youth as formal classroom curricula. ‘Every black home’, observed the Re. Barney Ngakane, ‘is a political school. The husband comes home every day and tells his wife how he has been kicked around and arrested for things like pass offences. The children are listening and they take all this in. This is why African schoolchildren have become politically aware so easily.’

The principal of a school in the Free State [said] that ‘students are becoming far more aware of history and politics than they were several years ago, and thus far more conscious of themselves and things happening around them. They learn of colonialism, imperialism, decolonisation and the independence movement on the

African continent. Then it comes down to themselves.... They have told me, "We are so fed up with apartheid we would rather have communism."

Task

Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights says:

1. Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit.
2. Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.
3. Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children.

In Soweto in 1976, students were not protesting because they did not have schools, but about the *kind* of education they were receiving.

Find examples from the extract that show that their education in 1976 was not in accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights:

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights:	Education in township schools in 1976
Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality	
the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms	
It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship	
Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children	

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Discussion:

Two principles inform the talking activities. The first is that structured personal discussions that engage all members of a class are required. Pair work (Example 1) is a crucial element in this. Finding ways to facilitate meaningful dialogue in pairs is vital to successful teaching on human rights. Secondly, classroom debate (Example 2) where two halves of the class are against each other is a very powerful tool for helping learners to understand what it means to have to take positions and defend them. The cut and thrust of debate on a well-chosen motion will always expose learners to a much wider range of opinion than would otherwise be possible. The task of the history teacher is then to help them to consolidate their newly found ideas.

The writing activities have been chosen, similarly, because they create a structure for understanding about human rights to be put down in writing. As there are so seldom issues that are completely clear cut in human rights, it is important that learners be given structures which allow them to categorise and organise their views and opinions. Example 3 does this by means of card sorting. In Example 4 the device of a writing frame to provide the initial structure for an answer fulfils a similar purpose.

The source-based activities were chosen to show that significant learning about human rights can take place with a few carefully selected documents and to demonstrate that source work does not simply involve answering lists of short questions. The use of tables in Examples 5 and 6 is designed to help learners to move away from looking for specific short answers to being able to engage with the sources as a whole.

The overriding approach in all of the examples is that the activities depend on learners coming to grips with the historical content while at the same time getting to know and working with statements of human rights.

References

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Where have all the learners gone?

(A small scale study to determine reasons for the decline in numbers of learners taking History in the FET phase)

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Few academic subjects evoke as much passion as history; to make a study of the future of history in schools, is therefore not a new debate topic at all. The aspect of the importance of history has been debated more than once and it seems as if no new arguments are coming to the forth; especially by teachers, officials from the Department of Education, and Historians. Some educators of History claim to have an answer, but possible solutions are constantly absent¹. In this paper the views of the learners themselves will be heard – many of which correspond with those uttered by Historians, teachers and officials over the past decades, but some different. Whatever the case may be, it is definitely worth listening to those who could become the historians and history teachers of the future, namely the learners themselves.

Concern about the declining numbers of learners taking History as a subject in the secondary (FET) and tertiary (HET) educational phases is not a new phenomenon and certainly not restricted to South Africa. It is this decline which has resulted in the formal establishment of the South African Society for History Teaching (SASHT) in 1986. Problems experienced in the field of History being offered and promoted at schools are also not new. Tensions between political parties during the period 1918-1948 resulted in History being declared non-committal.²

¹ Van Eeden, E. 2006. A 21st century perspective – value and way forward of History – a motivational discourse. Book of abstracts. FET History workshop: empowering the History teacher. North-West University, Vanderbijlpark, p. 7.

² Van Eeden, E. 2006. A 21st century perspective – value and way forward of History – a motivational discourse. Book of abstracts. FET History workshop: empowering the History teacher. North-West University, Vanderbijlpark, p. 9.

The widespread perceived notion about history as a school and university subject is one of merely memorising facts without application of those facts to other situations. This fact is echoed by Wilson ³ in research on history instruction which includes, among others that students generally find traditional teaching dry and largely senseless, resulting in “little intellectual engagement, a dominance of teachers and textbooks, and minimal problem-solving or critical thinking”. Research done by Wineburg ⁴ showed that historical thinking was not a natural process and that it would not arise automatically from normal cognitive development.

Curriculum revision began immediately after the 1994 election. In the immediate aftermath of the election, syllabi were ‘cleansed’ of their most offensive racist language and purged of their most controversial and outdated content⁵. The virtual disappearance of history teaching from schools in the immediate aftermath of the 1994 election, combined with an organized history profession and a Minister of Education sympathetic to this constituency and nation-building concerns, led to a movement to reinsert history more strongly into the curriculum. Both the Report of the History/Archaeological Panel⁶, presented to the Minister in early 2000, and the Report of the Review Committee on C2005 ⁷ emphasized the importance of history having its own space in the curriculum. Although there was not much resistance to the environment lobby, there was to the history lobby.

³ Wilson, S.M. 2001. Research on history teaching, in Richardson, V. (ed). Handbook of research on teaching, (pp. 527-544). Washington DC. American Research Association, p. 530.

⁴ Wineburg, S. 2001. Historical thinking and other unnatural acts: charting the future of teaching the past. Philadelphia: temple University press.

⁵ Jansen, J. D.1999a The school curriculum since Apartheid: intersections of politics and policy in the South African transition. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 31(1), 57-67.

⁶ DoE, 2000. Report of the History/Archeological Panel to the Minister of Education (Pretoria:DoE).<http://education.pwv.gov.za/content/documents/304.pdf> (visited 3 Dec.2003).

⁷ Chisholm, L. 2005. The making of South Africa’s National Curriculum Statement. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 37(2), 193-208.

This resistance came from a constructivist perspective expressed in the form of an opposition to content, as well as from the Christian right.

The first controversy in the history curriculum debates was over whether there should be a space for history at all. History, it was argued, should not have a separate status, especially in the junior years; this view emphasized boundless concepts of knowledge that ought to be expressed in the integrated curricula.

The second controversy was over content. History as a separate learning area was taboo for the original framers of C2005 and for some departmental officials, because it was seen as involving content. Such a response is testimony to the deep aversion to the nature of the history taught under apartheid. History teaching was symbolic of apartheid. Reinstating history was, and is, for these critics, like reinstating apartheid. History, therefore, was seen as having to be negated by integration. Authoritarian pedagogies typical of many schools under apartheid were also seen to have their home in history as taught in schools⁸. Finding a place for history in the curriculum was resolved in having two relatively autonomous and strategically integrated sections, history and geography, within one learning area, namely. Social Sciences. Content had to be taught through the development of skills, knowledge and understanding.

The “weight” of history as subject has decreased and the content stripped of all folk history (volksgeskiedenis)⁹. Kok¹⁰ however argues that the present syllabus, with ‘two histories in one’, could be a dividing factor but one advantage of the ‘new’ history is there are now more and more different perspectives than in the past on the table and that can enhance a better understanding of the different perspectives.

⁸ Chisholm, L. 2005. The making of South Africa’s National Curriculum Statement. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 37(2), p.199.

⁹ Pretorius, M. 2006. *Volksgeskiedenis: verwerp Kurrikulum 2005!* Afrikaner. 19 January 2006: 7.

¹⁰ Kok, M. 2006. *Een land, twee geskiedenis en nuwe perspektiewe.* Rapport. 5 February, 2006: 15.

Nation building

Political discourse in post-apartheid South Africa has set education on the course of nation building. As South Africa addresses the task of transforming a divided and profoundly unequal educational system, nation building is proposed by some as a strategy for creating unity from diversity¹¹. As part of addressing this problem, Higgs argues that education should primarily be concerned with an individual person's self-empowerment as a human being. This will mean that education will not be concerned primarily with the acquisition of a subject competence, or of skills for professional and vocational preparedness in the interests of nation building. But rather, education will be concerned with, what I call, a competence for life, which reveals itself in the development of resourceful human beings who creatively strive for a more humane social order in their commitment to a common good. Education is consequently an activity directed at self-empowerment, whereby persons are equipped for the task of living meaningfully, and guided in their aims and actions by their different experiences of *human agency*. By 'human agency', I mean, that fundamental orientation that we adopt in relation to our inter-subjective engagement with our world.

H G Wells¹² in reflecting on the course of human history commented:
"Human history becomes more and more a race between education and catastrophe".

Value of history teaching

Arthur and Davison¹³ emphasises the importance and value of history as a school subject in order for learners to become socially literate. The traditional subjects of the school curriculum focus almost entirely on cognate aspects of

¹¹ Higgs, P. 1998. Nation Building: A Dilemma for education. Journal of education and Training, November 1998 vol. 19(2), p.41.

¹² Higgs, P. 1998. Nation Building: A Dilemma for education. Journal of education and Training, November 1998 vol. 19(2), p.48

¹³ Arthur, J, & Davison, J. Social Literacy and citizenship education in the school curriculum. The Curriculum Journal Vol.II No.I Spring 2000, p.9

teaching and learning, but the knowledge and learning processes that they impart can have a value in directing activity towards desired social ends. For example, history is, above all else, about people and has an important and unique contribution to make to social education. In the primary school history develops certain skills which can be said to be key aspects of social literacy: the ability to reflect on evidence and draw conclusions: the ability to consider various interpretations of the same event, developing a respect for evidence. History also develops attitudes which a social being needs: tolerance of various viewpoints, a critical approach to evidence, and respect for the value of reasoned arguments. The study of the past is increasingly set in a cultural and moral context, looking at law-making, abuse of power, introducing persecution and religious conflict, as well as ideas such as cultural interdependence, diversity of beliefs and philanthropy.

Govender¹⁴ argues that history puts the present into perspective and shapes the future and that the subject lends itself to critical thinking. Furthermore, according to Govender, history teachers themselves are inadequately equipped, especially due to curriculum changes and many do not have the extensive knowledge needed to teach the subject and come up with half-baked ideas that bore learners. History teachers also need to be good story-tellers and not many people possess over that gift. Potenza as quoted by Govender¹⁵ supports this view but also motivates that history could make an immense contribution to society and 'can do a lot for nation-building'. There seems, however, to be a different view also. Wood¹⁶ reports that educationists claim the new curriculum to be a fundamental attempt to revitalise it in line with new developments in the 21st century and that the new content is being taught and tried out with a variety of

¹⁴ Govender, P. 2003. The importance of history: it's also your story. The Star. 23 June 2003. S.A. Media, p.1

¹⁵ Govender, P. 2003. The importance of history: it's also your story. The Star. 23 June 2003. S.A. Media, p.1

¹⁶ Wood, K. 2004. School history isn't what it used to be. Saturday Star. 18 September 2004:15

creative skills and approaches (the buzz word being outcomes). These outcomes give teachers more scope for stimulating assignments using skills of judgement, comparison, empathy, synthesis and much more – all part of the real challenge of the subject. More important, no longer empty vessels, learners are expected to engage actively, with their own personal views and backgrounds.

At Glenwood High School, Durban, various projects are offered to promote History as a subject; history tours, history field trips, Young Historians History Conference and an annual inter-school history quiz. These projects are all initiated by their aim, which captures the value of history teaching, that “it is essential that each learner who leaves school leave with some historical knowledge, particularly on understanding of their present situation in relation to their heritage. Moreover, each school leaver should take with them a working grasp of several key skills gained in History: detecting bias, developing empathy, presenting coherent arguments, understanding logic and other reading and writing skills; not only because the learning aspect in History is important, but learners must also enjoy themselves”¹⁷.

International trends regarding the studying of history

A few examples of the general trend regarding the situation of history as a school subject, are discussed here.

In 2004, professor A. Wessels¹⁸ pleaded that history should become a compulsory subject at schools; not only so that learners should be equipped to account for the past but in order for them to be better prepared for life. History, he said, does not necessarily give solutions to problems but, a person who has mastered history, knows how to identify and analyse a problem. To ensure the future of the past of all the people in South Africa, history should be studied more; if you do not know your history, you are suffering from amnesia. You do

¹⁷ Anon. www.glenwoodhighschool.co.za/academic/history

¹⁸ Wessels, A. 2004. Volksblad. 17 April 2004:4.

not know who you are, where you are, where you come from or where you are going. He is supported by Greyling¹⁹ who supports history as a means of nation-building and surviving as a nation. The concern about declining numbers of learners taking history as a school subject is not restricted to South Africa. An event in 2006 in Southampton saw thousands of people writing a blog of a normal Tuesday as part of the 'History Matters' campaign. This event led to a vital question being asked by Richard Harris²⁰, namely "how have things got to the stage where we need a campaign such as "History Matters?" He answers his own question by pointing out that it is crucially important that learners have a very clear sense of why they are studying a topic if they want to connect with the subject. The arguments that history has a social purpose and so forth are highly abstract to learners and seem to have no immediacy to them. The 'skills' argument can apply equally to other subjects in terms of employability. In Scotland a handful of schools have dropped history from the curriculum entirely in favour of subjects that are more 'relevant'. For some, this means that we have to justify the place of the subject due to its 'relevance' and if history is not relevant, then we need to alter the history curriculum to make it more 'relevant'. This term seems to have overtones of utility and presentism. It suggests a curriculum where topics are taught that are 'useful' either in terms of employability or it helps to make sense of current affairs.

..."Since the founding of the People's Republic of China, the introduction of the subject of history in high schools has gone through many ups and downs; in 1995, a new curriculum was introduced and history has since become a Senior I compulsory subject, although, due to limited teaching time, the content has to be limited to modern and contemporary history of China.²¹

¹⁹ Greyling, F. 2004. Bring geskiedenis terug as skoolvak. *Beeld*. 21 October 2004:16.

²⁰ Harris, A. & Rea, A. 2006. Making history meaningful. The History Association.

²¹ Qingjun, C. 2007. Reform of history teaching in high schools in the new era. [url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?](http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?), p.8

In neighbouring Southern African countries the same trend of declining numbers of history learners are being experienced. In Swaziland, for example it is not uncommon to find that in some schools the subject does not even feature as one of the subjects on offer. Of the 14000 students who sat for the year 12 public examination in 2006, only 4200 opted for history.²²

Hope for the future

Hope for the future of history as a school subject, has varied between optimism and pessimism over the recent few years. Prof P Kapp²³ announced in 2002 that he has hope for the future of History as a school subject after the growth in the number of learners participating in the History Olympiad. The increase was especially among learners with an African language as home language, which can be explained as support for the Olympiad was marketed strongly in township schools. This bright future which was envisaged for History as a school subject, did not last long. The last History Olympiad took place in 2003 and a 'bosberaad' was held at the Vaal Triangle campus of the North-West University, with the topic "What went wrong with the previous Olympiad? A challenge for the future". It is not the aim of this paper to discuss the reasons for the fact that the last Olympiad took place in 2003; but to express the hope for the possible revival of the History Olympiad as has been mentioned by the Suid-Afrikaanse Akademie vir Wetenskap en Kuns.²⁴ Racism can be minimised or even eliminated through education. Without knowledge of the other groups' history, the attitudes, beliefs and prejudices that have been inherited and passed down from one generation to another, cannot be eradicated. In order to promote inter- group relationships which could only be to the benefit of the South African nation as a whole, the serious decline in the numbers of learners taking History as a school subject in the FET phase, will have to be addressed.

²² Mazibuko, Z. M. 2007. Developments in History teaching at Secondary School level in Swaziland: Lessons from classroom research (Conference paper). SASHT Conference. Durban, p.3

²³ Kapp, P. 2002. *Beeld*. Media 24. Johannesburg.

²⁴ Die Suid-Afrikaanse Akademie vir Wetenskap en Kuns <http://akademie.org.za>.

Empirical study

(i)	We want to know what happened in the “old” times.	14
(ii)	One needs it for specific careers.	3
(iii)	If you know what happened in the past, you will understand the present and current events better.	26
(iv)	We must learn about our history	11
(v)	Just because ‘sommer”	2
(vi)	Because the children of today know nothing about history	3
(vii)	It is very interesting	6

In order to find possible reasons for the decline in the number of learners taking History as a subject at FET level and also to find possible solutions for the problem, a small scale study was undertaken in the Vereeniging District, Gauteng. The research was done among grade nine learners in so-called ex Model-C Schools. The reason for selecting these specific schools is because in the whole district only two of these ex Model C Schools, still offer History in the FET phase; both of which are English medium of instruction schools. There are 14 township schools still offering History at the FET level. It could be regarded as a limitation to the study but it also provides for further research. The research could not be done during teaching time and as a result only six questions (with sub-sections) were asked.

Semi-structured questionnaires, composing of both close-and open ended questions were constructed. All the learners of a specific grade nine class formed part of the sample group. The responses of the Afrikaans- and English schools will be discussed separately and only similarities and differences pointed out in the summary.

Afrikaans : *Three schools were involved*

Male	Female	Total
33	49	82

Question 3: Do you think History should be taught in schools?

	M	%	F	%	Tot	%
Yes	25	75	40	82	65	79
No	8	25	9	18	17	21

Question 3.1. Motivation as to why history should be taught, the following responses were received:

Question 3.2. Why should history not be taught in schools?

(i)	We don't want to know about the suffering of long ago.	3
(ii)	It only deals with Apartheid and Blacks	7
(iii)	It is boring	5
(iv)	We must go forward and not backwards	2

Question 4.1. What do you like about history?

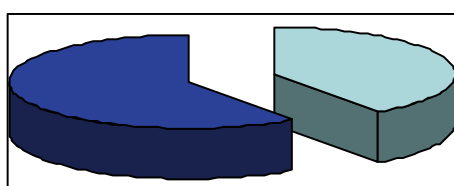
(i)	To learn about the old days	22
(ii)	When the teacher tells jokes about the 'old' people	1
(iii)	It is <i>sometimes</i> interesting	15
(iv)	Everything	15
(v)	Wars	8
(vi)	The South African War (Boere – oorlog)	4

Question 4.1. What do you not like about history?

(i)	Too much politics	9
(ii)	Too tedious	8
(iii)	Nothing, I like everything	24
(iv)	Rote learning and all the dates	24

Question 5

If History was offered at your school in grade 10, would you choose it as a subject?



Light Blue	Yes - 33
Dark Blue	No - 49

No response = 17

Question 5.1 Motivate why you would take history.

(i)	It is interesting	17
(ii)	Then you can converse with your grandparents	1
(iii)	To learn more about the past	15

Question 5.2 Motivate why you would not take history.

(i)	I don't need it for the career that I want to follow	26
(ii)	I don't really like it	6
(iii)	Boring	8
(iv)	It will not be needed once I am finished with school	8
(v)	You only learn about black people	1

Question 6. In what careers will History be a recommendation?

(i)	Teaching	39	(vii)	Nature conservator	4
(ii)	Work in a museum	15	(viii)	Historian	14
(iii)	Lawyer	6	(ix)	Writer	5
(iv)	Singer	1	(x)	President	11
(v)	Excavations	10	(xi)	I don't know	7
(vi)	Professors	6			

English schools (Five schools were involved, consisting of approximately 90% black learners)

Male	Female	Total
63	66	129

Question 3. Do you think history should be taught in schools?

Yes	No
114	25

3.1 Motivate why you should take history

(i)	We want to learn about the history of South Africa	64
(ii)	You learn to know your country better	
(iii)	We want to learn about the history of the world	9
(iv)	Because history is part of our lives	
(v)	It tells us how early humans lived	
(vi)	We can learn from the mistakes of the past	
(vii)	I like stories and history is like a story	

3.2 Motivate why you should not take history

- (i) Not required for my future career
- (ii) You must study too much
- (iii) I don't want to know more about what happened in the past

4.1 What do you like about history?

- (i) It gives you an idea what happened in the past
- (ii) I like to learn about other countries
- (iii) I like to learn about the Nazi party

4.2 What don't you like about history?

- (i) Modern people don't want to know what happened in the past
- (ii) All the calculations (it is not clear what the learners referred to)

Question 5

	Yes	No
Male	26	
Female	19	

Question 5.1

- (i) It gives you a feeling of experiencing what happened in the past
- (ii) Because it is fun and challenging

Question 5.2

- (i) I won't need history for my career
- (ii) It cannot get a job for me

Question 6: Answers to the question of possible careers with history as a subject, are indicated in the table below.

Lawyer	Talk shows	Museum
Historian	Travel and tourism	Professor
Astrologist	Artist	Doctor
Journalism	Working with the weather	Dancer / actor / singer

Pilot	Nursing	Astronaut
Technologist	Researcher	Don't know any
Architect	Nature reserve guardian	Investigator
Work with voting	Librarian	News reader
Teacher	Working with maps	Policeman and work at correctional services
Politician and working at the parliament	Sociologist	Archaeology
President	Psychologist	Making ancient movies Collector

Discussion of empirical data

Question 3: Do you think history should be taught in schools?

From the response it is clear that the majority of learners reacted positively about the teaching of history as a school subject. It thus seems as if there is a future

for History if the opportunity would be available. In the district where the research was done, 14 out of a possible 30 schools offer History at FET level, less than 50%. No Afrikaans medium schools offer History any more in the specific district.

What is a concern, are the reasons learners provide for the teaching of history (question 3.1). If the different dimensions of the learner which need to be addressed in all learning in Outcomes Based Education, namely knowledge, skills and attitudes (SKV's), are kept in mind, the reasons provided by the learners almost all lie on the '**knowledge**' level. Aspects such as the development of critical and analytical **skills**, to name but two, are not mentioned at all. **Values** could be implied in the following two answers; "if you know what happened in the past, you will understand the present and current events better" and "we can learn from the mistakes of the past", but these were mentioned by only 34 learners in total. It thus seems as if history is taught in a way that the learners still regard it as a 'knowledge' subject, which could be detrimental for the future of the subject. The learners from both the Afrikaans and English medium schools gave similar responses to this question. It is regarded as appropriate to quote the following words here.

Education includes, but is not coincided to basic, professional and vocational training, John Stuart Mills²⁵ captures the importance of history as follows:

"Men are men before they are lawyers or physicians, or merchants, or manufacturers; and if you make them capable and sensible men, they will make capable and sensible lawyers and physicians".

The responses to question 3.2, 'motivate why history should not be taught in schools', showed similarities as well as differences between the two language

²⁵ Higgs, P. 1998. Nation Building: A Dilemma for education. *Journal of education and Training*, November 1998 vol. 19(2) p. 48.

groups. Both indicated that it is 'boring' and that they don't want to know 'what happened in the past' but the Afrikaans speaking learners also supplied answers, such as: 'it only deals with Apartheid and Blacks' and 'too much politics'. This could perhaps be explained if the content of the new history syllabus is considered. The fact that none of the learners from the English medium schools, who are mainly black learners, supplied any 'political' or 'racial' reasons, could be because they can affiliate with the content and that once again emphasizes the importance of the inclusion of the history of all the peoples of the country in the history syllabus.

Kathleen Vail²⁶ speaks about 'cultural suicide', because of the impoverished history content of social studies in American syllabi and more time being spent on subjects such as reading and maths and she makes an appeal to go back to balanced teaching.

Another alarming reason provided by too many of the learners why history should not be taught in schools and which could also be linked with question 4.2 (what don't you like about history), is 'it is boring, 'too tedious', 'rote learning and all the dates'. This is not a very good reflection on History teachers and the way the subject is dealt with; maybe this explains why the learners don't regard it as a subject which can develop specific skills. Furthermore, this could explain the 'no' responses to question 5.2: Motivate why you do not intend (or would have considered) to choose history as a subject in grade 10. The answer provided by the majority of the learners, is "I don't need it for my future career".

Although it may seem as if the respondents are aware of a vast variety of careers for which history could be a recommendation, it is actually an area of great concern as the majority either wrote "I don't know of any" or just mentioned 'teaching'. The other careers were mentioned by one or at the most two learners. This could be an indication that insufficient career guidance regarding

²⁶ Vail, K.2007. Fighting over history in our schools. *American School Board Journal*. url=<http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx>? p. 36.

the career value of history is a problem at schools or even that some learners just wrote something down for the sake of answering the question, especially if career options such as dancer and singer are considered (although one could argue that it was a singer who put Genl. de la Rey on the map again). Careers like diplomatic services, marketing (sales, banking and economists), military information, heraldry and genealogy, theology and Radio and television have not been mentioned at all. It would have been interesting to ask them why they regard history as necessary for certain of the mentioned careers.

A positive response from all the learners is the desire to 'learn more about the past'. This already provides fertile soil to sow history seeds on.

Conclusion

Has anything positive come forth from this research? Certainly, yes. The fact that so many learners indicated that History should be offered at schools and that they would indeed consider History as a subject if it was possible, certainly send out a positive message. The question is; what can be done to put these positive attitudes into practice? We are convinced that if more History teachers and officials from the different Departments of Education involved with history, could listen to the voices of the young, it will have a positive outcome. Teachers should also receive intensive training on how to present the subject in more creative ways in order for it to becoming meaningful to the learners. This links with the aim of history teaching of Glenwood High School, namely that not only because "the learning aspect in History is important, but learners must also enjoy themselves".²⁷

The learning outcomes, assessment standards and content of textbooks have been adjusted to be more accommodative; but the question can be rightfully asked whether teachers have been equipped to deal with these changes in such

²⁷Anon. www.glenwoodhighschool.co.za/academic/history

a way that the declining numbers of learners taking History as a subject in the FET phase, can be halted.

Investing in formal education: Can indigenous knowledge studies enhance graduates' response to development needs of African communities?

Morgan Ndlovu
Human Sciences Research Council,
Policy Analysis Unit, 134

Isandulelo

I-Africa isaqhubeka ibonakala njengezwekazi elingafinyeleli intuthuko jikelele. Imizamo lezinqumo ezehlukile sezike zathathwa ziqondiswe kuntuthuko yezwekazi lase-Africa kodwa lelizwekazi lisaqhubeka bhekane lobunzima. Imfundo isikeyabonakala sengathi izasheshe ilethe intuthuko e-Africa kodwa namhla lokhu asikatholi ushintsho ebesilulindele. Imbuzo isiyabuzwa ngamaqhinga okulwa lobunzima kulelizwekazi kudingidwa ukuthi lamaqhinga engabe ekulungele ukuqondana nesimo njengoba sinjalo. Eminye yale mibuzo iqodiswe kwezemfundo. Imbuzo ecwaningisisayo ngemfundo kwele-Africa ifuna ulwazi ngokuthi izifundiswa ziyazizwisa izidingo zalabo abafuna intuthuko na? Imbono yezikhwicamfundo ingabe ifana laleyo eyabantu abafuna intuthuko na? Lelipheshana lifumana ukuthi ulwazi lwalabo abangafundile ngokwesilungu kufuneka lugoqelwe kulemfundo yaphesheya ukuze izifundiswa zikwazi indlela yokucabanga kwalabo abadinga usizo. Lokhu kubalulekile ngoba kuzokwenza ukuthi kungabi khona ukudonselana phakathi kwezifundiswa lezi eziphethe usizo nalabo abadinga lolusizo ngoba kuzobe sekukhona ukubona izinto ngesolinye. Lelipheshana liphetha ngokuthi izifundiswa zingathola amadla ekulweni lobunzima kuzwekazi-laseAfrica ngenkathi bezwisa imbono lemicabango yalabo abafuna usizo

Introduction

Apart from the violence of 'Eurocentred' political and economic colonial oppression, the indigenous people of Africa suffered epistemological violence and colonial domination in knowledge production that left them with almost no original thinking traditions to which they can go back. Despite the political, economic, social and epistemological violence that accompanied colonial imposition in Africa and the South in general, the possibility for kinds of thinking that reflect the diversity of historical processes outside the purview of Western epistemology such as those that have been turned into subaltern, still remain. Apart from *domination*, the colonial encounter became a dynamic process that was also characterized by *resistance*, *negotiation*, *mimicry*, *hybridity* and *alienation*. The conceptual tools of *domination*, *resistance*, *mimicry*, *hybridity* and *alienation* as advanced by the post-colonial theoreticians provide us with a

holistic picture of the colonial intercourse in Africa. A complete picture of colonial encounter that goes beyond *domination* and *hegemony* theories clearly reveal to us that present post-colonial Africa is characterized by a number of geo-specific worldviews that were not altered by colonial domination. By and large, the concept of indigenous knowledge systems in the context of Africa represents a patch-work of 'geo-specific' and 'body-specific' forms of knowledge that fall outside Western philosophy of what constitute knowledge. These conceptual tools together with those of *domination*, *resistance*, *negotiation*, *mimicry* and *alienation* are tackled in the course of this article.

Indigenous Knowledge: Relevance and Importance in formal education

It has already been acknowledged beyond any dispute that formal education¹ is a key aspect of development in general and addresses the vital component of capacity as a factor in addressing challenges of development. However, the question that is yet to be addressed is what form of formal education do Africans need in order to serve the continent efficiently and effectively? By and large, Africa need a different form of formal education in terms of substance compared to that offered by the Western world. This does not entail that current educational programs need to be replaced by an entirely new system but raising an awareness to students of formal education that there are other worldviews shared by many outside their 'Euro-centered' orientations, can make graduates execute their services in a contextually relevant manner.

Of course, the concept of indigenous knowledge in Africa is a problematic one. There are different views of what constitutes indigenous knowledge at different times and locations throughout the world. In Africa, conceptions of indigenous knowledge general fall into two broad categories. One category pushes for a 'nativist' approach to the concept of indigenous knowledge and the other, pushes

¹ The term 'formal education' is used here in reference to structured systems and processes of developing knowledge, skills and character through modern institutions such as schools, colleges and universities.

for a 'civic' approach². The former general conceives indigenous knowledge in dichotomous terms of the 'indigenous' as opposed to the 'foreign' and the later follows constitutional definitions of the indigenous. This article favors the 'natives' approach as opposed to the 'foreign' in its conceptualization of indigenous knowledge. Unlike the vague 'civic' conceptions of indigenous knowledge where democratic ideals qualify all knowledge including that which came with colonialism as the indigenous (and indigenous without the foreign), 'nativist' conceptions of what constitute indigenous knowledge bring to light those African bodies of knowledge that are geographically specific and have for a long period been suppression by imported colonial wisdom. These geographically specific bodies of knowledge, which are still silenced by the hegemonic formal education system reflects different kinds of epistemological orientations and ontology of knowledge that can be useful for graduates' response to Africa's developmental challenges. Any form of formal educational program in the post-colonial Africa that ignore indigenous knowledge studies as a way of making graduates understand the context which they are working in, risks producing a mismatch between education as a developmental intervention and the challenges that this intervention seeks to counter.

Many scholars have expressed skepticism on the viability and relevance of the concept of indigenous knowledge systems especially in the way it is conceived in this article. A number of these skeptical scholars are of the view that the imposition of hegemonic Western modernity through colonial violence became so effective that the indigenous peoples of the South were left with no any other world view outside the purview of Western epistemology. Gayatri Spivak even went to the extent of asking whether the subaltern could speak³. Jean and John Comaroff, two leading anthropologists studying South Africa have argued that the

² On 'nativist' and 'civic' conceptions of the indigenous and the native see S. J. Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 'Tracking the Historical Roots of Post-Apartheid Citizenship Problems: The Native Club, Restless Natives, Panicking Settlers and the Politics of Nativism in South Africa' *ASC Working Paper 27* (2007)

³ G. C. Spivak, 'Can the Subaltern Speak?' in P. Williams and L. Chrisman (eds), *Colonial Discourses and Post-Colonial Theory: A Reader*, (New York: Colombia University Press, 1994), pp. 66-111.

colonial encounter altered everything and everybody in Africa⁴. Terence Ranger and Eric Hobsbawm wrote of the 'invention of traditions'⁵. The key issue that can be gleaned from these studies is their emphasis on how Europe successfully invaded and altered everything in Africa and other parts of non-European world.

Of course, colonial domination in knowledge production in the countries of the South in general took the form of an epistemological genocide to the thought systems of indigenous people but it is too simplistic a view that the colonial impact was homogenous and left no stone unturned in destroying indigenous knowledge of the colonised. The colonial impact on epistemologies of the colonized varied from place to place and time to time. As Quijano puts it:

The forms and effects of cultural coloniality have been different as regards to times and cases. In Latin America, the cultural repression and colonization of the imaginary were accompanied by a massive and gigantic extermination of the natives, mainly their use as expendable labor force, in addition to the violence of the conquest and diseases brought by Europeans. The cultural repression and the massive genocide together turned the previous high cultures of America into illiterate, peasant subcultures condemned to orality; that is, deprived of their own patterns of formalized, objectivised, intellectual, and plastic or visual expression.⁶

Clearly, Quijano's position is that Latin America became the most extreme case of cultural colonization by Europe. He argues that Latin America cannot, for instance, be compared with Asia, the Middle East and Africa where:⁷

In Asia and in the Middle East high cultures could never be destroyed with such intensity and profundity. But they were nevertheless placed in subordinate relation not only in the European view but also in the eyes of their own bearers. In Africa, cultural destruction was certainly much more intense than in Asia, but less

⁴ J. Comaroff and J. Comaroff, *Of Revelation and Revolution: Christianity, Colonialism and Consciousness in South Africa: Volume One*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991).

⁵ E. Hobsbawm and T. Ranger, (eds), *The Invention of Tradition*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

⁶ A. Quijano, 'Coloniality and Modernity/Rationality', *Cultural Studies*, Vol. 21, No. 2 (March 2007), pp. 169-70.

⁷ A. Quijano, 'Coloniality and Modernity/Rationality', *Cultural Studies*, Vol. 21, No. 2 (March 2007), p. 170.

than in America. Nor did the Europeans there succeed in complete destruction of the

patterns of expression, in particular of objectification and of visual formalization.

What the Europeans did was to deprive Africans of legitimacy and recognition in the global cultural order dominated by European patterns.

The above analysis of varying impacts of colonial domination to cultures, patterns of thought and knowledge of the colonized throughout the South suggest that Asia, the Middle East and Africa are regions with high possibilities of diverse ways of thinking that reflects historical processes not completely altered by Western knowledge and imaginations of the world.

The colonial encounter was indeed, a dynamic process that could not have entirely wiped off the colonized patterns of thought and symbols. The colonized was not a passive actor in the whole colonial process but developed ways and means of resisting colonial domination. Apart from *resistance* to colonial *domination*, the colonial encounter was also characterized by *mimicry*, *hybridity*, *negotiation* and *alienation*. Post-colonial theoreticians such as Edward Said, Homi Bhabha and Gayatri Spivak developed the conceptual tools of *mimicry*, *hybridity*, *negotiation* and *alienation* in order to produce a holistic picture of the colonial encounter which goes beyond a simplistic approach of the *hegemony* theory⁸. These conceptual tools capture the complexities in the colonial encounter left out by *hegemony* theory's simplistic categorization of the colonial encounter in terms of *domination* and *resistance*. Cooper notes that the binaries of colonizer/colonized and *domination/resistance* began as useful devices for opening up questions of power but ended up constraining more complex interpretations of how power was deployed, engaged, contested and appropriated during the colonial encounter⁹. In spite of the constraining features of the binary analyses of *domination/resistance* and colonizer/colonized, Homi

⁸ E. Said, *Orientalism* (London, Routledge, 1978); H. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London, Routledge, 1994); G. Spivak, 'Can the Subaltern Speak', P. Williams and L. Chrisman (eds), *Colonial Discourses and Post-Colonial Theory: A Reader* (New York, Columbia University Press, 1994), pp. 66-111.

⁹ F. Cooper, 'Conflict and Connection: Rethinking Colonial History' in J. D. Le Sueur (ed), *The Decolonisation Reader*, (New York, Routledge, 2003), p24

Bhabha argues that *negotiation* became a process by which both the colonizer and the colonized articulated antagonistic and oppositional elements without the redemptive rationality of transcendence¹⁰. Apart from coercion, the colonial encounter saw the need for consensual approach whereby the colonised's version was at other times incorporated into the system of articulating knowledge. In other words, on-going negotiations brought together knowledge of the colonized and the colonizer and as such, it is wrong to assume that colonial domination in knowledge production wiped off once and for all indigenous knowledge systems of all African communities. As we can see that colonial domination did not altogether wipe off African ways of thinking, it means that graduates of formal education system that came with colonialism can only be effective practitioners

Within the frame work of undisputable dominative and hegemonic engagements between the colonizer and the colonized, it is important to acknowledge that *mimicry* became a restrictive element for the colonial discourse to completely articulate indigenous knowledge without somehow embracing it. According Bhabha, *mimicry* became a sign of double articulation, a complex strategy of reform, regulation and discipline, which appropriated the 'Other' as it visualized power. It was both a menace and resemblance with the menace part of *mimicry* being its double vision of disclosing the ambivalence of colonial discourse and also disrupting its authority. It reversed 'in part' the colonial appropriation by producing a partial vision of the colonizer's presence—a gaze of 'others'. It became a colonial discourse that was uttered *inter dicta*- at the crossroads of what was known and permissible with that which, though known, was kept concealed, as well as being uttered between the lines and thus both against colonial rules and within them¹¹. In a nutshell, the concept of *mimicry* in understanding the colonial encounter undermines the generalized perception that the colonizer's hegemony overhauled indigenous knowledge and discourses

¹⁰ Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, pp. 12-17.

¹¹ Ibid.

without appropriating and embracing them. This means that apart from destroying indigenous knowledge, the colonial system somehow preserved them and as such, it exists.

The nature of the colonial encounter can also be understood through the conceptual tool of *hybridity*. According to Bhabha, *hybridity* refers to strategic reversal of the process of domination through disavowal (that is, the production of discriminatory identities that secure the 'pure' and 'original' identity of authority)¹². The process of *hybridity* reversed the effects of colonialist disavowal and allowed the denied knowledge to enter the dominant discourse, estranging the very basis of its authority as well as its rules of recognition. *Hybridity*, therefore represented the limit of 'the noisy command of colonialist authority' and 'the silent repression of the native traditions' meaning that the end result of this was the crossover of ideas rather than complete domination and destruction of indigenous knowledge systems.

By bringing-in the conceptual tools of *mimicry*, *hybridity* and *negotiation* in defence of the existence of indigenous knowledge, the idea is not to dispute the relevance of hegemony versus resistance analyses but to demonstrate that at times the ability of the colonized to resist the colonizer revolved around terms constructed by the colonizer. This means that the very idea of trying to retrieve knowledge untainted by the colonial influence is quite difficult to imagine. Spivak points out that the lengthy historical and cultural effects of colonialism are irreversible and as such, returning to the source is impossible and the sovereignty of the lost 'Self' of the colonies cannot be restored¹³. Indeed, the hegemonic impact of colonial domination in knowledge production in African countries over a lengthy period rendered retrieval of knowledge untainted by the colonial system futile but some residual continuities in indigenous knowledge competing with the domineering Western world view exist. The idea here is not to

¹² Ibid

¹³ Spivak, 'Can the Subaltern Speak?' P. 66

retrieve these indigenous knowledge as this is an almost impossible task but to conscientize development practitioners such as formal education graduates about the existence of knowledge 'otherwise' that inform the worldviews of communities whose systems of thought fall outside the Western philosophy of what constitute knowledge.

A number of scholars contend that the colonial encounter was characterized by both continuities and disjuncture. According to Marks, in all societies, new classes and productive forces grew out of the Old World order. In colonial societies, in which new classes were frequently fashioned by external agencies before old hierarchies had disappeared, there was often articulation of new as well as old ideologies¹⁴. According to Mamdani, the colonizers constituted themselves as citizens and appropriated liberal ideas of liberty and equality as well as other civil and political rights as their preserve while they pushed the colonized into rural sector where they lived under the traditional authority who served the colonial system's principles of indirect rule¹⁵. This emphasizes that the colonial encounter was characterized by both continuities and disjuncture because some traditional leaders were drafted into the colonial civil service and became officials of native administration while on the other hand indirect rule meant the continuity of indigenous knowledge of those who were not directly affected by colonial knowledge.

In a nutshell, indigenous knowledge or 'subalternized' knowledge that has for long not been considered legitimate by the dominant worldview of what constitutes knowledge is real in Africa. It is therefore imperative that all practitioners of development including the educated elite understand and share the developmental imaginations of their intended beneficiary-communities. Otherwise, for formal education as a developmental intervention to neglect the

¹⁴ S. Marks, *The Ambiguities of Dependence in South Africa: Class, Nationalism and the State in Twentieth Century Natal* (Baltimore and London, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986) pp. 4-7.

¹⁵ M. Mamdani, *Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism* (New York, Princeton University Press, 1996) pp.12-20.

need to understand the worldviews of the indigenous communities, inevitably risks resistance to its imposition of services that do not build-on communal understanding of development.

It is imperative to point out that indigenous knowledge in Africa is not homogenous throughout the continent but exist in bodies of knowledge that are geographically-specific hence indigenous knowledge can feature under the conceptual frames of 'geo-politics' and 'body-politics' of knowledge production. The conceptual frame-works of 'body-politics' and 'geo-politics' of knowledge production are very useful in understanding how indigenous knowledge in Africa is silenced in the world dominated by Western knowledge. Western philosophy of knowledge currently dominating the African continent represents a body of knowledge of particular ethnic groups (i.e Europeans such as English, French etc) that are located in a specific part of the planet (i.e Europe) and gained a false pretence of universality¹⁶. This false pretence of universality became a useful politics that was used to relegate indigenous knowledge systems to the subaltern incapable of voice of a status of worldview. In the colonial mentality, it became necessary to elevate the geographically specific Western bodies of knowledge of ethnic groups such the English to the status of the universal and relegate geographically-specific African bodies of knowledge such those of the Zulus to the status of the subaltern because knowledge was central to 'the colonial matrix of power'¹⁷. The purpose of placing indigenous knowledge with the conceptual frames of 'body-politics' and 'geo-politics' of knowledge processes is to emphasize a point that knowledge is not exclusively the domain of the West but different African communities have different localized knowledge systems that development interventions can build on to counter challenges faced by those communities. Formal education as dominated by Western perspectives of what constitute development as well as useful knowledge can benefit the African

¹⁶ W. D. Mignolo, 'De-linking', in *Cultural Studies*, Vol. 21, No 2, pp. 449-514.

¹⁷ A. Quijano, *Coloniality and Modernity/Rationality*, (March 2007).

continent better by attempting to understand the world of those that are meant to benefit.

Indigenous knowledge studies and political constraints

Whilst indigenous knowledge studies at formal education level can be a plausible input of making graduates more relevant to Africa's development issues, there are political and ideological constraints to the incorporation of these studies into the mainstream curriculums. Many post-colonial Africa governments are faced with the difficult task of nation-building through forging common values out of diverse communities. In democratic African states such as South Africa, curriculum development is subordinated to the overriding aim of democratic transition and the inculcation of liberal democratic values as well as the promotion of democratic citizen that is fully de-racialised and de-tribalised.¹⁸ The challenge to the incorporation of indigenous knowledge studies in formal education therefore lies with convincing policy-makers that this idea compliments rather than contradicts with the project of nation-building in the context of post-colonial Africa where intra-state wars are constantly mobilized along tribal and racial lines. Indeed, intolerance of differences within many newly formed African states is major variable to civil wars especially in cases where race, culture and ethnicity is used to exclude than include. The main challenges in convincing the political elite therefore is how do one bring the subject of indigenous knowledge into the education system without provoking tribalism and racism? Whose indigenous knowledge will be taught and whose will be ignored? What characters and values will be cultivated by the subject of indigenous knowledge? All these questions make the task of incorporating indigenous knowledge system studies into formal education a challenge in the light of political and ideological constraints.

Conclusion

¹⁸ Department of Education, *National Curriculum Statement for Grade 10-12*, (Pretoria, 2002).

In conclusion, it is clear that there are foreseeable challenges to the promotion indigenous knowledge studies in formal education but graduates can understand better the contexts in which they work in from understanding the imaginations of development of the communities that do not necessarily share the world view of formal education. It is clear that the continent of Africa represents a patch-work of different geographically-specific bodies of knowledge that cannot be ignored by different development practitioners in executing interventions that address the challenges of different communities. Development interventions that build on communal perspectives of development can be more effective than that coming as an imported wisdom from above. In this way, indigenous knowledge studies can be a useful variable in aligning services of formal education graduates to the needs and challenges of the communities they intend to serve.

A study of mentoring history educators in the WCED: EMDC METROPOLE EAST (2005 – 2007) South Africa in the context of curriculum transition in an emerging democracy within a global world

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Abstract

South Africa is currently undergoing a transformation of the education system as the last vestiges of the apartheid curriculum are being phased out and a new curriculum introduced. This paper presents findings from a 2005 to 2007 study of the processes of the implementation of the new History curriculum by History education at various Further Education and Training (FET) public schools in very diverse contexts. It follows an action research approach. This paper is primarily concerned with outlining possible solutions to the diverse needs and practical challenges faced by History educators with regard to implementing the new History curriculum.

This discussion is based on an analysis of interviews, written reports and observation data drawn from multi-site studies in an urban nodal context. The contexts of the schools that I work with as a History Curriculum Adviser are very diverse. The first phase of orientation to the new curriculum suggested that a 'one size fits all' approach to educator support would not be appropriate. The contexts that needed to be taken into consideration were big classes, the unequal distribution of resources ranging from well-resourced to under-resourced schools, inexperienced Heads of Departments, the deployment of General Education and Training (GET) educators (Grades 1 – 9) to the Further Education and Training (FET) band (Grades 10 – 12) and the language of teaching and learning.

Intervention in the form of a mentoring programme developed as a response to the period of consolidation after the initial orientation of FET educators to the demands of the new History curriculum. School visits in the education districts of the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) take place in a multi-functional team context, placing time-constraints on the possibilities of in-depth subject support to educators within a school context. Individual needs identified during these visits necessitated a rethinking of educator support for more effective curriculum implementation. In setting up a system of mentoring I aimed not only at setting up a differentiated and more effective support system, but also at nurturing a reciprocal, professional relationship with History educators.

One of the major aspects of the mentoring programme is language support. Many educators are teaching and learners learning in a second or third language. Language therefore becomes a major barrier to teaching and learning. This is particularly acute in a subject such as History which is language-based, making a significant contribution to failure rates in the Grade 12 exit examination.

An ultimate goal in my mentorship programme is to improve the language proficiency and conceptual understanding of educators that will ultimately, it is hoped, result in raised levels of learner achievement.

Introduction

This paper presents findings from a 2005 to 2007 study on the processes of schooling, managed by History educators at different FET public schools with diverse contexts. It follows an action research approach. This paper is primarily concerned with outlining possible solutions to the diverse needs and practical problems faced by History educators with regard to a changing curriculum in the transformation period of education.

This discussion is based on an analysis of interviews, written reports and observation data drawn from multi-site studies in an urban nodal context. This paper starts with a brief reference to the formal curriculum and proceeds to a deeper consideration of the practical implications in the management of the curriculum. The focus is on a few selected prominent aspects, as well as the variables encompassed in the practical implementation challenges that the History educators encounter.

The changing curriculum calls on a reflection of one's own practices and experiences gained in the educational field. The implementation stage of the NCS curriculum clearly showed that the teaching approach was not a case of *one size fits all*. Schools have diverse contexts that, in certain instances, impact negatively on curriculum delivery and affect the levels of learner achievement. Contexts that were taken into consideration were big classes, the distribution of resources, which ranges from well-resourced to poorly- resourced schools, inexperienced HODs, the upward mobility of certain GET educators into the FET

band, the language of teaching and learning. The majority of educators are home language speakers and the mastery level of English in certain sub-districts is unlikely to be perfect – a factor that impedes on the learner’s ability to express them and also acts as a barrier to acquisition of problem-solving and research skills. The South African constitutional ideal of holistically grooming learners through education to become responsible citizens and critical thinkers in a democratic society in an interrelated world, become less tenable due to the aforementioned.

Intervention in the form of mentorship initially originated from a crisis management mode, in the period after NCS orientation for FET educators. It evolved from a response to interchangeable, identified needs during school visitations that required a multi-faceted approach from the Curriculum Advisor Service (CAS). Due to time constraints at such visits, facilitation of a continuing process of intervention, on an individual basis, became paramount to support qualitative educational input and output that ensured effective curriculum delivery. Negotiations on the availability of personal-time, to draw up short and long term action plans detailing a capacity approach, necessitated the nurturing of a reciprocal, professional relationship with the History educator.

The History Curriculum Adviser as mentor

An overview of how mentorship happened

Relevant role players in the educational field strive to ensure that the school is a dynamic environment where policies, the curriculum and school-based activities are integrated and translated into the processes of training/orientation, planning, support, development and monitoring that are outcomes driven. In the designing of an appropriate action work plan, factors of realism and a pragmatic approach play a profound role in the mentoring process. A prerequisite for the establishment of an integrated and effective support system is commitment from the educator, designated member(s) of the school’s senior management team and higher level authorities to embrace the Batho Pele principles which ascribe to excellence in service delivery.

In the spirit of the latter, one needs to foreground an acceptance that educators, especially in the nodal urban areas of the East-Metropole - after a brief week long orientation program - are failing to cope with the combined teaching of the NCS (new) and Report 550 (old) curricula. The next step is to motivate and support educators in remaining confident and prevent them from viewing the new curriculum negatively and shirk their responsibilities, by capacitating educators in simple ways to manage the increased administrative load and be more effective in their classroom practice.

A collaborative willingness to participate in the structuring of a supportive framework for the educator and actively assist in the maintenance of a consistent chain of support is of paramount importance to ensure improved final examination performance (Caldwell and Carter 1993, p.218).

In the quest to bring about change in the professional development of educators as well as envisaging a positive outcome in the identified area which requires improvement, an activity-based approach is adhered to. The scaffolding of targets in a battery of short-term action work plans formed the basis of my strategy to elicit a response to bring about improvement in identified areas of concern. To act as a change catalyst requires thorough knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of educators, their aptitude levels and attitude, along with an understanding of the challenges they face.

Analysis of final examination results, detailed school visitation reports, peer review moderation reports and consultation with circuit managers of the particular geographic area in which the school is situated, contributed to an emerging professional profile of the educator. Knowledge regarding the educator's social cultural context, the particular school context and its organisational priorities, as well as "...volatile dynamic influences of factors outside the classroom...", for example, absenteeism in lieu of industrial action taken by educators and the

temporary exodus to other provinces of educators on bereavement leave, are some of the deciding factors to consider in arriving at causal explanations to account for poor classroom practices and decreased output in the final results (Barry et al. 1998, p.631; Allan Walker and Kenneth Stott in Caldwell et al. 1993, p. 78).

Astute insight into the former becomes crucial in the designing of an action work plan with a problem solving approach which is “custom made” for the educator to strengthen his/her self managing skills and classroom practice (Caldwell and Carter 1993, p.218; Husbands in Brooks and Sikes 1997, p. 14).

The emerging educator profile allows the curriculum adviser to define the focus area for professional development, and thus contribute to creating an enabling environment to make the self-improvement plan workable when implemented and more tenable to comply within the range of the educator’s ability levels (Carruthers in Caldwell et al. 1993, p. 11).

Professional and personal qualities

Salient points to consider for successful mentoring that will add value to quality education in the History classroom, firstly requires recognition of what particular stage the educators find themselves at in their teaching career. These stages are loosely benchmarked into phases that evolve from an induction period of ‘idealism’ which cascades into phases of ‘survival’, ‘mastery,’ ‘coasting’ and culminates in a ‘pre-retirement’ phase (Bullough et al. Brooks et al, p.68; 1991; Furlong and Maynard in Brooks et al, p.69.1995). It is important for the educator to concede - based on evidence - that certain areas at a professional level need development in a structured way and the CA is there to provide developmental support. Whilst exhibiting a positive attitude, the curriculum adviser needs to impress on educators the need to be accountable, encourage them to follow through on recommendations and show visible progress when tackling the action

work plan tailored to their specific needs (Brooks and Sikes 1997, p. 51; Carruthers in Caldwell et al. 1993, p. 22).

To encourage attainment of good education at the highest level, curriculum advisers and educators should remain lifelong learners to retain their professional credibility by paying attention to developments in their specialist field and stay abreast with educational policies and procedures (Brooks and Sikes 1997, pp. 47, 51). The curriculum adviser should be organised and use the existing knowledge and skills of the educator as a resource to which new curricula knowledge and appropriate teaching methods could be added to. (McCann and Radford in Caldwell et al. 1993, p.43).

To assist in the professional growth of the educator, the curriculum adviser should have an accomplished sense of maturity in order to demonstrate the required skill of flexibility that will facilitate a process of consensus for the way ahead after a fact finding mission and the rendering of constructive criticism (Brooks and Sikes 1997, pp. 33, 34, 47). The curriculum adviser mediates time-frames with the educator and principal, honour pre-arranged meetings, evaluate and discuss progress or lack of it with the educator and interact with the principal or higher level authorities only when serious concerns arise about lack of progress or non-compliance.

The value of praise should never be underestimated. Brophy (in Barry et al. 1982, pp. 440,441) advocates that praise serves as positive encouragement to educators who show progress, especially those who slowly overcame the barriers that necessitated an onset of targets in the action plan. When the action plan expires, the educator and the principal receive a report that encapsulates an overview of the educator's progress.

A multi-site case study

Evolving practices and procedures

To ensure the broadening of subject knowledge and improvement of classroom competence, mentoring strategies conform to the identified curriculum needs of the educators. These strategies are reviewed and reflected on Friday afternoon sessions with either individual educators or a cluster of educators who teach in close geographical proximity. Such educators share the same areas that require curriculum development and by correlating the evidence of their undertakings to the structured work plan that has been tailored to their needs, the curriculum adviser is able to ascertain whether such needs have declined or accumulated. Such strategies aim at progress that should be reflected in the educators' professional preparation and training through their attendance of workshops with different foci at heart, the teaching of Saturday classes followed by peer review sessions.

Mentoring strategies evolve from school visitations that are organized in a term schedule. During such visits, the curriculum adviser takes along a school file that contains the educator's profile, peer reviews, moderation reports, Grade 12 results of the past three years or request to see the NCS results of the previous year. An interview follows and the educator completes a questionnaire that focusses on the availability of LTSM, challenges that the educator face, his/her strengths are highlighted and should be reflected in examples of good practice or good administrative management. The next step is an assessment of the completion of the curriculum and the pacing of CASS (Senior Certificate Continuous Assessment) which is made in relation to the following documents: December 2002 Senior Certificate Continuous Assessment, NPA (The National Protocol on Assessment for schools in the GET and FET Band: Grades R – 12), the SAG (January 2007 Subject Assessment Guidelines), the NCS Grade 10 – 12 (General) History document; January 2007 Learning Programme Guidelines, assessment practices and activities contained in the educator's portfolio that are correlated to content in the learner notebook/file or class work book.

Recommendations that are decided on evolve from the findings made after

scrutinizing and assessing all relevant material. The findings, in the form of constructive criticism, is signed by the educator, the curriculum adviser and are communicated in a detailed report to the educator, the HOD and the principal. For areas that require development, an action plan is construed around school obligations and the availability of time of all role players involved, in order to monitor, support and advise the implementation stage and consolidation phase of such recommendations. In cases where an educator faces a wide range of challenges, a cascading model to address identified challenges within an allotted timeframe, is designed and closely monitored in the form of two weekly visits followed by regular feedback to relevant role players. This is followed by telephonic follow-ups to ensure improvement and compliance.

The medium of History education

The foci are on practicality and achievement by following tenable steps. To improve the language proficiency and conceptual understanding of educators, the focus is on teaching strategies to question analysis and concept clarification in the classroom at schools where the Home language is Xhosa and the LoLT is Additional Language (Report 550) and First Additional Language (NCS). Educators receive a History manual that details a comprehensive and practical approach to question analysis, concept analysis, practical steps to essay writing and matrix interpretation in order to arrive at a common understanding of how to prepare learners for their final examination.

To create a supportive environment and in attempt to control the extent of code switching, educators meet weekly on Friday afternoons to revisit mentoring issues. In groups they share knowledge and engage with problem-solving strategies that are theme-based for example, educators adhere to the wheel invention strategy as they prepare bookmarks where difficult concepts or paragraphs per essay question are broken down into bar graphs and pie graphs to form a theme wheel. In this manner, avoidance of rote learning of model answers is instilled.

As a point of departure, concepts are clarified in Xhosa amongst peer teachers to over bridge gaps in their understanding. Their understanding of concepts is translated and communicated on a rotation basis to the other groups through the medium of English. Implementation of concepts are done in the classroom in the selfsame manner before learners proceed to essay writing. Educators practice this strategy **at the beginning** of a lesson in Saturday classes where learners from different schools who speak different languages are being taught History through the medium of English. This method enables the educator and learner to avoid confusion and gain confidence in moving from the spoken language i. e., Home Language into the LoLT and the written language (Cunningham et al. 1999, p. 5).

Educators, therefore arrive at an understanding that instructions should be clear, in written form and in simple language (Barry et al. 1998, p. 587). The educator has to make a teaching moment of ascertaining whether learners understood instructions, types and level of questions as well as sequential processes – especially in the case of a heritage investigation that entails scaffolding processes and time allotments. Creative ways for educators to practice their language skills and bind interesting ways to explore the interest of learners, is to ensure that ideas for heritage investigation, for example, tie in with relevant articles in contemporary newspapers and print. The improvement of both the oral and reading vocabulary can be ensured by reading such articles aloud and by listening to cds - simultaneously the discovery of new words and its meaning is facilitated.

Educators and learners are encouraged to network with various stakeholders in their endeavour to become more language proficient, through participation in provincial 'English Festivals' (Circular 014/2007), attendance of Language Ace courses, liaison with the WCED Edulis library, liaison with the Khanya computer laboratory that facilitates E-learning for learners and through their participation in

provincial, national and international essay writing and oral tradition competitions.

Much of my research is still an ongoing process. Reflection can only be done when the old curriculum is phased out in its entirety and the Grade 12s write their first NCS exit examination in 2008. However, already certain similar trends emerge in schools with diverse contexts, but has as common denominator, the teaching of History through the medium of English. Differences in resource allocation as well as differences in the range of teaching experience of educators would seem not to impact on a positive outcome in the final Matric results, despite the difference in the number of learners taking History on Standard Grade and Higher Grade per school and not having English as Home Language (School 1). One thus arrives at the conclusion that despite the diverse contexts and the code switching of educators, it would appear that learners are not adversely affected by the latter practice.

This can possibly be ascribed to the fact that the educators know **how** to teach the old curriculum and it is hoped that they will transfer such acquired skills in teaching and confidently engage with the new curriculum with which they are currently struggling.

Managing big History classes

The new curriculum demands of the teacher to become a lifelong learner. Educators are facing new challenges. They are overwhelmed with new policy documents with which they quickly need to come to grips. They are confronted with unfamiliar terminology and content, a plethora of textbooks that they have to use as sources to facilitate cross – referencing in theme work and activities; teaching approaches have changed; learners' attitudes have changed; classes have increased in size; E-learning is rapidly advancing at schools and much of the personal time of educators is sacrificed in the attendance of workshops to stay abreast with new developments. A great deal of classroom time is spent on either teaching, the marking of activities and most important, planning i.e., the

designing of learning programmes, work schedules, lesson plans or activity templates in an attempt to ensure correct pacing of CASS and the completion of the curriculum.

Educators should attempt to stay abreast with the pace setter to curb boredom amongst learners and ensure that learners are exposed to the different forms of assessment activities. The success rate for managing big classes can easily be assessed in scrutinising the lesson plan of the educator. Learners should be constructively busy at all times with a correct timing for field trips, tests, etc. Resource - rich schools (School 3) have no problem with the planning of outings or field trips, since it is not subjected to a non-payment of school fees. At School 2 and School 3 where there is regular to acute non-payment of school fees, but are fortunate enough to have a computer laboratory, activities are planned around accessing information from the computer. Clusters formed by teachers in geographical areas can decide on the teaching of the same themes, the planning of such activities and the selection of the same textbooks to facilitate an improved moderation process.

This will enable educators to design work schedules, summary recording Excel templates and the setting of assessment activities with provision for higher cognitive skills **beforehand** and lessen the administrative workload - thus tapping into each other's field of expertise. The educator should have his checks and balances in place when issuing research assignments or heritage investigations. He/she should plan controlling measures to ensure the execution of such activities. This can be done by using a checklist as well as a class list for the second term to daily target five learners to ascertain progress before the advent of every lesson. This process ensure that learners show progress at compulsory monitoring dates which should be communicated beforehand, along with the accompanying listed expectations. This method also contribute to the fact that qualitative remedial feedback is given to learners and useful communication is engaged in.

The passion and enthusiasm of educators need to be revived. The educator needs to know that there are ways and means that guide one to successful management of big classes by following a few basic rules. Firstly, careful consideration needs to be given to the organization of the classroom to promote a proper learning environment. Promote order through innovative furniture arrangement that will enable the free flow of movement and prevent learners from seizing an opportunity to cause disciplinary problems. Secondly, create a classroom atmosphere that is in line with contemporary developments in History, for example, updated displays of new archaeological findings, the commemoration of the SS Mendi etc., - such displays enable natural links for research assignments etc. Thirdly, it is important that learners are informed about the regulations for classroom activities in written form, which should be visibly displayed in one space until the next activity is on its way (Kruger et al. 1997, pp. 32,50). Allow learners to interrogate the school's disciplinary policy and use this as a teaching opportunity to latch onto the country's constitutional values, symbols etc.

Conclusion

On policy level, an obvious turning point will be a reassessment of the language policy for the teaching of History in the FET band to ensure sustainable, raised levels of academic achievement, as well as a re-assessment of whether the subject should be included as a compulsory subject or not. Presently, the subject is battling for legitimacy as a choice subject against the government's call for greater prominence to be given to subjects such as Mathematics, Science, etc. which gave impetus to the emergence of focus schools that are fast out-phasing the subject. On a more pragmatic level, the ultimate goal of mentorship is to improve the language proficiency and administrative efficiency of educators; to improve their teaching methodology that will ultimately culminate in raised levels of academic achievement.

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Differentiation in History - gifted learners, what can we do?

Penny Hitchens

UKZN

Part 1

Learners with barriers bring into the classroom an array of issues ranging from the tangible i.e. reading and writing difficulties, short attention spans, physical disabilities to the psychological i.e. low self-esteem, disregard for others, mental disabilities etc. For the history teacher, assigned to teach learners with barriers, their task is a difficult one with both physical and psychological aspects needing to be taken into account. In addition to this, research has also shown that 'low achievers often lacked motivation in their study of history' and that better results were founded when teaching concentrated on content as opposed to historical skill (Haydn, Arthur, Hunt, 2001, p 158). Counsell (2005) supports this when she delves into the difficulties of teaching history to the less able learner, she explains how history is infused with complex issues such as challenging stereotypes, avoiding homogenisation of nations and causation to name a few. Haydn, Arthur and Hunt explain that through the introduction and discussion of historical content opportunities to acquire historical skills will arise. This leads us to Hull's (cited from Haydn, Arthur, Hunt, 2001) understanding: if a teacher can present structured content clearly while regularly exercising skills in which pupils of lesser abilities can become reasonably competent in, there is a realistic possibility that interest, confidence and self-esteem can be attained. Turner (2002) supports this when he claims that the study of history has an indirect impact on skills and attitudes of learners with barriers. Increased critical abilities, understanding of society, developing increased tolerance of other groups and extending breadth of experience beyond their own are a few advantages that Turner (2002) refers to. Using these understandings of learners with barriers and relating it to a learning theory I am going to interrogate ways of achieving success with less able learners while investigating the topic humans on display and what happened to Sarah Baartman.

Jerome Bruner's theory is the optimal learning theory to be adopted when approaching less able learners. Bruner bases his understanding of learning and knowledge on the theory of constructivism. It was the straits of this theory and his research that led him to believe that children are active explorers and strategists (Donald, Lazarus, Lolwana; 2006). In addition to this, and one of the reasons why Bruner's approach to learning can be used effectively with less able learners, Bruner believed that the strategies children adopted were affected and mediated by their social contexts and experiences (Donald, et al, 2006). This belief has an effect on learning and teaching, a child on their own can only learn and develop knowledge so far, external influences e.g. teachers need to intervene and assist. Bruner's (1960, p 13) approach works for the less able because he believed that 'any subject can be taught effectively in some intellectually honest form to any child at any stage of development'. Bruner came to this conclusion due to the idea of scaffolding. Literally, scaffolding refers to temporary structures used to support buildings until they are complete; each part is removed as it ceases to be needed. Beck (2003, p 258) explains scaffolding metaphorically as a 'changing quality of support over the course of a teaching session'. She goes on to explain, adults, specifically teachers, who offer an effective scaffold adjust the assistance they provide to fit the child's current level of performance. We can see from this how Bruner believed that anyone can be taught anything as long it was adjusted to the needs and level of the individual and that effective support was provided throughout the learning process. In addition to scaffolding Bruner (1960, p 122) felt that teaching must begin with 'embodiment of principles in action, then by the supplement of image, and finally in symbolic form'. Bruner (1960) goes on to explain, that starting with concrete actions to be performed, moving onto a vivid case or paradigm and then finally to the formal description of the topic can lead to success. Alongside this Bruner (1960) urged that teachers emphasize the structure of a subject matter rather than its content, and that a curriculum be 'spiralled' so that students are approached with ever more complex ideas that reflect and are in parallel with

their level of maturity and understanding. Bruner (1960, p122) supports the positive effects of these techniques on learners with barriers when he writes 'more complex abstract ideas can in fact be rendered in an intuitive, operational form that comes within reach of any learner to aid him forward'.

Following the understandings of Bruner and applying it to teaching effectively to learners with barriers I would start with embodying the principles of action as stated above. The idea behind this lies on the principles of constructivism which states that learning and cognitive development are not passive but active processes. Therefore to start this section on humans on display and Sarah Baartman I would bring to class a number of modern pictures displaying humans, namely advertisements or pictures of models. In groups of 4 with specific roles having been designated i.e. scribe and time keeper I would initiate a discussion on what the class sees and thinks about the pictures by asking them the following questions: what are their thoughts about humans being on display? What do they think about using the human form to make money? How do they think the person feels about being on display? After discussion and group feedback I'll introduce a few pictures of Sarah Baartman (appendix 1) and initiate group discussion around the feedback from previous group work and ask similar questions. The process of this activity covers numerous aspects as set out by Bruner, it initiates action, introduces images as well as connecting the familiar to the unfamiliar. As Bruner and other learning theorists state 'teaching must connect with where students are at in their understandings' (Donald, et al, 2006), this is supported by Bruner (1983, p 183) when he states learning is about 'figuring out how to use what you already know in order to go beyond what you already think', the platform for providing this is the responsibility of an effective teacher. Husbands, Kitson and Pendry (2003) support this when they suggest introducing history studies through the familiar.

Encouragement and support would need to be given throughout the classes with less able learners, showing them what they have learnt and that everyday they

are improving is important as explained by Haydn, Arthur and Hunts (2001). After this initial group I would tell them the story of Sarah Baartman (in brief), but I would not just read it, but rather use story telling skills i.e. intonation, resonance etc. I would initiate a class discussion about the story afterwards asking for personal opinions. To make this story and section personal and possibly familiar I would ask if anyone in the class had felt like possibly Sarah had felt. The next stage would be to show the class an advert of Sarah Baartman on the overhead projector. Showing it enlarged would have a better effect as well as keeping the class interested. I would explain that this is a primary source; I would ask them to write down, even just in keywords or a list, of things they don't like and things they do like (if there are any) about the advert and what it implicates. I would give an example to assist them, i.e. I don't like the fact that she's on display but I do like the fact they are making them pay. Once they have done this they must compare what they wrote down with the others on their table. Another piece of work that can incorporate learning content knowledge as well as result in enjoyment and motivation is role play. Using dramatic tasks assists with access to history and by getting learners in groups to act out a scene from Sarah Baartmans story could initiate this. Cowie (1979) explains that the preparation of a piece to be acted out gives an opportunity to the slow learner to contribute and if he/she can play their part successfully they could receive recognition and gain self-esteem. Another activity that can be used to assist the less able learner is one of crosswords, as supported by Hagerty and Hill (appendix 2). This particular crossword, which can be added to later, offers a visual representation of the information, gives the necessary assistance and makes the content enjoyable.

A task for assessment, to be taken over a few weeks that can be managed, enjoyed and result in historical enquiry for less able learners can be one of producing a newspaper. Cowie (1979, p 143) supports this when he writes 'the device of compelling a newspaper for a particular event or period often interests slow learners and gives them the opportunity to contribute according to their

ability'. For this to work I would need to group learners according to interest and ability i.e. artistic, research, language.

The above series of lessons incorporates a variety of teaching techniques from group work, to teacher talk and individual work. As the authors explain this gives opportunities to less able learners to learn and enjoy as 'pupils learn in different ways'. I also focus on using a high ratio of 'picture to print' as suggested by Haydn, Arthur and Hunts (2001, p 165). By using different activities and subsequent tasks and targeting different areas of ability I hope to address the various needs of less able learners.

Part 2

Gifted learners arrive in one's classroom with a variety of abilities. These could range from literacy skills indicating they can perform at levels advanced for their age, synthesise information; to the ability of historical knowledge and historical understanding whereby they have extensive general knowledge as well as articulating explanation and argument (Guidance on teaching gifted talented learners, website unknown). In addition Haydn, Arthur and Hunts (2001) recognise that gifted learners have a wide range of abilities, from complexity of language, ability to move from the concrete to the abstract, to make connections, aware of wider historical content and being able to make use of material not immediately in front of them. The authors go onto argue that many gifted learners have the ability to read rapidly, memorise vast amounts of information, and enjoy broad attention spans and keen powers of observation and imagination (Haydn, Arthur and Hunts, 2001). The history teacher has an overwhelming responsibility to teach these advanced learners something new resulting in the learners being challenged and encouraged to apply and extend their particular capabilities. As explained by Kokot (1992, p 198) 'gifted children need learning tasks that present them with the necessary challenge so that they need sustained exertion to reach the learning goals'. It is the responsibility of the

history teacher to achieve this, and I feel this can be done by following the guidelines and understandings set out by Vygotsky.

Vygotsky introduced his perspective on child development called the sociocultural theory in the 1930's his main argument was that cognitive development was a socially mediated process. However, I do feel that this particular aspect of his theory is more influential in understanding the methods of teaching history to a co-educational and multiracial class as we will see in the next section. The aspects of Vygotsky's theory that I feel is important for teaching gifted pupils is his belief in the strength and power of language. As Beck

(2003, p 257) writes 'Vygotsky regarded it [language] as the foundation for all higher cognitive processes, including solving, abstract reasoning, and self-reflection'. Why is this aspect important for gifted learners? We know that many very-able learners are advanced in their acquisition of language; therefore by understanding its strengths and adopting ways of challenging language incorporated skills one can promote and encourage the learning of gifted learners. Hammond (1999) supports this when she writes that very-able learners reveal an advanced possession of oral and written skills and show correct deployment of a wide vocabulary. The importance and influence of language within history is supported by Cunnah (2000, p 118) when she writes 'pupils progression and development in historical knowledge, understanding and skills is essentially related to their ability to use language'. Hunt (2000, p 27) also supports this viewpoint when he writes 'the language demands of history are several and diverse'.

Due to the above understanding I will tackle humans on display and what happened to Sarah Baartman through a number of facets that challenge language acquisition as well as other skills incorporated in the gifted learner. To initiate discussion as well as knowing from where to start re: how much the learners know, I would put up an advert of Sarah Baartman's display (appendix

3). This advert in particular does not mention the name Sarah Baartman, resulting in the learner's general knowledge being tested here to see if they know who or what the advert is about. Once this has been achieved, further discussion can be initiated over the title 'Hottentot Venus'. What's its meaning? Where does it come from and why was it used? i.e. Venus being a synonym for sex and hottentot signifying all that was strange, alien, disturbing and possibly even sexually deviant (Holmes, 2007). In groups the class can discuss why she was possibly put on display, what are their opinions of this, how do they think she felt etc. These can be reported back to the class initiating further discussion. As one can see the above activities hopefully begin to challenge and introduce different aspects of language. Another activity to be used to encourage involvement could be to introduce the controversy around Sarah Baartmans different versions of her names i.e. Saartjie Baartman why it was changed or seen as being diminutive. Discussion of this could be accompanied with an extract from Holmes (2007) book *The Hottentot Venus* (appendix 4).

Besides language, teachers of gifted learners need to take into account their abilities to compare sources not in front of them and consider the broader scope of historical understanding. To achieve this I would introduce a variety of cartoons depicting issues around Sarah Baartman (appendix 5). Learners would be required to respond to the cartoons, what they are depicting and how are they different. Learners would need to take into consideration the current times that particular cartoons were printed and the influences these would have had on the artist i.e. colonialism, issue of Napoleon. Additional resources would need to be researched in order to support their ideas. Individual work would be required for completing this task. The need for individual work is supported by Hammond (1999, p 24) when she wrote that higher order learners 'demonstrate individual effort and independence as they seek to piece together an understanding of an issue'. Comparing the cartoons and their respective influences is deemed suitable for gifted learners as the task covers higher order requirements by asking the learners to interpret historical context and appreciate them as

evidence (Hammond, 1999). Gifted learners can be given additional resources with regards to Sarah Baartmans return to South Africa, her subsequent burial and public and political reactions (see example of appendix 6). A task can be set whereby they write a review for the local newspaper about her return, public opinions, an historical response and critical evaluation to the statement 'Saartjie Baartman: born 1789 – buried 2002' (Holmes, 2007). This task also reflects higher order activities by covering the realm of reporting (Hammond, 1999).

Another aspect for gifted learners that Kokot (1992) writes about is the need for appropriate experiences in the arts. The reason for this being that a 'knowledge of gifted children shows a need for the arts: sensitivity, keenness of perception and the ability to understand interrelationships all point to a need for exposure to aesthetic experiences' (Kokot, 1992; p 208). Specifically under this topic of humans on display and Sarah Baartman the teacher could organise a viewing of the Jomba! Contemporary Dance Experience namely the show 'They Look at Me and that's all They Think' which refers to the story of Sarah Baartman (http://www.ukzn.ac.za/cca/jomba_2006.htm).

These tasks work through the basis of developing skills which in turn increase knowledge and hopefully challenge the gifted learner in 'a continuing spiral of achievement' (Hammond, 1999, p 31). As the author goes on to explain, in order to stretch the very able learner the programme that we follow must allow the higher order skills and knowledge to work together and serve each other (Hammond, 1999).

The article on Guidance on teaching gifted and talented pupils states that challenges for these types of learners is achieved through giving them access to a wide range of sources, providing opportunities for them to communicate their understandings in a variety of ways and extending the breadth and depth of study. I feel by incorporating aspects of group and in particular individual work, giving different forms of resources and setting challenging tasks gifted learners would be motivated and tested.

Part 3

A class full of multiracial and co-educational pupils brings with it a range of complexities, all of which need to be considered when teaching history. Rüsen (1991, p 1) explains, 'every culture has an idea of mankind and humanity. But these ideas differ'. Differences in culture are supported by Vygotsky (Beck, 2003, p 256) in his sociocultural theory when he states 'rich social and cultural contexts profoundly affect children's cognition'. The problem is how do we bring them together to mediate within the classroom situation and specifically in response to teaching history? A major goal of multicultural education is to reform the schooling system so that learners from diverse racial, ethnic and social class groups will experience educational equality, included in this is the incorporation of both male and female learners so that they too have an equal chance to experience educational success (Banks, 1994).

Historical legitimacy is an important aspect and responsibility of teachers teaching history because with a genuine understanding of history comes an historical identity (Rüsen, 1991). An identity which will follow, influence and affect learners, therefore the truth needs to be told. Rüsen (1991) describes historical identity as the feeling one gets when they realise they belong to a group because of the common history they share. For many, historical identity places learners within a framework; it describes and articulates with whom one belongs, who the others are and who they live with (Rüsen, 1991). Truth and legitimacy is obviously essential. Teacher's political agenda's and personal beliefs cannot be the focal point of all history lessons, specifically those directed at multiracial and co-educational classes. The aim of teachers within a multiracial and co-educational class is two fold. Firstly, to reveal historical elements and culture outside the officially established curriculum and achieve historical identity for individuals within ones class. Secondly, to establish national identity, to make individuals feel part of South Africa, a part of their country and its future (Rüsen, 1991). How does one do this?

As a teacher of a multiracial and co-educational class you need to understand the historical memory of learners. Within this classroom of learners there are already culturally valuable traditions, ethics and morals, fragments of historical knowledge, attitudes towards a past and patterns of significance issues of historical identity (Rüsen, 1991). These ideas from the past have been conveyed by parents or older 'experienced' adults as supported by Vygotsky (cited in Beck, 2003, p 26) 'values, beliefs, customs is transmitted to the next generation'. As Rüsen (1991) explains all of the above needs to be known and taken into consideration by the teacher, this is so they can be reflected on, used within discussions and considerations and become part of the subject matter. The process of this, as argued by Rüsen (1991) can result in students gaining historical identity and subsequently legitimise the future of South Africa.

To tackle these above aspects with regards to humans on display and in particular Sarah Baartman would be quite difficult as this topic alone provokes questions of race and gender inequalities. However, to achieve historical legitimacy and identity, all aspects of discussion and learners opinions must be discussed and brought to the foreground. To initiate discussion and introduce the topic to this group of learners,

I would start with the story of Sarah Baartman, with reference to the first chapter of Holmes' (2007) book as a resource (appendix 6). This initial piece of writing brings to the fore issues of gender and race, however we see in this introductory chapter that being a certain gender, in this case a woman, does not prevent one from ridiculing or looking down upon other women. I would initiate group discussions around possible underlying influences with regards to the public's responses to Sarah Baartman. What I would try to reveal, is that many influences are at play besides gender and race, issues of being 'different', strange and the unknown. By doing this I hope to reach Wilson's (1997, p 86) approach to teaching a multicultural and gendered classroom which states 'history involves the development of pupils' analytical skills so that they always

examine the evidence and seek to view historical 'facts' from several points of view'.

Following Wilson's (1997) guidelines I would pose the class with a series of questions to be discussed in pairs. Namely, imagine within your culture and belief structure, what would happen if someone totally out the ordinary, according to you, was brought into your town. Imagine everyone was talking about how different and odd this person was. Would you be interested in seeing what they look like? What if all your friends had gone to see this person and they reported back in awe at the differences they had seen, wouldn't you be interested? By doing this and initiating discussion around these questions I would hope to open up the learners to see the situation from a different viewpoint (Wilson, 1992). According to Rösen (1991, p 5) teaching history to a multiracial and co-educational class should incorporate the learners beginning to understand that 'facts have their historical importance only within concepts or patterns of significance which relate them to their own time'. I would hope that this previous discussion did this by opening up the learners to other possibilities and an understanding of reactions due to the specific time in history.

To start working towards a national identity I would hand out the poem (appendix 7) that was written for and about Sarah Baartman, which many believe had a huge impact on her remains being returned and buried in South Africa. Learners would need to research opinions about her return and what the general public thought. This task needs to be done individually and each learner is to return to class with at least 3 articles or resources relating to this topic. The bases of their understandings will be presented to the class in an oral presentation of 5 minutes with class discussion of the findings ensuing afterwards. What they would find, along with the poem, is that the public of South Africa was in consensus around the dismal treatment of Sarah Baartman and in positive conformity with her return and burial. Ideally this would make learners of different races and genders feel a little more included, due to agreeing opinions and attitudes, in the country and its

future; and thus work towards developing a national identity. When working with a class from different cultural backgrounds language abilities and constraints need to be taken into consideration especially with regards to the oral presentation task. Banks (1994, p 279) supports this when he writes 'respect for the students home dialect should be fostered. Rather than viewing the home dialect as defective, teachers should view the dialect as a source of strength'.

When teaching various topics, in this case humans on display focusing on Sarah Baartman, teachers also need to consider the learning possibilities with regards to understanding and accepting diverse ethnic and cultural perspectives. Bank (1994) explains that traditionally in the teaching of history, learners have been taught to view events, situations and national history as from the perspectives of mainstream historians, which often support the status quo of the hegemonic state. This topic and the various tasks above can be used to gain a more complete understanding of ones past and present and to look at events from the perspectives of marginalized groups (Bank, 1994). As the author goes on to explain, working towards and incorporating aspects of this within each lesson, teachers can play a role in making learners less ethnocentric and more able to understand that any event or situation can legitimately be looked at from many perspective.

Part 4

Current situations in South African education have resulted in many classes being a mixing pot of races, gender and ability. From the teachers that I have been in contact with this idea has not been readily accepted. Many feel having multi racial, co-educational and mixed abilities within classrooms will hamper the learning and teaching process. However, the following analysis of learning theories, namely Vygotsky and Gardener, indicate that a multi faceted classroom can actually assist learning as opposed to hinder it.

Vygotsky's argues, as stated earlier, that not only are children active seekers of knowledge but that it is important to acknowledge that rich social and cultural contexts profoundly affect children's cognition (Beck, 2003). An aspect of this theory, which can be used in multi faceted classrooms as we are dealing with here, is what Vygotsky called the 'zone of proximal (or potential) development' (Beck, 2003). This concept refers to a range of tasks that a child cannot yet perform on their own but can accomplish with the assistance of adults or more skilled peers (Beck, 2003). How does this theory and the concept of zone of proximal development work in practice and assist with learning in a multi racial, co-educational and mixed abilities classroom. Learners, due to these differences, arrive at the classroom with different experiences and knowledge, as stated by Vygotsky. Therefore, successful and effective teachers need to use this to their benefit. Acknowledging that within ones classroom are a wide variety of abilities and cultures, groups can be made up where by differences are spread throughout the groups. Gifted learners, using the ideas of the zone of proximal development, can assist the less able learners. Individuals from different cultures and genders can bring to the groups different understandings and perspectives, hence contributing to the learning within the group and contributing to understanding the existence of different viewpoints. This can be achieved through any group work tasks, namely the cartoons task (appendix 5), analysis of the advert (appendix 3) or a review of the poem (appendix 7). Vygotsky also introduces the notion of using certain features of social interaction, namely 'assisted discovery' and 'peer collaboration' that I feel can be used in a mixed classroom (Beck, 2003, p 260). Assisted discovery is when teachers guide learning and tailor interventions to collaborate with a child's development. Therefore in a mixed class the teacher can focus on the less able. Peer collaboration refers to when classmates with varying abilities work in groups with others, many learners respond well to peer assistance. The features of this method assist with the less able as well as challenging the gifted. 'Differentiation by task', i.e. variety of work corresponding to different levels of pupil ability, also

allows for the addressing of less able learners within a mixed class (Haydn, Arthur and Hunts, 2001, p 161).

When teaching history to a class made up of race, gender and ability differences the notions behind Howard Gardner's multiple intelligences can have a huge affect on reaching all the needs of the learners in the classroom. Gardner believed that human intelligence does not comprise of independent abilities that collaborate as a general intelligence (Jordaan and Jordaan, 1998). Rather he believed that there are seven separate kinds of intelligence and that the dominant intelligences are influenced by hereditary, cultural and educational factors (Jordaan and Jordaan, 1998). Gardner introduced seven types of intelligences, the two standard academic kinds linguistic (production and understanding of languages) and logical-mathematical (logical reasoning and solving of scientific problems) intelligence. He then went on to include spatial intelligence (organise objects spatially i.e. artist, architects), bodily kinaesthetic intelligence (use of body to perform tasks), musical intelligence (compose, appreciate and perform music), interpersonal intelligence (to get along with people, be aware of moods, cues and motivations) and intrapersonal intelligence (to understand and predict own behaviour) (Jordaan and Jordaan, 1998; Goleman, 1996). Gardner later introduced two more intelligences naturalistic (recognise and categorise any object in nature) and existential intelligence (philosophical, question meaning of life). What does this mean for teaching history within a mixed class? As Goleman (1996) suggests teachers should spend less time ranking children and more time helping them to identify and cultivate their natural competencies and skills.

In order to achieve this teachers must incorporate tasks and activates that will allow for any child of any intelligence to find something that they are successful at. With regards to teaching history and specifically humans on display and Sarah Baartman I would challenge those with linguistic intelligence by giving the class a similar activity to the gifted class that incorporated the advert of Sarah

Baartman (appendix 3) and the resource 'A Note on Naming' (appendix 4) and the basic story of Sarah Baartman with relative questions.

It is essential that with this task the teacher takes into account questions that relate to Bloom's taxonomy i.e. to organise and sequence questions from a lower order to a higher order therefore increasing in complexity (Criticos, Long, Moletsane and Mthiyane, 2002). By adopting this approach, those with language abilities are targeted, however by using Bloom's taxonomy less able learners are not left out. In this situation questions can move from knowledge (recall) i.e. who is this reading and advert about, to comprehension (understanding) i.e. what is this story about?, to application (solving) and analysis (analysing) i.e. what does the term 'Hottentot Venus' mean and why was it used? (Criticos, Long, Moletsane and Mthiyane, 2002). The following higher order questions target and challenge the able and later on the gifted learners namely using synthesis (creating) critically discuss the issues relating to Sarah Baartman's name, which would you use and why?; what historical aspects influenced how and why Sarah Baartman was treated? And finally to evaluation (judging) i.e. what do you think about humans on display, answer with reference to Sarah Baartman, and do you think, considering the historical situation, responses were justified? (Criticos, Long, Moletsane and Mthiyane, 2002).

For this topic logical-mathematical and interpersonal intelligence can be combined. In order to target logical reasoning and being sensitive to people's moods and motives the class could discuss in groups the reasons behind Sarah Baartman's treatment. To target spatial and musical intelligence one could get the learners to make a display that they feel would suit being on display, giving the example as seen in appendix 8. In addition to this learners would need to, in groups, develop and compose a song about Sarah Baartman that could be presented on the night of the unveiling of their displays. Bodily-kinaesthetic intelligence can be included here by getting the learners to incorporate dance into their song routine. Intrapersonal intelligence could be targeted when in pairs

and later on in written form when learners explain about how they personally feel about Sarah Baartman and humans being on display. By using Gardner's notion of multiple intelligences individual cultural and race difference will be given a chance to be revealed. Dance routines and display work will allow individual preferences to be used

By incorporating aspects of Bloom's taxonomy which assists with less able learners as well as challenging gifted learners and by using Vygotsky's features of social interaction, classrooms of mixed abilities can prove to be successful. Due to the fact that Gardner believed that multiple intelligences were mainly as a result of culture, heredity and experiences using task and activities that focuses on the wide variety of intelligences allows for aspects of different cultures and genders to be included. The above shows us that mixing pot classrooms need to be seen rather as an opportunity for advanced learning as individuals work together, learn about each other and different experiences than as a hassle.

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Appendix A

Different pictures of Sarah Baartman to put up on the overhead projector.

PICTURES AS ILLUSTRATIONS TO BE INCLUDED PLEASE. [CAN ALSO BE SEND TO MY ADDRESS. SEE E-MAIL](#)

Appendix B

Crossword

		1.											
	1.												
						2.							
				3.						3.			
	2.												

Across	Down
1 In what river valley was Sarah Baartman Born	1 What was her birth name
2 Which continent was she taken to	2. In which town did her funeral eventually take place
3. One of the cities Sarah Baartman was displayed at.	3. What was the mans surname who found Sarah Baartman and took her over seas?

Appendix C

“Phoenomenon’ poster from Daniel Lysons, *Collectanea; or a Collection of Advertisements and Paragraphs from Newspapers, Relating to Various Subjects, vol. Iii, unpublished scrapbook*. (British Library).

Appendix D

<E:\History\Sarah Baartman, at rest at last - SouthAfrica info.htm>

Sarah Baartman, at rest at last

Lucille Davie

12 August 2002

Sarah Baartman, displayed as a freak because of her unusual physical features, has finally been laid to rest, 187 years after she left Cape Town for London. Her remains were buried on Women’s Day, 9 August 2002, in the area of her birth, the Gamtoos River Valley in the Eastern Cape.

Baartman was born in 1789. She was working as a slave in Cape Town when she was “discovered” by British ship’s doctor William Dunlop, who persuaded her to travel with him to England. We’ll never know what she had in mind when she stepped on board – of her own free will - a ship for London.

But it’s clear what Dunlop had in mind – to display her as a “freak”, a “scientific curiosity”, and make money from these shows, some of which he promised to give to her.

Baartman had unusually large buttocks and genitals, and in the early 1800s Europeans were arrogantly obsessed with their own superiority, and with proving that others, particularly blacks, were inferior and oversexed.

Baartman’s physical characteristics, not unusual for Khoisan women, although her features were larger than normal, were “evidence” of this prejudice, and she was treated like a freak exhibit in London.

The 'Hottentot Venus'

She was called the “Hottentot Venus”, 'Hottentot' being a name given to people with cattle. They had acquired these cattle by migrating northwards to Angola and returned to South Africa with them, some 2 000 years before the first European settlement at the Cape in 1652. Prior to this, they were indistinguishable from the Bushmen or San, the first inhabitants of South Africa, who had been in the region for around 100 000 years as hunter-gatherers.

Khoisan is used to denote their relationship to the San people. The label Hottentot took on derogatory connotations, and is no longer used.

Venus is the Roman goddess of love, a cruel reference to Baartman being an object of admiration and adoration instead of the object of leering and abuse that she became.



Baartman objectified. An early nineteenth century French print entitled [La Belle Hottentot](#).

She spent four years in London, then moved to Paris, where she continued her degrading round of shows and exhibitions. In Paris she attracted the attention of French scientists, in particular Georges Cuvier.

No one knows if Dunlop was true to his word and paid Baartman for her "services", but if he did pay her, it wasn't sufficient to buy herself out of the life she was living.

Once the Parisians got tired of the Baartman show, she was forced to turn to prostitution. She didn't last the ravages of a foreign culture and climate, or the further abuse of her body. She died in 1815 at the age of 25.

The cause of death was given as "inflammatory and eruptive sickness", possibly syphilis. Others suggest she was an alcoholic. Whatever the cause, she lived and died thousands of kilometres from home and family, in a hostile city, with no means of getting herself home again.

Cuvier made a plaster cast of her body, then removed her skeleton and, after removing her brain and genitals, pickled them and displayed them in bottles at the *Musee de l'Homme* in Paris.

Some 160 years later they were still on display, but were finally removed from public view in 1974. In 1994, then President Nelson Mandela suggested that her remains be brought home.

Other representations were made, but it took the French government eight years to pass a bill - apparently worded so as to prevent other countries from claiming the return of their stolen treasures - to allow their small piece of "scientific curiosity" to be returned to South Africa.

In January 2002, Sarah Baartman's remains were finally returned, and remained in Cape Town pending a decision on her final burial place.

Marang Setshwaelo, writing for *Africana.com*, says that Dr Willa Boezak, a Khoisan rights activist, believes that a poem written by Khoisan descendant Diana Ferrus in 1998 played a major role in helping bring Baartman home. Boezak says: "It took the power of a woman, through a simple, loving poem, to move hard politicians into action."

Whatever the reason, Sarah Baartman is home, and has finally had her dignity restored by being buried where she belongs - far away from where her race and gender were so cruelly exploited.

Appendix E

A poem for Sarah Bartmann by Diana Ferrus

"I've come to take you home -
home, remember the veld?
the lush green grass beneath the big oak trees
the air is cool there and the sun does not burn.
I have made your bed at the foot of the hill,
your blankets are covered in buchu and mint,
the proteas stand in yellow and white
and the water in the stream chuckle sing-songs
as it hobbles along over little stones.

I have come to wrench you away -
away from the poking eyes

of the man-made monster
who lives in the dark
with his clutches of imperialism
who dissects your body bit by bit
who likens your soul to that of Satan
and declares himself the ultimate god!

I have come to soothe your heavy heart
I offer my bosom to your weary soul
I will cover your face with the palms of my hands
I will run my lips over lines in your neck
I will feast my eyes on the beauty of you
and I will sing for you
for I have come to bring you peace.

I have come to take you home
where the ancient mountains shout your name.
I have made your bed at the foot of the hill,
your blankets are covered in buchu and mint,
the proteas stand in yellow and white -
I have come to take you home
where I will sing for you
for you have brought me peace."

Appendix F Example of sculpture of Sarah Baartman



Beyond cause and effects in the teaching of history: examining human relevance and importance in the classroom through personal stories

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Introduction

As my daughter neared the completion of her undergraduate programme, she found herself one course short of graduating. As one keenly interested in the subject of history, I couldn't help but suggest to her the possibility of taking one such course as a means of further developing her world view as well as her critical thinking skills. From the immediate look appearing on her face in response to my suggestion, alerted me to our divergent views on the subject. "No way! I'm not going to spend my last term, memorising all kinds of facts, dates and people with little or no relevance to the here and now. It's so boring" Although we had just talked past one another, her perspective on the matter, was hardly a new revelation to my ears. To be honest, for many people history classes are synonymous with the encyclopedic memorization of historical knowledge, fixed and embedded in time and place.

This common understanding tends to be reinforced by the demands placed on history and social sciences teachers to continuously process and disseminate larger and larger quantities of information with each passing year; the on-going pressure of attempting to cover an entire syllabus- persons, events and periods of history in a chronological, cause and effect way (see Kellner 1987); and a nagging concern that when exploring so many issues, there is the possibility that omitting any will give rise to the suspicion of some unjustified bias. Rosenzweig & Weinland (1986) describe history teaching as nothing less than a "mad dash to the present."

It is so easy to fall into the trap (however sincere and well meaning one may be)

of disassociating history and social sciences from the lived situations and contexts that have helped shape a democratic South Africa; of allowing it to become a storehouse of generic knowledge, devoid of the “personal.” This paper challenges teachers to empower their students and themselves to become agents of history rather than passive recipients of events.

“Unless the pedagogical conditions exist to connect forms of knowledge to the lived experiences, histories, and cultures of the students we engage, such knowledge is reified or ‘deposited’ in the Freirian sense, through transmission models that ignore the context in which knowledge is produced and simultaneously functions often to silence as much as deaden student interest (Giroux 2001:1-32).

Pedagogical choices

To kick start the possible inclusion of “narratives” (stories) in the teaching of history and the social sciences, would most likely involve giving up a degree of efficiency, productivity and comfortableness which comes when making use of the familiar and traditional approaches that have served us in the past. Making use of “personal voices” in the teaching of the subject, should be seen as one technique amongst many that could be used for enhancing teaching as a whole. This usage of personal memories also comes with the understanding any “curriculum or an instructional approach can’t be standardized and remain effective” (Ohanian 1985). In a postmodern era, the classroom becomes plural, local and immanent.

This researcher believes that whenever teachers have formed clearly defined goals and vision of the subject area, they allow themselves the freedom of determining “when” and “where” to use a particular methodology or in combination with another- including those promoting historical knowledge as linear and chronological, those featuring historical knowledge as de-centered, fuzzy and multidimensional; and of freely using lectures, discussion or

“narratives”(in particular- first person stories) whenever deemed appropriate. Because history and the social sciences are oftentimes influenced by changing interests, shifting conceptual understandings as well as by individual interests the task is made harder. Abel has correctly assessed that the “past is a steady process of imaginative reinterpretation and reconstruction, and in attempting to be meaningful to us in the present” (Abel 1976:165).

If we are honest about our teaching, it will most probably always involve juggling between academically preparing students for end-of-the-year exams as well as helping them to see historical content and analytical concepts as somehow impacting on their lives. That challenge reasserts itself again and again during our teaching careers.

South Africa’s Outcomes Based Education (OBE) Curriculum 2005 correctly mandates, that teachers should be made to “help learners to develop their knowledge as well as their skills, values and attitudes” as well as to nurture those skills that would facilitate the building of a more democratic and socially responsive nation (Bottaro et al 2006:v) . OBE like any other educational model, has had its share of critics. A commonly heard criticism of OBE in South Africa has been that it is overly weighted on the outcomes of education, and has marginalised educational knowledge (Blaine 2007). Blaine, nonetheless reports that even amongst OBE’s detractors, most would admit that it has helped in transforming a discredited and authoritarian apartheid educational system to one promoting praxis- theory and practice; academic knowledge and a commitment to democratic principles.

Waghid (2007) believes that OBE has the capability of enabling both educators and students to move “outside the lines” of instrumental thinking and a technicist teaching styles. He calls for placing particular focus in OBE in “educating for friendship,” and where people learn from one another through mutual engagement and sharing.

Royster (1996) calls such exchanges “contact zones” or “areas of engagement.” According to Royster, such encounters disallow ourselves and others from being locked into tunnels of our own visions and particularistic experiences. She advocates for the creation of an environment where sharing and academic learning are not seen as mutually exclusive. She also calls for the construction of new histories and theories that arise from shared stories engaged in transformation.

Shared perspectives

Most people prefer sameness, predictability and common interests. As a result, if and when someone thinks differently than ourselves, wears different clothes, maintain different cultural customs, we become nervous. This would appear to be true in a classroom setting as well. The idea of promoting the usage of shared perspectives, first person narratives and dialogue might seem threatening to some. But if pursued, this researcher believes it can enrich those who participate- providing them with hundreds of fresh ideas and insights. It can challenge, amaze, anger and even “prick” us to act in pro-active ways.

Being together in the same place, and talking amongst ourselves doesn't necessarily mean that we are engaged in meaningful dialogue from a shared perspective. According to Jones (1999), “...simply talking within groups, among ourselves while others talk among themselves” is not a part of liberatory and democratic education. She calls for an educational style rich in transparency, communication, and accessibility.

Like most other educators, this researcher can recall particular teaching occasions at the Lesotho College of Education where I worked for several years, where potentially important dialogue was diverted by several disjointed conversations taking place at the same time in the classroom- I lecturing in the front, two students in one corner of the room discussing a private matter; a

couple staring out the window and oblivious to all, four people actively taking notes, and a few appearing unduly focused on “exams” and asking, “Yes, I know there are many sides to the issue, but what exactly will be on the test? What should I write down as notes? What will the scope of the test be? ”

Paulo Freire identifies certain key factors needed by both students and teacher engaged in revolutionary and transformative education. These factors are ‘the ability to perceive and clarify reality critically in oppressive and dehumanizing situation...[and] the ability to arrive at an effective action to change the situation as part of a pedagogical praxis’ (Goba 1988:16).

In the context of the history and the social sciences classroom, Paulo Freire calls us to disengage ourselves from a “banking model of education,” where teachers serve as experts and pour knowledge into the empty heads of the students and the students gives back information to the teacher in an unadulterated form. Freire call for non-oppressive and dialogic teaching styles.

Baum (2000) particularly challenges South Africans to reawaken a historical consciousness suppressed by the chains of colonialism. “Historical understanding remains undoubtedly important and relevant for Africans in asserting themselves in the new global order.” She draws support from the words of critical theorist Henry Giroux in claiming that “history is irrelevant if it does not involve itself in the critical engagement of issues.” According to her, a historical consciousness can never be a singular activity. It always involves the development of a collective critical consciousness.

Transformative education, according to Nieto (1999:xviii), awakens a “consciousness;” it will not remain localized. She speaks of a “deep transformation on a number of levels- individual, collective and institutional.” (See also Bleich 1995 and Thayer-Bacon 1995)

According to this researcher, whenever a classroom teacher brings together people of divergent views and allows them to dialogue, experiment and build on those shared perspectives, the mixture is potentially dangerous for interested in maintaining hegemonic control. Chomsky has said, "Part of the genius of domination and control is to separate people from one another so that it doesn't happen...As long as we can't consult our neighbors, we'll believe that there are good times. It is important to make sure that people don't consult their neighbors..... If they're together, they'll start having thoughts, interchanging them and learning about them...." (Chomsky 2001:28).

The rich and enriching texture of personal voices

Perhaps one of the critical challenges facing schools today is the urgent need for collaboration between educators, students and the community. Most of the time, however, true collaboration is rarely achieved. To work collaboratively would require acknowledging that a sense of equality, mutual respect and gifted abilities exists amongst all concerned. For some educators, such an admission would be a stumbling block. According to this researcher, however, whenever schools foster such an atmosphere of true collaboration and partnership, wonderful things can happen. In particular, the usage of first-person narratives and oral histories are a specific means of being in partnership with the community interested in historical mapping. (See also Axtel 2001)

Hudson & Santora (2003) specifically refer to first person narratives or oral histories as "stories that are told by common and uncommon people who were present at or keenly affected by key events in history." Hudson & Santora see the usage of these "voices" as "opportunities for dialogue between teachers, their students and the communities in which they teach." They also believe such activities facilitate a historical praxis where theory and practice come together.(See also Elbaz-Luwiasch 1997).

According to Hudson & Santora, whenever students are finally made to see

history as “populated not simply by quasi-mythical figures, but by three-dimensional human beings, the famous as well as the forgotten, who live in and act in a real world that is always changing,” history takes in new meaning for the students, their families as well as the community.

This researcher has found the use of first-person narratives in varied classroom activities, as radically impacting on the lives of his students as well as himself. Guest speakers or personal narratives can and do help to “fill in the black holes” observant in certain textbooks.

...it is the oral that carries the knowledge of the people. Orality permits knowledge that comes from passion and experience and expands the space of dialogue that brings possibilities of empowerment through agency. It does not permit the academy to abstract and dilute the power of the narrative (Conde-Frazier 2006)

While teaching a course on contemporary issues to third year diploma students at the Lesotho College of Education, one of the units to be covered related to issues of “race, ethnicity, culture.” At the same time, I was also engaged in research, in preparation for writing a chapter in textbook on the subject of “inclusion and exclusion.” Assessing the work that laid ahead, this researcher attempted to initially research “racial exclusion” as practiced in Lesotho during the time of British colonial rule. To my surprise, I found little or nothing in the nation’s libraries. This researcher then turned to the students in the contemporary issues class for help. I proposed that they help by interviewing Basotho who had lived under British rule in the nation’s capital of Maseru. They were asked to use a “first-person narrative approach- allowing individuals to share insights on the subject, unfiltered. As expected, after making the proposal to the students, they bombarded this researcher with a flurry of questions- “Will our efforts be rewarded with a mark?” “How many people must we interview?” “Whom should we ask?” “How are we suppose to record the interviews?” “What kinds of questions should be asked?” “Will we get paid?” Their questions

consumed two class periods. Countless informal gatherings, also took place amongst the students prior to, during and after the interviews took place. It was a wonderful exercise, and it uncovered some interesting information as a result of their efforts, i.e.

During British colonial rule, racism was commonly practiced in Lesotho in a number of ways. For example, in the capital of Maseru neighbourhoods were segregated. Some areas were designated for whites or Europeans and others for Africans. Maseru West, for instance, was exclusively reserved for Europeans. In public places like the post office or bank, separate cues existed for both Europeans and Africans. And when it came to drinking in a pubs, Europeans had no restrictions, whereas Africans were required to show a special “exemption” letter from government indicating that they were entitled to do so. Establishments like Lancer’s Inn (a local hotel) and Maseru Preparatory School (an international school) were all white establishments (Jappie et al 2004:6).

The students, as a result of their efforts, forged new alliances in the community and gained a greater sense of self-confidence. They also discovered some of the problems that pertain to such research- the unreliability of certain witnesses, conflicting interpretations regarding the same event by interviewees, the periods of “silence” and the apprehension of certain people to talk publicly on any matter. This experiment with “oral histories” served as a catalyst and spawned other narrative research projects on the part of the students- including another pertaining to “xenophobia and immigrants.” First person narrative projects involving local participants, according to this researcher, allows students opportunities to see history come to life and to reconnect with their cultural roots in important ways.

Stroobants (2005) believes that through oral histories “learning comes both in the process of interviewing as well as when someone tells their life story.” According to him, all parties are actively giving and receiving. Fennes & Hapgood

(1997:104) believe that using people from the community enables students and the teachers to make use of “experiences and knowledge available outside the classroom.”

Actively engaging people from the community also serves another purpose. It is very clear that young people need role models to look up to; people to use as an example; individuals to guide them in their quest for identity and life’s meaning. Some guest speakers or interviewees, have the potential of sending a message of hope and reassurance to the world. They can remind young people that individuals and small groups working locally in a pro-active way can make a difference. The power of one person’s voice is great regardless of whether they are famous or someone out of the limelight. Stories create conditions for empathy free of ideological or political interference. They allow us to be inducted into another person’s world.

History and social sciences remains “too departmentalized”- an intellectual exercise between teacher, student and the textbook. Even when examining issues that come in response to local needs, it still tends to remain isolated. Rarely, if ever, does the teacher, students and the community come together, to understand such issues better.

Moulder (1997) believes that whenever students and educators come “face to face” with people from the community who might share their “personal voices”, much is done to dispel stereotypes about issues and allows students to see real people as struggling for change right there in their own community.

For example, a classroom lesson pertaining to the issue of poverty- can sometimes fall flat as reams of statistical data are used to highlight individual countries and communities falling under the veil of poverty in a “cause and effect” manner. To counter this approach, Puthenkalam (2004) calls for understanding

poverty as multidimensional- dealing with the human person as something more than an economic unit.

Poverty is hunger. Poverty is the lack of shelter. Poverty is being sick and not being able to see a doctor. Poverty is not being able to go to school, and not knowing how to read. Poverty is fear of the future, living one day at a time. Poverty is losing a child to illness brought about by unclean water, poverty is powerlessness, lack of representation and freedom. Poverty has many faces..... Puthenkalam (2004:230-231).

On a practical level, teaching about poverty in the social sciences and history classroom, might include among other activities: interviews with people and communities in the grips of poverty and who are pro-actively resisting its effects; profile organizations at work in the local community. Become experts on the history of a particular community or communities. Create a message of hope.

Confronting controversial and tough questions

Generally speaking, most people would do almost anything to avoid grappling with issues of controversy. Ignoring it, however, only multiplies the underlying problems. Consider for a moment, the issue of racism. For someone to believe that racism is a dead in South Africa would have their head buried pretty deep in the sand.

Although the nation's newspapers don't always gage what its citizenry are thinking, this researcher came upon an unusually high number of "race related" articles since the beginning of 2007, i.e. "Education for inclusion: faint hope or false promises" (see Osman & Lloyd 2007); "Anger brewing among blacks" (see Oakley-Smith 2007); "Skills gap a result of history" (see Quinta 2007); "Affirmative action is dead-Erwin" (see Pressly 2007); "Bok World Cup Threat"

(see Modzuli:2007); “Don’t lose vision of non-racial state, says De Klerk,”(see Bevan, S (2007); “Land reform must be speeded up” (see Webb 2007); “We must delve deeper into new wave of Afrikaner siege mentality” (see Makhanya 2007).

The day to day situation, in the nation’s schools appear to be no different.

According to Dolby (2002):

...race is produced and reproduced in multiple sites throughout a school: in the hallways, in the teachers’ lounge, the principal’s office, on the playing fields, at recess or break time, in the cafeteria. This production is of course uneven and sometimes in conflict: a school can, for instance, adopt a fiercely antiracist policy, while an individual teacher or student can hold and perpetuate racist views. Or, the institutional and structural apparatus of a school can reinscribe racism, while pockets of teachers, students and parents try to forge new practices.

Newspaper columnist Khumalo (2003) believes that South Africa is “littered with many other examples of racism- real or perceived, overt or subliminal.....We cannot deny that a country that has undergone centuries of colonial bondage and racism- racism later put into the statute books by the apartheid oligarchy- can we become non-racial and egalitarian in just a decade.”

In South African society, the majority of whites, according to Mkhondo (2007) “have come to believe that racism is no longer a serious and widespread problem. But racism continues to exist even though our constitution proclaims this country to be non-racist and non-sexist.”

As mentioned earlier in this paper, one of the objectives of OBE in South Africa is to help students develop their values and attitudes. Thus, such issues of controversy come to the forefront, what should be the response of history and social sciences teachers? According to this researcher, the only reasonable response would be- “How can we not address such socially relevant topics? As teachers, “seizing the moment” and “maximizing the situation” sounds like a better option than waiting until issues slowly makes its way into the textbooks in

sanitized form. Some issues, of course, are transitory in nature- but it doesn't stop it from being a concern for some. Attempting to allocate such ventures, doesn't necessarily imply diverting every lesson over a long period for such activities.

This researcher, while teaching at the Lesotho College of Education during 1998, was forced to make certain pedagogical choices based on what was happening at the time in that country. During that particular period, the country descended into a period of anarchy; people witnessed an incursion by the South African military, and were affected by a perpetual shortage of basic commodities. Within a certain window of that time, the College remained opened and classes went on as scheduled. Nonetheless, the teachers of that institution including myself, were made to ask what would the responsible thing to do in that situation- follow the syllabus or seize the moment? On that occasion, this researcher chose to seize the moment and confront controversial and touch questions.

The renaming of South Africa's cities, towns, highways, streets, buildings and townships appears to conjure similar feelings. The newspaper have headlined- "South Africa's cities, towns, highways, buildings and townships are being renamed rapidly" (Tolsi 2007); "racist anarchists' blamed as street signs end up in river: Potchefstroom name changes stir emotions"(Ndaba 2007) "Stop distorting issue of names: Comment (Memela 2007).

One letter to the editor of a Johannesburg newspaper, captured the mind of this researcher in particular. A white man complained by asking why government chooses to spend so much money on changing the name of Grahamstown, but appears uninterested about spending money on public services like electricity (see Drakes 2007). The writer's reason for anger, it would seem lies deeper than the problem he had chosen to write about. Thus, questioning the ways in which knowledge has been organized or how someone makes claim to authentic

knowledge, can be threatening. Nonetheless, such “stories” need to be heard so that we see and feel the consequences of absolutist views and change.

Addressing a controversial issue in the classroom can sometimes lead to highlighting the wrong concerns, especially without greater use of shared perspectives. Attacking the wrong problem never resolves the real problem. We are called to look deeper! Reporting on “name changes” in South Africa, Memela (2007) has said, “No one has the right, even in the name of freedom or self-expression, to abort the programme to rewrite the history of this country in a manner that projects and carries the names and legacy of people who paved the way for ‘the age of hope.’”

In situations like this- every effort should be made to create a pedagogical environment that strives to make the classroom “safe” for the exploration of conversation (amidst biases, deep-seated feelings and vulnerabilities). It should become an opportunity as social science and history teachers to profile those people who’s legacy is now being remembered (Oliver Tambo, etc.); examining the “changing of names” in other countries like India (Bombay to Mumbai) and undertake a study on the significance of “stone blessings”, “remembrance” and museums.

Do people intentionally beat around the bush intentionally? According to Geschier (2005), “human beings universally have the tendency not to think about or to build an emotional wall against painful experiences, also when these experiences are not theirs. According to Geischer, “laws and policies have changed post-1994 but changing practices and attitudes remains a daily struggle.”

Njobe has the view that (1990:54):

The decolonisation of the thinking of formerly colonised societies through education needs to be complimented by a similar decolonisation of the minds of the former

colonisers. Such double edged decolonisation process might more likely bring about better understanding between formerly colonised nations and their former colonised nations.

How do we prepare young people to deal with racism or any other major issue that come to the forefront? As educators, our primary responsibility should be to teach about it and how to handle it in a pro-active way.

Apple (1999) would say, "By placing race squarely in front of us, 'we can challenge the state, the institutions of civil society, and ourselves as individuals to combat the legacy of inequality and injustice inherited from the past' and continually reproduced in the present."

Ramsey (2005) said that once we are able to define racism as an interlocking system of advantage based on race functioning at all levels- as an individual, group, institutionally, and culturally, a veil is dropped. She says that in such environment, we are made to examine the many way such a thing impact on a person's life. We are all affected by race and must remain decentered.

Margonis (2003:296) reports that honesty and openness in dealing with war crimes committed in South Africa were critical steps towards avoiding a crippling amnesia. According to him, Desmond Tutu rejected the arguments that Afrikaners suggested that the country should simply forget the past and move on after its painful decades of violence. "...the past, far from disappearing or lying down and being quiet, has an embarrassing and persistent way of returning and haunting us unless it has in fact been dealt with adequately." (see also Laurence 2007).

The way forward

First, look within. Ideas are incubated! Chandra (2004:1-9) calls for a Gandhian style of self examination which would make everyone in the classroom (teacher as well as students) to examine their own morality:

...Academic analysis for far too long has tended to be concerned with the external world without simultaneously being turned inward. It has, thus grappled to understand the recent resurfacing of hatred and violence that we had innocently believed lay buried in the past. It has, almost invariably located the problem in a guilty 'other, rarely, if ever, in the 'self'.

Attempt to understand the issue in a multitude of ways; place a 'human face' on it. Acknowledge oppression and celebrate resistance. When appropriate, make use of "personal voices"- first person narratives, oral histories, and interviews. As teachers of the social sciences and history, make use of pedagogies which grow and expand because of the contributions made by all people as a community of inquirers. No person is an island.

Kincheloe & Steinberg (1992:28) indicates "that any education worth its salt must cause us to grapple with the critical issues of any society- including race, class, and gender in a democratic society."

Speak forthrightly, and be willing to dialogue. Communication involves a sincere desire to understand and be understood. Giroux(1989:79) rightly calls upon educators to do more than prick their student's conscience as a part of transformative action. They are also called to dialogue and social action.

Amongst the Basotho, when a person dies, the family is made to tell and retell the story of how that loved one died to everyone who comes to the house till the time of the funeral. In so doing I suspect, it helps both the listener and the speaker to remember the past as well as to prepare for the future. That is good historical thinking! As social sciences and history teachers, we too need to keep telling the story.

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Building a communities of practice for the continuing professional development of history teachers: insights from the TEMS project

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Abstract

In a period of rapid curriculum change, many South African teachers are faced with the arduous task of new curriculum development and implementation. This is particularly true of the challenges facing history teachers as they embrace new curricular expectations. While some teachers view this as a daunting endeavour, others disturb this assumption, embrace the challenge and seek out opportunities for personal professional development. This paper draws on the findings of TEMS teacher development project. It argues for a community of practice approach to continuing professional development (CPD) of teachers of history. The peculiar demands of teaching this discipline in post-apartheid South Africa necessitates the creation of 'safe spaces' for teachers of history to engage with the new discourse in history education. Communities of practice as espoused by Wenger¹ offers a useful theoretical approach for CPD in history especially in the absence of substantive support from the Department of Education for teachers of history.

Introduction

Day and Sachs contend that:

The increased investment in practitioner inquiry as a way of learning, in professional development schools, or networked learning communities ... are ... signs that CPD (continuing professional development) is becoming understood to have a range of forms, locations and practices appropriate to its many purposes. Yet both time to learn and the right timing are essential to success

In the above quote, Day and Sachs² present what they refer to as an optimistic view of a new understanding of the purposes and forms of continuing

¹ Wenger, E. (1998) *Communities of practice: learning, meaning and identity*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

² Day, C. & Sachs, J. (2004) Professionalism, performativity and empowerment: discourses in the politics, policies and purposes of continuing professional development. In Day, C. and Sachs, J. (Eds). *International handbook on continuing professional development of teachers*. Maidenhead: Open University Press, pp. 3-32.

professional development. They assert that internationally, there still is a substantial dearth of understanding with respect to the outcomes of teacher professional development as it occurs in its various forms, and that continuing professional development “is alive, but not thriving”.³

Against a background of fragmented and inequitable apartheid education, South African teacher professional development is diverse in terms of its service providers, contexts, and clients and as such presents unique challenges for continuing professional development. The issues, tensions and problems of teacher professional development in South Africa are indeed multi-faceted. Adler, writing from a South African perspective, comments on *one* significant aspect of continuing professional development of teachers as follows:⁴

There is little contention that teachers need to know the subject matter they are teaching, and moreover, that they need to know how to present this clearly to learners. The issue is how to integrate further learning of the subject with learning about how students in school acquire subject knowledge.

In describing the subject-pedagogy tension in teacher development programmes, Adler notes that teachers must be competent in terms of both the subject matter knowledge they teach and the ways in which to teach this subject matter knowledge. She highlights an important challenge that faces teacher development, that is, to integrate ‘further learning’ of subject matter knowledge with subject pedagogy.⁵ .However, many teachers in South Africa have a limited

³ Day, C. & Sachs, J. (2004) Professionalism, performativity and empowerment: discourses in the politics, policies and purposes of continuing professional development. In Day, C. and Sachs, J. (Eds). *International handbook on continuing professional development of teachers*. Maidenhead: Open University Press, pp. 3-32.

⁴ Adler, J. & Reed, Y. (2002) Researching teachers’ take-up from a formal in-service professional development programme. In Adler, J. and Reed, Y. (Eds). *Challenges of teacher development: an investigation of take-up in South Africa*. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers, pp. 18-35.

⁵ Adler, J. & Reed, Y. (2002) Researching teachers’ take-up from a formal in-service professional development programme. In Adler, J. and Reed, Y. (Eds). *Challenges of*

conceptual knowledge base. This problem has its roots in the poor quality of education many teachers were subjected to under apartheid.⁶ The challenge becomes more complex in a teacher development programme when teachers have limited or no subject matter knowledge in the subject they are expected to teach. This challenge is amplified in South African education, which has been undergoing unprecedented reform.

Policy development in teacher education has been prolific since the mid 1990s. While Welch is of the view that efforts to base educational policy in South Africa on sound research especially with regard to curriculum has at times been 'visionary'⁷, Harley and Wedekind argue that the most influential and radical policy, namely, "... C2005 did not arise from a 'situational analysis' of existing realities. Teachers, and probably most teacher educators, simply found themselves in a new curriculum world".⁸ Sayed⁹ concurs that South African education policy comprises symbolic gestures and government initiatives that are out of sync with the 'realities on the ground'. He describes educational policy change in South Africa as 'symbolic rhetoric'. It becomes clear that South Africa's transition to a democracy from a previously fragmented education and social system has thrown up several challenges for all teachers (including those that teach history). Several questions remain unanswered: How do history teachers

teacher development: an investigation of take-up in South Africa. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers, pp. 18-35.

⁶ Taylor, N. & Vinjevold, P. (1999) *Getting learning right: report of the president's education initiative research project*. Johannesburg: Joint Education Trust/Department of Education.

⁷ Welch, T. (2002) Teacher education in South Africa before, during and after apartheid: an overview. In Adler, J. and Reed, Y. (Eds). *Challenges of teacher development: an - investigation of take-up in South Africa*. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers, pp. 17-35.

⁸ Harley, K.L. & Wedekind, V.R. (2004) Political change, curriculum change and social formation, 1990 to 2002. In Chisholm, L. (Ed). *Changing class: educational and social change in post apartheid South Africa*. Cape Town: HSRC Press, pp. 195-220.

⁹ Sayed, Y. (2004) The case of teacher education in post apartheid South Africa: politics and priorities. In Chisholm, L. (Ed). *Changing class: educational and social change in post apartheid South Africa*. Cape Town: HSRC Press, pp. 247-266.

from disparate backgrounds address the expectations of a new curriculum that suggests a new ideology and pedagogy? How can we create a safe space for history teachers with differing social identities and values to begin to engage with the task of making meaning of and developing the school history curriculum development? The stark absence of substantive teacher development programmes to address teachers' needs has manifested itself in some teachers employing alternative mechanisms for learning. One such mechanism or model is a teacher community of practice. This usually takes the form of a voluntary network or grouping of teachers across schools. These teachers group themselves according to teaching subjects (or learning areas).

In this paper I draw on experiences gained from the Teaching Economic and Management Sciences Teacher Development project (TEMS) and offer insights for the development of communities of practice for teachers of history. The TEMS project took place in the greater Durban area of KwaZulu-Natal. The research study set out to explore the nature of teacher learning in a community of practice in the context of curriculum change. Of significance was that this 'community of practice' was a structure that had been conceived by a group of interested teachers eager to support each other in the absence of support from the Department of Education. This presented an excellent research opportunity for me (as university academic involved in economics teacher education) to study the nature of teacher learning in this context while making a professional contribution to the work of this group. The project entailed a study of how teachers cooperated, collaborated and made meaning within this learning community. One of the critical questions that this study sought to answer was: *What is the nature of teacher learning in a community of practice?* Using insights from the TEMS project, I explore the implications of Wenger's¹⁰ social practice theory of learning in a community of practice [for CPD? for teachers of history.

¹⁰ Wenger, E. (1998) *Communities of practice: learning, meaning and identity*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Communities of practice and teacher learning

Among the many reasons why teachers often find formal professional development disappointing include the fact that teachers are positioned as clients needing 'fixing' rather than as owners and managers of programmes that supposedly aim to support their learning.¹¹ [This sentence reads somewhat clumsy. Reformulate] Clark notes that many teacher professional development initiatives are often superficial, short-term and insufficiently sensitive to complex local conditions. He accordingly maintains that teachers must become agents of their own and each other's learning, and that teachers' perspectives on their work should be carefully considered.¹² "In education, the emphasis has shifted from *describing* various communities of practice to *creating* various communities for the purpose of improving practice, particularly as it relates to professional development".¹³ Communities of practice originated in response to several barriers to professional development that exist in the culture of schooling, such as the isolated nature of teaching and the lack of agreement as to what constitutes acceptable practices. They provide opportunities for collaborative reflection and inquiry through dialogue and thus develop common tools, language, images, roles, assumptions and understandings.¹⁴

In their study of the role that teacher communities of practice play in the development of the capacity of teachers to implement innovative pedagogical

¹¹ Clark, C.M. (2001) *Talking shop: authentic conversation and teacher learning*. (Ed). New York: Teachers College Press. Sayed, Y. (2004) The case of teacher education in post apartheid South Africa: politics and priorities. In Chisholm, L. (Ed). *Changing class: educational and social change in post apartheid South Africa*. Cape Town: HSRC Press, pp. 247-266.

¹² Clark, C.M. (2001) *Talking shop: authentic conversation and teacher learning*. (Ed). New York: Teachers College Press.

¹³ Wesley, P.W. & Buysse, V. (2001) Communities of practice: expanding professional roles to promote reflection and shared inquiry. *Topics in early childhood special education*, Vol. 21, No. 2, pp. 114–23.

¹⁴ Wesley, P.W. & Buysse, V. (2001) Communities of practice: expanding professional roles to promote reflection and shared inquiry. *Topics in early childhood special education*, Vol. 21, No. 2, pp. 114–23.

practices that make use of information and communications technology in three Canadian schools, Wideman and Owston¹⁵ conclude that communities of practice are crucial to sustaining and expanding the momentum for change. Working with science teachers, Avery and Carlsen¹⁶ studied the effects of teachers' membership of communities of practice on their management of their classroom communities. They found that teachers who had strong subject matter knowledge and experience with science were able to teach science in a 'sociologically' useful way. Teachers drew on their membership in communities of practice for support, ideas, and curricular innovations. An important argument for teacher community is that it provides a site or location for teacher learning. There exists a 'natural' interconnectedness of teacher learning and professional communities.¹⁷

Teacher communities differ from law and medical communities. Law and medical professions display their own unique characteristics and vary in the extent to which they are communities as compared to teacher communities. Membership of such communities entails the sharing of an identity, common values, role definitions and a common language. Teachers generally differ in their understandings of the goals of teaching, the structure of the curriculum, assessment, and basically anything that pertains to teaching. Differing values amongst teachers are linked to several factors, including the grade level they teach, the disciplines they teach, their teaching qualifications, and the type of pupils they serve. "Compared to medicine or law, education has been unable to forge a shared language of norms and values; and practically every significant

¹⁵ Wideman, H.H. & Owston, R.D. (2003) *Communities of practice in professional development: supporting teachers in innovating with technology*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Chicago, April 2003.

¹⁶ Avery, L.M. & Carlsen W.S. (2001) *Knowledge, identity and teachers' multiple communities of practice*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the National Association for Research in Science Teaching, St Louis, MO.

¹⁷ McLaughlin, M. & Talbert, J.E. (2001) *Professional communities and the work of high school teachers*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

question in education remains contentious”.¹⁸ This certainly has significant implications for teacher development and highlights the challenges of establishing professional community in teaching. Such challenges are exacerbated in education because here value systems, ideologies and teacher beliefs are more varied than in the case of law and the medical profession where consensus about ‘end’ and ‘means’ is much more easily achieved. The phenomenon of the contentiousness of education’s norms, values and ideologies is pronounced in South African education where teachers’ manifest behaviour has been shaped by a tapestry of influences and ideologies that date back to apartheid education.

In her analysis of case study data from a school reform initiative in a middle school in a major city in the south-western United States, Phillips concludes that by creating ‘powerful learning’ that is high quality learning for teachers, student achievement across all socio-economic, ethnic and academic groups improved dramatically. Teachers at the school were able to create a set of innovative curriculum programmes. These programmes were focussed on previously low achieving students. Phillips notes that “...learning communities create spaces for teachers to form professional relationships, to share information and to provide collegial support”.¹⁹ Such collegial communities of practice represent a marked shift from traditional approaches to staff development. Research by Lieberman,²⁰ Westheimer²¹ and McLaughlin and Talbert²² also suggest that such communities of practice have enormous potential for teacher learning.

¹⁸ Grossman, P., Wineburg, S., & Woolworth, S. (2001), “Toward a theory of teacher community”, *Teachers College Record*, Vol. 103, No. 6, pp. 942 – 1012.

¹⁹ Phillips, J. (2003) Powerful learning: creating learning communities in urban school reform. *Journal of Curriculum and Supervision*, Vol. 18, No. 3, pp. 240-258.

²⁰ Lieberman, A. (1988) *Building a professional culture in schools*. New York: Teachers College Press.

²¹ Westheimer, J. (1998) *Among schoolteachers: community, autonomy, and ideology in teachers’ work*. New York: Teachers College Press.

²² McLaughlin, M. & Talbert, J.E. (2001) *Professional communities and the work of high school teachers*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

In evaluating the usefulness of a socio-cultural approach for analysing teachers' responses to the professional learning of standards-based reform policies in the United States through a case study of six elementary teachers, Gallucci²³ asserts that communities of practice were sites for teacher learning and were mediators of teachers' responses to institutional reform. Characteristics of such communities of practice influenced the degree to which teachers worked out negotiated and thoughtful responses to policy demands. These findings confirm the value of teacher learning communities as sites for teacher learning. The study being reported on in this paper is a response to the challenges of South African institutional reform in the form of new education policy, as it seeks to explore how teachers use a teacher learning community as a vehicle to come to terms with new education policy.

An important element in the situative perspective on learning is the notion of 'distributed cognition'. Putman and Borko²⁴ assert that:

The notion of distributed cognition suggests that when diverse groups of teachers with different types of knowledge and expertise come together in discourse communities, community members can draw upon and incorporate each other's expertise to create rich conversations and new insights into teaching and learning. The existing cultures and discourse communities in many schools, however, do not value or support critical and reflective examination of teaching practice.

This notion is supported by research conducted by Grossman and colleagues.²⁵ They state that forming a professional community requires teachers to engage in both intellectual and social work; that is, developing new ways of thinking and reasoning collectively, as well as new forms of interacting personally. It is important to be cognisant of the fact that in the development of teacher community some people know things that others do not know and that the

²³ Gallucci, C. (2003) Communities of practice and mediation of teachers' responses to standards-based reform. *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, 11(35).

²⁴ Putman, R. T. & Borko, H. (2000) What do new views about knowledge and thinking have to say about research on teacher learning? *Educational Researcher*, 29 (1), pp. 4-15.

²⁵ Grossman, P., Wineburg, S., & Woolworth, S. (2001) Toward a theory of teacher community. *Teachers College Record*, Vol. 103, No. 6, pp. 942 – 1012.

collective knowledge exceeds that of the individual. Learning from fellow participants requires the ability to listen carefully to fellow participants, especially as these participants struggle to formulate thoughts in response to challenging intellectual content. Listening to the ill-formed thoughts and ideas of fellow participants may be a new activity that participants have to learn to engage with.

Communities of practice alter the “linear relationships through which knowledge ‘trickles down’ from those who discover professional knowledge to those who provide and receive services shaped by it because the model invites and builds upon knowledge from each”.²⁶ Cognition is distributed across the individual and other persons and is not considered solely as the property of individuals.²⁷ Participants “experience transformation in unique yet socially supportive ways”, as they extend each other’s thinking beyond what they might do as individuals.²⁸ In this way, teachers are better able to engage in learning that may influence their practice. Putman and Borko concur that for teachers to be successful in learning new knowledge and pedagogic skills, they need opportunities to participate “in a professional community that discusses new teacher materials and strategies and that supports risk taking ... entailed in transforming practice”.²⁹

A brief note on the research methodology

The purpose of the research study was to investigate teachers’ learning in a teacher community of practice, designed in accordance with the principles of social practice theory. This study was informed by a symbolic interactionist perspective which entails interpretative research that is concerned with how

²⁶ Wesley, P.W. & Buysse, V. (2001), “Communities of practice: expanding professional roles to promote reflection and shared inquiry” *Topics in early childhood special education*, 21(2), pp. 114–23.

²⁷ Putman, R. T. & Borko, H. (2000) What do new views about knowledge and thinking have to say about research on teacher learning? *Educational Researcher*, 29 (1), pp. 4-15.

²⁸ Long, S. (2004) Separating rhetoric from reality: supporting teachers in negotiating beyond the status quo. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 55, (2), pp. 141-153.

²⁹ Putman, R. T. & Borko, H. (2000) What do new views about knowledge and thinking have to say about research on teacher learning? *Educational Researcher*, 29 (1), pp. 4-15.

people see things and how they construct their meanings.³⁰ It is located in the qualitative paradigm. Contextual factors play an important role in influencing teachers and teacher learning and it is for this reason that a qualitative research study was considered to be most appropriate.³¹ This qualitative study spanned a sixteen month period, commencing in September of 2002. It entailed tracking teachers as they participated in the TEMS community of practice. Three in-depth, semi-structured interviews were conducted with participating teachers; one at the commencement of the programme, one approximately halfway through the programme and a final interview. Two lesson observations were conducted, with the first one taking place early in the programme and the second nine months into the programme. Detailed field notes of each participating school were recorded in order to develop a thick description of the context within which participating teachers were working. Detailed observation notes of teachers' participation in the monthly teacher development workshops were recorded. As the project progressed relationships of trust began to develop between the teachers and me. I was then able to negotiate for both lesson and workshop observations to be video recorded. Large quantities of rich, textured data were gathered over the sixteen month period. An inductive process of open coding was used to analyse the data.³²

Applying Wenger's theory of learning in a community of practice

³⁰ Woods, P. (1996), *Researching the art of teaching: ethnography for educational use*. London: Routledge.

³¹ Walford, G. (2001). *Doing qualitative educational research: a personal guide to the research process*. London: Continuum.

Anderson, G. (1999) *Fundamentals of educational research*. London: Falmer Press.

³² Henning, E. (2005). *Finding your way in qualitative research*. Pretoria: Van Schaik.

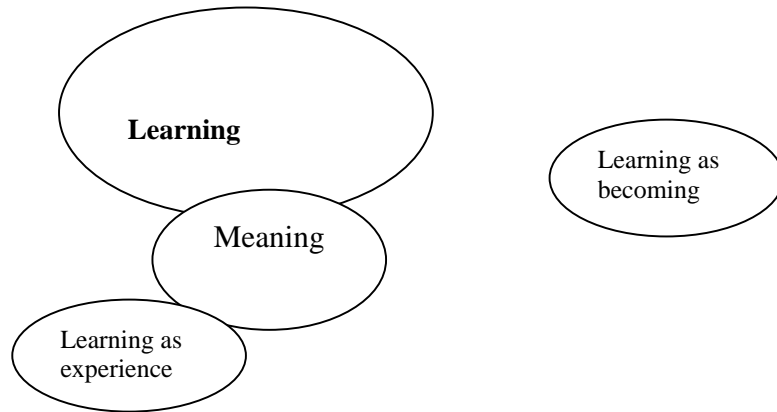
According to Wenger's framework, an individual's learning in a community of practice can be analysed in terms of four components that make up the concept of learning in a community of practice; namely, meaning, practice, identity and community. The focus of Wenger's theory of learning is on 'learning as participation', that is, being active participants in the *practices* of social communities and constructing *identities* in relation to these communities. He posits the following elements of a social theory of learning:

- Meaning: a way of talking about our (changing) ability – individually and collectively – to experience our life and the world as meaningful.
- Practice: a way of talking about the shared historical and social resources, frameworks, and perspectives that can sustain mutual engagement in action.
- Community: a way of talking about social configurations in which our enterprises are defined as worth pursuing and our participation is recognizable as competence.
- Identity: a way of talking about how learning changes who we are and creates personal histories of becoming in the context of our communities.

These elements are deeply interconnected and mutually defining. The concept 'community of practice' is a constitutive element of a broader conceptual framework, whose 'analytical power' resides in its ability to integrate the components of the model.³³

The elements of Wenger's Social Theory of Learning





The focus on participation implies that for individuals, *learning* is an issue of engaging in and contributing to the practices of their communities.

The data analysis reveals that teacher learning had occurred for all participants, but to differing degrees and along different trajectories. The following table presents an aggregate picture of teachers' changing understandings of the new learning area they were engaging in, their evolving practices and their evolving identities. While learning had occurred for all teachers, the extent of teachers' changing understandings of the learning area varied.

Table 1: A composite table of teachers' learning in terms of meaning, practice and identity

	<i>Evolving Meaning</i> (Extent of change)	<i>Evolving Practice</i> (Extent of change)	<i>Evolving Identities</i> (Extent of change)
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	Not discernable	Limited/marginal	Moderate/modest/fair	Substantially notable	Significant/profound	Not discernable	Limited/marginal	Moderate/modest/fair	Substantially notable	Significant/profound	Not discernable	Limited/marginal	Moderate/modest/fair	Substantially notable	Significant/profound
John					X					X					X
Mary				X					X					X	
Ben		X					X							X	
Kim				X					X			X			
Shirley				X					X				X		
Beth				X					X						X
Debbie					X					X			X		

Wenger suggests key indicators to analyse the emergence of a community. From the table below, we see that a community of practice had certainly begun to take root in the TEMS programme.

Table 2: Criteria for the emergence of a community of practice

(P = Substantially Present; D = Developing; A = Absent)

Criteria	P	D	A
Sustained mutual relationships – harmonious or conflictual	x		
Shared ways of engaging in doing things together	x		
The rapid flow of information and the propagation of innovation	x		
Very quick set-up of a problem to be involved	x		
Substantial overlap in participants' descriptions of who belongs		x	
Knowing what others know, what they can do, and how they can contribute to an enterprise	x		
Mutually defining identities		x	
The ability to assess the appropriateness of actions and products		x	

Jargon and shortcuts to communication as well as ease of producing new ones	x		
A shared discourse reflecting a certain perspective on the world		x	

Although Wenger's framework provided a useful tool for an analysis of learning as constituting these four components, these components and the changes that had taken place within them were inextricably linked to one another. An intricate relationship between the components existed. Although each component of learning had been analysed separately, they were in fact interconnected in a complex way. In terms of Wenger's first component, 'meaning' namely, 'learning as experience', the study has elucidated the changing understandings and meanings (changing ability) of the TEMS participants with regard to the new learning area and the teaching thereof as a result of participation in the TEMS community of practice. Teacher learning *had* in fact taken place. Teachers had begun to experience the new curriculum as meaningful. While some degree of uncertainty still existed, these uncertainties were not as pronounced as at the commencement of the programme. With regard to teachers' understandings of the content of the learning area, it was evident that teachers had experienced definite shifts in their content knowledge and pedagogic content knowledge base.

With regard to 'practice' namely, 'learning as doing', the study illuminated teachers' changing practices in relation to their teaching. All participating teachers had experienced changes in their practice which they attributed to their participation in the TEMS project. Changing 'identity' namely, 'learning as becoming' was signalled by the fact that teachers experienced their learning in terms of changed perspectives about who they were and what they were becoming. Teachers identified themselves as EMS [explain abbreviation] teachers and envisaged a future for themselves as EMS teachers at their respective schools. The study also shows that their increased involvement in EMS activities at their schools had strengthened their positions in these schools and that they were perceived as 'valuable' to their schools. Their participation in the TEMS programme had resulted in their repositioning themselves within their

own school communities. They had also started receiving recognition for their participation in the TEMS community from their school *and* other communities.

Finally, in terms of 'community' namely, 'learning as belonging' (participation), the study suggests that the community subscribed to the notions of a community as outlined by Wenger³⁴. The TEMS community had created opportunities for different forms of participation, both core and peripheral and had developed a wealth of communal resources from which members could draw. Healthy brokering relationships began to emerge with other communities. Thoughtful community maintenance activities were also a significant feature of the TEMS community.

Each of the components of learning is connected and mutually reinforcing. Teachers' abilities to talk about and make meaning of new knowledge influenced their practice and shaped their identities. These changes occurred within the context of a supportive learning community. Enhanced identities led to increased participation in the practice of the community, which in turn facilitated improved meaning. However, as noted above, outcomes for different participants were not uniform. They were, in fact, uneven.

This unevenness is attributable to several factors. Individual teachers differed according to previous experience, qualifications, biographies, career trajectories, cultures, present practice and expectations of the future. These differences influenced the extent of their learning along the learning continuum for each of the four learning components. The TEMS programme was an informal teacher development programme that invited different levels of participation (core membership, active membership, while also accommodating 'lurkers', and 'peripherals') and therefore had a unique appeal in that participation in the TEMS learning community was voluntary, allowing teachers to participate at will. Such

³⁴ Wenger, E. (1998) *Communities of practice: learning, meaning and identity*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

voluntary participation was always likely to produce uneven outcomes as a result of uneven participation. Peripheral participation³⁵ is a phenomenon where members rarely participate, but prefer to observe the interactions of the core and active members from the sidelines. “In a traditional meeting or team we would discourage such half-hearted involvement, but these peripheral activities are an essential dimension of communities of practice ... people on the sidelines often are not as passive as they seem”. In interactions with such members before and after TEMS workshop sessions, they often described the insights that they had gained from attending TEMS workshops and their attempts at applying this new knowledge to their classrooms. “Rather than force participation, successful communities ‘build benches’ for those on the sidelines”.³⁶ A community of practice allows for free movement of members between the core and the periphery.

Some implications for the development of a history community of practice

Financial and human resource constraints facing provincial education departments necessitate a creative approach to continuing professional development of history teachers, one that embraces existing financial and human resources in local communities. The present study and the Graven³⁷ study with mathematics teachers suggest that formations such as teacher communities of practice, that have as their basis the principles of social practice theory, offer much potential for continuing professional development of history teachers in South Africa.

³⁵ Wenger, E., McDermott, R. & Snyder, W.M. (2002) *Cultivating communities of practice: a guide to managing knowledge*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press.

³⁶ Wenger, E., McDermott, R. & Snyder, W.M. (2002) *Cultivating communities of practice: a guide to managing knowledge*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press.

³⁷ Graven, M. (2002) An investigation of mathematics teachers learning in relation to preparation or curriculum change. D.Ed. thesis (unpublished), Johannesburg: University of the Witwatersrand.

Policy at present exists at a symbolic level.³⁸ Stimulating the formation of a history community of practice is an important initiative, as it creates a space where teachers from across schools can come together to collaborate on educational issues that are relevant to them. Given the complex world of history teaching where problems are unpredictable, solutions are unclear and the demands and expectations of teachers are intensifying, collaboration amongst teachers in learning communities is beginning to emerge as a strategic response to overcome these challenges.³⁹ Teacher learning communities allow teachers to come together and learn from one another and to engage with curricular issues. It is the response to an important issue and that is that responsibility for continuing professional development simply cannot be left to 'others' (namely bureaucrats in the Department of Education).

Grounding continuing the professional development of teachers on the principles of social practice theory necessitates a 'paradigmatic' shift in the way in which we conceive of CPD. It implies a radical reconceptualisation of CPD, one that would mark a departure from the traditional 'training model'. The 'training model' for CPD advances a "skills-based, technocratic view of teaching... (i)t is generally 'delivered' to the teacher by an 'expert', with the agenda determined by the deliverer, and the participant placed in a passive role".⁴⁰ The weakness of this model is that it creates an artificial separation from the classroom context, as much of the 'training' takes place off-site. How new knowledge is used in practice is an issue that this model does not address. CPD in history that is context specific and responsive to the needs of history teachers is likely to be more effective when approached from a social practice theory perspective.

³⁸ Christie, P., Harley, K. & Penny A. (2004) Case studies from Sub-Saharan Africa. In Day, C. and Sachs, J. (Eds). *International handbook on continuing professional development of teachers*. Maidenhead: Open University Press, pp. 167-190.

³⁹ Hargreaves, A. (1995) Beyond collaboration: critical development in the postmodern age. In Smyth J. (Ed). *Critical discourses on teacher development*. London: Cassell, pp. 149-179.

⁴⁰ Kennedy, A. (2005) Models of Continuing professional development: a framework for analysis, *Journal of in-service education*, Vol. 31, No. 2, pp 235-250.

Christie et al⁴¹ identified two typologies of CPD that occurs in southern Africa. Firstly, one in which the teacher is viewed as a technician, with CPD directed at institutions and systems and based on the assumption of teacher deficit. This notion is supported by Sayed⁴² who notes that the weakness in many continuing professional development programmes is that they position teachers as clients that need 'fixing'. The second more progressive notion is framed along the lines of the teacher as a reflective practitioner, where CPD is aimed at the personal domain and based on the principle of teacher growth. CPD in Africa subscribes to the former typology, which starts from the premise of teacher defect.⁴³ Because CPD is often viewed as a means of implementing reform or policy changes, this can disguise issues relating to the underlying purposes of the activity. If CPD is conceived of as serving the purpose of preparing teachers to implement reforms then it is likely to align itself with the training and deficit models (transmission view of CPD). A community of practice model for teachers of history based on the principles of social practice theory, while it could also serve the above function, is however more likely to create opportunities that support teachers in contributing to shaping education policy and practice.⁴⁴

Collaborative initiatives that manifest themselves in teacher learning communities allow teachers to participate more in decisions that affect them. It also allows teachers to share pressures and burdens that result from policy changes. While collaboration may at first glance suggest an increase in the quantity of teachers' tasks, it is likely to make teachers feel less overloaded if their tasks are viewed

⁴¹ Christie, P., Harley, K. & Penny A. (2004) Case studies from Sub-Saharan Africa. In Day, C. and Sachs, J. (Eds). *International handbook on continuing professional development of teachers*. Maidenhead: Open University Press, pp. 167-190.

⁴² Sayed, Y. (2004) The case of teacher education in post apartheid South Africa: politics and priorities. In Chisholm, L. (Ed). *Changing class: educational and social change in post apartheid South Africa*. Cape Town: HSRC Press, pp. 247-266.

⁴³ Christie, P., Harley, K. & Penny A. (2004) Case studies from Sub-Saharan Africa. In Day, C. and Sachs, J. (Eds). *International handbook on continuing professional development of teachers*. Maidenhead: Open University Press, pp. 167-190.

⁴⁴ Kennedy, A. (2005) Models of Continuing professional development: a framework for analysis, *Journal of in-service education*, Vol. 31, No. 2, pp 235-250.

as being more "... meaningful and invigorating and the teachers have high collective control and ownership of it". CPD based on the principles of social practice theory minimises uncertainties faced by teachers and is likely to create what Hargreaves⁴⁵ refers to as situated certainties and collective professional confidence among particular communities of history teachers.

The potential for knowledge production in communities of practice is enormous. Communities of practice offer an inclusive approach to knowledge production that respects the contributions and roles of every member of the teacher education community. Social practice theory as it plays itself out in teacher learning communities is a fertile medium for deliberating and contesting the type of knowledge that should be valued in CPD initiatives. This is particularly applicable to new history knowledges that teachers of history have to engage with. While most CPD initiatives have as their aim the need to enhance or introduce new knowledge and skills, this is indeed a contentious issue as one needs to take into consideration both the type of knowledge, the context in which it is acquired and the how this new knowledge is to be applied.

On this issue, Day argues that knowledge created in the context of application is more useful than propositional knowledge that is produced outside the context of use. Knowledge that is created in the context of application is more likely to be the result of the efforts of a heterogeneous set of teachers collaborating on a problem specific to a context. Such knowledge is the product of negotiation and is likely to reflect the interests of all participants. Furthermore, such knowledge is more likely to minimise the problems associated with transfer, relevance and adoption. This perspective allows for the development of context specific knowledge (local city or province). Day⁴⁶ notes that such an approach

⁴⁵ Hargreaves, A. (1995) Beyond collaboration: critical development in the postmodern age. In Smyth J. (Ed). *Critical discourses on teacher development*. London: Cassell, pp. 149-179.

⁴⁶ Day, C. (1999) *Developing teachers: the challenges of lifelong learning*. London: Falmer Press.

acknowledges that knowledge production extends beyond the traditional understandings thereof to a process in which all participants can be contributors to new knowledge generation. Learning communities have much potential for creating opportunities for this to happen. Social practice theory as envisaged in teacher learning communities presents a dynamic forum in which the issues raised above can be deliberated.

CPD for teachers of history based on social practice theory offers hope for addressing another complex phenomenon facing South African education, namely teacher authoritarianism. Christie et al warn that authoritarianism is a phenomenon that is firmly entrenched in the psyche of many teachers in South African schools and serves as a serious impediment to moving teachers from the role of technician to that of reflective practitioner. Learner-centred pedagogies as advocated by the new history curriculum are frequently in conflict with teachers' lived experiences and previously established realities and expectations of the teaching task. CPD initiatives that have as their objective the development of reflective practitioners place participating teachers in potentially conflictual roles. Teachers' traditional values and historical experience are compelling factors that determine the extent to which teachers may assume or attempt roles as reflective practitioners.⁴⁷ Teacher learning communities however, can provide a safe environment in which such tensions can be played out, examined and discussed, as was revealed in the learning community in the present study.

Conclusion

Social practice theory as envisaged in the functioning of teacher learning communities can provide a vehicle for the kind of development that is so needed

⁴⁷ Christie, P., Harley, K. & Penny A. (2004) Case studies from Sub-Saharan Africa. In Day, C. and Sachs, J. (Eds). *International handbook on continuing professional development of teachers*. Maidenhead: Open University Press, pp. 167-190.

in South Africa. It holds tremendous potential for the continuing professional development of teachers of history. Well-co-ordinated teacher learning communities can harness the skills and expertise of history teachers, history teacher educators and department of education curriculum specialists towards developing and sustaining the continuing professional development (CPD) of teachers.

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Teaching the History of trousers: Tradition, Gender and the State in the contest for authoritative pasts

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Introduction

In July 2007, a twenty five year old woman named Zandile Mpanza was assaulted in the T-section of Umlazi. She was stripped of her clothing and her home was burned to the ground. The explanation given by her attackers was that she had violated a local code—a code apparently decreed by some of the men living in the hostels—that forbids women in the area to wear pants because they are not culturally traditional.

On the one hand, this can and should be understood as a straight-forward case of criminal violence and an instance evidencing South Africa's notably high rates of violence against women. Four men have been charged with this assault¹ and their trial will reportedly commence early next month. On the other hand, it is a case that raises broader legal and political questions about the principles upon which South African democracy rests, and the nature of the authority legitimating these principles. The incident invites strong and polarised emotions across a range of ethical and political positions. However, in this paper, I am not interested so much in setting out to validate one set of feelings over others but rather to suggest that these feelings—both in their power and their range—themselves evidence the importance of the dilemma at hand.

¹ At this writing, the four accused (Thulani Cele, Sibusiso Cele, Sitha Nzuza and Wiseman Mzotho) have been charged with indecent assault, causing malicious damage to property and common assault, but their trial has been postponed for the fourth time and will take place on 9 October. Mfusi, Ntokozo, the *Mercury*, 17 Sept 2007

Speaking very broadly, the T Section spectacle represents one instance, among many, in which the principles of liberal universalism (which are premised on a discourse of individual rights) are pitted against the assertions of cultural identity and community (premised on the necessity of pluralism and tolerance within a multicultural society). And it is a battle that is fought out perhaps most intensively over relations of gender and the status of women. In the impasse between the divergent claims of identity and rights, women are frequently caught in the middle. Their bodies are scrutinized as bearers of loyalty or betrayal to culture, or—conversely—as symbols of ‘liberation’. Debates about the traditionality or non-traditionality of pants, the testing of virginity, the sexual meaning of kangas, the responsibility of domestic labour and child care: all represent touchstones of a complex battle over the perimeters of citizenship. In a nation where the second highest office in the land is held by a woman, the heightened sentiments expressed in letters, editorials and radio talk shows all appear to be in agreement at least that the issue of women’s status is far from resolved. For example, from one end of the spectrum of opinion, a writer expressed the view that:

The protection of human rights should not supercede our right to protect our culture, identity and our image as Africans in line with our noble ideal of African renaissance. What happened in T-section is but a prelude of more challenges to come which will seek to define our democracy... Those who seek to engage in the struggle to wear pants must understand the consequences of embarking on a struggle ...²

Voicing an opposing opinion to these words, activist Nonhlanhla Mkhize asserted her view that governmental policy and the constitution must override traditionalist male attempts to dictate the propriety of women’s behaviours:

The rights of women in KwaZulu-Natal must be respected. We want to be free to go anywhere and wear anything as long as it is respectable.³

The stand off between, on the one hand, the constitutional authority of the state and, on the other, patriarchal authority in households and in other domains in which the sovereignty of men of status is locally legitimated, is emphatically not an issue that belongs exclusively to post-colonial Africa. While it is often

² Letter to the *Mercury*, by Simphiwe Manono Dlangamanla, KwaMashu. 28 August 2007.

³ As quoted in Mfusi, Ntokozo. 27 August 2007, the *Mercury*.

presented as a contest between African and Western cultures, such struggles have been waged globally over the last few centuries as economic and political transformations create new conditions in which power may be obtained, with new beneficiaries. The contest between rights and identity is intrinsic to the nature of modernity itself. Whether we are speaking of the United States, where until quite recently women were denied the right to vote and told that—‘traditionally’—their place was in the home, or here in South Africa, the status of women has been a key point of conflict *within* the story of modernity.

History education is well-positioned to interrogate the claims of tradition as well as to critically scrutinize the facile chronology and binary nature commonly attributed to the traditional/modern dualism. There are (at least) three reasons for why this challenge is worth taking up:

* Firstly, History is one of the few disciplines equipped with a method that can critically penetrate the tyranny of ‘common sense’ thinking that underlies dominant interpretations of these events. History does not take the seemingly obvious for granted but, though examining change over time, is able to interrogate concepts and claims that appear to be straightforward.

* Secondly, invocations of *tradition* are relevant to historical studies because they are themselves claims about the past and about the relationship of the past to the present. Tradition, in this sense, is a theory of history. As such, it represents an epistemological challenge to the empirically-based historical methods and the nationalist foundations of school history curricula. In this sense, it bears similarity to religious interpretations of the past (for example the Christian ‘creationist’ history of the universe, which draws its authority from a source quite different than an empirical reading of fossils.) The multiple interpretations of the past and their significance in the present are relevant to the discipline of history.

* Thirdly, related very much to the last point, these issues affect our students not only at the level of politics but at the deeply personal level of self. Like their teachers, history students inhabit overlapping identities that are simultaneously confirmed through similarly authoritative but often divergent interpretations of the past, which bear on how they relate themselves to community and to own identity. Depending on the nature of the 'past' that is being invoked, students are called—in various aspects of their lives—to different epistemological *tasks* in relation to the past. They are asked to learn, to know, to believe and to embrace as a matter of faith. They are also sometimes called to dismiss, to keep silent, *not* to question. The challenge of exploring these issues with students—issues which cannot easily appear in an exam or have an easily identified 'outcome'—is exactly what makes history so relevant to the project of social transformation in South Africa today.

The remainder of the paper takes up each of these points. My basic argument is that while History cannot resolve the contest between identity and rights, it most certainly can engage the issue and open up new ways of thinking and speaking about it. It should not offer pat answers to students by insisting on its own hegemony, but it should provide opportunities for thinking about the struggles between various interpretations of the past and what they hold for the present.

History as a weapon against the obvious

The impasse between the assertion of cultural tradition and assertions of democratic rights is not easily resolvable and the newspapers are filled with testimony to this dilemma. But resolution is *further* hampered by the 'common sense' explanatory framework that so frequently foregrounds these debates. There is a misleading premise that is shared by both 'sides', largely centred on the conceptual meaning and binary construction of *tradition* and *modernity*. This problematic starting point was evident in the analysis of a UKZN professor, asked

by the *Mercury* to explain the traditionalist male attitudes in Umlazi's T Section. According to him, these attitudes were 'outdated'.

There seems to be a conflict of values here, where it's the old versus the new. If one looks at South African societies, they are all patriarchal and it is difficult for people who assume authoritative roles in homes to adjust to women assuming their own roles and status within society.⁴

The idea that the conflict between patriarchal men and modern women represents a clash between 'the old and the new' may appear as self-evident. It is an intuitive position, moreover, because it is consistent with the claims of both parties. 'Traditionalists' represent their values as ones that come from the deep past, continuous with pre-colonial life—and therefore reflecting an 'authenticity' of identity with roots that go very deep. Their views are often portrayed as 'conservative' because it is believed their aim is to conserve or preserve a previously existing order and to hold back the march of time. Conversely, but *within the same paradigm*, supporters of [women's] rights frequently vindicate their appeals with reference to what is 'modern', by which they mean up-to-date, 'with the times' and appropriate to ideas of progress and social development. Such proclamations are frequently met with accusations (by traditionalists) that women who pursue civic rights are *departing from* tradition, are betraying 'their culture' and/or are forsaking their authentic or true identity.

The chronology and evolutionary logic at work in the concepts 'tradition' and 'modernity' are, upon closer and more critical scrutiny, *ideological* rather than historical realities⁵. The study of history has the capacity to reveal the particular and current conditions in which these battles are being waged, and to provide a historical context for the rise of these conditions. Invoking tradition (or modernity) is primarily a means of mobilizing currently powerful discourses to bolster forms

⁴ Mfusi, Ntokozo and Sibusiso Mbotho, 'Gender Commission Outraged: Women Wearing Pants to be Stripped if Caught'. *The Mercury*.

⁵ There is a robust scholarly literature that examines the contemporary meaning of mobilizations around claims of tradition. To say that 'tradition is a modern invention' does not deny the lived experience of culture—but to recognize the realities of change and impact of the modern state and economy in changing not only the material and cultural conditions of life for most people, but the meanings that are attributed to resilient practices and values. See Hobsbawm and Ranger (1991), Anderson (1991) (Mamdani (1986).

of authority and power which are wholly contemporary. The rise of traditionalism does not represent the *absence* of modern influence, it does not represent a reversion or return; and it is not advocated by people who are 'behind the times' or whose ideas are 'outdated'. It certainly draws upon practices and ideas from the past. But the rise of traditionalism as a claim to authority is itself an effect of the changes waged by modernism: the economic, political and social transformations that have altered relationships among human beings, and between human beings and nature.

To scrutinize the category of 'tradition' means a simultaneous scrutiny of the 'modern'. Modernity—and its institutions (capitalism and wage labour, the nation-state, and the military industrial complex) does not preclude patriarchy. Patriarchal capitalism and patriarchal state structures have, wherever they have emerged historically, either fully diminished the power of local and household patriarchs in agrarian societies or have bolstered the power of some patriarchs over others where agents of social control have been deemed necessary. Modernity also changes the discourses around which patriarchal power is legitimated. While specific gendered practices may be traced back in time, the political use of cultural or religious discourses to regulate women's status is a recent phenomenon. It reveals much more about the present than about the past it references. What it exposes is that identity (cultural or religious) is currently the only legitimate discursive domain for affirming the subjugation of women against constitutional state directives, within multi-cultural, democratic society. Culture and religion are primarily moral discourses. Issues of dignity, of morality, of propriety, of security and protection, of divine will and so forth, are often at the heart of these assertions.

To accept at face value the argument that traditionalist values are a surviving remnant of an old order is not only to dismiss the fundamental social transformations that have fully altered the meanings of certain values and practices, but it also is to support the common myths about modernity that

demand challenge. Modernity brought about rights and reform, but also brought us the holocaust, apartheid, and unprecedented warfare. While these events were often couched in analysis of a 'reversion' or 'neo-primitivism', such language simply reflects the myths of historical time as a teleological path of progress. These horrors were the children of bureaucracy, nationalism, statehood and science. These were not external to modern life but expressions of it.

There are elements in the specific history of South Africa which bear on the emerging stand off between conceptions of 'tradition' and 'modernism' which compound their complexity in the life of the new democracy. Here, in this context, prevailing ideas about culture as an identity are linked to designations that have historically divided South Africans *through the instrument of modern law* into political categories—'civic' or 'tribal', 'subjects' and 'citizens'. Colonialism and apartheid altered the political meaning of culture. Culture was salient long before Afrikaner ethnicity (and its preoccupation with cultural survival) became the banner under which the National Party came to power.⁶ Indigenous cultural identities relating to language, kinship, geography and organisational structures were appropriated and rationalised into tools of political management under British imperialist policy concomitant with the mineral revolution; and before that by Theophilus Shepstone in the colony of Natal.⁷ The resilience of many indigenous cultural practices and beliefs, the alteration of others, and the destruction of some, highlight both the unevenness as well as the necessary flexibility of power as groups of indigenous people in African were subjugated through violence, law and changing economic circumstance, first into residents of native reserves and, later, the bantustans. Indigenous authority structures were accommodated and incorporated, dismantled or restructured, always subordinated to state power.⁸

⁶ Giliomee 2003.

⁷ (for example, Welsh 1973, Mamdani 1996).

⁸ (Ntsebeza 2006).

In this process, indigenous gender relations and household structures proved both a centre of cultural resilience as well as a stabilising (though hardly stable) feature in the developing migrant labour system and in maintaining the political authority of the amaKhosi.⁹ African men were increasingly recruited from rural homesteads as wage workers on a temporary basis, accommodated in company compounds in highly disciplined circumstances, with legal documents (or 'passes') mediating their geographical mobility in the urban spaces racially designated as 'white'. Incorporated into industry as labouring bodies, rationalised as costs in production, these men were separated from the conditions of their social sustenance for sets of weeks, months, or years. As revisionist historians and critical sociologists have pointed out, the exaggerated separation between work and home was profitable for capital in that it kept wages down and the costs of social reproduction fell on the backs of women who sustained home for the working classes through agricultural and reproductive labour in the countryside.

Gender scholars have also pointed to a confluence of patriarchal interests sustaining this arrangement: for different reasons, it suited capital and African, wage-earning men to contain the labour power of African women under local, tribal authority. In this way, agrarian family life, with distinctive social practices, languages and cosmologies, became institutionalised as 'culture' within South Africa's racialised, industrial development. Politically and economically it was designated as a sphere of private authority—at the level both of household and community. The legal (political) and ideological (racial) demarcation of 'customary' space in South Africa was a specific feature of its capitalist development. Indigenous tradition was therefore not 'preserved' in the sense of being left behind in historical time: rather *it was the very premise of South Africa's modernisation*.

This is as much to say that current political meanings of 'culture' have their origins in the spatial separation of cultural groups (based especially on

⁹ (for example, Bozzoli 1983, Walker 1990).

language), through institutions of economy and political authority, and through relations of gender. These processes were thoroughly racialised. As the bedrock of racial strata was ideologically and materially engineered into four distinctive groupings—‘Bantu’, ‘Asian’, ‘Coloured’, ‘European’—their nature was described overwhelmingly in the discourses of cultural tradition. Indeed, part of what gave apartheid its longevity was the legitimacy derived from the idea of culture, an idea sustained by the social science of anthropology¹⁰ and from the way that culture supplied race with political plausibility. The belief in culture was widespread.

It is not surprising that culture arose as a contested issue during anti-apartheid political mobilisation. The organic power of culture as a designation of identity was made most apparent through the mobilisation of Zulu ethnicity by Mangosuthu Buthelezi’s Inkatha during the latter decades of apartheid.¹¹ Yet the politics of culture, because of its association with apartheid and Afrikaner ethnic politics more generally, faced a massive challenge from other identities mobilised in the broad church approach of political liberation. Black nationalists, workers, religious bodies, and non-racial democratic movements joined forces to create a South Africanist end to apartheid. It is notable that, as an alternative mobilisation strategy, Buthelezi’s campaign speeches were characterised by detailed and relentless reminders of what Zulu culture was and what it meant politically. In the 1980s and 1990s, the political meanings of culture required persistent descriptive and historical narratives to link ideas about culture both to the contemporary political climate and to Inkatha’s own agenda.¹² Even the allegiance of Zulu King Goodwill Zwelithini, who for many years appeared as a legitimising figure for Inkatha’s ethnic politics, was unstable: he quickly defected to the ANC after a victory for the latter seemed overwhelming, leaving little space for exclusively regional politics after 1994.

¹⁰ Dubow 2006.

¹¹ Maré and Hamilton 1986, Maré 1993

¹² Waetjen 2004

Culture has been a politically slippery discourse—but at the same time it is one that is powerfully felt precisely because it is considered so deeply authentic and personal. In the last 12 years, culture has been newly valorised by a wide range of players, from neo-traditionalist Afrikaners and Afrikaans-speakers to the ANC's project of the African Renaissance, and Christian and Muslim parties. Moreover, the persistence of an urban-rural divide, expressed in clashes between the state and traditionalists over matters such as circumcision rituals and virginity testing, as well as in conflicts over service delivery and land issues, makes culture a prominent social field for clashes of political imagination. The politics of race are never far from these relationships, given its ongoing (though diminishing) visible correlation with class. The meteoric rise of a small but growing black middle class has, in this racialised context, left many of the poor feeling left behind.¹³ And, as the poorest of the poor continue to suffer and to be treated to removals, police actions and criminalisation that is astonishingly reminiscent of apartheid authoritarianism, the political landscape of social transformation has become very complicated indeed. It has opened up new spaces in which discourses of tradition may be asserted, setting the stage for populist politics of culture with new political actors taking up the gauntlet.

The claims on the past

Keeping in mind that an interrogation of 'tradition' is simultaneously an interrogation of 'modernism', the controversies that arise, like the Umlazi T Section incident, offer opportunities to the student of history. There are two ways of approaching this. One way is to investigate specific claims and raise questions about their 'traditionality'. This is, indeed, what historian Jabulani Maphalala, also part of the KwaZulu-Natal legislature, was referring to when he declared 'It is not a part of Zulu custom to ban women from wearing trousers because we never had them as part of our culture.' Similarly, historians in the United States have challenged the idea (commonly put forth by the religious right in policy debates) that the 'traditional family is disappearing'—they ask for example: what

¹³ Seekings and Nattrass 2006.

conception of family is being called 'traditional'? Did such a model ever exist for any length of time? What class, ethnicity, or religious community can consider such a family model as 'traditional'? In what sense is a family with two heterosexual adults and 2.5 children in a nuclear household ever a 'tradition'? Who decides and for what reasons?

Another line of questioning is about the *selective* adherence to tradition, and its role in bolstering the gender and economic-based power for men (or for certain men). This is what UKZN history student Percy Ngonyama is interrogating in his article, when he raises such questions as:

[W]hat is so traditional about the Zulu king dressed up in an expensive western suite and being chauffeured around in a convoy of German luxury cars while the majority of his subjects are facing serious socio economic challenges? The KwaZulu-Natal constitution — a western concept — provides for the king to receive millions of taxpayers' money every year. Is this traditional? Has the royal family ever complained about this imposition of western/European ideas on the Zulu people?¹⁴

This last point relates to further questions about social and economic power and divisions: Are poor men, men in labour hostels, who are insisting on gendered traditions invested for the same reasons as men in positions of power? What other social divisions complicate the picture of 'conservative' or 'controlling' or 'out-of-date' men? What historical processes give rise to an investment in certain kinds of power in a situation of powerlessness? What other historical and social contexts can these relationships be seen (e.g., white hate-groups in rural America tend to draw upon men from poor and excluded communities, who make claims about heritage and history that similarly must be questioned.)

All of these angles of questioning have the potential effect of prying apart the common sense dichotomy of a clash between old and new.

Students of history: conflicts of self and community

¹⁴ Ngonyama, P. "'Culture' Trumps Women's Rights", *Business Day*, 13 September 2007. <http://www.businessday.co.za/articles/opinion.aspx?ID=BD4A563293> Accessed 18 September 2007.

'We, the youth [who attend university], are being defined as a lost nation, caught up in a white man's desires'. UKZN student, 2007

Last year, I had 122 university students in my undergraduate class, all from disadvantaged educational and economic backgrounds, and all of whom were very young children when apartheid ended so they do not themselves remember what it was like. Yet their reality is profoundly shaped by the overwhelming presence of the past and, to a person, they express their historical consciousness in what I think is a very interesting way but also in a way that demonstrates the specific *generational* burden they bear positioned at the vortex of social transformation.

These students appear to be pinned in between two crucial realities: on the one hand, the reality of a globalized economy, new open markets, discourses of development and nation-building and what they themselves call 'modern life'; they express their desire to participate in this reality both in the way they present themselves, careful about fashion and global trends in clothing, music, technologies, most like to exhibit their cell phones and also in their ambitions for jobs that will pull them and their families out of poverty and as players in the formal economy. On the other hand, they are vocal and clear about situating themselves in the local and specific: pride in being black, being African, being Zulu. While overwhelmingly my students identify as evangelical Christians, most also identify themselves as Zulu traditionalists who value a relationship with their ancestors, traditional practices and beliefs.

I don't know the extent to which my students are typical South African students but I think in many ways they are typical 'first generation' university students in this regard. Certainly there is certainly no *unusual* contradiction between an orientation towards the global and universal on the one hand and the specific and local on the other—this is obviously a familiar dialectic worldwide. But what concerns me on my students' behalf and for its wider implications is a tension that is evident also in the way many of my students express their sense of

history. There is a catch phrase—perhaps as an outsider I have noticed this more—that is used to describe South African society: students speak of its *current* state as ‘the problem of our history’. Students, for example may say: I want to be a social worker so that I can be a part of the solution to the problem of ‘our history’. This phrase ‘our history’ is used as shorthand for the things that are wrong with the present. ‘Our history’ is a euphemism to describe a present explained by the apartheid past, but this is a past that is lived in the immediate moment: persistent poverty and racial segregation, unemployment, the epidemiological patterns of HIV/Aids and its devastation in my students lives, and so on. The phrase ‘the problem of our history’ is a statement that reflects a concern about lived, *present* circumstances.

In contrast, students generally speak about *culture* as specifically what roots them to the *past*, a past whose origins are mystical and ahistorical. Culture is the word that describes an essential identity that anchors individuals and mediates some of the pressures inevitably imposed by the new opportunities in which the stakes of success are very high indeed.

So in some ways, notions of time and of the social are very much bound up together and seem to be a feature of the post-apartheid context of redress and some of the real dilemmas of social transformation. The resolution of a liberal civil society conception of nation with communitarian and local understandings is, in fact, one of the key dilemmas for South Africa, as in many other places (manifested in conflicts between traditional and civic authority, the problem of women’s rights versus patriarchy, claims about indigeneity and authoritative knowledge, and so on). Mahmood Mamdani, in his book *Citizen and Subject*, has argued that these dilemmas in Africa specifically find their political history in forms of indirect rule—what he calls the bifurcated state-- which designated the colonized as subjects of customary law through the language of culture while settlers were ruled through statutory law through the language of rights.

For my students, however, these dilemmas are played out at a very personal level, in the way they identify themselves, in the way they struggle to imagine their futures. Invocations of culture perhaps offer students a sense of empowerment and resources but it is situated in a broader and worrisome public discourse. Culture is very often invoked to denounce debate and argument in class. Phrases like 'its our culture' are almost inevitably expressed by students in the classroom as an antidote to discussion about a number of pertinent issues, particularly regarding gender power. The word *culture* becomes a way of expressing timelessness and immutability: the word *history* is similarly not about a past that can be investigated and illuminated but about a past that is both unthinkable and cruel, and better not explored. History, for my students is a depressing topic that they appear to wish only to get away from—many of them express the idea that 'people need to just get over it, just forget and forgive'. I think that such platitudes reveal a kind of trauma and untouchable grief. In contrast to a past defined in historical terms, it seems that *culture* is a past that can be knowable and generous.

Yet, I believe that notions of culture that look for the immutable and the essential, and notions of history that preclude critical examination, can be an impediment to the cosmopolitan understanding of SA origins and to democratic practice, to ease with debate and disagreement. In this regard, students' personal use of culture to explain and perhaps to protect themselves from uncertainty runs parallel to uses of culture in the political arena. When former deputy president Jacob Zuma attempted to defend himself in court on charges of rape this last April, he invoked Zulu culture to contextualize his understanding of 'consent' and of gender relations. (Fortunately, his interpretation was hotly contested from many fronts, but support for him was substantial.) Culture and ethnicity were also perceived to be at stake in the charges of rape against him, and his supporters made accusations of ethnic conspiracies, etc.. Such populist uses of culture highlight instances when what is considered traditional can be arbitrary, buttressing those in power through politically mobilizing the powerless.

Such narratives of culture must be challenged through critical and historical perspectives—and moreover, the discipline of history must offer a more generous resource to students for the sustenance of self.

My students' view of the world and its past appears to be shaped in important ways by the dilemmas of national redress, which include reconciling the directives of the global economy with the valorization of indigenous culture. Such dilemmas are played out at a personal level in my students' life. They are compelled to navigate what are often contradictory pressures to be successful in the formal, globalizing economy *and* to be rooted in community and cultural authenticity. This is the burden of transformation that weighs heavily on their personal lives and identities—and I think it is impossible to exaggerate how difficult it must be to navigate such pressures and how much creativity is utilized in this process.

It is this personal level that is often overlooked in theoretical discussions pertaining to the tensions between cultural diversity and liberal universalism, and I think it is important to see how such struggles affect young people facing their own prospects in a liberated but very troubled society. History teachers can play an important role in exploring these issues with their students. Indeed it would seem that there are few places more appropriate to doing so.

My worry is that these particular notions of time and of the social keep a lid on a past that reinforces the binary dualism between tradition and modernity. I think that pressures for reconciliation have offered a dangerous way out of examining apartheid and its legacies and serve rather to affirm a world in which the past is a *moral* narrative rather than one that can offer a truly new directly to the future.

History in Danger: The (non) Quest for a National History in Botswana

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Abstract

The socio-political context for history teaching in postcolonial Botswana did not provide for multicultural history approaches, and in fact it discouraged multiple approaches to national history. One of the ways in which the government sought to do this was through constant discouragement of what was regarded as tribalism, and an emphasis on a monolithic, monoethnic and homogenous national history. Part of this has to do with the government policy and practices that propound and subscribe to a monoethnic and monolingual society and education system, where history's role in that education system has been to tow the monoethnic line and to present a singular view of the country's origins and evolution. In all syllabi in the formal education system, national history is presented as a singular one, with the predominance of a Tswana ethnicity as the national curriculum's defining characteristic. This situation is deeply embedded in history, and reflects the social tensions that are generally being articulated in the wider society, particularly by minority groups, which are dissatisfied with the total neglect of their histories, cultures, and traditions. Hence, as communities continue to reflect on their place in Tswana society, the history syllabus will become highly contestable ground, and requires a rethinking and repackaging in order to avoid this pitfall. This paper seeks to explore the historical dimension of this current scenario, and reflects on curricula control and urges a rethinking on the question of a national history within the multiethnic and "multi-historied" Botswana.

Introduction

Following independence, the newly independent state of Botswana became concerned with nation-building, whereby it sought to forge a united, monolithic nation within the new nation state. In this regard, the country's leaders were particularly keen to tackle the issue of tribalism, which was regarded as a threat to a singular nationhood. Due to the historical developments hitherto, there was indeed a general manifestation of tribalism, which had increasingly festered during the period of colonial rule. The colonial government however, had merely exacerbated and entrenched existing tribal differences through their system of indirect rule policy. Indirect rule relied on a collaborative partnership with

established structures of rulership, which depended on the use of *dikgosi*, or traditional leaders. The Indirect rule system that was adopted by the colonial government relied mainly on the use of *dikgosi* to rule their people, to ensure stability and continuity. It was a cheaper alternative, and it was potentially quite efficient as it relied on use of existing channels of power and control.

The colonial government recognized only eight principal ethnic groups, which had been given prominence by various colonial practices and policies.¹ Although they were a colonized people and had many of their powers circumscribed², *dikgosi* were partners to, and collaborators with the colonial government. The division of Batswana land into reserves further consolidated this state of affairs, as it re-legitimized the control and authority of Batswana principal groups over the “subject” groups, where the latter was placed under the custodial overlordship of the former. Up until 1934 when *dikgosi* powers were curtailed, the latter had enjoyed a period of relative and collaborative engagement with the colonial government, where few if any stops were placed on their rulership of other *merafe*. Following the report of the Masarwa Commission set up to investigate the general treatment of Basarwa, chiefly rule was generally unfettered.

Following attainment of independence, this state of affairs was entrenched and given legitimacy by the type and nature of policies, which were adopted by the government. Essentially, the government sought to forge a nation around the concept of a singular Tswana ethnicity, in conformity with the idea of a single state or nation of Botswana. This essentially meant that in the quest for

¹ For example, the colonial government had elected to apportion land according to a system of reserves, which were assigned to particular chiefs of the recognized (usually numerically) superior ethnic groups. This system had no inbuilt provision for recognition of groups that were either had no chiefs (Basarwa), or which were otherwise regarded as “subject” groups even if they had distinct areas of their own land, distinct cultures, traditions and histories. They were simply all lumped for administrative convenience, and all deliberations were conducted with “principal” *dikgosi*.”

² Proclamations number 34 and 35 were particularly far-reaching in terms of changes hitherto unfettered powers of *dikgosi*.

nationhood, all the other ethnic identities were submerged by and subsumed under a common “Tswana³” identity.^{4 5}

It was in the education system generally, and the history curriculum in particular where the effects of these policies were manifested. These broader societal ideals were translated into the education system.⁶ The new nation state was geared towards the goals which were identified as unity, self-reliance, democracy, development and social harmony. The social studies syllabus particularly was re-oriented to reflect this concern, as well as to specifically serve the wider socio-political needs of the newly independent state, which centered on the notion of a common Tswana identity. These needs reflected an interpretation of the deficiencies of the colonial education system and colonial curricula, whilst seemingly discouraging manifestations and expressions of separate ethnic-based identities. Henceforth, both the content and emphasis of the social studies and history curricula came to reflect this thinking. This is the background which partly explains the evolution of history as a school subject in Botswana, and against which we should partially endeavor to understand its current status. It is necessary to give a brief background of the changes that have occurred in the Botswana education system, to tease out the core issues of concern of the two post-colonial commissions of education, within which we can situate the history syllabus and history teaching scenario.

The concern of the first commission on education therefore, was the eventual realization of social harmony-*kagisano*, which name became reflected in that

³ The word Batswana has two meanings. The first meaning relates to the groups which speak the seTswana language. This refers to the groups which share a common ancestry that can be traced back to their founder father, Masilo. They comprise mainly Bakwena, Bangwaketse, Bangwato, Batawana, and include Bahurutshe, Barolong and Bakgatla. The word also has another meaning, which is derived from the country name Botswana, in which sense it refers to the people of the country of Botswana (See attached map of location of various Batswana groups).

⁴ There are other ethnic groups in Botswana who make up the collective Batswana, such as Babirwa and Batswaping whose ancestry is linked more to Bapedi, as well as Bakalanga, Basubia and Bambukushu

⁵ The fact that the country was named boTswana⁵ clearly illustrates this point.

⁶ This tallies well with the view that educational problems and movements are a reflection of social changes” (Boyd Bode, p 25, quoted in J. Stephen Hazlett, in *Conceptions of Curriculum History*, *Curriculum Inquiry*, 9:2 (1979).

commission's report Education for Kagisano". The four national principles of democracy, self-reliance development and were all designed to work towards achievement of social harmony. Hence, the teaching of subjects across the curriculum reflected, and was geared towards this target, and hence formed part of that menu.

On another occasion he observed that:

Our (secondary) schools tend to be Botswana in miniature. That is to say they are multi-tribal communities. It is therefore essential that our children should not be exposed to influences which might lead them to place tribe before country (p10)...But let us all recognize the value of all the different elements which together make up the culture of our nation because they are equally part of our national heritage and we should be proud of our diversity, proud that different tribes and cultures can live together in the spirit of *Kagisano* (p10).

Hence, social harmony was to be achieved at the expense of articulation of diversity. The use of seTswana as a medium of instruction was part of the grand scheme, which aimed at nation building. SeTswana became both the medium of instruction⁷ and the second national language to English. In one of his numerous national appeals for a united Tswana nation, the first President of Botswana Sir Seretse Khama urged that:

While we must all appreciate the value of each other's language and culture, we have rightly made Setswana a compulsory subject in all our schools for all our citizens, irrespective of race or tribe. We cannot afford to educate leaders who cannot communicate with the majority of our people in a language they understand.....

⁷ Up to the late 1990's, seTswana still served as the medium of instruction up to Standard 4, which marked the last year of the lower primary level. It is currently the medium of instruction up to the second term of Standard 1, after which English takes over.

Forging nationhood was necessarily fostered through a monolingual medium of instruction. While English was the official language, and the medium of instruction in varying degrees in the education system. Setswana was the national language and the medium of instruction in lower level classes.⁸ In this scenario, open expression of diversity was strongly sanctioned in all official and sociopolitical discourse. Sir Seretse Khama again stated:

It becomes a threat to the stability and security of our state when it is carried to the point when a man in a responsible position thinks of himself as a tribesman before he thinks of himself as a Motswana (Botswana Gazette 11th October, 2000p.10).

This stance on language, also filtered down to curricula processes, especially that of humanities and socio-culturally inclined subjects such as history. The unified stance against “foreign” influences on the Botswana curriculum was only equaled in measure by the strong sanction against anything that might have looked like diversity on the socio-cultural or historical front. For this reason, the Botswana history syllabus has never articulated a need for teaching diverse histories, because the official view is that Botswana history is a singular history, thereby subsuming the histories of diverse peoples and cultures within a monolithic and hegemonic historical perspective. This has basically continued into the present syllabus orientation, which was informed by the findings of the second national commission on education.

History within the education system in the globalizing world

The report of the second Education Commission highlighted the concern of the education system with global competitiveness and socio-cultural relevance.⁹ The needs of society had shifted and changed in many ways since the first commission was undertaken. That is, it was important to build on and strengthen

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⁹ As enunciated in the National Commission on Education, 1993.

the earlier foundation, and quality and relevance were still regarded highly. However, in the new dispensation, educational quality and relevance came to be judged on the basis of narrowly conceived and skewed nationalistic objectives.

The question is, to the extent that history teaching should form an integral part of a national curriculum, to what extent is it being enabled to do that? There are two main points to make here. The country started well and had a sense of the role of history. This role was geared towards serving both nationalistic purposes, as well as curricula needs, where history was also supposed to play a complementary role to other subjects. The way in which the history curriculum evolved shows that a whole lot more emphasis has been placed on the academic side of things and a whole less attention has been placed on the “inclusive history” side of things. This distinction is crucial to make as the two objectives are not necessarily mutually inclusive. This is not somehow suggesting that the quest for an inclusive history should overshadow the teaching of historical skills, because that is always paramount.

My contention is that while people do understand and they do make a lot of speeches made in the public domain, which reflect an awareness that history is important as a documentation of our past, that it is an important repository of people’s unique histories, customs, values, of our traditions, which they profess to hold dear, this is not matched by an awareness of a direct link between the importance of history as subject in the national curriculum and its teaching of diverse histories. Hence, there is a general absence of public course over the importance of history as a school subject, and what its teaching should entail pedagogically. However, there is need to delineate the purpose of its teaching, particularly in relation to highlighting its importance as a nation building tool that recognizes and acknowledges diversity.

This may be due to the laissez faire manner with which the country has approached history generally, and as a school subject in particular. This laissez faire attitude is partly linked to the socio-political genesis of the Tswana nation, as previously alluded. Botswana's colonial past is largely bloodless, and the country's independence was achieved peacefully, as set against other colonial pasts, where nationalistic upheavals and wars of independence provide a nationalistic basis for reconciliation through reflections of their social diversity. For example, South Africa's Curriculum 2005 was predicated upon an inclusive and wholly embracing education system, at least in theory, but one that was a direct reflection of, and articulated acknowledgment of diversity. In the United Kingdom, there is open and varied discourse around the question of inclusive history, particularly the histories of minority groups, such as specifically that of Blacks.¹⁰

The examples given here are of countries that have come full circle, the countries that have come around to acknowledging that history's role and scope have to be wider, and has to reflect not only the pedagogical objectives, but should also be more reflective, and more in tune with society's pulse. In this way, they should necessarily have to acknowledge diversity. History then should be viewed, and must be allowed to play this role as an important platform for articulation of diversity. However, in order to do so, there should be enough public discourse generated around it to give it the necessary platform to re-launch itself as an inclusive and relevant subject, from a socio-cultural perspective. This will not only comprehensively serve the nationalistic ideal but will also be good for the survival of the subject in the school system. When history becomes more in tune with the way society evolves and when it gets to be more in tune with the changing political economy, and the socio-cultural discourse-and hence when it reflects political correctness, it will attain better relevance. The delineation of the parameters of this relevance needs to be a joint endeavor between the various

¹⁰ See for example, Rozvina Visram, "British History, Whose History?", in Hilary Bourdillon, *Teaching History*, and Andrew Wren, "History and National Identity",

stakeholders-history practitioners such as historians, history educators, syllabus developers, history teachers, the public in its varied forms, as well as the media and the legislators who should be brought on board to appreciate this.

In acknowledging the point, one writer noted that:

So it is in no spirit of caricature that I say that school history now stands in need of a fundamental rethink as far-reaching as the one that the SChP undertook thirty two years ago. Why? Firstly, because change is coming whether we like it or not. Change in education does not usually come from teachers; it comes from those with power and influence in the quarters where it matters: MPs, journalists, public commentators, and so on.

This engagement is important because part of the problem of delineating “history’s relevance” has to do with the fact that the parameters and criterion for it have never been debated publicly. It is important to acknowledge, however that this can only be a continuous process of reflection rather than a onetime event served by some sort of all encompassing process or document. This is due to the fact that in its nature, historiography is dynamic, revisionist, depending upon (incorporation of) new findings, new ways of looking at old data, ideological underpinnings of knowledge. But it needs to always be responsive to needs of the society it is based on in order to maintain its relevance, and thereby to ensure that it credible and is able to sustain itself. We need some standards of measure, but the standards will need continual revision and adjustment in line with those things, which the society holds dear and integral to it. This will entail being quite specific about what content areas and emphasis, which should be in line with forging of an inclusive nationhood.

Control of education

The nature of educational control in Botswana further diminishes the chances of having flexible approaches to the syllabus. Whilst in other countries such as the UK and South Africa there is a measure of local variation of historical content, the

Botswana curriculum is centrally controlled. All curricula decisions are made by the Ministry of Education and teacher representation in syllabus formulation is minimal.¹¹ Even then, the curriculum proceedings and syllabus discussions are largely driven by a predetermined policy, at least in terms of the general ethos of the syllabus. Hence, syllabus content remains outside the purview of many teachers and communities in which they function. For a subject such as history which is closely linked to people's origins and identities, the danger is that its relevance for the lives of learners cannot be immediately apparent. In this way it may actually alienate minority communities and learners from these contexts from selecting the subject out of a menu of several options.¹²

Comparison with other contexts

There has been along history of dialogue about inclusion of minority historical experiences in Britain (Visram 1994; Wrenn 1996) . But even there the debate is far from over, as attested to by recent studies on this subject (See Wrenn, 2001). Even in that context, the dominant ideologies still loom large, and dislodging them is easier in rhetoric than in reality. Even when it is generally agreed on the principle of teaching varied historical views, the practical implementation of such a program proves extremely difficult, in terms of what to include of the previously excluded and how much to include of the socio-cultural diversity, bearing in mind the need for selectivity that is central to historical writing and teaching, since everything cannot be included, as well as balancing contending views on representation. Whilst the school curriculum can be used to correct past mistakes, if care is not taken it can also be a site for not only ideological abut real conflict (See Wrenn 2001), where it can easily give rise to serious ethno-cultural tension. Similarly, while national history can be oriented to teach unity, the total exclusion of minorities can breed resentment and disharmony. For example, in Botswana the national curriculum concentrates on a Tswana nationalistic (ethno-

¹¹ It generally comprises regional representatives who are not able to consult widely enough with their constituencies.

¹² History has been an optional subject for sometime and its position in the curriculum has remained quite tenuous.

national) view of history. A similar situation occurs in Israel in relation to teaching of ethno-Jewish history rather than a multiethnic history (Majid 2005). Majid refers to what he calls ethnic democracy, which is predicated upon ethno-cultural domination, and cautions that it is very difficult to maintain democracy in such a situation, but not impossible if certain individuals and group rights are vigorously upheld. Of course the Palestinian-Israeli situation is much worse, as it is characterized by open and constant physical confrontation, but fundamentally it bears similar markers of ethnic democracy.

In South Africa, the curriculum provides for some measure of regional variation also. More importantly, it provides for teaching of diverse and previously silenced histories. This obviously derives from the evolving socio-political context where following centuries of subjugation racial discriminations of some groups by others, there has been a need to give a voice to these “others”, as part of the process of reconciliation and nation-building. Hence, rather than view nation building as a requirement for a singular historical perspective, South Africa has adopted a different stance to Botswana’s, in no small way because the historical context dictated it.

Currently in Botswana, in order to counter ethno-Tswana dominance in the education system, debates have arisen around the need for incorporation of minority languages into the education system. However, there has not been a complementary realization of, or a call for the teaching of diverse histories. But the link comes in due to the fact that languages embed histories, cultures and customs, so it may be that there will be a natural progression towards that goal.

Developments in History teaching at secondary school level in Swaziland: lessons from classroom research

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Abstract

History is a complex subject and teaching history is even much more complex than people think. It is more propositional than procedural in nature and involves adductive reasoning, where historical evidence and facts are reconstructed through speculation, imagination and empathy (Nichol, 1984; Booth, 1983). The effective teaching of history is more than the transmission of knowledge, but rather it is a process where students and teachers interact in the classroom as they share ideas, reflect and engage in reasoning. It is through this interaction that thinking and understanding will occur. This paper is a reflection on the developments in the teaching of history at secondary and high school level in Swaziland. The paper is based on research on a new history curriculum introduced in Swaziland in January 2006. In particular, the paper will highlight the research on the implementation of the new history syllabus. The paper will highlight the major challenges facing history teaching in the context of the new curriculum. Implications for the preparation of history teachers in Swaziland will be identified.

Introduction

The major objective of education in Swaziland is the improvement of the individual to make him/her a better citizen of Swaziland¹. This document still serves as the basis for educational developments in the country. A better citizen is defined as one who is a participant citizen in the development of the country. The Imbokodvo National Movement stressed on the need to address the foreign content of education by scrutinizing the syllabi to ensure that the curriculum was in the best interest of the Swazis.

Of particular interest to this discussion was that the Movement advocated that throughout the primary and secondary school, civic education and history relating to Swaziland should be given emphasis and at higher levels of the education system, emphasis should be given to development studies relating to Swaziland². However, despite the fact that Swaziland is a country that cherishes its customs and traditions as evident in the annual celebrations of the Incwala Ceremony (often regarded as the national prayer) and the annual Reed Dance amongst others, not much has been done to promote civic education and Development Studies, and to promote history teaching and in particular the history of Swaziland³. History teaching in secondary schools is under threat from other subjects that are vying for a place in the curriculum.

Research on history in Swaziland shows that the majority of history students in Swaziland do not like history and do not understand the importance of the subject in their lives outside

¹ Dlamini, M. (1972). The aims, objectives and philosophy of the Imbokodvo National Movement. Mbabane: SPPC.

² Dlamini, M. (1972). The aims, and philosophy of the Imbokodvo National Movement. Mbabane: SPPC.

³ Mazibuko, E. Z. (2002). The status of social studies in Swaziland: Challenges and prospects. Trends and Issues – The Quarterly Publication of the Florida Council for the Social Studies. Volume XIV, 1, Spring 16 – 20.

school except becoming history teachers themselves⁴. The perception of history amongst students is that of a boring collection of facts about the past that they have to memorise and reproduce these in tests and examinations. This perception of history is one of the causes of the poor image of the subject in the curriculum not only in Swaziland but in other countries as reflected in the literature.

Traditionally, many schools taught history as one of the subjects in the curriculum; however in recent years the subject is offered as an optional subject in many schools. It is not uncommon to find that in some schools the subject does not even feature as one of the subjects on offer. Of the 14000 students who sat for the Year 12 public examination in 2006, only 4200 opted for history⁵. Amongst the reasons why the subject is not popular in some schools is that in many schools students find it hard to pass the subject and as a result students avoid choosing history at the senior level because of fear that they are likely to fail it⁶.

However, in some schools, though not many, history is a prominent subject in the curriculum. In such schools, the subject is passed in good grades by many students and as a result the subject is chosen by many students for the high possibility that they will achieve a good credit in it. The number of credits one achieves and the quality of the credits is important because the high number of credits one gets makes it possible for one to get university entry, where applicants are ranked according to their aggregate achieved in at least six subjects. In a recent study on history teaching participants were asked why they opted to study history and one student remarked, *"nothing really special yah. Eh! of course some of my friends who studied history last year encouraged me, that if I want to increase the number of credits at the end of the year, I must consider studying history because many students pass the subject. I dropped history in Form 2 because our teacher made us read the textbook and it did not appeal to me"*⁷. In schools where the subject is passed, it becomes a marketing strategy for attracting students to study it.

This scenario for history is not uncommon. Many countries report that the subject is under pressure from new subjects that are now competing with the more traditional subjects like history. There is need for a marketing strategy in schools if we want our subject to remain in the curriculum⁸. This marketing strategy involves not only marketing campaigns in schools where history can be sold to students and parents, but it also means having a clear justification why it is worth studying by children. This campaign has implications for the teaching and assessment of the subject.

History teaching and learning should go beyond the accumulation of facts. Teaching should engage students in critical thinking and in exercising high level thinking and analytical skills that they would need in school and even in their adult life. This has implications for teaching and assessment of the subject and requires a paradigm shift from the traditional methods used in teaching the subject.

⁴ Mazibuko, E. Z. and Godonoo, P. (2002). History: Contemporary issues in teaching and learning. Manzini: Blue Moon.

⁵ ECOS (2007). Examiner's Reports. Mbabane.

⁶ Mazibuko, E. Z. and Gamedze, S. (2005). From Traditional to skills based history teaching. Paper presented at the 10th BOLESWANA Conference on Educational Research. Windhoek, University of Namibia.

⁷ Mazibuko, E. Z. and Gamedze, S. (2005).). From Traditional to skills based history teaching. Paper presented at the 10th BOLESWANA Conference on Educational Research. Windhoek, University of Namibia.

⁸ Brooks, R.; Aris, M.; Perry, L. (1999). The effective teaching of history. London: Longman.

Historical thinking is a process that is adductive in nature. It is both cognitive and affective in orientation. Interpretation in the classroom is an attribute of understanding. In interpretation, the classroom teacher is able to understand historical concepts that need to be understood by the learners prior to any teaching engagement. Social constructivist theorists argue that interpretation is brought about by the interaction process in the classroom⁹.

The context

The secondary education system in Swaziland is divided into two distinct sections. The first three years is referred to as the Junior Secondary school level (JC). The last two years are regarded as the senior secondary level or popularly known as high school level.

Junior Secondary School level

This level covers the first three years of secondary education, Forms 1 to 3. At the end of the first three years of schooling, pupils sit for the Junior Certificate public examinations. This examination is used for selecting pupils for senior secondary education. In Form 1 pupils are exposed to a wide curriculum and at the end of the year they are made to choose from the wide curriculum the subjects they would be pursuing up to the end of year 3. Schools use different methods for selecting pupils for the different subjects. In some schools students are organized by teachers into streams, whilst in some they make the choices themselves. It is common to find students in history classes who have been forced to do history because they may not be good in the sciences and hence they may be pushed into the social sciences stream¹⁰.

Senior secondary school level

During the colonial period, Swazi students at senior secondary school level sat for the South African Matriculation examinations. This arrangement continued up until 1962 when Swaziland joined the University of Cambridge public examinations for the GCE 'O' Level examinations at the end of year 12. The relationship with the Cambridge Examinations syndicate still exists. In this relationship, syllabuses and examinations were set and marked in the United Kingdom. It was only in 1989 that means were made to localize the marking process of the examinations after the training of the first cohort of markers for the 'O' Level examinations. In 2006, Swaziland moved away from the traditional GCE 'O' Level examinations to the skills based Cambridge International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE). Different countries have approached this move in different ways with Botswana and Namibia opting for local control of the examining process by developing local syllabuses and establishing a locally based examination. However, Swaziland has opted for a gradual shift as she still relies on the Cambridge IGCSE syllabuses and examinations, maintaining external control of the examination process and monitoring by Cambridge International Examinations (CIE)¹¹.

Teacher Preparation

⁹ Brophy, J. (2002). Social Constructivist teaching: Affordance and constraints. *Advances on Research on Teaching*, 9, Amsterdam: JAI.

¹⁰ Gamedze, S. (2003). Perceptions of history students and teachers about the status of school history: towards an effective application of the constructivist approach. Unpublished M.Ed. dissertation, University of Swaziland.

¹¹ Nyakutse, G. and Mazibuko, E. Z. (2007). Teaching and assessment skills of senior secondary school teachers: a study of geography, history and religious education teacher skills in Swaziland. Final Report of research funded by the UNISWA Research Board. Luyengo.

History teachers in Swaziland are trained at William Pitcher College for a three year Secondary Teacher's Diploma. Teachers holding a diploma in education teach at the Junior Certificate level. The University of Swaziland prepares teachers that qualify to teach at the senior secondary school levels. Teachers preparing for this level are products of the four year Bachelor of Education (B.Ed) programme, an upgrading programme for experienced teachers holding the Diploma in Education qualification. The Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) is a one year teacher preparation programme for candidates with a Bachelor's degree subjects offered in schools. A graduate of the programme also qualifies to teach at all levels of the secondary school system. In recent years there are an increasing number of teachers who have acquired post graduate studies at master's level who also teach at the senior secondary school level.

The International General Certificate for Secondary Education (IGCSE) Programme

This programme was introduced by Cambridge to replace the 'O' Level Examinations. The IGCSE is a two year programme introduced at the beginning of 2006 in all schools in Swaziland. Very brief training workshops lasting three days were organized to orient teachers on the new curriculum. The IGCSE curriculum is different in orientation from the 'O' Level programme. The approach of the IGCSE is skills based as opposed to the traditional content based 'O' Level programme. Amongst the skills that are meant to be developed by the IGCSE are: the ability to assess own personal strengths and weaknesses so as to be able to choose appropriate careers or employment opportunities; tolerance towards others; problem solving and critical thinking; enquiry oriented minds; ability to work in teams; and ability to communicate effectively¹².

Literature review

Several studies have been conducted in Swaziland on the teaching and learning of school history. Some of these studies point a bleak picture for the subject. However, despite this scenario, history is still taught in many schools and in some schools the subject is well taught and many students study it and do well in it.

Writing on the crisis facing history in the United States in terms of declining enrolments, funding and prestige in university history departments, Professor Brophy lamented that the reason for the declining enrolments was a failure to adapt history teaching and learning to better reflect a changing discipline and a changing world¹³.

Several studies on teaching history in the Swazi classroom have consistently come to the conclusion that history lessons in the Swazi secondary school history classroom are dominated by traditional teaching methods such as lecturing, note giving, questioning and too much reliance on the textbook¹⁴. These methods allow little or no room for learner participation in the classroom. The teaching methods in history have contributed greatly to the negative perceptions that learners have towards the subject. A interview with 1074 Junior Certificate school leavers in Swaziland on matters relating to their school experiences and on

¹² Ministry of Education (2005). IGCSE Consultative Document. Mbabane. Swaziland.

¹³ Brophy, J. (1996). Teaching and learning history. *Advances on Research on Teaching*, 6, 115-182.

¹⁴ Nyakutse, G and Mazibuko, E. Z. (2007). Teaching and assessment skills of senior secondary school teachers.

the school leavers' support for certain attitudes towards nine secondary school subjects found that history was ranked sixth as the best taught subject; second as the worst taught subject, and first as the least interesting subject¹⁵.

A study on the need for reforms in history examinations at secondary school level in Swaziland, established that the way history was taught and assessed by teachers and examined at the Junior Certificate public examination level was contributing to the negative perceptions to the subject¹⁶. The studies made an analysis of the examination questions at the Junior Certificate Level and at the G.C.E 'O' Level over a ten year period. It was established that about 90 percent of the questions asked in the Junior Certificate examination were at the knowledge level. Very few questions required candidates to show comprehension and the higher levels of thinking. Similarly, about 80 percent of questions at the 'O' Level were at the knowledge level of the Bloom's Taxonomy. By extension, history teachers also used the same assessment methods used by the examiners to assess their teaching. The nature of the questions in exams was found to have had a profound impact on the choice of teaching methods used by teachers. Lecturing, note giving, handouts, examination spotting and many more, were found to be the predominant teaching strategies used by history teachers in order to meet the demands of the examinations. Though students passed the subject, they however lacked historical understanding because the reproduction of regurgitated facts became the focus for teaching and assessment in history classrooms. This scenario have not changed since the way the Junior Certificate and the O Level history examinations still assesses content mastery on the expense of deeper understanding¹⁷. Public examinations are having an influence not only on teaching but also on how teachers conceptualize curriculum¹⁸.

A study conducted in Scotland on improving the teaching of history in high school found that the traditional methods used by teachers in teaching history contributed to declining interest among students¹⁹. A study conducted in Swaziland investigating the barriers to the effective teaching and learning of school history at secondary school level in Swaziland revealed that some of the barriers were the traditional methods used in teaching the subject, the negative perceptions of teachers and students towards history, the inadequate teaching and learning resources, the language barrier; subject selection process in schools where the students are in most cases forced to study history; the unclear vocational value of the subject to the students and the nature of the history curriculum which is Eurocentric and lacks local and national flavour²⁰.

An investigation on the perception of students and teachers regarding the status of history in school found that the attitude of history teachers was an important factor that contributed to the negative attitude²¹. Many history teachers present themselves as less enthusiastic and interested in the subject they teach and this affects the perceptions and attitudes of the pupils they teach with regard to the usefulness of the subject. The study also established that

¹⁵ Gamedze, S. (2003). Perceptions of history students and teachers.

¹⁶ Mazibuko, E. Z. (2000). Approaches to teaching history in secondary schools. In J. C. B. Bigala and E. Z. Mazibuko (eds). A source book for teachers of social studies, history, geography and religious education (p. 87 – 122). Manzini: Ruswanda.

¹⁷ Mazibuko, E. Z. and Gamedze, S. (2005). From traditional to skills based history teaching.

¹⁸ Mazibuko, E. Z. (1996). The mediation of teaching through central curriculum controls.

¹⁹ Hillis Keller (1997)

²⁰ Gamedze, S. and Mazibuko, E. Z. (2001)

²¹ Gamedze, S. (2003)

learners were much more interested in learning history through the use approaches such as visits to historical sites, research, using guest visitors, using newspapers, magazines, audio and visual aids as opposed to lecturing that is common in history teaching. The study concluded that the status of the subject was not so much affected by the location of the school but by the attitudes and ways in which it is taught.

The constructivist approach is based on the notion that the learner is an autonomous creator of knowledge and that the teacher is merely a facilitator of knowledge environments²². A knowledge environment refers to the learning conditions prepared by the teacher which stimulate learner thinking. This presupposes that once the learner is motivated to think, then it is easy to participate effectively in the process of knowledge construction²³. A good teacher is one who thinks systematically about how to integrate interesting content and methodology according to the experiential levels, abilities and interests of learners. Learner involvement means that learners are actively involved in learning and the role of the teacher is that which fosters an environment that gives rise to appropriate opportunities that lead to thinking, experience and growth of the learners²⁴.

A study that investigated university students' perceived characteristics of effective instruction established that students perceived effective instruction as the ability of the teacher to make students learn through motivation and instilling in them the confidence to acquire the desired competence²⁵. Teaching history should not only provide cognitive knowledge, but also should develop the capabilities, values, skills, dispositions and sensitivities through which individuals conceive their participations in the world²⁶.

The study

Context on research on teachers, texts and curriculum change

The literature suggests that curriculum support materials, particularly textbooks are highly influential in moulding the nature and effectiveness of curriculum change²⁷. This section reports on the findings of a research project concerned with identifying the role played by teachers, textbooks and resources related to issues in the implementation of the IGCSE in senior secondary school history. The IGCSE curriculum was launched in 2005 for implementation in 2006 in all high schools in Swaziland. The nature of this change is of special interest, in that its orientation, content, and structure represent a major departure from the former curriculum offerings.

The IGCSE history curriculum is the focus of this study. The syllabus is inquiry driven. This is reflected in the structuring of the mandatory and optional content around key focus questions or areas to which student learning should be directed. However, the syllabus prescribes

²² Moll, I (2002). Clarifying constructivism in a context of curriculum change. *Journal of Education*, 2, 5 – 27.

²³ Moll, I (2002). Clarifying constructivism in a context of curriculum change. *Journal of Education*, 2, 5 – 27.

²⁴ Drake, F. and McBride, L. (2000). The summative teaching portfolio and the reflective practitioner of history. *The History Teacher* 34 (1), 41 – 60.

²⁵ Jakede, J. D. (1995). University students' perceived characteristics of effective instruction. *BOLESWA Educational Research Journal*. 12, 56-63.

²⁶ Popkewitz, T. (1998). Dewey, Vygotsky and Social administration of the individual. *Constructivist pedagogy as systems of ideas in historical spaces. American Educational Research in Education*, 35 (4), 535-570.

²⁷ Fullan, M. (1991). *The meaning of educational change*. Columbia: Teachers College.

neither specific content sequence nor approaches, although strong emphasis is placed on student-centred modes of teaching and learning, the utilization of a wide variety of source materials, the connecting of past and present circumstances and on the investigation of contemporary issues.

Optional topics are intended to build on the skills and understandings of the mandatory core through the provision of an expansive range of inquiry topics. Whereas once resources like textbooks formed the basis or structure of a course of study, the new syllabus reflected up to date approaches to curriculum planning and teaching and encouraged teachers to interpret the curriculum for the students in the school and develop teaching resources to meet their learning needs. A single resource like a textbook could not adequately resource the course. This study sought to gather data on curriculum change by analysing resource acquisition and allocation during curriculum change.

Research methodology

Mixing methods

A mixed method approach was adopted, utilizing questionnaires, interviews, focus group discussions and a book room study. Questionnaires were sent to about 100 history teachers from all the four regions in Swaziland to determine preparation for the new curriculum. Interviews of approximately one hour duration were conducted with 20 heads of history departments drawn from the four regions, to determine readiness and types of resources available to support the curriculum change. Focus group discussions were also conducted with eight groups of students drawn from a variety of schools with different characteristics to determine how the students experienced the new curriculum in terms of resources, teacher preparedness and enjoyment of the study of history. The instruments further sought to locate specific concerns and coping behaviours. The book room study was carried out to determine the range, age and titles of texts and other resources being used to assist the teaching and learning of history at IGCSE.

Selecting research participants

Effort was made to include teachers and pupils from a wide range of schools from rural, semi urban and urban settings. The research was carried out in government schools, mission schools. Private schools were deliberately omitted in the study because most of these schools had different arrangements. Some had introduced the curriculum several years before it was introduced in the government schools. Hence, the schools and teachers involved in this study are representative of diverse educational environments; co-educational and single sex, with students from varying socio-economic backgrounds. A balance was also established in the sample between established and new schools. The age of the school, its context, and as a consequence its resources were seen as important factors in the resource focus of the study.

Amongst the established schools were Catholic, Anglican single sex schools; Evangelical and Methodist co- educational schools and two very large national schools. Of the 20 participating schools, several had history departments and some had collapsed history, geography and religious education into one social science department.

Data collection

Research questions were developed to ascertain the part played by text resources in implementation by eliciting specific data on:

- Teachers responses to the new syllabus
- New and existing resources to support curriculum change
- The range and number of new resources purchased by history departments
- The nature and extent of resource materials developed to support implementation
- Student responses to implementation of new curriculum

An important component of the research is the book room study. This aspect of the research involved a quantitative analysis of the resource stock held in the History Department in each of the 20 sample schools. A database was compiled on teaching materials, audio-visual, supplementary materials used to resource the new course. Publication details and numbers of titles and some patterns of use were also recorded.

Research outcomes

Placement of history

In the majority of schools surveyed, history was offered as a subject in 14 of the schools in Forms 1-3. In all the 20 schools history was offered in Forms 4-5. However, the number of students opting for history varied from school to school. In one urban high school with the enrolment of about 865, only 15 students from a class of 80 opted for history in Form IV. Similarly, in another semi-urban school with an enrolment of 786, only 10 in a class of 74 opted for history. In another large school with enrolment of about 1200 students, 80 students opted for history from a class of 200 in Form IV. In some of the schools studied, the head teachers decided on placement of students to different subjects. Whilst in some schools, students were allowed to choose though the final decision even in this case was with the head teachers. These decisions appear to have been grounded in matters connected with subject combinations and groupings, timetabling and availability of rooms. Teachers seemed to be unaware of the prior knowledge or historical leanings of their incoming students, particularly in Form IV. Placement in history at this level was not based on students' prior knowledge of the subject, unlike in other subjects.

Programming for curriculum change

There is documented evidence from the literature that successful implementation at school level is contingent upon planning and organization in the initial phases of change²⁸. It was found that the time spent on curriculum planning varied across the sample. Sixteen months after initial implementation of the IGCSE curriculum, some history departments are still struggling with decisions related to choice of textbooks and resources. The amount of time allocated to planning of change was also a major concern amongst teachers. Training was organized for three days before the curriculum was implemented. After that some schools made their own arrangements to empower teachers with teaching skills whilst many others relied on the training offered by CIE.

²⁸ Fullan, M. (1991). The new meaning of educational change. Columbia: Teachers College Press.

In these early days of implementation of the syllabus, interpretation tended to vary from teacher to teacher and from school to school. Frequently the old was melded with the new, resulting to hybrid interpretations – old syllabus/new syllabus. A series of problems associated with change were alluded to by the interviewees. These involved; inadequate consultation before implementation of curriculum, time, training, resource shortfalls, staff expertise, inadequate classrooms, large classes and many more. A number of interviewees indicated difficulties stemming from old mindsets about history and its teaching and recognised the need to rethink their discipline.

Resources used in syllabus implementation

In general, some schools opted to purchase a whole set of books that were on offer. Patterns of acquisition varied from school to school. What was evident from the responses was the fact that most history books on offer were very expensive in the new programme compared to the old programme. Of the 20 schools, 8 had purchased a set of the textbooks recommended during the training. Some schools took a plunge and bought the first text on offer, whilst others waited, made do with existing materials and only purchased after close examination of those available. Most of the rural schools had difficulty in buying textbooks because of the high cost of books. Most purchased one copy for use by the teacher, whilst in the urban schools textbooks were purchased by the schools and a rented system was in operation in some schools where students paid a fee for the subject. The books were owned by the school. There were also a number of textbooks that were identified which were published by people who wanted to take advantage of this curriculum change. These textbooks were also common in the rural schools where they were seen to be cheaper. Most of these books were poorly written and relied on past examiner's reports. These textbooks also appealed to some teachers because they claimed to be written for the new curriculum. In a number of cases, teachers used a range of criteria derived from their own pedagogical content knowledge in evaluating the textbooks. There was a tendency with the rural schools to seek advice on textbooks from some of the well established schools in the urban areas on the choice of resources and textbooks. These schools were willing to help and offer advice to teachers. This seemed to be the only assistance available to schools. The criteria included knowledge of specific content areas, knowledge of the needs of the learners within a given teaching/learning context and knowledge of history pedagogy.

Teacher's commentaries on published texts indicated a keen awareness of the limitations of materials from a teaching perspective. Conceptual and language based difficulties were cited as matters of concern among interviewees. A number of schools surveyed had purchased the first new texts to be recommended soon after the introduction of the syllabus. Interviewees tended to have misgivings over this initial purchase, and explained their actions as a 'stop gap' in meeting the immediate pressure of teacher and student need. *'I like it at the outset'*, remarked another history teacher. At the outset teachers tend to buy whatever is available, but then they develop a bit of insight into some of the textbooks that available. Staff wanted this as initial support, although the syllabus does not really encourage the use of one text.

Resource difficulties and dilemmas, and response to change

Twelve schools in the sample had difficulties in providing students with appropriate written support materials in history to cover the areas under study. Some of these schools relied on photocopying chapters from different texts from some schools. Teachers' responses to the

new syllabus ranged from resigned acceptance to enthusiastic approval. One way of conceptualizing such responses suggest that teachers initially have personal concerns about innovation, such as their capacity to meet new and uncertain demands and their personal commitment to change. After participating in the training workshops, and planning at the school level, considerations of this nature gave way to management matters and the implications of change for students and the school. Reactions of the interviewees to the IGCSE history syllabus document the presence of personal and management concerns.

At the individual level, some teachers cited difficulties in reconciling the varied approaches of the GCE 'O' Level and the IGCSE history syllabuses to the study and representations of history. Some felt the real tension between their personal beliefs about the nature and purposes of the discipline and the orientation of the IGCSE history syllabus. Others found the syllabus daunting, unfriendly, and were uncertain of where to begin the process of making sense of change. A number of teachers expressed dissatisfaction with the syllabus's inquiry – based approaches to teaching and learning. Some teachers took issue with the syllabus's failure to respect chronology by pointing out that some topics were broad and lacked continuity and coherence. Similarly, some of the content, problems and issues suggested by the new syllabus were viewed as problematic rather than an opportunity to explore the 'new'.

On the more pragmatic level of planning for change, half of the schools surveyed reported encountering difficulties. Teachers spoke of 'stumbling', of being 'time pressured' of their efforts as 'disjointed', 'lacking continuity and resources' and of 'plans that just didn't work out'. These comments appear to emerge from dissatisfaction with the manner in which the course was introduced. The teachers' association complained that the curriculum was imposed by the ministry of education. However, in schools where implementation had been well planned and organized, respondents reported that negativity or ambivalence had quickly given way to more positive perceptions, as teachers interacted with colleagues and became more acquainted with the syllabus.

An analysis of non history teachers' views of the syllabus, documents their concerns as resource rather than discipline based. Social science graduates teaching the course with no formal background or qualifications in history described it as 'not bad'. They assumed that the inquiry – based orientation of the syllabus reflected a 'generic approach' and that the strategies utilized in teaching geography and other social education subjects would compensate for poor subject matter knowledge. There was no recognition by the teachers involved of the subject specific pedagogy neither of history, nor of the fundamental role that subject matter knowledge play in effective teaching and learning.

These findings highlight research on the influence of teachers' disciplinary background on classroom teaching - that formal academic training in any given discipline predisposes the teacher to view other subject areas through the constricted lenses of their own discipline²⁹. The implications of these findings in the social science subjects are startling.

Access to resources

²⁹ Wilson, S. M. and Wineburg, S. S. (1958). Peering at history through different lenses: the role of disciplinary perspectives in teaching history. *Teacher's College Record*, 89, 4, 24-37.

Teachers utilized a number of strategies to locate support resources to support the syllabus. These included among others; active internet searching, networking, selecting from materials disseminated by publishers, booksellers, educational and curriculum authorities, subject inspectors, subject panels, and newspapers. The marketing of textbooks for the syllabus varied. Some schools had received visits from publishers such as MacMillan and Cambridge University Press. Most schools had visits from booksellers who brought samples of history books that could be purchased. The book inspection strategy allowed teachers to make informed choices on the suitability of resources for personal and student use. However, most respondents considered books suitable for the new syllabus to be too expensive in an environment of competing resource demands. The other problem was that it took a long time to get the books delivered once ordered.

Contact with professional associations

Professional associations offer teachers two potential avenues of support; involvement in professional development activities and access to teaching and learning materials. In-service is often the point of introduction to curriculum innovation and change. The Swaziland History Teachers Association played a key role in assisting teachers to implement the new curriculum, through the provision of in-service activities and curriculum materials. However, these activities were not sustained. There were no training sessions in the regions to familiarize teachers in the regions with the new syllabus.

One of the startling finding of the study was that in a significant number of schools there was a large number of teachers who had not participated in any professional development activity. The literature on curriculum innovation documents the importance of teacher to teacher contact in interpreting change and in promoting personal understanding. While this type of collegial behaviour may occur internally or on –site, the external facilitator or change agent can be crucial in any change³⁰. About forty percent of the teachers in the study were not members of SHTA and their schools had not paid the subscriptions for the year. In some schools individual teachers were members of SHTA and their schools had not subscribed as required. Many respondents talked of lack of support from principals who often refused to allow teachers to attend SHTA meetings and to pay for the subscription fees which could be used to organize workshops for teachers. While professional associations' materials were viewed positively by some teachers, those who did not participate did not benefit. These findings duplicate earlier studies on teachers' content needs and professional association in-services as sources for either supplementing or renewing their subject base³¹.

Conclusion

Some generalizations can be drawn from the data regarding the nature of effective patterns of change. It is suggested that there are three dimensions involving the implementation of any new program or policy – the use of new curriculum materials, new teaching methodologies and alterations to belief systems. If innovation is to be effectively adopted, a significant refocusing of these dimensions needs to occur³². A crucial element in facilitating this refocusing lies in sound leadership and group ownership of change. Unfortunately, these seemed to be lacking in the Swaziland case. This view is borne out in the findings where

³⁰ Hovelock, R. (1975). *The change agent's guide to innovation to education*.

³¹ Print, M. (1989). *The content needs of history teachers in Australia*: Cariberra: curriculum Development Centre.

³² Fullan, M. (1991). *The new meaning of educational change*. Columbia: Teachers' College.

heads of departments and principals had supported and involved all staff in the implementation process through the provision of time, resources and professional development, there was good progress made in terms of teaching the new history syllabus. Where levels of interaction between staff in the planning process were high, heads of department reported an increase in confidence, a willingness to try new teaching and learning approaches. It was maintained by most teachers and heads of department that history texts were not relied upon in the structuring of the lessons.

Responses to the syllabus were patchy. The data indicate that some initial negativity may be accounted for by teacher anxiety, resulting from changes to the traditional patterns of history placement in the secondary school curriculum and perceived resource dilemmas. Others commented favourably on the syllabus. One teacher talked of 'a refreshing approach to history'. Whilst others thought it was not good and that students found it 'Boring'. The polarity of these perceptions is not surprising when set against the backdrop of controversy which surrounded the introduction of the new syllabus³³.

Resources for implementation

Schools pursued a range of strategies to resource the new syllabus. These included;

- The purchase of new produced texts specifically developed for the course
- The reuse of existing resources in the schools that were seen as pertinent to the course
- The development of materials to meet content specific teaching and learning needs through collaboration between teachers and schools
- The purchase of non-text resources – audio visual, visual, etc

What was noticeable from the data was the fact that most history departments (70 percent) had limited budgets ranging from 1500 to 3000 Emalangeni for purchasing resources³⁴. It was clear that for the head of departments interviewed, the purchase of a junior text was a capital expenditure, not a recurrent one. It was an investment to be considered in dire circumstances. History departments in most schools were neglected, characterized by limited budgets, ageing resources and students with disparate learning needs. In one school there were about 10 titles that were reported as being used. The majority were very old texts some dating back to the mid seventies. Most of the old texts used in the old syllabus were on the average very old. Many of the old texts contain inaccurate information and did not respond to the approach promoted by the new syllabus.

This study identified the resources in book rooms and staffrooms used to support the implementation of the new syllabus and placed their acquisition and allocation in the wider context of response to curriculum change. Publishers have played an influential role in shaping and defining the response to the curriculum change by the publication of whole course texts. These texts are based on the publishers' assumptions about the range, direction, level and orientation to the study of history. The new inquiry based syllabus and its associated pedagogy require access to a wide range of resources. Teachers and learners require access to a wide variety of teaching and learning materials drawn from the subject to meet the inquiry needs of the syllabus and the diverse learning needs of their students. To

³³ Young, C. (1993). Change and innovation in history teaching: A perspective of the NSW experience.

³⁴ One Lilangeni is equivalent to one South African Rand.

achieve these ends would require a significant increase in resources allocated to the introduction of the new syllabus.

Students voiced out their serious concerns regarding the new syllabus. Though the majority viewed the changes in approach as improving their perception towards the subject, they however commented about their teachers' lack of confidence in teaching the course. "*our teacher told us that the syllabus was imposed and it demands a lot of work. She tells us she there are no resources*", remarked one of the students. Several students raised their frustrations regarding the lack of teaching and learning resources and this affected their confidence for the coming examinations. "*We are not sure what we will write in the exams*", remarked one student.

The research also shows that even though schools were dissatisfied with the costs of some of the texts recommended for the syllabus, they expended the majority of their very limited budgets on them to provide some core reference material for the course. Even so the limited funding for resources meant that the few class sets of texts that could be afforded and used were used heavily in the classroom. With little reference material on offer, commercial textbooks can become the defacto curriculum³⁵ and this is how publishers mediate curriculum change. Inadequate funding for the resources required for adequate curriculum implementation restricts access to a wider range of materials and resources for the needs of the learners. For this reason, many schools produced their own tailored texts not subject to the review and expertise of the publishing industry. The study shows a dysfunction between the industry producing resources and the schools that need them; and for the representation of the discipline in the secondary classroom.

These new changes were intended to change the teaching of history from the traditional modes to much more learner centred methods that engage the learners in the subject. This is a paradigm shift that has great potential for improving learner perceptions of the subject and improving the status of the subject in schools in Swaziland. Establishing value, relevance, meaning, connecting students emotionally to history, giving students the responsibility for their own learning, analysing, evaluating and synthesising information, are all powerful strategies for improving history teaching in schools. However, teachers who have operated for a long time under the traditional teaching methods need help by empowering them with appropriate teaching skills through continuous in-service workshops so that they can handle change positively. Good teaching leads students to display their own best qualities. However, this calls for change in attitudes and thinking and teaching. Teacher preparation courses should engage prospective teachers in these skills as a teaching approach to familiarize the prospective teachers with the methods that will engage the learners in history classrooms. There is also need for continuous in- service teacher training for history teachers. History is a dynamic subject and there is always new information coming on best practices which can be used by teachers. The Swaziland scenario shows the seriousness of the problem when a new curriculum is introduced before adequately orienting teachers in it.³⁶ It also shows that introducing a new syllabus is costly and requires adequate financial resources to be used for

³⁵ Marsh, C. and Huberman, M. (1984). Disseminating curricula: A look from the top down. *Journal of Curriculum studies*, 16 (1), pp 13-23.

³⁶ Nyakutse, G. and Mazibuko, E. Z. (2007). Teaching and Assessment skills of senior secondary school teachers: A study of geography, history and religious education teacher skills in Swaziland.

acquiring the needed resources. Where there is lack of support, teachers will disown the curriculum. Their lack of content knowledge and pedagogical skills is likely to affect the quality of teaching and learning and subsequently students' attitude towards the subject.