

CHAPTER NINE

KEY FINDINGS: THEORY AND RESEARCH ON MEMORY, IDENTITY AND THE POST-CONFLICT HISTORY CURRICULUM

Introduction

The focus of this study was an examination of the processes of change in two societies emerging from violent conflict and the ways in which each sought to construct a post-conflict memory and identity, politically and educationally, that signalled a re-imagined society. Rather than formulating a theory of change to guide the investigation, I sought to develop a theory of change from the emerging research data. A basic assumption I did hold from the beginning was that education policy and history education are both political and ideological and that there would be critical intersections between the politics of memory and identity and history education. In this concluding chapter, I reflect on and assess the data from the two case studies, highlighting the main findings, suggesting a possible theory of change and identifying a major area for future research.

This study was not intended to be a comparison of the conflicts or trauma. It is neither possible nor ethical to attempt to make comparisons of suffering or to suggest that there might be a hierarchy of trauma. Where I did engage with the conflict, it was to analyse the process of the construction of the conflict narrative; to examine the extent to which the narrative may have contributed to the conflict; and the way in which the post-conflict state engaged with the conflict narrative in the process of constructing a new memory and identity that embodied the values of the new state. This is essentially an historical approach – understanding where we come from helps us to understand who we are in the present and provides insight into the nature of the struggles for reinvention. The comparison was of the articulation between the political processes of re-imagining the ‘nation’ after conflict and construction of education policy; and the extent to which new meanings of the past were constructed in the school history curriculum.

What became evident during the course of this research were the complexities involved in undertaking a comparative study. My assumption at the beginning of the study was that research carried out in Western democracies could not simply be transferred to an African context. However, I would argue that specific contexts are critical in post-conflict societies, and that apart from broad principles, policies cannot simply be transferred from one society to the next, even within a continent. This has implications for policy borrowing. The creation of knowledge is context related and influenced by political and ideological motives. To be able to recognise the complex layers of disputed values and ideologies in a post-conflict, divided society requires an understanding of the nature of the conflict and an attempt, in Geertz's terms, to discover who people think they are, what they think they are doing, and to what end they think they are doing it. This provides an ongoing challenge for a researcher as outsider.¹

A number of broad principles emerged during the research. Firstly, it is critical for those in all levels of the education system to recognise the extent to which identity-based conflict damages all of those whose attitudes and values were shaped by the conflict. In South Africa and Rwanda, the education system and curriculum were designed to educate differently: there were those who were considered to have been born to rule, and those educated for manual labour.² In South Africa stereotypes and attitudes towards 'the other' were exacerbated by geographical segregation that resulted in very little contact across the race divides during apartheid, a situation that largely continues today in the poorer areas.³ These deeply held 'beliefs' have therefore had few opportunities to be mitigated. In Rwanda, Hutu and Tutsi lived in

¹ Geertz, C. (1999) *A Life of Learning*, Charles Homer Haskins Lecture for 1999, American Council of Learned Societies, Occasional Paper No. 45

² This was the rationale of Bantu Education. See chapter 4. For Rwanda, see IRDP: ii

³ Mamphela Ramphele in her recent book, *Laying Ghosts to Rest*, notes that a 'complex web of factors drives the perpetuation of stereotypes on all sides of the colour divide. Black and white South Africans' views of one another are distorted by their successful separation into different worlds. This is particularly true at the lower socio-economic levels. Many black people have not been exposed to white people as ordinary human beings with strengths and frailties. They know white people only as authority figures...Likewise, many white people have little experience of black people as fellow humans, with the same capacity for joy and pain. Their experience of black people has often been limited to contact with them as menial workers.' Ramphele, M. (2008) *Laying Ghosts to Rest: Dilemmas of the Transformation in South Africa*. Cape Town: Tafelberg: 79

close proximity to one another, but deep-seated colonial legacies of Tutsi privilege and Hutu oppression, ethnic quotas in education and a conflict narrative that could be manipulated in times of crisis, reinforced notions of difference.

Secondly, peace agreements, whether negotiated or imposed after military victory, do not by themselves end the identity-based conflict or change the feelings of fear, mistrust and hostility that identity-based conflict creates. This means that the re-emergence of conflict and violence in various forms remains probable after such agreements. South Africa and Rwanda are societies still in conflict although the ways in which the conflict is expressed now may be different. In South Africa the legacy of unresolved conflict and trauma can be detected in the continued violent responses to, for example, issues of non-delivery of government, such as housing, or increased fees at tertiary institutions. National news bulletins talk of university students, bus commuters, members of communities ‘going on the rampage’ and ‘trashing’ property, buses or trains when ‘grievances are not met’. Openly articulated racism seems to be increasing in schools, universities and on radio talk shows.⁴ The current perceptions of ‘others’, such as refugees and poor immigrants from neighbouring states, expressed in xenophobic violence, is as much about unresolved trauma of the violence of the 1980s as it is about competition for economic resources amongst the very poor in South Africa.

In Rwanda the continuing unresolved conflict is masked by the discourse of national unity. There are Human Rights Watch reports of police and local officials imposing collective punishments as part of the measure for increased protection of genocide survivors – fines, forced labour, and even beatings – on persons who lived near places where survivors had suffered property loss or damage.⁵ All discourse about

⁴ An example of talk radio is *Cape Talk 567*. Responses from the public to issues such as the recent xenophobia and the responses to callers revealed the continued racism from a wide spectrum of South Africans. Examples of blogs that have revealed crass racism include the responses to *The Times* [South Africa] *online* columnists, in particular to the articles of Jonathan Jansen. Examples of violent responses include the burning and trashing public buses because disputes are not settled to the liking of the commuters; students trashing university property when issues arise; the recent xenophobia; stabbings in schools; racist murders committed by white youths; not to mention the high murder rate and crime rate in general. One of the causal factors I believe is the unresolved violence of the 1980s.

⁵ Human Rights News, New York, July 24, 2007

ethnic/racial identity has been silenced and those who do attempt to engage in conversations around identity are accused of fostering genocide ideology. However, ethnic awareness and even prejudice continues to surface in schools. During the research carried out in 2006 by the Institute for Research and Dialogue for Peace (IRDP), teachers admitted to having separated Hutu and Tutsi children in the class. Some had also asked pupils publicly about their ethnic membership.⁶ More recently, in 2008), there has been government anxiety about the reported increase of genocide ideology in schools which resulted in the dismissal of the education minister earlier this year.⁷

Thirdly, the educational and socio-economic inequalities that form a major part of the legacy of conflict, need to be taken into consideration not only by policy makers, but more importantly, by teacher educators. Evidence from this research suggests that it is critical to engage with ongoing identity-based conflict and personal legacies of the conflict, creating structures to bridge those divides, particularly when teachers are expected to deliver a new curriculum that requires them to teach new values and change their practice. But equally important for change, is addressing the depth of subject knowledge and classroom confidence that was eroded by the identity-based conflicts. These observations are based on critical findings from this study and will be the focus of the rest of this chapter.

Key findings

In this section I discuss a number of key findings relating to the principles that emerged from the research. The South African data tends to be richer than the Rwandan, since this was the main focus of my research and I was situated within the change processes. South Africa has also been through a deeply nuanced process of change that was contested on a number of levels: politically and educationally; nationally and regionally, and which was complicated by a deeply divided society that

⁶ IRDP (2006) *History and Conflicts in Rwanda*. Kigali: IRDP:197

⁷ Reports in the Kigali-based *The New Times* during February 2008. For example, an article in *The New Times* of February 7, 2008 states that 'genocide ideology still exists in school and there is no doubt about that...In research conducted...late last year, it was found out that teachers and students in some schools were planting revisionism in several forms.'

both consciously and unconsciously carried the ‘burden’ of what the world regarded as a miracle transition. Certainly reconciliation in those first years of democracy had to be an imperative, but it submerged the discourses of the past and race – both of which re-emerged with a changing political climate after the second elections in 1999. This has had particular implications for education.

Rwanda’s transition has been carefully controlled by the RPF government, which exercises power through emotion both politically and through education policy. The Rwandan ‘miracle’ is the illusion of political and economic stability which is masking the continued legacy of ethnicity. The discourse of unity is intended to bring about reconciliation. However, this is submerging the discourse of ethnicity which, if psychoanalysts are correct, will resurface in a renewed cycle of violence. The researchers for the Institute for Research and Dialogue agree. They criticised the history taught in the *ingando* camps as denying ‘what was and still is the place of ethnic group in the Rwandan collective consciousness’, and further stated that ‘denying the concept of ethnic identity in attempting to build an alternative Rwandan inclusive identity...does not match reality and tends to obstruct expression within the Rwandan society’.⁸

The research data from Rwanda has enabled me to engage with the findings that emerged from the South African research through an expanded lens of post-conflict possibilities. This, in turn, expanded my thinking in a way that a single country case study may not have.

A first major finding to emerge from this study shows that the way in which conflict is settled has implications for curricular knowledge. This may seem self-evident; however it is an aspect of research in post-conflict education that has not received sufficient attention. The conflicts in South Africa and Rwanda ended in very different ways. In South Africa there were hard fought negotiations from 1991 to 1994 which happened during a period of sometimes extreme violence that often threatened their progress. The negotiations were therefore not peaceful: most politically related

⁸ IRDP (2006): 200

deaths, 14 000, took place in the four years leading up to the first elections in April 2004.⁹ At times, negotiations stalled.¹⁰ But the determination of the negotiators on both sides to reach settlement resulted in a peaceful election and transition to democracy. On the other hand, military victory in Rwanda left the Tutsi-led Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) in undisputed control. The unquestionable horror of the genocide and the feelings of guilt of the international community for failing to intervene timeously to prevent or stop the genocide, has, some would argue, resulted in a ‘genocide credit’ that the new regime in Kigali exploited in the years immediately after 1994.¹¹ This has been used to silence potential international and internal criticism of the increasing authoritarianism of the Rwandan government. These very different country contexts have influenced the ways in which each society engaged in the politics of memory and identity, as well as memory and identity in the history curriculum.

In South Africa the nature of the negotiated settlement and the resultant political compromise created a particular context for the creation of the education policies of particularly the early phase of transition. South Africa’s first White Paper on Education and Training was a fiercely contested document. The ANC and its Education Portfolio Committee regarded the White Paper as a crucial document that would signal the demise of the apartheid education system and celebrate the ‘victory of education struggles’.¹² The intense resistance of the National Party politicians when it was released for public comment led to a compromise which moderated the language of the policy, though without giving ground on the goals of the White Paper. The need to engage in *realpolitik* at that particular time was expressed by Blade Nzimande:

⁹ Figures quoted in Ramphele (2008): 38

¹⁰ Notably in 1992 when negotiations stalled in May 1992 over disputes about majority rule, power sharing and regional powers; and the threat to the whole process when Chris Hani was murdered in 1993. Morris, M. (2004) *Every Step of the Way: The Journey to Freedom in South Africa*. Cape Town: HSRC Press/Ministry of Education; Sparks, A. (1994) *Tomorrow is Another Country: The Inside Story of South Africa’s Negotiated Revolution*. Cape Town: Struik Book Distributors.

¹¹ Reyntjens, F (2004) Rwanda, ten years on: From Genocide to Dictatorship in *African Affairs*, 103, 177-210; Mamdani also refers to this in his book *When Victims become Killers* (2001)

¹² Blade Nzimande, Head of the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee at the time, quoted in Christie (2008) *Changing Schools in South Africa: Opening the Doors of Learning*. Cape Town: Heinemann: 157

It is important to understand our actions as ANC parliamentarians in the context of the times. Remember these were the days of the Government of National Unity (GNU). It was important at that time to secure the transition. The situation was explosive and we were on the brink of civil war. Our policies were therefore crafted in a context where ensuring a smooth transition was as important as developing policies for social transformation.¹³

This had implications for history education during the early transition period. The reluctance to make radical alterations to the old apartheid syllabi during 1995, and retaining the textbooks, could be seen as a compromise. Certainly apartheid and resistance was included in the interim syllabus, but the Minister's insistence that the changes to the old syllabi should not entail new textbooks not only left the Afrikaner nationalist interpretation of history education intact, but also meant that some teachers, usually white Afrikaans-speaking, could choose not to teach that section, because of a reluctance to engage with a difficult past. Other teachers, usually black, were unable to teach that section because of the lack of appropriate resources. They also felt more comfortable with the familiar content.¹⁴

The situation in post-genocide Rwanda was completely different. After the RPF victory, any policy decisions could be made without consultation with representatives of the previous regime. While policy directions often had to take the requirements of international donor agencies into account, the language of the policy documents was uncontested. What emerges from political and educational policy documents are contrasting discourses: the positive discourse of national unity located in pre-colonial Rwandan values and a negative threatening discourse, clearly employing the politics of emotion strengthened by the 'genocide credit' that aims to prevent public criticism. The key policy document, Vision 2020, provides an example of this emotional use of

¹³ Nzimande, B. (2001) Inside Parliament: making laws and contesting policy in South African education. In Sayed, Y. & Jansen, J. (eds) *Implementing Educational Policies: the South African Experience*. Cape Town: University of Cape Town Press, quoted in Christie (2008):157-158

¹⁴ It was my experience at least in the Western Cape as a subject specialist and as a Grade 12 provincial examiner. It was also information shared at the annual inter-provincial examination meetings with the external moderator.

language. The powerful statement of rebirth, ‘Rwanda is rising from its ashes, healing its wounds and rifts, thinks of its future and formulates its aspirations’, is followed closely by the negative statement of ‘the risk of political instability born from divisionist speeches of some politicians’.¹⁵ Many of the documents, including the history and civic education curricula, set the ideal of unity and positive Rwandan values against threats of ‘divisionism, negationism, negative forces and genocide ideology’.

Secondly, the nature of the emergent state sets the limits as well as possibilities for curriculum change. The compromise politics in South Africa provided the context for a continuing tacit understanding of compromise in education. I have suggested a number of reasons for the omission of history education from Curriculum 2005, but it could also be argued that it reflected a tacitly understood compromise during a fragile political period when there was a deep need for reconciliation. Omitting history avoided confrontation, or as Hoffman has put it, avoided a potential clash of ‘martyrological memories’.¹⁶

Avoiding the past in the curriculum allowed for the expression of new values and a national identity located in a vision of an economically prosperous nation. Curriculum 2005’s emphasis on the economic nation enabled policy makers to insert global economic discourses into education policy as a means of re-positioning South Africa in the global and regional economy. In an early national Department of Education background information document intended for educators, in answer to the rhetorical question posed - why are paradigm shifts important? – the answer was that ‘in our education system this shift is inevitable because there is a need for more learning on global awareness’.¹⁷ The ‘irrelevancy of the previous curriculum’ it was noted further on in the document, was ‘illustrated by the need of successful modern economies for citizens with a strong foundation of general education and who could move flexibly between occupations’.¹⁸ The integration of education and training was following a

¹⁵ Republic of Rwanda (2002) *2020 Vision*

¹⁶ Hoffman (2004)

¹⁷ DoE (1997) *Outcomes Based Education in South Africa: Background information for educators*:7

¹⁸ Ibid: 10

current ‘major international trend in curriculum development and the reform of qualification structures’.¹⁹ Highlighting the deficiencies in the apartheid education system in terms of appropriateness for the global economy, and re-imagining the identity of the nation in terms of a prosperous modern economy, was at the time less sensitive than locating identity in the past.

A new official narrative of the past was in any event being constructed in another, more public ideological space – the Truth and Reconciliation Commission – which could serve to satisfy the victims’ need for voice and recognition. This was a more dramatic demonstration of past evil and in the short term reached many more first generation South Africans than a curriculum revision would have done. It could be argued that the TRC hearings forced a greater number of white South Africans to recognise the evil in the former regime than happened in Germany in the first decades after the end of the Third Reich when there was a general complicity of silence and denial.²⁰ The TRC did not prevent denial among white South Africans; merely that it ‘reduced the number of lies that could be circulated unchallenged in public discourse’.²¹ On the other hand, the TRC was itself a product of compromise at a number of levels. Not only did the amnesty provisions prevent the alienation of the Security Forces, but focussing on the main perpetrators moved the attention away from the complicity of the majority of white South Africans in a system that the United Nations had characterised as a crime against humanity. Regarded in the light of reconciliation, being able to put aside personal feeling of guilt enabled more white South Africans to feel reasonably comfortable with a government that had a black majority.

In Rwanda, the limits and possibilities were set by the RPF victory after the genocide and the legacy of the genocide. While victory may seem to have provided possibility, the minority government’s fear of true democracy and its dependence on international

¹⁹ Ibid: 11

²⁰ Jarausch, K.H. & Geyer, M. (2003) *Shattered Past: Reconstructing German Histories* Princeton: Princeton University Press; Herf, J (1997) *Divided Memory: The Nazi Past in the two Germanys* Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press

²¹ Ignatieff, M. (1998) *The Warrior’s Honor: Ethnic War and the Modern Conscience*. New York: Metropolitan Books: 173. Quoted in Cole (2007b): 119

aid created a tension in education. International aid requires target setting, progress towards Education for All, and Millennium Development Goals. But more and more, development agencies also require progress towards citizenship and democracy education and interactive teaching methodologies that encourage critical thinking. While the language of democracy may be found in Rwandan education documents, in reality, there is a fear that if truly free and fair elections were held, Rwandans would vote according to ethnic allegiances. This implies a Hutu victory at the election polls.

Thirdly, and particularly related to the South African data, the research provided evidence of the impact that changing ministerial personalities can have on curriculum processes. While this could be said to apply to any country, I suggest that ministerial agency in countries in transition has greater impact. The energetic pace of change unleashed by the second Minister of Education, Kader Asmal, contrasted sharply with the lacklustre performance of the first Minister of Education, Sibusiso Bengu. However, their exercise of agency needs to be understood within the particular political contexts, which provided both opportunities and constraints. The ‘exile factor’ in political appointments played a significant role in early political appointments which had a number of policy implications.²² Bengu had been absent from the country for more than ten years which, it has been argued, meant that he was hampered by a lack of knowledge of policy debates in the run-up to 1994.²³ The choice of educator reform strategies and Curriculum 2005 demonstrated a lack of in-depth knowledge of practitioners on the ground and the deep inequalities amongst schools. As previously suggested, Curriculum 2005 could also have been partly shaped by the political climate of the first four years of democracy characterised by compromise, reconciliation and symbolic change statements

Equally, the political contexts provided opportunities and constraints for Kader Asmal. Each of these periods was characterised by contrasting policy networks: a labour-dominated network that produced Curriculum 2005 and the academic network

²² This is something that Rwanda and South Africa had in common. In Rwanda the exiles, particularly from Uganda, are dominant in political and educational spheres. It would have been interesting to have been able to explore this comparison further.

²³ Ramphele (2008): 157

that enabled the ‘strengthening and streamlining’ of Curriculum 2005 to take the particular form that it did. The changing political discourse within the ANC and the considerable support outside of the political domain for a curriculum revision, opened the way for Asmal to set up and work through ancillary academic networks to effect the re-insertion of history education into the curriculum. However, his curriculum reform would have been more far-reaching had his move to radically reform outcomes-based education not been blocked by the ANC ideologues.²⁴

Fourthly, again emerging from South Africa, the character of regional or provincial politics and capacity has an impact on the pace of change. The differences in the capacities of the provinces meant that curriculum implementation did not unfold equally. My experience of curriculum processes came from being situated within the Western Cape Education Department. The Western Cape inherited viable education structures from the old white Cape Education Department and the education section of the coloured House of Representatives. The institutional memory inherited from both was overwhelmingly authoritarian. The new Western Cape Education Department (WCED) was better resourced in terms of available finance, basic equipment such as computers and motor vehicles than the majority of the other provinces. Also, subject advisers in the Western Cape generally had more professionalism and subject knowledge than many advisers in the other provinces. While schools in the Western Cape range from overcrowded, often dysfunctional schools where teachers still do not spend the time they should in the classrooms to extremely well-resourced state schools, and even better resourced independent schools; from urban to rural schools; this does not compare with the poverty and majority of poor rural schools in a province such as the Eastern Cape.

Politically, the Western Cape was out of step with most of the rest of South Africa during the first phase of transition. The National Party retained control of the province, largely through the support of coloured voters. The only other province not to have an ANC majority was KwaZulu-Natal which was held by the Zulu-based Inkatha Freedom Party. Given its history, the politics of identity are more complex

²⁴ Ibid: 177

than in the rest of South Africa. While whites were always at the top of the racial hierarchy, the Western Cape was also historically a ‘coloured preferential’ region for housing and jobs. The migration of black South African in search of employment to the Western Cape after 1994, has contributed to complex political, social, economic and racial tensions.

The politics of the province and the relative curriculum expertise within the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) gave rise to particular dynamics in the relationship between the WCED and the national Department of Education. Firstly, there was a mutual political suspicion which was not generally overtly expressed but in the WCED manifested itself both in defensiveness in relation to national DoE and in a drive to demonstrate compliance with the implementation of the new education policies. Secondly, on the part of the national DoE and other provinces there was an almost palpable antagonism towards officials from the Western Cape. This became evident in inter-provincial working groups during implementation phase of Curriculum 2005. This was often expressed in the immediate open rejection of any Western Cape contribution or more passive ignoring of any input from the Western Cape.²⁵

The resources available within the WCED, the curriculum expertise, and the desire to be seen to be implementing the new curriculum, meant that the introduction of Curriculum 2005 and the orientation of teachers to the new curriculum were carried out with a greater measure of efficiency than in more rural and under-resourced provinces.²⁶ This does not mean that teachers received the depth of support needed for implementation; rather that every teacher in the province could be reached in a series of orientation workshops. It also does not mean that there was a differentiated orientation programme which took into account the different needs of the schools and teachers to address the legacy of the inequalities embedded in the apartheid education system. Implicit in all orientation and implementation programmes was that

²⁵ I experienced this on a number of occasions as did the majority of my colleagues.

²⁶ Gauteng province generally matched the Western Cape in terms of resources and curriculum expertise, although politically it was very different.

curriculum advisers and teachers were starting from the same level of understanding and ability. This was patently not the case. It had major implications for the way in which the curriculum officials understood the new curriculum and carried out the orientation and subsequent training on the one hand, and teachers received and understood the new curriculum, on the other. Orientation to the new curriculum was organised on a cascade model: curriculum officials received training from the national Department of Education and were then expected to cascade to the teachers. The superficial exposure of officials to the new curriculum, led to a shallow understanding and therefore an inability to engage in any real depth with debates around the new curriculum in teacher workshops. They often resorted to emphasising the ‘slogans’ that became integrally associated with Curriculum 2005.²⁷ From the first workshops to introduce Curriculum 2005, outcomes-based education was equated with group work, teachers as facilitators, teachers as resource-creators and teaching and learning that is ‘learner-based and learner-paced’ – nothing about understanding the content or nature of the new learning areas.²⁸

There were enough curriculum officials in the Western Cape Education Departments available to carry out relatively extensive monitoring of the implementation in the Foundation Phase during the first year of the implementation of Curriculum 2005 in 1998. However, as none of the officials had entry into classrooms when teaching was actually happening, it was not possible to gain reliable evidence of the understanding that teachers had of the new curriculum or the extent to which their practice had changed in relation to the requirements of the curriculum. The monitoring took the form of discussions with the teachers once a week after school.

By contrast, Rwanda is a small country with more centralised control over education. Theoretically this should facilitate more efficient implementation and ensure greater conformity from teachers. Certainly, although access to schooling is not yet universal, ethnic quotas that controlled entry to all levels of education have been eradicated.

²⁷ Examples include: Design Down, Deliver Up! Learner Based and Learner Paced! Be a guide on the side not a sage on the stage!

²⁸ Interviews with teachers during the monitoring processes of the WCED – February – June 1998.

However, post-genocide education has continued to be influenced by colonial systems through the return of Tutsi refugees. They have brought models of educational policy and practice from neighbouring countries such as Uganda and Tanzania, and a number of these policies have their origins in British colonial models.²⁹ Tensions have emerged around teaching methods that reflect ethnicity. Hutu teachers are more likely to encourage debates about history and the Rwandan past in their classroom than Tutsi teachers.³⁰

A last major finding from the research is that the implementation of curriculum in South Africa was carried out without the normal structures of supervision and control that are generally accepted as part of education structures in most countries. This had major implications on the way in which the implementation happened in the provinces, as well as on actual classroom implementation.

At the level of policy implementation, the decentralised nature of the education system means that the national Department of Education does not have real power to enforce compliance in provinces. Policy is developed at national level. Provincial education departments have the task of implementing policy, creating provincial policy documents that are intended to make the content of policy more understandable at teacher level. This inability to ensure full compliance means that provinces can either avoid implementation of policy or ‘provincialise’ policy, subverting the original intentions of the policy document. During the orientation phase of Curriculum 2005 in the Western Cape, when generic information was being conveyed to parents and teachers, little change was made to the information in the national documents when provincial manuals were developed. However, when Curriculum 2005 was implemented in the intermediate (Grades 4 – 6) and senior (Grades 7 – 9) phases in the Western Cape, the Human and Social Sciences curriculum advisers, all history or geography subject specialists, reorganised the content of the learning area so that the subjects would be discernable to teachers. It was hoped that this would help to allay

²⁹ Schweisfurth, M. (2006) Global and cross-national influences on education in post-genocide Rwanda. *Oxford Review of Education* Vol. 32, No. 5: 697-709

³⁰ Freedman, et al (2004): 260-261

some of the anxiety expressed by subject teachers and gave what we as a learning area team felt was a more educationally sound structure to the learning area.³¹

Since the late 1980s, there has been no mechanism for monitoring curriculum implementation at classroom level which has major implications for the development of a community of practice. This is a legacy of the mass action of the 1980s when many schools across the country refused to allow education officials access to schools and classrooms. After 1983 black and coloured schools increasingly became sites of struggle against apartheid. As part of the protest against apartheid education and the authoritarian control exercised by the education departments, subject advisers were prevented from entering schools and classrooms. The largest teacher union, SADTU, was formed during this period, taking up the political struggle against apartheid. A legacy of this period has been SADTU's refusal to support classroom visits by education officials which was then extended to other teacher unions. SADTU's continued refusal to accept classroom visits and its protection of under-performing teachers has resulted in deepening the inequalities in teaching and learning. In a harsh judgement of this action, Ramphele has argued that:

By shielding under-qualified teachers, Sadtu is inadvertently completing the job Verwoerd could not finish [when he introduced Bantu Education in 1953].³²

This is a sensitive issue that still has not been satisfactorily resolved and has had particular consequences for implementation of the new curriculum. Without on-site supervision in schools and classrooms, teachers are able to ignore the new curriculum, continuing to teach in the old, more familiar, ways. Not only has this meant that no common practice has developed, but that the unequal provision of curriculum content in schools has been deepened. In the former white schools with well-qualified teachers, 'old familiar ways' include good subject knowledge, access to a wide range of resources, and increasingly interactive teaching methods. In former black schools where many teachers are under-qualified, content transmission continues as a safety-net for the teachers who are insecure in the new content knowledge. This has had

³¹ WCED Human and Social Sciences training documents from 1998.

³² Ramphele (2008): 174

devastating implications for yet another generation of young South Africans who have been unable to access an education of reasonable quality. Evidence of these disparities is seen in the international literacy and numeracy results. South Africa regularly performs below even neighbouring countries such as Mozambique. The country also has the greatest difference between the top performing schools and the lowest performing schools.³³ It is also seen in the matric history results, a subject that demands high literacy levels and the ability to transform knowledge and express it clearly. Thousands of black students continue to fail the final history examination, unable to access the question papers in a second or third language, and unable to express their understanding in a written form in that language.³⁴

The next section of this chapter turns to a more specific discussion of curriculum and teacher development within the context of the principles and findings discussed above.

Towards a theory of curriculum change in post-conflict societies

This study has shown that educational change in post-conflict societies is a long, uneven and complex process that is conditioned by the political processes which end conflict as well as the nature of the emergent state. Within this context, the capacities of national as well as regional actors need to be taken into account. This includes the new and inherited bureaucracies and those who are the targets of change, the teachers. At a bureaucratic level the tensions between the inherited bureaucracy and the new political appointees needs to be mediated; at all levels there is an unevenness in terms of curriculum and subject knowledge that needs to be addressed; and equally at all levels there is the legacy of the past that continues to inform the way in which people interact with and respond to one another and the way in which curriculum is engaged in the classroom.

³³ There is a discussion of the results of the TIMMS and SACMEQ tests in Christie, P., Butler, D. & Potterton, M. (2007) *Schools that Work: Ministerial Committee Report to the Minister of Education*: 36 This is also discussed in Ramphela (2008): 179-180

³⁴ My experience as a provincial examiner and marker, and national moderator of Grade 12 history.

When any new education policies are introduced it is always intended that teachers will have to change – the way they teach, their content knowledge and their values and attitudes. What became clear in this study was that the ongoing legacy of the conflict which includes trauma, identity issues and disparities of education, critical issues which should be taken into account, are seldom, if ever, considered. In stable democracies it is generally assumed that teachers move from a more or less equal basis. At this level in a post-conflict society in which the conflict not only created identity-based divisions but systematically created educational and social inequalities, this is never the case. Demands for change need to address both the gap in knowledge and skills, as well as the deeply internalised personal legacy of racialised identities. So change needs to take into account the teachers’ experiences of the conflict, where they teach, what has formed their knowledge and understanding of subject matter and methodologies, and the depth of their content knowledge. Evidence from the implementation processes in South Africa for both Curriculum 2005 and the revised curriculum shows that that neither of these aspects was adequately addressed. Nor were they addressed in Rwanda. Significantly, a recent report on South African schools, *Schools that Work*, noted that:

historical legacies within the system may diminish, but are *unlikely to disappear of their own accord* as time passes, unless there are targeted interventions to address them.³⁵

Critically this should include subject content knowledge. While a good grasp of subject knowledge is not the key to changing classroom practice, teachers who are insecure in their subject knowledge are less likely to feel confident enough to venture from their tried and tested classroom methodologies.³⁶

However, in a society emerging from identity-based internecine conflict, theories of change need to move beyond the formal curriculum to take into account the historical meanings of identity within the national context, as well as the aftermath of trauma.

³⁵ Christie, et. al. (2007): 21 Authors’ emphasis.

³⁶ Newton Stoffels in the first chapter of his PhD Dissertation provides a comprehensive survey of literature with regard to changing teacher practice. Stoffels, N.T. (2004) *Sir, On What Page is the Answer? Exploring Teacher Decision-making in the Context of Complex Curriculum Change*, University of Pretoria.

Mamphela Ramphele, reflecting on South African society, today wrote of the traumatic legacy of the apartheid society:

we still struggle to find closure on many issues related to the past. This is in part because the wounds are still raw. It is also because we have difficulty acknowledging the depths of our trauma. Our wounds fester partly as a result of our denial of their extent and their impact on attempts to transform our society. Past wounds have a long history...Forging an identity as a non-racial, non-sexist, egalitarian society, the kind of society to which we committed ourselves in our constitution, requires us to lay to rest the ghosts of racism, sexism, ethnic chauvinism and authoritarianism. These are stubborn ghosts that will not be easily exorcised.³⁷

The traumatic legacy of genocide in Rwanda has also not been addressed, and continues to be a factor in schools. Teachers report of withdrawn, non-communicative pupils, of children with mental health problems, and children afraid to approach one another, fearing that Hutu pupils were *interahamwe*. As one teacher said, ‘these days teaching pupils at primary school is one of the most awful jobs in existence’.³⁸ It is felt that the Ministry of Education in Rwanda is concerned only with the material well-being of pupils, limiting itself to financial matters and checking on head teachers and ignoring moral and intellectual support.³⁹

A society emerging from conflict is relationally fragile. Rebuilding what has fallen apart is centrally the process of rebuilding relational spaces that hold society together,⁴⁰ and lasting peace requires changes in the attitudes of people in each group towards the other and changes in ways of handling conflict.⁴¹ Personal change in societies emerging from identity-based conflict has a very specific context – that of

³⁷ Ramphele (2008): 15; 25

³⁸ Human Rights Watch (2001): 83

³⁹ Ibid: 82

⁴⁰ Lederach, J. P. (2005) *The Moral Imagination: The Art and Soul of Building Peace*. Oxford, MA: Oxford University Press

⁴¹ Staub, E., Pearlman, L.A., Gubin, A., Hagengimana, A. (2005) Healing, Reconciliation, Forgiving and the Prevention of violence after Genocide or Mass Killing: an Intervention and its Experimental Evaluation in Rwanda. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology*, Vol. 24, No. 3: 297-334

confronting the divided identities and mental models that all constructed of ‘the other’ as a result of the conflict, and of coming to terms with the traumatic legacy. Deep personal change cannot happen in isolation, it occurs within the rebuilt relational space in which meaningful interaction can take place.

What is currently being demanded of history teachers in South Africa is that they become change agents for democracy with little regard being given to the years of conditioning into the attitudes and prejudices under apartheid, and the extent to which the trauma is still raw and the ghosts of the past are refusing to be exorcised. The extent of the identity-dilemma and the traumatic legacy of the past have been expressed in comments made by teachers on the *Facing the Past* programme:

We are not admitting enough about how messed up we are. There are angry people out there. We can’t deal with it unless we acknowledge the hatred and anger. We have to work things out ourselves first before going to the learners. We have to get rid of our stereotypes before we can help learners. (Teacher A)

Derogatory terms are being used in townships to describe others, whites, etc – we are passing this on to the children. There is unfinished business in our country. (Teacher B)

We are not just confronting the past, but also the present. This is equipping us with tools to engage minds and to help see what the system has done. This is part of confronting the present. (Teacher C)⁴²

Lederach’s concept of moral imagination is particularly helpful in thinking about possibilities for real change after identity-based conflict that can be extended to involve curriculum initiatives. A key element of moral imagination is the capacity to

⁴² These are comments recorded during the *Facing the Past* teacher workshops. An important focus of the *Facing the Past* project is to facilitate these critical conversations. Interviews with the pupils and working with pupils has provided evidence that the in-service approach of the project is having a valuable impact on the pupils. See the comments from pupils above.

imagine the web of relationships that holds society together and to include even our enemies; and a desire to understand our enemies from their point of view.⁴³ ‘Their point of view’, however, needs to include both group memory and identity. This is Edward Said’s ‘thinking each others’ history’ – not necessarily agreeing with it, but understanding it from the other’s point of view⁴⁴ - or Lederach’s ‘thinking in the presence of others, because the others are still present’.⁴⁵

What is particularly pertinent to identity-based conflict is the importance Lederach gives to understanding the past in order to understand the settings of cycles of violent conflict. Peoples’ ‘lived histories’ or vernacular memories encompass the communal experiences, Bodnar’s vernacular cultures, that create and reinforce the stories of their collective lives and shared memories. The history of the formation of the group’s identity, the construction of the group’s future and its very survival are all about finding place, voice and story.⁴⁶

Moral imagination does not see the past as something to be overcome, laid aside or forgotten in order to move toward a better future. Instead, the narratives that give meaning to peoples’ lives and relationships must be told and the repetitive patterns acknowledged so that healing can take place. People must attempt to discover where they have been, who they are, where they are going and how they will make this journey together. For teachers, this is a necessary pre-requisite not only to personal change but in order to engage with these difficult conversations with their pupils. Between memory and the potential future, there is the place of narrative, the art of ‘restorying’.⁴⁷ Reconciliation is not to forgive and forget, but rather to remember and change.⁴⁸ We need to develop a capacity to imagine the past that lies before us, recognising that the past is not dead, but rather alive and present in the identity of the group. Any theory of change needs to take this into account.

⁴³ Lederach (2005)

⁴⁴ Edward Said’s comment at the Saamtrek Values in Education Conference in Cape Town referred to before.

⁴⁵ Thank you to Pam Christie for introducing me to this concept and to the work of Lederach.

⁴⁶ Lederach (2005): 143

⁴⁷ Lederach (2005): 148

⁴⁸ Lederach, J.P. (n.d.) Using Imagination and Creativity. *Arts and Peace*

www.pangea.org/unescopau/img/programas/musica/07musica013:pdf:1 Accessed 9 August 2008

Related to personal change by confronting the ‘ghosts of the past’ is the question about what should be done with the traumatic knowledge of the conflict within history education? For many that past is still too present. Fourteen years after the genocide in Rwanda the fear of engaging with the genocide is still very real. Many South Africans continue to be traumatised by their apartheid experiences. What emerges from the German experience is that it took decades for ordinary Germans to engage with the traumatic knowledge of the Holocaust in the history curriculum. There is, of course, an essential difference between Germany emerging from conflict and attempting to re-imagine the nation and countries such as South Africa and Rwanda that needs to be taken into account. In Germany, the victims had been removed from society leaving the perpetrators to deal with the past without the presence of victims. However, psychologists insist that not dealing with collective trauma will have dangerous societal consequences in terms of renewed cycles of violence. It is in relation to this that I argue that a curriculum which provides tools for democracy and structures for conversations is more valuable to societies emerging from identity-based conflict than changing a national narrative. This has the potential for interrupting trans-generational transfer of traumatic knowledge and chosen traumas that feed new cycles of violence.

Teachers in South Africa, as first generation survivors of trauma, are expected not only to engender new democratic values, but in a curriculum that includes the traumatic knowledge of the conflict, they are expected to teach it. Little consideration has been given to the retraumatising of teachers during the process. The depth of the legacy of trauma, and possibility of renewed trauma, became evident in a recent teacher workshop on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (an examination question for Grade 12) which used documentary footage of the TRC hearings. One of the teachers was in tears and commented: ‘we worry about our learners, but we should be worrying about ourselves. What is teaching this doing to us?’⁴⁹ In an email to the facilitator after the workshop, the same teacher wrote:

I have been thinking about the TRC and our response to it – and the difficulties I find in dealing with our past. I must admit, I didn’t sleep

⁴⁹ Comment during a Facing the Past workshop, 25 August 2008.

so well last night...partly because I felt the need to reflect on our session...I realised that what we are attempting to do is to teach our own nation's trauma while still in a period of mourning – especially for those of us who experienced apartheid. I don't have a psyc [sic] background but I suspect that this may not be the wisest course of action. However, the curriculum is the curriculum and teach it we must, but I have a suspicion that some 'shrinks' would question our intention to examine our trauma in a formal pass or fail exam.⁵⁰

This is deeply relevant to both South African and Rwandan teachers and raises questions about the wisdom of including the traumatic past in the South African curriculum so soon and of those encouraging Rwanda to begin teaching about the genocide. This is a complex question, particularly as psychoanalysts insist on the importance of engaging with a traumatic past.

The value of the approach to history followed by the *Facing the Past* programme and *Facing History and Ourselves* in post-conflict societies is fourfold. Firstly, it engages with issues of individual and group identity. The latter explores the construction of we and they and the prejudices and stereotype that can result from group identity. Secondly, it opens the way to making connections to a traumatic past through examining a more distant history, that of the Holocaust. Thirdly, it helps to broker conversations that in other circumstances might not be possible. Teachers in Rwanda, for example, can examine the factors that undermined democracy in Weimar Germany in terms of political intolerance and human agency, and implicitly be talking of their own society. Fourthly, and this might be criticised by mainline historians, it enables teachers and pupils to engage with their own past as present history. This occurs through the study of human behaviour, the choice and consequences of those choices, in each of the case studies. Through narratives of real people, pupils learn of victims and perpetrators, of bystanders, resisters and rescuers and of the contexts and choices that can turn bystanders into resisters or perpetrators. Connections are made between the lessons of history and the questions that face young people today. The

⁵⁰ Email dated 26 August 2008.

final goal is that of ‘choosing to participate’, encouraging young people to take positive action in their own communities.

It was the work of Facing History and Ourselves (FHAO) and the partnership between FHAO and the Western Cape Education Department that originally opened the way for the comparison between Rwanda and South Africa. A major strength of the approach is its adaptability for different post-conflict contexts. In South Africa, the scope and sequence, including the historical case studies, were embedded in the curriculum, providing for deeper historical understanding as well as enabling the critical conversations that linked past and present. In Rwanda, without a history curriculum, a significant contribution was enabling difficult dialogues as well as reflection about their own past, even if open conversations were not always possible. In South Africa, a critical aspect in *Facing the Past* is the space provided for teachers to engage with personal legacies of the past. This is not possible in Rwanda.

Theories of educational change have been silent on the influence of a traumatic past on teacher identities and the need to take cognisance of the legacy of trauma in theorising about change. There is a body of research that recognises the political nature of education policy. A classic study is Kingdon’s work on agenda setting in United States politics which examines how and why policy issues rise and fall from the agendas of the United States government. He argues that when a country is faced with a crisis, problems, policies and politics converge.⁵¹ Others include Smith, et. al. who suggest that change happens when stakes are high and politicians manipulate political power to serve narrow interests or politicians evoke a crisis for political benefit on the political stage;⁵² and Jansen who examined changing education policy in South Africa as a symbolic statement of transition from the past.⁵³ Ball argues that when political leaders face a crisis of legitimacy governments introduce new policies

⁵¹ Kingdon, J.W. (1984/2003) *Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies* (second edition): Addison-Wesley Educational Publishers Inc.

⁵² Smith, M.L., Miller-Kahn, L., Heinecke, W. & Jarvis, P.F. (2004) *Political Spectacle and the Fate of American Schools*. New York: Routledge Falmer

⁵³ Jansen, J. D. (2002) Political symbolism as policy craft: explaining non-reform in South African education after apartheid. *Journal of Education Policy*, Vol. 17 (2): 199-215

that rework the school curriculum.⁵⁴ While Ball's work has been valuable in understanding policy in a post-conflict society as responding to a complex, heterogeneous configuration of elements, including ideologies that are residual, emergent and currently dominant, neither he nor the others cited, engage with policy as practice and teacher identities.

Sutton and Levinson do engage with policy as practice.⁵⁵ They regard policy as negotiated meaning, with policy as a form of governance constantly being negotiated and reorganised in the ongoing flow of institutional life. They consider state policy to be a discursive mode of governance and policy formation and implementation as a dynamic interrelated period stretching over time. They call this policy appropriation and analyse policy in terms of how people appropriate meaning for themselves in the context in which they are expected to implement it. Change therefore comes through the appropriation of policy – it may not be the intended change, but it is nonetheless change. This is a form of value congruence – changing practice when teacher and policy values are in alignment. However, helpful as their insights are, they do not engage with teacher identity which is such a critical issue in post-apartheid South Africa.

Jansen in *Image-ining teachers: Policy images and teacher identity* does examine teacher identity in post-apartheid South Africa, highlighting the clash between policy images and personal identities of teachers in South Africa.⁵⁶ Jansen argues that policy images make demands that conflict with teachers' personal identities as practitioners. He points out the complex problems associated with teacher education reform in developing countries and suggests that we have to understand the identity dilemma if we want education reform. The concept of teacher identity is described as the way teachers feel about themselves professionally, emotionally and politically given the conditions of their work. Professional identity relates to subject matter competence,

⁵⁴ Ball, S.J. (1990) *Politics and Policy Making in Education: Explorations in Policy Sociology*. London: Routledge

⁵⁵ Sutton, M. & Levinson, B.A.U. (2001) *Policy as Practice: Towards a Comparative Sociocultural Analysis of Education Policy*. Westport: Ablex Publishing

⁵⁶ Jansen, J.D. (2001) Image-ining teachers: Policy images and teacher identity. *South African Journal of Education* Vol. 21 (4): 242-246

levels of training and preparation and formal qualifications; how teachers understand their capacity to implement a proposed policy. Emotional identity is about the ways in which teachers understand their capacity to handle emotional demands of new policies in the context of stress and pressure – how do they feel about and respond to a particular policy in terms of how that policy defines their role. Political identity is about ways in which teachers understand and act on their value commitments, personal backgrounds and professional interests in the context of the change demanded. This reflects teacher understandings of their authority to act or withhold action in response to a particular policy reform. This comes closest to understanding the ‘identity dilemma’ of racialised identities in post-conflict societies, but does not go far enough in explaining the impact of identity-based conflict and personal legacy of trauma on teachers in a post-conflict society and the way in which that shapes responses to a new history curriculum and the way in which curriculum is mediated in the classroom.

In South Africa this personal legacy becomes crucial when the nature of the new curriculum is understood. It was developed as a human rights curriculum with issues of human rights, social and environmental justice infused into each subject. Teachers are expected to ‘deliver’ on these promises of human rights. However, policy makers and education officials have failed to engage with what it might mean for teachers, conditioned by conflict, to have to do this. This requires deep personal, as well as professional change, but evidence from research conducted by Harland and Kinder indicates that deep professional change which results in changed teacher practice comes only when there is value congruence between the policy message about ‘good practice’ or in this case required new values and the teachers’ own ‘codes of practice’ or values – that is when policy intentions and teachers’ beliefs about good practice or values coincide.⁵⁷ However, achieving value congruence in a post-conflict society is a far more complex process than that outlined in the research of Harland and Kinder quoted above. Expanding on Jansen’s definition of political identity, it is about their value commitments, personal backgrounds, *personal experiences during conflict and*

⁵⁷ Harland, J. & Kinder, K. (1997) Teachers’ continuing professional development: framing a model of outcomes, *Journal of In-Service Education*, Vol. 23 No.1: 71-84

therefore the ongoing traumatic legacy of that experience, and professional interests in the context of the change demanded. As evidenced in the extract from the email above, the personal experiences even fourteen years after the demise of apartheid as a system remain very real.

Change at classroom level is the most difficult to achieve, and yet it is here where it matters the most for societies in transition from conflict, not only in terms of curricular knowledge, but for inculcating the democratic values for the new society. At this ‘smallest unit of the system’ change requires a strategic balance of pressure and support.⁵⁸ The support for teachers, who are the key to transforming pupil attitudes and values, needs to be rethought. The implication of this is that for change to succeed, teachers must have the support structures in place that open the way to engaging, in a community of practice, with the personal imprint from the past and the traumatic knowledge that limits the possibilities of retraumatisation. This is the importance of working within a framework of Lederach’s ‘moral imagination’. The value of that support as part of the process of change, the way in which it can facilitate self-reflection as well as challenge the mental models we have of one another, is reflected in a selection of teacher comments below:

I was not always aware of my own prejudices prior to my participation in this project. I always saw myself as a victim of other people’s prejudices and as such generalizations such as whites are racists never bothered me. But when Denis Goldberg told us of his involvement in the struggle against apartheid I decided to re-look at how I view others.
(Teacher A)

I have sat with, spoken with, listened to, felt anguish with colleagues from the disadvantaged and privileged schools and we have hugged and cried together. (Teacher B)

⁵⁸ Christie, et. al. (2007): 31 quoting McLaughlin, M.W. (1986) Learning from experience: Lessons from policy implementation *Education Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 9 (2)

As educators we are the agents of social change...Although the apartheid system is dead and buried, racism is still the main challenge that is facing our country almost daily everywhere. This is a long journey. (Teacher C)⁵⁹

These reflections by teachers, place into stark relief the need to take into account the historical meanings of identity when thinking about educational change.

Implications for further research

One of the most fruitful fields of further research to emerge from this study would be on how exactly the biographies, emotions and beliefs of teachers filter official knowledge in the classroom. Very little is known about this in divided societies. Teachers are not a homogenous body: they lived in different communities; had different experiences during the conflict years. Identities become deeply internalised, bolstered by group memories. While teachers on the *Facing the Past* programme have reflected deeply on the ways in which the apartheid conflict affected them and on the ways in which they have viewed fellow South Africans, there is little evidence of the way in which their pasts acts as filters for curriculum knowledge in the history classrooms. One teacher who has been on the programme for several years has provided a tantalising indication of that filter when he said:

I have just realised how much I still teach resistance to apartheid in a biased way...over the years I have tried to be unbiased in all of my teaching...but I now realise I have to work that much harder when it comes to resistance.⁶⁰

I have used data from the *Facing the Past* programme quite extensively in this last chapter because I believe that it is the only professional development programme that takes teacher identities and the traumatic legacy of the past into account. There have been extensive evaluations of the programme, both internal and external, and

⁵⁹ Recorded teacher reflections, *Facing the Past* programme, 2007.

⁶⁰ This was a black teacher who thinks deeply about his teaching and continuing racism in South Africa. This was in 2007 – he has been on the programme since 2004.

overwhelmingly the evidence emerging from these evaluations and the workshop observations point to the necessity for education policy makers and department officials, as well as non-governmental service providers, to rethink quite radically the ways in which implementation strategies are conceived and carried out in a post-conflict society.

This study has also opened a fruitful field of possible future research in curriculum studies – that of engaging with curriculum in post-conflict societies. As noted in an early chapter, while there are a growing number of societies in and emerging from conflict, not enough attention has been given to curriculum issues, particularly when development organisations are involved, in the reconstruction of education systems after conflict.