

## CHAPTER 5

### HISTORY TEACHING IN THE TRANSVAAL AND ORANGE FREE STATE 1900-1918

#### 1 PAX BRITANNICA: MILNERISM AND BRITISH SUPREMACY 1900-1909

On 1 September 1900, the South African Republic became the British Colony of Transvaal. Earlier the same year the Free State Republic had become the Orange River Colony. The new British administration appointed E.B. Sargent<sup>1</sup> as adviser on education matters to the military authorities in the two former Boer Republics. He was zealous in his efforts to carry out Milner's instructions to Anglicise the Boers. After a visit to Cape Town in January 1901, Sargent planned the establishment of schools in the concentration camps along the lines of the camp school at Green Point. By July 1901 he had been appointed Director of Education for the "occupied" areas. In the course of 1902 most of the Transvaal Education Department's schools were in fact operating in the camps: by May 1902 there were over 17 000 children in the camp schools as compared to just under 11 000 at school in the towns. In the Orange River Colony the comparable figures were 12 000 as compared to about 2 700.<sup>2</sup>

On 31 May 1902 the two Republics officially ceased to exist. South Africa was at last at Milner's feet. Van Jaarsveld<sup>3</sup> quotes Milner's confident pronouncement in 1902: "I have saved the British position in South Africa and have knocked the bottom out of the great Afrikaner nation for ever and ever, Amen." His energetic attempts to Anglicise South Africa included an immigration scheme and the inculcation of the values of imperialist Britain in the schools.<sup>4</sup> Republican education was swept away. All the inspectors and other education officials were

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1 See M.A. Basson, Die Britse Invloed in die Transvaalse Onderwys, 1836-1907, pp.144-190.

2 J.C. Coetzee, (Ed.), Onderwys in Suid-Afrika, pp.297;162.

3 F.A. van Jaarsveld, Wie en Wat is die Afrikaner? p.10.

4 Reader's Digest Illustrated History of South Africa, pp.266-267.

English. Any teacher suspected of dubious loyalty was summarily dismissed. The power of the state was used to bring about the denationalisation of a people through the schools.<sup>5</sup>

In a confidential report for the half year ending 30 June 1901, Sargent makes his intentions quite plain: "English must be the paramount, and indeed, the only language throughout South Africa ... I have therefore determined to propose that English shall be the medium of instruction in all secular subjects". Dutch was to be used for religious instructions only.<sup>6</sup> It was necessary to teach the Boer children "those ideas which belong to the civilization of the twentieth century" (i.e. British ideas), and for this reason Sargent expected his teachers "to learn sufficient of the 'Taal' to be able to exchange courtesies with the burgher and his wife ... they will gain the hearts of the people, and find them willing to allow their children to be taught the speech and the knowledge of a world that has hitherto lain outside their ken".<sup>7</sup> The spirit of Milnerism was indeed abroad. In an address delivered to a teacher's conference in Johannesburg in July 1902,<sup>8</sup> Sargent spoke of the need, above all, of unity:

"South Africa has to be taught to understand the value of unity, and it lies with you teachers, more than with any other body of men and women, to educate her in that view. We do not want any longer to have a divided community ... It is for you to make the children in the schools understand that these differences ... must be obliterated before South Africa is worthy to take her place beside ... Canada or ... Australia... I think ... the Dutch can readily understand a United South Africa. Their imagination may in in time ... embrace the idea of a world-empire".

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- 5 E.G. Malherbe, Education in South Africa, Vol.I., p.315.  
6 T.E.D.A., Transvaal and Orange River Colony, Report of the Acting Director of Education for the Half-Year Ending June 30th, 1901, p.14.  
7 Quoted in E.G. Malherbe, Education in South Africa, Vol.I., pp.18-19.  
8 T.E.D.A., Conference of Teachers of the Transvaal and Orange River Colony, Johannesburg, July 1902., pp.24-28.

The British authorities imported a strong and well-trained force of three hundred teachers from the Home Country and the other colonies, with which to inculcate the English language and ideals in the younger generation of Republican Afrikaners.<sup>9</sup>

In 1901 Milner<sup>10</sup> wrote that he attached special importance to school history books:

"A good world history would be worth anything. At present children are only taught the history of South Africa ... Everything that makes South African children look outside South Africa and realize the world makes for peace. Everything that cramps and confines their views to South Africa only (limits their historical reading, for instance, to Slagter's Nek and Dingaan's Day and Boomplaas and Majuba) makes for Afrikanerdom and further discord"

The "Report on the Educational Needs of the Transvaal Colony" 1901, barred the teaching of South African history as it only stimulated disloyalty to England.<sup>11</sup> Although Sargent deemed it undesirable to teach history in camp schools at all, the Transvaal schools were obliged to meet the syllabus requirements of the University of the Cape of Good Hope. Despite Sargent's reservations, history, in the form of the Cape syllabus, was taught in the schools under his control.<sup>12</sup> In 1903 the first syllabus based on the Cape syllabus appeared, covering British and European history between 1748 and 1815, with particular emphasis on British imperial and colonial history. South African history only was to be taught in that limited context. It is interesting that the geography syllabus of the same year unhesitatingly prescribed a detailed knowledge of South Africa. Geography was clearly not as "dangerous" a subject as history,<sup>13</sup> although even here the context of the Empire was to be

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- 9 Malherbe, E.G., Education in South Africa, Vol.I., p.299.  
10 Quoted in M.B. Basson, Die Britse Invloed in die Transvaalse Onderwys, p.156.  
11 F.A. van Jaarsveld and J.J. Rademeyer, Teorie en Metodiek vir Geskiedenisonderrig, p.89.  
12 M.A. Basson, Die Britse Invloed in die Transvaalse Onderwys, p.157.  
13 Conference of Teachers, Johannesburg, July 1902, p.25.

emphasized.<sup>14</sup>

In 1903, there were 14 secondary schools in the Transvaal, with 964 pupils, of which 336 at 11 schools offered history.<sup>15</sup> The 1903 report of high school inspectors on history teaching at those schools contains some illuminating insights into the objectives of the British authorities at the time: "... the political attitude of the next generation will be determined by the history teaching of this, and in view of this special importance attaching to the subject," certain considerations deserved to be borne in mind in deciding upon a history curriculum. "History is politics taught by examples, and it is in the history lesson that a teacher has an opportunity of ... laying the foundations of good citizenship and statesmanship." The inspectors concede that where the "struggle with barbarism" and the Afrikaner's sense of "national mission" are "of romantic interest", "a narrow particularism must be avoided". By the latter, of course, they meant Afrikaner national consciousness. Transvaal and Free State high school children were "obviously destined to be the future pioneers and apostles of a civilisation no doubt primarily English". One of the inspectors, Mr Hope, could not have been more explicit in his view of the nature and advantages of the type of history which should be taught: "... I look upon a simple and connected account of the gradual progress of English History as the backbone of any vertebrate and coherent system of instruction for my pupils."<sup>16</sup>

Bertha Synge's Story of the World replaced the South African textbooks in Transvaal and Free State schools in this period. The T.E.D. Report for 1902<sup>17</sup> commented as follows on the state of

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- 14 T.E.D.A., T.E.D. Report for the School Year January to December 1903, p.30.
- 15 T.E.D.A., T.E.D. Report for the School Year January to December 1903, p.43.
- 16 Ibid., pp.43-44.
- 17 Ibid., p.30.

history teaching:

"The teaching of history has received scant attention, so far, in our schools, owing to the desire of the Department to avoid controversial subjects: However, it was impossible to banish it for ever, and so the series of readers by Miss Synge are welcome. They appear as if they would ... avoid controversy".

The 1904 Report confirmed that "Synge's Readers are universally used from Standard III upwards" and the Rand circuit inspector reported "a revival" in history due to the popularity of Miss Synge's book. Basson<sup>18</sup> on the other hand, quotes the Volkstem of 27 July 1903: "'Synge ... this is the name of the secretive 'specially chose' British-imperial children's historian." Davenport<sup>19</sup> says of Synge that "she belittled all aspects of Afrikanerdom". From Klerksdorp it was reported that English history was being taught to pupils preparing for the Cape Elementary and School Higher Examinations. In the Rustenburg circuit "for political reasons neither English nor South African History is taught at present".<sup>20</sup>

The examination papers set by the T.E.D. for high school bursary candidates in this period are revealing. In the 1906 History paper for candidates under thirteen, twelve questions are set; all deal with general and in particular British history (e.g. "Give an account of the attempts made by James II and his followers to recover the English crown"). The only concession to South African history is in question 12:

"State briefly who or what were any three of the following:

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- 18 M.B. Basson, Die Britse Invloed in die Transvaalse Onderwys, 1836-1907, p.180.
- 19 T.R.H. Davenport, History in South Africa in the 1980's: Why Bother About It?, in South Africa International. Volume Nineteen. Number Two, October 1988, p.98.
- 20 T.E.D. Report for the School Year January to December 1904, pp.31, 33, 35, 41.

Martin Luther, Wellington, Erasmus, Gustavus Adolphus, Peter the Great, Mirabeau, Lafayette." <sup>21</sup>

At least van Riebeeck found himself in illustrious company.

A year later the same examination contained three full questions on aspects of South African history, albeit with Afrikaner heroes and heroic deeds completely missing.<sup>22</sup> The 1906 paper for candidates under 14 does contain one question on the reasons for the Great Trek and two others on South African history.<sup>23</sup>

The imbalance between general and local history reflected in these papers is significant, for the 1906 syllabus had at least paid lip service to the status of South African history. It prescribed (a) Modern European History 1517-1815, and (b) History of South Africa, from the discovery of the Cape to the Matabele War.<sup>24</sup> Nevertheless it was clear that more and more concessions were being made to the feelings and aspirations of the Afrikaans-speaking element. In the light of the Afrikaner political revival this was perhaps inevitable.

## 2. THE AFRIKANER POLITICAL REVIVAL AFTER 1905

Milner's strategy for the pacification of the Boer population of the Transvaal and Orange Free State had included their "denationalisation" by the suppression of their cultural development and the re-education of their children through a deliberate policy of Anglicisation. The effect produced by this enforced Anglicisation was precisely the opposite of that

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- 21 T.E.D. Papers set to Candidates for High School Bursaries, September 1906, p.4.  
22 T.E.D.A., T.E.D. Papers set to Candidates for High School Bursaries, 1907, p.5.  
23 Ibid., 1906, p.10.  
24 T.E.D.A., T.E.D. Report for the Six Months January to June 1905, p.31.

intended. The Afrikaans language movement flourished in the atmosphere of intense resentment fostered by Milnerism. On the political front too the Boers had been finding their way back to self-government much faster than Milner had envisaged. Somewhat disillusioned, Milner left South Africa in April 1905. General Botha's Het Volk party, founded in 1904, won the majority of seats in the Transvaal elections a few years later. In December 1907, General Hertzog's Orangia-Unie swept to power. By 1908 Afrikaners had returned to power in three of Britain's four South African colonies.

The Smuts Act (No. 25 of 1907) is seen by Barnard<sup>25</sup> as the establishment of a neutral state education system, in keeping with Smuts's holistic philosophy. South African children, both Boer and English, were to be prepared for their place within the British Empire. Smuts did indeed make concessions to the status of Dutch. However they were so minor as to be bound to cause dissatisfaction among his compatriots. General Hertzog's Education Act of 1908 on the other hand provided for mother-tongue education up to Std 4, raising a howl of protest from English extremists in the Free State.<sup>26</sup>

Four years before the Smuts Act, a movement headed by the Dutch Reformed Church set about establishing non-state schools in which a "Christian National spirit" would prevail.<sup>27</sup> In 1903 the Commission for Christian National Education issued the syllabuses for the schools under its jurisdiction, which within a few years numbered over 200.<sup>28</sup> In contrast to government schools at the time, where British history took central (even sole) place, the C.N.E. schools were to teach the history of the fatherland ("Geschiedenis des Vaderlands"), starting from Std 1. The context of the history syllabus is the very antithesis of what Milner was attempting in his schools: the Std 3 syllabus, for example,

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- 25 S.S. Barnard, *Blankeonderwys in Transvaal*, p.113; see also M.A. Basson, *Die Britse Invloed in die Transvaalse Onderwys*, ch.XVII.
- 26 See R.A. Grobbelaar, *Middelbare Onderwys in die Oranje-Vrystaat, 1910-1952, met Spesiale Verwysing na Leergange en Leerplanne*, pp.15-17, and B.I.S. Beukman, *Die Geskiedenis van Onderwys in die Vrystaat Voor en Onmiddellik na Unie 1898-1912*, ch.IV.
- 27 See M.A. Basson, *Die Britse Invloed in die Transvaalse Onderwys*, ch.XVII.
- 28 E.G. Malherbe, *Education in South Africa, Vol 1*, p.322.

covered "the main figures and main facts from the history of our "volk", beginning with the Great Trek ... up to the Bloemfontein Convention", and teachers were to regularly commemorate, whenever appropriate, "Amajubadag, de Hervormingsdag en Dingaansdag", the very events Milner was endeavouring to wipe from the pages of history.<sup>29</sup>

Similarly the Std 4 syllabus covered events such as the Great Trek and the wars of 1880-81 and 1899-1902 in great detail. Std 5 pupils were to learn "the whole history of South Africa, and that of the Orange Free State and of the South African Republic (Z.A.R.) in particular", while Aitton's Korte Geschiedenis van de Republieken in Zuid Afrika was prescribed for Std 6. Other textbooks recommended (for the use of the teacher as reference works) were F. Lion Cachet's De Worstelstrijd der Transvalers, Theal's Korte Geschiedenis van Zuid Afrika and Van Oordt's Kort begrip der Kerkgeschiedenis.<sup>30</sup>

In an undated piece from this period (probably 1903 or 1904) entitled "Christelijk ... Nationaal Onderwys", Prof. D. Postma provides insight into the thinking behind Christian National Education. In his exposition we catch a glimpse of a thread which was to run through South African education until the present day. In the struggle ("strijd") in which the Afrikaners were involved, not only a thoroughly Christian education, but also "truly national (original emphasis) education was essential. It was God's Will that there should be different nations, nations separate from one another in their way of life, thinking, attitudes, religion and language. It should be obvious to everyone what differences exist between peoples. The Afrikaners were led by God along different ways, "door God geleerd ... anders te denken en te gelooven". C.N.E. Schools could serve to

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29 T.E.D.A., Leerplan voor de Scholen voor Christelijk Nasionale Onderwijs, Commissie voor C.N.O., pp.40-41.

30 T.E.D.A., Leerplan voor de Scholen voor Christelijk Nasionale Onderwijs, Commissie voor C.N.O., pp.41-43.



maintain and strengthen "ons nationale leven, en dat wel door onderwijs in onze taal en onze geschiedenis". Besides the national language it is especially the "Vaderlandsche Geschiedenis" which exercises the greatest influence on "de nationale vorming". Since time immemorial the tales of the forebears' deeds have been a powerful means of arousing sympathy, antipathy, enthusiasm and patriotism. Instead, Postma laments, schools were being used to alienate young hearts by the narration of the heroic deeds of other nations: "and when attempts are sometimes made at catching glimpses into our history, then such attempts are countered with violence. Precisely because one is afraid of the powerful influence of a proper treatment of national history in the schools". Just as Christian education would save the nation from spiritual downfall, so National education would save it from national downfall ("nationalen ondergang").<sup>31</sup>

Prof. F. Postma of Potchefstroom, one of the leading figures in the C.N.E. movement, articulated in 1905 the close link between national consciousness and the teaching of national history. Although the C.N.E. schools did not survive long, it is worth quoting Postma at length, for his "national" views (if not the Christian dimension) on the subject, and those of kindred spirits, eventually came to dominate history teaching in South Africa, as the chapters to follow will illustrate. According to Postma, "love of the fatherland is rooted in a knowledge of the history of the fatherland, in the knowledge of the deeds of our fathers". He feared the demise of the Afrikaner nation because of the "scandalous" neglect of the teaching of national history, which "sacrificing of the feeling of nationality" he compared to "a stab of the knife into one's own bosom". Part of the blame could be laid at the door of the University of Cape Town which, as the examining body, had only just begun to make allowances "ever so slightly" for "Afrikaans history". As they

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31 D. Postma, Christeljk ... Nationaal Onderwys, pp.13-17.

were almost exclusively English one could not expect them to feel "much for our history". Postma, however, also takes teachers and parents to task.<sup>32</sup>

In a similarly impassioned lecture in 1908, the same Postma<sup>33</sup> was once again pointing to the abysmal lack of knowledge of South African history of the upcoming generation: "they know a little mouthful of 'Cape history' and know a great deal of the 'Williams' and 'Richards' and 'Edwards' and all the kings and queens of England. The important issue before them is the 'History of England'", which made up seven-eighths of the syllabus. He quotes the Cape examiners: "The candidates ... know more of the kings of England than about their own nation". Postma identifies the Cape external examination as one of the primary causes of this state of affairs: South African history was no longer required for the higher examinations, and counted only one-third of the marks for the elementary examination. In 1906 the latter examination had been abolished and with it "Vaderlandsche geschiedenis". Even in primary schools there was little or no history teaching: "There is no time in the schools to teach Afrikaans children their own history!!!" (original emphasis).<sup>34</sup>

In schools where some attention was given to history, it was through textbooks "which presented twisted facts" or told untruths. According to Postma<sup>35</sup>, Whiteside's widely used book was not only written in a foreign language, but was riddled with "untruths and inaccuracies." He proceeds to give examples of

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32 F. Postma, Vaderlandsche Geschiedenis, passim.

33 F. Postma, Zuid-Afrikaansche Geschiedenis op onze Schole, passim.

34 "Daar is nie tyd nie op die skole om die Afrikaanse kinders in hul eien geschiedenis te onderricht!!!" (original emphasis).

35 F. Postma, Zuid-Afrikaansche Geschiedenis op onze Scholen.

Whiteside's perceived bias, which he roundly condemns:

"The great damage ('kwaad') that a book such as this does, is incredible. The false and distorted presentation alienates the children completely from their own history ... and utterly deadens (original emphasis) all feeling of nationality. The whole spirit in which the book is written is anti-Afrikaans, and the politics of killing by silence ('dood-zwigg Politiek') plays a major role in this".

Postma concedes that Darter's Geschiedenis van Zuid-Afrika is slightly more acceptable at least being in Dutch, but he questions this book's impartiality too: it downplays British injustices, and does not promote "love of the fatherland". His address concludes with the injunction: "Let us at last then start to banish Whiteside from Potchefstroom and district." The controversy over history teaching and history textbooks is indeed never-ending.

By 1909 the C.N.E. movement's schools had been taken over by the State. Financial problems and the lack of interest and support by the Het Volk Party led to the gradual, but certain demise of the C.N.E. schools. As Coetzee<sup>36</sup> points out, the ideal of C.N.E. did not die in 1910 - its protagonists had lost the battle, but not the war. During the 1930's this spirit would be revived and after 1948 it would leave its imprint on the entire South African education system.

In the wake of the defeat of 1902 and the establishment of British hegemony over the whole of South Africa, Afrikaner national and historical consciousness asserted itself in other ways. It was in the period under review that a series of readers, "Zuid-Afrikaanse Historie Bibliotheek", was published. The series was meant to appeal to young readers, providing a counter-balance to the vast amount of reading material on English history available at the time.

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36 J.C. Coetzee, (Ed.), Onderwys in Suid-Afrika, p.305.

The readers proved immensely popular, enjoying several editions in Dutch, followed by several Afrikaans editions in the 1920's and 1930's. The original versions were written in a simplified Dutch to make them more easily comprehensible and palatable to young Afrikaners. A generation or more imbibed heroic episodes in the Afrikaner's history. The following stirring titles are a sample: De Strijd om Recht; Voor Land en Volk; Zwart en Wit; Een Vader des Volks; Onder de Vierkleur; David Malan; Liefde en Plicht; Aan Tafelbaai's Strand.

The author, J.F. van Oordt, wrote under the pseudonym D'Arbez.

### 3. HISTORY SYLLABUSES 1910 - 1918

By 1909, the demographic and political realities of the Transvaal could no longer be disregarded. Thus the Regulations Governing Primary Schools and Secondary Schools issued by the T.E.D. in that year were issued simultaneously in Dutch as Bepalingen voor Lagere Scholen en Middelbare Scholen. The history syllabus for primary schools prescribed "the principal events of South African History, with the Colonial development of the British Empire, and with the related and causative world movements, and further, with the growth of free institutions within the British Empire and especially the machinery of responsible government in South Africa". The hope was expressed that the course would inspire pupils with reverence for the past which they had inherited, and a sense of civic duty in the present.<sup>37</sup>

Neither the list of suggested topics for Stds 2 and 3 nor the list for Stds 4 and 5 contained the Anglo-Boer War as a theme. It would appear that in the sensitive years preceding Union the

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37 T.E.D.A., T.E.D. Regulations Governing Primary Schools and Secondary Schools and Departments for White Children including the Code or Course for Instruction to be Followed Therein, 1909, pp.30-33.

topic was being studiously omitted so as not to inflame past grievances. The senior primary list did, however, include the events of 1877 - 1881. Theal's South Africa formed the basis of the syllabus.

The Std 6 and 7 course called for "a more precise and mature appreciation of the facts of South African history", once again with reference to Theal's South Africa in the Story of the Nations Series. The pupil's study of history should end in "practical patriotism", particularly through the study of "the principles and practice of responsible government". Besides Theal, Hofmeyr's revised book, Kijkes in onze Geschiedenis, in both languages, was considered "useful". Amongst the books teachers could read to extend their knowledge was, interestingly enough, Aitton. As before, the senior secondary course followed was that of the Cape.<sup>38</sup>

Although the Transvaal history syllabuses were to an increasing extent reflecting an awareness of "national" history, in practice South African history was still being neglected. In the 1907, 1908 and 1909 Lower Certificate Examinations there was not one question on South African topics.<sup>39</sup>

The period 1910 - 1918 (and beyond) was characterised in both former Republics by an acute shortage of suitable school books in Afrikaans, which was gradually being introduced as the medium of instruction in place of Dutch. As far as history was concerned, the education authorities were clearly uncertain as to which history should be taught, and how: "... There is still too much

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38 T.E.D.A., T.E.D. Regulations Governing Primary Schools and Secondary Schools, 1909, pp.35-37.

39 T.E.D.A., T.E.D. Report for the Year 1909, pp.141, 146, 153.

difference of opinion amongst those who would claim to speak with authority as to the character and range of history syllabuses for the results of school work in this subject to give real satisfaction to anyone".<sup>40</sup> This uncertainty is reflected in the large number of syllabuses compiled in the decade 1910 - 1920, usually with only minor changes.

These changes and the uncertainty underlying them, mirror the lack of direction and national identity characteristic of the years after Union. The White "nation" was fractured by three powerful, and contradictory, forces: Hertzog's nationalism aiming at a separate identity for the two White language groups in a two-stream policy; Botha's and Smuts's South African Party wanting to merge the two into a single stream, that is a broad South Africanism, and the Jingo element determined to maintain British superiority. The Jingo element had had their way after 1900 with Milnerism, yet from about 1906 they were increasingly neutralised by Afrikaner political mobilisation. Between 1906 and 1918 the political scene was largely dominated by Botha and then Smuts. The history syllabuses in these years illustrate very clearly the spirit of the South African Party: reconciliation between Boer and Briton, and South Africa as a self-governing country but an integral part of the Empire. From the founding of the National Party in 1914, Hertzog and his followers were to become more and more strident in their demands for mother-tongue education, recognition of the Afrikaners as a nation with their own national past, and independence for South Africa. This was to be at the centre of the White political conflict for the next half century.<sup>41</sup>

Nowhere is the philosophy of the political middle ground as represented by the South African Party clearer than in the 1913 Transvaal history syllabus. As before (for example the 1907

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40 T.E.D.A., T.E.D. Report for the Year 1914, p.32.

41 See E.G. Matherbe, *Education in South Africa*, Vol. I., pp. 415-417; and J.C. Coetzee, *Onderwys in Suid-Afrika*, Ch.IV.

syllabus), South African history was to be "thoroughly treated", but note the growing sense of South African nationhood in the following extracts:

"... younger pupils will hear stories based on the stirring events of South African history", and "As regards history ... then, the code ... reflects clearly South African circumstances and aspirations. The teacher will have a great opportunity here. The subject must have local appropriateness, local point and sting. The centre of gravity and interest must lie in South Africa. There must be a South African spirit throughout. The South African boy must learn to look with discrimination and pride on the development of the two great White races which inhabit South Africa."

In an obvious concession to the extremist elements in the Party, however, the British connection was emphasized: "... and on the development of the empire to which he belongs."<sup>42</sup>

Whereas the Republican syllabuses had contained the names of Arikaner heroes, and the British-orientated ones the names of British heroes, the 1913 syllabus and others of that decade presented a more balanced gallery of heroes. The Std 1's were to be told not only of the "bravery of Woltemade", the "bravery of young Uijs" and the "brave women at Bloed (sic) River", but also the "ride of Richard King" and "the death of Wilson and his men". The Std 2's were to learn about "the hardships endured by the Voortrekkers" as well as the bravery of the British at Isandlwana and Rorke's Drift. The authorities must have felt by 1913 that there was sufficient distance from the Anglo-Boer War for it to be included in the syllabus. Thus "the great Boer War" was dealt with in Std 4, and again in Std 7. The syllabus for the school-leaving certificates were still those of the Cape, and did not yet cover South African history. The syllabus was brought right up to date with the inclusion of the Act of Union in 1910. The lists of books of reference contain the usual Foggin,

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42 T.E.D.A., T.E.D. The Curriculum of Schools for General Education, 1913, pp.4-6.

Parker, Theal, Hofmeyr etc., but also for the first time Preller's Piet Retief. Preller will figure more prominently in Chapter 6. The 1913 syllabus showed a desire to satisfy both flanks of the ruling party while at the same time promoting a broad South Africanism.<sup>43</sup> This inherent tension would eventually lead to the demise of the South African Party.

Relations between the two White language groups, patched up superficially before and immediately after Union, had soured. Tensions within Botha's party had led to the establishment of the National Party in 1914. South Africa's participation in the First World War triggered off the Rebellion of 1914, a head-on collision between the Government and Afrikaner nationalists. This was a serious challenge to the legitimacy of the new South African state, for the cry for the restoration of the Boer republics was being heard. The execution of Jopie Fourie and the accidental shooting of General de la Rey led to a further deterioration in relations between the Government and Afrikaner nationalism. It was at this time that the Helpmekeer society and the first Nationalist newspaper De Burger were born.<sup>44</sup> In deference to the feelings aroused by these events, the education authorities thought it wise once again to exclude the Anglo-Boer War from the history syllabus of 1917:<sup>45</sup> "It has been decided that South African history beyond the year 1892 shall not be included in any school course".

This is one of the clearest examples of the direct link between the needs of a regime and the content of school history syllabuses.

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43 T.E.D.A., T.E.D. The Curriculum of Schools for General Education pp.59-67.

44 T.R.H. Davenport, South Africa. A Modern History, pp.271-272.

45 T.E.D.A.; T.E.D. School Courses Including the Principal Subjects of the Common Primary Course and of the General Secondary Course, 1917, pp.33-38.



In reaction to the growth of an exclusive Afrikaner nationalism, the syllabus was altered to allow for a choice between South African history and the history of the Empire. "Scheme A" provided for South African history up to the end of Std 4 and again in Std 6, but not at all in Stds 5, 7, 8 and 9. "Scheme B" provided for South African history alongside general history through all standards.

As mentioned above, 1892 was the cut-off point. In practice this meant that a teacher choosing Scheme A would effectively be eliminating South African history from his history syllabus. The South African Party had not only to contend with the demands of Afrikaner Nationalism, but also those of the Jingos in the Unionist Party without whose support Botha, and later Smuts, could not have governed. The playing down of South African history and the omission of the great conflict of 1899-1902 demonstrate the difficult position of those entrusted with the drawing up of history syllabuses in a plural society. We turn now to some representative texts of the period.

#### SELECTED TEXTBOOKS: 1900 -1918

#### Characteristics of the Textbooks Analysed

In Chapter 3 the textbooks analysed are representative of the pro-British, Colonial school of writing. In Chapter 4, works by Republican-minded, pro-Afrikaans authors were examined.

While the Cape and Natal were British colonies, and the Free State and Transvaal, Boer Republics, these two officially sanctioned perspectives on the South African past, though challenged, were unassailable. After 1902, and particularly after Union in 1910, White South Africa was no longer divided into a Republican North and a Colonial South, but rather along language, and ultimately, party political lines.

The Second Anglo-Boer War saw the emergence of an Afrikaner Nationalism which transcended the old geo-political boundaries. Similarly, English-speakers formed nationwide political parties. By the end of the period reviewed in this chapter, the battle lines had been drawn. The Jingo element had the Unionists to articulate their political ambitions, the Afrikaner Nationalists the National Party, and the political "moderates" of both language groups the South African Party.

It is noteworthy that the textbooks examined, while not consciously written from a party political perspective, to a very large extent reflect party political standpoints.

Scully, Bleby and Foggin, while still British-orientated are cautious, even conciliatory, in their treatment of British - Boer clashes of the past, a stance in line with the policies of the S.A.P.

The Afrikaans-orientated textbooks are, in spirit, close to the National Party of the time. The British and the Blacks, in that order, are regarded as the two main threats to the Afrikaner nation. The two axes of Afrikaner history, the Great Trek and the Second Anglo-Boer War (which superseded the Anglo-Transvaal War), are in full evidence in these books. The list of grievances against the British, a kind of historical charge sheet, had been greatly expanded by events such as the Jameson Raid; the depredations of the Second Anglo-Boer War, the traumatic loss of independence in 1902, Milnerism and the Rebellion.

The non-White peoples are treated in the same manner in all the books reviewed in this chapter as they were in the textbooks examined in preceding chapters.

The differing approaches to South Africa's past found in these two groups of textbooks, and the by now firmly established stereotypes and master symbols, were to persist for the next half

century or more.

#### 4.2. Analysis of the Textbooks

(a) W.C. Scully: A History of South Africa from the Earliest Days to Union, (1915)

Scully was the author of books on Africa, such as Reminiscences of a South African Pioneer and Between Sun and Sand. In his preface Scully states that this book fulfilled the need for a single work setting forth South African history after Union in a connected form. It treats all four South African states: there are 190 pages for Cape, 40 for Free State, 24 for Transvaal and 14 pages for Natal history. Scully concedes that this is not original work, being based on Theal, Cory and Leibbrandt's précis of the Archives.

The tone and language in Scully's book is so similar to that of the works of Colonial writers already examined that only a few examples will suffice. His treatment of the "Hottentots" is characterised by all the usual clichés and stereotypes: they "murdered" herdsmen and "carried off" cattle (p.18); they were generally a constant source of trouble to the White settlers. Most of the "Hottentots" the missionary van der Kemp tried to "save", "deserted", and "recommenced marauding" (p.94). In 1802 expeditions to the interior met with various "wandering hordes" of Hottentots and "half-breeds" (p.95). The "Bushmen" were "savages" (p.59) and "marauders" (p.67), "lawless" bands of "true Ishmaelites" (p.83), guilty of the standard "depredations" (p.52) and "treacherous murders" (p.59).

On the Eastern Frontier the "unfortunate farmers" were constantly being "murdered", "pillaged" and "plundered" by the "invading" Xhosa (p.92). By 1816 the "depredations" and "outrages" perpetrated by the Xhosa had become "almost unbearable": "War, hunting and cattle-lifting were looked upon by the Bantu of the

period as the only pursuits worth following, and there was probably hardly a Xhosa within 50 miles of the border who had not participated in the plunder to which the farmers had for so long been subjected". Under the heading "More Bantu Depredations", Scully mentions "trouble with the Bantu" again as a result of their incessant "depredations"(p.131). Gaika was a "debauched drunkard", "weak", "vacillating" and "self-indulgent" (p.143); Sandile was "weak" and "unstable" (p.142).

The abolition of slavery resulted in the country becoming filled with "wandering Hottentots and others of nondescript breed, who lived by thieving ... doing anything but working" (p.152). Scully expresses his sympathy with the Trekboers in Trans-Orange who were placed under the jurisdiction of a "hybrid, inferior race" (i.e. the Griquas). On the Diamond Fields the Coloured labourers "took to drink and stole diamonds from their employers" (p.208).

Moshweshwe's "ambition" led him to occupy areas "where no Basuto had previously resided" (p.174). He continued to "profess friendship", but his "sinister attitude" caused further hostilities (p.184). Later his "double-dealing" became evident (p.191). The treaty between the Free State and the Basutos was "disregarded" by Basuto who "violated" the border (p.191). By 1858 the "depredations" of the Basutos had become "intolerable", thus war was "forced upon the O.F.S." (p.193). Later he again grew "arrogant" and "the looting became worse than ever" (p.198). The antithesis of the above stereotypes and unfavourable master symbol is the positive self-understanding of White South Africans as a decent Christian people reflected in Scully's judgement on the Company's rule: "on the whole" the Company dealt with the Hottentots in a "humane, lenient and considerate manner" (p.43). Scully quotes Theal on the fine qualities of the European settlers - "unconquerable love of liberty, a spirit of

patient industry, a deep-seated feeling of trust in the Almighty God; virtues which fitted them to do the work marked out for them by Providence in the land that to their children was home" (p.44). The Huguenots were of a "superior class", a few even belonging to the noblest families of France (p.41). The positive self-image is constantly reinforced: the South African Boer was "the most efficient pioneer that civilization has ever known" (p.47).

British sympathisers with the Blacks were a group of "ill-balanced enthusiasts" whose "mistaken indignation" weakened a righteous cause (p.103). Scully is sceptical of Philip's Researches in South Africa: the work "confounds theories with facts", and is "unreliable" in many important respects. In short, he concludes, Philip's influence upon South Africa "has not been beneficial" (p.141).

True to the spirit of reconciliation of the time, Scully is lenient in his treatment of incidents such as Slagters Nek: Bezuidenhout and his kin were "hardy, turbulent men, who had spent most of their lives in defending their property against Native marauders" (p.112). The "intrepid" Jan Bezuidenhout, "with high courage, faced his foes". He regrets that mercy was not shown as this would have averted "much subsequent bitterness".

The Great Trek was a migration to regions "occupied only by wandering hordes of savages and wild animals". The main cause of the Trek was "the blundering and vacillating" policy adopted towards the "warlike and aggressive hordes of Bantu" on the frontier (p.153). It was "impossible to overestimate the bravery" of the men of the Vlugkommando (p.163). Pretorius was a man of "high character" and "great ability", a "heroic figure", whose death was widely mourned (p.123). According to Scully, the charges of slavery brought against Transvaal farmers before 1877

were unfounded (p.216). The Boers who left to escape British rule are no longer "rebels" as in earlier works, but merely "orthodox" (p.219). He also makes a point of mentioning that there were "many English volunteers" with the Boer forces deployed against Sekhukhune (p.220).

In his discussion of the 1877 Annexation, Scully takes care not to push a British line. The battles at Ingogo and Laing's Nek are now termed "defeats", as opposed to "withdrawals" in earlier British-orientated books.

Scully deals very briefly with the events leading to the Second Anglo-Boer War, and he is careful not to apportion guilt for the outbreak of war. On the war itself there are only a few lines: "It is not proposed to enter into the details of that struggle, which ended in a complete victory for Great Britain" (p.227). 1915 was a sensitive year in South African politics, and certainly no time to dwell on the uncomfortable details of the Anglo-Boer War. The chapter on the Transvaal ends with the heart-warming words of Kitchener's farewell address to his troops : "'No war has ever yet been waged in which the combatants and non-combatants on either side have shown so much consideration and kindness to one another'" (p.227). It was the official view in 1915 that those sections of the past which could disturb relations between the two White language groups should be omitted from the history syllabus. However noble the intention, this must be construed as bias by omission.

Turning to Natal, Scully refers to the "very great energy" of the European community (p.238). The "Coolies" had, however, increased so rapidly as "to become a serious embarrassment" (p.239). Natal had great potential, "but the enormous and increasing Bantu and Coolie elements in its population present problems of growing menace" (p.245).

The rest of Scully's book is devoted to the "burning" "looting"

and "plundering" of the Xhosa (pp.251-252), the "long and troublesome campaign" against the "degraded" Batlapin (p.305) and the expansion of British power in the Transkei, Bechuanaland and Rhodesia ("Major Wilson and his brave band") p.304. Significantly, the last chapter is headed The South African Commonwealth, pointing to the ideal of a British-orientated union of states, larger than the Union itself.

- (b) A.S. Bleby : South Africa and the British Empire. A Course of Lessons for the Cape Matriculation History Syllabus (1913 Revised Edition)

Miss Bleby was principal of the Girls High School at Rondebosch, Cape Town. As stated earlier in this chapter, the Transvaal followed the Cape Matriculation syllabuses until 1918. Bleby's book was one of the texts catering for these candidates. More than half of the book's 423 pages deal with South African history. The title is typical of the spirit of the times treating South Africa in the context of the British Empire. The section on South African history begins with the last days of Company rule at the Cape.

Bleby's attitude towards the non-White inhabitants is that of other nineteenth and early twentieth century colonial writers of textbooks, with the by now familiar references to their laziness, unreliability, barbarity and the like. The Khoi were a wandering race of cattle-owners, "too lazy to be useful labourers, but too cowardly to be dangerous enemies" (p.89). The San "a race of small, untameable savages, treacherous and revengeful, incorrigible thieves, living by hunting and plunder, were a much greater trouble" (p.89).

The "Kosa Kaffirs" were a much more formidable foe, "brave, warlike, well-organized." They soon began "cattle-raiding" (p.89) and "trespassed" (p.90). The Government's weak frontier policy made them more "troublesome". Because of Maynier "the Kaffirs

were now harassing and plundering without fear" (p.92). Here again are the negative terms applied to "the others".

The inclination of the British government to blame everything on the farmers was due to their never having come into contact with the "noble savage" : there was no-one to tell of "the poor farmer's wife, roused up at midnight to find her husband killed with an assegai" (p.173). It should also be remembered, Bleby says, that the Xhosa were not the original owners of the land (p.188). The White man's claim to the eastern districts is being legitimated here. Bleby's solution to the frontier problem is straightfoward : "The only alternative with the Kaffir was to conquer and repel him, or to civilise and bring him under colonial control" (p.189).

In another example of bias by disproportion, an entire chapter is devoted to the British immigrants of 1820, illustrating the British orientation of the books of the period. Along with other colonial writers, Bleby is strongly critical of Lord Glenelg, and expresses her indignation at the treatment meted out by him to the farmers (p.204). Unlike earlier colonial writers, however, Bleby is conciliatory, even complimentary, in her attitude towards the Dutch-speaking farmers. This shows a desire to bring the two White language groups closer together in the years after Union. She also acknowledges the sometimes positive role played by the missionaries : "In looking back ... now that we have become a South African nation, ... we should dwell rather on the services they rendered to South Africa" (p.212).

When discussing the Matabele, Bleby uses the word "ravaged" three times on page 227, and again on page 232. Chaka was a "tyrant" who had massacred in cold blood more than a million of his people (p.240). Dingane was a "treacherous savage" (p.246), as "cruel" as Chaka and even more cunning and treacherous", who on one occasion put to death eleven of his wives for having annoyed him" (p.241).



In contrast to the epithets employed in her discussion of the non-Whites, Bleby eulogizes both White language groups. The "hardy Voortrekkers, nothing daunted", "stout-hearted farmers strengthened by prayer and trust in God", defeated these "savages" (p.33). Dirkie Uys was "a brave young boy" who died a "hero's death" (p.247); Pretorius was a "trusty" leader and "able general", "respected", "God-fearing", capable of "splendid generalship" (p.249). Farewell and his party were "adventurous spirits" (p.239), "stout-hearted settlers" who had the courage to face the dangers of the wild. The Bacas, "a freebooting Kaffir tribe", were punished for helping the Bushmen steal Voortrekker cattle: they were driven from their kraals (pp.252-3). No mention is made of the killings of the Bacas that took place during this expedition, a case of bias by omission so common in school textbooks).<sup>46</sup> The main result of the Great Trek according to Bleby was that it forced the Imperial government "to accept the responsibility for the maintenance of peace and good order in South Africa" (p.264). Bleby clearly regards British rule as beneficial.

The British annexation of Natal is justified by the usual arguments (p.253). There were "hordes of savages" roving about Natal (p.257) and the "native difficulty" remained one of the "problems" of Natal. In later years "another problem" was added by the "importation of Coolies" from India (p.259). Common to South African textbooks over the decades, the non-Whites are pictured by Bleby as either a threat or a problem, or both. The White population of Natal on the other hand became "a very energetic and intelligent community" (p.259).

The Trek in itself was "a great misfortune", although its ultimate effect was a great expansion of colonial territory and the opening up of new fields for colonisation further north (p.265), which expansion is supported by Bleby.

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46 See B.J. Liebenberg, Andries Pretorius in Natal, Chapter 7.

Like other writers in the Colonial mould, Bleby makes much of the supposed dishonesty and duplicity of the Xhosa. Thus the Glenelg system was doomed as it ignored "Kaffir modes of morality" (p.270); the treaties had "no meaning for the Kaffirs" (p.271). To the "Kaffir mind cattle-lifting was no more a crime than it was to the Highland raiders in the Middle Ages"; certain Kaffir tribes "prided themselves on their skill in stock stealing" (p.272). By 1841 Napier "had lost all belief in the value of Kaffir promises" (p.272).

The orientation function of history is clear in Bleby's comment on the "native problems" which lay before the newly united South Africa: these people should be approached with the same desire to deal justly, with love and mercy, which had been the redeeming feature of British native policy throughout the the nineteenth century (p.289). Thus the past policies could provide orientation for the solving of problems in the future.

Bleby is conciliatory toward the Boers, acknowledging that they had fought "with great courage" at Boomplaats (p.296), and siding with them against the Basuto: the "crafty" Moshesh "needed a lesson" (p.301). Despite the conciliatory tone of Bleby's work, she still uses the pronoun "us" throughout to refer to the British perspective, for example: "The two British annexations further embroiled us with the Dutch republics, and embittered still more their feelings towards us" (p.308). This "us-them" scheme is reversed in the Dutch, and later the Afrikaans, textbooks where the "us" become the Afrikaners and the "them" the British. The pronouns "us" and "them" reveal much of the historical perspective of a writer.

Bleby devotes five chapters to Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the Indian Mutiny. Her treatment of nineteenth century South African history ends with the Keate Award (1874). The two Anglo-Boer conflicts are omitted so as not to disturb relations

so soon after Union, once again bias by omission. The record resumes again with Union, which above all brought with it all the chance of a better understanding between the two White races of South Africa, "and of their working together harmoniously for the common weal". If this hope was realised, Union meant the dawn of a brighter day for South Africa and the fulfilment of the maxims of two of her great leaders - 'Eendracht maakt Macht', and 'Alles zal recht komen' (p.415).

The book ends on a reassuring and self-assured Imperial note: "The peace and freedom of South Africa, and her leisure quietly to develop her resources, are secured to her by the power of the British Empire and the protection of the British navy" (p.424). South Africa, firmly British-orientated, could thus feel secure in the bosom of the Empire.

- (c) L.M. Foggin : The Civil Reader, for Upper Classes (1913),  
(Third Edition, 1918)

Foggin, Inspector of Schools in Rhodesia, had first published his little reader in 1910. The preface to the first edition was provided by Patrick Duncan, former Colonial Secretary of the Transvaal, and contains thoughts of great importance for this study. Duncan writes of the importance of knowledge of government and constitutional matters, especially in South Africa where a national life and the institutions belonging to it "are in the process of being built up by a people having within itself many elements of difference, and divided until recently into separate states with different governments. The success of the Union and its institutions depends on, amongst others, the citizen's understanding of the complex machine of government." No clearer example of the legitimation function of history could be found anywhere.

The preface to the 1913 edition is even more explicit: "It is the mission of this work to instil into the minds of the

citizens of the future an adequate conception of their primary duties, their elementary rights and the relation to each other as co-workers in building up the fabric of the body politic as well as to the State of which they form the constituent elements".

In the chapter on "Examples of Patriotism", Foggin writes that South Africa had every reason to be grateful to its political leaders, who co-operated to establish the Union. It was only by the exercise of patriotic effort that Union had been achieved (p.23). On the "Education of Citizens", Foggin maintains that the best textbooks for the education of citizens were "the records of past experience" (p.29). The chapter on "the Relations of Governing the Subject Races" opens with Kipling's "Take up the white man's burden". In contrast to former days, most "enlightened" nations treat the conquered races "as children needing guidance, help and training". This task was the White man's burden, a burden "which has fallen upon the British more than upon any other nation in modern times". Such a burden also lay upon the shoulders of the White man of South Africa as the ruling race (p.33), a task "laid upon him by Providence" (p.38). The paternalism and sense of superiority of the period, and the consciousness of a calling are all obvious here.

The institution of Cadet Corps and Boy Scouts gave the boys of the Empire a chance to share in the "imperial and patriotic work" of defending the British Empire (p.54), a "community of states or nations bound together by bonds of blood, sentiment and commerce"(p.74). Foggin writes of the "necessity of destroying the Zulu power" (p.86) and the "elimination" of the two Republics that had been the largest obstacle to Union (p.85).

In the section on "Prospects of the South African Union", Foggin sees as the greatest gain "the welding of the two great white

racés of South Africa into one"; there were signs that "the old racial animosities are beginning to break down" (p.95). In three different places he emphasizes the need for South Africa to contribute more to the British navy: "South Africa will not be mistress in her own house until she makes full provision for defence" (p.100).

- (d) E. Stockenström: The New Matriculation History (Part II).  
A Brief Summary of the Central Facts of South  
African History from Earliest Times to 1892  
(1918)

While English-speaking history pupils were being offered Whiteside, Scully, Bleby and other unashamedly pro-British authors, Afrikaans-speaking pupils were to an increasing extent being weaned from such books by National- or Republican-minded teachers. Eric Stockenström was history master at the Boys' High School in Stellenbosch and also lecturer at the University of Stellenbosch. He was an ardent supporter of the Afrikaner cause. His books were used for decades in South African schools. Stockenström's 1918 book was published in both English and Afrikaans. The second edition of 1922 was the same text, with an additional chapter on Union. The 1928 Afrikaans edition is reviewed in Chapter 6. Part I of Stockenström's twin volumes covered general history.

Stockenström's book was critical of the liberalism of the English missionaries, and like almost all other textbooks of the time, anti-Black. In two important respects it differed from the textbooks of the time: it was anti-British in places, and secondly it placed the Afrikaner at the centre of the historical stage. Here was evidence of an anti-establishment, alternative historical perspective. Whereas Whiteside and others viewed South African history through British spectacles, Stockenström, Godée Molsbergen and others reflected the Afrikaner's historical consciousness and interpretation of the past.

Stockenström firmly establishes the traditional mastersymbols pertaining to the indigenous inhabitants. Under the heading The Aborigines and Other Natives of South Africa, the "Bushmen" are described as a race of "wild men", "pygmies", probably "the lowest and most degraded specimens of the human race". Their physical appearance is described in the most insulting language. They were "coarse in feature", with "very thick lips", their skin "too wide for their bodies which were covered with wrinkles", and they had "a very flat nose"; their bodies "were usually smeared with animal fat and their dwelling was simply a cave or hole in the ground" (p.17). He quotes John Barrow's description for good measure : "The Bosjesmans indeed are amongst the ugliest of all human beings ... (they) partake much of the apeish character" (p.18). They had no language other than clicks and hoarse sounds". These "irreclaimable savages" had their hand against every man (p.18); they eventually disappeared, as "the weaker go to the wall" (p.19). Their "rude paintings" are reminders of these "savages" (p.19).

The indolence of the "Hottentots" is stressed. They were a "lazy, filthy race" whose most striking character was "idleness", spending a large part of their day sleeping, and the night dancing to their "rude" instrument the "ramkie" (p.20). They were "fond of smoking dagga": this probably accounts for their "languor" and "listless character". Very little was known about the religious notions of these "savages" (p.21). The Bantu had achieved a much greater civilization than the "despicable Hottentots" (p.23), who were "extremely indolent and as farm hands absolutely worthless" (p.30).

In contrast, the forebears of the Dutch settlers were the "indomitable" Netherlanders who had fought with "exceptional skill and valour" against the Spanish, winning "the admiration of the whole world" (p.25). Stockenström's praise for the European settlers at the Cape is lavish. They were "a veritable aristocracy". In 1664, fifty orphan girls of "respectable and

good moral character" were brought to the Cape, and twenty years later more farmers and girls", all of them of unstained reputation and good moral character"(p.32). The Bushmen depredations", the continuous struggle against "savage men and ferocious beasts", resulted in an exceptional skill with weapons. The wild free life made these pioneers "self-reliant, hardy ... splendid colonists in every respect" (p.35). He quotes Livingstone to reinforce the positive self-image: "'The Dutch farmers of South Africa trace their descent from some of the best men the world has ever produced" (p.32). The Huguenots too represented "the best and noblest blood from France", "men of character and unblemished reputation" (p.32). In summarising the Dutch period, Stockenström pays tribute to the "doughty" and "redoubtable" Hollanders who only allowed colonists of "unblemished moral character" to emigrate and whose slave code "was the mildest in the world" (p.44).

To enhance the self-esteem of the Whites and especially the Afrikaners, Stockenström describes them in glowing terms, page after page: Tjaart van der Walt was a man of "unblemished moral character and great intrinsic worth, intrepid and undaunted ... distinguished for his sincere patriotism and his strong devotion to duty", a forerunner "of a long series of distinguished Boer commandants" (p.15). Janssens and de Mist were "honest", "progressive", "broad-minded" "conscientious" men, and the administration of the Batavian Republic was "lenient, enlightened, and honest"; Janssens in particular was an "intrepid and distinguished soldier, and a high-principled, broad-minded gentleman ... of unimpeachable moral character ... inspired by a strong sense of duty and ardent patriotism" (p.56). The "gallant" Andries Stockentröm too was a man of "unblemished moral character and intrinsic worth" (p.60). Colonel Graham is quoted on the orderliness, willingness and obedience of the Boers. Four pages and a pen-and-ink illustration by the author himself are devoted to Slagters Nek, described as a "political

blunder" by the "mere handful of British officers" ruling a nation with a "great and stirring history" (p.69). The 1820 settlers soon got to know the "sterling virtues of the Boers, especially their "undaunted perseverance" (original emphasis) (p.75).

To strengthen ties between the two White groups at the time (i.e. 1918), Stockenström emphasizes their co-operation in the past in defence of the frontier. Before 1820 the Dutch burghers "had to brave the numerous onslaughts of the Kafirs alone". Thereafter the English had to take their stand "beside their Dutch fellow colonists". The result of this "defensive struggle against the barbarians was to bring the English and Dutch colonists together (original emphasis). The two had a common interest in "repelling the natives" and learned to live "in harmony" together. Just like the ancestors of the Boers, the South African English too were the "most valuable and splendid" colonists, who "though constantly surrounded by numberless savages" never "degraded themselves to form connections with the natives"; rather, "they preserved their moral character unblemished" (p.78).

In a glaring example of bias by overemphasis, the author uses the word "savages", six times on pages 60 and 61 alone to describe the Xhosa. They are also called "aggressors" and "intruders". His crayon sketches of Shaka and Mzilikazi portray them as malformed, pot-bellied savages. His descriptions of these and other chiefs are the usual stereotypes. The former "exterminated" the tribes he conquered, his career marked by "indescribable cruelty" and the "ruthless bloodshed" of his "irresistable hordes". These "savage hordes", these "murderous bands", "cruelly butchered" whole tribes. Mzilikazi was a "cruel tyrant" with a "bloody career", Dingane a "fiendish tyrant, more cunning and cruel than his predecessor, who ruled his people with a "diabolical cruelty" (pp.80-82). Moshweshwe gathered under him a "savage crew", and was "crafty" and "ambitious" (p.83).



Stockenström, like so many other authors already reviewed, stresses the supposed duplicity and unreliability of non-White chiefs. The Treaty States were thus the "acme of the ludicrous policies of the philanthropic government" (p.142), hoping to make treaties "with barbarians as if they were civilized Europeans"(p.144). The system was doomed to failure, for "the Kaffirs were savages, and there was naturally no moral code among them which could bind them ... to an agreement"; it was "part of the tradition of the Kaffirs to do as much harm and injury as possible to their natural enemies. To rob the white man of his cattle was to the mind of the barbarians no criminal act but a great virtue" (p.145). D'Urban was "hoodwinked by savages to whom the breaking of a compact ... was not a crime but rather a virtue" (p.149). Sir George Grey also allowed himself "to be hoodwinked by a barbarian whose mental capacity was altogether out of comparison with that of civilized Europeans" (p.183).

Cetshwayo, surrounded by thousands of "bloodthirsty warriors", showed signs of restiveness. The British ultimatum, preceded by the "massacre" of Christian converts, and "Zulu intrigues", was "scornfully repudiated" by the "haughty savage". (p. 224). It is significant that just as pro-British authors support the other White Group in a Black-White conflict, so Stockenström aligns himself with the British in this Anglo-Zulu clash: At Isandlwana a "huge Zulu army", an "overwhelming mass of bloodthirsty barbarians", surrounded and "butchered the handful of men", after which the "exultant savages" attacked Rorke's Drift where the "redoubtable defenders" saved Natal (p.225).

Typical of Afrikaans historiography of the post-1902 period, Stockenström views the Great Trek as the first great pole of Afrikaner history. In a classic case of bias by overemphasis, it is allotted six chapters in which the emigrants are treated most sympathetically. There is full understanding of the reasons given for their departure: the "weak and foolish" frontier policy allowing the Colony to "swarm with Kaffirs"; the Anglicization

policy which "deeply wounded the sentiment of the Dutch colonist"; the Missionaries' interference and influence on policy decisions such as the 50th Ordinance resulting in the country "swarming with vagrant Hottentots" which "vagabonds proved a serious menace". All this was "to the savage mind" a sign of weakness (pp.90-110).

True to the tradition of Gustav Preller (see Chapter 6) and others before and since, Stockenström raises the Trek leaders to the status of demi-gods. Louis Trichardt, the "redoubtable" leader had grown up "under the majestic vault of the charming South African firmament"; with his wife the "heroine Martha", he entered the "almost entirely depopulated" interior. After much suffering he and most of his party succumbed: those "hardy pioneers offered up their lives for the cause of freedom and justice" (pp.117-119). Hendrik Potgieter was a "worthy frontier farmer", "trusted and respected by all the burghers, eminently fitted to be a leader" (p.120). His agreement with Makwana "proves that the emigrants never took forcible possession of any territory belonging to the natives". Thus the White man's claim to the interior is legitimated (p.121). Gerrit Maritz too "possessed many excellent qualities" - he was a "disinterested, fearless and able man who was respected and trusted by all" (p.123). Similarly Piet Retief possessed "many qualities which fitted him to be a great national leader ... distinguished for his probity, determination and pertinacity of purpose ... a noble patriot, a bold and fearless advocate of the rights of his countrymen". "Andries Pretorius was a man of high character, intrinsic worth, indomitable resolution and sincere patriotism" (p.131).

The massacres along the Bushmen and Sunday Rivers are described in powerful language:

"While the desperate mothers were shoving their beloved children under the bed ... the cruel savages ... ripped open their breasts with the sharp blade of the deadly

assegaai. The innocent little ones were then dragged from under the bed and horribly massacred by having their brains dashed out against ... the wheels. Robust young ladies were held down on the ground while their bodies were being cut open, and their heart, lungs and internal viscera torn out by the cruel hands and cast on the veld. Young lads and grey-haired men were first tortured and then murdered in a manner than can be better imagined than described" (p.128).

Louw Wepener "the heroic Boer Commandant", was killed by the "savages, who cut out his heart and mingled his blood with theirs, for these "credulous and superstitious barbarians" believed that they could thereby imbibe his strength (p.186). Hermanus Potgieter's hunting party was "tortured to death", Potgieter himself being "pinned to the ground and skinned alive". The bodies of all the victims were then horribly mutilated" (p.192). Generations of pupils were taught this and similar highly emotive "history" at an impressionable age.

At Boomplaats, the farmers made "a determined and heroic stand, but the odds were too great" (p.178). In contrast to the British-orientated textbooks of the period, Stockenström backs the Republic's claims to the Diamond Fields. In the question of the Annexation of 1877 and subsequent events, Stockenström's loyalties are obvious: he condemns the Annexation in no uncertain terms and commends the fighting qualities of the Transvaal Boers.

At Laing's Nek, Joubert gained "a brilliant victory. A handful of "plucky" Boers under the "doughty" Roos rushed forward at Majuba "to do or die," resulting in a "brilliant" victory over the "brave" General Colley. Stockenström specifically mentions the "bravery and determination" of the British. Thus while his pro-Boer sentiments are clear, Stockenström is careful to give credit to the British as well. This was an important consideration in a 1918 textbook.

The author goes out of his way to enhance the self-esteem of the young Republics: Brand was a "renowned patriot", a man of "great

tact, intrinsic worth, and unblemished character who made of the O.F.S. a "model state", one of "the most orderly and best governed in the world" (p.246).

Stockenström is derogatory about the Uitlanders and the social results of the discovery of gold, and guilty of bias by exaggeration: "The territory formerly sanctified by the blood of martyrs - the blood of Boer heroes and heroines - was now vitiated by abominable houses of disrepute, horrible gambling dens, low class canteens, vicious slums, and filthy haunts of robbers and assassins" (p.262). The events discussed conclude with 1892, the syllabuses of the time not accommodating the history of South Africa after that year. The Anglo-Boer war is played down, receiving a mere sentence: "After a terrible war which lasted three years, the gold mines and the country of the Boers were finally added to the British Empire" (p.264). This rather bitter postscript does, however, betray much more about Stockenström's resentment of the fate of the Republics.

- (e) E.C. Godée Molsbergen: A History of South Africa for Use in Schools; and Geschiedenis van Zuid-Afrika voor Schoolgebruik (1910)

Godée Molsbergen was a Dutch-born professor of history at the University of Stellenbosch, whose sympathies lay unmistakably with the Boer or Afrikaner cause. This textbook, in the original Dutch and in the English translation, had been compiled at the request of the Zuid-Afrikaansche Taalbond, the Zuid-Afrikaansche Onderwijzers Unie and the Afrikaanse Christelike Vrouwen Vereeniging, all of whom felt the need for a textbook that would do justice to the Afrikaner's past. It would act as a counter to the pro-British books being used in schools. That such a book was, in 1910, guaranteed to stir controversy, can readily be understood.

The English press reacted violently to the appearance of the



book. The East London Daily Despatch condemned the book in two leading articles in April 1910: "It is monstrous that such a book should be printed, but when it comes out as the work of a Professor to whose salary the Government contributes!"; The Star called it "poisoned" and "rank, pernicious racialism". The Jingo element clamoured for the banning of the book. The Superintendent General in the Cape did not oblige, but the Director of Education in the Transvaal did place Godée Molsbergen's book on the "blacklist".<sup>45</sup>

The parts of the book that precede the actual text are in many ways more revealing than the text itself. The book is dedicated to the youth of South Africa"; before the preface there are four quotations, including Psalm XXII ("Our fathers trusted in Thee - they trusted, and Thou didst deliver them") and the first stanza of the Z.A.R.'s national anthem, Kent gij dat volk. This alone would have caused consternation in "red-hot" pro-British circles. The preface looks forward to the year 1910 when a united South Africa, "the cherished dream of many hearts", would be an accomplished fact; South Africans would have reached their goal, "guided by ... Providence, notwithstanding diversity in tongue and nationality ... ,welded together into a new people!".

Godée Molsbergen continues:

"The birth of this nation was the outcome of much travail ... and the shedding of blood ... and it is our duty to recall the sufferings of the past ... May no son of South Africa, whether of Dutch or English parentage, be found to date her history from the time when he himself reached years of discretion...! Young South Africa ... will not ... grow up in ignorance of their country's past ... in that we can trace its course step by step from the coming of the first white man right up to the present day. The story is one to cause the heart of the young Afrikaner to throb with gratitude towards Providence for the favour shown his people, and to

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45 See A.J. Boeseken, Lewe en Werk van prof. E.C. Godée Molsbergen, Tydskrif vir Geesteswetenskappe 17/1 April 1977, pp.7-18.

thrill with love for his country and his nation ... "And along with the hard facts of history let the teacher mingle stories ... of Jan van Riebeeck's residence on the shores of Table Bay; of the heroic deeds of ... Joachem Willemszoon, Woltemade, Richard King, Piet Uys, General de Wet, ... of the chivalry of General Colley ... of the escape of President Steyn, and the burial of President Kruger; of the sorrows and sufferings of the widows and orphans of the combatants who fell in the war, whether Boer or Briton."

Several interesting aspects come to light in this preface: first the typical White-centric approach to South African history; second the belief in the hand of Providence in history. For example the Trekkers trust in God is stressed: they relied "upon God and upon His protection. That He would never desert them was their certainty in an uncertain future" (p.111). The final defeat of Mzilikazi was "deliverance, truly ... of the Lord " (p.117). The third noteworthy aspect of the obvious attempt at national unity, but with an emphasis on the central place of the Afrikaner and the fourth the stated aim of fostering national consciousness through a knowledge of the past, i.e., national orientation through a study of history.

In Chapter I the author answers the question, "Why do we study the history of our fatherland?", by saying, "in order to know what position our nation ("ons volk" in the Dutch version) holds in the eyes of the world". Unlike the British-orientated textbooks of the time, Godée Molsbergen gives considerable attention to the rise of the Netherlands.

The first half of the textbook deals with the Dutch period in Cape history, including five pages on the Huguenots. Van Riebeeck was "strictly honest, of unblemished character, full of faith in God, resourceful and prudent"(p.43). After two generations the descendents of the French, Dutch and German settlers no longer thought of themselves as such, but as "Afrikaners". This is another example of backward projection. There are several references to the Afrikaner nation's special relationship with

God. The thought "of such brave forefathers, as these, who, guided hither by God, helped to build up the Afrikaner nation, thrills every heart with pride"(p.54). The stock-farmers of the interior "never lost their trust in God nor their reverence for His word."

The frontier farmers had constantly to be on their guard against the San, and the experiences in the "struggle" with this "troublesome" "foe" are very similar to what their descendents were to suffer "at the hands of the Kaffir nation"(p.56). The colonists had "in the Kaffirs, ... a perpetual menace" (p.65). The colonists were better able to wage war with an "enemy" like the Xhosa (p.69), than the "elusive foe", the San (p.66). By means of such language the master symbol of non-Whites as a threat is constantly being transmitted.

The negative Feindbild is further strengthened by emotive language such as the following: "a great horde" of Xhosa crossed the Fish, "raiding cattle", "laying waste farms", "setting fire to dwelling-houses" and "even torturing several Europeans to death"(p-71). The colonists were exposed to the "pillage and plunder" of the "native hordes" (p.76), those "troublesome and dangerous cattle-thieves" and "marauders" (p.82), a "perpetual menace". Further on, the author expands on the master symbol of other non-Whites as a danger: the rapid increase in the Black population "is a constant menace to Natal", and there was also "a danger from the Coolie element" (p.139). From the start, the Republican Boers had to confront "a common danger", a "universal danger", i.e. "the Basuto problem". Even after the annexation of Basutoland, the Basuto constituted "a constant danger" (p.146).

A further stereotype which is repeatedly reinforced is that of the San and Xhosa as thieves: the author writes of the "cattle-lifting propensities" of the San, and of the Xhosas' "frequent raids upon the colonists' cattle"(p.70).

Godée Molsbergen, in discussing the causes of the Great Trek, displays an anti-British stance; he maintains that the patience of the Dutch-speaking inhabitants was "strained beyond the limit" (p.89) by, amongst others, the hostile attitude of the British Government towards their mother-tongue, making them feel like "strangers in their own fatherland" (p.91). Yet the most momentous consequence of the Trek was to be the birth of a new nation - the Boers (p.112).

To legitimate the White man's, and specifically, the Afrikaner's claim to the South African interior, the author points out that Potgieter "formally purchased" the country lying between the Vaal and Vet rivers from Makwana; "thus the Boers ... became, after much wandering, landowners once more" (p.115). The immense territory which Mzilikazi had ruled in his "reign of terror", had "now passed into the possession of the Boers" (p.117). Similarly the author makes much of the "treaty" between Dingane and Retief, the "deed of cession of Natal" (p.120), calling it an "important document". The Boers "rid South Africa of two great evils" - the Matabele and the Zulu; "thus they deserve her lasting gratitude for rendering her habitable for white men and for black, subject to the latter's good behaviour" (p.122).

The author's Afrikaans perspective is clearly visible in the following: the Boers had no sooner triumphed over their Zulu foes than they were "menaced from a new quarter", i.e. the attention of the British Government, which "seemed bent on the extermination of the Trekkers". The Boers "have never forgotten the attitude assumed by the British Government towards them" (pp. 122-123). Yet the Sand River Convention showed that God "had not deserted his people. They were free!" A "lusty nation, the Transvaalers, had come into existence; a nation tempered in the furnace of affliction, the healthy offshoot of the sturdy Dutch stock" (p.133). Through such adjectives, the self-esteem of one's own group is enhanced. During the British Administration the Free State was in "a deplorable condition", as the British officials



"abused their power" and "the Basutos plundered the country at will" p134). This, and the following extract, must have ruffled Jingo feathers at the time:

"In 1836 these very Boers had left the Cape Colony so as to be free from British rule. This had been forced upon them in 1848, and yet in 1852, when the British Government had created a powerful native state, and brought the country into a state of hopeless confusion, and saw no honourable way of escape from its difficulties, it had withdrawn from the scene of its blunders." (p.135).

In concluding the section on the Orange Free State, the author commends the Free State for "nobly fulfilling" her treaty obligations in 1899 in her "sister republic's" hour of need. Steyn and de Wet "made the whole world ring with their names when they kept up the gallant struggle to the bitter end". After "much storm and stress" the O.F.S. has the right to expect a happy future, and her children will work together "in the building up of a healthy and vigorous South Africa" (p.147). Thus inspiration from the past could provide an orientation for the present and future.

The author's treatment of Transvaal history reads like a charge-sheet, a litany of grievances, and a tabulation of conflicts against the Pedi, the Kwenas, the British. He is at pains to refute the reasons given by Shepstone for annexing the Transvaal, and rejoices in the Transvaal victories at Bronkhorstspuit, Laing's Nek and Majuba (p.158). He is sympathetic towards the Z.A.R. in its efforts to maintain its sovereignty in the face of British imperialist expansion. While acknowledging Rhodes's stature, he nevertheless singles out Kruger as "the most notable man South Africa has to this day produced", a man of "marvellous resource". He was noted for his "scrupulous honesty" and "determined to secure the rights of his nation by honourable methods", in contrast to Rhodes, "who did not hesitate to make use of any means to attain his cherished ambition" (p.161).

British moves and attitudes between 1897 and 1899 "made war inevitable" - no wonder Godée Molsbergen's textbook was banned by the authorities of the time. In contrast to other works in the first decade or two after 1902, he pointedly mentions the "terrible privations" caused by the concentration camps, and other consequences of British ruthlessness: the whole country "was in a most deplorable condition, homesteads were plundered and burnt, crops were destroyed, and cattle slaughtered". The country was systematically laid waste, and women and children were carried into concentration camps, where 20 000 of them died" (p.171).

The last chapter is headed A Happy Ending. Although critical of the appointment of Milner as High Commissioner for the conquered territories as well ("they recognized in him the man who had been instrumental in bringing about the war"), the author looks forward to May 31, 1910 as "the dawn of a new era", and expresses the hope that the King will reign "over a flourishing and prosperous South Africa, whose subjects, whether of Dutch or English descent, will live together in brotherly love!" (p.176).

(f) Maskew Miller: Korte Geskiedenis van Suid-Afrika Met Baie Illustrasies vir die Gebruik van Skole, 1918(?)

This is the Afrikaans edition, around 1918 (there is no date of publication) of Maskew Miller's Korte Geschiedenis van Zuid-Afrika en zijn Bewoners voor het Gebruik van de Scholen (1909). The preface states that the book is based on both published works and unpublished manuscripts by Theal, as adapted by T. Young, Principal of Sea Point Boys' High in Cape Town, in collaboration with F.W. Reitz. This was also the only book based on Theal's work which carried his official blessing and sanction: "Of the different concise history books the content of which was taken from my work, this is the only one for which I have granted

my permission". The content and atmosphere of this 1918(?) edition are, therefore, characteristic of the books based on Theal.

There are the usual descriptions of the Bushmen as "a race of wild people" (p.2) "low on the ladder of civilisation" (p.3), and the Hottentots as "Half-naatjes" (half-breeds) (p.5). Neither had any knowledge of God, relying on magic and "all manner of strange customs" to ward off evil spirits (p.3). The Bushmen were "wild people out to rob travellers and murder ship-wrecked sailors". The war against them only ceased when there were so few left that they could do little more harm ("weinig kwaad") (p.61). They were not prepared to change their ways so the Whites were not prepared to share the land with them (p.61). The first Bushmen are purported to have entered north east Africa, probably from Asia (p.7), and by 1500 there were "few Bantu south of the Zambezi" (p.9), a belief widely held for a long time. Three chapters are devoted to the Portuguese "discovery" of South Africa.

When the Xhosa refused to go back across the Fish, the commandos forced them back to "their own side". This event should be remembered well because it was the first of a long series of frontier wars (p.76). Under the heading "Trouble with the Xhosa" the usual criticism of British frontier policy (or lack thereof) is aired. More than a hundred Whites were "murdered by the Xhosa" and the country was "plundered and destroyed" (p.159). Having endured ten years of the Xhosas's "excesses" ("buitensporighede") the Governor felt obliged to punish that "troublesome" tribe (p.160). A "large mass ("trop") of Xhosas" entered the Colony, "set houses alight, chased the stock off and murdered some Whites" (p.161). Again the Xhosa secretly prepared for the war of 1850, in which on Christmas Day alone, 46 men were "cold-bloodedly murdered" and their houses burned down"(p.168). The Birkenhead episode is given two pages. Once again there is

an emphasis on war and conflict and little or nothing on the trade and social relations between White and Black, the acculturation that took place, and the long periods of peace between the wars. This bias by omission or underemphasis is characteristic of all the earlier, and even many of the later textbooks.

For a "barbarian", Shaka was a man of great intelligence, although almost indescribably "cruel and vicious" (p.120). Dingane was just as "murderous" ("moorddadig") but even more "treacherous" than Shaka. Moshesh, although "not fond of the truth" was "intelligent, generous and good-hearted" (p.126). The book estimates the number of Blacks killed during the Mfecane at about two million (p.124), a number derived from Theal.

The reasons given by the Emigrants for leaving the Colony are sympathetically treated. The author also puts forward the master symbol of the deserted, "uninhabited" interior beckoning the White settlers (p.142).

Natal history is sketched briefly up to 1893 and features mainly military history in the form of the Langa libalele Rebellion and the Zulu War. Similarly the history of the Z.A.R. is primarily concerned with the clashes between the Boers and the Pedi, Kwena and Magato. In all cases it was the tribes "who first caused trouble" (p.197). The War of 1880-81 is termed a "Vrijheidsoorlog" (War of Freedom) and the British reverses are called "shattering defeats" ("gedugte neerlae") in no uncertain terms. Theal's pro-Boer sentiments are revealed here. The 1899-1902 War is given a line or two: "It was the most unfortunate war which South Africa ever experienced" (p.207). As with other approved school history textbooks of the period, there is the desire to omit those events of the past which may have disturbed relations between the two White language groups.

The last two chapters, entitled "Successive Expansion of the Cape Colony", self-consciously reflect the growing self-confidence of the young state. 1909 is described as the "year of the birth" of the South African nation in which one large South African commonwealth was established (p.207).

## 5. SUMMARY

After the military conquest of the Boer Republics, Milner set about anglicising Afrikaans children. An important element of his education policy was the banning of South African history in favour of British and general history. Milner understood only too well the symbiosis of national and historical consciousness.

However, the national-minded Afrikaners of the North could hardly be expected to take such treatment lying down. The emergence of C.N.E. schools articulated the Afrikaners' determination to resist Milner's attempts to denationalise them. The C.N.E. movement was representative of a wider revival of Afrikaner national sentiment.

After 1910 history syllabuses and most textbooks examined reflect a desire to reconcile the two White language groups. Certainly the syllabuses of the period are a compromise between the differing historical interpretations of the two. Controversial topics are carefully excluded and credit is given to the heroes on both sides. The syllabuses clearly show the increasing self-awareness of the young Union, and its need for an identity.

The textbooks examined may easily be divided into two schools - the pro-British and the pro-Afrikaans. Both types treat the non-White peoples in an equally derogatory manner, a legacy of Colonial times.