

CHAPTER 7

HISTORY TEACHING DURING THE PERIOD OF NATIONAL PARTY RULE 1948-1990

1. POLITICAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL FACTORS INFLUENCING HISTORY TEACHING

1.1. The Way to the Republic: 1948 - 1961

Dr Malan's coalition Government which came to power in the upset victory at the polls in 1948 was the first government in the history of the Union to consist of Afrikaners only. The question of a republic, so long shelved during the Smuts-Hertzog era, soon came to the fore. Malan himself was lukewarm on the issue¹, but J.G. Strijdom's wing of the National Party advocated not only a republic, but one outside the Commonwealth. Strijdom succeeded Malan as Prime Minister in 1954. In contrast to his careful predecessor, Strijdom had a vigorous approach to matters: in 1957 he blandly announced that Die Stem van Suid-Afrika would henceforth be the only national anthem; later that year he had legislation passed that the Union Jack cease to have any standing as an official flag of the Union. These were two of the last remaining emotional ties with Britain. Only South Africa's non-republican status as a member of the British Commonwealth remained.

Strijdom's fiery support for a republic had been tempered by a lack of confidence in the possibility of a majority voting in favour of a republic in a referendum. His successor, Dr H.F. Verwoerd, had decided by 1960 that the time was indeed ripe to put the matter to the test. The 1960 Referendum produced a majority (52,14 per cent) in favour of a republic.² Developments

1 See D.W. Krüger, South African Parties and Policies 1910-1960, pp.187-199.

2. N.G.S. van der Walt, Die Republikeinse Strewe, p.244.

at the Commonwealth Prime Minister's conference in London in March 1961, led to the Union's becoming the Republic of South Africa on 31st May, its membership of the Commonwealth terminated forthwith. The dream of republican-minded Afrikaners since 1902 had at last been realised. The offices of the Queen and the Governor-General were combined in the new office of State President³. On 31 May 1961, C.R. Swart was sworn in as first State President. According to D.W. Krüger⁴, through this constitutional change, South Africa had at last achieved a national solidarity based not so much on a common heritage, as on the expectation of a common future. The root cause of the English - Afrikaans division of the past century and a half (in fact since 1806) had been removed. There were now far more ominous and pressing issues facing the country. These constitutional matters are reflected in the history syllabuses of the period.

1.2. The Political Emancipation of Africa

After the Second World War, the wave of African nationalism began to sweep over the continent of Africa. The colonial powers were hastily compelled to adapt their colonial policies to the increasing demands for independence. By 1961 the decolonization process was already in full swing. Events in Africa after 1961 were to force the South African Government to re-consider its position on the continent and re-assess its relations with the various independent states. For many years Africa had played an extremely limited role in South Africa's foreign policy. The Union, as a White African state, remained outside the growing circle of independent African states. Criticism of South Africa's apartheid policy became increasingly vehement from within these states. The most serious obstacle in the way of normal relations was, and still is, South Africa's internal policies. To an

3 See N.G.S. van der Walt, Die Republikeinse Strewe, Ch. XI; and T.R.H. Davenport, South Africa. A Modern History, pp.398-399.

4 D.W. Krüger, The Making of a Nation, pp.334-335.

increasing extent independent African states used their influence to manipulate world opinion against South Africa.⁵ Pressure from Africa began to assume new proportions in 1963 when the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) was established. The granting of independence to the three British Protectorates, Lesotho, Botswana and Swaziland in 1966 and 1968 brought Black Africa to South Africa's doorstep. Dr. Verwoerd was not able to make much headway in Africa. His successor, B.J. Vorster, after 1966 launched a so-called outward moving policy ("uitwaartse beleid") and dialogue with African states. This introduced a phase of détente in the politics between South Africa and Africa. One of the main contributory factors to this dynamic policy was the increasing international pressure upon South Africa and her consequent isolation. By 1966 forty African states were already independent and as a pressure group, both as the O.A.U., and at the United Nations, they could no longer be simply ignored. There was a growing realization that South Africa's relations with the rest of the world were largely dependent on her relations with the African states. There was also the increasing consciousness that South Africa had a specific responsibility towards independent Africa as the regional industrial and economic power; conversely, Africa offered new markets.⁶ Vorster's meetings with African leaders, sometimes in the African states themselves, did not lead to formal diplomatic ties.⁷

The Soweto uprising of 1976, and South Africa's intervention in the civil wars in Angola and Mozambique had led to the collapse of the détente policy by 1978. By 1980 Zimbabwe had been added to the semi-circle of Marxist-controlled states (Mozambique and Angola) on South Africa's northern flank. This and the

5 See T. Cameron and S.B. Spies (Ed.), An Illustrated History of South Africa, pp.293-295, and A. Hepple, Verwoerd, Ch.14.

6 See O. Geyser (Ed.), B.J. Vorster: Selected Speeches, pp.15, 254-256.

7 T. Cameron and S.B. Spies (Ed.), An Illustrated History of South Africa, pp.297-298; G.M. Cockram, Vorster's Foreign Policy; and A. Guelke, South African Foreign Policy in Africa.

deteriorating security situation on the home front, led to the formulation of P.W. Botha's "Total Onslaught Strategy".⁸ This resulted in increasing militarisation and growing paranoia in the White population. The "Total Onslaught" approach came to an abrupt end with the political demise of P.W. Botha in August 1989.

The various phases in the Republic's relations with Black Africa are mirrored in the history syllabuses from the early 1960's.

1.3. The Age of Social Engineering: Apartheid and Separate Development, 1948 - 1982

If it is accepted that school history syllabuses, and to a certain extent textbooks, serve to legitimate the political dispensation of the day, then nowhere is this more obvious than in South African history syllabuses since 1948.

After the result of the 1948 election became known, the National Party leader, Dr D.F. Malan, could exclaim : "'Today South Africa belongs to us once more'". From then on the policy of the government would be focused upon a single immutable goal - the preservation of White power in general, and of Afrikaner power in particular. The instrument used to put this policy into practice was apartheid. Segregation was nothing new to South Africa, yet it was now to be more vigorously and systematically enforced.⁹

From 1949 to 1961 the "cornerstone" legislation to support the policy of apartheid was passed: the Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act (1949); the Population Registration; Immorality and Group Areas Acts (1950); the Prevention of Illegal Squatting Act (1951); the Native Laws Amendment Act and the Abolition of Passes

⁸ Readers' Digest Illustrated History of South Africa, pp.453-457.

⁹ See W.A. de Klerk, The Puritans in Africa: The Story of Afrikanerdom, also, Readers' Digest Illustrated History of South Africa, p.367.

Act (1952); the Reservation of Separate Amenities Act (1953); the removal of Coloureds from the common voters' roll (1956); the Bantu Investment Corporation Act (1959); the Coloured Persons Communal Reserves Act (1961); the Preservation of Coloured Areas Act (1961); the Urban Bantu Councils Act (1961). This list is by no means complete.

In its 1948 election manifesto the National Party had adopted the general principle that the various Black "ethnic groups" would, as far as possible, be concentrated in their respective territories where each could develop into a self-sufficient unit. Under Verwoerd the policy of apartheid became the ideology of "Separate Development". The patchwork of "homelands" that had been consolidated by the Natives' Land Acts became the basis of a new and ambitious scheme to create separate "nation states" within South Africa, each to develop independently of the other, and each offering political rights to its inhabitants, right up to "independence", if they so chose. Blacks living in a "white" South Africa would become citizens of whatever "homeland" or "national state" they could be traced to; finally there would be no Black South Africans. Making the plan work required social engineering on a massive scale; over a twenty year period an estimated 3,5 million people were "re-settled".¹⁰

The emergence of Transkei, Bophutatswana, Ciskei and Venda as politically "independent" entities, (the establishment of "self-governing territories") and the separate political structures created for Indians and Coloureds, created the temporary illusion that Separate Development had succeeded. History syllabuses mirror the growing dominance of apartheid policies in South African politics from 1948 onward. As will be seen subsequently,

See F.A. van Jaarsveld (Ed.), Honderd Basiese Dokumente, pp.243-250; also T. Cameron and S.B. Spies (Ed.), An Illustrated History of South Africa, p.278; and D.W. Krüger, South African Parties and Policies 1910-1960, pp. 435-440; and A. Hepple, Verwoerd,

from the mid-1970's Black South Africans disappear from the syllabuses altogether. The collapse of apartheid, and recent pronouncements since 1986 on "one South Africa", have yet to find their way into history syllabuses, as does the history of lack resistance politics to Apartheid (See Chapter 8).

The fossilized, extremely narrow image of the past presented in current syllabuses nowhere reflects the dramatic, even fundamental shifts that have taken place in Government policy and South African society since the 1970's. The syllabuses bear little, if any, relation to the richness of South Africa's past as it is continuously being revealed by research.

2. HISTORY SYLLABUSES 1948-1972

2.1 Cape History Syllabuses

Introducing the proposed syllabus in history and civics for the Primary school in 1949, the Cape Education Department¹¹ expressed the need for "a new spirit in history teaching". True, history was "the story of the blood and tears, the devotion and the suffering, the endurance and the victories of men and women, and of nations"; at the end of the course the child should have "a fairly clear idea of the growth of his own nation"; the national traditions and customs "as they came into existence and grew out of the past, are of great cultural value, together with personal and national freedom in all its difference aspects". Amongst the general aims of history teaching was the cultural aim: "To make the pupil realise how Western Civilization came to, and developed in, South Africa and accomplished its own particular national task of influencing the country's racial groups." The civilizing mission of the Whites is clearly expressed here. There could also be little doubt as to where effective history teaching should

11 The Education Gazette, Vol. XLVIII, No. 28, 1st December 1949, pp. 2059-2061.

lead: "In this way a sensible and enlightened patriotism must be cultivated in order that the child will cherish his own country, South Africa, above all else." Two master symbols, that of South Africa's great strategic importance and that of South Africa under constant threat by covetous enemies, are visible in the "general remarks" : "It is also essential that our pupils should understand clearly how this southern-most corner of Africa is and has been of strategic importance among the nations of the world, and has been regarded, ever since its discovery, as a desirable possession".¹²

In the proposed new syllabus South African history was still to end in 1910: 31 May 1910 was the "preferable closing date, because a chapter of the past ended here, and a new era for South Africa commenced. As we are still in the midst of this new period, it is not formally included in the syllabus."¹³ The syllabus itself does not have direct bearing here as we are concerned mainly with secondary syllabuses, yet the Eurocentric approach is noticeable: "How the Cape was discovered and how the Hollanders brought civilization to South Africa"; "Civilization penetrates into the interior"; "Civilized occupation of the interior" are some of the items covered, as is the myth of "the land deserted as a result of destructive wars".¹⁴

The Secondary School Courses for 1952¹⁵ contain no changes from the previous Junior and Senior Certificate syllabuses. In 1953, however, the syllabus for the Junior Certificate was adapted slightly¹⁶: in the section dealing with the Republics and the Anglo-Boer War, the course of the war was greatly emphasized.

12 The Education Gazette, Vol. XLVIII, No. 28, 1st December 1949, p.2061.

13 Ibid., p.2066.

14 Ibid., pp. 2066-2071.

15 Cape of Good Hope. Department of Public Education. Handbook 1952, pp. 28-29.

16 Cape of Good Hope. Department of Public Education. Junior Secondary Course, pp.196-203.

The National Party had just increased its majority considerably in the recent elections and the Afrikaner government was asserting its authority to an ever increasing extent: there was a need to allow the second great pole of Afrikaner history to figure more prominently from then on.

The Section "How we are governed to-day" emphasized the fact that the Union was "an independent member of the Commonwealth of Nations, with full control over internal affairs"; in fact there is a separate section to reinforce this idea: "The emergence of the Union of South Africa as an independent member of the Commonwealth of Nations". This section reflects a young nation conscious of its growing importance and international role : the "increasing economic importance" of the Union; General Smuts as a member of the Imperial War Cabinet; the Union represented at Versailles, the Union as a member of the League of Nations and its part in the drawing up of peace treaties; the Balfour Declaration "increasing economic importance" of the Union; General Smuts as a member of the Imperial War Cabinet; the Union represented at Versailles, the Union as a member of the League of Nations and its part in the drawing up of peace treaties; the Balfour Declaration and Statute of Westminster, and the "further development of the Union" were some of the aspects highlighted by the syllabus.¹⁷

An extremely significant addition to the 1953 syllabus was "The Bantu in the Transkei and in the urban areas", dealing with "details of tribal life" and the administration of the Transkei, as well as the "problems" presented by the presence of the urban Blacks. Section II of the general history was concerned with the partition of Africa, including the Union's control of South West Africa.¹⁸ These were two themes which were to be steadily expanded in future syllabuses.

17 Cape of Good Hope. Junior Secondary Course, p.202.

18 Ibid., pp.202-203.

The new Senior Secondary Course came into effect in January 1956.¹⁹ Amongst the general aims mentioned were a satisfactory knowledge of the history of the pupils' own country, of the manner in which their country was governed and of events which have had an influence on the South African way of life; further, history teaching was to explain the heritage of the pupils' past; to give them an insight into the origins of contemporary problems and conditions, and to acquaint them with questions ("vraagstukke") with which they would be confronted in future. The orientation function of history as a means of grasping the origins of present challenges and equipping the nation to meet them in the future, is well expressed here. Some of the "General Remarks" are rather interesting for our purposes: one of them states that a good deal of material contained in the former syllabus, which had "lost much of its significance", especially that related to the eighteenth century, had been discarded in order that the course might be extended into modern times. The new material brought the study up to the second decade of this century and, in some instances, up to the present. The under-emphasis of more distant history and the greater emphasis on recent events, had political overtones.

Comment 5, in particular, is noteworthy: "in view of the integration of the Bantu into our economic structure and the emergence of a number of concomitant problems", two aspects of "Bantu Studies" had been included in the course. These were first "The Bantu peoples of South Africa", and second "Native policy and administration". By the time this new syllabus was introduced, the Government was well on its way to restructuring South Africa according to its apartheid policies. The first theme made provision for a study of the "migration" of the Bantu into Southern Africa (the idea being that they too were immigrants with no more claim to the country than the Whites); the

19 Cape of Good Hope. Department of Public Education. Senior Secondary Course 1952, pp. 73, 75, 135-141.

distribution of "ethnic groups" (to an increasing extent the real and imaginary differences between such groups were to be emphasized, even exaggerated), "aspects of their culture and organization", their contact with the European" and "the impact of Western Civilisation on the Bantu". "Native policy and administration" was a fairly detailed study of "Native administration in the Union", the "Formation of Native reserves", the "Natives in urban areas" and their political status both past and present. The functions of the Governor-General, the Minister of Native Affairs, the Department of Native Affairs, the Native Commissioners, Chiefs and Headmen were to be studied, as were the various Land Acts, the Trust system, present economic and social conditions in the reserves as well as in the urban areas, and legislation dealing with their political status. Blacks also featured elsewhere in the South African history syllabus but mainly as a source of labour: "slave labour", "Hottentot labour", "the role of Native labour" and "Indian labour" are all mentioned as topics.

Although Blacks were beginning to figure more prominently in the syllabuses, the basic approach was still Eurocentric. The theme "Immigration and expansion in Southern Africa" mentions the Free Burghers, Huguenots, Trekboers, British and German settlers, immigration into Natal, Southern Rhodesia and South West Africa, Whites all.

Other themes are the "British Empire and the Commonwealth", in which not only the evolution of the independent members is dealt with, but also the Republic of India as a Commonwealth member (the latter point could quite conceivably have been introduced to prepare the way for a South African republic within the Commonwealth); the relations between the British Government and the Boer Republics and the evolution of our form of government (from 1652 to 1932).

The Senior Certificate syllabus published in 1961 is identical to

that of 1956.²⁰ The 1969 syllabus,²¹ however, reflects several new dimensions of Government policy and some shifts in emphasis. Under General Remarks the Coloureds and Indians are now dealt with in addition to the Bantu: "In view of the integration of the Bantu, the Coloureds and Indians into our economic structure and the emergence of a number of concomitant problems ...", Topics dealing with this were included; the theme "The Bantu peoples of South Africa" becomes in the 1969 syllabus "The Non-European Population of South Africa", covering not only the "Bantu" but also the Coloureds (their origin, and place in the economy) and the Indians (distribution, position in the economy).

In the theme on immigration and expansion, South West Africa and Rhodesia become, in the new syllabus, sub-sections in their own right. This reflects the international dispute over South West Africa on the one hand and, on the other, the importance of Ian Smith's Rhodesia in Southern African affairs in this period. In the part dealing with constitutional development, the formation of the Republic is included in the new syllabus. Under the heading "South Africa Today" there is a sub-section on the growth of the new states south of the Sahara, and South Africa's relationship with them. Thus the rest of Africa, which for so many decades had been included as the partition of Africa, i.e. in a colonial context, in the general history section, now comes under the South African history section and deals with the independence movements in Ghana, the Congo, Zambia, Malawi and Kenya, the three former protectorates and South West Africa. This was an attempt to legitimate or underscore the importance of Vorster's outward looking policy, and provides a partial African orientation for South Africa as a regional power.

20 Cape of Good Hope. Department of Public Education. Senior Secondary Course, 1961, pp. 126-130.

21 Cape of Good Hope, Department of Public Education. Senior Secondary Course, 1969, pp. 1-10.

2.2 History Teaching in the Transvaal ²²

The development of history syllabuses in the Transvaal during the decade after 1948 followed similar lines to that in the Cape. The first real changes came about in the 1958 syllabuses, which introduced "Africa after 1939", including a survey of the British territories, of Kenya, the Central African Federation and the Gold Coast; the "struggle for independence" in the French territories; Portuguese and Belgian territories, and the independent states such as Egypt and Abyssinia. South African history was taken up to 1939. The 1958 syllabuses were already differentiated according to the T.E.D.'s system of streaming, i.e. A, B and C streams for University Entrance, Matriculation and Junior Certificate respectively.

The 1958 syllabus²³ is virtually identical to the Cape syllabus and need not be repeated here. For the first time the History Syllabus Committee of the T.E.D. detailed the sections of the syllabus, thereby preventing authors of school history textbooks from presenting a division in topics of their own. The latter were thus forced to follow what was contained in the detail and use this as captions for content; this limited their freedom. What is noteworthy about the Transvaal version, is the detailed nature of the section dealing with the relations between the British Government and the Boer Republics in the period 1836-1902, covering nearly half of the six pages setting out the syllabus. The reason for this can probably be traced to the greater vigour of Afrikaner nationalism in the Transvaal.

22 Free State history syllabuses in this period are virtually identical in content and spirit to their Transvaal counterparts and are thus not discussed here. The reader is referred to M.A. Grobbelaar, Middelbare Onderwys in die Oranje-Vrystaat 1910-1952, and M.C.E. van Schoor and J.J. Oberholster, Geskiedenis vir die O.V.S.-Skoleindsertifikaat.

23 T.E.D.A. T.E.D. Syllabus for History for the Secondary School, 1958.

The history syllabus for primary schools of 1966²⁴, provides insight into the degree to which Transvaal education, and specifically South African history, was becoming "Afrikanerised". The aids and suggested activities listed in the syllabus almost invariably make use of examples from Afrikaans history or culture: the Children's Monument at Bloemfontein, the Piet Retief, Danie Theron and Voortrekker monuments or museums, Retief's Manifesto, Blood River, Vegkop, a Voortrekker laager, Marthinus Oosthuizen, Dirkie Uys, Bennie Liebenberg, Paardekraal, Kruger, de la Rey, the Vrouemonument, and Concentration Camp cemeteries. The 1820 settlers are dealt with in eight lines; the Great Trek receives eighty.²⁵ This exaggeration of the role of one community, and conversely the under-emphasis of the role of others, remains a characteristic of history syllabuses to the present.

There are other official T.E.D. documents of the period which provide insight into the stated aims of history teaching. For example, the T.E.D. Study Guide No. 14,²⁶ with the title "The Cultivation of a Positive Attitude as Aim of the Teaching of History", highlights some of the T.E.D.'s aims in the teaching of History. In the syllabus for the junior and senior secondary phases one of the aims mentioned is the development of "the idea of nationality; the cultivation of loyalty, respect and love for (the pupils') country and its people; love and respect for ancestors". Further on we read that "from a Christian conviction and tradition, we confess that God ... controls the destiny of people and nations". The Christian National philosophy of education is clearly expressed here. Under the sub-heading, "Attitude to cultural heritage", one detects the thrust of the Government's Apartheid policy: "Every national community has its

24 T.E.D.A., T.E.D. Syllabus for the Senior Certificate, 1968.

25 T.E.D.A., T.E.D. Syllabus for History in the Primary School, 1966.

26 T.E.D.A., T.E.D. Study Committee for History. Study Guide No. 14. The Cultivation of a Positive Attitude as Aim of the Teaching of History, undated.

own traditions and cultural heritage which are closely connected with the ... cultural environment to which it belongs". By means of the teaching of history the child has to gain respect (original emphasis) for his language as spiritual value. Moreover, there should be a conscious endeavour to absorb an attitude of respect for the cultural values acquired and built up during the years, e.g.: national customs, traditions, mores and attitudes. A child should realise that other population groups in the country also have their own cultural and spiritual heritage. He must develop respect for these, without relinquishing his own, "because the survival of his own people as a cultural society depends on this." Once again, differences between groups are emphasized, while commonalities remain unmentioned.

The subsection "Disposition towards the National heritage" states that the child belongs to a specific country and state: "In the teaching of History a direct attempt should be made towards developing attitudes of loyalty, respect and love (original emphasis) towards the country and its leaders, also towards the leaders (and heroes) of the past ... in this way the child will come to realise that national sacrifices (original emphasis) were made ... and (become) aware of his commitment to his ancestors and to his fatherland". The Study Guide also makes provision for "political education: History explains the presence and survival (original emphasis) of our political institutions; it "guides the child to understand" the "Republican form of government and ideal". It is, therefore, important for him to cultivate an attitude of respect for, appreciation of, and obedience (original emphasis) to, the institutions and the laws". It was the authoritarian undertones and encouragement of the leader-cult contained in such official pieces that opponents of the Government and concerned educationists severely criticised from time to time (see 7.5).

The study guide enjoins the history teacher to "deliberately promulgate fundamental convictions (original emphasis) which

are basic to a Christian-National view of life, and the world". From "a particular perspective (according to the S.A. Constitution, from a Christian and widely national perspective)" the history teacher should inculcate the above habits and "positive attitudes". The Afrikaans-centric approach of the T.E.D. toward South African history is further revealed in the "examples from South African History" selected to show how certain attitudes may be instilled in history lessons. With one exception (the 1820 Settlers), all examples are from the Afrikaner past or represent Christian National Education: the concepts of diligence and industry could be brought home by a lesson on "van Riebeeck's untiring diligence and the loyalty with which he undertook his work of settlement"; the concept of faith through "the Covenant and the Battle of Bloed (sic) River" when the "steadfast faith of the leaders and members of the victorious commandos and their dependence upon God, are emphasized"; liberty as a concept by the example of the Battle of Majuba illustrating "the struggle for freedom and the sacrifices made by our forebears"; the concepts of authority and order by a study of the legislative authority of the Republic to emphasize "the necessity of a good government to upheld (sic) authority and maintain order in society"; respect for our national symbols could be brought home "by making known the origin and symbolism of the National Flag."

2.3 Natal History Syllabuses in this Period

As a result of the recommendations of the Natal Provincial Education Department of 1946 that all syllabuses be revised and that Natal should administer its own Junior Certificate examinations, draft syllabuses for primary schools were despatched in 1949 to selected schools for trial and commentary. By 1950 the revision of syllabuses, including those of history, were completed, so that Natal pupils took the first provincial Junior Certificate examination in 1951. For this first examination the regulations and syllabuses of the old University

of South Africa were applied. It was only at the end of the following year that the Junior Certificate examinations according to the Natal Education Department's own regulations and syllabuses were taken.²⁷

The content of the J.C. history syllabuses used by Natal during the period up to the introduction of national core syllabuses at the end of the 1960's is very similar to those of the other provinces.²⁸ There is therefore no need to reproduce the syllabuses in any great detail here. The South African history component begins with the "Foundation of a Civilized European Settlement" in South Africa and ends with the Second British Occupation in 1806. Although the content of this component is what could be called the "standard fare", Natal did offer its schools a wider choice of themes and topics than the other provinces, all of whom were more prescriptive. Thus Natal history teachers had to treat the section on South African history which was compulsory, but could select two out of four sections dealing with general history.²⁹ The 1964 J.C. history syllabus was, with only minor adjustments, the same as its predecessor.³⁰

In 1953 the National Education Department received permission to administer its own Senior Certificate examinations, but still provisionally according to the regulations and syllabuses of the Joint Matriculation Board. When the N.E.D. did introduce its own history syllabuses, such as that of 1956, they did not differ to any significant extent from those of the other provincial education authorities, except that the South African

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- 27 J.C. Coetzee (Ed.), *Onderwys in Suid-Afrika*, p.263.
28 See for example N.S.L., *N.E.D. Junior Certificate Examination Handbook 1958*, pp.38-42.
29 N.S.L., *N.E.D. Junior Certificate Examination Handbook 1960*, pp.42-60.
30 N.S.L., *N.E.D. Junior Certificate Examination Handbook 1964*, pp. 28-34.

component was a slightly smaller part of the whole than elsewhere, i.e. about two-fifths compared to roughly half in the other three provinces.³¹

The topics included were:

- The Cape, 1771-1936
- The Foundation of the Trekker Republics
- Natal, 1845-1906
- Transvaal, 1872-1902
- Eastern Border, 1836-1894
- The Road to Union, including constitutional developments³² between 1806 and 1936

The emphasis was still very much on political and constitutional history. In a note to the 1956 Senior Certificate syllabus, candidates were expected to know "causes, results and general principles of Acts, Treaties and Conventions", and a more detailed knowledge of the South African Convention and the South Africa Act was expected.³³

The introduction to the 1958 syllabus for the Senior Certificate contained "General Aims" for the first time. They were of the lofty, idealistic variety, couched in more general, universal terms for example: "To teach our pupils to be worthy citizens appreciating their privileges and guided by the fundamental principles of justice and liberty".³⁴

What made the Natal syllabuses different from the Transvaal and Free State syllabuses in particular, was the absence of nationalist overtones in the aims set for history teaching. The Christian National character of history teaching (and of education in general), evident to various degrees in the other three provinces, is lacking in Natal with its large English-

31 N.S.L., N.E.D. Senior Certificate Examination Handbook 1956,
pp.50-56.

32 Ibid., p.50.

33 N.S.L., N.E.D. Senior Certificate Examination Handbook 1958,
pp.44-46.

34 Ibid., p.42.

speaking majority.

However, Natal's independence in this regard was to be short-lived. The introduction of a national education policy, including standardised syllabuses brought Natal into line with the other provinces after 1967.

3. HISTORY SYLLABUSES 1972-1984: THE NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY ACT

The National Education Policy Act (No. 39 of 1967) took effect from 1 January 1968. This Act necessitated amendments to the existing provincial ordinances. It laid down that education in South Africa be provided within the framework of certain principles. Not all of these principles are relevant to this study. The following, however, are pertinent:

- (a) Education provided by the State "shall have a Christian character."
- (b) Education "shall have a broad national character."
- (c) Co-ordination on a national basis in respect of syllabuses, courses and examinations standards shall be effected.³⁵

The intention was that the whole school system and subject content was to be Christo-centric, to have a "Christian character", defined as "education founded on the Bible".

National character, according to the Act, was to be imprinted, amongst others, through "the conscious expansion of every pupil's knowledge of the fatherland, embracing language and cultural heritage, history and traditions, national symbols ... and national achievements"; and by developing this knowledge by presenting it "in the teaching of the ... national history of the

fatherland, civics and geography ... and further through the participation of pupils in national festivals, and their regular honouring of the national symbols, so as to ... inculcate a spirit of patriotism, founded on loyalty and responsibility toward the fatherland ... ".³⁶

In order to equip teachers to give effect to this broad national character, their training, in terms of regulation No. R 1192, was to be so planned that "a spirit of patriotism, loyalty, and a sense of responsibility towards the fatherland and its inhabitants" be engendered. They would be required to study "the language, traditions and history of the Afrikaans and English cultural communities."³⁷ Here one witnesses a heavy emphasis, even exaggeration of, Nationalism. It is a sectional, highly exclusive Nationalism of the "White" variety.

From the above, it is clear that the Act meant history to play a central role in the development of the "National" character of South African education.

The Act also resulted in the new four-phase system of schooling. The old Junior Certificate course that had encompassed Stds 6, 7 and 8 was replaced by the Junior Secondary Phase (Stds 5, 6 and 7) followed by the Senior Secondary Phase (Stds 8, 9 and 10).

To co-ordinate syllabuses, courses and examination standards, a joint interdepartmental committee was appointed comprising representatives from all the provincial education departments, and the Department of National Education. New core syllabuses were drawn up by the joint subject committees of all the education departments, whereupon each department drew up its own syllabuses around these cores, taking into account local needs

36 Republic of South Africa, Government Gazette. Vol.120, No. 4749 of 20 June 1975, Notice No. R. 1192.

37 Ibid.

and circumstances.

History was to be a compulsory subject in the Junior Secondary Phase, as it had been for the Junior Certificate, and thereafter it was optional. This means that South African pupils have, since the late 1960's, had one year less exposure to history as a compulsory subject. This can only have a further diminishing influence on their historical consciousness.³⁸ In Natal, for example, the percentage of Std 10 pupils taking history declined from 44% in 1970 to 24% in 1983; In the O.F.S. the percentage declined from 35% in 1974 to 32% in 1979.

The new 1972 syllabuses³⁹ differed little from the provincial syllabuses discussed above. Political history was brought forward to 1939 and constitutional history now included the constitution as in 1970. The section dealing with the social, political and economic development of the non-Whites made provision for a study of "separate development and separate homelands" in the case of "the Bantu", and the Indian Council and Coloured Representative Council with regard to the other two groups. As the various facets of the policy of separate development unfolded, they were included in the syllabuses. Part 5 of the 1972 syllabus dealt with Foreign Relations, and included South Africa's relations with the U.N. and its neighbours, as well as its "uitwaartse beleid in Afrika". In this way contemporary history was included, to legitimize current political policies.

The 1972 Junior Secondary Course made allowance for a study of South African political history up to the end of the Verwoerd era (1966).⁴⁰

38 See R.E.Chernis, The Role of Sources and Field Studies in the Teaching of History in Natal Provincial High Schools, ch.3.

39 See T.E.D.A., T.E.D. Syllabus vir Geskiedenis Hoër-en Standaardgraad. Standerd 8,9,10, Junie 1972 and G.A.P., N.E.D. Syllabus for History Higher and Standard Grade, 1974.

40 T.E.D.A., T.E.D. Syllabus for History. Standards 5,6,7, 1972; and G.A.P., N.E.D. Syllabus for History Standards 5,6,7, 1974.

These national core syllabuses were to remain in force until the introduction of the new core syllabuses in the mid-1980's.

4. CORE SYLLABUSES SINCE 1985

4.1 The aims of the syllabus

What is striking about the new national core syllabuses, in contrast to the first history syllabuses of the 19th century reviewed in Chapters 3 and 4, is the detailed attention given to, and the concern with, the aims of history teaching. The current T.E.D. syllabuses for the Junior Secondary Course,⁴¹ for example contain six pages of aims, concerning the "Enrichment of Knowledge", the acquisition of skills (fourteen such skills are named), and attitudes (eight are listed).

There appears to be much scepticism as to the extent to which these aims are actually realised in the context of present teaching and examination methods. The Transvaal High Schools' History Teachers' Association reported⁴² that there was "overwhelming consensus" at all their meetings that the current methods of evaluation fail to assess the mastery of skills and fall back instead on merely testing memory. The report also criticised another potential contradiction inherent in the syllabus aims - the conflict between "the need for students to recognize bias and to be able to think objectively and critically", and the stated aim (3.3.4 under "Attitudes"): "the cultivation of loyalty, respect and a love for the country, its peoples, its symbols, for its ancestors and national heroes who, by their struggle and sacrifice, gave us privileges such as religious freedom, political, constitutional development and

41 T.E.D. Syllabus for History Standard 5 and Ordinary Grade Standards 6 and 7, 1985.

42 The Transvaal High Schools History Teachers Association Committee Report, 1988, pp.4-16

independence". The Association suggested that adherence to a philosophy of history "which saw its purpose simply in terms of positioning people politically could easily result in a situation where history became a tool of propaganda." Van den Berg and Buckland⁴³ regard present textbooks and examinations as counter-active to the aims set. This illustrates that it is not only the content of the history syllabus which is controversial, but the very aims (see Chapter 2). Exceptions to the standard textbooks, which make little or no provision for the acquisition of historical skills by pupils, are the books by Graves examined later.

4.2 The syllabus content

The biographical approach of the previous syllabus has been dropped completely in the new Junior Secondary Course.⁴⁴ The Std 5 syllabus deals with the topic "The Development of the Cape Colony 1707-1795", and the British and Batavian administration between 1795 and 1806. The Std 6 syllabus (most of it the former Std 8 syllabus) covers events from 1806 to 1854; its three subdivisions deal with the Mfecane, the Second British Occupation and the Great Trek (still two-thirds of the Std 6 syllabus). The Std 7 syllabus attempts to cover the period 1854 to 1961, requiring pupils to study three of the following five themes: Mineral Discoveries, The Anglo-Boer War, "from Union to Republic", "the basic principles of how the Republic of South Africa is at present governed at all levels", and "Any topic in modern South African history determined by an education department". The only two themes in this course on which additional reading is recommended are the Great Trek and the Anglo-Boer War: these remain the two foci or poles of "official" school history, right up to the present day.

43 O. van den Berg and P. Buckland, Beyond the History Syllabus, Constraints and Opportunities, p.48.

44 T.E.D. Syllabus for History, Standards 5, 6 and 7, 1985; C.E.D. Junior Secondary Course Syllabus for History Standard Grade, 1984.

When we turn our attention to the South African history sections of the new Senior Secondary core syllabus introduced in 1987⁴⁵ we find that a large part of the previous Std 8 syllabus has disappeared - to re-emerge as the Std 6 syllabus. The Std 8 syllabus starts with a "brief revision" of the Mfecane and the Great Trek, but deals mainly with the relationship between the Trekker communities and the British through to the 1880's. The syllabus allows for a regional study as well. A part of the old Std 9 syllabus has been included in the new Std 8 syllabus, the new Std 9 syllabus covers a much shorter period - roughly from 1882 to 1910, focusing on the socio-economic effects of the discovery of diamonds and gold, on the clash between "British Imperialism" and "Afrikaner Republicanism", on what is termed "the incorporation of independent chiefdoms" and on events leading to Union. The Std 10 syllabus again covers the period 1910 to 1970, but a significant innovation is that the material is grouped into three chronological periods (1910-1924, 1924-1948, 1948-1970), of which two consecutive periods only have to be studied, the choice to be determined by each examining body. There is, therefore, very little change in the new syllabuses, rather merely a rearranging of the material of the old syllabuses; in essence the same topics are retained, often verbatim.

4.3 History syllabuses for Blacks

Before the establishment of the Bantu Education Department in 1954, schools for Blacks used either the provincial departmental syllabuses if they were under provincial control, or the J.M.B. syllabuses if they were under church control. The content of the history syllabuses used in Black schools between 1954 and 1979 warrants an investigation of its own, and cannot delay us here.

45 See C.E.D. Senior Secondary Course. Syllabus for History Higher Grade 1985; and T.E.D. Syllabus for History Higher Grade Standards 8-10, 1985.

At present education for Blacks living outside the independent and self-governing states is the responsibility of the Department of Education and Training.

The Department of Education and Training (D.E.T.), like all other examining bodies under the Joint Matriculation Board has, since 1979, been obliged to implement the national core syllabuses. D.E.T. syllabuses for the Junior Secondary Course are consequently virtually identical to those in use in the other departments. The Std 7 syllabus allows for a regional study; thus the D.E.T. syllabus⁴⁶ makes provision for a study of relations between the central government and one "independent state" and one "national state" chosen from the list of the T.B.V.C. states and the other six self-governing territories. The D.E.T. does not have its own Senior Secondary Course history syllabus, but simply implements the syllabuses of the "White" Department of Culture.⁴⁷ What is of the utmost importance for this study is the fact that the D.E.T. has selected for its Std 10 history candidates the two consecutive periods 1910-1924 and 1924-1948.

Thus, for the Black pupil, South African history ends in 1948 with the coming to power of the National Party. In contrast the T.E.D. has made the period 1924-1948 compulsory, while year by year the other two periods are alternated. A brief look at some of the topics covered in the period which the D.E.T. has chosen to omit will bring home to the reader the serious implications for the historical orientation of the Black pupil involved here: "Policy on race relations and the ensuing reactions: Apartheid, laws to enforce it, domestic and foreign reaction; separate development with regard to the Coloureds and Asians up to 1970; Separate Development with regard to the urban Blacks up to 1970;

46 D.E.T. Syllabus for History Standard 7. 1987.

47 Department of Education and Culture. Administration: House of Assembly. National Examinations Syllabus for History Standard 10. Code: 203/0/1/1/88.

Homeland Policy⁴⁸. Three-quarters of South Africa's senior history pupils do not study their own country's history of the past forty years, a catastrophic omission.

The following statistics⁴⁹ show how the proportion of Whites in South Africa's Std 10 history candidates is steadily decreasing:

	Blacks (R.S.A.)	Indians	Coloureds	Whites	Whites as % of total
1986	37 651	2 438	7 831	26 163	33,9%
1987	46 419	2 682	8 892	27 887	32,5%
1988	56 814	3 269	10 565	30 492	30,1%

In 1988, 51,5% of Black Std 8 pupils included history in their subject combination for the Senior Certificate compared to only 26% of Whites in the same standard. In fact the percentage of White Std 10 pupils taking history appears to be holding steady at around 26%, while that of Indians has increased from 21% in 1986 to 24% in 1988, and that of Coloureds from 45% to 48% during the said period.⁵⁰ This presumably reflects a growing historical consciousness in these communities, probably arising from their increasing political awareness. In 1971⁵¹ there were only 2 735 Blacks in Std 10 taking history; in 1988 there were 56 814⁵² excluding TBVC candidates. In 1988⁵³ there were 374 624 Blacks in Std 5, 323 925 in Std 6 and 257 297 in Std 7, a total of almost a million pupils, all of whom take history, which is a compulsory subject in the junior secondary phase. This makes it all the more important that these pupils be able to identify with the kind of history they are being taught.

48 C.E.D. Senior Secondary Course Syllabus for History Higher Grade 1985.

49 SANOP Inligtingstelsel: Departement van Nasionale Opvoeding.

50 SANOP Inligtingstelsel: Departement van Nasionale Opvoeding.

51 Department of Education and Training, Annual Report 1971, pp.115 and 117.

52 Department of Education and Training, Annual Report 1988, p.322. (figure does not include TBVC pupils).

53 Ibid.

5. THE CONTROVERSY OVER CHRISTIAN NATIONAL EDUCATION

In 2.2. above it was seen to what extent Christian National Education policy had become official education policy and had permeated history teaching in the Transvaal for example. The clash of interests highlighted in Chapter 6 continued unabated into the 1950's. In fact, after the National Party came to power in 1948 and set about putting an Afrikaans stamp on South African society, the debate became progressively more and more heated. The F.A.K. had launched its controversial programme of fundamentalist Christian National Education in 1948. This programme was adopted by the National Party at its congress in November of the same year,⁵⁴ although, as mentioned before, little more than lip-service was to be paid to it in practice.

Reaction from the English-speaking teachers unions to the intentions of the C.N.E. movement was immediate and vociferous. The Transvaal Teachers' Association⁵⁵ asserted that the C.N.E. constituted "a threat to democracy and to the liberty of the individual", and criticized C.N.E. on religious and educational grounds; it queried the emphasis on the "volkseie" and on what it termed "exclusive nationalism which will destroy in the child all desire to be a world citizen and a true South African". Concerning history, the T.T.A. took the proponents of the C.N.E. to task for what it regarded as the emphasis on national history "to such an extent that it is obvious that the history of minority groups in South Africa would be disregarded". The same organ reported that, at a mass meeting in Johannesburg, organised by the Education League in protest against the C.N.E. policy of the F.A.K., a resolution had been passed "deploring the educational policy outlined by the F.A.K." as contrary to the spirit of Christianity and alien to the best traditions of South Africa"; the Transvaal Teachers' Association was "in full

54 E.G. Malherbe, *Education in South Africa, Volume 2*, pp.146-147.
55 The Transvaal Education News, February 1949, p.15.

agreement with this resolution".⁵⁶

Organised opposition in the Cape also attacked the policy: The S.A.T.A.⁵⁷ hoped that the F.A.K. pamphlet would elicit vigorous opposition. It expressed concern at the doctrine that school subjects should be expounded in the light of "'national'" truth: "We know what this means in the case of a subject such as history". All "true South Africans" were called upon to "unite to scotch and kill" the C.N.E. movement.

Commenting on C.N.E. as explained by Prof. J.C. Coetzee, the S.A.T.A. mouthpiece⁵⁸ claimed to recognize that "a principle of separation" was being implied between the Boerenasie and the "'English'" nation; in the S.A.T.A.'s view there could be only one South African nation. Joining its sister body in the north, the S.A.T.A. at one conference rejected and condemned the F.A.K. pamphlet on, amongst others, the grounds that "a scheme of education designed for a large section of the population (the Afrikaans speaking section) must powerfully influence the education of the rest"; that it considered it the duty of teachers "to give our children the vision and ideal of a united South African nation (original emphasis); it too deprecated the narrow definition of "national" in the pamphlet.⁵⁹ One recognizes in this conflict principally the differing views of nationhood which had already crystallised in the first decade of this century.

A year later the S.A.T.A. took the Cape Education Department to task for instructing teachers "to inculcate proper pride of race and language"; these the S.A.T.A. regarded as "idols of the tribe" to be worshipped; such worship could degenerate into a "denigration o f the aspirations and achievements of the other

56 The Transvaal Educational News, February 1949, p.15.
57 Education, March 1949, p.47.
58 Education, May 1949, p.87.
59 Education, July 1949, pp.160-161.

section of the European population" (i.e. the English-speakers).⁶⁰ Just as Afrikaners were expressing their dissatisfaction with the bias and imbalance they perceived in history syllabuses up to 1948, so now it was the turn of the English-speakers to voice their protest after 1948 at their relegation to a back place in history.

A leader article in The Star quotes a retiring principal, A.C. Martin, who condemned the "completely distorted impression of the country's history and development resulting from the presentation of carefully selected facts and the suppression of other facts." All the heroes were on one the side and all the fools and knaves on the other; the principal saw in these "deplorable school history books the political tracts of a narrow sect and an impediment to the rise of a healthy South African nation". The editor associated himself with these remarks, pointing to similar complaints from other quarters: Dr F.A. van Jaarsveld, for example, had appealed for a more objective approach to South African history by Afrikaans-speaking writers; the hope was expressed that people "with the adequate scholarship and the ability to rise above prejudice" would be found to produce "a more satisfactory type of book for the schools".⁶¹

A.C. Martin published his views on history teaching in 1953⁶², accusing the "Broederbond dictatorship" of "arrogance" and "racial intolerance" in attempting to override the "worthy traditions ... and aspirations" of other sections (i.e. the English).⁶³ The presentation of history in South African schools had "too often been distorted, with evil results". Describing

60 Education, February 1950, p.19.

61 The Star, 28.2.1952. "History in the Schools."

62 A.C. Martin, "History in our Schools. Mutual Respect or Antagonism?" 1953.

63 See A.N. Pelzer, Die Afrikaner-Broederbond: Eerste 50 Jaar, pp. 136-142; and I. Wilkins and H. Strydom, The Super-Afrikaners: Inside the Afrikaner Broederbond, ch.15, for a contrasting discussion on the role of the Broederbond in South African education.

Milner as a "great man", Martin goes on to deplore the "strong forces" threatening the British heritage. By selection, omission, suggestion, innuendo and false emphasis, children were being encouraged to believe that one section of the nation had contributed nothing but good, while the contribution of the other sections had been limited to little good and much evil. School histories often disclosed an attitude that made it possible for children "to pay due respect to the traditions of only one section of the South African nation": what was said in the classrooms "is often more serious still". The educationist Franz Auerbach⁶⁴ concluded that Lauwerys had been right when he asserted that the South African educational system was being used to divide the people; his enquiry had shown "that a pronounced trend to greater ethnocentrism, embodied in certain Afrikaans textbooks only, has now also become part of the aims and content of the syllabuses prescribed for all schools, irrespective of language medium; "this trend had been influenced by the philosophy of C.N.E.; it was characterized by much emphasis on the history of the European in South Africa, and of the forebears of the Afrikaans-speaking section of the community especially". He quotes the presidential address to the Transvaalse Onderwysersvereniging in April 1960: "'For this group of people there is only one way out: and that is to maintain themselves in spite of the black barbarism rolling toward them which carries the beautiful name of black nationalism.'"

Such views are diametrically opposed to those expressed by, for example, Dr J.J. van Tonder, in his address to the Natalse Onderwysersunie in October 1966⁶⁵: History teaching could ensure that the future citizens of the Republic would be firmly anchored in the nation's foundation ("volksbodem"); he asks whether "die volk" realised what power could be drawn from the teaching and knowledge of national history ("vaderlandse geskiedenis") in

64 Quoted in F.E. Auerbach, An Enquiry into History Textbooks and Syllabuses in Transvaal High Schools, pp. 166-176.

65 J.J. van Tonder, Geskiedenis in die Skole, pp.29-31.

order to "maintain and reinforce the current state structure" ("staatsvorm")? Van Tonder is, of course, referring of the legitimation function of history as school subject.

Three years later the same academic pointed to the rapid decrease in the percentage of pupils choosing history for the Std 10 examination. Because of the special role of history in promoting the firmness of the national anchors ("volksankers") and national allegiance ("volksgebondenheid"), it was the duty of the State to intercede with legislation to make history a compulsory subject in both primary and high schools. Van Tonder supported his argument by reminding his listeners that such a step had already been proposed by organisations such as the Historiese Genootskap, a conference of history teachers held in Stellenbosch, and the Free State, the Transvaalse Onderwysersunie and the National Party. The latter had passed a motion asking for history to be made compulsory up to Matriculation, and that the books used should be "standard works by reliable ("betroubare") writers".⁶⁶

Van Tonder⁶⁷ regarded the theme, "Ons Volk en sy Geskiedenis", as so crucial as actually to affect the "nature and survival of the nation" ("volk") of the Republic of South-Africa". By "volk" he meant "die Afrikaans-sprekendes". Knowledge of the nation's past was essential to the formulation of an ideal for the future; it was a source of power for the nation's continued survival; together with religion and the mother-tongue it formed the foundation of the nation.

The controversy surrounding history as a school subject in the period up to the 1970's was dominated to a great extent by the acrimonious debate between the Afrikaner nationalists and their mostly English-speaking liberal opponents. Since the 1970's the issues have become more complex, with the English-Afrikaans

66 J.J. van Tonder, Geskiedenis Staen by die Wegswaai, p. 30.

67 J.J. van Tonder, Geskiedenis en die Onderwys, pp. 1-4.

conflict gradually being eclipsed by a far more serious Black-White clash of interests.

6. A SELECTION OF REPRESENTATIVE TEXTBOOKS 1948-1987

6.1 Textbooks examined and their authors

In sharp contrast to the earlier periods examined in the chapters up to now, the period under review is characterised by an abundance of history textbooks in both English and Afrikaans. Whereas the late 1940's and 1950's belonged to a large extent to Gie, van Dyk, Lindeque, Havinga, and Fowler and Smit, from the late 1950's onward Boyce, van Jaarsveld, Lategan and de Kock and others replaced these as prescribed authors especially in the Cape and the Transvaal. Natal has never had a policy of prescribing books, the choice of textbook being at the discretion of the teacher.⁶⁸ In the foreword to the 1959 syllabuses, the N.E.D. states that "there are at present no books that completely cover the work of any particular standard in the new syllabus ... As suitable books become available so will they be recommended."⁶⁹ From various interviews and discussions with teachers, retired teachers, ex-pupils and education department officials in Natal, this writer was able to conclude that Natal teachers made use of books selected from those mentioned above.⁷⁰ From 1948 until the introduction of the national core syllabuses, schools in the Orange Free State followed the syllabuses of the Joint Matriculation Board, thus using Gie, van Dyk and Lindeque and other standard works which covered the J.M.B. course. Some of the later works in use in the O.F.S. are listed below.

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- 68 Interview with Mr G.A. Chadwick, retired History Subject Adviser, Natal Education Department, on 20 January 1990.
- 69 N.E.D.A., N.E.D. Syllabus for History and Geography, July 1, 1989.
- 70 Titles found in the informal textbook collection of the Natal Provincial Museum Services in Pietermaritzburg include Skinner, Bryan, van Dyk, Gie, Foggins, Boyce, Howes and Mandelbrote,

In making a representative selection of books for examination, this writer attempted to include at least one work by the best-known, most widely used textbook writers of the period. In many cases several works by the more prolific writers have been examined. The textbooks selected not only cover the standard works of the time, but also all secondary school standards. The selection also spans the entire period 1948-1989.

The following is a list of the 21 textbooks examined that have been quoted in the text:

J.H. van Dyk	<u>Geskiedenisleerboek vir Suid-Afrikaanse Hoërskole (Senior Sertifikaat), 1949.</u>
B.G. Lindeque	<u>Geskiedenis Standerd VI, 1956.</u>
C. de K. Fowler and G.J.J. Smit	<u>New History for the Senior Certificate and Matriculation, 1957.</u>
Havinga, et al	<u>Geskiedenis vir St. VI, 1958.</u> <u>Geskiedenis vir St. VII, 1958.</u> <u>Geskiedenis vir St. VIII, 1958.</u>
Van Jaarsveld, et al	<u>History for Standard VI, 1958.</u> <u>Illustrated History for the High School Standard VII, 1960.</u> <u>Geskiedenis vir Standerd VII, 1958.</u> <u>Illustrated History for the High School Standard VIII, 1959.</u> <u>Illustrated History for Senior Certificate. Standards IX and X, 1962.</u> <u>Nuwe Geïllustreerde Geskiedenis. Standerd VIII, 1967.</u>
A.N. Boyce	<u>The Legacy of the Past. A History for Standard Six, 1960.</u> <u>The Legacy of the Past. A History for Standard Seven, 1961.</u> <u>The Legacy of the Past. A History for Standard Eight, 1962.</u> <u>Europe and South Africa. A History for South African High Schools, 1967.</u>
M.C.E. van Schoor et al	<u>Senior Geskiedenis vir Suid-Afrikaanse Skole, 1970.</u>
E.H.W. Lategan and A.J. de Kock	<u>Geskiedenis in Perspektief. St. 10, 1977.</u>
F.E. Graves et al	<u>History for Today 6, 1985.</u> <u>History for Today 7, 1985.</u> <u>History for Today 8, 1985.</u>
C.J. Joubert and J.J. Britz	<u>History for Std. 10, 1986.</u>

A further 17 textbooks were examined but not included in the text, being either very similar to the above titles in spirit and content, or being other works by authors already well-represented:

- | | |
|---|---|
| A.G. Coetzee et al | <u>Geskiedenis vir die Senior Sertifikaat, 1960.</u> |
| Van Jaarsveld et al | <u>History for Standard VI (Revised Edition), 1958.</u>
<u>Geïllustreerde Geskiedenis. Standerd VI, 1958.</u>
<u>Geïllustreerde Geskiedenis. Standerd VIII, 1958.</u>
<u>New Illustrated History for the Senior Certificate Stds IX and X Volume II, 1970.</u> |
| A.C. Coetzee et al | <u>Geskiedenis vir die Senior Sertifikaat, 1960.</u> |
| A.N. Boyce | <u>The Legacy of the Past. A History for Standard Seven, 1961.</u>
<u>Europe and South Africa. Part I. A History for Std 9, 1979.</u>
<u>Europe and South Africa. Part II. A History for Std 10, 1980.</u> |
| M.C.E. van Schoor et al | <u>Geskiedenis vir die O.V.S. - Skooleind-sertifikaat, 1963.</u> |
| C.J. Joubert | <u>History for Std 8, 1980.</u>
<u>History for Std 9, 1987.</u> |
| Geen's | <u>The Making of South Africa, 1982.</u> |
| A.P.J. van Rensburg and F.S.G. Oosthuizen | <u>Active History Std 9, 1986.</u>
<u>Active History Std 10, 1987.</u> |
| H.G.L. Lintveldt et al | <u>Timelines 10, 1988.</u> |

The above two lists obviously do not include every title used in South African provincial schools during the period. They are, however, comprehensive lists, containing most, if not all, of the best known textbooks.

To avoid cluttering the footnotes, textbooks are referred to in abbreviated form. For fuller details the reader is referred to the bibliography.

Broadly speaking, van Dyk, Lindeque, Havinga, van Schoor, Lategan and de Kock, Joubert and Britz were, or are, Afrikaner

Nationalists and their books reflect an Afrikaner view of the South African past. Their interpretation of historical events brings them very close indeed to the ruling National Party. Their works display a Christian National spirit throughout. These books are very similar in tone and spirit to those of the Afrikaans-speaking authors reviewed in the previous chapter.

Van Jaarsveld, South Africa's most prolific author of history textbooks takes a much broader view of events. Although to a certain extent bound by his Afrikaans upbringing and by the demands of the syllabuses, he displays an independence of thought, and his works are characterized by a less sectional approach than that of most of his contemporary compatriots. The same applies to the scholarly Fowler and Smit.

Boyce and Graves represent the older and younger generations of English-speaking textbook writers respectively. Boyce's approach is usually objective and unemotional, but he is sometimes guilty of perpetuating racial stereotypes. In his treatment of Anglo-Boer clashes, he is mildly pro-British. Graves, as will be seen subsequently, has a broad South African, non-sectional approach to South African history.

6.2 Analysis of the Texts Selected

(a) History as Legitimation

Many of the texts examined make a point of legitimating the Whites' claim to the land they occupy. However this ground has been adequately covered in previous chapters. What comes increasingly to the fore in the textbooks of the mid-1950's onward, is the legitimating of the Government's Policy of Apartheid or Separate Development. Thus van Jaarsveld looks to the past for examples of a policy of segregation being applied: during the First Occupation the English adopted "a policy of segregation"; the "segregation policy" of the Batavian regime was

unsuccessful; Collins realised that "segregation was the only solution to the (frontier) problem"; Cradock took decisive steps "to enforce segregation"; even Dr Philip is regarded as "a great supporter of segregation"; "territorial segregation" was also the policy of the Voortrekkers.⁷¹

Van Jaarsveld writes that the principle of separate development had shown "a clear evolution in South African history".⁷² In another work he stresses that the "Bantu of South Africa consist of different nations".⁷³ The answer to "the challenge of the 20th century has been the policy of separate development".⁷⁴ The Crux of the policy "is that the Whites regard the Bantu nations ... as separate ethnic units or nations which have temporarily and partially become intertwined with White society. Each separate ethnic unit must develop a separate nation outside the White area. It is accepted that there is one South Africa with two areas - a white area in which the Bantus reside temporarily as migrant labourers, and a black South Africa consisting of Bantu homelands which exist historically, and which have to be developed" (original emphasis throughout). The Whites "accept the demand of each Bantu ethnic unit for political self-determination in the eight homelands"; the policy aimed at "the development of separate political fatherlands" (original emphasis); the process of integration "can be reversed" (original emphasis).⁷⁵

Lategan and de Kock⁷⁶ seek reasons for the decision "to administer the Bantu separately: the Bantu's traditional system of government differed completely from the democracy of the White man ("Just think of the dictatorial behaviour of Zulu kings

71 F.A. van Jaarsveld, Std VII, 1960, pp.114, 120, 134, 138, 188.
72 F.A. van Jaarsveld, Standards IX and X, 1962, p.517.
73 F.A. van Jaarsveld, St. VIII, 1967, p.269.
74 Ibid.,p. 273.
75 Ibid.,pp. 275-276.
76 E.H.W. Lategan and A.J. de Kock, St. 10, 1977, pp.184-193.

such as Shaka and Dingaan"); the economic and social standards and the development of the Bantu also differed completely ("hemelsbreed"). For these differences ("andersoortigheid") a different administration had to be found. If the White man wishes to survive and maintain his identity, he is "obliged" to follow the policy of separate development. This policy was also "essential" on behalf of the Black man. Because the different Black nations were "traditional enemies", it was "impossible to throw them together"; for the same reason the Black and Whites could not be thrown together. Each "ethnic group" would develop to full sovereignty in its "own country", and the White man in his part of South Africa. This would be to "everyone's advantage". While it was true that the Blacks had no political rights in "White South Africa", the same could be said of the Whites, who had no political rights in the Black homelands.

Joubert and Britz devote fourteen pages to the justification of Separate Development. Through the use of terms such as "different", "own", "each", "peculiar" and "exclusive", the perceived differences between the country's peoples are constantly emphasized. The Whites accepted that the Black man had the right to "realise" his national identity. To allow this to happen in "as just a way as possible" and to allow every group the opportunity for "national self-realisation", Verwoerd implemented the policy of separate development. The policy aimed at the maintenance of the "established nationhood of the Whites" (original emphasis) in that part of the country that had always been theirs, and at the same time, the development of "each separate Black nation to full autonomy" (original emphasis). Much is made of the recognition of ethnic differences, ethnic groups, Black nations, national Black states and the like. ⁷⁷

The legitimation of Apartheid is not confined to the Blacks: van Jaarsveld points out that since the early days of the Cape

settlement, "there was a feeling" that the Coloured people should not be absorbed into the White community, but that they should develop as a "separate population group".⁷⁸ The Coloured population "is closely aligned to the Whites and have no homelands"; in the social and cultural sphere there were still many possibilities for the Coloureds "to climb higher on the ladder of civilization"; "naturally this process will have to take place ... within the framework of local separation."⁷⁹ Indeed, at present this pattern holds more possibilities in store for the Coloured people than if they were in open competition with the other population groups". The implication is clear - separate development is seen to be beneficial to the Coloureds.⁸⁰ It should be remembered, however, that the syllabuses did not make allowance for the dislocation, humiliation and bitterness experienced by the Coloureds in the process of the implementation of Apartheid. Van Schoor⁸¹ writes that the "old road of political integration" had come to an end; the Coloureds would have to fit into the "South African policy".

Not only the policy of Separate Development as a whole, but also individual Apartheid laws are justified. Thus van Schoor⁸² asserts that the Suppression of Communism Act was passed to put an end to the "incessant incitement" by White communists of the non-Whites. Lategan and de Kock maintain that the influx of Blacks into White areas became so bad ("erg") that people spoke of "locations in the sky"; this "was not a healthy state of affairs and caused many problems" - "all sorts of evil" emanated from these conditions; the "Luglokasiewet" of 1955 put an end to the "unnecessary gathering of Bantus in white areas".⁸³ Black protest against and resistance to Government policies is linked with Communism: the Government was not intimidated by this

78 F.A. van Jaarsveld, Standards IX and X, 1962, p.520.
79 Ibid., p.520.
80 Ibid., p.524.
81 M.C.E. van Schoor, Senior Geskiedenis, 1970, p.594.
82 Ibid., p.527.
83 E.H.W. Lategan and A.J. de Kock, St. 10, 1977, p.144.

communist-inspired protest movement", and took measures to maintain law and order.⁸⁴

Joubert⁸⁵ also approaches the question of Black resistance politics in a way that links all protest to Communist agitators: "At the end of 1949 the A.N.C. started a new strategy, based on mass demonstrations, strikes and boycotts ... Communists started a continuous policy of incitement of Blacks against Whites. The educated Blacks were especially susceptible to communist propaganda."

There was "increasing lawlessness" amongst the urban Blacks; this and the resistance by Blacks, Coloureds and Indians towards the government resulted in the government being forced to pass the Suppression of Communism Act. In 1953 "several Whites, communists, certain liberals, Non-Whites, the Congress of Democrats and members of the South African press, incited the Blacks against the government. Their aim was to create anarchy and overthrow the government by means of a revolution"; "the government was obliged to act against these "anarchists", and so the Criminal Procedures Act was passed to give the Government the power "to keep law and peace and safety (sic) in the country".⁸⁶

In the early years of its existence the African National Congress "professed itself to be against violence, but despite this it became more militant after 1949". In this way Joubert equates militant protest with violence. Attention is given to "violent resistance by urban Blacks"; "instigated" by the P.A.C. the resistance to the government's policy gained momentum in 1960. At Sharpeville 20 000 Blacks "encircled" the police station; the police opened fire on the "threatening Black crowd".⁸⁷ Verwoerd had "unrest agitators (sic) arrested in large numbers". Despite the fact that the unrest of 1959-60 was widespread, the "agitators" did not succeed, "because the vast majority of Blacks

84 E.H.W. Lategan and A.J. de Kock, St. 10, 1977, pp.182-183.

85 C.J. Joubert and J.J. Britz, Std.10, 1986, pp.334-345.

86 Ibid., p.345.

87 Ibid., p.347.

showed little or no reaction to the call of the A.N.C. and the P.A.C.". ⁸⁸

The A.N.C., "together with a number of listed White communists", hatched "the most serious conspiracy that South Africa had up to that stage ever had to deal with"; a group of "conspirators" was arrested; documents found in their possession revealed the "conspiracy". Later, yet another group of "agitators" was arrested. The arrests brought to a temporary halt "the international onslaught on the existing order in the Republic".⁸⁹ It is interesting to see how the "total onslaught" jargon of the P.W. Botha era finds its way into school history textbooks. This also reinforces the master symbol of South Africa as a threatened country.

There are also attempts by various authors to justify or explain the Vorster administration's outward-looking policy, of détente in Africa. Lategan and de Kock ⁹⁰ are at pains to legitimize the ventures into Africa: "It would be good to indicate the reasons why the outward policy is necessary"; five pages of reasons follow. One of them is that, for the survival of the Whites, it was essential that not only Africa, but also the rest of the world "should know what separate development (original emphasis) is and implies". Boyce ⁹¹ describes the policy as "a conscious effort to break out of an increasing isolation", and an effort "to establish normal economic and diplomatic relations with the rest of the continent".

(b) The Orientation Function

Van Jaarsveld provides his readers with historical orientation: the story of a nation is the story of its fatherland; as a

88 C.J. Joubert and J.J. Britz, Std 10, 1986, p.348

89 Ibid., p.349.

90 E.H.W. Lategan and A.J.de Kock, Std 10, 1977, p.239.

91 A.N. Boyce, Std 10, 1980, p.316.

nation, South Africans in their fatherland belong to a Western civilisation. The forebears of the Whites came from Europe, while those of the "Natives" came from Central Africa. The story of how the Whites' forebears settled and prospered in South Africa "constitutes the history of our fatherland."⁹² The same author, under the heading "Who were the people who contributed to the making of our history?" emphasizes that Bantu, Boer and Briton were co-responsible for the making of South African history, an unusually broad-minded approach at the time. Reflecting the urge towards White unity in the late 1950's the "good relationship existing between these two groups" on the Cape eastern frontier is emphasized: they "lived and fought together."⁹³ Similarly, mention is made of the "thirteen brave Englishmen" who died "for the cause of the Voortrekkers ... the names of Robert Biggar, John Cane and others will always be remembered".⁹⁴ English-Afrikaans co-operation in the past is recalled in service of the present, thus providing orientation.

In reply to the question why it was necessary to learn more about the continent on which South Africans live, Van Jaarsveld,⁹⁵ points out that, prior to World War 1, South Africans had paid little attention to "this vast continent"; it was taken for granted that "the non-Europeans of Africa would always be ruled by White men. Yet events in Africa were likely to have their repercussions in South Africa; it was thus to their advantage to know of these events.

Identifying the Great Trek as the (Afrikaner) axis of South African history, van Jaarsveld⁹⁶ points to the forces brought about by that event that were still being felt up to the present. The central theme, according to him, is the story of the efforts

92 F.A. van Jaarsveld, Std 6, 1978, Introduction.

93 F.A. van Jaarsveld, Std 7, 1960, pp.123-126.

94 Ibid., p.178.

95 F.A. van Jaarsveld, Std 8, 1959, p.89

96 F.A. van Jaarsveld, Std 9 & 10, 1962, Introduction.

at unity leading first to Union then to the establishment of the Republic in 1961. Contrary to the spirit of the times, van Jaarsveld stresses that all groups played a role in the building up of the country, and that all had to abide by common frontiers within which their future had to be worked out by mutual co-operation. In this way a common past could show the way to a common future. The author states that no attempt had been made to write a book from an "English" or "Afrikaans" point of view; the approach was rather that South Africa was one indivisible unit and, therefore, a South African perspective was called for. The hope is expressed that the book would help pupils to become better South Africans.

In a later work, van Jaarsveld⁹⁷ provides orientation with regard to the Government's race policies. He refers to the tradition of segregation and trusteeship: the policy of Separate Development (original capitals) was directed to the past, the present and the future (original emphasis); it rested on "traditional principles of separation", and aimed at changing relations between the various national groups in such a way that a new future would be constructed in which "the separate population groups" would "co-exist in peace, security and prosperity without the loss of identity by any group."

We have seen in previous chapters how writers at various times orientated their youthful readers by looking to the British motherland and Empire, and later, Commonwealth, as an anchor, or to the rise of the Dutch Empire as a link with a non-British past. As discussed elsewhere, after 1958 both the syllabuses and the textbooks reveal an increasing awareness of the African continent. An African orientation, hitherto completely absent, is evident in textbooks such as those of Havinga. In the Std 8 textbook examined, some forty pages of the general history section are devoted to the partition of Africa and a study of

97 F.A. van Jaarsveld, Std 8, 1967, p.275.

African territories up to 1958.⁹⁸

(c) The Identity-formation function of history teaching

In his introductory chapter on the Cape in the 18th century, van Dyk⁹⁹ places the embryo Afrikaner national at the centre of the historial stage. By then, he maintains, the White inhabitants of the vast interior, apart from minor regional differences, were one (original emphasis) nation, with one language and one Church; this was the "nation" with whom the English came into contact in 1795. This is another example of backward projection. The Dutch colonists' treatment at the hands of the British reinforced their understanding of themselves as "an own nation with its own culture and own destiny".¹⁰⁰ Through the Great Trek, the Afrikaans language and culture was "removed from the Cape", where it had come "under the influence of Anglicisation", and established in the north, where it could "unfold and develop pure" ("suiwer"). The future existence of the Afrikaans nation "with its own language and culture" was thus guaranteed; the Trek provided the Afrikaans nation with "a glorious past", heroes and inspiration upon which to build; furthermore the Trek confirmed the "apartheid" of the two White "races" and the formation of an "Anglo-Afrikaner volk" was avoided.¹⁰¹ In this way van Dyk reinforces the separate identity of the Afrikaners.

Havinga, et al.,¹⁰² describe 6 April 1652 as "the birth day of our fatherland"; on landing van Riebeeck expressed the wish that "God protect the country and bless the new 'volksplanting'". The "new nation" would have "many clashes in the future", clashes which would give birth to its special characteristic, its

98 J.F.E. Havinga, Std 8, 1958.

99 J.H. van Dyk, Senior Sertifikaat, 1949, pp.203-204.

100 Ibid., p.245.

101 Ibid., p.255

102 J.F.E. Havinga, Std VI, 1958, p.69.

"striving for freedom and racial purity". In another example of backward projection Havinga¹⁰³ writes of "the national or patriotic feelings" among the Trekkers, who came to realise that they were "an own and separate nation". Kruger, the "purest representative of the Voortrekker ideal", the "guardian of the spiritual treasures of his nation", placed "spiritual gold above earthly gold", importing educated Hollanders from the Netherlands, the "Calvinist 'Voedingsbodem' of the Afrikaner volk"; these teachers laid the foundation of the "sturdy Christian nationalism" of the Afrikaner volk through which "the interests of Afrikaner youth could be protected".¹⁰⁴

Reflecting the increasing sense of unity between the two White language groups in the face of increasing external and internal pressure, van Jaarsveld gives full recognition to the contribution of the English-speaking section who exploited and financed the world's greatest gold industry: their money and readiness to undertake enterprises made the Transvaal prosperous and enabled South Africa to become the leading industrial centre in Africa. Their business acumen and initiative prevented South Africa from remaining poor and backward. South Africa's identity as a sovereign state is stressed: since 1910 the Union had changed from a self-governing colony to a sovereign independent nation (original emphasis) with the Commonwealth. The coming of the Republic is anticipated: A member of the Commonwealth had the right to leave and become an independent Republic if it so desired.¹⁰⁵

According to the new spirit of co-operation between English and

103 J.F.E. Havinga, Std VI, 1958, pp.149; 128.
104 J.F. Havinga, Std VIII, 1958, pp.127-128.
105 F.A. van Jaarsveld, Std 8, 1959, pp.163; 231.



Afrikaans-speakers after the establishment of the Republic in 1961, van Jaarsveld stresses that there was "a great deal of unity" (original emphasis) and co-operation transcending the disputes, and binding the language groups together "as a common community in a common fatherland". The enterprise and economic progress of the English-speaking section created the opportunities for Afrikaners in the cities. The reciprocal cultural influence between the two made South Africans of both language groups South Africans. The traditional cause of friction between English- and Afrikaans-speakers had been removed on 31 May 1961, and "the time was ripe for a White South African national identity to be formed."¹⁰⁶ In another textbook,¹⁰⁷ van Jaarsveld again articulates the desire of most Whites to close ranks against real and perceived threats from both within and without at that time, pointing out that the period of tension, conflict and attempts at unification ended in 1961. The two groups had developed "a unique common character" which differentiated them from other new nations.

It is noteworthy that the strong identity-finding and identity-forming accent of earlier, especially Afrikaans, textbooks gradually weakened until it virtually disappeared after 1961. By then the identity of the Afrikaners was no longer in doubt; Afrikaans was finally established as an official language, and the Afrikaners' flag, anthem and republic had become those of the whole country. From the mid-1950's one detects the first hesitant steps towards a broader White South African nationhood. Past unity and co-operation between the two language groups is held up as an example for the present. In this way the identity of the White "nation", consisting of Afrikaner volk and the loosely grouped English-speakers, is reinforced.

106 F.A. van Jaarsveld, Stds 9 and 10, 1962, Introduction.

107 F.A. van Jaarsveld, Std 8, 1967, p.315.

(d) Bias and subjectivity

(i) Afrikaner nationalism and the Afrikaners' sense of mission

Van Dyk asserts that the colonists' Calvinism reinforced their conviction that "the calling of the White man was to bring the heathen natives to a realisation of the higher authority of the White man." For the Blacks the Great Trek was of the greatest importance: under the White man's wing the different Bantu tribes could develop and multiply.¹⁰⁸

Van Dyk discusses the Anglo-Boer war under the heading "The Conquest of the Transvaal and Free State". The war is seen as the final phase in the expansion of British power in South Africa. The root cause of the war was British capitalism in the form of gold-mining interests. Whenever Britain interfered in the affairs of the Z.A.R., she did so to the advantage of the capitalists. The war was the climax of a hundred years struggle by Britain to establish its paramountcy over a united South Africa under the British flag.¹⁰⁹

Kitchener applied his scorched earth policy with "cold-bloodedness"; the "notorious concentration camp system was in fact war being waged against the non-combatant civilian population". The loss of the 28 000 women and children in the camps and 5 000 men on commando was a tremendous blow to the small Afrikaner nation, "leaving a deep, bleeding wound".¹¹⁰

Havinga's textbooks are also written from an unashamedly Afrikaans perspective in which the Calvinist influence is clearly evident: "The value of history for the intellectual, social, ethnic and religious forming of the pupil can hardly be exaggerated; it

108 J.H. van Dyk, Senior Sertificate, 1949, pp.204; 256.

109 Ibid., pp. 336-337.

110 J.F.E. Havinga Std 8, 1958, pp.143-146.

should also be remembered that for the believer the Hand of God reveals its markings in the history of our volk".¹¹¹ God planted a new nation at the southern tip of Africa. Against all odds and expectations this nation expanded and took possession of the interior. There was much struggle and and conflict, but also "great faith in the Creator". This nation would on many occasions find itself on the brink of extinction, "only to be miraculously saved".¹¹²

Van Riebeck's instructions were to treat the Hottentots well and to preach the Gospel to them. The Whites brought the greatest of all treasures with them to Africa, i.e. the Bible which was to be "the guiding light of the new volk".¹¹³ One of the essay topics in the author's Std 6 textbook reads: "Write an essay on the topic: 'God plants a new nation at the Southern Tip of Africa'".¹¹⁴

Havinga believes that the Great Trek made it possible for the smaller tribes "to live and expand in peace under the protection and trusteeship of the Whites".¹¹⁵ His Afrikaans nationalist perspective is clear in the choice of pictures, including one of a Voortrekker wagon crossing the Drakensberg, a highly dramatised portrayal of the oxen pulling the wagon literally through the clouds at an impossible angle; when viewing Natal from the Drakensberg, the Trekkers could not have known that that verdant land would within months "be drenched in the blood of hundreds of Afikaner men, women and children".¹¹⁶ The belief in the guiding, and protecting, hand of God in Afrikaner history is revealed in

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- 111 J.F.E. Havinga, Std 8, 1958, preface.
112 J.F.E. Havinga, Std.8, 1958, p.65.
113 J.F.E. Havinga, Std 6, 1958, pp.67-68.
114 Ibid., p.149.
115 J.F.E. Havinga, Std 8, 1958, p.147.
116 J.F.E. Havinga, Std 7, 1958, pp 148-149.

several places: the Transvalers' "covenant with God" at Paardekraal ensured their victory over the British in 1881; Paul Kruger's words on hearing of the victory at Majuba are quoted: "It is God the Father who helped us - the God of our fathers'".¹¹⁷

In another the Afrikaans perspective is evident in the treatment of the establishment of the Republic outside the Commonwealth: the conquest of the Boer Republics in 1902 "had burned like coals in the hearth of Afrikaner hearts", and was carried from generation to generation; we should know of this striving to understand why the Union became a Republic in 1961. What follows is a history of the National Party and its republican strivings; there are photographs of E.G. Jansen, Drs. Malan, P.J. van der Merwe and Verwoerd, and of Hans Strijdom and C.R. Swart. On 31 May 1961, "an (Afrikaner) ideal was realised".¹¹⁸

While Afrikaans perspective is still visible in certain textbooks right up to the present (e.g. Joubert's books), the heavy emphasis on Afrikaner nationalism becomes gradually weaker after the establishment of the Republic in 1961.

According to van Jaarsveld, the principle of guardianship envisaged White control over the Blacks, "but not for all time"; the Whites, as guardians, were called upon to guide the Bantu on the road to development and civilization".¹¹⁹ Lategan and de Kock, also write of the White man, with his "superior knowledge and development, having the duty" to "develop and train the Bantu".¹²⁰

117 J.F.E. Havinga, Std 8, 1958, p.106.

118 F.A. van Jaarsveld, Std 8, 1967, p.226.

119 F.A. van Jaarsveld, Stds 9 and 10, 1962, p.517.

120 E.H.W. Lategan and H.J. de Kock, Std 10, 1977, p.185.

(ii) Bias by omission, exaggeration and under-emphasis

Like so many of the earlier textbook writers already reviewed, Havinga and his co-authors exaggerate the importance of the Great Trek, and glorify the Voortrekker past and its heroes. Thus Hendrik Potgieter is portrayed as a mythical, almost God-like figure: "Big and powerful of stature; he was strong and muscular, yet agile and an excellent horseman; he was a man of commanding appearance and strong, impressive personality; he was strictly religious, a firm, conservative Calvinist who led his life according to the Bible; he was a courageous, experienced warrior, possessing all the necessary requirements for competent leadership".¹²¹ Sarel Cilliers too was a "virtuous ('vrome') man of God; Gert Maritz had a good intellect, was handsome and impressive of build, six foot tall, neat and upright in posture"; Piet Retief had "a very good Christian education, the basis of his deeply rooted sense of religion"; Jacobus Uys was an "honourable old patriarch".¹²² Pretorius appears almost as a superman: he was known for his bright intellect, keen sense of judgement, extraordinary physical strength, impressive appearance and physique; he was an upright, tall figure, so strong and symetrically built that a sculptor would have found in him an excellent model for a Hercules image; he was the fastest man on commando, he was friendly and likeable, and outstanding military leader and good organizer.¹²³

Such descriptions are, of course, also part of the positive self-image cultivated by Afrikaner nationalists, just as British imperialist writers had done before them and Black nationalists are doing now.

In van Jaarsveld's earlier works, the events of the 1880-81 War

121 J.F.E. Havinga, Std 7, 1958, p.137.

122 Ibid., pp.139-145.

123 J.F.E. Havinga, Std 8, 1958, pp.151-154.

are given a disproportionate amount of attention - Amajuba alone receives an entire page and three illustrations in one book.¹²⁴

Bias by emphasis is evident in van Dyk's treatment of Slagters Nek. An historical impact out of all proportion to its actual importance is attributed to this event.¹²⁵ The same author is also guilty of bias by omission: General Smuts's name is not once mentioned in his book. As with so many writers of South African history textbooks, Havinga cannot conceal his antagonism toward the missionaries with their "exaggerated, unreasonable, and sentimental concern for the Hottentots"; a philanthropist or negrophile is defined as someone displaying "an unbalanced and totally exaggerated feeling for the 'non-Whites'".¹²⁶ Havinga's subjective approach is betrayed both in his description of Slagter's Nek as a symbol of "harsh British suppression",¹²⁷ and the emphasis on Transvaal victories over the British at Laing's Nek, Ingogo and Amajuba, which receive three pages;¹²⁸ Paul Kruger is given eight pages, and President Steyn one line;¹²⁹ the establishment of the Het Volk Party is not mentioned, but the founding of the National Party receives considerable attention ("the N.P. grew wonderfully rapidly").¹³⁰ The questions in Havinga's books also show a certain bias: they relate almost exclusively to Hertzog, the National Party, Jopie Fourie, the Rebellion of 1914 and Afrikaans cultural figures and issues.¹³¹

Van Jaarsveld's textbooks, although largely free of the bias and subjectivity so characteristic of many other books examined, nevertheless display an Afrikaner-centric approach at times.

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- 124 F.A. van Jaarsveld, Std 8, 1959, p.152.
125 J.H. van Dyk, Senior Sertifikaat, 1949, p.237.
126 J.F.E. Havinga, Std 7, 1958, pp.100; 118.
127 Ibid., p.105.
128 J.F.E. Havinga, Std 8, 1958, p.106.
129 Ibid., p.129.
130 Ibid., p.163.
131 Ibid., p.170.

In comparing Rhodes and Kruger, van Jaarsveld devotes two pages to Kruger's early life and character, but only half a page to Rhodes.¹³² The same writer also shows a measure of bias against South Africa's Indian population, which is described as a "non-assimilative", to a large extent "foreign" (original emphasis) group, "not always loyal towards South Africa", and unwilling "to co-operate in any way in efforts to effect repatriation".¹³³

Bias by emphasis is evident in Joubert's treatment of urbanisation: the White migration to the cities receives six and a half pages, that of the Blacks one and half, and that of the Coloureds and Indians together half a page. Although Joubert displays a measure of sympathy for the plight of urbanised Blacks, the emphasis is on the Whites and the place of the Afrikaners in the economy in particular. Several tables are presented featuring the Afrikaner's share of trade and professions. Afrikaans politics during World War II is given coverage of nine pages.¹³⁴

(iii) Stereotypes and master symbols

The stereotyped presentation of the San as treacherous, thieving, murderous semi-animals; of the Khoi as unreliable, dishonest, filthy, lazy and so on; and of the Blacks as cruel, savage, full of duplicity, warlike barbarians, so common in almost all the books reviewed up to now, and examples of which have been given abundantly, continued well into the 1970's and is even evident up to the present. Because this ground has been more than adequately covered, a few examples will suffice, mainly to illustrate the extraordinary longevity and tenacity of such stereotypes.

132 F.A. van Jaarsveld, Std 8 (English), 1959, pp.180-187.
133 F.A. van Jaarsveld, Stds 9 and 10, 1962, pp.530-531.
134 C.J. Joubert and J.J. Britz, Std 10, 1986.

Van Dyk writes of the Hottentots who concentrated on "theft" and "plunder", and became a "burden"; those outside the mission stations unsettled the entire country through their "vagrancy", "thieving" and "violence".¹³⁵ Dingane is depicted as being "even more tyrannical and cruel" than Shaka; Moshesh as "cunning", and Mzilikazi bent on "slaughter", "murder" and "plunder"; Sir George Grey introduced public work schemes to counter "the traditional laziness of the Xhosa".¹³⁶ Fowler and Smit also write of the thieving of "Hottentots and other natives".¹³⁷

Van Dyk, while confidently asserting in the preface to one of his books that all offensive terminology has been omitted, goes on to use all the conventional negative value-judgements, epithets etc. so characteristic of his earlier works. The "cunning Hottentots continuously troubled" the settlers., the "villains" ("skelms") stole their cattle, and set their grazing alight. They were "very warlike", "vengeful", and "troublesome". The Bushmen, too, were "cunning", "superstitious", and "gluttonous".¹³⁸ The Xhosa, of course, were "savage", and caused "no end of trouble" by stealing the farmers' cattle. The "purported converts" at Bethelsdorp were "a filthy lot", who "never worked", but "mostly stole".¹³⁹ Havinga describes the Hottentots as "extremely troublesome", "sly", and "murderers",¹⁴⁰ while the Bushmen were "hardly good-looking" and "always busy stealing and killing stock".¹⁴¹ The Xhosa "caused the frontier farmers much suffering by plundering their cattle"; they were "openly hostile", "robbed" and "plundered".¹⁴² Fowler and Smit refer to

135 J.H. van Dyk, Senior Sertifikaat, 1949, pp.232-233.

136 Ibid., p.291.

137 C.de K Fowler and G.J.J. Smit, Senior Certificate and Matriculation, 1957, p.238.

138 J.H. van Dyk, Senior Sertifikaat, 1949, pp.81-84, 86, 97.

139 Ibid., pp.151, 158.

140 J.F.E. Havinga, Std 6, 1958, p.72.

141 Ibid., p. 132.

142 J.F.E. Havinga, Std 6, 1958, p. 145.

the "double game" played by Hintsa, thus alluding to his supposed duplicity.¹⁴³

Havinga's texts are riddled with the stereotypes of Bethelsdorp as "a breeding place of all evil", where "dirty" and "lazy" Hottentots lay about,¹⁴⁴ of Shaka as a "bloodthirsty tyrant" and Mzilikazi as "cruel".¹⁴⁵ Hendrik Potgieter knew the Blacks' "savage ways and nature".¹⁴⁶ The laagers at Blaauwkrantz were attacked by the "hordes" of "bloodthirsty" ("bloeddronk") "savages".¹⁴⁷ Cetshwayo was "a very power-hungry native king", with "the fiery desire to wash his assegais in the blood of the white man and particularly confrontational in his attitude."¹⁴⁸ Boyce writes that the Khoi "led to certain problems", for they "stole cattle and sheep".¹⁴⁹ Dr van der Kemp, "instead of encouraging the Hottentots to improve their standard of living

... sank to their level".¹⁵⁰ The Khoi were "a constant menace" because of their "thieving habits", the Trekboers had to contend with the "marauding Bushmen"; the Xhosa were often "dangerous and troublesome neighbours"; Shaka was "a tyrant known for his cruelty".¹⁵¹

The stereotyped approach to non-Whites as labourers is evident in Lategan and de Kock's book: the Coloureds did "skilled and unskilled work" in the factories. Coloured women "did their bit

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- 143 C. de K. Fowler and G.J.J. Smit, 1957, p.240.
144 J.F.E. Havinga, Std 7, 1958, pp.85, 90.
145 Ibid., pp. 130, 132.
146 Ibid., p.137.
147 Ibid., p.149.
148 J.F.E. Havinga, Std 8, p.111.
149 A.N. Boyce, Std 6, 1960, p.92.
150 A.N. Boyce, Std 7, 1962, p.120.
151 A.N. Boyce Std's 9 and 10, 1967, pp.94, 118, 128, 159.

in the factories too".¹⁵² Van Jaarsveld makes much of the role of "Bantu workers" in building up the country: "today they still play an important role - not only as domestic servants, but also as stable boys, etc."¹⁵³

The master symbol of the Afrikaners' special mission in Africa has been dealt with elsewhere. There are other, by now familiar, master symbols present in the textbooks under review. In many cases they are interwoven, even synonymous with, the images of others and of the self.

The master symbol of the non-Whites as a threat at worst, or as a problem or burden at best, is still everywhere evident. Once again, only a few examples from the many possible illustrations will be given, to avoid unnecessary repetition.

Van Dyk writes of the Hottentots who were a "danger"; after the smallpox epidemics they no longer posed a "national danger to the whites".¹⁵⁴ For Sir George Grey "the frontier problem" was part of a "great national problem" today known as the "native problem"; the "native danger" was even greater after the discovery of diamonds - their migration by the thousand soon led to "a national widespread threat".¹⁵⁵ To Lindeque Whites and Blacks were "sworn enemies" from the start.¹⁵⁶ Havinga reinforces the master symbol of the incessant warfare amongst the Blacks, which only came to an end with the arrival of the Voortrekkers: pupils are urged to have a debate "on the future of the Bantu had the Voortrekkers not moved to the interior."¹⁵⁷ Van Jaarsveld refers to the "Basuto danger" confronting the young

152 E.H.W. Lategan and A.J. de Kock, 1977, p.145.

153 F.A. van Jaarsveld, Std 8, 1967, p.295.

154 J.H. van Dyk, Senior Sertifikaat, 1949, p.232.

155 J.H. van Dyk, Senior Sertifikaat, 1949, pp.291, 303.

156 B.G. Lindeque, Std VI, 1956, p.144.

157 J.F.E. Havinga, Std 6, 1958, p.87.

Free State Republic,¹⁵⁸ while Boyce¹⁵⁹ uses the terms "problem" and "trouble" ad nauseam when referring to the role of non-Whites in South African history: the "Basuto problem", the "Native problem", the "Sekukhuni problem", the "Indian problem" and the "Bantu problem". His view of the Indians and Coloureds of his own time is still in terms of them as problems rather than as fellow citizens: "Discuss some of the problems connected with the Coloured people today"; "explain the presence of the Indians in South Africa".¹⁶⁰

After about 1960, the master symbol of South Africa as an isolated, threatened state becomes increasingly prominent in school history textbooks. Van Jaarsveld asserts, for example, that the Black states "want to bring the last White controlled governments to a fall"; "it seems as if the powers of Black Africa have unified to break down the 'White South'"; to achieve their aim, "a vendetta (original emphasis) had been launched in the U.N. against the White South"; at the U.N. the Republic was subjected to "unfriendly remarks", "insults" and "threats". To ensure that the Republic was not "caught off-sides", its security system against "internal unrest", and its defence against "foreign aggression" had been improved.¹⁶¹ The U.N. had become "a threat to the security of the Republic"; the progaganda emanating from the Afro-Asian block "aimed at the destruction of the R.S.A.; the Republic was treated like a "pariah" ("uitgeworpene") and "stood isolated".¹⁶²

Joubert's textbooks is riddled with terminology that reinforces the above master symbol. He writes of "criticism at the U.N." against South Africa; of "hostile feelings", "increasing isolation", "boycotts", "embargoes", "expulsions", "attacks" and

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- 158 F.A. van Jaarsveld, Std 7 (Afrikaans), 1958, p.190.
159 A.N. Boyce, Std 8, 1963, pp.81, 105, 144, 154, 169.
160 A.N. Boyce, Stds 9 and 10, 1967, pp.720-727.
161 F.A. van Jaarsveld, Std 8, 1967, pp. 138, 139, 141.
162 Ibid., p.156.

"terrorist onslaughts".¹⁶⁴

(iv) Positive self-image

In contrast to the above-mentioned hostile images of others and the negative stereotypes discussed elsewhere in this chapter, comfortably positive self-images are projected in many of the textbooks reviewed. Besides the numerous other examples found in the other sub-sections of this Chapter, the following are further illustrations. Lindeque portrays the Cape Burghers as "pious", "hospitable", "reserved" "family-bound".¹⁶⁴ Havinga too extolls the virtues of the White settlers: their "piety, hospitality, trust, strong feeling of family, and perseverance".¹⁶⁵ The frontier farmers, despite all they had to endure remained "true", "honourable", "religious" and "noble".¹⁶⁶ Havinga also quotes Sir Benjamin D'Urban's favourable view of the Trekkers as "orderly", "patient", "industrious" and "religious".¹⁶⁷ In the same way van Jaarsveld boosts the Afrikaners' positive self-image by including Somerset's reported appreciation of "the courage of the Boers and their willingness to make sacrifices".¹⁶⁸ Boyce stresses the fine qualities of the Voortrekkers: they "blazed the trail and opened up the country for civilization", they were very "godly" people, noted for their "hospitality", "hardy", "self-reliant", "independent", "resourceful" and "always upright".¹⁶⁹

(e) A New Textbook Approach

As mentioned in 7.5. the Textbooks examined so far make little or no provision for the acquisition of historical skills. Refreshing

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- 163 C.J. Joubert, Std 10, 1986, pp.349-350.
164 B.G. Lindeque, Std 6, 1956, pp.119-120.
165 J.E.F.Havinga, Std 6, 1958, pp.116-117.
166 Ibid., p.135.
167 J.E.F. Havinga, Std 7, 1958, p.129.
168 F.A. van Jaarsveld, Std 7, p.140.
169 A.N. Boyce, Stds 9 and 10, pp.103; 116; 117-120.

exceptions are the series of textbooks written by F.E. Graves (with L.H. Consul, T. Eksteen and E. Viglieno). In the introduction to the Std 6 book Graves¹⁷⁰ explains how each chapter exploits a particular historical skill. Particular emphasis is placed on evidence (pictorial, written, documentary) so that pupils can learn to appreciate that the story of the past is not definitive but is reconstructed; the chapters are written "with a view to the need to correct long held and historically untenable myths/legends/ interpretations". In this way children can be shown that there is no "final story" and no "correct version": "Appreciation of past peoples and heritage need not mean the adoption of hero-worship nor villain-denigration stances ... Southern Africa's best interests will be served if all who study History ... do so without judgement."

In many respects Graves's approach to South African history in particular could show the way to the much needed multiperspective treatment of historical issues (see Chapter 8). In her discussion of the Slogters Nek incident, for example, Graves gives the colonists' point of view as well as that of Lord Charles Somerset and of various historians, even pointing out that the incident took place soon after Somerset's wife had died, thus explaining his distress and possibly his stern action.¹⁷¹

In the same way Graves attempts to put across several divergent perspectives on other controversial issues such as the Eastern Frontier, the emancipation of the slaves, the causes of the Great Trek and the annexation of Natal.

In the Std 7 book, in a note to the pupil, Graves¹⁷² points out that the past is about people: "Like us, they had emotions such as anger, fear, hate and love. Like us, they made mistakes, had

170 F.E. Graves, History for Today 6, 1985
171 F.E. Graves, History for Today 6, 1985, pp.184-185.
172 F.E. Graves, History for Today 7, 1985.



had successes and failures. If we can look on their actions with understanding ... then we can apply the same understanding in Southern Africa today." The remarkable thing about Graves's book is that her stated intentions in writing these books are actually carried out in the texts. There are conscious efforts to explain the behaviour of historical personalities, to offer differing explanations of historical events. Quoting from the preamble on aims contained in the new core syllabus, Graves points out that "'a systematic study of the past ... based on evidence: a selection of facts and events that are arranged, interpreted and explained'", requires more of both teacher and pupil "than the old concept that History was a collection of truths and that the main activity of the pupil was to listen, learn and rewrite it."¹⁷³

The conventional, and indeed sterile, approach of most school history textbooks simply does not meet the demands of present day South Africa.

8. SUMMARY

The National Party have, at the time of writing, been ruling South Africa for over forty years. During these four decades both the N.P. and South Africa have undergone fundamental changes. In 1948 the Government came to power promising to bring about separation in every sphere of South African society. It was exclusively an Afrikaner government, determined to ensure the eventual establishment of an Afrikaner Republic, a "volkstaat". In 1990 this same party has as many English-speaking as Afrikaans supporters, has shared political power with the Coloureds and Indians, has undertaken to scrap every last vestige of Apartheid, and is involved in negotiating with all who would engage in discussion to bring about majority rule in a unitary state.

The pace of change has been accelerating ever since the unrest of 1976, yet the history syllabuses presently in use cover events up to 1970 only. Moreover, they still reflect a narrow, sectional, petrified image of a largely mythical past, in which the struggle for supremacy between Boer and Briton still furnishes the central theme. In essence the syllabuses which were in use in 1948 are the same as the most recent core syllabuses of 1985. Some of the detail may have changed, but the spirit and the message have not.

The textbooks examined, especially those recommended or prescribed by the State education authorities, are understandably the products of both the syllabuses and the prevailing times. While the use of negative epithets and openly derogatory language continued well into the period under review, bias and prejudice in textbooks has, it is true, become less obvious. These books are still being written by Whites, usually Afrikaans-speaking, and, like the syllabuses upon which they are based, are still expected to fulfill an orientation, legitimation and identity-formation function for Afrikaans-speaking Whites only.

CHAPTER 8

CHALLENGES TO THE OFFICIAL INTERPRETATION OF SOUTH AFRICA'S CONTENTIOUS PAST: SOME CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. CHALLENGES TO THE "OFFICIAL" VIEW OF THE PAST

No school history anywhere has ever satisfied an entire community. We have seen that the more heterogeneous or divided a country's population, the more controversial its history teaching is likely to be. In a country as fragmented and deeply divided as South Africa, a fundamental questioning of the legitimacy of the official version of the South African past, as reflected in the present syllabus, is to be expected. The criticism levelled at the teaching of history in South African public schools is not only widespread, but also extremely varied. We can only concern ourselves here with that criticism relevant to this study, i.e. the role of history in the self-understanding of a people, in particular the orientation, legitimation and identity-forming functions of history teaching.

Current history syllabuses (and by implication the officially sanctioned textbooks in use at schools) mirror the image of the South African past held by the dominant political order, i.e. the White, Afrikaner-dominated National Party Government of a decade ago. Until the late 1970's there was little questioning within the Afrikaner Establishment of what was being offered in history syllabuses.

However, the National Party has, in the last decade, undergone a fundamental transformation. It is unlikely that it still speaks for a majority of Afrikaners. It relies to an increasing extent on the support of English-speaking voters. Its ideological shift to the left has certainly estranged it from many of its traditional supporters. There are signs that it is about to

expand its power-base to "moderate" elements in other population groups.

All this means, of course, that a Government pre-occupied with the awesome problems of present South Africa, and challenged with the ushering in of the "New South Africa", can no longer afford the luxury of dwelling on past grievances, some of which are now over 150 years old. The ruling party's historical consciousness has decreased dramatically. It is now the Conservative Party which has taken over as custodian of the Afrikaner's past. There is in the ranks of this Party, a nostalgic longing for an Afrikaner-dominated, Republican past, as witnessed by, for example, the flying of the Vierkleur by C.P.- controlled local bodies.

In short, the National Party Government appears to have left the conservative (in the non-party political sense) officials responsible for drawing up history syllabuses far behind. Such a time lag is not new, and not necessarily unusual. In Chapter 7, one saw that the new C.N.E.- influenced history syllabuses were only introduced five years or more after the N.P. came to power. There are other similar examples to be found here and elsewhere. However, it is the pace and depth of the change of N.P. policy, and the remarkably static nature of South African history syllabuses, that has resulted in an unusually large gap. Present syllabuses are perpetuating an image of the past not necessarily still accepted by the ruling party, and helping to prop up a political and social dispensation which no longer exists.

While there was an active debate (see Chapters 3, 5, 6 and 7) on the content of history teaching up to the early 1970's, with a vigorous defence of syllabuses by Afrikaner Nationalists, the present challenge to, and dissatisfaction with, history syllabuses is no longer a debate as such. The only defendants of the current syllabuses are those Whites to the right of the

Government, representing about one-third of the White electorate.

The rest of the Whites, and of course, the other 86% of the population, appear to be insisting, with varying degrees of vehemence, on an immediate and drastic revision of history syllabuses.

Dissatisfaction has been expressed by a wide range of critics not only by those who feel themselves excluded from the current political (and socio-economic) dispensation, but also by independent thinking Afrikaners, such as F.A. van Jaarsveld and J.M. du Preez. The range and depth of dissatisfaction with history at school would warrant a study on its own. The following pages represent a cross-section of some of the views expressed in recent years.

The Transvaal High Schools' History Teachers' Association, affiliated to the T.T.A., took Joubert and Britz to task for the "highly biased treatment of many areas in the syllabus and of South African history in particular" in their textbooks; it suggested that it was essential to recommend a variety of textbooks which embodied different points of view. The Association claimed that there was a tendency in the Std 10 examination "to concentrate almost entirely on questions deemed important by Afrikaner Nationalists and to ignore the history of the majority of South Africans. Remarking that history has always been used as "a tool to enforce a particular world view of the educational authorities", the Association is sceptical as to whether the "particular ideological slant" in history in the Transvaal would change. In their view the overriding theme throughout the Std 10 syllabus (as mirrored for example in the book by Joubert and Britz) is the struggle against Communism: "This is the case patently because history can effectively be used by those in power to maintain and extend their world view". White pupils left the school system "with little understanding of crucial issues of the S.A. situation and almost no understanding of the grievances of other sectors of the community", because of

a lack of balance in the selection of the issues presented.

The Section covering 1948-1970 was "an apology and motivation for apartheid. There is never any discussion as to the excellence of the policy ... This is surely not a balanced presentation of the issues." Similarly, the examination paper was "extremely limited in its themes reflecting a very one-sided view of South African History", the questions being "almost solely based on Afrikaner History". The Association's wide-ranging and spirited attack on the official approach to school history in the Transvaal ends with a call for "the approval of a book which does not have as its base an Afrikaner-centric approach but rather, one which tries to present a balanced view of ... particularly the South African past."¹

The Pretoria News² reported that "History boffins" had "slammed" the 1987 Std 10 paper as 'a history of the Afrikaner'; one teacher had described it "as a test on the history of the Afrikaner people". In a series of articles, beginning with "History as she is wrote in the Transvaal", the educationist Janice Farquharson took the T.E.D. to task for its "apparent racial obsessions and narrow political sectarianism". The fact that the T.E.D. could even have considered Joubert and Britz's book "must give rise to doubts as to the quality of history taught to thousands of South Africans of all races, and the kind of answers expected from the pupils". The South African half of the syllabus, as presented in that textbook, gave the impression of being intended for one very limited section of the community.³

The T.E.D.'s response was that the book was the only history textbook for Std 10 to have been submitted to the T.E.D. by the

1 Transvaal High Schools' History Teachers' Association, History Committee Report, 1988, passim.

2 Pretoria News, 18 November 1987.

3 Pretoria News, 13 August 1987.

time arrangements had been made for its publication.⁴

In the second article ("Whose past? How the T.E.D. learns you ous history"), Farquharson asserts that Joubert's book "was not an isolated phenomenon, but symptomatic of a wider malaise". She asks also who decides what themes are to comprise the history syllabus, what sort of a past is being created by those who make the decisions; did the T.E.D. vision of the past encompass all South Africans or was history an "'own affair'" in which the aim was "the perception of the grievances of a limited section of the community, with everyone outside the charmed circle constituting a 'problem'"; in her opinion the South African history syllabus was "limited and stultifying", precluding "any independent thought".⁵

Farquharson's article, "The examiners anonymous", criticizes the fact that the T.E.D. Std 10 history paper in 1987 contains quotations solely from Afrikaans newspapers; furthermore the essays were "narrowly sectarian"; she quotes a "frustrated historian" who said of the paper that "it was not history, but indoctrination".⁶ In response to a call by the T.T.A. for the history examination to be set on the syllabus and not the textbook, a T.E.D. spokesman replied that teachers should not prescribe to the examination panel how to set the paper.⁷ Joel Mervis, in an article entitled "History warped in Transvaal", asserted that there had been "three generations of purposeful brainwashing in schools".⁸

Van den Berg and Buckland⁹ concur with the above critics that the present syllabuses reflect an essentially White perspective; the

4 See SAIRR Survey, 1990, p.257.

5 Pretoria News, 22 October 1987.

6 Business Day, 21 December 1987.

7 See SAIRR Survey, 1990, p.258; and Business Day, 21 March 1988.

8 Business Day, 26 August 1988.

9 O. van den Berg and P. Buckland, Beyond the History Syllabus, pp. 12-13, 31-33.

overall impression is that Whites made South African history. Where reference is made to persons not classified as White, this was done in a variety of ways: as background information to "White" history, as "people", as persons having separate history requiring attention in "segregated syllabus compartments", or "as persons constituting incipient or established separate nations, thus providing a backdrop for an understanding of the racial-constitutional policies of the recent past." They accuse the syllabus of perpetrating the discredited view that there was (original emphasis) no South African history before 1652. The paradigm of South African history that is required to be taught and learnt corresponds solely to the interpretation of history propagated by "the ruling Afrikaner Nationalist power elite" in particular and accepted by the White population in general. Given this group's dominance of education departments, it was "not surprising that ... with very few exceptions", the books that came to be approved were those sympathetic to this paradigm; thus it was that a view of history that is "heavily Eurocentric and white-orientated" comes to be taught and learnt in schools.

The appearance of the Reader's Digest Illustrated History of South Africa in early 1989, although not published as a school textbook, was widely greeted in popular, and anti-Government circles as a refreshingly new approach to history, and a corrective to "official" school textbooks. A review in the Citizen was positive: "Prof. Saunders achieves his ambition of telling the story without nationalistic bias; wherever possible, even telling the history from the point of view of the ethnic peoples (sic) and the invaders";¹⁰ Gerald Shaw's review "S.A.'s sad and violent past"¹¹ complimented the authors on "getting away from the old divisive tracts", the "deplorable sectional bias and partiality of most school history books" had perpetrated "division and conflict". Graham Linscott¹² praises the book for

The Citizen, 5 June 1989, "Illustrated History of SA."

Cape Times, 1 April 1989, "SA's sad and violent past".

The Star, 6 May 1989, "Titillating history of South Africa."

"breaking new ground" and "challenging this country's fund of myths and stereotypes"; it would give any child a fresh insight into the land and society in which he lives, "something which the straitjacketed and deadly dull school syllabus will never do". Unfortunately it demolishes so many historical myths that it is "unlikely to be prescribed by any education department controlled by Pretoria". The book's reception among professional historians was less enthusiastic because of its obvious ideological approach.

Other challenges to the traditional Euro-Centric interpretation of South African history have also come from academically far sounder, rather less ideologically inspired works by respected historians. In recent years a number of general histories have appeared, representing a renewal in South African historical writing: R. Elphick and H. Giliomee (Eds.), The Shaping of South African Society, 1652-1840 (1989)¹³; H.J. van Aswegen, Geskiedenis van Suid-Afrika tot 1854 (1989)¹⁴; and T.R.H. Davenport, South Africa. A Modern History (Third Edition, 1987)¹⁵, and T. Cameron and S.B. Spies (Eds.) An Illustrated History of South Africa,¹⁶ are examples.

Vrye Weekblad¹⁷ wrote of the "unravelling of myths which the Afrikaner has linked to apartheid". The educational supplement to New Nation, "Learning Nation", asked its readers how much of the true history of South Africa they knew; they "certainly won't find it in school textbooks", "Learning Nation" contends. It was very important for students to know "what really happened", because it would help readers to understand life in South Africa

13 See T.R.H. Davenport's review in, Historia, November 1989, Volume 34 No. 2, pp.119-120.

14 See F.A. van Jaarsveld's review in, Ibid., pp.120-122.

15 See C Saunders' review in, South African Historical Journal 19, November 1987.

16 See E. Bradlow's review in, Historia, November 1986, Vol.31, No. 3.

17 Vrye Weekblad, 12 May 1989, "n Kans om mites te bekyk".

today. Dr Johan Malan of Potchefstroom views prejudice as the result of stereotyping.¹⁸ Ken Owen asserts that "the teaching of history has been displaced by propaganda".¹⁹ Harvey Tyson, in an article entitled "Wean us off historical junkfood", calls history "the crystallisation of popular beliefs". Several generations of South African school children had "escaped death from boredom merely by going into a trance during history lessons": they had been "spoon-fed junkfood history" in the form of recorded stereotypes.²⁰

Even the mass-murderer Barend Stydom is seen as a product of history teaching: a newspaper correspondent²¹ wonders what "those responsible for the teaching of history in this country feel about their most shining product. Gerald Shaw in an article "NP sowed the wind, SA reaps the whirlwind"²² puts "White - supremacist South African society" on trial alongside Strydom, but hopes that "the new generation will be spared this vicious brand of brainwashing ... A new uniform history is planned for all schools."

Opening the Natal Teachers' Society's 74th annual conference, Prof. Colin Bundy examined conflicting versions of South African history. According to Bundy,²³ the first framework for understanding the South African past as presented in the "white supremacy history" or "history by denial", a framework that goes back to the settler histories of the nineteenth century. It was typical of both popular and academic Afrikaner nationalist history and for a long time deeply entrenched in school textbooks. It proceeded essentially by denying that Black South

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- 18 Cape Argus, 19 June 1989, "Prejudice must go, social workers, academics told".
19 Cape Times, 31 July 1989, "NP is Mickey Mouse steeped in failure".
20 Saturday Star, 17 December 1988.
21 The Star, 16 May 1989, "Wean us off historical junkfood".
22 Cape Times, 26 May 1989.
23 Natal Mercury, 21 June 1989, "The problems that different kinds of history create for SA".

Africans have a history. The history of South Africa was the history of Dutch trekboers and English settlers:

"Many of you may have been exposed to this kind of history when you were at school, and you will be familiar with the texts that concentrate, complacently and relentlessly, on the history of governors, generals, voortrekker leaders, British administrators, missionaries and prime ministers. When Blacks do impinge on this history, they do so largely as external irritants - like locusts, rinderpest or droughts. They are cattle raiders, work-shy squatters, unruly frontier crossers and uncivilized heathens."

Joubert's textbook was a kind of "anti-knowledge", and the syllabus for black schools "a move towards the retribalisation of the past ... a new ethnic idyll in which black heroic figures are invoked to legitimize separate development". He maintains that "large numbers" of Blacks have quite simply rejected the kind of history offered at school. Blacks perceived history at school as "profoundly disabling", as it was ideologically controlled: "to deny people their history is to cripple them intellectually and to maim them psychologically".

The reaction to this has been "anti-apartheid history", "history by assertion", or simply "Black history", concerned above all to establish that there was an African past, to write into the historical record an African identity.²⁴ In South Africa, Black history has re-established Black people as the subjects, and not the mere objects of history; it restores to them the status of makers of their own history, rather than victims of "White" history. Bundy asserts that the weakness inherent in this history is that it is locked conceptually into the framework of "White supremacist" and "apartheid" history to which it merely responds. Thus for example, Dingane becomes "a goody", and the Mfecane more important than the Great Trek; there is the danger too of "Black

24 See W.R.L. Gebhard, Black Perceptions of South African History, and J.C. Moll et al., Tussengroepverhoudinge soos Weerspieël in die Suid-Afrikaanse Historiografie, pp.21-28.

history" celebrating a fictitious golden past, investing an idyllic, precolonial society free of conflict or oppression, thereby ignoring the uglier side of African history.²⁵

A further and perhaps more serious challenge to the prevailing version of the past has come in the form of "people's history", or "history from below", a movement which encompasses "Black history" as well. People's history has its origins in the anti-colonialist, anti-capitalist writings of Frantz Fanon and other Marxist writers of the Third World, and in the history workshops of left-wing historians in the United States and Britain. It is closely linked to the radical historiography which came to South Africa in the 1970's. The History Workshop conferences held at the University of the Witwatersrand, the first in 1978 and then at three-yearly intervals focused on "grassroots history", and were a "deliberate attempt to democratise the study of history".²⁶ Since 1986, the idea of "people's history" and the "history workshop" has spread throughout the country, a direct result of the two "National Consultation Conferences on the Crisis in Education" held in 1985 and 1986. The Conferences gave birth to the "National Education Crisis Committee" (NECC) articulating the rejection of "apartheid education". The NECC appointed a "People's History Commission" to establish an alternative image of the past.²⁷ In answer to the question why the NECC focused specifically on history, Witz²⁸ states that it was primarily due to "the distortions and myths" that pervade South African school history, the peripheral role of Blacks in that history, and the uninspiring methods used in the teaching of

25 C. Bundy, "History - Then and Now", in Mentor, Vol.71, No. 3.

26 C. Saunders, Towards Understanding South Africa's Past, in South Africa International, Volume Nineteen, Number Two, October 1988, p.67.

27 F.A. van Jaarsveld, Omstrede Suid-Afrikaanse Skoolgeskiedenis, Historia, November 1989, pp.1-21.

28 L. Witz, History of the People, For the People and by the People: A Brief Examination of the Development of People's History in South Africa, 1977-1988, in South Africa International, Volume Nineteen, Number Two, October 1988, p.91.

history.

This reinterpretation of South Africa's past displays elements of Black nationalism as well as Marxist theory: key concepts include colonialism, exploitation, dispossession, national liberation, the workers' struggle, and capitalism. It is a history geared to the "liberation struggle", in which the traditional white-centred image of the past is inverted by the use of alternative or counter perceptions. Yesterday's villains become today's heroes and vice versa. According to Saunders, much of the new work has deliberately sought to "counter the myths embedded in received versions of the past". What was for so long taught in the schools "has been turned on its head". The myth of a past in which the Whites were the only dominant actors has been demolished.

Ethnicity, multiculturalism, cultural plurality and so on are rejected out of hand as government propaganda, a ploy to divide and rule. The "people's history" is trans-ethnic, based on the Marxist paradigm of the oppressed classes struggling to overthrow the exploiting class. Because there is no official recognition of the "people's history" movement, its activities take place outside the formal education system.²⁹

This is not the place to debate the merits or shortcomings of "people's history". What the sudden and spectacular spread of the movement does do, is underline the most glaring weakness in the present syllabuses: their White-centredness.

On the assumption that a national identity rests to a very significant degree on a nation's historical consciousness, in this case a mutually agreed upon version of the past (allowing of course for regional, class and other nuances), the present South

29 C. Saunders, Towards Understanding South Africa's Past, in South Africa International, Volume Nineteen, Number Two, October 1988, passim.

African crisis invites the question of whether a mutually agreed upon past is possible, let alone likely. More pertinent, what role could history teaching play in the current identity crisis, lack of national orientation and challenge to legitimacy? The solutions offered to these problems and questions are likely to be as varied and controversial as the problems themselves.³⁰ Before reaching any conclusion or venturing any recommendations, a brief look at some European and international attempts to resolve similar questions could be useful.

2. INTERNATIONAL TEXTBOOKS REVIEWS³¹

As early as 1849, "peace congresses" held in Europe pleaded for the revision of manuals of instruction which could eliminate false and misleading representations. In 1893 G. Pitt published his A History of England with the Wars Left Out, regarded as a landmark in textbook revision. In the Scandinavian countries since the 1920's there has been mutual examination of one another's school books. In 1924, the report of the Carnegie Foundation for International Peace found all fifty-three countries that had participated in the First World War guilty, in varying degrees, of national prejudice in their history textbooks. In 1926 the League of Nations took a significant step forward in textbook reform: it invited every member country to set up a national committee charged with the task of examining foreign history books and reporting instances of national bias to the home country of the book concerned. A report published in

30 F.A. van Jaarsveld: Omstrede Suid-Afrikaanse Schoolgeskiedenis, Historia, November 1989, pp.17-21 see also F.A. van Jaarsveld, Hervertolking in die Suid-Afrikaanse Geskiedenis, pp. 10-11.

31 See O. Schüddekopf (Ed.), History Teaching and History Textbook Revision, pp.190-218, for a comprehensive list of multilateral and bilateral History Textbook Revision Conferences between 1946 and 1965.

1930 on history teaching in 55 countries produced a wealth of evidence about harmful national perceptions.

In 1931 the South American republics resolved that in future textbooks and syllabuses should not contain any expressions or judgements which reveal a feeling of hostility towards another country. It was realized that the most significant problem was not factual inaccuracy, which is relatively easy to detect, but verbal nuances. In 1947 a joint U.S./Canadian report was published on the Study of National History Textbooks used in the Schools of Canada and the United States.³²

As early as the 1920's the historians of Denmark, Norway and Sweden began to examine their nation's textbooks in order to "purify" them. The Norwegian historians' commission identified certain Norwegian elementary school textbooks which stated that, during the Swedish invasion of Norway in the 16th century, the Swedes had behaved like "savages", no mention being made of the fact that Norwegians and Danes had killed and plundered in exactly the same way during their raids into Sweden. This example illustrates the tendency of historians to describe wars in a most prejudiced way, attributing all blame to the enemy and all virtue to one's own country. Each nation's heroes are glorified at the expense of the great men of other nations.³³ What applies to prejudice against other nations internationally applies to group prejudice within South Africa.

In the late 1940's UNESCO announced a detailed plan of action in the form of the booklet, A Handbook for the Improvement of Textbooks and Teaching Materials, leading to an international seminar on textbooks. The seminar recommended that there be revision of textbooks by means of mutual agreements, starting

32 E.H. Dance, History the Betrayer. A Study in Bias, pp. 127-132.
33 UNESCO, Better History Textbooks, pp.1-2.

with the negative process of eliminating errors and tendentious or biased statements.³⁴

The German-Polish bilateral textbook revision is another example of what may be achieved. Between 1972 and 1976 there were twelve meetings between Polish and German experts. By 1976 the joint commission could express its satisfaction at the first concrete results in both countries in the form of improvements to the textbooks in both countries.³⁵ This project continues today. Between the Federal Republic and its western neighbours (For example France and the Netherlands) Feindbilder and prejudices in history textbooks have largely disappeared, thanks to the bilateral examination of textbooks.³⁶ Similarly, Germany and Israel established a joint schoolbook conference for mutual analyses of geography and history textbooks in 1979.³⁷ Germany and the United States developed a collaborative project between 1979 and 1981.³⁸ Boden³⁹ discusses the Anglo-Dutch geography textbook conference, as a further example.

The Georg Eckert Institute's project has already been described in the Introduction.

3. THE SEARCH FOR A EUROPEAN IDENTITY

The examples given of mutual textbook revision point the way

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- 34 UNESCO, Better History Textbooks, pp. 11-21.
- 35 Georg-Eckert-Institut, Empfehlungen für Schulbücher der Geschichte und Geographie in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland und in der Volksrepublik Polen, pp.159-161.
- 36 H. Schissler (Ed.), Schulbuchverbesserung durch Internationale Schulbuchforschung?, pp.9-10.
- 37 Georg-Eckert-Institut, Band 25, Das Deutschlandbild in Israelischen Schulgeschichtsbüchern.
- 38 Georg-Eckert-Institut, Band 30, Die Bundesrepublik Deutschland und die Vereinigte Staaten von Amerika. Empfehlungen zur Behandlung ihrer Geschichte nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg.
- 39 P.K. Boden, Promoting International Understanding through School Textbooks. A Case Study, p.51.

towards intergroup analyses in South Africa. The search for a European identity, currently so intense in western (and indeed many eastern) European countries, also illustrates the possibilities for, and hurdles in the way of, the attainment of a South African identity.

The European Economic Community is due to become a "united Europe" in 1992, when all economic frontiers will disappear.⁴⁰ Addressing the problem, Jeismann⁴¹ asks what Europe actually is, where its boundaries lie, what its definite ethnic, cultural, political and economic substance is, and whether one can at all hope to find a European identity in European history, whether history teaching can make a contribution to the building of a European identity, or merely serve to destroy illusions, such as the dream of a united Europe on the model of the United States.

These are pertinent questions to be asked of the present, and future, South Africa. Jeismann describes Europe as a collection of identities in tension ("Spannungsbündel"), a cross-section of a variety of identities.⁴² He believes that no teaching can create an identity, it can only reinforce, reflect, and strengthen identities where they already exist, and he warns that, although historical teaching can help promote a European consciousness, the division of Europe's national histories cannot be dissolved in one generation. Pellens⁴³ agrees that the search for a European identity will not lead to a monolithic identity, but rather to a plural identity; there can also never be a unified historical consciousness.

Europe's multicultural or multi-ethnic character, strongly

40 F.A. van Jaarsveld, Omstrede Suid-Afrikaanse Skoolgeskiedenis, pp. 17-24.

41 K.E. Jeismann, Internationale Schulbuchforschung oder nationale Staatsraison?, pp.260-276.

42 Ibid., pp.260-261.

43 K. Pellens, Die Internationale Dimension der Geschichtsdidaktik, in K.Pellens et al., Geschichtskultur-Geschichtsdidaktik, pp.38-43.

reminiscent of South Africa, is undoubtedly an obstacle in the path of European unity and a common "European" syllabus for history teaching. Jeismann has established that there is resistance of a "European" history syllabus. Each nation is still inclined to its own "church tower perspective": it perceives its own country, its neighbours and the rest of the world from the perspective of its own church tower. Thus a broad European dimension is lacking. His conclusion is that the "European idea" in history teaching is not yet possible. It can only be set as a political goal for the future, probably unattainable in the present generation. As mentioned above, he is sceptical of the capacity of history teaching to establish a new European identity in the face of separate national identities, and a variety of historical consciousnesses.⁴⁴

An investigation into the state of the "European idea" in the history syllabuses and textbooks in five European countries yielded disappointing results.⁴⁵ The message for South Africa in this is that there is no instant formula for establishing a South African identity through history teaching.

It will be a gradual process demanding insight, tolerance and above all, patience. It is unlikely that a monolithic identity could be formed in the foreseeable future. South Africa should perhaps aim at the establishment of a plural identity, such as that of the Americans.

4. SOUTH AFRICA : UNNAMED, INCOMPLETE AFRICAN STATE

Probably never before in its history has South Africa been in such a state of flux. From its inception in 1910, the new state was ruled by Whites. Until well into the 1960's their authority was never seriously challenged. The collapse of the European

44 F.A. van Jaarsveld, *Omstrede Suid-Afrikaanse Skoolgeskiedenis*, in *Historia*, November 1989, pp.12-17.

45 See E. Bruley and E.H. Dance, *A History of Europe?*, passim.

empires in Africa and the rapid urbanization of South Africa's Black population, changed all this. In 1976, and again in 1984-6, the Blacks' acute dissatisfaction with their political, social and economic lot was articulated by way of mass protest and unrest. White authority was being challenged as never before.

In some ways the tri-cameral parliamentary system introduced by P.W. Botha in 1983 was an admission that South Africa was no longer (it had never been) only a "white man's country". The inclusion, for the first time, of people who are not White in the central government, albeit with limited power, and the Government's oft-stated intention since 1986 of sharing power with "all South Africans" are the first tentative steps towards a shared future. The White South African "nation" was expanded in 1983 to accommodate Coloureds and Indians. The Government's admission since 1986 that separate development has failed, and that South Africa is henceforth to be regarded as one nation in indivisible unitary state has ushered in a new political era,⁴⁶ and launched South Africa, apparently rudderless, into as yet uncharted waters.⁴⁷

This political upheaval and the fundamental changes in National Party thinking has caused a national identity crisis with a sudden absence of historical orientation.⁴⁸ For a century or more Whites, and Afrikaners in particular, could use their image of the past to grasp their present situation and plot a course for the future.⁴⁹ Just how constant and secure that historical image has been, is adequately borne out by this investigation. It is now no longer only White political authority which is being

46 See "Voting rights for all on horizon - Viljoen", Star, 6 February 1990.

47 See "Afrikaners at the crossroads", South 5 to 14 February 1990.

48 See F.A. van Jaarsveld, Omstrede Suid-Afrikaanse Skool-geskiedenis, in Historia, November 1989, pp.17-18.

49 See "van Verwoerd tot by F.W. de Klerk", Transvaler, 8 February 1990.

challenged, but also the legitimacy of the South African past, as viewed from a White perspective and offered in history syllabuses and textbooks in all public schools. The sublime assumption that the past was unchanging, fixed for all time, has been shattered. Every stereotype, every myth, every master symbol upon which the Whites' historical image has rested for a hundred years or more, is being scrutinised, questioned and in many cases hurled contemptuously onto the scrapheap.

The heroes of yesterday have become, in the eyes of all those opposed to the Government, as well as the "international community", the villains. The wrong-doers in the official version have become the innocent victims of racism, colonialism and exploitation. The Boer-Briton clash which so long sustained Afrikaner nationalism, and which has stood central to the historical stage, is suddenly irrelevant. Both Afrikaners and English-speaking Whites are now seen as co-responsible for wrongs perpetrated against the Black majority.⁵⁰ White South Africa stands dazed and bewildered by the "unexpectedness" of it all.

If South Africa is indeed now a unitary state and all its inhabitants citizens of that state, it should be possible to talk of a South African nation in the process of becoming. As yet this nation-to-be lacks any kind of identity. There is no common language, culture, religion, tradition, not even common loyalties and allegiance to national symbols. These are not even mutually accepted boundaries. This has led F.A. van Jaarsveld to refer to South Africa as an "unnamed, incomplete African state" ("onbenaamde, onvoltooide Afrikastaat").⁵¹ As German thinkers could ask for centuries: "Deutschland? aber wo liegt es?" ("Germany? but where is it situated?"), and not be able to answer ("Ich weiss das Land nicht zu finden")⁵², so we can enquire after the whereabouts of South Africa. Our country is, like Germany, "Das Schwierige Vaterland".⁵³

The United States, with all its staggering diversity of peoples enjoys the allegiance of the overwhelming majority of its inhabitants. The American anthem (as well as other patriotic songs) and flag command universal respect, devotion and affection throughout that vast nation. There are national symbols that transcend group, ethnic, state and class differences. South Africa at this stage does not even possess a name upon which all are agreed: in radical and pan-Africanist circles this country's name is Azania. The Government appears open on this question too.⁵⁴ Our very borders are a matter of dispute: are the "non-independent national states", such as KwaZulu or Lebowa part of South Africa or not? Are the inhabitants of the TBVC states necessarily to be thought of as foreigners? Many regard the "bantustans", including the Transkei as a farce, and therefore, still as integral parts of the Republic. There is even open talk of their re-incorporation.⁵⁵

Taking into account that South Africans cannot agree on the exact extent of their country, or even on a name for it,⁵⁶ it is not surprising that national symbols, a focus for national unity in most states, are a source of constant friction here. A Labour Party Member of Parliament stated that "he never could nor ever would stand for the national flag or sing the national anthem 'Die Stem'", symbolising as they did "white history and white values". He could not identify with the words of the anthem: "We need a new flag and a new anthem to symbolise the ideal for the future, not the hurtfulness of the past".⁵⁷ Wynand Malan of the Democratic Party has said that "for a new South Africa we shall

54 See Beeld, 14 March 1990, "SA se naam: Regering sal daaroor praat"; and Pretoria News, 15 March 1990, "SA could well become 'Azania', Viljoen tells newspaper".

55 See Vrye Weekblad, 13 October 1989, "Verwoerd se groot droom is aan die verbrokkel", South, 5-11 October 1989, "Holomisa: No lip-service to Pretoria" and "Nuwe era vir TBVC-state", Rapport, 4 Februarie 1990.

56 See Saturday Star, 28 October 1989, "You can't stop march on the road to Azania".

57 Pretoria News, 15 April 1989, ("MP rejects SA flag, anthem").

have to develop a new flag, a new anthem as well as other national symbols"⁵⁸ Martin Dibodu of the Methodist Episcopal Church stated bluntly that the anthem and flag meant nothing to him: "I am not proud of them and don't recognize them".⁵⁹ Vrye Weekblad noted that "only 8 per cent of South Africa's national monuments commemorated the history of people other than Whites".⁶⁰

In June 1989, the synod of the Anglican Church in Southern Africa passed a motion calling Die Stem "unsuitable and unacceptable".⁶¹ Commenting on this, the editor of The Natal Mercury wrote that if Die Stem was not "genuinely acceptable to the majority, there can surely be nothing wrong in finding something that is".⁶² The Citizen⁶³ conceded that "one day, in a new South Africa, there may be a new anthem negotiated by, and acceptable to, all its peoples". Die Kerkbode was quoted⁶⁴ as voicing its support for the use of Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrika alongside Die Stem. In a leader, Die Volksblad acknowledged "that in the South Africa of the future there would be a need for a new anthem".⁶⁵ Dr Pierre Roussouw of the DRC was of the opinion that "all communities would have to thrash out a new dispensation for the country and that would include national symbols".⁶⁶ Die Beeld, in a leader, foresees that a new dispensation would lead to insistence on a new or at least additional national symbols.⁶⁷ The Conservative Party reacted to the controversy by advocating partition in accordance with which each nation would have the right "to recognize and honour its own national symbols".⁶⁸

58 Vrye Weekblad, 26 May 1989, p.11
59 Vrye Weekblad, 26 May 1989, "Monumente vir 'n wit geskiedenis".
60 Ibid.
61 The Star, 13 June 1989, "Anglican Church rejects anthem".
62 The Natal Mercury, 13 June 1989, "Die Stem".
63 The Citizen, 13 June 1989, "Die Stem".
64 The Citizen, 22 June 1989, "NGK backs Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrika".
65 Die Volksblad, 12 June 1989, "Die Stem".
66 Weekend Argus, 10 June 1989, "National song 'must be for all'".
67 Die Beeld, 14 June 1989, "Volkslied".
68 The Pretoria News, 26 June 1989, "CP warns on results of NP idea of unitary state".

The flag and the national anthem are not the only symbols of the historical image of a nation. National commemoration days are another. As is to be expected South Africa's national days are also being questioned. Willie Esterhuyse, for example, objects to the way symbols are interpreted, particularly the narrow "volksnasionalistiese politiekery" around the the Day of the Vow.⁶⁹ On the 150th anniversary of the Great Trek, the public debate on the significance of the Day of the Vow flared up yet again. The details need not concern us here. What is important is that December 16, May 31 and October 10 have widely differing meanings for South Africans. To some they are symbols of a glorious, heroic past; others view them as the commemoration of events which led to their dispossession and enslavement.⁷⁰

Not all would agree with P.W. Botha when he addressed the "official" crowd at the amphitheatre of the Voortrekker Monument in 1988: "A century and a half ago Blood River was an hour of victory - the victory of faith in the power of God over unbelief and violence."⁷¹ In a statement, the Inyandza Youth League of Kangwane describe December 16 as "the day on which our historic forebears under the command of one of the outstanding revolutionaries, Dingane, had clashed with imperialist marauders and land plunderers". The League was to commemorate "the heroism of Dingane's impi's at the Battle of Ncome (Blood River)".⁷² South Africa truly has a controversial past, an "omstrede verlede".

69 Rapport, 11 December 1988, "Die laers moet oop!".

70 See "Die Groot Trick?", Saturday Star, 17 December 1988, p.11; "What we can all learn from the Great Trek", Sunday Times, 11 December 1988, p.20; "The Great Trek enigma", The Star, 15 December 1988; "Die laers moet oop!", Rapport, 11 December 1988, p.27.

71 Address by the State President P.W.Botha on the occasion of the 150th anniversary of the Great Trek, p.1.

72 New Nation, 16 December 1988, "Chiefs to salute impi's Blood River Sacrifice".

5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

History teaching fulfills an important function in the areas of legitimation, orientation and identity-formation. The historical consciousness of the ruling party, group, class is intimately bound up with its national consciousness, and its self-image. History syllabuses world-wide mirror the image of the past as sanctioned by the existing order. In South Africa, government after government has imposed its image of the past on other groups.⁷³ A distinctly pro-British, anti-Black view of the past is discernable up to 1948, with the British link becoming ever weaker : syllabuses and most textbooks emphasized South Africa's place as an integral part of the Empire. The non-White peoples were relegated to the position of "problems" at best, and a "threat" at worst. Through a system of inter-connected stereotypes, master symbols and Feindbilder, constantly reinforced by bias, prejudice and negative language, those perceived to have opposed the existing order were presented in a negative light. The consistency and tenacity of these negative images has been shown. In contrast, a positive self-image of the Whites, especially those Whites favourably disposed to South Africa's British connection, is projected.

We have seen that since 1948, a fundamentally Afrikaner view of South Africa's past has been imposed on the entire country. This view has its roots in the 19th century, manifesting itself in history teaching in the Boer Republics, but was not officially sanctioned after 1902 until the National Party Government came to power in 1948. The role of Blacks in history, as viewed by the Afrikaner, was virtually identical to their role in the "official" history up to 1948. It was the Afrikaners' reaction against British domination, beginning in earnest in about 1877, that led to a different presentation of the past. Now it was those that had opposed British imperialism and South Africa's

73 F.A. van Jaarsveld, *Omstrede Suid-Afrikaanse Skoolgeskiedenis*, in *Historia*, November 1989, p.19.

links with the Empire, that became the heroes.

Just as most Afrikaners rejected what they regarded as a British version of their history, and consciously sought to develop an alternative interpretation (a kind of counter history), so most English-speaking Whites feel disadvantaged by the current syllabuses and textbooks. Needless to say, Black, Coloured and Indian South Africans are no happier now with the way in which they are presently portrayed than they were at any other time in the past. They are insisting, as never before, on their own interpretation of South African history. Since 1948, an Afrikaner-centric past has been presented in public schools, and even in private schools following provincial or JMB syllabuses. As has been noted, this version of the past is now regarded as untenable, even by the National Party Establishment.

The vehemence of the objections to current syllabuses would indicate that they are simply not representative of the great majority of South Africans. 78 per cent of the present South African school population is Black, and a further 11 per cent Coloured or Indian. Fewer than 11 per cent are White⁷⁴ and by no means all of them are satisfied with the content of history teaching.⁷⁵ The question, therefore, which has to be answered is whether an image of the past, applicable to roughly 5 or 6 per cent of the country's school population, can possibly be legitimate. The crisis in history teaching and the questioning of this image even in certain Afrikaner circles would seem to indicate that the "official" version of South Africa's past is no longer tenable.

74 Department of Education and Training, Education for Blacks in South Africa: Statistics.

75 This author knows from personal experience that at many English-medium schools, the South African section of the history syllabus is dealt with quickly and without much enthusiasm, while the general history component claims the lion's share of the teachers' and pupils' time and attention.

As Jeismann⁷⁶ points out, outdated historical dimensions cannot, and should not, be reclaimed, and in any case a monolithic approach to history is undesirable. Society for its maintenance and further development demands a multi-perspective approach to history. None of the new insights, knowledge and perspectives gained through historical research over the past few decades is reflected in the current syllabuses. It is still a largely political/constitutional approach to an extremely limited section of the past that is being presented.

History as taught at school has little application to the new world for which it is supposed to prepare the nation's future citizens. Education authorities traditionally tend to be conservative. Those who control South African education are no exception. It is therefore to be expected that those responsible for drawing up syllabuses would tend to be conservative as well. In societies where the pace of change is slow, such conservatism need not pose too great a problem. South African society is dynamic, and the pace of change breathtaking. It is beyond dispute that South African school syllabuses, particularly those pertaining to history, now lag very far behind the political and constitutional developments of the past decade.

What Dance⁷⁷ says about British history is strikingly applicable to South Africa:

What we have to do ... is to re-assess our basic values. History is a medium of education, and we are educating not a leisured class like that for which Arnold started the teaching of history ... but people who will have to face problems, political and social, of which Arnold could never have dreamed."

76 K.E. Jeismann, Geschichte als Horizont der Gegenwart, p.23.

77 E.H. Dance, History the Betrayer, pp.49-50.

Ever since 1976 South African society has been characterised by tensions, conflict, and change to a degree unusual even for this country. White South Africa in particular, indeed the country as a whole, is in the midst of political and social turmoil in which values and "certainties", hitherto unquestioned, are being drastically revised, even rejected out of hand. The collapse of Apartheid and the rapid erosion of the White monopoly on political, and even economic power, has resulted in an identity crisis, a serious lack of historical orientation, and the realisation that power is no longer accepted as legitimate. The character of the present period is overwhelmingly one in which an old order is fragmenting, yielding and being reshaped, and in which a new order is struggling to define itself, to win acceptance (and legitimacy).⁷⁸

While the Government now speaks of a new South Africa, a unitary state in which all will be regarded as South Africans with full rights, our present syllabuses and textbooks still reflect a White-centred, largely Afrikaner-centric view of an idealised past, in which the White man occupies almost the entire historical stage. Whereas the central conflicts in South Africa have long been between Black and White nationalism on the one hand, and between labour and capital on the other, our history textbooks would have us believe that the conflict between Briton and Boer, long irrelevant, is still the major issue. As van Jaarsveld⁷⁹ points out, a view of the past that fails to take cognisance of new circumstances will appear anachronistic.

International schoolbook revision challenges, confronts, relativises and exposes and is, therefore, of necessity drawn into the political arena, and must touch sensitive nerve centres

78 C. Bundy, *History - Then and Now*, in *Mentor*, Vol.71, No.3.

79 F.A. van Jaarsveld, Lewende Verlede, p.77.



of public opinion. Jeismann⁸⁰ points out that many of the mutual recommendations of the German-Polish project clashed with the tabus of the Party in Poland and could not be implemented. He stresses that an open society is a pre-requisite for meaningful research, as is an education system free of central indoctrination: a high degree of tolerance and plurality of opinion is required. It is open to question whether South Africa at this moment meets these requirements. Jeismann⁸¹ illustrates the problems involved with the examples of the refusal of Soviet historians and authorities to concede the secret clauses of the Hitler-Stalin Pact of 1939: as soon as vital political interests are threatened, politics does not allow the truth to be included in the state education system. The political order ("Staatsräson") can react massively against any attempt to question its assumptions. This happens especially when the elementary self-assuredness of being correct, of having right on one's side, is questioned. The need for legitimation and the reinforcement of identity through history teaching are powerful, and the Feindbilder are insolubly linked to the positive self-image. An attack on long nurtured Feindbilder is perceived as a fundamental assault on a nation or group's self-image, for the self-image is only completed by the delineation of the Feindbilder.

However, far from a massive reaction from the prevailing political order in South Africa, one could now expect official sanction of a fundamental syllabus and textbook revision. It is only in Conservative Party circles where one can expect a defensive stance in favour of the existing content of history teaching.

Very recently a senior cabinet minister and leading Afrikaner establishment figure, Dr Gerrit Viljoen made a most significant speech, in which the Government's receptiveness to fundamental

80 K.E. Jeismann, Internationale Schulbuchforschung oder nationale Staatsräson?, p.194.

81 Ibid., pp.6-7,13.

curriculum revision was signalled. Dr Viljoen correctly stated that in South Africa there are clearly distinguishable groups, having different demands and needs. These differences had their origins in traditions and convictions and could not be ignored by education. Acculturation and even an integration of the different cultural groups had, however, already resulted in an indisputable unity and commonality of interests between these different groups of South Africans. By virtue of common citizenship and a commonality of interests the different groups shared a common destiny:

"It is this commonality, rather than the differences, that should increasingly be our point of departure in our thinking and planning for the future. It is possible that we have neglected this commonality and over-emphasised the differences in the past ... The curriculum must make provision for that which the people of this country have in common and which is universal ... , while still leaving enough room to accommodate specific needs and demands ...

In this way provision is made for the complex societal situation in the Republic ...

There is another, more socio-political, reason for urgent revision of existing syllabuses ... found in the predominantly Eurocentric or White-orientated content of existing syllabuses, due to the initiative and leadership of White educationists thus far in the development of curricula and syllabuses. It is essential that the experience, ideals, values and aspirations of all communities within the South African nation find a true reflection in our learning programme. To this end it is essential that all further curricula development be undertaken as a task involving the best educationists and subject experts from all population groups and communities".

Dr Viljoen went on to emphasize that the State President had requested that urgent attention be given to the revision of the existing syllabuses.⁸³

83 Department of National Education, Speech on Curriculum Renewal by Dr G. van N. Viljoen, Minister of Constitutional Development and of National Education, on the occasion of the opening of the annual congress of the Education Association of South Africa, Cape Town, 10 January 1990.

That such revision will touch sensitive nerve-centres is evident from the immediate and unequivocal reaction of the Conservative Party⁸⁴ to the above speech:

"The CP rejects uniform syllabuses for the different peoples of South Africa. Particularly a subject such as history cannot be presented from a general South African perspective. The Afrikaner and the broad White community insists that history be transferred to the next generation from its own perspective and ... world-view."

It is significant that, although Dr Viljoen never mentioned history specifically, the Conservative Party interpreted his speech as an assault on current history syllabuses.

Differing or conflicting forms of historical consciousness within one society are at once the cause and result of strong political opposition and tensions. With the rise of the national states, the idea of the nation was central to history teaching and historical consciousness could become identical with national consciousness. The crisis in a national state (e.g. Germany in 1945, South Africa/Afrikanerdom in 1902 and 1989) brings with it a crisis of historical consciousness, which leads to the questioning of current historical consciousness, and to the need to achieve through new syllabuses a reorientation of this consciousness. Such a crisis offers the opportunity to examine anew the relationship between historical consciousness and history teaching. Jeismann⁸⁵ refers to a process of "historical enlightenment" ("historische Aufklärung), a reflective process whereby an explanation is sought for differing interpretations of the same event or phenomenon. Such a reflective attitude is the prerequisite for mutual correction. The resulting teaching

84 Die Konserwatiewe Party van Suid-Afrika, Persverklaring uitgereik deur Mnr Andrew Gerber LV (Brits) woordvoerder oor Nasionale Opvoeding 1990-01-11.

85 K.E. Jeismann, Geschichtsbewusstsein, in K. Bergmann et al., Handbuch der Geschichtsdidaktik, pp.40-42.

attempts then to defuse the conflict potential contained in divergently accentuated memories.

These examples as well as the Georg-Eckert-Institut model show what is feasible in the way of mutual textbook revision. Under the auspices of the Department of National Education or some other "General Affairs" body, a multicultural, representative panel consisting of educationists, historians, textbook writers and others, could ensure the elimination of most, if not all, overt bias, negative and emotive references, stereotypes, Feindbilder etc., in history textbooks. If Germany could succeed in its bilateral agreements with former arch-enemies such as Poland, France, and Israel, South Africans should be able to succeed. This would be a positive beginning. The identification of such negative aspects in textbooks is relatively easy, as this investigation proves. Their elimination should also be fairly easily achieved. The textbooks by Graves, discussed briefly in the previous chapter, prove that this can indeed be done. They also show that a more critical, analytical approach to the past is possible, and of course desirable.

The possibility of reaching agreement on the content of history syllabuses is more difficult. There would appear to be certain general principles for syllabus revision on which most South Africans could probably agree. From the foregoing pages it is clear that the criticism of the present syllabuses centres on their Eurocentric vision, their White - even Afrikaner - centredness. Syllabus revision would have to take this into account and establish a more acceptable balance between "White " and "Black" history. A revised self-image and a more positive image of other groups are called for, so that history syllabuses can serve to unite, rather than divide. Syllabuses will have to accommodate a spectrum of diverse, sometimes opposing, historical

positions, with the emphasis on unity in diversity.⁸⁶ Insofar as South African history is highly controversial in terms of the different interpretations, it offers an extraordinarily fertile field for teaching and learning about history as a process, whereby historical skills may be acquired. A more open attitude to the problems of historical interpretation, particularly South African history, in other words a multi-perspective approach, is called for.⁸⁷

Defining culture as "a unity of differences," Laeng⁸⁸ makes a case for a multidimensional approach to education (and by implication history teaching) leading to the acknowledgement of diversity and richness in a framework of mutual enrichment. In similar vein, Durojaiye⁸⁹ describes how in many multicultural African countries an important aim of education is to foster a sense of nationhood among different groups, "to weave together a diversity of cultural yarns in a colourful and enduring garment of nationhood".

Where two or more groups experienced a common event or series of events (for example the frontier wars), their versions are likely to differ. If the historical events concerned cannot be presented without bias, then all the versions should be offered to enable the pupil to reach his own conclusions.⁹⁰ In 1930 the eminent educationist, E.H. Brookes,⁹¹ wrote : "We should perhaps feel a

86 F.A. van Jaarsveld, Omstrede Suid-Afrikaanse Skoolgeskiedenis, in Historia, November 1989, pp.19-21.

87 O. van den Berg and P. Buckland, Beyond the History Syllabus. Constraints and Opportunities, pp.47-51.

88 M. Laeng, Culture et Multiculturalisme entre le passé et l'avenir, in W. Mitter and J. Swift (Ed.), Education and the Diversity of Cultures.

89 M.O.A. Durojaiye, Multiculturalism - A Challenge for African Education, in W. Mitter and J. Swift (Ed.), Education and the Diversity of Cultures.

90 F.A. van Jaarsveld, Omstrede Suid-Afrikaanse Skoolgeskiedenis, in Historia, November 1989, pp. 18-21; and J.C. Moll, et al., Tussengroep-verhoudinge soos Weerspieël in die Suid-Afrikaanse Historiografie, pp. 73-75.

91 E.H. Brookes, Native Education in South Africa, p.70.

little shamefaced at telling a class of Native children the story of Bloedrivier (sic) in exactly the same way as we should tell it to a class of white children. Our heroes should not all be white men". His advice still stands.

Future history syllabuses, to allow for diversity, will have to display a strong regional flavour, in keeping with the increasing tendency toward decentralisation, also in the provision of education. This could make pupils' identity-formation and orientation easier. Such syllabuses will have to reflect a greater involvement with the African continent of which South Africa is an important, integral part.⁹²

If history teaching is to fulfil its functions of making a contribution to national orientation, legitimacy and a new identity for the new South Africa, then the history syllabuses need to be drastically revised. Syllabuses should allow for local, regional, cultural and ethnic diversity, as they already do to a very limited extent.

The Department of National Education's imminent investigation into the content of South African school courses⁹³ provides an ideal opportunity to produce, as a matter of urgency, history syllabuses which will include, rather than exclude, most of the country's inhabitants as participants. As van Jaarsveld⁹⁴ succinctly points out, the nature and content of future syllabuses will depend on who is governing South Africa.

92 See O. van den Berg and P. Buckland, Beyond the History Syllabus Constraints and Opportunities, p.51.

93 Address by Dr R Stumpf, Deputy Director General, Department of National Education, at DET Macroplanning Conference, 28 September 1989.

94 F.A. van Jaarsveld, Omstrede Suid-Afrikaanse Skoolgeskiedenis, in Historia, November 1989, p.18.

South Africa's past never did belong to the British, it does not now belong to the Afrikaners, nor should it in a future South Africa belong to the Blacks. Our past, like our future, belongs to all who call South Africa home.