

TITLE:

An autobiography of teaching and teacher evaluation in an apartheid and post-apartheid South Africa – Part One

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ABSTRACT

Apartheid was a system of government in South Africa, abolished in 1994, which systematically separated groups on the basis of race classification. The Apartheid system of racial segregation was made law in South Africa in 1948, when the country was officially divided into four racial groups, White, Black, Indian and Coloureds (or people of mixed race, or non-Whites who did not fit into the other non-White categories). 'Homelands' were created for Blacks, and when they lived outside of the homelands with Whites, non-Whites could not vote and had separate schools and hospitals, and even beaches where they could swim or park benches they could sit on. With regards to the education of non-Whites, Dr Hendrik Verwoerd stated that 'I just want to remind the Honourable Members of Parliament that if the native in South Africa is being taught to expect that he will lead his adult life under the policy of equal rights, he is making a big mistake. The native must not be subject to a school system which draws him away from his own community, and misleads him by showing him the green pastures of European society in which he is not allowed to graze' (Republic of South Africa, 1953, 54-55). Thus began the era of apartheid education. The Bantu Education Act was introduced to Parliament in 1953; universities were segregated in 1959; a separate education system was set up for the 'coloureds' in 1963; followed by Indian education in 1964; and an Education Act for whites was passed in 1967.

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The story as I tell it and why I tell it

It should be clear that no story by a teacher can be regarded as typical or representative, but that, within each individual narrative, there will be episodes, experiences and emotions with which teachers can readily identify. (Thomas, 1995, p. xiv)

Prologue

There is a story in all of us that needs to be told. This story that I am about to tell is a prerequisite in comprehending the scholarship that plays itself out in the forthcoming articles; Part One; Part Two and Part Three; on teacher evaluation. For many a reader, the journey that this story takes might be construed as boring and irrelevant but others might be intrigued by it because it is a genuine story ‘told from the heart’. It is a story that I passionately believe needs to be shared with people of all colour, race or creed. It is a critical but humane story of what it is to be a teacher in an apartheid society—of what it is to be Black in a White-man’s ‘country’. For the sake of clarity, I use the terms ‘White’ to refer to South African European and ‘Black’ to refer to non-Europeans comprising Bantus, Indians and Coloureds—people of mixed-race.

Telling a story of this nature in the least number of words is a no mean feat. I have woven particular personal experiences with institutional and historical realities into a labyrinth of social, political and economic facts in order to fully explain and describe an ideology that has had a profound bearing on millions of people in South Africa. The ideology that I speak of is

apartheid. It is my intention to reveal how the very fabric of Black society was tainted by this evil, inhumane policy and the significant role it played in my life as a teacher.

Telling my story, using the ‘self as the subject’, shows the intersection between the individual and the larger forces of South African history. Also, in telling my story, I attempt to portray, both intellectually and emotionally, the wounds that apartheid inflicted on its victims; the bureaucratic nature of teaching and teacher evaluation in South Africa during apartheid; the current situation in relation to teachers’ work in a democratic South Africa; and my reasons for conducting research in a particularly timely and worthwhile topic: namely, teacher evaluation.

Whilst teachers in South Africa were discriminated against through legislation that separated the races, promoted White superiority and non-White inferiority, and punished anyone who was perceived as questioning or challenging the apartheid regime, they (teachers) ‘never surrendered’ (Weider, 2001, p. 145); ‘they were not inferior because they were not white, and they spent their whole lives committed to their students—pedagogically and politically’. In Es’ kia Mphahlele’s words, teachers ‘never allowed the apartheid regime to steal their souls’ (Weider, 2001, p. 145). Likewise, in the Australian context, the present managerialist version of teacher evaluation can technicise teachers’ work, try to control and measure the work, but in the end it cannot take away teachers’ hearts and minds and the relational essence of their work.

If one has to look at what is happening to the work of teachers universally, what is glaring, according to Smyth (2001b, p. 2), ‘is a cataclysmic shift in values—from education embodying a grand narrative of “a model for life”, to one of “performativity”, requiring

“skilled performance within job roles””. As a result, teachers are now ‘pushed in the direction of “defensive teaching” (McNeil cited in Smyth, 2001b, p. 2)—a style of teaching promulgated as a result of intensifying teachers’ work to the point of keeping kids busy, while emotionally distancing and insulating teachers from any meaningful educative relationships with children’ (Smyth, 2001b, p. 2). Smyth also maintains that teaching has currently become overburdened with managerialism, marketisation and accountability imperatives that have resulted in the educative agendas becoming totally undermined (2001b, p. 2). As Hans (1995) puts it:

The individual . . . become[s] atomized, pulverised and dissolved . . . [to the point where] we are forced to search for other means of reclaiming our special place.
(cited in Smyth, 2001b, p. 2)

These changes have, to a great degree, resulted in what Smyth (2001b, pp. 2–10) refers to as ‘a damaging of teachers’ lives. At this juncture, I would like to make the point that in the South African context, teachers were ‘brutalised’ by a regime that had legitimated itself by enforcing apartheid which was based on a blatant set of racist policies that argued the inherent inferiority of one race over another. In the South Australian context, however, teachers are also being ‘damaged’, but in nothing like the brutal ways I have experienced. The mechanism being used in this context is enforced by the use of a hostile policy regime, which teachers mediate in a whole variety of ways. This is the very essence of this research project—the ascertaining of how teachers mediate the policy of performance management ‘policy relay’ in the South Australian context.

Part One

Apartheid

A story of this nature would be incomplete without a brief narrative on apartheid. Numerous detailed analyses of the apartheid laws and their consequences are available, but it is not my intention to provide yet another one here. However, what I would like to highlight in this part of the story are the salient points of apartheid. Some of the narrative in this part of the story will be retold later in order for one to fully comprehend what it meant to be Black during the apartheid era.

The beginning

It must be emphasised that apartheid had already existed during British colonial rule, being an unwritten law in South Africa. When the Nationalist Party took over government of the country in 1948, the Afrikaners only gave it an official title. Apartheid had two basic philosophies: namely, class differentiation and racial discrimination.

It was, for instance, not commonly known amongst White South Africans that during British rule in South Africa, Black children were not allowed to attend school after puberty. Those fortunate ones who could study further were taken along by missionaries to continue their studies abroad.

By the 1930s, no employed Black person was even allowed to own a car and if a Black person bought a car, he/she was dismissed immediately (Mutwa, 1986, p. 17). Some of the most discriminatory and most offensive racist laws in South Africa were passed during British rule.

In 1925, a law was passed which forced Black people of all ages and sexes to get into a specially designed dipping tank to be dipped exactly like cattle. The reason for this brutal and humiliating law was the perception that all Blacks were infested with all sorts of vermin, such as lice, nits and bugs; a belief that Blacks were not intelligent enough to remove this vermin on their own so the law had to do it for them. In an inhumane and degrading manner, Blacks were forced to stand naked in long queues like cattle waiting to go through the dipping process. A disinfectant known as 'Pumula' was dissolved in the water. Their clothes were disinfected by a steaming process, after which they were dumped on a concrete floor for their owners to find and put on again while the clothes were still soaking wet (Mutwa, 1986, pp. 20–21).

Also, during the years of depression, hundreds of poverty-stricken White farmers were forced to leave their farms and move to towns and cities in an effort to obtain scarce jobs. In many cases far-sighted Black entrepreneurs managed to buy the abandoned farms and run them fairly profitably. Very soon White farmers, who had managed to hold onto their farms, were in competition with Black farmers when they tried to sell their produce. So the Black farmers had to be removed and the *Native Trust and Land Act 1936* was passed which was an effective weapon that removed Black farmers from their land (Mutwa, 1986, p. 20).

The above narratives clearly illustrate that the British Government was instrumental in laying the foundations of segregation in South Africa. The Nationalist Party, through the proclamation of various laws, designed the ideology of apartheid based on the very same foundation that British colonialism practised and endorsed in South Africa.

Some of those horrendous laws passed by the Nationalist Party deserve a brief mention at this juncture:

- the *Group Areas Act 1950* extended laws on racial segregation of residential areas and pass laws
- the *Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act 1949* banned marriages between races
- the *Population Registration Act 1950* forced all South Africans to register as Black, Asian or Coloured
- the *Immorality Act 1950* banned sexual relationships between people of different racial groups
- the *Criminal Law Amendment Act 1953* imposed stiff penalties (fines, prison, flogging) for protests or incitement to protests
- the *Bantu Education Act 1953* enforced racial segregation of schools
- the *Natives Resettlement Act 1954* empowered the government to forcefully resettle Blacks (About four million people were forced to move from their homes)
- the *Industrial Conciliation Act 1956* empowered the Minister of Labour to reserve any job on a racial basis and to dissolve racially mixed trade unions
- the *Separate Representation of Coloured Voters Act 1956* removed the franchise from Coloureds
- the *Promotion of Bantu Self-government Act 1959* removed the limited Black representation in Parliament and created separate Black homelands (Parsons, 1982, pp. 291–293).

The reality of apartheid

South African society was built on systematically enforced racial division (Collins, 1994, p. 18). The National Party introduced laws (the so-called apartheid laws) aimed at separating Whites and Blacks and instituting as a legal principle the theory that Whites should be treated

more favourably than Blacks and that separate facilities need not be equal (United States Library of Congress, 2000a). This was fundamentally the underlying philosophy of apartheid.

Apartheid originated as an ideology of race relations that took hold within the Afrikaner intellectual and political elite. It was introduced in South Africa by the National Party in 1948, and lasted until 1990. A single principle—the complete separation of Black and White races in South Africa—underlay both the ideology and the institutional system it spawned. The policy of separate development was implemented in an elaborate system of laws and administrative regulations. The government's domestic policy was directed at enforcing racial separation in every conceivable sphere: interpersonal relations, social and economic organisation, residential patterns and the political organisation of the state.

In order to comprehend apartheid ('separateness' in Afrikaans)—its nature, purposes and evolution—it is useful to bear in mind that the Afrikaners considered themselves as God's chosen people with an ordained calling or mission. They believed that God had created them with a unique language and a unique philosophy with their own history and traditions, in order to fulfil a particular calling and destiny in the southern corner of Africa. Thus, in order to maintain Afrikanerdom, 'apartness' was a necessary corollary. The genetic mixing and cultural diffusion that was seen as the natural concomitance of intergroup contact would erode unity and identity among the Afrikaners and would thus undermine their God-given mission. Separation, then, becomes within this logic an ordained enterprise.

Furthermore, apartheid also offered to the Afrikaner elite a method for overcoming its most basic political challenge—a challenge built into the very structure of the South African sociopolitical system—how to maintain in perpetuity the domination of a White minority

over a vastly numerous Black majority. Apartheid in its instrumental aspects was the solution to this dilemma. The Afrikaners were convinced that the policy of racial segregation would enable them to maintain White supremacy in a Black South Africa. They claimed that it was their duty to 'raise' the Black population, and that they (Blacks) were not mature enough to govern themselves.

In the 1950s, Hendrik Verwoerd, the minister of Native Affairs, introduced a new idea: the idea of 'Grand Apartheid'. Cognisance should be taken of the fact that Verwoerd, considered by many as the 'architect of apartheid ideology', studied psychology at universities in Hamburg, Leipzig and Berlin in Germany at a time when these institutions were energetically forwarding psychiatric genetics. Director of the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute of Anthropology, Human Heredity and Eugenics in Berlin, psychiatrist Eugen Fischer, boldly theorised that Blacks were devoid of values and useless for employment other than for manual crafts. Nazi psychiatric eugenics characterised Blacks, according to Richard Lerner in *Final solutions: Biology, prejudice and genocide* as 'slothful, unintelligent, though motorically and physically capable people, who live in crime, poverty, and generally socially deteriorated conditions, and do so because of their genetically based limited mental capacities' (1992, p. 129). Apparently, Verwoerd took this to heart.

He based his idea of grand apartheid on the *Native Land Act 1913*. This Act gave the Black population 13 per cent of the land area, naturally the most infertile soil, and forbade sale of further lands to the Natives. Grand apartheid philosophised that the Blacks would be happier and better off governing themselves in their own areas and maintaining racial purity in their ethnic groups. In order to enforce this policy, the governing National Party extended and

tightened up the existing Group Areas Acts, which legally prescribed where different population groups could own property, reside and work.

This idea of grand apartheid also had a hidden agenda. The government consolidated the existing segregated neighbourhoods so as to create a pattern of racially homogeneous and physically separated residential areas. This was enforced in the *Group Areas Act 1950*. In each city it established periurban townships for African, Indian and Coloured population groups that were several kilometres distant from the centres of White residence and business enterprises. By carefully linking the satellite Black townships to their respective metropolis with only one or two transportation arteries, which could easily be cut, the government placed itself in a position to swiftly and effectively insulate the White cities from townships and their numerous, potentially hostile inhabitants. Mass uprisings and any other direct threats to the outnumbered White population could thus be fenced off and contained. Thus, apartheid's group areas policy offered the means to contain and defeat any uprising in the urban areas, while at the same time insulating the White minority from other racial groups.

The *Group Areas Act 1950* also played a role in a program designed by apartheid's architects to alter the racial demography of South Africa so as to control the Black population in the officially designated urban White South Africa. Blacks were prohibited from being present in South Africa's cities for more than seventy-two hours without official permission; Black labourers were designated specific jobs that required official permission to work for a specific employer and live in a designated urban township; and there was strict enforcement of already existing 'pass laws' (all Black persons over the age of sixteen were to carry identity documents) so as to ensure compliances with the seventy-two hour provision of the

Group Areas Act. By these means, the National Party Government sought to remove from the South African heartland all but those Blacks whose presence was economically necessary.

To ensure White supremacy, Verwoerd's government added and passed a large number of new laws. The *Population Registration Act 1950* officially classified the population into four groups: Whites, constituting about 13 per cent; Africans, 77 per cent; Coloured (mixed descent), 8 per cent; and Asians (Indian and Chinese), 2 per cent. Laws were also introduced that determined what kind of jobs the different groups could have. Marriage between the races was prohibited.

Petty apartheid was also implemented by law in the *Reservation of Separate Amenities Acts 1953 and 1960*, which enforced the segregation of elevators, beaches, transport, hotels, parks, zoos, museums, galleries, cinemas, theatres, public toilets, sports grounds, cafes, restaurants and so on. Segregation was also applied to hospitals, where Blacks and Whites were treated separately by staff of their own racial group, and sport, where mixed teams, mixed competitions and mixed spectators were all forbidden. Factories had to have separate entrances, clocking-in devices, pay offices, first-aid rooms, crockery and cutlery, washrooms, toilets, changing-rooms, rest rooms, dining rooms and workrooms.

The new laws also forbade Blacks to strike and to form trade unions, and they ensured a great advantage for Whites on the job market. Of course, the most obvious parts of apartheid were also stated by law: only the population classified as White had the right to vote, be a member of a political party and to hold office.

Thus, from a social, economic and political viewpoint, apartheid alienated the Whites from the Blacks. The Whites, through social structures and mass media, dictated which values and norms dominated the country. Although the White Afrikaners were not the dominant group in numbers, they dominated politics, the church and the school system for years (Venter, Franzsen & Van Heerden, in press). According to Schoeman (1995), general social stratification and human alienation were reinforced in this way.

The legislative implementation of apartheid in education

One of the aims of Native Education, as Black education was known before and after the Union of South Africa in 1910, was to prepare Black children for a subordinate society. ‘Schools should not give the Natives an academic education . . . If we do this,’ said JN le Roux in parliament as early back in 1945, ‘we shall later be burdened with a number of academically trained Europeans and non-Europeans, and who is going to do the manual labour in this country? [W]e should conduct our schools so that the Native who attends those schools will know that to a greater extent he must be a labourer in the country’ (Kallaway, 1994, p. 66).

Even missionary education, known also as native education, was founded on two premises. The first was that Whites would continue to rule and Blacks would continue to be ruled. The second basic premise was that Blacks were a rural people and that their future lay in the countryside. Education was seen as entrenching White control and a rural-oriented way of life for Black South Africans (cited in Kallaway, 1994, p. 113).

This racial ideology was further propagated in 1948 when the National Party came into power. The principles which governed the education policy of the Nationalist Government were laid down by Dr Verwoerd in parliament in 1953:

Native education should be controlled in such a way that it should be in accord with the policy of the State . . . If the Native in South Africa today is being taught to expect that he will live his adult life under a policy of equal rights, he is making a big mistake. (Republic of South Africa, 1953, 54)

In June 1954 he said: 'Our school system must not mislead the Bantu by showing him the green pastures of European society in which he is not allowed to graze' (Republic of South Africa, 1953, 54).

He also stated in parliament that:

Natives will be taught from childhood to realise that equality with Europeans is not for them . . . There is no place for him [sic] in the European community above the level of certain forms of behaviour. I will reform it [Black education] so that natives will be taught from childhood to realise this. (Republic of South Africa, 1953, 54)

Until 1953 Black schools were of four types: private schools run by religious communities; subsidised mission schools founded by church organisations, teaching a syllabus prescribed by the state; government schools; and community or tribal schools maintained by Black communities themselves.

The *Bantu Education Act 1953* was designed to simplify the administrative control over Black schools; to bring the control of Black education into line with the policy adopted by the Ministry of Bantu Affairs; to provide the type of education which the ministry had decided was best suited to Blacks as unskilled labour for White areas, and limited in access to more skilled occupations outside their homeland; and to make the Blacks finance their own

education. Thus, what we had was a dual system of education, which was designed to serve the economy in which Whites were privileged and Blacks disadvantaged.

Following the recommendations of the *Eiselen report* (1951), Verwoerd introduced a bill to remove Black education from missionary control to that of the Native Affairs Department. He also attacked the liberalism of missionary education, which gave Black children ideas of growing up to live in a world of equal rights between Black and White. He argued that there was no place for Blacks outside reserves and that Blacks should not rise above certain forms of labour. Furthermore, he believed that education should train and teach people in accordance with their opportunities in life (Pelzer, 1966). Verwoerd (speaking in the House of Assembly in 1954) stated:

Bantu education must be controlled in conformity with the policy of the state. There is no place for the Bantu in the European community above the level of certain forms of labour. For that reason it is of no avail to him to receive a training which has as its aim absorption in the European community . . . What is the use of teaching a Bantu child mathematics when it [sic] cannot use it in practice? (South African Institute of Race Relations, 1978, p. 298)

As a result, the *Bantu Education Act 1953* was put into operation in April 1955. Kallaway (1994) states that the aims and objectives of Bantu education provide that:

- It should be in the mother-tongue.
- It should not be funded at the expense of White education.
- It should by implication not prepare Blacks for equal participation in economic and social life.
- It should preserve the ‘cultural identity of the Black community’.
- It must of necessity be organised and administered by Whites. (p. 140)

The above Act also ensured that Black schools no longer studied the same syllabi as other non-White schools, but followed new Bantu education syllabi based on officially recognised Bantu languages. English, which had been the most common medium of instruction, was

stopped in primary schools and limited in high schools. The Bantu Affairs Department had to approve teachers, and it also controlled the local school boards consisting of parents and officials, and which managed the everyday running of schools.

The Bantu Education Act also removed state subsidies from denominated schools with the result that most of the mission-run Black institutions were sold to the government or closed (United States Library of Congress, 2000b, p. 1). Official attitudes towards Black education were paternalistic, based on trusteeship and segregation. Black education was not supposed to drain government resources away from White education. The number of Black schools increased during the 1960s, but their curriculum was designed to prepare children for menial jobs. Per capita government spending on Black education was only one-tenth of spending on White children. Black schools had inferior facilities, teachers and textbooks (United States Library of Congress, 2000c, p. 1). Whereas 96 per cent of all teachers in White schools had teaching certificates, only 15 per cent of teachers in Black schools were certified. High school pass rates for Black pupils in the nationwide, standardised high school graduation exams were less than 50 per cent the pass rate of Whites (United States Library of Congress, 2000d, p. 1).

In summary, apartheid education in South Africa promoted race, class, gender and ethnic divisions and emphasised separateness, rather than common citizenship and nationhood. The fiscal allocation in terms of race, where White education enjoyed more funding, resulted in wide-scale disparities with regard to all aspects of education. This included quality of teacher training, level of teacher training, resources at schools, location of schools, support materials and almost every aspect of educational service delivery. The education policy and curriculum

development in apartheid South Africa was used as an ideological state apparatus to promote the interests of the ruling apartheid government.

Schooling in an apartheid society

I was born in 1960. During the formative years of my life I was totally oblivious of the harsh realities of being born an Indian in a White South Africa. Could I be blamed? A child of my age is preoccupied with bonding with parents and other siblings, making friends and playing. The world seemed perfect: we lived a comfortable middle-class life (my father was a teacher), in a safe and quiet suburb; all our neighbours were Indians and we socialised with Indians. Furthermore, I attended an Indian school comprising of only Indian pupils and teachers. Like most other Indian children in my situation, we were content with our lives. Little did I realise then that contentment blinds one from the harsh realities and injustices that engulf one. We, in a metaphorical sense, 'looked but did not see'.

I did not, then, realise why I was not allowed to live among Whites, use the same amenities as Whites, attend a White school, travel on a bus or train reserved for Whites only or to socialise with Whites. Much later, in my teens, conscientisation by Black political ideology provided the answers to the countless number of questions that I dared not ask for fear of being seen as a threat, rather than a challenge, to the state.

I started high school in 1973 and finished in 1977. As mentioned earlier, it was the time of separate education, of growing up in an all-Indian school. The school for White children was at the other end of town; we never met them. African children went to schools in the distant 'locations'; Coloureds, to schools in their own areas. In my Natal Education Department (White-controlled provincial system of education) classroom of those years, I was safely

sanitised from the realities of sharing life with my fellow South Africans. It was a sad indictment on apartheid schooling that I was not afforded the opportunity to encounter and interact with students of other race groups throughout my entire formal education from primary to high and to tertiary level. Generations of South African students have endured this cultural impoverishment because of apartheid.

Furthermore, the education that we received was used to reinforce notions of White superiority and Black inferiority, as well as the reproduction of male superiority and female inferiority. These messages were not only imparted through the curriculum, but also in the very structure of our classrooms, in the different racially segregated schools, the different roles of boys and girls as well as male and female teachers in the entire apartheid schooling regime. This apartheid education was explicitly formulated and implemented as an instrument of national oppression. It was done implicitly and in hidden ways, through what one may call a 'hidden syllabus'. In a nutshell, the curriculum was riddled with racism and sexism and designed to keep people in their place.

Another sad indictment of my apartheid schooling, sufficiently well-organised to promote formal, functional education, was its insidious stranglehold on the creative imagination. I was subjected to apartheid discourse and simultaneously prevented from criticising apartheid 'textuality' (Boehmer, 1995). I was also kept apart from the wider world community of history, literature and intellectual thinking. South Africa's post-1960 isolation from the rest of the Commonwealth did not enhance a sense of shared educational conditions globally. It could be stated that I was drawn into the process whereby exploitation and domination was embedded, whereby people subjugated themselves in a process of 'subjection' (Foucault, 1972). I, as an Indian, was not only manipulated educationally, socially, politically and

economically, but also excluded by being ostracised from the other race groups. Not content with the situation that I found myself in, I decided to attend university and train to become a teacher.

I felt that as a teacher I could help dismantle some of the injustices of the past. I was of the belief then, and still am now, that educating humanity and education for humanity in a diverse society should start at the school level. People should learn to listen to each others' stories, irrespective of colour, race or creed. Education should assist the individual to live life to its fullest within a heterogeneous society. I was determined to educate the young for a socially just, socially responsible, democratic and compassionate community but at the same time not to turn education into a monolithic, moral straitjacket where educational concerns are narrowly defined (Shapiro, 1995).

I also strongly believed that education was one of the ways for humans to define their humanity, to practise humanity, to maintain humanity and to change humanity. Education was a way to connect oneself to the past and to project into the future (Boyd, 1992). Teaching was one of the means of achieving this humanistic goal.

Teacher training in an apartheid South Africa

The *Extension of Universities Education Act* (No. 45, 1949) closed undergraduate classes at White universities to Blacks. Instead, Black 'ethnic' university colleges were created to cater for University of South Africa degrees and diplomas. In addition to Fort Hare, which was reserved for the Xhosas, new colleges were opened at Turfloop (Tswanas/Sothos), Durban–Westville (Indians), Cape Town–Bellville (Coloureds), and Ngoyge (Zulus). The creation of these 'ethnic' institutions enforced racial segregation and thus discouraged any movement

towards racial and cultural diversity on campuses. This also ensured the production of professionals for their own bureaucracies.

Thus, in terms of apartheid education, it made sense to provide separate tertiary facilities for the separate groups. Nkondo (1975, p. 2) makes the point that ‘the White universities were inspired by the ancient ideal of the university as being a community of scholars and students dedicated to truth, and therefore tended to emphasise academic freedom and academic autonomy’. The same was not true for Black universities. In the Afrikaner view, the Black universities had to conform to national policy and the social order, and their primary aim was to serve the communities in which they functioned.

White (1997) uses the idea of political versus educational necessity to explain the contradictory nature of Black universities. It was, he claims, created as a political necessity and this meant that at all levels, from governance to buildings and the activities of research, teaching and learning were a secondary consideration. He states that:

This lack of legitimacy was to have a negative influence on the entire teaching and learning process . . . it was the idea of culture, of tribalism, of division and control which manifested itself in the very structure of all Black universities. (White, 1997, pp. 73–74)

In 1969, the various Black university colleges were proclaimed autonomous by Acts of Parliament. But, as Nkondo (1975, p. 3) points out, ‘the initial pattern of power relationships between Black and White in the control of affairs was not altered. They remained White-controlled Black universities. They remained also ethnic universities integral to the overall national framework of separate development’. What this meant in practice to many Blacks was that they were totally incapable of managing their own affairs, let alone being involved

with their White compatriots in the all too difficult machinery of responsible government. As a result we had university institutions meant for Blacks but controlled entirely by Whites.

Whites teaching at these university institutions also enjoyed better facilities; in some cases they were the only ones who had access to certain facilities; and these ranged from a cafeteria to better housing and luxuries such as a swimming pool. Pay and promotion favoured Whites. Whites were even granted an inconvenience allowance for teaching at these institutions. Over and above many such structural discriminations, there were also the patronising and insulting attitudes of many Whites.

The University of Durban–Westville that I had to attend because of my race had all the markings of a typical Black university. The rector of the university was a staunch Afrikaner; a large majority of the lecturers were Afrikaners; the university stank of racism; resources were minimal; the subject content, knowledge production and dissemination of knowledge were biased; and the tuition fees were exorbitant for students coming from a disadvantaged economic background.

In addition to the above injustices, the teacher training curriculum also had a ‘hidden syllabus’. Enslin (1990) suggests that a large number of teachers-in-training were underpinned by pedagogics, a sub-branch of fundamental pedagogics which was prevalent in South Africa at this time. Fundamental pedagogics was used in most Black universities. According to Beard, Enslin and Morrow (1981, p. 14), who view pedagogics in the same way as functionalism, the University of Durban–Westville propagated the tenets of pedagogics. Pedagogics is considered by Beard and Morrow (1981, p. ii) as a way of theorising that ‘makes autocratic and monopolistic claims to being the only reliable, or “authentic” way of

studying education . . . most writers in the field are arrogantly dismissive of alternatives'. They also argue that pedagogics was a highly efficient method of control for the maintenance of the status quo. I, together with a large number of South African educators, had been trained within this paradigm which had to do with prediction and control and belief in the soundness of a non-democratic system. Thus, the pedagogy did not prepare me to function in a dynamic school environment. It moulded us into what we should be, without taking cognisance of the dynamic nature of schools and the changing requirements of being a teacher. Most of us in training were aware of the fact that knowledge was transmitted from the lecturers to student teachers but we, as teachers-in-training, had to swallow what the lecturers were saying without being encouraged to be critical.

Calvinist and Christian National Education was also a major influence on the thinking of South African educationists (Gluckman, 1981, p. 110). According to Gluckman (1981), many of the writers under the Calvinist and Christian National Education argued that learners' achievement could only be realised through obedience. This type of thinking required educators to mould students into obedient subjects. This ideology was based on the Calvinist notion of the child as born in original sin and thus deficient. Therefore, as a result of this Calvinist notion, the child was regarded as in need of guidance by an adult who had to overcome such a state so that the child could also achieve 'normal' adulthood—the state of adulthood being, namely, independent, competent, wise, skilful, responsible and disciplined. As teachers-in-training most of us became passive recipients of this ideology.

Another important perspective of our teacher training could be gleaned from the *Report of the commission of enquiry into the training of white persons as teachers* (1969). It had this to say of teacher training:

A national system of teacher training must be such as to produce teachers who are willing and able to achieve the aims of education that are pursued or should be pursued in our separate schools. The system of training must therefore produce teachers . . . who . . . are imbued with the ideal . . . of teaching towards the development of their own pupils into men and women of rectitude, efficient and loyal citizens of their country. (Beard, Enslin & Morrow, 1981, p. 9)

Thus, it was not surprising that the teacher training curriculum did not take into account the realities of schools. The curriculum that I was immersed in was too theoretical and lacked real world practices for me. In the case of teaching practice, I found that the sessions were too short with no proper support for student teachers from either the school or tertiary institution. I also observed that the links between colleges of education, universities and schools were minimal and in some cases non-existent.

It was within this paradigm of functionalism that I was trained to become a teacher. I was not afforded the opportunity to become a reflective thinker, independent, creative, resourceful or critical. Furthermore, I was not taught to take cognisance of how societal factors such as poverty and its concomitant ills affect teaching and learning. Fundamental pedagogics bracketed out the sociological considerations in explaining teaching and learning. Its research agenda also did not take into consideration historical and contextual issues. The apartheid dispensation allowed no room for critical questioning of the status quo amongst its servants, of whom teachers formed a significant group. As teachers in a society dominated by a White supremacist ideology, we were doomed from the outset.

Teaching in an apartheid South Africa

According to Inglis (2001, p. 1), 'historically, teaching in South Africa has been characterised by a prescriptive, reproductive, didactic, punitive, exam-driven approach, together with fragmentation, separateness, distinctness and racial segregation'. As a result, teaching

appointments to schools were made on the basis of colour and race. Being an Indian, I had to teach in an Indian school. One had no choice in the matter.

During a career which spanned sixteen years, I taught in three schools. I was fortunate enough to teach at both the primary and high school levels. My years of teaching were filled with numerous incidents of both joy and pain. A detailed narrative of these unforgettable experiences would fill many a page. It is for this reason that I will highlight only some of the pertinent conditions under which I taught.

I entered a scenario where teachers in government schools were under an enormous amount of pressure. Large class sizes, lack of teaching resources, a high percentage of disadvantaged learners, poverty among the learner population, discipline problems in schools, limited parental and external support, and time-consuming assessment practices made life for teachers very difficult. In addition to the above, negative media coverage of teachers during times of strikes, poor pay and drawn-out arguments over inadequate reforms in teachers' work left many teachers facing financial disaster and feeling unappreciated for the work that they did.

To compound this endless stream of problems, animosity among staff, and friction between staff and the administration were a constant reality. Most schools were run by totally autocratic principals who took pride in dehumanising their teachers. Nepotism and favouritism were rife in many schools. This in turn led to numerous conflicts among members of staff. The principal's 'bum boys', as they were so aptly referred to, would stop at no ends to procure favours that facilitated promotion. Being outspoken or vocal were regarded as a cardinal sin. You were seen as a threat to the efficient bureaucratic running of

the school and the result was a punitive transfer. Many politically conscientised teachers, who were seen to pose a threat to the educational bureaucrats, were sent to teach in remote areas.

Classroom teaching was also controlled by the dominant ideology of the principal and his administrative team. In most schools, these ‘Uncle Toms’ enforced a policy of submissiveness endorsed by their White superiors. Teachers were not afforded the opportunity to ‘experiment’ when it came to style and methodology. There was no room for innovative teaching ideas or the adoption of critical methods in teaching. The system emphasised the prescriptive ‘talk and chalk’ method. Lessons had to be taught in a manner that facilitated the learner passing at the end of the year. Furthermore, there was no room for critical thinking in the curriculum. The child had to imbibe knowledge without question. Knowledge was seen as an entity, a finished reality, already decided upon by the guardians of apartheid only to be delivered to students, and which demanded no need for further analysis or dissection. As a ‘progressive’ teacher I found the system that I was working in totally stifling and repulsive. However, fear of victimisation forced me to ‘toe the line’.

My stance was not unique. Many of us chose to adopt a policy of ‘passive resistance’ in order to blank out the demonising conditions of work. In the same vein, it must be remembered that teaching offered stable employment and a relatively decent salary. Teaching also meant enjoying the spoils of a middle-class lifestyle. It was for these reasons that many teachers, including myself, were content to accept the bureaucratic rigmarole that characterised teaching and evaluation for the sake of financial security and the question of lifestyle.

It must be borne in mind that my personal experiences of teaching in the apartheid era were no different from countless numbers of other Black teachers in South Africa. As teachers, we

had to cope with minimal levels of resources, inadequately trained and few staff, poor quality of learning materials, shortages of classrooms, and the absence of laboratories and libraries. Besides these tangible deprivations, our Black schools also inculcated unquestioning conformity, rote learning, autocratic teaching and authoritarian management styles, syllabi replete with racism and sexism, and antiquated forms of assessment and evaluation. They were indeed trying times for us Black teachers and the system left much to be desired.

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