



SAAMTREK: Values, Education  
and Democracy in the 21st Century

# conference report

National Conference Kirstenbosch 22-24 February 2001





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and Democracy in the  
21st Century

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Department of Education



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## foreword

In keeping with the values of democracy, an open society and accountability, the Values in Education Initiative brought together a collective of South Africa's most creative minds at an extremely significant national gathering. This was the National Conference: *Saamtrek*: Values, Education and Democracy in the 21st Century, held at Kirstenbosch from 22 - 24 February 2001. Politicians, academics, intellectuals, departmental officials, researchers, educators and members of non-governmental organisations, came together to discuss the values arising out of our Constitution, that our education system ought to embrace.

The intellectual and creative energy, which drove the *Saamtrek* Conference, was unique and inspirational. I was truly gratified by the enthusiasm of participants to give of their time, labour and honest opinions at this important gathering. There was an immense willingness from all sides to engage in open and frank, if at times somewhat hard-hitting, debate. The Conference should be taken as an indicator of the level of goodwill that exists, in civil society and amongst the intelligentsia, towards the project of public renewal and social policy. This goodwill could be further capitalised upon, and the delegates at the Conference should feel encouraged to donate more of their time, skills and expertise towards the resolution of South Africa's immense educational problems.

The quality and significance of the debate at the Conference is reflected in this conference report. The proceedings have, together with other preceding documents, generated a further document on values, entitled, "Manifesto on Values, Education and Democracy". This manifesto will be widely distributed and I hope that it will lead to further dialogue, commitment, and finally, action, around the values contained in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, as these pertain to education.

The enormous energy and flair of the *Saamtrek* Conference were generated by various sources. I must thank Dr Wilmot James, convenor of the Working Group, the Working Group itself as well as the Steering Committee within the Department of Education, for the preparation leading to the Conference. Immense gratitude goes to Dr Gerhard Pfister of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation and Dr Wim Hoppers of the Royal Netherlands Embassy for funding and supporting the Conference.



Professor Kader Asmal, MP

Minister of Education

December 2001





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## background

In February 2000, the Minister of Education, Professor Kader Asmal, MP, convened a Working Group on Values in Education. Chaired by Dr Wilmot James, the brief of the Working Group was to write a report on the appropriate values for South Africa to embrace in its primary and secondary educational institutions.<sup>1</sup> Given the growing call, among politicians and members of civil society alike, for moral regeneration in our society, Professor Asmal felt it was imperative to ground the discourse of values firmly within the founding documents of our society, our Constitution and our Bill of Rights. He spoke of the need “to create a truly inclusive nation”.<sup>2</sup>

The Working Group interpreted its brief by presenting a document “as a starting point in what ought to become a national debate on the appropriate values for South Africa to embrace in its primary and secondary institutions”.<sup>3</sup> It defined values as “desirable qualities of character ... we would like our young adults to possess, and, therefore, our schooling system actively to promote”<sup>4</sup>, and specified six values: equity, tolerance, multilingualism, openness, accountability and social honour.

“Equity” was considered to be a framing value; one that required an understanding that equality of opportunity to all South Africans, regardless of their race, gender, class or geographical location, needed to be at the core of the value system in education in a democratic South Africa. The value of “tolerance” would be achieved “by deepening our understanding of the origins, evolution and achievements of humanity on the one hand, and through the exploration of that which is common and diverse in our cultural heritage on the other”.<sup>5</sup> Key concrete proposals came out of this intention, namely, that “because the teaching of history is central to the promotion of all human values, including that of tolerance”<sup>6</sup>, a panel of historians be appointed to ensure the centrality of history teaching in the curriculum”; and that the creative practice of the arts be encouraged and supported as a “potentially powerful instrument in the promotion of tolerance through exposure to, and a sharing of, diverse cultural traditions and experience”.<sup>7</sup> It was specifically proposed that an artist-in-residence be placed in each school.

Under the value of “multilingualism” the government’s Language-in-Education Policy was reasserted: “There are two main values we wish to promote in the area of language: firstly, the importance of studying through... mother-tongue education; and secondly, the fostering of multilingualism”<sup>8</sup>: the latter would be done by ensuring that each province taught at least three mandated languages and that English and Afrikaans speakers specifically were required to learn an African language. The value of “Openness” was defined as being “about the asking of penetrating questions and the willingness to debate ideas in order to arrive at quality conclusions”<sup>9</sup>, and specific conclusions were that stronger reading and debating cultures should be promoted, as should libraries and access to information technology such as the Internet.

The value of “accountability” focused on shifting schools from places of authoritarian discipline to those of orderly child-centred learning, and highlighted the importance of teachers as role-models and school gov-



erning bodies as “legitimate and working institution(s)” of civil society.<sup>10</sup> The primary proposal here was around the popularisation and implementation of codes of conduct in schools.

The final value, “social honour”, was defined as being about “cultivating a sense of honour and identity as South Africans... where individuals are comfortable with both a local or cultural identity and a national South African one”.<sup>11</sup> The recommendations here were the most specific: the National Anthem should be sung, the flag should be prominently displayed, and an oath of allegiance should be declared publicly at all schools on a regular basis. To generate debate, the Working Group proposed a specific text.<sup>12</sup>

The report was published and distributed widely, and the Minister of Education called for public response. The response received took on four specific forms. Firstly, there were published critiques and commentary in the media and in academic and educational journals<sup>13</sup>; secondly, individual members of the public and organisations<sup>14</sup> responded directly to the Minister; and, thirdly, extensive school-based research was conducted on behalf of the Department of Education.<sup>15</sup> In the last instance, responses were submitted by way of the papers and inputs presented at the *Saamtrek* Conference.<sup>16</sup>

The specific purpose of this document is to report on the latter, the *Saamtrek* Conference, and to assess the ways in which it contributed to the “national debate” on values in education called for by Minister Asmal. This report will not look specifically at the other three arenas of response in which the debate took place - namely published critiques, the responses to the Minister and the school-based research - but will refer to them when the issues they raised were debated and discussed during the Conference.

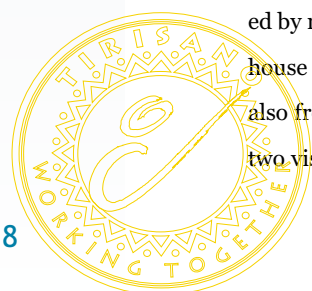
On the basis of all the above responses and as a consequence of the *Saamtrek* Conference, the Ministry of Education has drafted a *Manifesto on Values, Education and Democracy*. The proposals of this *Manifesto* are outlined in the conclusion of this document.

## the delegates

*I was quite intrigued to have actually been invited to this Conference and at first I felt completely out of place. I mean, it (was) an overwhelming Conference. I'm sure I don't have to share that sentiment with all of you. But I think what has been useful for me was the inspiration that I gleaned from attending the last two days. I've never worked with the Department of Education...*

*Judy Nokwedi-Fortuin, LoveLife*

The Conference, which took place at Kirstenbosch in Cape Town from 22 to 24 February 2001, was attended by more than 400 people. The conference convenors were emphatic that they did not wish it to be an in-house talk shop of experts. The event drew together key opinion-makers from the world of education, but also from government, the media, the private sector, civil society and academia. With the exception of the two visiting keynote speakers, Professors Edward Said and John Powell, all the delegates were from South



Africa.

Although the vast majority of delegates and panellists were institutionally connected to universities, the discussions centred almost exclusively around schools. This was not necessarily inappropriate: schools, clearly, are the primary dynamos of our society, and the places where the issues addressed during the Conference are most alive. However, several delegates expressed the desire to extend the discourse into other arenas of education, such as early childhood, higher education or out-of-school youth.

## conference report

The plenary sessions as well as sixteen concurrent sessions were tape-recorded. In addition, the concurrent sessions had rapporteurs who handed reports to the formal conference report writer. This conference report begins with a section on “framing dilemmas”, which highlights the key tensions emerging at the Conference, about ways of talking about values. It then presents the key themes that emerged from the discussions, before summarising the closing sessions and recommendations.





## 2.1 prescription vs dialogue: how do we root values in schools?

Professor Asmal launched the *Saamtrek* Conference by stating that “values cannot simply be asserted; they must be put on the table, be debated, be negotiated, be synthesised, be modified, be earned. And this process, this dialogue is in and of itself a value - a South African value - to be cherished”.<sup>17</sup> He cited the school-based research on values conducted for the Department of Education, which identified “dialogue” as one of the values most desired, and most lacking, in South African schools: “The need to be heard, to be listened to - and the rarity of that experience - was a common thread linking the voices of educators, parents and learners. For educators, this is felt most strongly in relationship to school management and the national Department of Education.”<sup>18</sup>

There was universal consensus around this point and around the notion that values cannot be legislated or prescribed. Responding directly to the Minister, Justice Kate O'Regan agreed “that values cannot be asserted or taught in any direct fashion. Values are assimilated and adopted. The manner in which we teach probably does more to instil values than the subject matter of what we teach”.<sup>19</sup> In an elegiac presentation, Professor Edward Said spoke of reading and learning as the kindling for a process of critical thought. Because they generate dialogue and debate, they are at the very core of democracy.

Education, he said, was about “activating the mind” rather than “stuffing it”.<sup>20</sup> In the panel discussion on “Values, Character-Building and Educator Development”, Professor Wally Morrow of the University of Port Elizabeth elaborated on this: “Central to a civic-republican conception of democracy is the principle that disagreements and conflicts in the society will be solved by discussion rather than by dogma, violence, propaganda or other forms of manipulation or sheer power. Education for citizenship in such a democracy must have as one of its primary aims the development of the capacities, including the virtues, to participate in discussion.”<sup>21</sup>

Speaking from the African-American experience, Professor John Powell challenged South Africa to implement a “comprehensive integration strategy”: “The interaction and dialogue that results from such integration is the key to mutual respect and understanding which, in turn, provides the bedrock of meaningful democracy.”<sup>22</sup> The acceptance of dialogue as the key vehicle for values-formation means a reappraisal of the original proposals with regard to social honour - specifically the recitation of a pledge of allegiance. Pansy Tlakula of the South African Human Rights Commission summarised the sentiments of the “Revisiting Social Honour” panel discussion, when she cited research showing that in the United States, “children are said to recite the pledge, by rote, affording it no meaning other than an obligation they perform on a daily basis” and proposed that “it would serve our Honour Pledge well if learners were afforded an opportunity to discuss and be involved in its contents, and to participate and comment on whether it would have meaning and utility for them, if it were adopted as a weekly ritual”.<sup>23</sup>

There was also an understanding that it is vital for young South Africans not only to be participants in dia-



logue, but to be given the tools to engage in it creatively and effectively through performance and debate. In its proposals on “openness”, the Working Group on Values had recommended that schools introduce debating societies, and Justice O’Regan vigorously seconded this: “Participants learn the hard lessons of rigorous preparation for debate, the development of skills of reasoning and expression, as well as learning to tolerate different views. Activities such as debating can be used as well to foster political and social tolerance and understanding of other points of view coupled with the development of the capacity for independent and critical thought and expression.”<sup>24</sup>

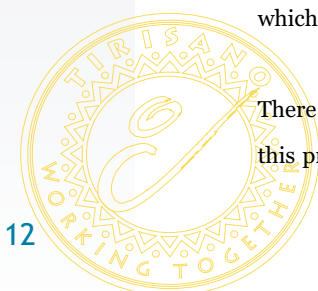
In his closing remarks, Professor Asmal said that while “everybody’s talking about implementation,” he was not going to pass national legislation on values in education: “I’m not going to adopt norms and standards in the area of values of education because in fact legislation will stay in the statute book and like they used to do in Eastern Europe with the Constitution every morning, you genuflect to the Constitution and then break it for the rest of the day. We don’t want that genuflection towards legislation because it makes us feel good. We had enough of it in South Africa.” One overriding consensus of the Conference, was that dialogue is a necessary value and an essential vehicle for promoting values within schools and educational institutions.

## 2.2 frameworks vs mindsets: can we change material conditions before we change consciousness, and vice versa?

“Values,” said Dr Barney Pityana, Chairperson of the South Africa Human Rights Commission, “are more than desirable characteristics. They are essential for life. They are normative principles that ensure ease of life lived in common. Values are a common currency that help make life more meaningful than it might otherwise have been.”<sup>25</sup>

In the panel on religion, Father Albert Nolan explained the relationship between “values” and “morals” by referring to the writer Lawrence Kohlberg, who defined the levels and stages of moral development in the typical person. The first level of morality is about obeying laws to avoid punishment and gain reward. The second level of morality is about doing one’s duty out of a sense of conscience and group identity, and the third and final level of morality is about “a conscious choice of values based upon one’s consciousness of who one is and what life is about. Values have been internalised and a sense of duty has been replaced by a sense of personal responsibility”. While “a government must of course make laws and impose them in order to protect the rest of society from those with asocial and criminal tendencies, this is not how you educate people in the spontaneous adoption of moral values. This requires a change of consciousness - something which education can do”.<sup>26</sup>

There was general agreement that education is indeed in the business of changing consciousness, and that this process of values-formation takes place both formally, within the classroom, and informally, embed-





ded in the “informal curriculum” of social relations that make up the education environment. Particular emphasis was placed on role-modelling in the process. This was flagged by no less a role-model than Nelson Mandela himself when he opened the Conference. He said that “one of the most powerful ways of children and young adults acquiring values is to see individuals they admire and respect exemplify those values in their own being and conduct”.<sup>27</sup>

Some at the Conference were sceptical about whether education could - or should - play this kind of consciousness-changing role. Professor Morrow maintained that values could not be taught in a classroom, but “emerge gradually, if at all, out of community life”.<sup>28</sup> Duncan Hindle of the Department of Education cautioned that international trends were suggesting that teaching was “about a fairly narrow view of academic and skills development and the whole issue of character building belongs to the home, the family, the church and all those other institutions outside of education,” and that this argument was particularly persuasive in a multicultural context like South Africa, where a classroom might contain “competing and perhaps even contradictory values”.

Others questioned what material effect the Values in Education Initiative would have on the dire conditions of education and the abject conditions of poverty in this country. Dr Neville Alexander of the University of Cape Town asked: “Is there not a danger... of giving the impression that if we change values we are somehow going to change society?” Dr Alexander’s question raises a key issue. Does one bring about a change in the material conditions of society and classroom by effecting a change of consciousness through the seedling in young South Africans of the values of our democratic Constitution? Or will these values develop organically once material conditions have been improved; once South Africans are literate and nourished and employed?

This concern underpinned much of the Conference. Justice Kate O’Regan articulated it by reminding us that “agency lies beneath the shadow of structure”<sup>29</sup>, that material conditions do hamper our ability to exercise our rights and assume our responsibilities; and our ability to generate values and live by them. Professor John Powell put flesh on this by drawing the distinction between affirmative and transformative action. He reminded us that human rights are meaningless without socio-economic rights. In the discussion on Social Honour, Chief Phatekile Holomisa, MP, Chairperson of the Congress of Traditional Leaders, said that while he supported the recommendations of the Working Group on Values in Education, “all of these values will not amount to much if the allocation of resources remains as skewed as it is, where the majority of rural schools are made of mud and thatch grass, have no piped water, have no electricity, have no modern technical equipment such as telecommunication systems, computers, libraries and laboratories, and no reliable and affordable transport for both learners and teachers. If this situation is not turned around as a matter of national urgency, our freedom will continue to be a mirage for the majority of our people, who as some say are ‘the poorest of the poor’”.<sup>30</sup>

A key interchange in the first plenary session went some way to resolving this dilemma. Speaking from the floor, Professor Edward Said professed to being astonished, given that South Africa had “come through the



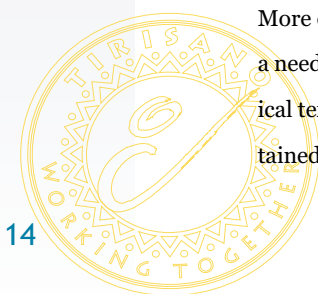
liberation struggle into a new society and is really a light unto the nations”, that there still was such a “persistence of racism”, and that such inequity appeared to be structurally maintained within the educational system, despite the Constitution, the Bill of Rights and the policies of the Department of Education. Dr Barney Pityana responded that this was the key question of transformation in South Africa. He believed that we had the value system in place (our Constitution) and we had the structures in place (our new government and its organs), but that we were only just beginning to marry the two. We were only just beginning to understand that structural transformation was impossible if there were no simultaneous change of consciousness. Otherwise, old wine simply got poured into new vessels and the fundamental iniquities remained. We needed, Pityana said, “to go beyond the creation of structures to say what actually does it mean to be a South African...”.

How, in conclusion, could young South Africans ever make the kind of “conscious choice of values” that Rev Nolan was talking about if their conditions remained those of the abject poverty described by Chief Holomisa? How could such conditions begin to shift if young South Africans did not consciously choose values that facilitated such shifts? A consensus seemed to arise, out of the Conference, that any values in education initiative had to view consciousness-raising and the improvement of material conditions as inter-dependent. The fact that the process had been framed by the value of “equity” from the start, made that a given.

## 2.3 “human rights” vs “law and order”: is there another way?

One of the criticisms of the Values in Education Initiative was that the initiative was a distraction from and duplication of the existing policies of the Department. A further criticism, as paraphrased by Professor Asmal, was that “there is an argument that any talk of values must by definition be framed by a discourse of morality, that it must thus be reactionary and retrogressive, in that it will inevitably lead to an erosion of the human rights culture as enshrined by the Constitution and the Bill of Rights”. Professor Asmal stated that he was “compelled to argue exactly the reverse”, and that it was his impression that precisely because of “the absence of a clearly-articulated value system to which everyone subscribes in our places of learning, fundamental human rights are being violated every day in our classrooms”. The result was that the situation on the ground “makes a mockery of the lofty ideals embodied in our Constitution and our Bill Of Rights”.<sup>31</sup>

Professor Asmal responded to the “moral panic” critique by acknowledging that “in this globalising, post-modern world, traditional authorities have found themselves losing control over their subjects, and nation-states - some of them new and vulnerable - have found themselves losing control over their economies. More often than not, the primary defence against this anxiety has manifested itself as a moral call-to-arms; a need to return to ‘family values’, to tried-and-tested orthodoxies, to fundamentalist readings of the canonical texts”.<sup>32</sup> He referred to evidence of the repetition of this trend in our own classrooms and schools, contained in the school-based research into values conducted on behalf of the Department of Education. When



asked about the values they found important in education, educators responded, overwhelmingly, with the need for old-style authoritarian discipline and control in the classroom. A large majority, 78,4% of them, thought that the Government puts too much emphasis on Children's Rights, which leads to problems in their classrooms. They said things like: "The government is influencing our children not to respect their teachers and to lack discipline" and "The students can't handle the new freedom they've got and so they tend to become disrespectful".<sup>33</sup>

The schools-based research concluded that "until educators experience the concept of 'child-centred' learning as a mechanism to gain (rather than to lose) respect and discipline in their classrooms, the tension between repressive and rights-centred interpretations of values is likely to continue"<sup>34</sup>. During the Conference, Professor Asmal argued that: "Unless we nurture a value system in our schools that is workable, owned by everyone, and in line with the principles of not only our Bill of Rights, but of all our curriculum and school governance policy and legislation, we run the dangerous risk of turning our classrooms into a battleground between an anarchic freedom that masquerades as 'human rights' and an authoritarian backlash that masquerades as 'moral regeneration'. Let me be absolutely clear about this: anarchy is not the route to freedom; neither is authoritarianism the route to good citizenship. Our mission - in this Conference, in the sector of education, in the forging of a new South Africa with an empowered and responsible populace - is to find a path towards freedom that is not anarchic; a path towards good citizenship that is not totalitarian."<sup>35</sup>

Nozipho January-Bardill, a human resources expert and now South Africa's Ambassador to Switzerland, tried to explain this "path" by talking about "empowerment": "True empowerment requires as few rules as possible," she said. "This does not mean the absence of certain codes of conduct. On the contrary, pupils, teachers and administrative staff need to know and understand the boundaries of their discretion if they are to feel truly free to act within these boundaries. And any rules, will, of course, always require a certain amount of policing to make sure that they are adhered to. Empowerment will inevitably, I believe, result in a certain degree of loss of being in authority. But, the teacher who is 'an authority' not 'in authority' will be better able to guide and nurture pupils to engage in their own analysis and make their own decisions based on that guidance."<sup>36</sup>

Dr Ann McLennan of Wits University spoke of how there was, traditionally, "a tension between a culture of resistance spawned by the challenge to apartheid education and a culture of dependency spawned by the security of regulation and line management" and how the potential for collaboration was eroded by "the gap between these two cultures".<sup>37</sup> McLennan, who conducted research into school governing bodies, emphasised collaborative practice, or partnerships, as the only possible bridge between the cultures of resistance and of dependency that were our dual legacy. Similarly, a collaborative practice built on dialogue in schools and educational institutions was the only possible way of resolving the seemingly competing claims of "human rights" and "law and order" that threatened, perpetually, to disrupt the practice of education in South Africa.



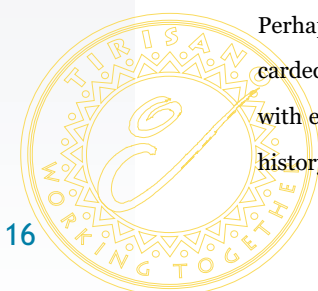
## 2.4 educating for the market-place vs educating for citizenship: can we do both?

Oscar Wilde is reputed to have defined a true cynic as one who knows the price of everything but the value of nothing. Wilde's aphorism was brought into the Saamtrek Conference by Professor Jeff Guy of the University of Natal, who used it specifically to explain why he thought history was no longer being taught in schools.<sup>38</sup> At another point in the Conference, Professor Wally Morrow cited Mahatma Gandhi: "The real difficulty is that people have no idea of what education truly is. We assess the value of education in the same manner as we assess the value of land or of shares in the stock-exchange market. We want to provide only such education as would enable the student to earn more. We hardly give any thought to the improvement of character of the educated. The girls, we say, do not have to earn, so why should they be educated? As long as such ideas persist there is no hope of our ever knowing the true value of education."<sup>39</sup>

Mokubung Nkomo of the Human Sciences Research Council reminded the panel on equity that there was an empirical, market-related value to education. Because the worth of a South African education was so low on an international scale, this country was facing nothing less than a state of emergency: "The data on South Africa's poor scholastic performance, both internally and internationally, and low ranking among a range of countries... suggest that nothing short of a fundamental change in mindset is necessary.... The survival of the country in the global knowledge economy of the 21st century as a viable player in the international arena depends on a conscious and determined will to invest heavily in the education of its citizens to improve their own quality of life upon which rest the prosperity and viability of the country." Nkomo drew the bottom line: "The occupational status of the vast majority of Africans in South Africa is unacceptably poor and exacts a debilitating cost to society as a whole. Most Africans are illiterate, perform unskilled or semi-skilled jobs and do not have the vaguest idea of the new knowledge-based occupations of the information age and network society. African children, the majority of whom are in schools where career and guidance counselling is virtually non-existent, cannot even imagine, let alone dream of the emergent occupational configurations of the 21st century."<sup>40</sup>

The report of the Working Group on Values and Education stated that "an education system does not exist to simply serve a market, important as that may be for economic growth and material prosperity. Its primary purpose must be to enrich the individual, and by extension then, the broader society".<sup>41</sup> Responses to the report overwhelmingly commended it for this acknowledgement. But how, given Nkomo's comments, do we balance a vocationally-based approach to education with a values-based one?

Perhaps history gives us an answer. In the discussion on why this discipline appeared to have been discarded in contemporary South Africa, the historian Luli Callinicos commented that "our dominant concern with economic empowerment has tended to foreground vocational skills".<sup>42</sup> Her colleague, Jeff Guy, used history to give some valuable insight into how one could view education simultaneously as market-driven



and values-driven: “The study of history,” he said, “works towards ending the disastrous misconception that vocational studies are fundamentally distinct, and even contradict, cultural or social studies. In fact, a major objective of a progressive education initiative would be to integrate these two aspects of education - the vocational and the cultural, price and value. And, I would argue, the study and the teaching of history are particularly well-suited to this objective - the development of an educational system where the vocational and the cultural have been successfully integrated; one in which what is individually useful, is also socially valuable.”<sup>43</sup>

In his plenary address, Professor John Powell used different language to speak about the need to reconcile the two roles of education. He defined them as, firstly, “learning and access to opportunity” and, secondly, as “citizen building and participation in democracy”.<sup>44</sup> However, without stating it directly, he seemed to conclude that because there was no equal access to opportunity in South Africa, it was impossible for these two roles to complement each other the way they should. Without the kind of access to the market that educational opportunity should provide, black South Africans could not become full participants in their democracy.





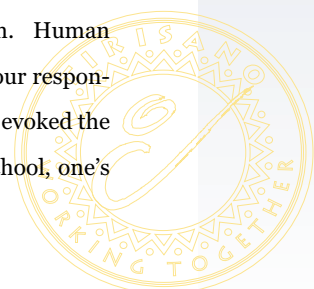
### 3.1 rooting 'the new patriotism' in the constitution

In his address to the opening plenary, Professor Asmal cited focus group research conducted for the TV series, *Yizo Yizo*, in which a teacher from Mamelodi was quoted as saying: "Apartheid had one good thing. It kept us together. We had a common enemy to fight. We helped each other. When the common enemy went we were suddenly left alone and [now we] can't find the same powerful thing to hold us together. Each one for himself. And this has ruined a sense of community."<sup>45</sup> Professor Asmal said that his reason for initiating the Values in Education process was "to find something even more powerful to hold her community together; something so powerful that it will not only rebuild the sense of community she feels has evaporated, but will bond her community of Mamelodi into the larger community of South Africa. My bravest hope is that this cement, this glue, will be ground not out of the battle against a common enemy but out of a battle for a common destiny".<sup>46</sup>

In the final keynote address of the Conference, Professor Njabulo Ndebele took up the theme, as he tried to imagine how a group of South Africans, thrown together in New York, might choose to celebrate Freedom Day. "We do not as yet have," he said, "a common set of values as a people or nation in this country. Nor is there an overarching discourse to accommodate its differences. South Africa lacks a central idea around which to mobilise its entire people. Our talk about the values of South African people is often in abstraction rather than a reflection upon a concrete reality. Since the end of the political struggle in 1994 we lack the central idea that defines us as South Africans. Even the remaining cultural experiences that once served to bind communities together now often appear as oddities and out of sync in the new world order .... There is a need, therefore, to build common values and invent social practices that would serve to bring the country together as a people or nation."<sup>47</sup>

In her response to Professor Asmal's speech in the opening plenary, Justice Kate O'Regan argued, to the contrary, that we indeed have a common set of values in the form of the Constitution. She cited former Chief Justice Ismail Mahomed in his landmark *S v Makwanyane* decision: "All constitutions seek to articulate, with differing degrees of intensity and detail, the shared aspirations of a nation; the values which bind its people' and which discipline its government and its national institutions; the basic premises upon which judicial, legislative and executive power is to be wielded, the constitutional limits and conditions upon which that power is to be exercised; the national ethos which defines and regulates that exercise; and the moral and ethical direction which the nation has identified for its future."<sup>48</sup>

Justice O'Regan spoke about the way the Constitution defines responsibility as "a concept that determines the relationship between society and individual" and said that "in so doing it is central to our conception of both individual and society. It is a fundamental link that denies a rigid and blind individualism. Human beings are human beings because of other human beings as the concept of ubuntu states. It is our responsibility to ourselves, to others and to things that makes us human beings".<sup>49</sup> Professor Asmal evoked the 'New Patriotism' of President Mbeki, at the core of which was a sense of obligation to one's school, one's





community, one's country - the very opposite of the kind of patriotism of the past, one which was predicated upon and which led to the subjugation or denial of others. Clearly, the purpose of the Values in Education Initiative was to animate the Constitution in such a way that it would become the "common set of values" that Professor Ndebele called for, "the central idea around which to mobilise our people". There was consensus that for that to happen, the Values in Education Initiative would have to be rooted more firmly in the Constitution, and its values should flow more directly out of it.

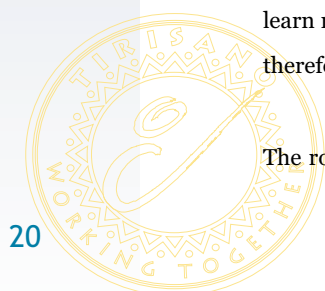
Professor Ndebele also spoke of the need for "symbolic actions" that would "capture our unity as a people", and Professor Asmal said, in his opening remarks, that although he was not a "flag-waver" himself, he was impressed by the way that, in those ex-model C schools where flags were flown, there was a "sense of identification of the children when you talk to them". Nonetheless, there was a feeling, from delegates, that extreme caution had to be exercised in using schools as the blunt implement for nationalism - or, as had traditionally happened in South African schools, for religion. Sunday Independent Editor John Battersby felt it would be "too dogmatic and too centralised a prescription that schools have to start on Monday mornings with singing the Anthem or reciting the vow". The strongest comments on the subject came from Edward Said, who cautioned that "it would be the rankest betrayal of the educational mission if the reading of books was in some way viewed as tantamount to smuggling a 'corrected' or 'properly restored' sense of the new national identity. There is plenty of opportunity for that elsewhere in the society where a sense both of citizenship and idealistic notions about social justice and multi-racial co-existence can be given their due, and indeed they should be".<sup>50</sup>

In the panel discussion on social honour, consensus could not, as was noted above, be reached on the merits of a weekly pledge of allegiance, but there was agreement that schools should be involved in the business of nation-building, social service and the development of a new patriotism. Speaking from the chair, the Deputy Minister of Education, Mosibudi Mangena, suggested that that should take the form of community service. There was also widespread consensus, throughout the Conference, that such patriotism should be grounded, as suggested by Professor Asmal and Judge O'Regan at the outset, in a common adherence to the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. That was taken up in the *Manifesto on Values in Education*.

## 3.2 the role of teachers

In his opening comments to the *Saamtrek* Conference, Nelson Mandela said, as has already been noted, that "one of the most powerful ways of children and young adults acquiring values is to see individuals they admire and respect exemplify those values in their own being and conduct. Parents and educators or politicians or priests who say one thing and do another send mixed messages to those in their charge who then learn not to trust them. The question of leadership generally, and in the educational sphere particularly, is therefore of vital importance".<sup>51</sup>

The role that educators were expected to play in the seeding of values in the children they taught, was a



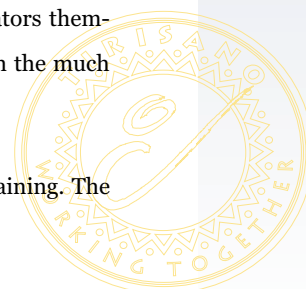
major preoccupation of the Conference, and there was an understanding that educators could not be role models for their students if they were not role models within their communities; if they were not valued and cherished members of their communities and did not have a sense of the nobility of their calling. There was consensus that such a process could happen not only through a strict adherence to ethics by educators, but also through better communication between all stakeholders within the community.

In his opening address, Deputy President Zuma spoke about the importance of the re-establishment of a mutual respect between teachers and communities. He noted that because “we entrust our children, the future of our country” to them, they were the “custodians of our value systems in the school environment”. Educators, he said, “must be in the forefront in helping to shape the ideal of a common South African nation through the values that they emphasise in our children”. But that role, which was “more than just the mere imparting of textbook knowledge”, “requires a special commitment that is lacking in some of our educators”. He understood, however, that the broader community had a responsibility too: if we were going to entrust our young to them, we needed to support them, and to pay, as he put it, “special attention to their working environment”.<sup>52</sup>

Deputy President Zuma’s use of the word “commitment” resonated in the panel discussion on Values, Character-building and Educator Development, during which Professor Wally Morrow outlined a critical distinction between “competency” and “commitment”: “It is fashionable to think of education in terms of the development of competencies, but there are limitations in this view. The Nazi leaders were not in general lacking in competence and nor is Wouter Basson. High degrees of competence are compatible with moral degeneracy.... Most teacher education programmes focus [too] sharply on the development of competence and not enough on professional commitment.”<sup>53</sup> Morrow cited the Indian experience, where teachers are required to demonstrate both competency and commitment before qualifying, and suggested similar criteria here. Working, too, with the concepts of “competency” and “commitment”, Yusuf Waghid of the University of Stellenbosch made an argument for skills training for educators that emphasised “critical reflection and interactionism ... to encourage educators to reshape themselves into competent citizens committed to the implementation of democratic values in their educational institutions”.<sup>54</sup> This kind of training was critical, he said, before they could become activators of values among our young.

In his presentation, Duncan Hindle acknowledged that skills could not be applied in a value-free way, and that it was for this reason, rather than for any pastoral or leadership role that teachers had, that educator development had to take values-training on board. Hindle outlined three key instruments for educator development: the Norms and Standards for South African Educators, the Code of Conduct of the South African Council of Educators, and professional upgrading programmes. He believed that the emphasis should be on codes of conduct educators had to adhere to, and which they had to buy into. This is so, not only because these impose common norms and standards, but because they protect the educators themselves and provide a rational, standard framework that everyone can work off, and upon which the much needed mutual respect can be built.

Several of Professor Asmal’s undertakings at the end of the Conference concerned educator training. The



*Manifesto on Values in Education* lays out a strategy for “promoting commitment as well as competence among educators”.

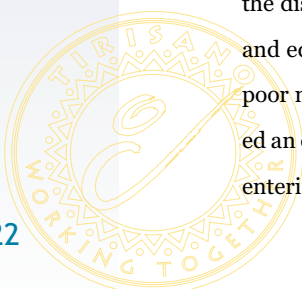
### 3.3 the question of equity

The continuing lack of equity in the South African educational system was laid out bluntly in the report of the Working Group and was a persistent theme at the Conference. In his speech, Professor John Powell cited a statistic that, while eight out of ten white children reached matric in 1995, only two out of ten black children did so.<sup>55</sup> Chief Holomisa spoke, as has been noted above, about the skewed allocation of resources that prejudiced rural children, and, in the “Equity, Opportunities and Access” panel, Allen Meyer, a principal from the Cape Flats, spoke on how he was being forced to close his modest computer lab because he could not afford the licensing fees. Access to information technology and all the benefits it brought, he said, “will remain within Bishopscourt and not get into the Cape Flats area”.

Professor Powell came to the conclusion that “while school reforms that address learning needs, quality of teaching, and other issues play some role, ... these reforms cannot work alone. Affirmative action is necessary to both improve access to opportunity and fully engage disenfranchised groups in building a nation”.<sup>56</sup> He developed this into a definition of “transformative action”, which he defined as focusing “not simply on eliminating discrimination or effecting a more racially just distribution of resources (as embodied by a more racially equitable wage structure, for example), but also on striving to ensure that everyone participates in redefining and reshaping our respective democracies, which in turn helps to reform ourselves individually and collectively. Consequently, this transformation must be institutional, communal and personal, as well as experiential and attitudinal”.<sup>57</sup>

Powell’s comments underscored those made by Justice Kate O’Regan. The Constitution, she said, “is not a description of our society as it exists that would require nothing of us but the maintenance of the status quo, it is a Constitution that compels transformation. The Constitution recognises that for its vision to be attained the deep patterns of inequality which scar our society and which are the legacy of apartheid and colonialism need urgently to be addressed. Nowhere are these scars more marked or more painful than in the education sector. The Constitution then is a call to action to all South Africans to seek to build a just and free democratic society in which the potential of each person is freed”.<sup>58</sup>

The Chairperson of the panel on “Equity, Opportunities and Access”, Bobby Soobrayan of the Department of Education, noted that “equity” was the value that drove everything done in the education sector, but that it was not accepted by all. One of the biggest challenges, he said, was non-compliance and subversion. In the discussion, several indicators were cited to demonstrate that the battle to improve access to education and equality of opportunity was not over. Leila Patel of the University of the Witwatersrand spoke of how poor matric pass rates resulted in a decline in the pool of eligible students at a time when the country needed an even higher level of skills. Jonathan Jansen of the University of Pretoria said that fewer students were entering schools and graduating into higher education than in the early 1990s, and Mokubung Nkomo



offered statistics that demonstrated how poorly South Africa was competing globally.

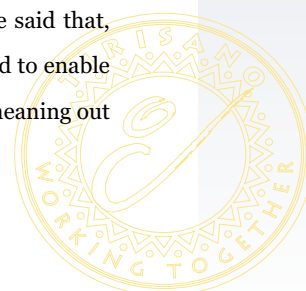
Nkomo concluded that commitment to the values of opportunity, access and equity was not only a moral imperative, but at the very core of South Africa's ability to achieve "individual satisfaction, greater internal socio-economic prosperity and greater viability in the global system".<sup>59</sup> Jansen concluded that he did not doubt the commitment to those values, but that he doubted the system's capacity to realise them.

## 3.4 governance and institutional culture

An issue pertaining to governance, which peppered the Conference across all discussions and sessions, was the importance of community involvement, participation and ownership of schools. If dialogue was the vehicle for rooting the values of the Constitution in schools, then that applied as much to the way schools were run as it did to the way children were taught. An example from the social honour discussion is Chief Holomisa's statement that because traditional leaders continued to command respect and exacted authority over their communities, "they must be made to regard themselves as part of the education system of the land, for the smooth operation of the schools".<sup>60</sup>

Central to notions of governance were definitions of empowerment, and those were given by Nozipho January-Bardill, who made the critical distinction between being "in authority" and being "an authority": "It is one thing knowing how best to develop a responsible, accountable, human rights culture which values and empowers people. It is another thing to live such a culture. Positive attitudes to empowerment are a prerequisite to changing behaviour, and of course, a willingness to use and practise the art of empowering others. Such practice develops empowering behaviour and skills and can lead to the attainment of the desired outcome. There is no short cut to the process of changing organisational culture. The challenge is for each and every individual to change himself or herself first through constant use and practice of new behaviours."<sup>61</sup>

Drawing on her research into school governing bodies, Dr Ann McLennan described "a deep-rooted commitment to democratic change, but also a growing despair as the same old problems seem to recur. The chaos and conflict that characterise stakeholder relationships in most of the township and farm schools are perceived as the opposite of what is needed, and therefore as inappropriate to school development. Yet, this chaos and conflict might be all there is on which to build more effective governing bodies and more developmental schools".<sup>62</sup> She emphasised that in very small ways, communities could become involved in the governance of their schools: by tending flower-beds, for example, or by running concessions, and that "if the standards are set too high, or make assumptions about the types of social organisation which should characterise school governance, school communities are likely to be further demoralised. They will think that if, despite their best efforts, they are not the ideal school, they are simply failures".<sup>63</sup> She said that, while we needed the grand plans "because that's what encourages transformation, we also need to enable people within our system, principal, parent, district level official, to create a relevant and local meaning out of those bigger policies that work within the specific context of schools".



Professor Ben Khoapa of Natal Technikon proposed five ways in which universities and technikons should reform their governance structures, all of which had to do with the re-distribution and rationalisation of power and the introduction of more effective forms of partnership. Responding to Khoapa's proposals, Professor Colin Bundy, then Vice-Chancellor of Wits University, issued an important word of caution against what he called "the stakeholder paralysis that has gripped some of our institutions". The balance, he said, was that authorities needed to be free to make decisions, but needed to make them transparently and needed to be able to justify them and live with them. Dr Jean Benjamin, MP, commented from the floor that a question remained: even if there were capacitated governance bodies, how did one stop different stakeholders "fighting for their own interest rather than a common set of values that should be running through the institutions?".

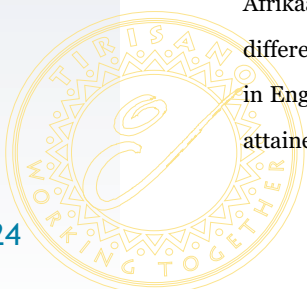
The effects of violence and sexual abuse against girls were touched upon in the "Sexual Mores" and "Gender" discussion. Several of the strategies in the Manifesto on Values in Education deal with the inter-related issues of governance and safety. These include "Nurturing a culture of communication and participation in schools", "Bringing back the rule of law to schools", and "Making schools safe to learn and teach in".

### 3.5 the question of language

There was widespread support across the Conference for the central proposals on language of the Working Group on Values in Education: the implementation of mother-tongue education through dual-medium programmes and the fostering of mandatory multilingualism so that communication and access could take place on an equal footing and so that, as the Language-in-Education Policy puts it, being multilingual could become "a defining characteristic of being South African".

The arguments for mother-tongue education were passionately and repeatedly made. Dr Neville Alexander of the University of Cape Town said that "the overwhelming majority of linguists, educationists and psychologists who have studied this question are in agreement about the fundamental value of learning in the mother tongue... There ought to be absolutely no doubt in the minds of anyone connected with the education of South African children that we have to rehabilitate mother-tongue education in this country. We have to reconnect with universal practice in this regard and lay the ghost of Drs. Verwoerd and Eiselen once and for all."<sup>64</sup>

There was no dissent from this position at the Conference. Professor Stef Coetzee of the University of the Free State explained how Afrikaner Nationalism had developed Afrikaans as a language of instruction over the course of fifty years by providing incentives for the use of it, and how immensely this had benefited Afrikaans-speaking children. He also cited a study in which he had participated in Mangaung, where three different sets of Grade 4 pupils were taught the same History curriculum in three different ways: in Sesotho, in English with summaries in Sesotho, and in English alone. The students learning exclusively in Sesotho attained the highest marks, and the students learning exclusively in English the lowest<sup>65</sup>



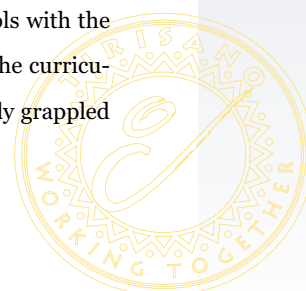
Many delegates spoke emotively about the importance of mother-tongue education for valuing oneself and therefore for valuing others. Geina Mhlophe cited a Nguni proverb which translates roughly as “you suck your language from the breast of your mother”. “Somehow,” she said, “we are weaning the children off our own mother tongues ... and when we lose our languages, we lose ourselves, we lose our face, we lose our sense of pride, we lose that way of walking and feeling the ground you’re walking on and because of this losing of a sense of a self, a sense of pride, a sense of who we are, where we come from, where we belong, because of losing that we are not exactly free, we can vote four times a week if we like, but we’re not yet free, because we don’t have that sense of self.” Elinor Sisulu put it more simply: “Children are still having to leave their language and culture at the school gates.”

Delegates expressed frustration with the implementation of the Language-in-Education Policy. Alexander thought that was because questions were still being asked about the economic implications of implementing the Policy. He dismissed these questions out of hand, making the point that we wasted millions of rand anyway on teachers’ salaries in Grades 10 to 12, where the failure rates were so exorbitantly high because students were writing in English: “The most sensible and feasible strategy to adopt over the next generation or two is the creation of a system of bilingual education. This should be a system that would provide for many options ranging from simple language support in mixed-language classrooms where one language of teaching dominates, to the ideal of dual-medium classes taught by well-trained proficient bilingual or multilingual teachers.”<sup>66</sup> The point was also made that if we were serious about English as a lingua franca, our English-as-a-Second-Language educators had to be trained properly.

In his opening remarks, Professor Asmal offered his explanation of why multilingualism had not taken root in South African schools: “because of the constitutional compromise in 1996, language policy is a voluntarist tradition”. In other words, parents and communities could make their own decisions as to what language they wished their children to be educated in. He also said that multilingualism was “not working on the ground, because people do not understand it”. He committed himself and his Department to popularising the concept of mother-tongue education, and to developing a National Action Plan for the introduction of African languages into schools. The *Manifesto on Values in Education* has a strategy to “make multilingualism happen”.

## 3.6 infusing schools with the values of human rights

How did one teach human rights? This question was one that arched over much of the Conference. Justice O’Regan’s words resonated: “the manner in which we teach probably does more to instil values than the subject matter of what we teach”. The discussions on governance; educator awareness and training; and medium of instruction were critical in formulating an understanding of how one infused schools with the values of human rights. It was in the panel discussions on the curriculum, and on how to use the curriculum to seed the values of tolerance and an appreciation of diversity, that these issues were really grappled with. These panels will be examined in separate categories below.





In the panel discussion on “Multiculturalism, Human Rights and the Curriculum”, Cassius Lubisi of the University of Natal began by explaining the limitations of the “multicultural” approach to human rights education. It “ghettoised” ethnic “others”, and that was particularly problematic in a South African context where the “ethnic other” was in fact the majority. The logical conclusion of his paper, albeit unstated, was that the approach that would best facilitate nation-building in South Africa was one that would integrate an understanding of human rights and human rights issues across the curriculum. Internalising the human rights values as laid out in our Constitution required us to value and accept other cultures if we were to have our own valued and accepted.

This approach was very much in line with that of the curriculum review process, according to Professor Linda Chisholm, who chairs the Ministerial Project Committee to streamline Curriculum 2005. Chisholm outlined the way human rights and inclusivity would be dealt with in the curriculum in future. She cited John Volmink: “The aim is not to promote an uncritical allegiance to the state and an unhealthy reverence for the state. It is not necessarily politically partisan, nor is it a list of moral imperatives that have to be followed unquestionably. The purpose of human rights education, not as a separate subject, but infused throughout the curriculum should be to develop learners as agents of social change.”<sup>67</sup>

Professor Chisholm noted that because “the structure of the curriculum currently allows teachers free choice in the selection of content... content chosen can be equally racist and anti-racist: ultimately the decision rests with the teacher... It also does not provide a strong enough statement about which values the curriculum promotes and which it does not promote”. For these reasons, the approach of the Ministerial Project Committee “places a strong emphasis on both clear guidelines and the infusion of these guidelines by the principles and practices of human rights, inclusivity and social justice. Clear guidelines will not solve all South Africa’s curriculum problems, but could possibly place more teachers in a better condition to teach with confidence. A stronger emphasis on human rights, inclusivity and the values of social justice will ensure that the curriculum may deal more directly with questions of racism, sexism, disability and other forms of discrimination, whether these be direct or indirect”.<sup>68</sup>

Much of the discussion following Professor Chisholm’s and Lubisi’s presentations, and that of Zozo Siyengo from the Western Cape Department of Education, went back, out of the classroom, and into the broader context of the school again, looking at how social relations that developed within schools or among schools fostered or hampered cultures of human rights. From the chair, Ignatius Jacobs, the Education MEC for Gauteng, told of a highly successful exchange programme between black townships and white suburban students. His point was that aggressive programmes of integration and the actual experience of other cultures would do as much to facilitate multiculturalism and the taking on of an understanding of human rights among young South Africans as would the academic study of it.





### 3.7 the oral tradition as a carrier of values

Opening the *Saamtrek* Conference, Deputy President Jacob Zuma spoke about the importance of “being able to read and write, being familiar with the language and conventions of power,” because that “makes it easier to participate in institutions of power, be it parliament, the local civic organisation or the bank”. Nonetheless, he issued “a challenge to our young learners, university graduates and professionals: Do not disrespect those who developed insight and wit from our rural traditions and communal gatherings.... Knowledge and literacy means power - but to be wise or ethical comes from experience, being in touch with the soul of one’s community, kinship and solidarity”.<sup>69</sup>

This framed a theme which was to animate the Conference: the dual importance of literacy and the oral tradition, and the power of stories as a carrier of value and a vehicle of empowerment, particularly when they were one’s own. In “The Stories We Tell Of Ourselves”, author Elinor Sisulu quotes the Zimbabwean writer, Chimera Hove, “who has argued that education in Africa has been an alienating experience, because from the time an African child enters a classroom he finds that his world is not worth learning about.” There is no denying, she said, “that in today’s world, literacy is power and an inability to read and write is a great deprivation. I do believe however that there is a danger that we can become so enamoured of the written word that we forget that the spoken comes first, we should never lose sight of the fact that orality lies at the heart of our human identity.”

In his presentation in the same panel, Mandla Langa took the idea further, into the realm of history: “The stories of this country’s coming to terms with itself,” he said, “which have not yet been set as part of the curricula, can only liberate us from our ignorance of what makes up this country and its peoples. It is this knowledge, from oral tradition to electronic deliveries, that will help to sustain us in the future and help us grow.”<sup>70</sup> In the “History, Memory and Tolerance” panel, historian Luli Callinicos spoke about the importance of oral history as the bearer of “the experiences, stories and dramas encountered in day-to-day life; narratives that cross social divides. With both social history and oral history located more firmly in the curriculum, an empathy with the cultures and attitudes of those we have hitherto barely understood will be nurtured”.<sup>71</sup>

Langa and Sisulu are both authors of fiction, and the empowering and liberating possibilities of storytelling were clear from their highly creative presentations, as well as the presentations, in the “performance” session, of Alfred Hinkel and Gcina Mhlophe. The importance of literature and of the reading of literary works as a way of seeding the values of critical enquiry, debate and tolerance, was the central point of Edward Said’s address: “If the activation rather the stuffing of the mind is, as I believe it is, the main business of education, then I shall argue that an invigorated book culture must remain central to it .... The emergence ... of a critical sense ... can only come from a sustained encounter with the actualities of reading and interpretation”.<sup>72</sup>



Edward Said insisted that the reading must happen on the printed page: “To read a book, and especially a literary work, is in the full sense of the word an expenditure of a highly concentrated and disciplined energy during a protracted period of time. This is a unique activity for which there is no real analogy; it is not like watching a screen or walking on the beach. There is a specific resistance in idiom, form and gesture that the book provides by virtue of its cover, binding, format and physical feel which the reader must deal with and cannot evade, involving a beginning, middle and end, a certain temporal duration and, most important, a process of methodical decoding whose general rules can be learned but, we need to stress, whose application in each specific instance cannot be applied by rote or in a general way.”<sup>73</sup>

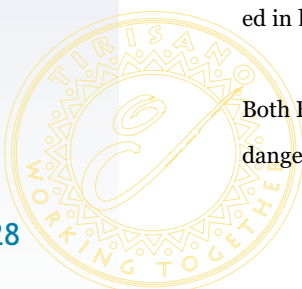
## 3.8 the value of history

“History,” said Professor Colin Bundy from the chair of the “History, Memory and Tolerance” panel, “is one of the memory systems that shapes our views and reality. It is one of the crucial ways the human race preserves and remembers itself. A society with a weak and undeveloped sense of memory is likely to collapse. If the majority of a society have access to the past, it is genuinely empowering.” Luli Callinicos cited Hobsbawm: History has the potential to promote “the understanding of society in order to make it better”.<sup>74</sup>

The report of the History and Archeology Panel, appointed by the Minister of Education under Professor Njabulo Ndebele, expresses concern that history appears to have been devalued by the new curriculum. The formal study of history, it says, nurtures a spirit of critical inquiry and assists in the formation of historical consciousness, “which has an essential role to play in building the dignity of human values within an informed awareness of the past”. This process is “especially urgent”, given that “we are living in a country which is currently attempting to remake itself in time”. The study of history “helps to prevent amnesia, checks triumphalism, opposes the manipulative or instrumental use of the past, and provides an educational buffer against the ‘dumbing down’ of our citizens”.<sup>75</sup>

Why has the study of history been downgraded in the new South Africa, at the very time it was most needed? “It could be,” suggested Luli Callinicos, “that a study of the past is painful or at least uncomfortable, and that teachers who value reconciliation and nation-building are loath to stir up tensions amongst children who are undergoing new and often difficult social skills in a still polarised and divided society”.<sup>76</sup> She warned that “history as a learning tool at school is of little value, and can indeed be dangerous - or rather ‘abused’ - in both society and politics, without educators who have themselves grasped the tools and concepts of history and are passionate about arousing the intellectual curiosity and excitement of their students”.<sup>77</sup> She thus called for far more advanced history educator training, which Professor Asmal reiterated in his closing remarks.

Both Eddie Maloka of the Africa Institute and Professor Jeff Guy of the University of Natal spoke about the dangers inherent in the value-laden task of writing and teaching history. Professor Guy spoke of how “we



have just emerged from a past where every effort was made to turn history into propaganda. Values, where they existed, were always under threat and every attempt was made to silence those who held them and acted on them". Guy stressed "not just the role of the past in creating the present, but our role as historians, researchers, educators in creating a past of value for the present. We make our yesterdays, and we make them according to the values we hold today".<sup>78</sup>

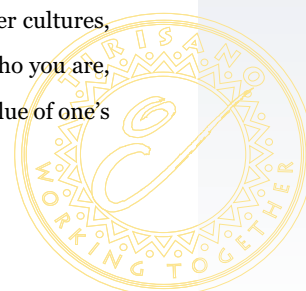
In his closing remarks, Professor Asmal made two pledges that related specifically to history: there would be a national conference for historians and history teachers to plan a strategy for teaching and development in both the discipline and methodology of teaching history, and there would be the on-going upgrading of history teachers and provision of special bursaries to attract students to study history and history teaching at tertiary level. *The Manifesto on Values in Education* has a strategy, too, for "putting history back in the curriculum".

## 3.9 the value of arts and culture

In the panel on "Music, Fine and Performing Arts at Schools", Vivienne Carelse of the Western Cape Department of Education, said that "empowerment comes through the emancipation of the imagination and acquisition of skills to refine our various forms of expression". Alfred Hinkel of Jazzart put flesh on this by giving a live demonstration of how he used dance and music to teach creative expression in schools. He also quoted a high school student who participated in one of his programmes: "The main thing about working with Jazzart was the empowering experience. When I arrived I was self-conscious, but the way we trained shed all the layers I was wearing. Training focused on life skills. In the way classes were dealt with, I learnt tolerance, self-confidence, respect for other people, working together, and I learnt to like myself."<sup>79</sup>

The point was made that arts and culture education empowered young people by giving them the means to express themselves creatively, through music, drama, dance and visual art, when language alone proved itself incapable. In an environment where children were often learning in second or even third languages, that was particularly important. Performance, be it music or drama, also gave students, as Edward Said noted, "a non-coercive and voluntary model for submitting oneself to the ensemble".<sup>80</sup> That was the best possible way of teaching teamwork.

Delegates spoke of how powerful arts and culture education was as a vehicle for instilling the value of tolerance and the appreciation of diversity in young South Africans, and thus for teaching human rights. That was the core of Gcina Mhlophe's presentation, which was about how one could not look at other cultures if one did not "have the pride in yourself and your culture in your ancestral line". She challenged delegates to play a role "in creating children who are aware, who are proud, who are willing to embrace other cultures, knowing that theirs are not less of anything, theirs is just as important, step out there and be who you are, it's extremely important! For what was reconciliation, ultimately, if not the recognition of the value of one's own culture, and an understanding and appreciation of the value of others?".



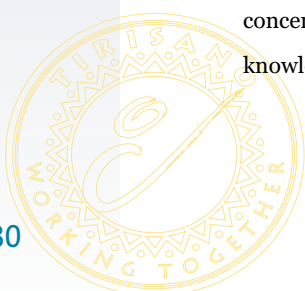
The Working Group had proposed, as has been noted above, an artist-in-residence in every school: in his final comments, Professor Asmal suggested kicking this off with artist-in-residence programmes in universities, with outreach programmes to schools. The *Manifesto on Values in Education* also has a strategy for “making arts and culture part of the curriculum”.

### 3.10 religion education vs religious education

In the panel on “Religion, Diversity and Democracy,” Rev Albert Nolan of Challenge Magazine outlined the crucial difference between “Religion Education” and “Religious Education”. While Religious Education is about “nurturing a religious consciousness, and that should be done in churches”, the aim of Religion Education is to provide knowledge about the different religions. In the public education system, “the school is not responsible for nurturing the religious development of the scholars. The school’s responsibility is to provide the learners with the knowledge about religion and morality and values and the diversity of religions”.<sup>81</sup>

In the panel discussion on “Equity”, Professor Jonathan Jansen called for the banning of schools “from using Monday mornings to run church services. That for me is the most divisive and the most destructive event in the life of a public school”. To use religion in public schools as a confessional vehicle might not only be divisive, but was also unconstitutional. The “Religion” panel addressed itself to ways in which teaching about religion might be a way of encouraging tolerance and promoting diversity rather than entrenching chauvinism, exclusivism and discrimination. This notion was taken up by Manila Soni-Amin of the University of the Western Cape, who saw in religion education the best possibilities for the promotion of pluralism and diversity within the classroom. She cited the American theologian Ninian Smart: “In a plural society, the need for a cultural contract is very vital. Moreover, to imagine that religious education should be biblical is presumptuous and insensitive .... But the new South Africa has a marvelous opportunity to reform education and to promote a plural society. Pluralism and openness are the heart of academic life.”<sup>82</sup> Within the African context, the need to teach and learn about traditional indigenous religions was a key dimension of this.

In his closing remarks to the Conference, Professor Asmal promised the speedy publication of the Department’s policy on religion education. Several questions raised in the panel discussion showed that that area remained thorny and unresolved. Delegates were concerned about whether teachers would be able to maintain distance from their own personal convictions, and to present religion in a multicultural, multi-faith context. They were concerned about whether the values arising from the religions could be taught in such a way that they could be relevant to people who did not have religious faith. Several delegates voiced concern that there was a danger, too, of sanitising religion and making it purely a matter of intellectual knowledge or morals or ethics, without any spiritual content.<sup>83</sup>



## 3.11 the role of sport

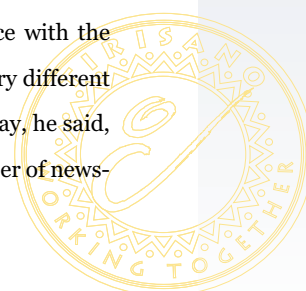
In the “Sport and Nation-building” panel discussion, Sam Ramsamy of the National Olympic Committee of South Africa laid out the value of encouraging sport at schools. It exposed learners to positive role-models; it gave them the experience of team-sport and nation-building; it imparted the rules and values of fair play; it represented “clean living, fairness and righteousness” and it “transcended all notions of prejudice” to allow for merit-based acceleration into national teams.<sup>84</sup> Denver Hendricks, the Director-General of the Department of Sport and Recreation, took a contrary position, warning against the fallacy of sport having some “mystical potential” to provide positive outcomes for a nation, unless firmly located within a broader socio-economic context. He felt that sport was so tied to media and marketing that it could, in fact, fix division and inequity rather than resolve it.

Within the context of these two polar opinions, Doctor Nkosi presented the aims and operations of his new body, the United School Sports Association of SA (USSASA), which includes farm school programmes, the promotion of sport among girls, and the introduction of leagues in townships to promote mass participation. Nkosi asked delegates to commit themselves to “let our children play” as they learn and grow up. In conclusion, rapporteur Andre Odendaal asked whether it was possible, given the way the values connected with sport had often been chauvinist in the past, to use it to inculcate values that were progressive and balanced. He also questioned whether there had been any progress, away from the scenario sketched by Hendricks, since the advent of democracy.<sup>85</sup>

The report of the Working Group on Values suggests a wide range of extracurricular programmes that are purposefully designed to build democratic values in young people, from popular sports to debating societies. The school-based research into Values in Education reported that parents, learners and educators alike emphasised the importance of teamwork as “perhaps the most important vehicle to facilitate democratic values in schools ... both inside and outside the classroom”. Currently, they said, sports activity was confined to sports days or open only to talented athletes. They motivated, instead, for “an inclusive extramural sports programme whereby all learners can learn the self-discipline, responsibility, dedication, consistency, and teamwork that is required of group play”.<sup>86</sup>

## 3.12 values and technology

Edward Said’s keynote address was a caution against the over-dependence on information technology and the Internet, and a reassertion of the fundamental transfer of knowledge, skills and values that happened through an engagement with books and reading. Speaking from his own personal experience with the Palestinian struggle, Said recounted just how useful cyber-communication was, “but this is a very different thing from the longer and much slower process of which books are the heart”. Young people today, he said, “take it as entirely natural that with a computer screen in front of them that can access any number of news-



papers, books, magazines, plus an uncountable number of sites from all over the world at a moment's notice, without any visible labour, and without any kind of effort once depended on acquiring a book, reading and interpreting it". It is that act of finding and interpreting that Said put at the heart of critical thought and humanism, fundamental values, he insisted, that "cannot come from, and indeed may be circumvented and annulled, by the amenities and speed of electronic information".<sup>87</sup>

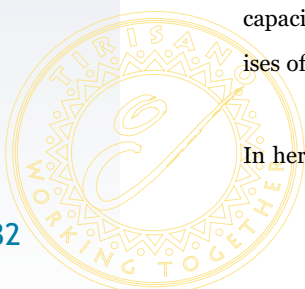
These themes were raised elsewhere during the *Saamtrek* Conference. In her report of the panel, "The Stories that We Tell Ourselves", Liz Gunner of the University of Natal noted that the key difference in approach to the issue of creativity between the two panellists, Elinor Sisulu and Mandla Langa, was that, while Sisulu "argued of the dangers of creating a computer-literate and Internet-aware society that had nothing much to say and no stories to tell" and "argued that perhaps we should arm schools with stories rather than computers", Langa saw technology "as a crucial medium for social creativity and self-awareness".

Given the digital divide and other fundamental inequities, was such rumination not a luxury on our continent? That was the response of Kole Omotoso of the University of the Western Cape, to Professor Said's address: "One of the questions I would have liked to ask our speaker this morning is how do we begin the enjoyment and continuation of reading and books in a situation where all through Africa we have eighty percent illiteracy, [and] eighty percent of our population are ruled and administered and governed in languages that they neither speak nor understand or read? I think this is really where my problem starts."

In the session on technology, Mandy Esterhuyzen of the University of the Witwatersrand gave some sobering statistics on the digital divide and access to technology. Latest estimates showed that Africans comprised less than 1% of the 407 million presently connected to the Internet, "and that that there is a growing number of people for whom the ever-advancing technical world will never be reality". Allan Meyer underscored her point in the "Equity" panel when he told how his computer lab would have to be shut down because he could not afford to pay licensing costs on software. Esterhuyzen commented on the relationship between technology and power: "One problem I've repeatedly encountered in schools in Gauteng, the Northern Province and the Western Cape, is a lack of access caused not by economic disparity, but by the fact that computers, like telephones, fax machines and photo copiers, are symbols of status, power and control. They thus become a sole property of principals and senior teachers even when they themselves don't know how to use them."

The argument has been made that precisely because of our developmental needs, it is all the more important to work with technology on this continent. Without the resources to train teachers or distribute learner support materials, virtual classrooms could reach far more learners than we might otherwise have the capacity to do. Professor Martin Hall of the University of Cape Town cautioned against the utopian promises of the "thin-air business".

In her contribution, Lulama Makhubela of the South African Management Development Institute, spoke



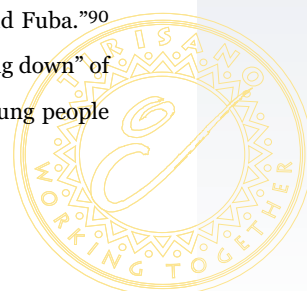
about the potential of technology in encouraging the primal democratic value of openness, but also of what the consequences are, in terms of universal access to information, of this openness. In the discussion on media, Tim Modise of SAFM made this explicit: “I think we should be mindful of the fact that the digitisation where every child in Gauteng, it is said, is going to have an e-mail address and access to the Internet, is a good thing and a bad thing at the same time, in the sense that the content available on the Internet is not produced by people who would like to see this society achieve or realise the ideals we’ve set for ourselves. 99.9999 % of the content will always emanate from the United States. And 99.9999 % of the content will always be junk.”

Makhubela touched on the theme of new ethical issues raised by new technology; on how the Internet compelled us to balance the value of “openness” with the need to shield learners from material that might be harmful or offensive. In the “Science, Bio-Ethics and Values” discussion, panellists looked at the value systems underpinning science and medicine, and the ways in which learners needed to engage with those. Mohammed Dada of the Nelson Mandela Medical Institute at the University of Natal spoke of the importance of human rights training as part of medical training, which was not, he said, “just the acquisition of new knowledge and skills. It is the acquisition of a doctor’s identity and character”.<sup>88</sup>

In her presentation to the “Science and Bio-Ethics” panel, Dr Namane Magau of the Council for the Study of Scientific and Industrial Research, said “indigenous knowledge systems have real potential for providing values which need to start informing science and technology research”. She cited the South African philosopher, Marlene van Niekerk, who stated that what made African knowledge systems unique was that they “don’t put science in charge of life - they put people first”.<sup>89</sup> The relationship between science or technology and life, was at the core of what all delegates concerned with this arena at *Saamtrek* grappled with. While strategies could be developed to bridge the digital divide, and while the emphasis on maths, science and technology education had to be accelerated, the consequences remained troublesome and uncharted, particularly within an African context where there would always be “haves” and “have-nots” with respect to access, and clearly require much more careful thought and engagement.

## 3.13 the role of the media

Newspaper columnist Max du Preez opened the discussion on “The Role of Radio, Television and Newspapers in Education” by laying down the gauntlet: “You as educators and we as media practitioners have let our people down. We have caused our young people to think that ‘liberation’ meant the white faces in the black Mercedes Benzes driving past in noisy convoys were simply exchanged for black faces. We have done something wrong, because to so many young South Africans the revolution of 1994 only meant they can now aspire to wearing baggy trousers and baseball caps and brands like Fila and Nike and Fuba.”<sup>90</sup> Taking a similar line to that of Professor Said, Du Preez took a strong stand against the “dumbing down” of print media, and spoke about how important critical analysis of the media was in teaching young people about how to read the world.





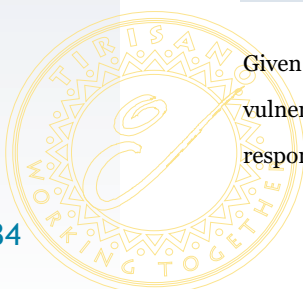
Nicola Galombik, the head of educational television at SABC, used examples from her programming to show how television, because it played “such a very powerful role in shaping our sense of worth and identity”, could change value systems and function “as an activating agent rather than as a didactic tool”. Galombik dwelled on how one brings about behaviour change in people: “It is not something you can simply teach someone in a deducting mode. Television can’t do it, but actually nor can anyone else or anything else. It is a process that you have to try and enable people to take themselves through ... to activate discussion in the society, to engage people in the complexity of many of the issues around social justice that we deal with in reality every day in this country.” She attempted to demonstrate how SABC television was doing this, specifically with programmes such as *Yizo Yizo*.

When challenged from the floor about whether *Yizo Yizo* was providing negative role-models, she responded by quoting a learner from the focus group research who said “a mirror cannot make us ugly”. A *Yizo Yizo* researcher said, from the floor, that the programme “was able to put the matters that young people face into the room. That they can be able to engage with those matters in a meaningful way as young people. Because those are the issues they confront every day. And we do not know about those issues as experts sitting in this room. But when we go to the townships, you realise what issues the young people are faced with”. Galombik made the point that as soon as *Yizo Yizo* was mentioned, the room became intensely animated, and over thirty hands shot up, and that, she said, citing Edward Said, “is activated minds. What I think is powerful about *YizoYizo* is the debate that it generates”.

Joe Thloloe said from the chair that the media had three roles to play in respect of a vision for democratic values as outlined by the Constitution. The first was to transform the industry so as to realise the vision of the Constitution within the industry itself; the second was “the rather arrogant position where we designate ourselves as the custodians of this vision. We want to keep a mirror where we say, this is the vision, this is what you South Africans committed yourselves to. And we want to hold South Africans, particularly the powerful, particularly the strong, we want to say you are accountable for this vision”. The third was “to keep a score card and say so to South Africans, this is how far you have moved towards realising this vision”. Framing the discussion was a consensus that media - print, radio and television - was a primary shaper of value systems in our society. Any attempt to seed democratic values in South Africans could not work if it were not done as much through the mass media as through the classroom. There was, however, some disagreement as to whether the media should be pressed into playing “nation-building” values generating roles, or whether it should be left free to do its job, as that was the best way of ensuring the value of openness in and of itself.

### 3.14 sexual responsibility and HIV/AIDS

Given the severity of the HIV epidemic in Southern Africa and the grim reality that learners were the most vulnerable to infection, the role of the education sector to provide information and guidance on sexual responsibility had become a vital and urgent locus for the activation of values in education. It was here, first



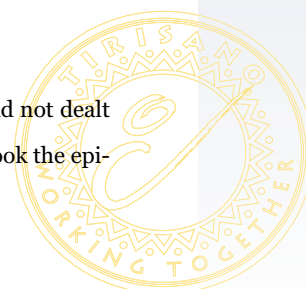
and foremost, that the Values in Education Initiative ceased to be theoretical and became real, and that was brought home by the statistics and projections presented to the “Sexual Mores and HIV/AIDS Education” panel by Judy Nokwedi-Fortuin of Lovelife, Kgobati Magome, advisor to the Minister of Education, and Alan Flisher of the University of Cape Town.

Magome spoke about how the “values” process charged her work: “Certain qualities of character are essential for HIV prevention and management. And essentially, those qualities of character are values. And what we are saying here, is that values such as respect, responsibility, the ability to think, say and act the same thing, - that integrity - are essential for the prevention and management of HIV.” She explained that the Department of Education had embarked upon a three-pronged approach: to provide information and raise awareness; to ascertain the effect of the epidemic upon the sector; and to ensure that HIV-positive learners and educators were not discriminated against.

Flisher urged educators to integrate HIV awareness and AIDS-prevention programmes into what he called “health-promoting schools”. He offered a World Health Organisation definition of such a school: a place where “all members of the school community work together to provide students with integrated and positive experiences and structures which promote and protect their health. This includes both the formal and informal curricula in health, the creation of a safe and supportive school environment, the provision of appropriate health services and the involvement of the family and community in efforts to promote health”.<sup>91</sup> In the Western Cape, 80 schools had become “health-promoting institutions”, and Flisher presented encouraging results from one, a primary school in Atlantis.

In her presentation, Judy Nokwedi-Fortuin explained how the LoveLife Campaign was attempting to get South African teenagers to take responsibility for their decisions. LoveLife’s research had demonstrated, she said, the centrality of dialogue in behaviour-modification, thus supporting everything that had been said at the Conference about the importance of dialogue as the prime vehicle for seeding values in young people. She also articulated, very eloquently, the way that popular culture influences attitudes towards sexuality, and the complex and often contradictory impulses that go into the construction of sexual identity, urging educators to take stock of them. “Sexuality,” she said, “is the most profound meeting place of nature and culture. At its best, sexuality allows us to give ourselves over to feeling. To other people. To the world. To say yes to our souls and fundamentally to our bodies. But, sexuality is also where we experience most intensely the demands of a religion, morality and culture in general.... The reality for the South African adolescent is that sex is pervasive. And it is presented as such an essential part of being an attractive young person with a fulfilling and exciting life ahead of you, that if you reject sex, you become the ultimate outsider. And adolescence is the one period in your life when you want to be an insider. So, you can imagine the pressure on young people to conform to being sexually active. Sex is no longer seen as something that wild kids or the cool kids do. It has become a rite of passage.”

There was some criticism at the Conference that the Working Group on Values in Education had not dealt specifically with HIV/AIDS. Professor Asmal spoke during the session about how seriously he took the epi-



demie, and that the fight against it needed to be given “absolute priority” because it was a “state of emergency”. He spoke about the need to free officials to deal specifically with it, which was why he had appointed a national co-ordinator and two full-time officials per province. There was a need to “break all the shackles of territoriality” and bring all role-players together. He offered to host a national conference on HIV/AIDS in the education sector to this end. The *Manifesto on Values in Education* has as one of its strategies “nurturing a culture of sexual and social responsibility in schools”.

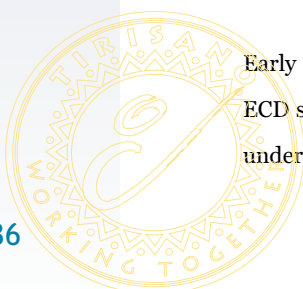
### 3.15 gender and schooling

In the panel on “Gender and Schooling”, Philippa Kabali-Kagwa of the University of the Western Cape and Thandiwe January-McLean (standing in for Cheryl de la Rey of the National Research Foundation) reviewed the way gender affected schools and schooling. Kabali-Kagwa identified five areas, which formed a useful framework: the organisation of the school; curriculum and classroom practices; attendance; violence and abuse; and poverty.<sup>92</sup>

De La Rey’s paper presented statistics showing that, although women were significantly over-represented as teachers, they were radically under-represented in positions of authority, from Heads of Department upwards. Likewise, women tended to teach younger children and ‘soft’ subjects like the arts and social sciences, while men taught older children and the ‘hard’, marketable subjects like mathematics and science. Thus, from a very early age, learners experienced an environment where men held power and women did not. Kabali-Kagwa looked at how, in the classroom, girls were steered away from science, technology and business. Within specific learning areas, the role that women played was often erased, and the relationship of women to the learning area, ignored. That occurred across all disciplines, but could be seen most dramatically in a subject like history. Moreover, within the classroom, boys tended to talk and dominate. Often, that was actively encouraged, but more frequently, it was just a continuation of social norms outside the classroom, which were not discouraged by the educator.

In the area of attendance, Kabali-Kagwa noted how, particularly in rural areas, girls were discouraged from enrolling in school or have very high levels of absenteeism, because they were expected to fulfil other domestic or childcare duties. Girls often left school to care for younger family members, or to work so that their male siblings could complete their education. This had become marked with the advent of AIDS orphans. The problem was particularly serious with respect to pregnant girls. Mention was made of the fact that they were often forced to leave school, although that was illegal. Perhaps the most direct way that girls were discriminated against within the education system, was via violence and abuse, from highly sexualised verbal degradation to physical harassment and rape.

Early Childhood Development (ECD) education was also addressed in the “Gender and Schooling” panel. ECD specialist Gloria Britain noted that 95% of the caregivers in ECD were women, and spoke about how undervalued and under-resourced that key area of education was. It was important to do research into how



gender roles were set at that level of education. Others spoke, from the floor, about how the fact that that area was gendered as female, meant that it was not taken seriously.

Speaking from the chair, Joyce Piliso-Seroke, chair of the Commission for Gender Equality, said that there was still “a huge gap between policies and practice” in South Africa. Despite the progressive Constitution and Bill of Rights and a whole slew of legislation that protected women, there was, nonetheless, still much evidence of discrimination against girls and women in the education system. Speaking from the floor during the session, Professor Asmal acknowledged that gap between policy and practice, and spoke of focusing on gender in the battle against AIDS, because of the way that violence against girls and women and attitudes towards them made them so vulnerable to infection. The *Manifesto on Values in Education* deals with gender inequality throughout its fifteen strategies, but specifically in the strategy, “reeing the potential of girls as well as boys”.

# themes and discussions





## 4. conclusion

Professor Asmal closed the Conference with thanks to all participants and organisers. He listed a number of recommendations for further consideration and action. These were:

- Outreach on SABC TV and Radio to publicise the values
- Provincial units to be set up to deal with racism and values
- Higher education institutions to get involved with performing arts outreach and to have artists-in-residence to service nearby schools
- A national endowment for the arts to fund talented individuals in schools
- The establishment of a national writing centre with prizes and projects
- In-service and pre-service educator training to address training on values
- A more deliberate pursuit of affirmative action to improve equity of access
- The recruitment of teachers to ensure diversity in schools
- A national action plan for the introduction of African languages into the schools, universities and adult education
- Civics education as part of the new curriculum
- A national conference for historians and history teachers to plan a strategy for teaching History and for the discipline
- Ongoing upgrading of history teachers and special bursaries to attract students to study History
- A national conference on HIV AIDS, values and sexuality education
- Publication of the report on religion education
- The dissemination of the proceedings of this conference to participants
- The production of a revised document on values that would become the policy of the Department of Education

From the Values, Education and Democracy discussion document, research and submissions in relation to that document and the proceedings of the *Saamtrek* Conference, the following ten fundamental values of the Constitution were identified:

- Democracy
- Social Justice and Equity
- Equality
- Non-racism and Non-sexism
- Ubuntu (Human Dignity)
- Openness
- Accountability (Responsibility)
- The Rule of Law
- Respect



## ■ Reconciliation

From these proceedings, the following sixteen strategies were proposed to seed these values in South African learners:

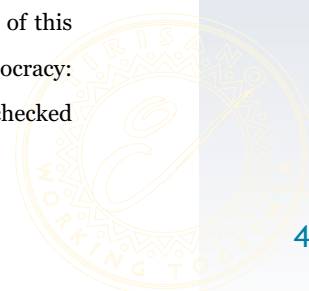
- Nurturing a culture of communication and participation in schools
- Role-modelling: promoting commitment as well as competence among educators
- Ensuring that every South African is able to read, write, count and think
- Infusing the classroom with the culture of human rights
- Making arts and culture part of the curriculum
- Putting History back into the curriculum
- Introducing religion education into schools
- Making multilingualism happen
- Using sport to shape social bonds and nurture nation building at schools
- Ensuring equal access to education
- Promoting anti-racism in schools
- Freeing the potential of girls as well as boys
- Dealing with HIV/AIDS and nurturing a culture of sexual and social responsibility
- Making schools safe to learn and teach in and ensuring the rule of law
- Ethics and the environment
- Nurturing the new patriotism, or affirming our common citizenship

The proposals and recommendations coming out of the *Saamtrek* Conference were consolidated in the *Manifesto on Values, Education and Democracy* released by the Minister of Education, Professor Kader Asmal, MP, in August 2001. The purpose of the *Manifesto* is to place the Values in Education Initiative in the context of other processes and initiatives taking place in the education sector. It will highlight programmes already in operation or being planned in the education sector, that have to do with values, to fast-track and popularise them by making them part of this high-profile initiative. Most importantly, it draws the commitment of the entire sector into the values initiative, from government through to civil society, and gives all participants in the education sector a way of being involved in the process, and of engaging in dialogue about our values. In this way, it activates the “culture of communication and participation” that was identified, by *Saamtrek*, as being so crucial if the democratic values of the South African constitution are to be seeded in young South Africans through the education system.



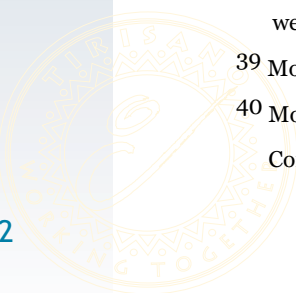
## 5. references

- <sup>1</sup> Dr James was until recently Professor of Diversity Studies at UCT, and is now Associate Editor of the Cape Times. The other members were: retired educator Dr Franz Auerbach; Ms Zubeida Desai, the Deputy Chair of the Pan-South African Language Board; historian Dr Hermann Giliomee; parliamentarian Dr Z Pallo Jordan MP; author and journalist Ms Antjie Krog; Ms Pansy Tlakula of the South African Human Rights Commission, and, representing the Department and Ministry of Education, Mr Thembile Kulati, Mr Khetsi Lehoko and Ms Brenda Leibowitz.
- <sup>2</sup> “Values, Education and Democracy: Report of the Working Group on Values in Education”, Department of Education, Pretoria: 2000, p5.
- <sup>3</sup> Ibid, p2
- <sup>4</sup> Ibid, p10
- <sup>5</sup> Ibid, p6
- <sup>6</sup> Ibid, p23
- <sup>7</sup> Ibid, p25
- <sup>8</sup> Ibid, p33
- <sup>9</sup> Ibid, p7
- <sup>10</sup> Ibid, p45
- <sup>11</sup> Ibid, p7
- <sup>12</sup> “I promise to be loyal to my country, South Africa, and to do my best to promote its welfare and the well-being of all its citizens. I promise to show self-respect in all that I do and to respect all of my fellow citizens and all of our various traditions. Let us work for peace, friendship and reconciliation and heal the scars left by past conflicts. And let us build a common destiny together.”
- <sup>13</sup> See specifically: Carrim N and Tshoane M, “The Holy State? Values in Education”, in the *Quarterly Review of Education and Training*, Volume 7, Number 4, December 2000, Wits EPU, University of Witwatersrand; Porteus, K, “The Social Mandate: Racism, Values and Safety in Schools”, in the *Quarterly Review of Education and Training*, Vol 7, Number 3, July-Sept 2000; Gardiner M, “Values, Education, Democracy”, *Mail & Guardian*, 17 September 2000; and articles in daily press, September 2000.
- <sup>14</sup> A full set of responses is available from the Department of Education, through the National Centre for Curriculum Research and Development (NCCRD). 48 responses were received, including 28 from institutions and only 3 from schools. According to a summary prepared by the NCCRD, 38 were positive and 4 negative.
- <sup>15</sup> The preliminary findings were published as “Values, Education and Democracy: Interim Research Report”, commissioned by the Department of Education; Research Consortium led by the WITS Education Policy Unit and distributed at the *Saamtrek* Conference. At the time of publication of this report, a final document was being prepared under the working title, “Values, Education and Democracy: Schools-based Research”. All citations are from the latest draft of this document, and should be checked against the final, published version, unless otherwise noted.

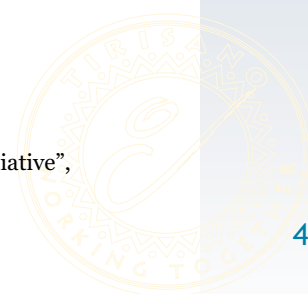




- 16 All papers which were submitted to the *Saamtrek* organizers, as well as a full set of edited transcripts of the Conference, are available on the Department of Education website (doe.gov.za).
- 17 Professor Kader Asmal, “Pride vs Arrogance: The New Patriotism”, paper delivered at *Saamtrek*, DOE website.
- 18 “Values, Education and Democracy: Schools-based Research”, National Department of Education and Wits EPU.
- 19 Justice Kate O’Regan, “The Vision of the Constitution: A response to the address by Prof Kader Asmal, MP, Minister of Education”, paper delivered at *Saamtrek*, DoE website.
- 20 Professor Edward Said, “The Confluence of Civilizations: The Book, Performance Art and Music in the 21st Century”, paper delivered at *Saamtrek*, DoE website.
- 21 Professor W Morrow, “Cultivating Humanity in the Contemporary World”, paper delivered at *Saamtrek*, DoE website.
- 22 Professor J Powell, “Race, Affirmative Action and Democracy in the 21st Century”, paper delivered at *Saamtrek*, DoE website.
- 23 Pansy Tlakula, “Social Honour and Human Rights: Some Thoughts”, paper delivered at *Saamtrek*, DoE website.
- 24 O’Regan, op cit
- 25 Dr B Pityana, “Conference on Values, Education and Democracy: Respondent to Address by Professor Kader Asmal, MP”, paper delivered at *Saamtrek*, DoE website.
- 26 Rev A Nolan, “The Role of a Religious Consciousness in the Development of Values,” paper delivered at *Saamtrek*, DoE website.
- 27 Nelson Mandela, Speech to the Opening Dinner, *Saamtrek*, DoE website.
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- 29 O’Regan, op cit
- 30 Chief P Holomisa, MP, “Revisiting Social Honour: Harnessing the Resources at our Disposal”, paper delivered at *Saamtrek*, DoE website.
- 31 Asmal, op cit
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- 33 “Values, Education and Democracy: Schools-based Research”.
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- 35 Asmal, op cit
- 36 Nozipho January-Bardill, “Institutional Culture, Values and Governance: The Importance of Values in Developing Organizational Cultures”, paper delivered at *Saamtrek*, DoE website.
- 37 Dr Ann McLennan, “You Have To Help Show Us The Way: Institutionalizing Democratic Governance In Schools”, paper delivered at *Saamtrek*, DoE website.
- 38 Professor Jeff Guy, “The Value of History: The Price of the Past”, paper delivered at *Saamtrek*, DoE website.
- 39 Morrow, op cit
- 40 Mokubung Nkomo, “What Do Values Have To Do With Opportunity, Access and Equity? Preliminary Considerations on Human Resource Needs”, paper delivered at *Saamtrek*, DoE website.



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- 65 Professor S Coetzee, T du Plessis, J Messerschmidt, “Language Policy in Schools: A Critical Reflection”, paper delivered at *Saamtrek*, DoE website.
- 66 Alexander, op cit
- 67 In Professor L Chisholm, “Values, Multiculturalism and Human Rights in Apartheid and Post-Apartheid South African Curriculum”, paper delivered at *Saamtrek*, DoE website.
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- 79 Alfred Hinkel, "In Step With The Bill of Rights", paper delivered at *Saamtrek*, DoE website.
- 80 Said, op cit
- 81 Nolan, op cit
- 82 Manila Soni-Amin, "The Politics of Religious Education in South Africa, Past and Present", paper delivered at *Saamtrek*, DoE website.
- 83 The author is indebted to Cedric Mayson for his excellent rapporteur's notes on this panel.
- 84 Sam Ramsamy, "Olympic Values in Shaping Social Bonds and Nation Building at Schools", paper delivered at *Saamtrek*, DoE website.
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- 88 Dr Mohammed Dada, "Ethics and Medical Education: A Bitter Pill to Swallow", paper delivered at *Saamtrek*, DoE website.
- 89 Dr Namane Magau, "Science, Bio-Ethics and Values", paper delivered at *Saamtrek*, DoE website.
- 90 Max DuPreez, "Educating Trainee Citizens", paper delivered at *Saamtrek*, DoE website.
- 91 Dr Alan J Flisher, "Adolescent sexuality, values and education", paper delivered at *Saamtrek*, DoE website.
- 92 Phillippa Kabali-Kagwa, "Gender Equity in Schools: Challenging Ideologies", Cheryl De La Rey, "Schools - Role-Players in the Construction of Gender"; papers delivered at *Saamtrek*, DoE website.



## 6.1 programme

### Thursday, 22 February 2001

Opening Keynote

*Speaker: Jacob Zuma, Deputy President of South Africa*

*Chair: Kader Asmal, MP, Minister of Education*

*Address: The Honourable Nelson Mandela*

### Friday, 23 February

Opening Plenary

*On the Right Track? Whose Values, Whose Schools?*

*Chair: Wilmot James, University of Cape Town*

*Presentation: Kader Asmal, MP, Minister of Education*

*Response:*

*Dr Barney Pitso, Human Rights Commission*

*Kate O'Regan, Justice of the Constitutional Court*

### Concurrent Sessions

#### Panel (1): The Stories We Tell of Ourselves

*Chair: Ampie Coetzee, University of the Western Cape*

*Panellists:*

*Mandla Langa, Independent Communications Authority of South Africa*

*Achmat Dangor, Nelson Mandela Children's Fund*

*Elinor Sisulu, author*

*Rapporteur: Liz Gunner, University of Natal*

#### Panel (2): History, Memory & Tolerance

*Chair: Colin Bundy, University of the Witwatersrand*

*Panellists:*

*Jeff Guy, University of Natal*

*Luli Callinicos, History Workshop*

*Eddy Maloka, Africa Institute*

*Rapporteur: June Bam, University of Stellenbosch*

#### Panel (3): Religion, Diversity & Democracy

*Chair: Tinyiko Maluleke, University of South Africa*



**Panellists:**

*Albert Nolan, Editor - Challenge*

*Manila Soni-Amin, University of the Western Cape*

*Azila Talit Reisenberger, University of Cape Town*

Rapporteur: Cedric Mayson, ANC Commission for Religious Affairs

**Panel (4): Revisiting Social Honour**

Chair: Mosibudi Mangena, MP, Deputy Minister of Education

**Panellists:**

*Patekile Holomisa, MP*

*Pansy Tlakula, Human Rights Commission*

*John Battersby, Sunday Independent*

Rapporteur: Salim Vally, University of the Witwatersrand

**Panel (5): Multi-Culturalism, Human Rights and the Curriculum**

Chair: Ignatius Jacobs, MEC: Gauteng

**Panellists:**

*Linda Chisholm, University of Natal/Department of Education*

*Cassius Lubisi, University of Natal*

*Zozo Siyengo, Western Cape Education Department*

Rapporteur: Themba Kojana, South African Democratic Teachers Union

**Panel (6): Equity, Opportunities and Access**

Chair: Bobby Soobrayan, Department of Education

**Panellists:**

*Leila Patel, University of the Witwatersrand*

*Jonathan Jansen, University of Pretoria*

*Mokubung Nkomo, Human Sciences Research Council*

Rapporteur: Brian O'Connell, Western Cape Education Department

**Panel (7): Institutional Culture, Values & Governance**

Chair: Pravin Gordhan, South African Revenue Services

**Panellists:**

*Nozipho January-Bardill, Ambassador Designate*

*Anne McLennan, University of the Witwatersrand*

*Ben Khoapa, Natal Technikon*

Rapporteur: Victor Matonsi, South African Association of School Governing Bodies

**Panel (8): Sports and Nation-Building at Schools**

Chair: Ruth Bhengu, MP



## Panellists:

*Denver Hendricks, Department of Sports and Recreation*

*Sam Ramsami, National Olympic Committee of South Africa*

*Doctor Nkosi, South African Schools Sports Association*

Rapporteur: Andre Odendaal, Robben Island Museum

## Plenary - Report on Concurrent Sessions

Chair: Thami Mseleku, Department of Education

## Reporting Sessions

1-4: Ihron Rensburg, Department of Education

5-8: Xolela Mangcu, Steve Biko Foundation

## Keynote: *Race, Affirmation Action and Democracy in the 21st Century*

*John Powel, University of Minnesota Law School*

Chair: Nasima Badsha, Department of Education

Lead-in-Remarks: Leila Patel, University of the Witwatersrand

## Saturday, 24 February

### Keynote: *The Confluence of Civilisations: The Book, Performance Art and Music in the 21st Century*

*Edward Said, Columbia University*

Chair: Nadine Gordimer, author

Lead-in-Remarks: Elinor Sisulu, author

## Concurrent Sessions

### Panel (9): Music, Fine and Performing Arts in Schools

Chair: Kole Omotoso, University of Stellenbosch

## Panellists:

*Vivienne Carelse, Western Cape Education Department*

*Alfred Hinkel, Jazzart*

*Gcina Mhlophe, Zarenoaca Storytellers*

Rapporteur: Stanley Hermans, painter and journalist

### Panel (10): Values and the Opportunities of Technology

Chair: Ben Parker, University of Natal

## Panellists:

*Lulama Makhubela, South African Management Development Institute*

*Martin Hall, University of Cape Town*



*Mandy Esterhuysen, University of the Witwatersrand*

Rapporteur: William Bennett, Peninsula Technikon

## **Panel (11): The Role of Radio, Television & Newspapers in Education**

Chair: Joe Thloloe, e-tv

Panellists:

*Tim Modise, SAFM*

*Nicola Galombik, SABC*

*Max du Preez, Columnist*

Rapporteur: Coco Cachalia, Kagiso Educational TV

## **Panel (12): Values, Character-Building & Educator Development**

Chair: Mark Potterton, Catholic Institute of Education

Panellists:

*Palesa Tyobeka, Department of Education*

*Yusef Waghid, University of Stellenbosch*

*Wally Morrow, University of Port Elizabeth*

Rapporteur: Greg Vlotman, Sid G. Rule Primary School

## **Panel (13): The Language Question in Schools**

Chair: Cynthia Marivate, Pan South African Language Board

Panellists:

*Stef Coetzee, University of the Free State*

*Neville Alexander, Project for the Study of Alternative Education in South Africa*

*Sizwe Satyo, University of Cape Town*

Rapporteur: Brenda Leibowitz, Department of Education

## **Panel (14): Sexual Mores & HIV/AIDS Education**

Chair: Ivan Toms, City of Cape Town

Panellists:

*Alan Flisher, University of Cape Town*

*Judy Nwokedi-Fortuin, Love Life Campaign*

*Kgobati Magome, Department of Education*

Rapporteur: Lulama Mbobo, Department of Education

## **Panel (15): Science, Bio-Ethics & Values**

Chair: Khotso Mokhele, National Research Foundation

Panellists:

*Solly Benatar, University of Cape Town*

*Namane Magau, Council for Scientific and Industrial Research*



*Mahomed Dada, University of Natal*

Rapporteur:

Michael Kahn, University of Cape Town / Department of Education

## **Panel (16): Gender and Schooling**

Chair: Joyce Pilliso-Seroke, Commission on Gender Equality

Panellists:

*Philippa Kabali-Kagwa, University of the Western Cape*

*Cheryl de la Rey, University of Cape Town*

*Gloria Britain, SABC Education*

Rapporteur: Henry Hendricks, National Professional Teachers Organisation of South Africa

Plenary: Report on Concurrent Sessions

Chairs:

Duncan Hindle, Department of Education

Mark Gevisser, author and journalist

Reporting on Sessions

9-12: Tembile Kulati, Department of Education

13-16: Marcus Balintulo, Cape Technikon

Keynote: *The Moral Properties of the South African People*

*Njabulo Ndebele, University of Cape Town*

Chair: Albie Sachs, Justice of the Constitutional Court

Lead-in-Remarks: Nozipho January-Bardill, Ambassador Designate

Closing Remarks and The Way Forward

Kader Asmal, MP, Minister of Education

Chair: Wilmot James, University of Cape Town





## 6.2 keynote speeches

### **Opening Keynote Address by Jacob Zuma: Deputy President of South Africa**

The Minister of Education

Cabinet Ministers and MECs

Government Officials

Representatives of the Diplomatic Corps

Ladies and Gentlemen

Allow me to begin by thanking the Department of Education for producing the Values, Democracy and Education Report which highlights the role that education can play in the entrenchment of democracy in South Africa.

This is an important initiative that can only enhance the contribution which our schools and our education system can make in the building of a common, harmonious South African nation.

Why, you may ask, is it important for us to redefine our values when the guiding principles of our young society have been enshrined in the South African constitution?

Education in South Africa was successfully used by the apartheid government to ensure that blacks occupied an inferior position in the social structure of our country. For the majority of South Africans, education was geared mainly for service related professions: teaching, nursing, the police force, etc.

This Report is necessary because there is a need for us to take a long and hard look at our society. We see in South Africa a degree of materialism, anger and callousness that finds expression in many forms and is to be found in many spheres of our society including our schools. We see also the meanness, fear, indifference and cruelty of some members of our society jealously guarding their privileges. Our schools as an integral part of our society have not been spared from the consequences of our unfortunate past.

Ladies and gentlemen, although a nation is generally regarded as broadly defined by its borders, the question "What constitutes a nation?" is relevant in South Africa in 2001 as it ever was pre 1994.

We have a Constitution of which we can be most proud, we have put in place the organs of a genuine democracy and we can safely say that our government is one that has been elected by a broad mass of South Africans.

But - to what extent are we a nation?



President Mbeki said in his state of the nation address two weeks ago that we share a legacy that we did not desire: a legacy of segregation, of oppression and violence. Yet, as a nation we have much to celebrate: The achievement of a peaceful political settlement and the development of a diverse civil society are but some of these.

Yet, we must ask the question whether these achievements have succeeded to mould us into a single nation that is bound by all that is held dear by people in a state of nationhood.

It is important for us to contextualise the origins of our problem as stemming from the distortion of our value system by the apartheid regime.

Information on how this came about is well documented. I believe that any attempt at correcting this distortion has to first deal with what has gone before to better deal with what is happening now. To be able to address the challenges of our country, we cannot ignore the impact that our past has had on our present.

The role played by the state in creating racially defined value systems that divided our country into separate nations cannot be over-emphasised. Because education was used as a tool for subjugation, it was only natural that resistance to the apartheid state would also come from this direction.

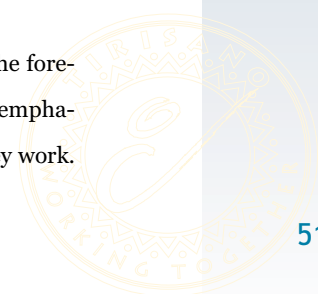
Over six years into democracy, South Africa is still grappling with the mammoth task of correcting the wrongs of the past in education. The first phase of this was creating a single education system. The many education systems that now constitute our Department of Education came with varying value systems that we are now trying to bring together to form a single value system for our schools.

Education is essential to addressing many of our social ills that extend from general society to our school-rooms and there find nurturing and become firmly entrenched as part of our future. For this reason we cannot have an education system that is abstract from our reality.

One of our greatest challenges during this period of transition is that of attempting to transform our country through an education that itself needs transformation. Educators thus have a challenge to understand this reality and position themselves appropriately for their task.

Educators are custodians of our value systems in the school environment. We entrust our children, the future of our country, to educators and, therefore, we have a responsibility to pay special attention to their working environment. I believe that teaching is more than just the mere imparting of textbook knowledge from a teacher to a pupil.

It requires a special commitment that is lacking in some of our educators. Educators must be in the forefront in helping to shape the ideal of a common South African nation through the values that they emphasise in our children. To do this successfully, they need support from the communities in which they work.



Parents in particular have a responsibility to be more active in this regard.

Ladies and gentlemen, I am sure you will all agree that values and nationhood cannot be legislated but have to evolve from a common understanding of who we are and a sharing of what we are about - through a process of socialisation.

As a nation in making, we need to go forward and to unshackle ourselves from anger, alienation and fear. The Values, Education and Democracy Report suggests that one of the ways to achieve 'tolerance' is via an understanding of who we are, of our past, and thus suggests the importance of unlocking our collective memory.

This is a collective memory of fear, hatred and desolation - but as the Truth and Reconciliation Commission demonstrated to us, we must face this legacy if we want to move forward with forgiveness and solidarity. The collective memory is also one of heroism, and the triumph of the will over adversity. These are proud traditions that provide a strong basis for building a common future.

One of the outcomes of the Values in Education Report has been the establishment of a reference group on History and Archaeology in Education, which I believe has produced an excellent report on memory and History in Education.

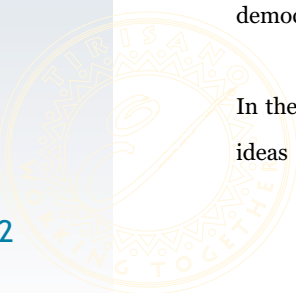
You might well ask, if we have a proud tradition espousing values of 'equity', 'tolerance', 'multilingualism', 'openness', 'accountability' and 'social honour', why do we need a report on Values, Education and Democracy? The answer is simple: we cannot sit back with our hands folded, now that we have an outstanding Constitution, and statutory institutions that are entrusted with realising the principles of this Constitution.

Ladies and gentlemen, the time to make our Constitution work, to take these ideas and discuss them, advocate them and implement them is now.

This is the challenge that I put to you gathered here tonight: how are we going to take the values of equity, openness or accountability, and to realise them in our daily practices as professionals, civil servants, educators and learners? One way suggested by the Values, Democracy and Education Report, is through dialogue.

There are a few issues dealt with in the Values, Democracy and Education Report I would like to refer to before closing. These are to do with how education can play an important role in the achievement of democracy and prosperity in South Africa.

In the section on 'openness', the Report stresses the importance of a culture of reading, openness to new ideas and debate, which are essential qualities for citizens in order to participate fully in a flourishing



democracy. In a country where six years ago there were approximately 3 million adults with no education at all, the importance of extending education to all our citizens cannot be underestimated.

Being able to read and write, being familiar with the language and conventions of power, makes it easier to participate in institutions of power, be it parliament, the local civic organisation or the bank.

At the same time I wish to issue a challenge to our young learners, university graduates and professionals: do not disrespect those who developed insight and wit from our oral traditions and communal gatherings.

Do not use your school knowledge to alienate you from indigenous knowledge and the wealth of culture embedded in our African ways of life. Knowledge and literacy means power - but to be wise or ethical comes from experience, being in touch with the soul of one's community, kinship and solidarity.

The section on openness in the Report also stresses the importance of numeracy, the scientific approach to problem-solving and technology. Whether we like it or not, there exists a worldwide arena of global economic and scientific interdependence.

This competitive world dictates that education must provide our learners with the motivation, skills and reflective understanding to work with technology, understand scientific phenomena and to compete in the international arena.

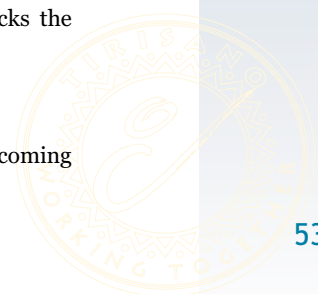
We have no choice: global forces determine what happens in our own backyard. We remain innumerate and techno-phobic at the cost of our own security and safety, and at the cost of the development of our nation. You should all be aware of the Human Resource Development Strategy launched by Government, with the Departments of Labour and Education as principal players.

This Strategy makes it clear that numeracy, scientific thinking, information and communication technology are of paramount importance in the information age. It stresses the importance of high levels of general education amongst a flexible workforce that is able to adapt to the rapidly changing global markets.

The Values, Democracy and Education Report acknowledges that a problem-solving approach to life does not develop in the head alone, but in the heart as well.

Success in education is achieved via literacy and numeracy, but also through creative and communal activities; as the Report states in the introduction: "The will and courage to approach life in this manner do not simply reside in science, but in the spirituality of humanity that defines our attitude to life." Democracy is achieved when we value human life - our own lives and those of others; when education unlocks the treasure within.

The significance of the Values, Democracy and Education initiative is not, as I indicated earlier, in coming



up with something new: it is to remind us of the vision yet to be achieved, and of the challenges that still lie ahead. It is to focus our minds on the role of education in achieving our ideals for a united, democratic and peace-loving nation. And finally, it is to set in motion a dialogue about these values, which should occur at this Conference, in your organisations and offices and above all, in your classrooms. I wish you well in your deliberations over the next two days.

In closing, let me reiterate the importance of a gathering of this nature. Educators, by the nature of their profession, have the best opportunity to help shape this ideal in our children for a better future.

The very act of getting together and talking; talking about what values we want to inculcate in our children, and about how we want to make education a more effective institution, represents an important part of the African Renaissance and of making our Constitution a living document.

I thank you.

**Address by the Honourable Nelson Mandela, former President of the Republic of South Africa**

Chairperson

Deputy President Jacob Zuma

Minister of Education Kader Asmal

Excellencies

Honoured Guests

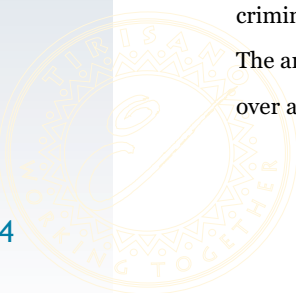
Ladies and Gentlemen

It is a very great privilege and honour to be present here this evening.

This Conference in so many ways exemplifies the spirit of the movement and the struggle that gave birth to our emancipation as a nation and people, and to our democracy.

What distinguished the struggle against apartheid was the almost universal support it received - from virtually all political persuasions and parties from almost every country in the world.

Ours was regarded as one of the great moral struggles of the twentieth century. The fight against racial discrimination and tyranny was seen by the world as a struggle for all of us to assert our common humanity. The anti-apartheid struggle transcended party or sectarian politics in the world; it was a universal struggle over and for humane values.



The manner in which we resolved our historical differences and overcame the political divisions of our past, vindicated that belief that ours was a moral struggle over values of human beings living together in society. The attainment of national democracy was not the end of the struggle over humane values. The eradication of poverty, for example, remains as the major challenge before we can even start to claim victories. Our Constitution speaks before anything else about the value of human dignity. While people still languish in the abject conditions of material and social deprivation, we continue that struggle for the realisation of humane values.

Our history also enjoins us to find ways of living together and working together to create the conditions for realising those ideals of equality and dignity for all.

Since 1994, South Africa has been involved in a nation-building project. This is because the divisions of our past, racial in character, had to be bridged and healed. It was very clear to us that to be successful, to prosper and grow, we had to be able to work together as one, whatever our differences.

Our capacity to rise above differences, discuss and settle conflicts of interests, and peacefully establish a democratic system on the fragile reed of the well-known and extraordinary inequality between our people, captured the imagination of the world. We were admired for having social qualities that took us out of and beyond apartheid.

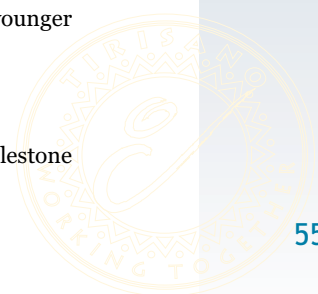
This approach to nation building was not only reflected in the conduct of individuals and national leadership, but also in the institutions we created. The Constitution is the highest expression of the values of nation building, and is made to work in practice by Parliament, the Constitutional Court and the many bodies supportive of democratic consolidation.

These bodies are expressions of democratic intent and peaceful co-operation between our people. They are the embodiment of values and ethical commitments to how we wish to live our lives. Core social values such as justice, rule by constitution, peaceful resolution of conflict and inter-racial harmony are at the heart of these bodies and arrangements.

Much as we may cherish the past and the traditions out of which these social and political arrangements came, we cannot take these values for granted. We cannot assume that because we conducted our struggle on the foundations of those values, continued adherence to them are automatic in the changed circumstances.

Adults have to be reminded of their importance and children must acquire them in our homes, schools and churches. Socialisation is the primary vehicle of human learning; in simple terms it is about our younger generation making values a part of themselves and their innermost being.

It is for these reasons that I welcome this Conference on Values, Education and Democracy. It is a milestone



in our national evolution, for judging from the programme, it focuses the mind on how to convert in practical ways our core social values into educational practice.

The very extensive and quite remarkable programme draws together many people from a diversity of backgrounds and taps into our talent for dialogue about the educational aspects of nation building.

It continues the traditions on which our struggle was fought, the groundwork we laid with our political negotiations and the nation-building project we embarked upon from 1994. We cannot commend you strongly enough for the initiative and the effort, because the challenge of nation building remains with us.

One of the most powerful ways of children and young adults acquiring values is to see individuals they admire and respect exemplify those values in their own being and conduct. Parents or educators or politicians or priests who say one thing and do another send mixed messages to those in their charge who then learn not to trust them.

The question of leadership, generally, and in the educational sphere particularly, is therefore of vital importance.

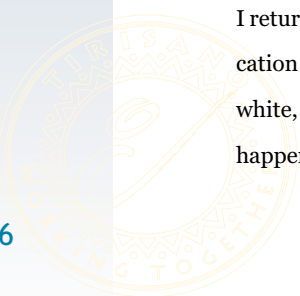
There is a passage in the Values, Education and Democracy Report that reads as follows:

Teachers and administrators must be leaders and set the example. Children learn by example, consciously or unconsciously. What parents or teachers do is much more important than what they say they do. If teachers do not want learners to be absent they must not be absent. If teachers expect homework to be completed, they must complete their homework. As the dedicated teacher well knows, a relationship of trust and fellowship develops when educators and learners become partners in the vocation of schooling.

I would like to see the various participants in the educational sector take this powerful moral injunction seriously. The development of the leadership potential of our education community having these values in all spheres - primary, secondary and tertiary - is one of the greatest challenges and opportunities of our time.

I have in my own way tried to be of some help in education by finding businesses and donors to build schools. But, as you well know, schools are living communities of people young and old and not buildings and infrastructure, important as the latter may be. We all are partners therefore, with everyone having something worthwhile to contribute.

I return in conclusion to the broader challenge of nation building. There is no question in my mind that education is one of the primary means by which the inequality in our country, between rich and poor, black and white, is to be tackled. Education is liberation. We are both encouraged by and rely on you to see that this happens.





Our struggle is not over. We all now have, as one nation and people, the historic task to promote and consolidate those humane values that have brought us to where we are. This is the major task of education, formal and informal.

I thank you.

## **Pride vs Arrogance: The New Patriotism**

### **Plenary Address by Professor Kader Asmal, MP, Minister of Education**

Comrades, colleagues, friends

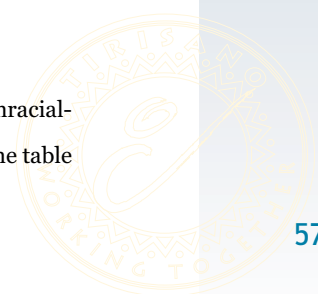
I would like to welcome you to this Conference on Values in Education and Democracy by taking you back, if I may, to the late 1980s. The townships are on fire, the future looks bleak indeed, and a black South African activist finds himself sitting in jail on charges of treason against the state. Long before “National Reconciliation” became the buzzword - long before black South Africans even had the power to forgive oppressors - he writes a letter to his teenage daughter, urging her not to hate his captors.

After giving her a lesson in Afrikaner history, he makes the claim - astonishing, if you think about where he is at the time - that “the history of the Afrikaner people is the history of the African people”.

“I have told you this tale,” he writes, “so that you may not fall victim to the follies of our Afrikaner compatriots. You must refuse the temptation to build our future on the unreliable foundations of mistrust and hatred of others... If only the Afrikaners knew how dearly we prize their friendship, were they only ready to accept that, as the Freedom Charter says, ‘South Africa belongs to all who live in it, black and white, and no government can justly claim authority unless it is based on the will of the people.’

“My dear Tjhabi,” he concludes, “I shall be happy if you forgive but not forget all the ugly things the Afrikaners have done to us. You must remember them so that you do not commit the same acts of barbarism on other human beings, particularly the Afrikaners themselves. Let us build our future on the love and mutual respect of all our country’s people. That is also why I am here. It is not because your mom, Kotane, Nonkululeko and yourself are not dear to me. Rather it is because your own future is inseparable from whatever peaceful and prosperous future the people of our country may hope for...Take care of yourself, my little girl, and always remember that Dad loves you. Goodbye!”<sup>1</sup>

The articulation of this essentially humanist value was committed to paper not in the heyday of nonracialism, before the movements were banned and their leaders imprisoned. Neither was it orated from the table



of victory, from the comfort of a parliamentary chamber after the battle had largely been won. It was written in prison, by a man awaiting trial, a man who had every reason to expect the death penalty for fighting for the liberation of his people. Its author penned it during the Delmas Treason Trial: he is now the Chairman of the African National Congress and the Minister of Defence, Minister, Mosiuoa Lekota.

Why am I opening a conference on Values, Education and Democracy in South Africa with Mosiuoa Lekota's letter to his daughter?

I suppose it is because I want to remind you - to remind us all - that we do not need to invent or imagine the values that make us uniquely South African; the values on which we can build our democracy. We can evince them all, from Lekota's letter to his daughter: tolerance and acceptance, an intractable belief in human rights, respect, responsibility, patriotism and, most important of all, an understanding of history, what bonds us, what cements us, as South Africans. This is the cement, the glue, that makes us different - not better or worse, but different from other peoples, who are searching for their own paths towards peace and democracy.

I am also struck by the pedagogical paradigm in which Lekota writes to his daughter. He tells her that he is writing to her because circumstances are such that he can trust neither the schools nor the young comrades on the barricades to teach her the values of history, to teach her the values of reconciliation that he believes she needs, as a young woman growing up in South Africa.

Now this is the point I really wish to make. Mosiuoa Lekota did not suck those values from thin air. He did not invent them. He learnt them - by his own admission at what was known as "The University". He learnt them because the elders on Robben Island took the time to teach him when he involuntarily spent six years with them after his involvement in the student uprisings of 1976 and his participation in the mass Democratic Movement. And those elders learnt them from their elders, who learnt them from their elders, back unto generations.

I sat in Parliament earlier this month, listening with immense pride as our President so clearly articulated these values. If I may remind you, he said:

Outwardly, we are a people of many colours, races, cultures, languages and ancient origins. Yet, we are tied to one another by a million visible and invisible threads. We share a common destiny from which none of us can escape because together we are human, we are South African, we are African.<sup>2</sup>

As I listened to him, I recalled a speech that a previous president of the African National Congress, Chief Albert Luthuli, made to white South Africans some time in the late 1950s. He said:

I believe that our vision of democracy in South Africa will be realised, because there is a grow-



ing number of people who are coming to accept the fact that in South Africa we are a multi-racial community - whether we like it or not. I am not prepared to concern myself with such questions as, 'Where have you come from?' 'Do you come from the North?' or 'Did you come from Europe?'

That is not important. What is important for our situation is that we are all here. That we cannot change. We are all here, and no one desires to change it or should desire to change it. And since we are all here, we must seek a way whereby we can realise democracy, so that we can live in peace and harmony in this land of ours.

Going back and looking at that speech, I realised that the Chief had done an extraordinary thing! He had urged his white audience to propagate the values of Western Civilisation!

I would like to suggest," he said, "that you cannot preserve your heritage by isolating yourself, or by isolating other people; you can only preserve human values by propagating them and creating a climate where these values will flourish. That is the only way of saving white civilisation! Propagate it! Don't hoard it! For if you hoard it, it is going to shrivel with you. But if you propagate it, more people will develop these values, preserve them, and prevent their dying out. We are interested in the preservation of those values, for they are eternal values.<sup>3</sup>

I think we might have a very fruitful discussion about whether the values of white civilisation are in fact worth preserving - or whether you can even talk, as the good Chief did, of a "white civilisation". I look forward to that debate. Right now, however, I am making another point. I am making the point that the democratic movement of liberation has always understood that wherever we come from originally - Africa, Asia, Europe - we all have values, and the good of our society rests on our ability to integrate all these values into our definition of South-Africanness. What I think we can get from Chief Luthuli - who, by the way, was the person in the world who brought me into the struggle - is that values cannot simply be asserted; that they must be put on the table, be debated, be negotiated, be synthesised, be modified, be earned. And that this process, this dialogue is in and of itself a value - a South African value - to be cherished.

What better way to teach this value than to teach the history of our negotiated settlement? And to teach that out of this negotiated settlement come the documents that form the foundation of our new, democratic value system - our Constitution and our Bill of Rights. Our values derive from these documents, and they are values we moulded, together, from our different heritages, our different positions in society. We cannot treat them as an after-thought - they should govern our lives and our relationships. They encapsulate what South Africans have desired for generations - a non-racial, non-sexist society based on equality, freedom and democracy.

My purpose, therefore, in appointing the Working Group on Values In Education, and in convening this



Conference, comes from a very simple premise indeed: if we are to live our Constitution and our Bill of Rights in our everyday life rather than just hear it interpreted for us by the venerable elders of our Constitutional Courts and statutory Commissions, we have to distil out of it a set of values that are as comprehensible and meaningful to Grade Ones and Grade Twos as they are to Justice Kate O'Regan and Dr Barney Pitsoana.

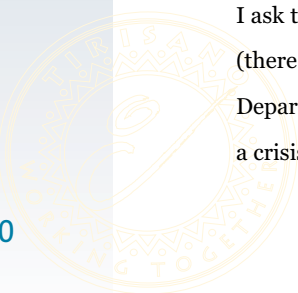
Just as Chief Luthuli taught me, just as Nelson Mandela taught Mosiuoa Lekota who then taught his daughter, Tjhabeni, we all need to find a way of teaching our children what it means to be South African. And before we can teach these values, we have to make sure that we understand and assimilate these values ourselves.

There is an argument that any talk of rights must, by definition, be framed by a discourse of morality, that it must thus be reactionary and retrogressive, in that it will inevitably lead to an erosion of the human rights culture as enshrined by the Constitution and the Bill of Rights.

I am afraid I am compelled to argue exactly the reverse. From all the listening and observing I have done in my eighteen months as Minister of Education, I have heard, over and over again, that because there is the absence of a clearly-articulated value system to which everyone subscribes in our places of learning, fundamental human rights are being violated every day in our classrooms. The lack of teaching and learning that takes place, the criminality and lawlessness in so many of our schools and the authoritarianism and outlandishness of initiation ceremonies in many of our schools who should know better, makes a mockery of the lofty ideals embodied in our Constitution and our Bill Of Rights.

How can we talk of everyone having the right to basic education in our schools when so many teachers don't show up to teach, and so many learners don't show up to learn? How can we speak of the right to dignity in an environment where learners and educators abuse each other verbally, physically and even sexually? How can we speak of a right to dignity, too, when so many educators find themselves criticised and reviled by the communities in which they work, and held responsible for impossible conditions which are entirely beyond their control? How can we speak of a right to freedom and security of the person when going to school often means running the gauntlet of crime, drugs and criminality? How can we speak of a right to freedom of expression when learners, educators and parents alike are discouraged from talking out? What does it mean to say, "everyone has the right to choose their profession freely" when the dysfunctionality of our education system precludes such choice? How can we speak about the right to use the language of one's choice when many educators do not even begin to understand - let alone teach - the mother tongues of their learners? How, finally, can we speak about a child's best interests being of paramount importance - as the Bill of Rights does - when we cannot even agree about what is in a child's best interests in the first place?

I ask these questions not because I wish to instil in you, or in the society at large, any sense of moral panic (there is enough self-flagellation in our country, in any case), but because I am convinced - as is my Department - that we face a crisis of daunting magnitude in the education sector; and thus - by extension - a crisis of daunting magnitude in our society at large.



I think that one reason why there is fear of a discourse of morality taking hold and eroding our culture of human rights is because, in this globalising, post-modern world, traditional authorities have found themselves losing control over their subjects, and nation states - some of them new and vulnerable - have found themselves losing control over their economies. More often than not, the primary defence against this anxiety has manifested itself as a moral call-to-arms; a need to return to “family values”, to tried-and-tested orthodoxies, to fundamentalist readings of the canonical texts.

In very different ways, we have seen this in the so-called advanced states of Europe and North America; in the corrosive nationalism and the revival of racism, in the erosion of secular statehood and the rise of sectarianism and of bigoted religious extremism in many countries.

There is, I fear, evidence of this trend repeating itself in our own classrooms and schools. This evidence is contained in the school-based research into values conducted on behalf of the Department of Education. One key finding cuts, I feel, to the heart of the dilemma we face. When asked about the which values they found important in education, educators responded, overwhelmingly, with the need for old-style authoritarian discipline and control in the classroom. Indeed, they went further. A large majority, 78,4% of them, thought that the Government put too much emphasis on Children’s Rights, which led to problems in their classrooms.

They said things like:

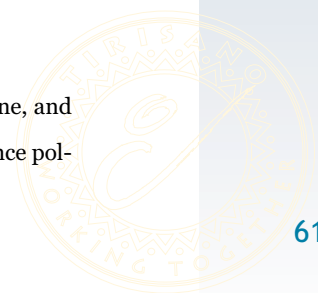
“The government is influencing our children not to respect their teachers and to lack discipline”, and, “The students can’t handle the new freedom they’ve got and so they tend to become disrespectful” .<sup>4</sup>

I would like to suggest that what is happening in the schools and classrooms of our new, democratic South Africa is a direct analogue of what is happening to the nation-state in our globalising, post-modern, post-national, boundary-less world: an anxiety around the loss of control - the loss of power, as manifested, perhaps most neatly in the outlawing of corporal punishment and the retiring of the trusty old school cane - is leading to a nostalgia for “the good old days” of “family values”, when teachers (or patriarchs, or rulers) were in firm control of the lives and destinies of their subjects, and the trains ran on time!

And so, the research concludes:

Until educators experience the concept of ‘child-centred’ learning as a mechanism to gain (rather than to lose) respect and discipline in their classrooms, the tension between representative and rights-centred interpretations of values is likely to continue.<sup>5</sup>

In other words: unless we nurture a value system in our schools that is workable, owned by everyone, and in line with the principles not only of our Bill of Rights but of all our curriculum and school governance pol-



icy and legislation, we run the dangerous risk of turning our classrooms into a battleground between an anarchic freedom that masquerades as “Human Rights” and an authoritarian backlash that masquerades as “Moral Regeneration”.

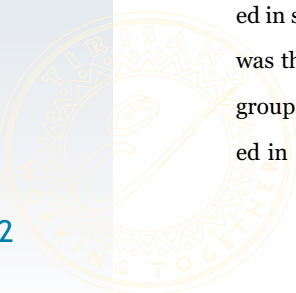
Let me be absolutely clear about this: anarchy is not the route to freedom; neither is authoritarianism the route to good citizenship. Our mission - in this Conference, in the sector of education, in the forging of a new South Africa with an empowered and responsible populace - is to find a path towards freedom that is not anarchic; a path towards good citizenship that is not totalitarian.

How do we find this path? I think it is essential to put this process into some kind of context - because in the education sector, we have always been concerned with the generation of democratic values in our places of learning. This is explicit in all our post-1994 legislation, and in all our policy formulation. Curriculum 2005, for example, committed educators to instilling in learners knowledge, skills and values, and many of the specific outcomes address themselves specifically to values generation. The evidence is, however, that educators have - not surprisingly - found these outcomes among the most difficult to teach, and so, in our Curriculum Review Process, we have set up a committee looking specifically at Human Rights and Inclusivity in Education. Any work we do in Values in Education must happen in tandem with these vital initiatives of the Curriculum Review Process.

Values - I repeat - cannot simply be asserted. This much is made clear in the documentation of the school-based research, a copy of which you have all been given in your conference documentation, and which I urge you to read closely. This research suggests that all stakeholders - parents, learners and teachers - are very unhappy with the value systems that they currently perceive to be in operation in our schools. It confirms the recommendations of our Working Group in several key areas - most notably, in the understanding of the role of History in education, and in the absolute hunger, in our schools, for any activity, curricular or extracurricular, that facilitates dialogue, communication and creative expression - be this in the arts or on the playing fields.

Teacher, learners and parents alike feel that communication and dialogue are sorely lacking in our schools, and they crave the opportunity for more of it. For this reason, the research warns against “an emphasis on value prescription”. Values, it says, “are not changed by prescription, but through dialogue, experience, new knowledge and critical thinking”.<sup>6</sup>

I could not agree more. Which is why, when I imagine how we are going to draft our programme for values generation within our educational system, I find myself, once more, reaching back into South Africa’s history - this time to the model of the Freedom Charter. This document was not, as has been suggested, drafted in smoke-filled rooms in Johannesburg by a few intellectuals. This is nonsense. What actually happened was that, in preparation for the Congress of the People of 1955, activists went to church groups, women’s groups, youth groups all over the country and asked them to write their own wish-lists for what they wanted in an ideal South Africa. These demands arrived in their thousands, on little slips of paper, and were



shoved away into a suitcase, because nobody really knew what to do with them. Finally, as the date of the Congress drew near, a drafting committee was given the job of synthesising the scraps of paper into what became known as The Freedom Charter.

I want to make a point, not so much about the document that came out of this process, as about the legacy it left behind. A new book by the US-based geographer, Gillian Hart, looks at two neighbouring municipalities in northern KwaZulu-Natal, and tries to make sense of why one of them, Ladysmith, appears to be faring so well under democracy, while another, Newcastle, appears to be struggling. Her conclusion is fascinating and instructive: Govan Mbeki had been a teacher in Newcastle during the years immediately preceding the Congress of the People, and he had mobilised the community around the generation of demands. This had facilitated a level of political consciousness - an understanding of democratic values, of accountability and popular participation - that persists to this day. Clear evidence, indeed, that the discussion and debate and negotiation of values is a value in and of itself, a value to be nurtured and cherished.<sup>7</sup>

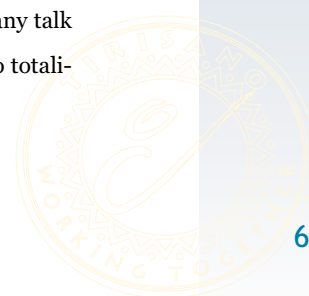
Now, half a century later, Govan Mbeki's son - the President of South Africa - speaks frequently of "the New Patriotism" and his predecessor coined the vivid imagery of the "RDP of the soul". In his latest "Letter From The President", published in the online journal of the ANC, he explains his vision of what he calls "the New Patriotism".

The New Patriotism, he says, requires us to proceed:

... from common positions about the nature of the problems our country faces. We must share a common recognition of the fact that all of us stand to gain from the transformation of SA into a non-racial, non-sexist and prosperous country. Unless we build such a society, the better life for all that we all seek would be realised neither for the whites nor for the blacks. This means that all of us must engage in a difficult and protracted struggle to defeat the accumulated prejudices that all of us harbour in our minds. Nobody is born either superior or inferior. No people is predestined to succeed or to fail. No child is born hating. Our neighbours, whether black or white, are as human as we all are and as South African as we all are.<sup>8</sup>

If these values are at the core of the "New Patriotism", how could anyone dispute it? Even in this post-modern, post-colonial world, this world of fracture and elision and partition, surely there remains some centrifugal force, some dialogue towards consensus that sets as its task the formulation - as President Mbeki has it - of a common position out of which we can build a new society?

Why are some of us so fearful of the notion of a "New Patriotism"? Why do some of us worry that any talk of values puts us "on the RIGHT track" rather than the right track, on a path to fundamentalism, to totalitarianism, to authoritarianism?





I would venture to suggest that this is because we do not always understand the critical distinction between Pride and Arrogance.

Pride is the fount of patriotism; arrogance the source of jingoism and chauvinism. We know, from the remarkable work of our honoured guest, Professor Edward Said, that Europe's Imperial designs stemmed from its own sense of deficiency; its own anxieties about what it was lacking. Arrogance derives from a lack of confidence that requires you to subjugate others so that you can feel better about yourself. Those who thought they could subjugate and control the destinies of millions of African people were unconscionably arrogant - tragically so, fatally so.

Pride is something else entirely. If arrogance is a reaction, then pride is an action. If arrogance devalues the other, then pride values the self. If arrogance is the Old Patriotism, then pride is the New Patriotism.

New Patriots are confident enough to understand that, as well as national identities, they have both ethnic identities and global identities. And because they see themselves as a complex fusion of the local, the regional, the national and the global, they understand - with no difficulty - that their neighbours are such complex fusions too.

And so out of pride, out of the New Patriotism, stems the very opposite of chauvinism and xenophobia: out of the New Patriotism stems the values of tolerance and acceptance, of equality and democracy, of dialogue and negotiation and conflict resolution that make us uniquely South African; uniquely South African in the uniquely global universe that is the 21st century.

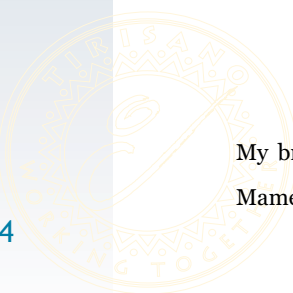
Of course there will be contestation; of course there will be disagreement, but we must all help to build a new civic culture and identity.

These are the values that I hope we can look towards as we discuss Values, Education and Democracy over the next few days.

As you may know, the second series of our award-winning educational drama, *Yizo Yizo*, began on television this week. This is another initiative we have supported to introduce a process of values generation in our schools. I have just been shown some focus group research, conducted for *Yizo Yizo*. A Mamelodi teacher was quoted as saying the following:

Apartheid had one good thing. It kept us together. We had a common enemy to fight. We helped each other. When the common enemy went, we were suddenly left alone and can't find the same powerful thing to hold us together. Each one for himself. And this has ruined a sense of community.

My bravest hope is that in the days and weeks and months to come, we will work, together with that Mamelodi teacher, to find something even more powerful to hold her community together; something so



powerful that it will not only rebuild the sense of community she feels has evaporated, but will bond her community of Mamelodi into the larger community of South Africa.

My bravest hope is that this cement, this glue, will be ground not out of the battle against a common enemy, but out of a battle for a common destiny.

I thank you.

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<sup>1</sup> Mosiuoa Lekota, "Prison Letters to a Daughter", Johannesburg, 1991, p190

<sup>2</sup> State of the Nation Address of the President of South Africa at the National Assembly, 9 February 2001

<sup>3</sup> In Carter G and Karis T, "From Protest To Challenge: A Documentary History of African Politics in South Africa 1882 - 1964": Volume 3, p458

<sup>4</sup> "Values, Education and Democracy". School-based Research - Interim Findings; Department of Education and Wits Education Policy Unit, 2001

<sup>5</sup> Ibid

<sup>6</sup> "Values, Education and Democracy". School-based Research - Interim Findings; Department of Education and Wits Education Policy Unit, 2001

<sup>7</sup> Hart, G, "Disabling Globalisation: Tales of Two Towns in South Africa", Berkeley: 2001

<sup>8</sup> ANC Today, Vol 1, #4, 16-22 Feb 2001

## **Race, Affirmative Action and Democracy in the 21st Century**

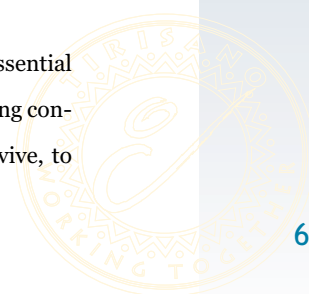
### **Keynote Address by John Powell, University of Minnesota Law School**

"What is clear is that we cannot say that we are committed to nation building and, at the same time, seek to marginalise any section of that population. At the same time, it is equally clear that we cannot speak of nation building while doing nothing decisive to end the disadvantaged position of those whom the apartheid system deliberately sought to disadvantage. I am also convinced that the non-racial future of our country depends to a great degree on what the youth of our country themselves do to bring about this result." — Thabo Mbeki at the 2000 Youth Conference

"The power of education extends beyond the development of skills we need for economic success. It can contribute to nation-building and reconciliation." 1997 Speech by Nelson Mandela at the Education Africa Awards

## **Introduction**

The 1990 World Conference on Education for All defined basic education as encompassing both "essential learning tools (such as literacy, oral expression, numeracy and problem-solving) and the basic learning content (such as knowledge, skills, values and attitudes) required by human beings to be able to survive, to



develop their full capacities to live and work in dignity, to participate fully in development, to improve the quality of their lives, to make informed decisions, to continue learning.”

Further, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was affirmed in 1993 at the Vienna World Conference on Human Rights, where it was reiterated that: States have an obligation to create and maintain adequate measures at the national level, in particular in the fields of education, health and social support, for the promotion and protection of the rights of persons in vulnerable sectors of their populations; and States are duty-bound to ensure that education is aimed at strengthening the respect of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

But, despite the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) declaration that everyone has a right to an education, it was found in 1990, at the Education for All conference, that:

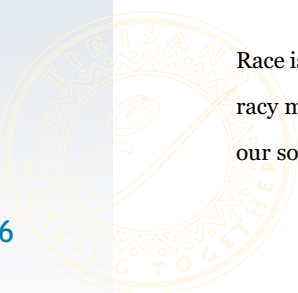
1. More than 100 million children including at least 60 million girls, had no access to primary schooling;
2. More than 960 million adults are illiterate, and functional illiteracy is a significant problem in all countries, industrialized and developing;
3. More than one-third of the world’s adults have no access to the printed knowledge, new skills and technologies that could improve the quality of their lives and help them shape, and adapt to, social and cultural change; and
4. More than 100 million children and countless adults fail to complete basic education programs; millions more satisfy the attendance requirements but do not acquire essential knowledge and skills.

Education and democracy are both ideals that promise a great deal. At best, they both provide the means for effective, meaningful participation in all aspects of society, from access to adequate housing and employment, to engagement in the political process. Too often, however, both education and democracy fail to fully meet their promised goals.

Often scholars assume the democratic nature of a nation if it holds free and fair elections.<sup>1</sup> But as the recent American presidential election demonstrated<sup>2</sup>, this assumption poses a serious challenge to the democratic ideal. Was democracy at work when large numbers of blacks were turned away from the polls? How would the United States be different today if those votes had counted?

Education plays a crucial role in building a racial democracy. It provides the means for achieving justice and fairness in society. It is also a system in which justice must operate for education to be effective. Yet is justice achieved when 75 to 88 percent of students in U.S. high poverty schools are students of color? When only 20 percent of American students in urban high-poverty schools score at the basic level or higher on standardized reading tests, are children gaining the skills they need to fully participate in society?<sup>3</sup>

Race is where we consistently fail in meeting the ideals of education and democracy. Education and democracy make it possible for us, as individuals, to constitute ourselves. It is only as we become more aware of our society, our place in it, and exercise our ability to participate in it that we become fully constituted. At



least as significant, education and democracy together work to constitute our larger society and societal values. The notion of racial hierarchy makes it difficult, if not impossible, to achieve either education or democracy completely. Racial hierarchy makes it impossible for some members, and difficult for others, to fully constitute themselves or participate in society.

In this presentation, I will first describe the historical role of education in building nations and consider how education can shape the newly emerging South African democracy. I will then examine how both the United States and South Africa have failed to meet the challenge of providing black children with the kind of education that empowers them to participate as citizens in their societies. The work of creating not just a system of education, but an entire society, is an ongoing one that must include attention to race. A necessary policy for building equity back into both South African and American education programs is affirmative action. Only with policies in practice that move us away from racial hierarchy will we be able to appreciate the constitutive nature of education in the lives of individuals, communities, and entire nations.

## Historical Role Of Education in Nation Building

Long before the 1990 World Conference definition of basic education, John Dewey wrote of education as broader than deliberate and formal schooling. “Association with others provides another avenue for learning. Through association we learn to consider the effect of our actions upon others...” Dewey also saw education, in his broad understanding of the term, as a means of continuous renewal. “Through education, we constantly equip our children with the tools to live.”<sup>4</sup>

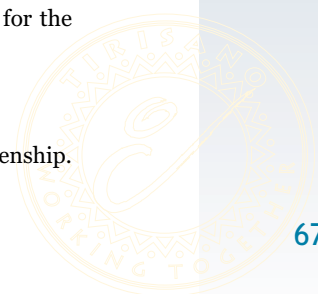
Similarly, James Baldwin writes in *The Price of the Ticket*:

The whole process of education occurs within a social framework and is designed to perpetuate the aims of society...

The paradox of education is precisely this — that as one begins to become conscious one begins to examine the society in which he is being educated. The purpose of education, finally, is to create in a person the ability to look at the world for himself, to make his own decisions... [t]o ask questions of the universe, and then to learn to live with those questions... the way he achieves his identity.<sup>5</sup>

These higher aspirations for educating our citizenry were not always a part of our history. In Europe and the United States, education was not viewed as necessary for nation building. It was believed better for peasants, slaves, and the underclass to remain ignorant and uneducated. With the Industrial Revolution, education became important, not for the lofty goals of building citizenship and participation, but for the more mundane need of disciplining workers for growing industries.

Only in the last 140 years has mass education reflected the goals of building democracy and citizenship.



Although the need to distribute knowledge and build competence through our education systems remains important, it is a narrow view of how education does and should function within society. Focusing only on academic achievement or the economic consequences of education (or its failures) makes education only a private benefit and misconstrues any public benefit as merely a sum of individual successes.<sup>6</sup> Education, and public education, in particular, sets out to give children a common experience, both learned, and created through their various interactions. The success of education can also be measured by the values of a society and by the experiences of all its citizens. Essential to any education system is attention to this transformative nature of learning. Through the experience of educating or constituting ourselves, we shape our values and our world.

## ■ Two roles of education:

**(1) Learning and access to opportunity:** this is reflected today in our attention to achievement, test scores, and graduation rates, as well as the role of education in creating a productive workforce.

- The practical goals of education grew initially out of the industrial revolution years when education was necessary to train a new type of worker.<sup>7</sup>
- As the population increased in Europe and with the full-scale industrial phase in place, educational enrollment increased significantly, and mass education followed. Educational goals were dictated by the economic requirements of the industrial age.<sup>8</sup>
- In the U.S. the education of the masses was first targeted to farmers, who had to relocate or learn new skills after the industrial age. Later, education was used to extend educational and employment opportunities to the white, urban poor.<sup>9</sup>
- “Mass education arose primarily as a means of transforming individuals into members of these new institutional frames that emerged in Europe after the Middle Ages. The nature of society was redefined; society became a rational, purposive project devoted to achieving the new secular ends of progress and human equality.”<sup>10</sup>
- Education today serves important economic functions. This is clear when we see that in the U.S. racial minorities are alienated from economic and social participation when they have limited access to education.<sup>11</sup> In an increasingly technologically-advanced world, access to higher education has been critical to moving out of poverty.<sup>12</sup> There is a significant gap between those who graduate from college and those who just graduate from high school.<sup>13</sup> The U.S. Census Bureau estimates a wage differential of 50 percent between college and high school graduates.<sup>14</sup>
- Because earning a college degree leads to greater earning power and access to the opportunities of housing, meaningful employment, transportation, further education, and social networks; bias, discrimination, and segregation in higher education work to dismantle the opportunity structures that would be available for racial minorities.<sup>15</sup> Because racial minorities undergo systematic placement by tracking and are allocated to vocational education programs, they are less likely to receive the type of preparation required for college, and they cannot compete effectively with the white students.<sup>16</sup>
- In South Africa, because of a lack of education, 42 percent of the population between the ages of 15 and 30 are without a job. Among them, blacks are worst off, equaling 45 percent of those jobless while whites only account for 12 percent of that number.<sup>17</sup>
- Faced with the challenge of globalization, countries that are more economically disadvantaged, like so

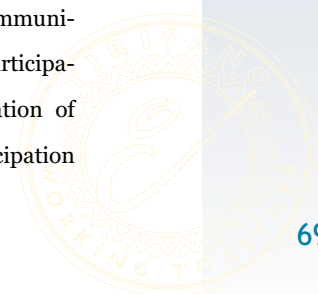


many countries in sub-Saharan Africa, would have to learn new skills to compete in the ever-changing global market.<sup>18</sup> Countries in Sub-Sahara have seen their foreign aid cut down to the bare basics, have had their share of world trade decline sharply and wealth inequalities have widened even more in the last decades, while wage employment is declining.<sup>19</sup> This has resulted in the “number of Africans enduring absolute poverty [growing] by almost two thirds in the first half of 1980’s to constitute more than half of the population.”<sup>20</sup> South Africa, even though an industrialized country, still faces many of the challenges of less-developed countries because of the great racial divide in the aftermath of Apartheid.

- Throughout the world, money dictates who is educated and who is not. Education’s economic benefits are certainly great. But education is also a forum in which justice, and not merely equality, is imperative. Neither equality in income nor ability to pay for education translate into equality of educational access, attainment, or performance. Iris Young concurs, “Money continues to be a major discriminator. Middle- and upper-class children have better schools than poor or working-class children. Thus they are better prepared to compete for college admission. If by chance poor and working-class children qualify for college, they often cannot pay[.]”

(2) **Citizen building, participation in democracy:** this is reflected in the notion of public education for all, and that effective education creates a better society. If education gives individuals the ability to participate more fully in society, then education is working to constitute both individuals and a nation.

- The education needed to deal with the many realities in Sub-Saharan Africa has to prepare citizens to play a more active role to improve the life of the community in their respective societies.<sup>21</sup> Only then would the traditional social order, which continues in South Africa and elsewhere to discriminate against and oppress so many citizens, be changed.<sup>22</sup> To do this, students in Sub-Saharan Africa need to be creative, and learn the new skills that would allow them to compete in this scientific and technical world.<sup>23</sup> New jobs are needed to sustain the employed force as well as absorb new job seekers.<sup>24</sup> New policies are needed to alleviate poverty and close the gap between the extreme inequalities in wage and wealth. “every nation’s primary assets will be its citizens’ skills and insights, which must be developed if a society is to survive economically, especially as it enters the [new] century.”<sup>25</sup>
- This idea of democracy, because it argues that public policy alters the behavior of people and should be used to support democracy, involves social justice and implicates equality among groups in the legal, social, economic and political forums.<sup>26</sup> In this sense, governments can, through the use of public programs, advance democratic practices.<sup>27</sup>
- This idea of democracy taken further introduces a denationalized form of citizenship, where people from around the globe can come together to create policies altering behavior of people or nations. In this way education makes the larger world more accessible, while fostering global citizenship. A good case in point was the fight against the Apartheid system in South Africa.<sup>28</sup>
- By extension, because education plays a vital role in the construction and maintenance of communities, the advancement of education for all is vital to democratic ideals.<sup>29</sup> Then, democratic participation requires minimizing segregation and fostering diversity and the effective representation of oppressed and disadvantaged groups.<sup>30</sup> Simply put, democracy is impossible without the participation



of every citizen.

- Education is central to democracy and is a prerequisite for meaningful access to economic, social and political life.<sup>31</sup> Education is also central for nation building.<sup>32</sup> All discussions of education are at essence discussions of citizenship. The U.S. Supreme Court has identified “the objectives of public education as the inculcation of fundamental values necessary for the maintenance of a democratic political system.” Education, then, is about the ability of members of all races to participate fully in democratic structures, and central to the formation and sustenance of racially just democratic society.

■ **These two roles of education complement each other:** true access to opportunity requires an education system that is available to all; when education is not limited, all citizens have the equal opportunity to achieve.

- Molly Townes O’Brien has written that the efficacy of education could be measured by its capacity to “instill moral character, critical thinking ability, and cultural literacy” but it is studied, instead, in terms of “standardized test scores, drop-out rates, or occupational attainment.” It is necessary to integrate these two measures; not only to achieve parity of education opportunities, but also to create a just space for the constitution of the self, education, and democracy.
- Edmund Gordon has written that an effective education and social justice goals, a too often disowned democratic ideal, are inextricably linked:

There may be some educational context/process relationships that are so symbiotic as to defy separation. It appears that education and social justice are so symbiotically related. In modern societies the achievement of universally effective education may not be possible in the absence of contexts in which social justice is valued and practiced. Similarly, the achievements of social justice may not be possible in the absence of achievement of universally effective education.

- The dilemma of democracy and citizenship can be problematic, more so in a multicultural society. Both theories have been advanced by white middle- and upper-class heterosexual males who still identify a common citizenship as one that is homogeneous and that happens through systematic exclusion of what is different. Thus, in their minds equal access might mean forced integration into the mainstream.<sup>33</sup> “Theories of democracy, while effective in identifying the sources of democratic power, participation, and representation in legitimate political democratic systems, had been unable to prevent the systematic exclusion of large segments of the citizenship.”<sup>34</sup>
- Australia: The capacity to represent all citizens effectively has meant forcing the Aborigines to try to espouse the dominant white culture in order for them to receive government aid for education and other social needs. “To be eligible for most of the available funding, Aboriginal communities are required to demonstrate Western organizational structures.”<sup>35</sup>
- Only, democratization of a society should mean a continual renegotiation of the meaning of fundamental rights, including that of education, on a global society. Democracy should involve the fundamental right to participate, which in turn necessitates a critical political literacy. Thus, more attention should be paid to particular notions of power and belonging rather than just the idea of democracy, and for Aborigines and white Australians this means having a common ground which would be an





inclusive society that is not assimilationist. This would entail white Australians understanding Aboriginal political and social structures and vice versa.<sup>36</sup>

- Guttman states that educational policy must first satisfy conditions of non-discrimination and non-repression before it encourages public discussion about the democratic component.<sup>37</sup> Limiting racial minorities access to education contradicts ideas of democracy.<sup>38</sup>

- Martha Minow writes:

Schools afford an arena about what kind of society we should be, how the old and new generations should relate, whether commerce should govern democracy or democracy shall govern commerce, and how individual freedoms should be rendered compatible with the common good. It is imperative that the new round of school fights center as much on the symbols of inclusion and equality as upon the rhetoric of individualism and quality. These values need one another so that the whole is at least as worthy as the sum of its parts, if not perhaps more so.

## How Have we Reconciled the Two Roles of Education?

The understanding of American and South African educational policies both past and present, is central to a successful reform in modern South Africa and in the U.S. Because governments in both South Africa and the United States sought to maintain subordinated status for blacks, the education blacks received in both nations were and still are inferior.<sup>39</sup> This is significant since we have seen that education is a powerful tool to achieve social, political and economic empowerment.<sup>40</sup> In both countries, there was and continues to be an under funding of education for blacks. This makes it difficult for them to progress economically, since the lack of adequate education has resulted in blacks not being able to compete in the labor market, and thus advance economically.<sup>41</sup> The situation in South Africa is even more critical, since most black children are still unable to continue their education beyond elementary school.<sup>42</sup>

■ **United States:** problems of the gap in achievement according to race; educational and residential segregation by race and class.

- In the United States, stringent racial legal classifications based on phenotypic appearance, bloodline, or ancestry resulted in Jim Crow laws, anti-miscegenation laws, racially restrictive housing covenants, and black segregation.<sup>43</sup>
- Even prior to the period of “separate but equal” education, many states, especially those in the South, had enacted laws that barred the education of African-Americans.<sup>44</sup> The United States Supreme Court decision in *Plessy v. Ferguson*, by condoning state governments policies of separating public school children by race, further endangered school education for black children.<sup>45</sup>
- Historically, states segregated black children into chronically under funded and substandard schools to limit and undermine their education.<sup>46</sup> Often, a correlation exists between educational spending and achievement.<sup>47</sup> Another consideration is that poor urban school districts have much greater student needs, requiring greater resources, than wealthier school districts.





- In the U.S., the reliance on local taxes to finance schools has undermined educational opportunities amongst racial minorities.<sup>48</sup> Through local taxes, local governments fund schools, libraries, health and welfare services, highway, sanitation, fire and police protection etc.<sup>49</sup> Often, disparities in educational funding occur when local property taxes in more affluent districts yield a higher tax base and more money to fund the needs of their pupils, while less affluent districts have fewer resources to meet their increasing needs.<sup>50</sup> Disparities in educational equity and funding have had a significant effect on educational outcomes.<sup>51</sup>
- This has been significant for racial minorities since the U.S. Supreme Court has not required states to provide supplementary funding to equalize funding across districts.<sup>52</sup> Some state supreme courts have found that the reliance of local taxes to fund schools is unconstitutional under their state constitutions.<sup>53</sup> The U.S. Supreme Court's non-responsiveness to racial issues in education has made it difficult to reach educational equity.<sup>54</sup>

■ **South Africa:** actual disparities in education systems, facilities, quality.

- In South Africa the legal racial categorization ruled four categories of white, coloured, Asian/Indian, and African; and the laws created the Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act<sup>55</sup>, the Immorality Amendment Act, the Population Registration Act<sup>56</sup>, the Group Areas Act<sup>57</sup>, and the Reservation of Separate Amenities Act, to make sure that the races remained separate and unequal.<sup>58</sup>
- South Africa has undergone the same racial inequalities in education as the U.S. Historically, educational policy in South Africa developed alongside the statutory laws requiring racial separation in all other areas.<sup>59</sup>
- Educational policy pre-Apartheid provided compulsory segregated and free education for white children, non-compulsory free education for African children and colored children.<sup>60</sup>
- This pattern of segregation in government-sponsored education was further reinforced and formalized during the Apartheid years with the introduction of the Bantu Education Act of 1953.<sup>61</sup>
- 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 in any kind of school in existence is being taught to expect that he will live his adult life under a policy of equal rights, he is making a big mistake ...There is no place for him in the European community above the level of certain forms of labour.<sup>62</sup>

- Educational services for blacks reflected deliberate and continuing disparities in funding and facilities in per capita spending, pupil teacher ratios, teacher pay scales, school facilities, compulsory education requirements, school attendance practices, secondary school matriculation rates<sup>63</sup>, and university entrance examinations.<sup>64</sup>

Many people were victims of nonphysical violations of their basic human rights during the apartheid years... These rights include the right to an education, which in our country often translates into the right to work and earn a living. In the context of the country's high level of illiteracy, infant mortality, poverty, rising unemployment and the resulting increase in violent crime, especially within the black communities, the



denial of educational opportunities to the majority of people not only closed the doors of learning to these communities but also systematically deprived them and their families of the means to life.<sup>65</sup>

- Further, the government instituted a constitutional mandate during the Apartheid years that allowed students to receive education in their official language of choice.<sup>66</sup> This has resulted in “autogenous education” which had become little more than racially segregated education.<sup>67</sup> Under this vision, the government would continue to fund racially segregated schools, but require at least seven years of free and compulsory education.<sup>68</sup>
- In South Africa, just as in the U.S., the problem of housing has made the lack of educational opportunities even more glaring. Access to the right housing often means access to the right education.<sup>69</sup> However, because of the acute segregation and the lack of an urban housing development program for the majority of Africans, they lack the basic water and sanitation necessary. In both the rural and urban areas many have had to build camps made of mud, plastic and corrugated iron sheets for shelter.<sup>70</sup>
- In fact the housing problem is so dire that it would require the building of 150,000 houses over a period of 10 years to meet the huge backlog in facilities and amenities.<sup>71</sup>

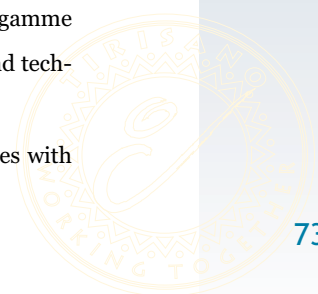
## The State of Race and Education in South Africa and The United States

■ When a state provides education to its citizenry, it invites participation and belonging. These assets help constitute a nation. The transformative effect of education - the ability of an educational environment to open up opportunities and change people’s lives on multiple levels - also transforms a nation by creating the possibility of participation. [“Transformative action” discussed again with affirmative action below.]

■ The end of segregation in the US and the end of Apartheid in South Africa did not end historical truths. In both cases, racially discriminatory systems have become embedded in a nation’s consciousness. Significant nation-building points of departure have held a promise of democracy, but the full meaning of these promises has not been realized. In the U.S., *Brown v. Board of Education* represented a significant jurisprudential departure from the Supreme Court’s history of de jure racial segregation in public schools with its rejection of separate education as being equal.<sup>72</sup> Similarly, the advent of Nelson Mandela to the presidency in the 1994 multi-racial elections, and the relatively new 1996 Constitution have helped in the rejection of the divisive politics of Apartheid.<sup>73</sup> But these first steps must be followed through with longer strides.

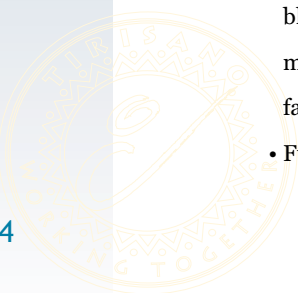
### ■ Race and education in South Africa:

- The South African Constitution states that “[e]veryone is equal before the law and has the right to equal protection of the law.”<sup>74</sup> The Constitution also guarantees the right to education.<sup>75</sup>
- The South African Government has also introduced The Reconstruction and Development Programme to deal “with education from primary to tertiary level, from child-care to advanced scientific and technological training. It focuses on young children, students and adults.”<sup>76</sup>
- Under Apartheid, autogenous education maintained separate educational facilities and policies with



government approval.<sup>77</sup> But, the new constitution — though retaining the right to use the language and culture of one's choice<sup>78</sup> — has rejected an educational system based on “separate but equal” schools.<sup>79</sup>

- Moreover, South African courts seem to have rejected the claims of separate and equal.<sup>80</sup> They also rejected autogenous education that results in divisiveness and inequality rather than in respect of ethnic, cultural, or language differences.<sup>81</sup> The courts have interpreted the language of the Constitution as forbidding state- sanctioned discrimination based on race. They reiterated that even though the Constitution allowed for the respect of cultural differences in language and ethnicity, it did not allow for the exclusion of students based on their primary language.<sup>82</sup>
- The South African Schools Act of 1996, unlike the separate provisions of the Apartheid years, provides for a uniform policy and funding of schools.<sup>83</sup> Unlike the Apartheid provisions, which only required compulsory schooling for the whites, the bill mandates equal opportunity education, with compulsory attendance for all children from age seven through fifteen, and admission to public school without respect to race.<sup>84</sup> This new focus emphasizes outcome based learning rather than the more traditional education and training in place during the Apartheid years.<sup>85</sup>
- Graduation rates and admissions to institutions of higher learning are usually used to assess equal education opportunity. Blacks continue to lag behind, and the continued use of the high school matriculation exam illustrates the continuing inequalities in South African education.<sup>86</sup> In 1995, while eight out of ten white children reached high school and the “matric year,” only two out of ten African children did.<sup>87</sup> Adult literacy, which is around 67 percent for males and 66 percent for females,<sup>88</sup> might have as many as 83 percent of Africans unable to read beyond the fifth grade.<sup>89</sup>
- Also telling are statistics on employment. It is clear that the formal end of Apartheid has not eliminated racial inequalities. South Africa's 1991 Census found that the 29.26 million Africans, 3.08 million Coloured and 1.16 million Indians, which constitutes 87 percent of the population, were hurt by the formal racial classification.<sup>90</sup> Blacks, who are the majority of the population, hold only 1 percent of top executive positions, and 3 percent of managerial jobs.<sup>91</sup> The whites who constituted 13 percent of the population controlled most of the wealth of the country.<sup>92</sup> They hold 83 percent of the professional positions and 93 percent of management positions in the private sector.<sup>93</sup>
- Reports in 1994, at the end of the Apartheid regime, indicated that there were only 30 black engineers, 31 pharmacists, 65 certified accountants and less than 20 architects in South Africa.<sup>94</sup> Less than 7 percent of Ph.D. holders were blacks in 1994, and most professional blacks specialized in law and teaching instead of the rapidly growing business, finance, engineering, and sciences sectors.<sup>95</sup>
- Thus, because South Africa has had years upon years of discrimination, the new education policies alone cannot guarantee equal education against continuing effects of Apartheid's poverty and inequality.<sup>96</sup> Things have not significantly changed for blacks in terms of educational opportunity.<sup>97</sup> Institutions and schools are still promoting race and gender inequalities.<sup>98</sup>
- There is a “huge backlog in amenities at all levels of the educational system.<sup>99</sup> Many of the schools blacks attend lack water facilities,<sup>100</sup> toilets,<sup>101</sup> and telephones.<sup>102</sup> Close to half of the schools needed major repairs and many were overcrowded and understaffed.<sup>103</sup> By contrast, white schools have better facilities and were better funded.<sup>104</sup>
- Further, black integration has met with stiff white resistance in some areas. Some white schools refuse

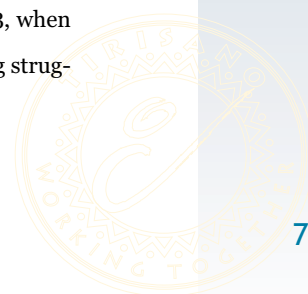


to admit black students for fear of lowering their “the standards.”<sup>105</sup> Interestingly enough, in schools that only taught Afrikaans, the introduction of English African Languages has forced those schools to have two types of education.<sup>106</sup>

- There is still a tendency in some schools to celebrate “fallen heroes” of the past. There is a need to cling to old symbols despite the new dispensation....[We] have recognized the difficulties that teachers and others encounter when they try to change attitudes, beliefs, and values. They meet with strong resistance. How can we encourage a new way of thinking so that a real shift of consciousness can take place? Transformation in education is very complex. So far, we still have more questions than answers.<sup>107</sup>

## ■ Race and Education in the United States:

- In the U.S., critics of the post-Brown legacy of integration and educational equality policies argue that it breeds “racial body counts” and quota filling rather than educational opportunity.<sup>108</sup> In truth, the variety of methods that include school bussing plans, geographic zoning plans, intra-district transfer plans, and curriculum enhancement, in-service training and testing, as well as counseling and career guidance plans<sup>109</sup> have had mixed results. Along several indicators, gains were made.
- Yet, despite these changes, the myopic scope of these reforms has ensured that the performance of black students continues to lag behind that of white students.<sup>110</sup> Statistics show continued racial disparity in education and differentials in educational outcomes and achievements.<sup>111</sup> In the U.S., child poverty, especially among racial minorities, is increasing in both rate and magnitude.<sup>112</sup> Disproportionately, black children are finding themselves trapped in the juvenile and criminal system instead of finding their way to school.<sup>113</sup> In addition, intra-school segregation is rampant and results in academic grouping, ability grouping, curriculum tracking, disproportionate loss of black faculty and administrators, and the disproportionate representation of black children in suspension and expulsion statistics.<sup>114</sup>
- The Supreme Court’s imprecise segregation remedy of “a prompt and reasonable start toward full compliance,” and its non-specific deadline for implementation to proceed “with all deliberate speed” resulted in the continuation of school desegregation.<sup>115</sup> It was not until *Green v. County School Board of New Kent County Virginia* that the Court mandated affirmative actions to dismantle segregated school systems, because it found that states were using the “all deliberate speed” language as an excuse to delay desegregation. Today, we see the persistence of racial discrimination, as opponents of affirmative remedies push for reforms that do not directly address racial disparities in education.
- The Kerner Commission which President Lyndon B. Johnson ordered to study race found that the United States was “continuing to move toward two societies, one black one white—separate and unequal” along class and race lines.<sup>116</sup> A continuing legacy of past and as the Franklin Commission appointed by President Bill Clinton show, present discrimination, segregation, crime and poverty have created destructive “ghettos”—enclaves of deprivation.<sup>117</sup> As the Citizen’s Commission on Civil Rights stated “so much of what the Kerner Commission found wrong in 1968 remained wrong in 1993, when we marked the twenty fifth anniversary of one of the most momentous years in the nation’s long struggle for equal opportunity.”<sup>118</sup>



## Affirmative Action: One Path to Participatory Democracy

### ■ Introduction: Affirmative action and transformative action

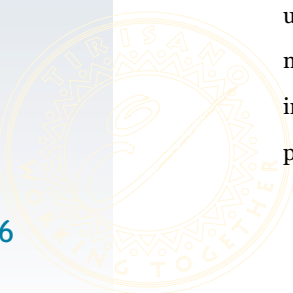
- The effort to build a participatory democracy requires addressing education as a central element of democracy. The education system is where citizens learn to engage in the larger society and fully participate. How do we reach a level of education that is truly participatory, that constitutes citizens in a racially non-hierarchical way, and that reflects a sense of justice?
- Affirmative action is an important tool for gaining the level of participation we seek in a true democracy. It can serve the function of distributing resources and opportunities in a more equitable manner. Yet it is this redistribution of resources that makes it difficult for dominant cultures to accept. Affirmative action changes the racial hierarchy by taking away what some have come to view as entitlements, and giving what was not available to others. I will outline below why affirmative action is necessary on several levels, as well as some of the issues raised by affirmative action. I will then introduce the alternative vision of “transformative action” which has the potential to achieve the transformative, constitutive goals necessary for building a truly participatory democracy.

### ■ School reforms are not enough:

- School reforms that address learning needs, quality of teaching, and other issues play some role. Larger community reforms that address inequalities in access to education and the opportunities that support education (housing, family socioeconomic status, employment) also play a role. Yet these reforms cannot work alone. Affirmative action is necessary to both improve access to opportunity and fully engage disenfranchised groups in building a nation.

If one focuses on discrimination as the primary wrong groups suffer, then the more profound wrongs of exploitation, marginalization, powerlessness, cultural imperialism, and violence that [racial minorities] still suffer go undiscussed and unaddressed. One misses how the weight of society’s institution and people’s assumptions, habits, and behavior toward others are directed at reproducing the material and ideological conditions that make life easier for, provide greater real opportunities to, and establish the priority of the white.<sup>119</sup>

- The seeming crisis in public schools has lead many conservatives to push for policies to redirect, refocus, and polarize the concept of equality with that of normalization, standardization and uniformity in education.<sup>120</sup> The new proposals for school reforms include school vouchers, privatization of public schools, home schooling, and national education standards and tests.<sup>121</sup> Theoretically, through these reforms, public schools will have to compete or lose public resources.<sup>122</sup>
- Privatization of schools seems to have taken roots in the Swedish system and is becoming a more popular idea in the U.S. The Swedish system of education was founded as a citizenship right that “legitimated a social democratic educational policy.”<sup>123</sup> Sweden has become one of the most literate nations in the world. Yet Sweden is moving away from the view of education as a public good towards a more private view of education.<sup>124</sup> The current trend encourages parents to choose the type of education



their children should receive.<sup>125</sup> A government bill (Prop. 1988/89:4:52:56) makes it easier for parents by paying for the tuition of students in alternative schools.

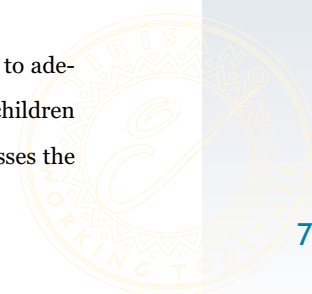
- However, the freedom to choose one's school might not have turned into a greater democracy.<sup>126</sup> The "rapid and not carefully discussed [public school alternatives] provided an opening for all sorts of private schools."<sup>127</sup> Among those schools were many religious fundamentalist schools.<sup>128</sup> Sweden's "long struggle for education as a collective social citizenship right and a societal cohesive force" is now being challenged.<sup>129</sup>

## ■ The merit problem:

- Affirmative action in the U.S. has been limited by the American ideal of merit. Merit assumes a position of neutrality, equal status, and equal access to opportunity. Merit, then according to many, is measured through impartial measures of competence.<sup>130</sup> This often means, to most, scientific, value-neutral standardized testing, job history, and educational credentials.<sup>131</sup>
- However, these "neutral" measures of merit do not exist.<sup>132</sup> The tests and practices merit is based upon are often the tests and practices of a particular group.<sup>133</sup> The criteria used to measure merit favor certain values, norms and cultural attributes that are more normative and cultural than neutrally scientific.<sup>134</sup> "They concern whether the person evaluated supports and internalizes specific values, follows implicit or explicit social rules of behavior, supports social purposes, or exhibits specific traits of character, behavior or temperament that [society] finds desirable."<sup>135</sup> "Only relatively few" people develop and exercise their capacities with the reliance on such culturally biased criteria.<sup>136</sup> Merit standards often translate differences in race, culture, gender, and class into a hierarchy, with whites (usually men) at the top and the rest at the bottom.<sup>137</sup>

## ■ Blacks in the U.S. and South Africa experience a deep level of disadvantage:

- Past and present discrimination has depressed wage opportunities for blacks and limited their access to opportunity structures.<sup>138</sup> Although the number of black professionals is growing, a large subgroup of blacks appears to be "intractably disadvantaged," with the poverty and despair transmitted from one generation to the next.<sup>139</sup> Affirmative action in admission to professional schools and graduate schools and colleges is a significant route to advancement.<sup>140</sup> Furthermore, the size, history, culture, and contemporary salience of this racial group makes their inclusion a virtually essential part for the responsible education of tomorrow's citizens.<sup>141</sup>
- A post-Apartheid South Africa, and a post-Brown U.S. cannot effectively reach equality of educational opportunity, the right to choose a trade, occupation or profession, or the right to have access to adequate housing without using affirmative action.<sup>142</sup> A mere statement of structural equality without the support of effective affirmative remedies would not result in better opportunity structures for the blacks, because although de jure discrimination is no longer present, discrimination's lingering effects continue to persist.<sup>143</sup>
- In both South Africa and the U.S., the performance gap between blacks and the lack of access to adequate education is due to "second generation" discrimination, which has resegregated black children within both the segregated and desegregated school system.<sup>144</sup> As Iris Young writes, "One misses the



mundane and systematic character of oppression if one assumes that particular oppressors can and should always be identified and blamed.”<sup>145</sup>

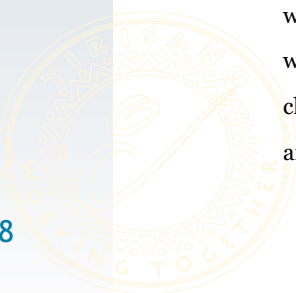
- The new South African Constitution’s guarantee of equal opportunity, including equal education, is a significant one. But, standing alone, it is little more than a symbolic gesture.<sup>146</sup> Ideology alone, however ideal, would not have any transformative effect in the lives of blacks and other disfavored children as the post-Brown U.S. has shown.<sup>147</sup> The government must genuinely want to implement programs that bring about equal educational opportunity, and must be willing to pay the price for enforcement of its policies.<sup>148</sup>

■ Affirmative action cannot be neutral; it is a response to a system that is not neutral:

- South African’s affirmative action policies are being implemented with an idea of equality. But, for affirmative action to redress past and present discrimination it must be more than equal.<sup>149</sup> Affirmative action must be thought of in terms of equity.
- Affirmative action does not stand in place of other educational reforms; rather, it is a necessary part of societal reform. In higher education, affirmative action primarily addresses admissions policies. Once minority students enter a university, they must compete like every one else on an equal footing, regardless of their educational background.<sup>150</sup> Institutions of higher learning do not account for the fact that many racial minorities do not receive adequate academic preparation in K-12.<sup>151</sup>
- The reforms many conservatives are proposing will not work in the face of the glaring disparities among races in both South Africa and the U.S. Affirmative action is still necessary. The fact that it has not effectively worked in its present form might reflect the U.S. reluctance to accept a policy that is not completely merit-based.<sup>152</sup> But, affirmative action is discriminatory. It is discriminatory but necessary to end oppression of minorities.

■ Colorblindness cannot work in place of affirmative action:

- Brazil illustrates the limits of colorblindness. Similar to the U.S. and South Africa, Brazil was involved in the slave trade. Post-slavery Brazil inherited chronic social hierarchies and racial segregation and prejudice. But, unlike the U.S. and South Africa Brazil adopted a policy of ‘colorblindness,’ choosing not to create official racial domination but rather projecting an image of an inclusive, color-blind state and racial democracy.<sup>153</sup>
- While Post-Civil War laws regarding the status of African-Americans and Apartheid- era laws regarding the status of black South Africans bear striking similarities in their legal classification,<sup>154</sup> Brazil did not have governmental policies that recognized racial classifications.<sup>155</sup>
- Even though informal racial discrimination is evident in everyday life, Brazil, with its fixation on unity and stability, seemingly chose inclusion of all rather than white hegemony. Brazil appeared to lack formal segregation and to avoid the animosity and social redress that would result from a direct conflict with its racial minorities.<sup>156</sup> However, the social order of the whites at the top and blacks at the bottom was never shaken, and because Brazil supposedly has no color problem, nothing has been done to change the social pattern of gross racial inequities.<sup>157</sup> To establish an image of racial paradise, present and past discrimination are denied.<sup>158</sup> Interestingly enough, until quite recently, black Brazilians also



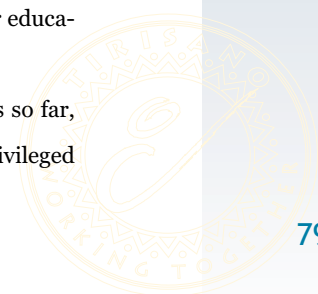


believed in this idea of racial harmony, and like many officials, they explain their lack of access to wealth and education in terms of class rather than race.<sup>159</sup>

- The United States could learn from Brazil. A color blind society in a nation infested by racial animosity only perpetuates and reinforces racial divisions along economic and social lines. Regarding the government implementation of racially neutral education policy, both the U.S. and South Africa can learn from Brazil.<sup>160</sup> Racially neutral policies in the face of centuries of discrimination can only exacerbate the divide between the races.<sup>161</sup>

■ The U.S. record on affirmative action can be instructive to South Africa :

- U.S. Supreme Court cases have narrowed the scope of remedies federal courts can use to accomplish Brown's equal education goal.<sup>162</sup> *Regents of the University of California v. Bakke* ruled that an institution of higher learning can favorably consider an applicant's minority status for admissions purposes to increase the diversity of its students, but not to increase the number of minority graduates in the general society as a whole or to redress past societal discrimination.<sup>163</sup> In *Adarand Constructors Inc. v. Peña*,<sup>164</sup> the Supreme Court ruled that programs that classify people based upon their race (which would include affirmative action), both at the federal and state level, have to be subjected to the more stringent strict scrutiny test under Constitutional interpretation.<sup>165</sup>
- Despite the fact that Brown's equal education has not been realized, the Court has released school districts from federal court oversight, and has moved away from the Brown Court's emphasis on educational equality.<sup>166</sup>
- Thus, the U.S. government continues to move away from affirmative action. Today, affirmative action, especially programs in higher education, are often found by the Supreme Court to be violative of Fourteenth Amendment rights of equal protection under the law.<sup>167</sup> Many people have attributed the Court's and the federal government's reluctance to endorse affirmative action to the lack of visible success of affirmative action measures. But the move away from Brown and the push for these conservative reforms are little more than disguised methods to further segregate America's schools along both race and class lines.<sup>168</sup>
- In South Africa, even though affirmative action enjoys broad support among the African population, it has received stiff resistance among the whites and some of the other racial minorities.<sup>169</sup> Because there "isn't a subject more taboo in [South Africa] than talking about affirmative action in racial terms" the government is in the difficult position of trying to include blacks without angering powerful whites.<sup>170</sup> For fear of alienating whites, and to avoid the ensuing economic and political problems, it has been quite cautious in undertaking the steps necessary to really advance equal opportunity structures.<sup>171</sup> Whites dominate every economic area in South Africa. And because of their huge stronghold of the civil service—with 1.2 million Afrikaners—the government risks a standstill if it alienates whites.<sup>172</sup>
- Whites here, as in the U.S., are concerned about the erosion of standards, and use the notion of merit to prevent black access to employment. Blacks' disadvantages in accessing the type of skills or education necessary to 'merit' a job makes it futile to bring merit into the discussion.<sup>173</sup>
- The non-whites are also often angry with the tokenism about the affirmative action programs so far, and are concerned that as it is implemented today, only a very small percentage of already privileged





non-whites benefit from the program.<sup>174</sup>

- Other issues around affirmative action have come up in the U.S., and are likely to come up in South Africa. In addition to merit arguments, which claim that the best measures of achievement are standardized, neutral tests and other such “neutral” criteria; white Americans have claimed their individual innocence in the present status of blacks. Rather than recognize that the very government policies and personal preferences that had created opportunities for them had denied those opportunities to blacks and other minorities, whites have claimed that they are innocent of discrimination and thus not responsible for its consequences. Although it seems that the argument of white innocence will be more difficult to make in South Africa, many whites resistant to reforms will make that very claim. Groups opposed to affirmative action in the U.S., including some blacks and other minorities, have claimed that affirmative action creates a stigma that they are not qualified for education or employment opportunities. This is a destructive view that perpetuates another stigma and misconception that racial minorities are somehow inferior to whites. In South Africa, this may play out differently with a black majority, but it is possible that given the overall level of professional status of whites compared to blacks, South Africans will see the same dance around the real issue of racial hierarchy performed in the U.S.
- The U.S. experience can serve as a caution to South Africa as it embarks on affirmative action as a remedy. The model of equality is inadequate. Achieving equity today requires unequal treatment to remedy yesterday’s inequities. Assuming otherwise will set South African society up for false expectations of what affirmative action means. In the U.S., for example, whites will now make claims of reverse discrimination, saying that they are being treated less equally than blacks or other racial minorities.

## ■ Transformative action

- Affirmative action can certainly alter distribution of resources and the system of racial hierarchy. But another approach that I call transformative action promises much more. “Transformation” describes not just the goals of racial justice and substantive democracy, it also describes the means or process for working toward those ends. This strategy, then, must focus not simply on eliminating discrimination or effecting a more racially just distribution of resources (as embodied by a more racially equitable wage structure, for example), but also on striving to ensure that everyone participates in redefining and reshaping our respective democracies, which in turn helps to reform ourselves individually and collectively. Consequently, this transformation must be institutional, communal and personal, as well as experiential and attitudinal.
- One element of transformative action is that racial inequality would no longer be seen as flowing from individual intellectual failings of some and merit or skill of others. Under this strategy, personal weaknesses and strengths would certainly be acknowledged, but, more importantly, structural (social, economic, and political) forces would be identified and addressed.
- Another element of transformative action would be a comprehensive integration strategy. Integration, under this approach, does not mean assimilation in any sense of the word.<sup>175</sup> A comprehensive approach would have two important outcomes. First, meaningful integration will enhance “non-whites” access to the opportunity structure, thereby adjusting “whites” access to an equitable level.



There would be a racially just distribution of resources and power, and all members of each society would have similar life-chances and choices. Second, integration of the workplace, schools, neighborhoods, and other public spaces will mean greater interaction and dialogue between and among the races, the constitutive force of which should not be underestimated. The interaction and dialogue that results from such integration is the key to mutual respect and understanding which, in turn, provides the bedrock of meaningful democracy.<sup>176</sup>

- Lastly, a transformative action policy must strive to “water the roots, not the branches.”<sup>177</sup> Realizing that lasting improvements for “non-whites” are not solely achieved through “resource transfers to individuals based upon ascribed identity characteristics,” transformative action must utilize broader efforts “to provide meaningful access, earlier in life, to the institutions and mechanisms by which society cultivates the human capital that makes individuals attractive for admission, employment, or promotion on their own.”<sup>178</sup>

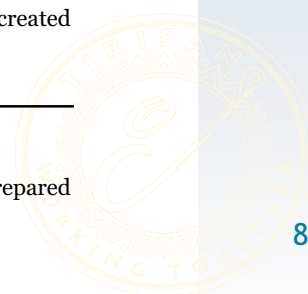
## Conclusion

The education system becomes a test of a nation’s commitment to full participation of society. Education has the ability to constitute society in a racially non-hierarchical way. The promise of education is great; its failures can be equally great. Because education is a highly important locus for personal development, and effective education cannot occur without social justice at the forefront, we should ask what the result would be if justice were to be inserted into education. Can the ideas students have about race be changed if education is just? The answer is clear from research on school desegregation: students who are educated in an integrated environment are more likely to live in integrated environments as adults. This evidence shows that individual preferences are not pre-ordained, but rather that schools are a site of formation of the self, and they shape the choices made later on in life. That this is true of the self, the site of education, and perceptions on race has great significance for a new model of education and justice.

The United States and South Africa share many similarities. Both countries have had a history of slavery. Both countries have also had laws and policies that have created, and in many ways maintained, the subordination of the black population. Both countries have ended de jure discrimination, the U.S. in 1954 with *Brown v. Board of Education* and South Africa more recently with the accession to power of Nelson Mandela in 1994 and the creation of the new constitution in 1996. Yet, the end of legal discrimination has not resolved the systematic segregation and discrimination of blacks that has resulted from centuries of racial intolerance.<sup>179</sup> Racial discrimination has greatly and adversely affected blacks and other racial minorities, but it has not left whites unscathed. Chiefly, the education systems in both countries have suffered from racial segregation. There have been endemic problems within the public education system in both countries which have affected everyone. The lack of “quality” education in public schools has created a state of crisis for all children.<sup>180</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See Michael Minstrom. *Reforming Schools, Rethinking Democracy* 6 (August 31, 2000) (paper prepared



for presentation at the 96<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association. Washington D.C., on file with the Institute on Race and Poverty)

<sup>2</sup> Despite winning the Popular Vote. Al Gore lost the presidency to George Bush because Bush is presumed to have won the electoral vote.

<sup>3</sup> *Title 1 in Midstream: The Fight to Improve Schools for Poor Kids* (Report of the Citizens' Commission on Civil Rights, Summer 1999)

<sup>4</sup> John A. Powell. *Living and Learning: Linking Housing and Education*, 80 MINN. L. REV. 749, 792 (1996).

<sup>5</sup> See James Baldwin, *The Price of the Ticket* 236 O.

<sup>6</sup> *Note: The Hazards of Making Public Schooling a Private Business*, 112 HARVARD L. REV. 695, 698 (1999).

<sup>7</sup> See Mitter. *supra* note, at 465.

<sup>8</sup> See Jan C. C. Rupp. *Citizenship, Education, and the Nation State*, PH XXIX PAEDAGOGICA HISTORICA. 735, 737 (1993)

<sup>9</sup> See powell & Spencer. *infra* note 31. at 1250-1256.

<sup>10</sup> See Rupp. *supra* note 8. at 739.

<sup>11</sup> See excerpt draft CERD (Convention on the elimination of Racial Discrimination). Shadow Report by the Appleid Center.

<sup>12</sup> See excerpt draft CERD

<sup>13</sup> See excerpt draft CERD

<sup>14</sup> See excerpt draft CERD

<sup>15</sup> See excerpt draft CERD

<sup>16</sup> See excerpt draft CERD

<sup>17</sup> See Attah. *supra* note 24. at 9.

<sup>18</sup> See M.K. Bacchus. *The Role of Education in Development in South Countries*. XLII ALBERTA J. LEG. EDUC. RES. 77 79-82 (1996).

<sup>19</sup> See Bacchus, *supra* note 18, at 79-82.

<sup>20</sup> See Bacchus, *supra* note 18, at 80 (citing Sandbrook, 1993, p.97).

<sup>21</sup> See Bacchus, *supra* note 18, at 81.

<sup>22</sup> See Bacchus, *supra* note 18, at 81

<sup>23</sup> See Bacchus, *supra* note 18, at 81

<sup>24</sup> See Judith Sefi Attah, *Monitoring the Transition to Democracy in South Africa*, U.N. COMM. HUMAN RTS. 3 (Jan. 1995)

<sup>25</sup> See Bacchus, *supra* note 18, at 81

<sup>26</sup> See Iris Marion Young, *Justice and the Politics of Difference* 248 (1990).

<sup>27</sup> See Minstrom. *supra* note 1, at 8.

<sup>28</sup> See Heintz Klug, Contextual Citizenship. 7 *Ind. J Global Leg. Studies* 567, 572 (2000)

<sup>29</sup> See Minstrom, *supra* note 1, at 8. In the same way, the democratization process is meaningless without economic participation, which means in the advanced world that we live in that those without adequate education are effectively precluded from meaningful economic participation. See YOUNG. *supra* note



26, at 249.

<sup>30</sup> See YOUNG, *supra* note 26, at 254, 255.

<sup>31</sup> See John Powell & Marguerite M. Spencer, *Remaking the Urban University for the Urban Student: Talking about Race*, 30 CONN. L. REV. 1247, 1247 (1998).

<sup>32</sup> See Powell & Spencer, *supra* note 31, at 1248

<sup>33</sup> See Carlos Alberto Torres, *Democracy, Education and Multiculturalism: Dilemmas of Citizenship in a Global World*, 42 COMP. ED. REV. 417 (1998).

<sup>34</sup> See Torres, *supra* note 33, at 423.

<sup>35</sup> See Anthea Taylor, *Education for Democracy: Assimilation or Emancipation for Aboriginal Australians?*, 40 COMP. ED. REV. 437 (1996).

<sup>36</sup> See Taylor, *supra* note 35, at 438.

<sup>37</sup> See David M. Steiner, *Rethinking Democratic Education. The Politics of Reform* 10 (1994)

<sup>38</sup> See Powell & Spencer, *supra* note 31, at 1247.

<sup>39</sup> See Alfreda A. Sellers Diamond, *Constitutional Comparisons and Converging Histories: Historical Developments in Equal Educational Opportunity Under the Fourteenth Amendment of the United States Constitution and the New South African Constituion* 26 HASTINGS CONST. L. Q., 853, 866.

<sup>40</sup> See Diamond, *supra* note 40, at 866.

<sup>41</sup> See Diamond, *supra* note 40, at 871.

<sup>42</sup> See Diamond, *supra* note 40, at 872.

<sup>43</sup> See Diamond, *supra* note 40, at 863-64.

<sup>44</sup> See Diamond, *supra* note 40, at 867. During the 18th and 19th centuries, southern states made it a crime to teach slaves to read. As a result, prior to the Civil War, there were fewer than seven percent of free black children who attended school. *Id.*

<sup>45</sup> See Diamond, *supra* note 40, at 867.

<sup>46</sup> See Diamond, *supra* note 40, at 867.

<sup>47</sup> See Diamond, *supra* note 40, at 867..See

<sup>48</sup> See YOUNG, *supra* note 26, at 254.

<sup>49</sup> See YOUNG, *supra* note 26, at 254.

<sup>50</sup> See Draft Institute on Race and Poverty, *Addressing Racism in Education*, Appendix, 11.

<sup>51</sup> See Draft Institute on Race and Poverty, *supra* note 51 at 11.

<sup>52</sup> See Diamond, *supra* note 40, at 901.

<sup>53</sup> See Draft Institute On Race and Poverty, *supra* note 51 at 26 (some states including Texas, California, New Jersey, Kentucky, Montana, and Florida have found that the local funding of school were discriminatory and violative of equal protection rights).

<sup>54</sup> Because the Court has mostly espoused the federalist idea of leaving the most control to the state. The Rehnquist court has left the resolution of the funding disparity to state and local legislators. See e.g. Diamond, *supra* note 40, at 901.

<sup>55</sup> The Prohibition of Mixed Marriage Act of 1949 and the Immorality Act of 1950 prohibited interracial marriages and sexual relations between people of different race.

<sup>56</sup> The Population registration Act of 1950 categorized people at birth into four racial group, white,



coloured, Indian and African. It is interesting that after the end of apartheid the government categorized people into categories, whites and black (which include Indians and Coloured). *See* Glele-Ahanhanzo. Racism. Racial Discrimination. Xenophobia and all Forms of Discrimination. U.N. COMM. HUMAN RIGHTS. 2 (1999).

<sup>57</sup> The Group Areas Act of 1950 imposed separate residential places for each group.

<sup>58</sup> *See* Diamond, *supra* note 40, at 864-66.

<sup>59</sup> *See* Diamond, *supra* note 40, at 899. As early as the early 1900's, the South African Native Affairs Commission Report of 1903 - 1905 pushed for separate education for whites and non whites as a means of protecting the integrity and quality of the life of the whites. *Id.*

<sup>60</sup> *See* Diamond, *supra* note 40, at 871.

<sup>61</sup> *See* Diamond, *supra* note 40, at 871.

<sup>62</sup> *See* Diamond, *supra* note 40, at 873. (speech of Dr. H.F. Verwoed Minister of Native Affairs during the floor debates for the Bantu education Act).

<sup>63</sup> The senior certificate examination, also called the matriculation or matric exam is the measure of success in secondary school performance and earn students earned a high school diploma as well as an entrance to college or university education. *See* Diamond, *supra* note 40, at 901.

<sup>64</sup> *See* Diamond, *supra* note 40, at 874-75.

<sup>65</sup> *See* Cristensen, *supra* note 40, at 6.

<sup>66</sup> *See* Diamond, *supra* note 40, at 882-3.

<sup>67</sup> *See* Diamond, *supra* note 40, at 883.

<sup>68</sup> *See* Diamond, *supra* note 40, at 883.

<sup>69</sup> *See* Attah, *supra* note 24, at 11.

<sup>70</sup> *See* Attah, *supra* note 24, at 11.

<sup>71</sup> *See* Attah, *supra* note 24, at 11.

<sup>72</sup> *See* Diamond, *supra* note 40, at 878. The Warren Court recognizing the fact that access to equal education was the most important function the states provided, overruled Plessy and ruled that 'separate but equal' facilities violated the equal protection clause of the U.S. Constitution *Id.* at 878-79

<sup>73</sup> *See* Diamond, *supra* note 40, at 879.

<sup>74</sup> *See* Diamond, *supra* note 40, at 879.

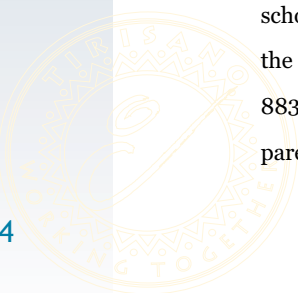
<sup>75</sup> *See* Glele-Ahanhanzo, *supra* note 55, at 3.

<sup>76</sup> *See* Glele-Ahanhanzo, *supra* note 55, at 6.

<sup>77</sup> *See* Diamond, *supra* note 40, at 879.

<sup>78</sup> *See* Glele-Ahanhanzo, *supra* note 55, at 3.

<sup>79</sup> After moving to a formerly all white neighbourhood in the town of Potgietersrus, in the Transvaal region. Magiliweni Alson Matukane, a black South African educated in the U.S. sought to enroll his children in the neighbourhood primary school. In scenes reminiscent of the Little Rock Crisis, white school officials refused to admit the black children, and white parents forcibly blocked their entrance to the school house door while other white parents simply refused to send their children to school. *Id.* at 883-84. Matukane, in a case that we should refer to as Matukane and Others, and other sympathetic parents sought declaratory judgement from the Transvaal Provincial Division of the Supreme Court,



citing racial discrimination in violation of South Africa's constitutional provision requiring equal education. Just like in the discrimination suits in the U.S., the Court ruled that since the plaintiffs had established a prima facie case of racial discrimination, the burden of proof shifted to the respondent school to disprove discrimination. *Id.* at 884. The school failed to meet the burden and the Court ruled denial of admission to the school contravened the mandate of non-discrimination in education. *Id.* at 884-85.

<sup>80</sup> See Diamond, *supra* note 40, at 885.

<sup>81</sup> The constitutional language regarding language choice, in contrast, only permits minorities to establish private educational institutions in order to insure the preservation of distinctive cultural and language values. See Diamond, *supra* note 40, at 889.

<sup>82</sup> See Diamond, *supra* note 40, at 885.

<sup>83</sup> See Diamond, *supra* note 40, at 899.

<sup>84</sup> See Diamond, *supra* note 40, at 899.

<sup>85</sup> See Diamond, *supra* note 40, at 900.

<sup>86</sup> See Diamond, *supra* note 40, at 902.

<sup>87</sup> See Diamond, *supra* note 40, at 902.

<sup>88</sup> See Unicef

<sup>89</sup> See Christopher Ford. *Challenges and Dilemmas of Racial Ethnic Identity in American and Post Apartheid South African Affirmative Action*, 43 U.C.L.A.L. REV. 1953, 1968 (1996).

<sup>90</sup> See Ford, *supra* note 89, at 953.

<sup>91</sup> See Ford, *supra* note 89, at 1968.

<sup>92</sup> See Ford, *supra* note 89, at 953.

<sup>93</sup> See Ford, *supra* note 89, at 1968.

<sup>94</sup> See Ford, *supra* note 89, at 1956.

<sup>95</sup> See Ford, *supra* note 89, at 1973.

<sup>96</sup> See Diamond, *supra* note 40, at 900.

<sup>97</sup> See Diamond, *supra* note 40, at 901.

<sup>98</sup> See Memo of Christa L. Kuljian. Race and Ethnic Relations in South Africa: Cluster Memorandum, 2 (Feb. 1, 2000). The memo refers to a report the South African Human Rights Commission, created in 1994, did on racism on secondary schools. *Id.*

<sup>99</sup> See Attah, *supra* note 24, at 8. There is a need for additional places, materials, trained teachers and new building to alleviate on the overcrowding in the townships. *Id.*

<sup>100</sup> As late as 1997 1.9 millions of the students attending school in the had no water facilities in walking distance. See Diamond, *supra* note 40, at 901. Cape, 44:1 in the Northern Province, and 41:1 in Mpumalanga Province.

<sup>104</sup> The statistics in the Western Cape Province, a predominantly white province, reflected that approximately 90 percent of schools had telephones, fewer than 1% of schools were in need of repair, and pupil teacher ratios were approximately 25 to 1. See See Diamond, *supra* note 40, at 901.

<sup>105</sup> See Glele-Ahanhanzo, *supra* note 55, at 9. In one such an example since the teacher's and the town's authority are all whites, the blacks have had little recourse. *Id.*

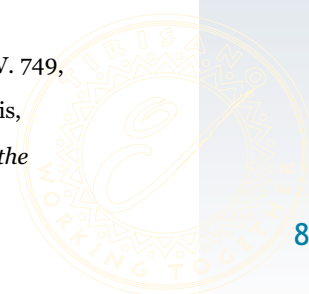


- <sup>106</sup> See Glele-Ahanhanzo, *supra* note 55, at 9.
- <sup>107</sup> See Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, Racism in Schools, Report of a first networking meeting convened by the CSMT 6 (May 26, 2000)
- <sup>108</sup> See Diamond, *supra* note 40, at 886.
- <sup>109</sup> See Diamond, *supra* note 40, at 886-87.
- <sup>110</sup> See Diamond, *supra* note 40, at 887.
- <sup>111</sup> See Diamond, *supra* note 40, at 893.
- <sup>112</sup> See Diamond, *supra* note 40, at 912.
- <sup>113</sup> See Diamond, *supra* note 40, at 912.
- <sup>114</sup> See Diamond, *supra* note 40, at 888.
- <sup>115</sup> See Diamond, *supra* note 40, at 888.
- <sup>116</sup> See Diamond, *supra* note 40, at 905.
- <sup>117</sup> See Diamond, *supra* note 40, at 905.
- <sup>118</sup> *The Test of our Progress, The Clinton Record on Civil Rights, Citizen's Comm. on Civil Rights 1* (Corrine M. Yu & William L. Taylor eds. 1999).
- <sup>119</sup> See YOUNG, *supra* note 26, at 196-97.
- <sup>120</sup> See Diamond, *supra* note 40, at 889.
- <sup>121</sup> See Diamond, *supra* note 40, at 889.
- <sup>122</sup> See Diamond, *supra* note 40, at 888.
- <sup>123</sup> See Thomas Englund, *Education as a Citizenship right - a Concept in transition: Sweden Related to other Western Democracies and Political Philosophy*, 26 J. CU
- <sup>124</sup> See Englund, *supra* note 130, at 384.
- <sup>125</sup> See Englund, *supra* note 124, at 384.
- <sup>126</sup> See Englund, *supra* note 124, at 389.
- <sup>127</sup> See Englund, *supra* note 124, at 389.
- <sup>128</sup> See Englund, *supra* note 124, at 389.
- <sup>129</sup> *Id.*
- <sup>130</sup> See YOUNG, *supra* note, at 193.
- <sup>131</sup> See YOUNG, *supra* note, at 193.
- <sup>132</sup> See YOUNG, *supra* note, at 193.
- <sup>133</sup> See Sharon Bailin, Education, Knowledge and Critical Thinking in *Education Knowledge and Truth, Beyond the Postmodern Impasse* 217 (David Carr, ed. 1998).
- <sup>134</sup> See YOUNG, *supra* note, at 204.
- <sup>135</sup> See YOUNG, *supra* note, at 204.
- <sup>136</sup> See YOUNG, *supra* note, at 193.
- <sup>137</sup> See YOUNG, *supra* note, at 197.
- <sup>138</sup> See Paul Brest & Miranda Oshige. Affirmative Action for Whom? 47 STAN L. REV. 855 (1995).
- <sup>139</sup> See Brest & Oshige, *supra* note 138, at 880.
- <sup>140</sup> See Brest & Oshige, *supra* note 138, at 880.
- <sup>141</sup> See Brest & Oshige, *supra* note 138, at 880.





- <sup>142</sup> See Diamond, *supra* note 40, at 888.
- <sup>143</sup> See *Citizen's Comm. on Civ. Rights. infra* note 118, at 17.
- <sup>144</sup> See Diamond, *supra* note 40, at 888.
- <sup>145</sup> See YOUNG, *supra* note 26, at 196.
- <sup>146</sup> See Diamond, *supra* note 40, at 879.
- <sup>147</sup> See Diamond, *supra* note 40, at 879.
- <sup>148</sup> See Diamond, *supra* note 40, at 880.
- <sup>149</sup> See YOUNG, *supra* note 26, at 196.
- <sup>150</sup> See
- <sup>151</sup> See *Citizen's Comm. on Civ. Rights. supra* note, at 215.
- <sup>152</sup> See e.g. YOUNG, *supra* note 26, at 194. (arguing that because affirmative action programs treat certain groups differently from the rest of the population, they were necessarily discriminatory. But that unlike the discriminatory nature of private and government actions that seek to subordinate blacks, female and other minorities, affirmative action seeks to end oppression).
- <sup>153</sup> See MARX, *supra* note 155, at 164.
- <sup>154</sup> See Diamond, *supra* note 40, at 863.
- <sup>155</sup> See Anthony Marx, *Making Race and Nation, A Comparison of the United States, South Africa and Brazil* 164 (1998).
- <sup>156</sup> See Marx, *supra* note 155, at 164-65.
- <sup>157</sup> See Marx, *supra* note 155, at 166.
- <sup>158</sup> See Marx, *supra* note 155, at 167.
- <sup>159</sup> See Marx, *supra* note 155, at 168.
- <sup>160</sup> See Marx, *supra* note 155, at 164.
- <sup>161</sup> See Young, *supra* note 26, at 248.
- <sup>162</sup> See Diamond, *supra* note 40, at 892.
- <sup>163</sup> See Brest & Oshige, *supra* note 138, at 858.
- <sup>164</sup> 115 S. Ct. 2097 (1995).
- <sup>165</sup> See Ford, *supra* note 89, at 1953.
- <sup>166</sup> See Diamond, *supra* note 40, at 893.
- <sup>167</sup> at 904.
- <sup>168</sup> See Diamond, *supra* note 40, at 890.
- <sup>169</sup> See Ford, *supra* note 89, at 1956.
- <sup>170</sup> See Ford, *supra* note 89, at 1956.
- <sup>171</sup> See Ford, *supra* note 89, at 1956.
- <sup>172</sup> See Ford, *supra* note 89, at 1956.
- <sup>173</sup> See Ford, *supra* note 89, at 1979.
- <sup>174</sup> See Ford, *supra* note 89, at 1956.
- <sup>175</sup> See, e.g. John Powell, *Living and Learning: Linking Housing and Education*, 80 MINN. L. REV. 749, 774-78 (1996); Eric Foner, *The Great Divide*, 261 THE NATION 487, 488 (1995); W.E.B. Du Bois, *Afterthought: The Problem of Humanity - The "Voice of Voices" - The Fusion of Cultures - Not the*





"Intergration" of Colours, in *A W.E.B. Du Bois Reader* 369 (Andre Paschel ed., 1971): JOHN DEWEY, DEMOCRACY AND EDUCATION 101 (1916).

<sup>176</sup> See, e.g., Sara Evans & Harry Boyte, *Free Spaces: The Sources of Democratic Change in America* 68 (1986); Powell, *supra* note 242, at 791-92; DUBOIS, *supra* note 242, at 369; Dewey, *supra* note 242, at 101.

<sup>177</sup> See Ford, *supra* note 89, at 2014-2018.

<sup>178</sup> *Id.* at 2014-2015.

<sup>179</sup> See Diamond, *supra* note, at 855.

<sup>180</sup> See Diamond, *supra* note, at 885.

## The Confluence of Civilizations:

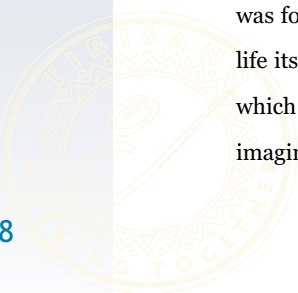
### The Book, Critical Performance, and the Future of Education

#### Keynote Address by Edward Said, Colombia University

A few years ago, the American essayist and novelist Nicholson Baker published a long and, for those of us who grew up frequenting old-fashioned libraries, a grippingly nostalgic account of how card catalogues were in the process of disappearing and were being replaced by electronic devices for rapidly retrieving books and their contents. By now, most major research libraries have replaced their rows of wooden drawers and the thousands of individually filed and filled out index cards with shimmering screens that have transformed the appearance of the library's antechamber so completely as to make it seem like a cockpit of a space craft rather than the orderly hierarchical temple of scholarship and research that it had been for so long. What was so striking about Baker's essay was that, by describing the vast number of empty file drawers lined up and made ready for the scrap heap, he managed (quite brilliantly) to evoke in me and many others elegiac feelings of loss and regret for the wood and paper that had sustained literally generations of readers and scholars for enlightenment and liberation.

Suddenly, it seemed that a whole world of patient dedication symbolised by the researcher's aching fingers going through drawer after drawer of cards and then trudging valiantly through many yards of stacks in search of the crucial books so necessary to one's desire for knowledge, suddenly all that appeared to belong to a forgotten old world that had been turned into empty boxes abandoned unceremoniously and scarcely noticed to a forlorn scrap heap. For, in a sense, what one mourned was the loss of the book as a discrete and venerated object stored, indeed cradled, inside that microcosm of the world, which was the library.

No one to my knowledge has evoked the library as world in all its splendour and authority as well as Jorge Luis Borges whose story, "The Library of Babel", is a marvellous short parable of how natural and logical it was for people over many centuries to think of the book as having a specially close relationship to human life itself. I say natural and easy precisely to accentuate the irony in the contrast between book and life on which Borges's whole story turns with such frightening efficiency and even a frisson of terror. The narrator imagines that the universe is nothing less than "the Library" and that every human is born in one of the infi-



nite number of hexagonal spaces into which the Library is divided. As he prepares for his own death, the nameless narrator finds himself once again “a few leagues from the hexagon where I was born”, as a result of which he is in a position at last to understand the whole scheme.

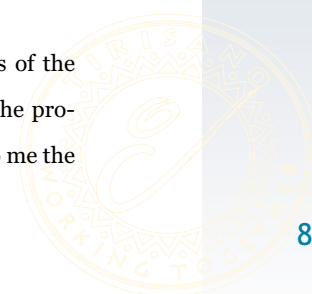
*The Library has existed ab aeternitate.* That truth, whose immediate corollary is the future eternity of the world, no rational mind can doubt. Man, the imperfect librarian, may be the work of chance or of malevolent demiurges; the universe, with its elegant appointments - its bookshelves, its enigmatic books, its indefatigable staircases for the traveller, and its water closets for the seated librarian - can only be the handiwork of a god. In order to grasp the distance that separates the human and the divine, one has only to compare these crude trembling symbols which my hand scrawls on the cover of a book with the organic letters inside - neat, delicate, deep black, and inimitably symmetrical.<sup>2</sup>

The more the narrator’s meditation progresses, the more formidable and, in a sense, unthinkable the library and its books become. Many questions are provoked. Who made these books, what do they mean, is there a Book-Man, a sort of librarian somewhere who might be able to explain what the whole is about and finally, doesn’t there “exist a book that is the cipher and perfect compendium of *all other books*, and some librarian [who] must have examined that book; this librarian is analogous to a god”?<sup>3</sup> Then finally the narrator ventures the vertiginous thought “that the human species - the *only* species - teeters at the verge of extinction, yet ... the Library - enlightened, solitary, infinite, perfectly unmoving, armed with precious volumes, pointless, incorruptible, and secret - will endure”.<sup>4</sup>

I’ve quoted Borges at such length because he seems to me to sum up in so haunting and compelling a way the apogee of book culture, with that cumulative mystique of total order, silent rationality and inhuman perfection which is embodied in the traditional general or universal library, with its serried shelves, its neatly, perhaps even remorselessly organised rows of books, and even in the school or small community library that most of us have used at some point in our lives, its alienating power. In a library, books seem to belong to a world of their own, very different from the messy, disorderly universe of human life.

What Borges ignores, however, is the book as a sort of testimonial of humanistic practice, the book as enabling emancipation and enlightenment, the book as friend and companion. I recall with embarrassing vividness that the great fantasy of my early and delinquent school days was the fond dream that I myself might shuffle off my mortal coil and become a book, thereby containing within myself not only all the difficult information I was unable to master as a very reluctant Arab student of subjects such as the English monarchy, but also the capacity for containing priceless images and thoughts read and handed around by friends and perhaps even left behind in a train compartment.

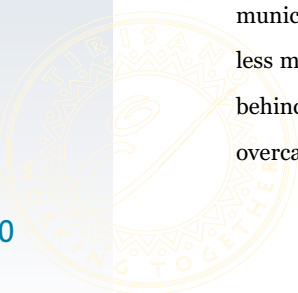
In later years, it was the book that came to symbolise for me what Vico called the heroic powers of the human imagination. As reader and author I have never failed to see in what we read and write the profoundest strivings of which the mind is capable and which, whether in success or failure, suggests to me the



nobility of effort required to achieve moments of insight, acts of interpretation and, above all, sustained performances of the humane and critical understanding that can ennoble and emancipate human beings.

The advent of cyberspace has, to some degree, violated, if it hasn't entirely encroached upon, the sacralized precincts of the library and the book as we have known them since their first great collective exemplar in Alexandria. Young people today take it as entirely natural that with a computer screen in front of them they can access any number of newspapers, books, magazines, plus an uncountable number of sites from all over the world at a moment's notice, without any visible labor, and without any kind of effort once expended on acquiring a book, reading and interpreting it. The history of the book, as chronicled for instance in *The Coming of the Book: The Impact of Printing 1450-1800*<sup>5</sup> by Lucien Febvre and Henri-Jean Martin, with its laborious processes, the acquisition and transmission of manuscripts, the rise and fall of publishing centers, the various changes in taste and reader interest, the patterns of book trade, the geography of book production and storage, all this seems quite remote today. Even as a kind of general cultural memory, the world of the book seems threatened with irrelevance and inconsequence as compared to the literally unconfineable reaches of cyberspace, with its unencumbered sense of immediate access and direct consumption which seems to circumvent and preclude the hugely labor-intensive practices described so well in Alberto Manguel's *A History of Reading*.<sup>6</sup> You can now see or hear anything you wish to on your handy personal computer, provided of course that you have the actual thing itself and the internet access. It has become a sign of modernity and development to provide students with terminals so that no one will be deprived of what is on offer there by way of information, technical knowledge, and up-to-date modern life.

This is not to be belittled as helping people break out of the confines in which for political and ideological reasons they have been imprisoned. Let me give you one example. As you may know, Palestinians today are a dispossessed people. Their society was destroyed in 1948 when Israel was set up as a state, and over two thirds of the population driven out by Zionist forces as part of a plan to depopulate Palestine. The descendants of those refugees now number 4.5 million, scattered throughout the Middle East, Europe, Africa, Asia and the Americas. One million more Palestinians remain as second-class Israeli citizens (18% of the Jewish state), and a little over 2.5 million are the residents of the West Bank and Gaza, under Israeli military occupation since 1967. As a people, we neither have sovereignty anywhere nor is there geographical continuity between one group of Palestinians in one area and another group elsewhere. The result is that we have been cut off from each other by region, by history, by geography. The 350,000 Palestinians in Lebanon today are the descendants of those driven out in 1948, but most of them are either too young to have any memories of their homes or they are banned by Israel from returning, even though according to international law they have a right of return. Last year, a group of Palestinians living in a West Bank refugee camp set up a computer center which they used to transmit physical descriptions of the villages and towns left behind by the refugees to those exiled Palestinians. Pretty soon a lively network of Palestinian communication emerged, overcoming the political barriers that had separated us as people, and allowing stateless men and women in one place to get direct information about the homes and farms that had been left behind fifty years ago but which are still claimed as rightfully Palestinian. Rapid electronic communication overcame the obstacles that had separated us. For writers like myself, whose works had been banned



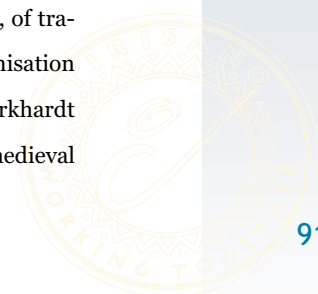
because they were critical of the Oslo accords and the Palestinian Authority, our writing could circulate once again because of email and fax. So this is a salutary instance of instantaneous communication as an active form of emancipation.

I need to add as an unhappy footnote that several months after the terminals were set up they were attacked and destroyed in an act of political vandalism whose purpose is too transparent to require elucidation here. But, I must also add, a short while later the computers were being rebuilt or replaced. The struggle continues, concealed ironically behind the ignorant media representation of Palestinian “violence”.

But this is a very different thing from the longer and much slower process of which books are the heart. The act of reading, which used to be a complex social and epistemological discipline based not only on knowledge of both a classical and vernacular language, but on the science of philology, seems slowly to be losing its considerable existential density, its enormously rich web of association as an activity with such cultural processes such as education, ethics and religion. We tend to forget how the culture of book reading in nearly every civilization known to our planet once entailed a vast communicative structure of other human activities, from prayer, to love-making, to school instruction, to decoration, and silent meditation. Far from being an inert objet scattered throughout the house or library, the book was, and to many people still is, a site of extraordinary human richness and significance, as well as an icon of so much experience on every level as to be in effect a continent within the overall structures of our collective lives. In Canto V of Dante’s *Inferno*<sup>7</sup> it is the reading of a book about Lancelot’s seduction of Guinevere that provokes in Paolo and Francesca the amorous lust they feel for each other and which ultimately condemns them to the second circle of hell for eternity. Another celebrated instance of the effect of books, and specifically of the Arthurian romances, is the mournful knight of La Mancha whose life is utterly transformed by what he has read which drives him to futilely comic chivalric exploits that become the subject of one of the great comic books.<sup>8</sup> Finally, there is that most memorable of all scenes in Proust’s unsurpassed novel<sup>9</sup> where the narrator returns recurrently to his childhood in order again and again to re-experience the excitement of a book, George Sand’s *Francois le Champi*,<sup>10</sup> which he brings to life in the very worn yet beloved of edition whose specific texture and print he recalls, along with the thrill of its feel and the sound of its words.

Books are therefore themselves the subjects of literature, whether in the form of the terrifyingly authoritarian visions of a Borges or in these intimately familiar forms envisaged by the earlier writers I have just mentioned. But, as those of us who have know directly the ravages of racism and disposition will necessarily add, we are morally obligated to recall that books and the humanistic cultures that nurtured them have been put to the most inhuman uses, whether in the justification of colonial oppression or in the creation of systems of knowledge designed systematically for the subjugation and dehumanisation of inferior Others.

What we shouldn’t be afraid to confront then is the closeness, and indeed the intimate connection, of traditional book culture as emancipation and enlightenment with its exploitation and abuse as legitimisation for all sorts of terror. The very same humanism that legions of modern European scholars since Burkhardt have justly celebrated in Erasmus, More, Boccaccio and Petrarch very easily co-existed with the medieval

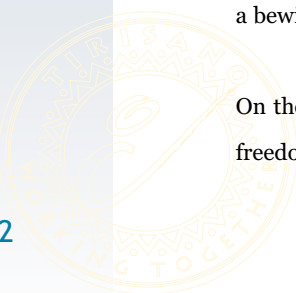


and renaissance slave trade, which in their repetitive encomia to European humanism those same scholars simply overlooked, or passively accepted as the natural order of things; and again, it was those wonderful humanistic ideas about man that almost imperceptibly shaded into Olympian dogmas about Europeans as superior to Africans and Orientals, and from them quite inevitably into the practices of taking land away from those, as Conrad said, who have a different complexion or slighter flatter noses than ourselves.<sup>11</sup> No wonder that Fanon said at the height of the Algerian revolution that the Greco-Roman statue of humanism is crumbling in the colonies,<sup>12</sup> and no wonder at all that Aime Cesaire took one of the most famous 19th century French scholar-humanists, Ernest Renan, to task for corrupting humanism into the dogmas of racial stereotyping and slavery.<sup>13</sup>

It would be ahistorical to see Fanon and Cesaire as lonely voices and not, as in fact they were, continuers of a long, learned, dissenting tradition within book culture of using the creative, and liberatory aspects of books to fight many of same books as tyrannical instruments of orthodoxy and conformity. This is readily obvious to individuals raised in the monotheistic tradition, but I am sure just as perceptible in other religious and ethical domains. The English poet, William Blake, produced a magnificent literary and pictorial oeuvre whose main subject is the ceaseless dialectical struggle between the old, bearded men of the Bible, authors of the repression and literalism, against the young Christlike and quasi-demonic figures whose aim it is to overturn orthodoxy for the sake of vision and liberation. So, too, is there a similar struggle within Islam between a codifying literalism embodied in doctrines of barren legalism and, on the other side, an often-apocalyptic embrace of truth shorn of its scholastic adornment. There is an analogous battle between pharisaic orthodoxy and Kabbalah within Judaism. The point to be made is that in all three religions the book is at the heart of the struggle over whether it will emerge as a regressive fundamentalism or as enhanced freedom, “the letter killeth but the spirit giveth life”. This is the choice posed for the reader who has the alternative of either being a Spinoza, a Kierkegaard, a Nietzsche on the one hand, or an inquisitor, a commissar, a sultan or a judge on the other. No one here needs reminding about canonical texts such as the Old Testament or the writings of the founding fathers can either issue forth in wholesale oppression or in the struggle for justice. Collective passions derived from uncritically memorised texts are the bane of human life and whether they flow directly into political dogma or into simplified versions of the past, they have atrocious results, which it must be every teacher’s obligation, to combat with the weapons of criticism.

In hardly any of the scholarship and criticism of the last few decades has there been more originality and importance than in a critical awareness that reveals the deep and quite menacing affinity between the traditional culture that we have long been trained with considerable justification to admire and study, and many of the most systematically unjust and evil practices that have disfigured human history. The processes of liberation that ended colonialism nearly everywhere and that defeated apartheid here, brought to the fore a critical vision and analysis of humanism that saw in it both virtue and vice, but has left us now with a bewildered sense of uncertainty.

On the one hand, the new electronic fields of communication and easily accessible information suggest a freedom from a heavily burdened legacy of orthodoxy and authoritarianism that critical scholarship has



shown us was in some senses fuelled, if not entirely instigated, by humanistic books and ideas. Every repressive regime has had its archive of justification in learned books and authors whose narratives and doctrines seem to permit and encourage discrimination, racial laws, ethnic cleansing and invented traditions.

On the other hand, we are beginning to be more and more aware that in the age of a globalised and consumerised economy the mind is scarcely an agent suddenly set free from the past and able to wander blithely or at will in cyberspace. It has in effect become instrumentalised and, I would venture to say, programmed by what is on offer, packaged, framed, shaped and predisposed towards acceptance and consent, without much regard for questions of justice, discrimination and judgement of the sort we correctly associate with the arts of reading and writing, which had for years been the basis for education. In rebellion consequently there has been a tendency to think of the past as discredited and better forgotten; to scrap the scrupulously detailed world of humanistic scholarship for its hypocrisy, its Eurocentrism, its blindness towards what were disparagingly called lesser peoples, minorities, women; and to welcome uncritically the vistas opened up by new media which promise all sorts of wonderful opportunities unencumbered by plodding book-learning and years of difficult apprenticeship.

Nothing, I feel, is likely to be more misleading than the euphoria felt by acolytes of a technologically more advanced education whose main claim is that it puts on offer for teachers and students a whole array of easily available resources provided by the Internet. If the activation rather than the stuffing of the mind is, as I believe it is, the main business of education, then I shall argue that an invigorated book culture must remain central for reasons that I will now elucidate.

I should first dispel any thought that I am an expert on education: I am not, although I have been a teacher for almost 40 years. For students now coming to maturity in the post-colonial, globalised and post-apartheid society, the essential issue is the emergence - slow, painstaking, rational - of a critical sense that can only come from a sustained encounter with the actualities of reading and interpretation and these, I must insist, cannot come from, and indeed may be circumvented and annulled by, the amenities and speed of electronic information. To read a book, and especially a literary work, is in the full sense of the word an expenditure of a highly concentrated and disciplined energy during a protracted period of time. This is a unique activity for which there is no real analogy; it is not like watching a screen or walking on the beach. There is a specific resistance in idiom, form and gesture that the book provides by virtue of its cover, binding, format and physical feel which the reader must deal with and cannot evade, involving a beginning, middle and end, a certain temporal duration and, most important, a process of methodical decoding whose general rules can be learned but, we need to stress, whose application in each specific instance cannot be applied by rote or in a general way. There has to be a specific exercise of reading skill adequate and necessary to the work at hand.

In no verbal artefact is language used to greater effect and with more complexity than in literature, and this is why the heart of the cultural enterprise has always been organised around works of literary, figural art.



Plato and Nietzsche understood this perfectly, as they also understood the tremendous moral and epistemological challenges entailed in the unfolding of a tragedy and the complex defiance of everyday intercourse elicited by even so simple and direct an utterance as that provided by the words of a lyric. Yet, no literary work in any culture exists in isolation from other works, whether by the same author or those in a different mode. Likewise, books are not only representations of, but exist as embedded in, the individual and the collective experience of historical time. It is the peculiar genius of literary language that its component words are both democratically available to everyone and at the same time are instances of the most subtle and complex use of words available to us. How this is disclosed in the act of reading is an enormous subject requiring far more time than is available here. So, I shall be content simply with citing Emerson who says that when we write literature “we write from aspiration and antagonism, as well as from experience”.<sup>14</sup> This is explicated by the distinguished American critic, Richard Poirier, who says that:

[Emerson] means that while we aspire to say something new, the materials at hand indicate that whatever we say can be understood only if it is relatively familiar. We therefore become antagonistic to conventions of language even though we are in need of them (and need to understand how they operate, for which only a particularly attentive and actively dedicated reading can serve). Indeed, the social and literary forms that ask for our compliance were themselves produced in resistance to conventions of an earlier time. Even in the words that now seem tired or dead we can discover a desire for transformation that once infused them (and hence the crucial importance of an active practice of book reading anchored in the history and social structure from which in all sorts of ways it emerged and also challenged). Any word, in the variety and even contradictoriness of its meanings, gives evidence of earlier antagonistic uses, and it is this which encourages us to turn on them again, to change... them (as we read and write about them) still further.<sup>15</sup>

Therefore, the discipline required by a serious engagement with the order of books is neither an exercise in sipping and tasting, nor an occasion for rote learning, or worse, pedantry, for the sake of making an impression or coercing someone else. To quote Poirier one last time:

“Literature makes the strongest possible claims on my attention because more than any other form of art or expression it demonstrates what can be made, what can be done with something shared by everyone, used by everyone in the daily conduct of life, and something besides which carries most subtly and yet measurably within itself, its vocabulary and syntax the governing assumptions of a society’s social, political, and economic arrangements (and, we need to add, must be read for and with those arrangements in mind, critically, with understanding, as opposed to pedantic knowledge, and by dint of an act of historical sympathy and insight) ... . But (neither works of music, dance, painting, filmmaking) depend (as literature does) for its principle or essential resource on materials that it must share in an utterly gregarious way with the society at large and with its history. None can teach us so much about what words do to us and how, in turn, we might try to do something to them which will per-



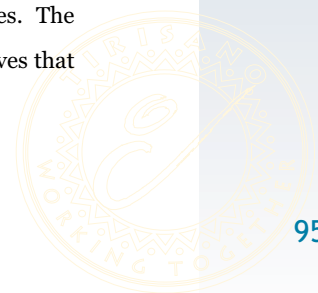


haps modify the order of things on which they depend for their meaning. To literature is left the distinction that it invites the reader to a dialectical relationship to words that is allowable nowhere else.<sup>16</sup>

And of course it is in the teaching of literature, a unique situation purposely removed both from the bustle of everyday life as well as the direct political impingements of society, that such a relationship described by Poirier can occur. It is dialectical not only with the enquiring mind of the student and teacher, but with socio-political values imposed by a party, a political agenda, or a worldly authority. The humanistic and literary education to which I have referred, are profoundly and radically secular activities. In a multicultural multilingual society such as South Africa, emerging at last from a long period of distortions forced on it by apartheid, there is clearly a need to try to re-establish a wider, more generously inclusive sense of history and identity than was formerly possible. But - and here we must be very cautious indeed - it would be the rankest betrayal of the educational mission if the reading of books was in some way viewed as tantamount to smuggling a "corrected" or "properly restored" sense of the new national identity. There is plenty of opportunity for that elsewhere in the society where a sense both of citizenship and idealistic notions about social justice and multiracial co-existence can be given due attention, and indeed they should be.

I am saying, however, that the understanding that should, in my opinion, emerge from the reading of specifically literary books is a different thing entirely, though it is necessarily an organic part of the consciousness of young citizens being educated in the new South Africa. It is far more important, from my point of view, that the independent, inquiring and sceptical mind is able to see in the printed word *everything* of which such words may be capable, from propaganda to lyricism, from hypocrisy to moral vision, from the deepest expressions of misery and evil, to the loftiest and most nobly disinterested idea, from - to use a tired but in this case almost perfectly literal phrase - the sublime to the ridiculous.

None of the sense of potential human freedom can be coerced into rigid formulations that conform to be pre-established nationalist, religious or social doctrines. The whole idea of literature as we find it enacted in Shakespeare, or Joyce, or Gordimer is to stretch the potential of language beyond any practical use into realms of discovery and beauty unimagined and unarticulated elsewhere. The reading of literature then, as R.P. Blackmur memorably said, is bringing it to performance, taking it off the page where it is inert and passive, and yoking it to all the activities of mind and life of which the human being is capable, neither according to one's whim, nor to a pre-set doctrinal programme, but rather according to the order of the words whose meanings, Gerard Manley Hopkins once said, have to be fetched out scrupulously.<sup>17</sup> A musician does much the same thing by reading a score and immediately translating it into the sounds of an instrument, and in so doing creating a sound where there had been only a dead silence. Reading connects us to the book, and to all the affiliations it bears within it, to its own time, to the world of the author, to the various structures of feeling, perspective, power that animate it, and to other books and other times. The workings of the imagination, in sum, are what the book embodies from a whole gamut of perspectives that emerge only in the act of reading. The philosopher Maxine Greene puts it very exactly as follows:



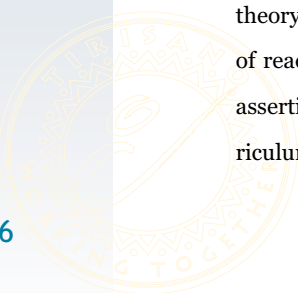


To recognise the role of perspective and vantage point, to recognise at the same time that there are always multiple perspectives and multiple vantage points, is to recognise that no accounting, disciplinary or otherwise, can ever be finished or complete. There is always more. There is always possibility. And this is where the space opens for the pursuits of freedom. Much the same can be said about experiences with art objects - not only literary texts, but music, painting, dance. They have the capacity, when authentically attended to, to enable persons to hear and to see what they would not ordinarily hear and see, to offer visions of consonance and dissonance that are unfamiliar and indeed abnormal, to disclose the incomplete profiles of the world. As importantly, in this context, they have the capacity to defamiliarize experience: to begin with the overly familiar and transfigure it into something different enough to make those who are awakened hear and see.<sup>18</sup>

I especially like Greene's phrase "to disclose the incomplete profiles of the world" as a major aspect of learning, through the arts, about how to view the world we all live in. Surely a great lesson of the last hundred years is that none of the great or small systems, whether imperial, ideological, racial, religious, or socio-economic, is adequate to the world's complexity, which cannot be herded neatly under one or other totalising rubric. Such systems are false gods that routinely end up by lapsing into barbarism and tyranny. Hence the alternative notion: that the world is incomplete, in the process of becoming. It is a magnificent series of fragments, certainly uncontainable by reductive schemes, nationalist, or otherwise. Green is right to say that, as Vico had suggested in the mid-eighteenth century, the world presents itself to the learning and inquiring mind in incomplete profiles.

Yet, one of the banes of education, in my opinion, has always been its persistent and usually unexamined (but not always) tendency to nationalism. Young students are slowly imbued overtly or surreptitiously, with the sense that the history, or tradition, or great books that they study in school are *the* history, *the* tradition, *the* books, and that what they receive or find out much later is, in their view, likely to be somehow hostile, or barbaric, or perhaps even inferior. That has been the problem with Eurocentrism whose ravages include such spoliations of human history as slavery, colonialism, Orientalism and racism. Now the whole wave of decolonising movements that rose everywhere after World War Two to resist Eurocentrism has not always substituted a more tolerant and open kind of knowledge in its place: there are new nationalisms, identities, and fundamentalisms that have entered the minds of young people and these, alas, can play horrible tricks on their sense of identity, which in turn does, to say the least, unedifying things to their idea of the world they live in.

From this point of view, post-apartheid South Africa is in a unique position as far as education is concerned, since the mercilessly imprisoning perspectives of apartheid have been overcome and a patently pluralistic theory of culture and history has begun to replace it. A special role therefore attaches to the very basic role of reading in education, a role that I have tried to describe as critical performance rather than dogmatic assertion. The additional point I want to make is that reading attentively is no mere decoration in a curriculum devoted to such urgent concerns as providing the new South Africa with people well trained in

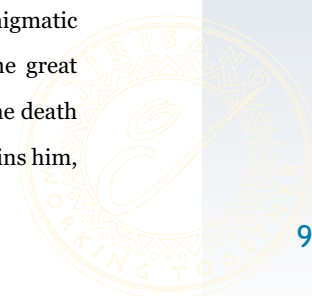


science and technology, professional and vocational specialities like medicine and engineering, technical know-how in everything from business and agriculture to computer soft-ware and accounting. Surely in such an environment reading books is in real danger of being pushed to the sidelines as an almost decorative pastime, required at some level, but somehow secondary to the main concerns that guarantee advancement and decent career prospects, to say nothing of bringing the nation to an acceptable international level of development.

To which I would agree, but remember the price paid generally by the absence of a viable and lively intellectual community able to deal sceptically and perhaps even subversively with injustice, dogmatic authority, corruption and all the blandishments of power. Even after apartheid these *can* reappear. Critical reading provides students with an awakened understanding of how texts are constructed and how they function at the highest levels of imagination and originality, which in turn quickly furnishes the engaged mind with an alertness to the lazy rhetoric, automatic language, and distorted ideological discourses that have so often covered up abuses of power as well as pacifying citizens into a quasi-somnolent acceptance of what is presented as reality. “Pragmatism” and “practicality” have become the watchwords of our age, and with them circulate all sorts of dead clichés about the free market, opportunities for expansion, development and trade. Now these always come in the form of easily commodified and packaged information, precisely the opposite in their easy accessibility to what a trained reader can elicit from a complex text. So, we have an urgent need to decodify the smooth signals that pass as knowledge, to connect what is referred to misleadingly as “the news” or “reality” to the actual processes concealed or effaced by agencies whose role is the defeat or anaesthetisation of agency. This, I want to say most insistently, can only come as a result of a thorough exercise of the mobilised, criticised and secular understanding through humanistic book-based education, that is, reading literature.

Let me add one slightly eccentric note. I have long argued that some of the greatest critical insights come from exiles, especially in our own time, men and women whose work derives directly from the condition of extra-territoriality, marginality and exile which the great demographic upheavals attendant on war and empire have imposed on them. The world is full of displaced and dispossessed people, refugees, immigrants, and expatriates, whose homelessness in some cases is never really mitigated through repatriation and homecoming. Writers and artists who take that condition seriously, as a radical condition of their own consciousness, contribute a certain detachment of insight and a blazing independence of thought that evades the pervasive hold on most of us maintained by the comforts of home, being at home and in one’s place. That sort of thought I think deserves an important place in humanistic education, since its value is exemplary and provocative in stirring the all-too-sedentary consciousness out of its habitual restraints and formulaic thought.

I shall conclude with an all-too-brief and superficial digression. There is an extraordinary and enigmatic moment in Nietzsche’s *Birth of Tragedy*<sup>19</sup> where he describes the death of Socrates whose one great Cyclops eye was turned critically and rationally on Euripede’s plays and was mainly to blame for the death of tragedy. As Socrates is awaiting his death in prison, his muse or daemon appears to him and enjoins him,



according to Nietzsche, to “practise his music,” an injunction that suggests that despite his attacks on art he was at heart himself an artist. (In a memorable phrase Nietzsche says that Plato’s dialogues are the slender bark on which tragedy saved itself.)

My point is that what I have been saying about literature would be profoundly abetted and confirmed by instruction in the understanding (not simply the appreciation) and performance of music. As someone who has been a lifelong musician, I have found that the adjacency of music to my work as a writer and teacher of books brings into play a fully-fledged highly articulate and inflected, profoundly expressive language whose meaning is neither detonable nor expressible verbally. The parallel of one language with the other has been of singular importance to my life as an intellectual and teacher. There is, firstly, the fact that all music, like drama, is made for performance, and acquires its life only as a result of performance. As a model for the kind of reading I’ve been discussing, music is, therefore, without peer. Secondly, in all performance there is an element of presentation for listeners without which the text is lifeless; in addition, music and drama as ensemble practices provide one with a superb, non-coercive and utterly voluntary paradigm for submitting oneself to the ensemble, that is, obliging the individual performer to play a part in an organic whole. Thirdly, and just as important as the other two, music or drama in performance are always forms of interpretation, and require commitment to some ideal of realisation, disclosure and fulfilment that, ironically, does take place, but whose actual import or meaning is always provisional, partial and incomplete, no matter how superb the reading, regardless how virtuosic the performance.

With so remarkable a presentational art to sustain and underpin what one does with words, it is no wonder then that even Socrates, surely the cleverest man who ever lived, had recourse to music for giving irreplaceable perspective to his philosophy and critique. And so it can be for us and for our students, an everlasting effort to understand and use several *languages* in the presence of each other, to grasp and dissent from our fate as citizens in society, to make and unmake, to construct and deconstruct the forms of life into which we have been born and from which mortality decrees that we must leave.

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1 N. Baker

2 J.L. Borges, ‘The Library of Babel’

3 Borges, ‘The Library of Babel’, p.116

4 Borges, ‘The Library of Babel’, p.118

5 L. Febvre and H.-J. Martin, *The Coming of the Book: The Impact of Printing 1450-1800* (London, 1997).

6 A. Manguel, *A History of Reading* (London, 1997).

7 English translation by L. Binyon (London, 1952).

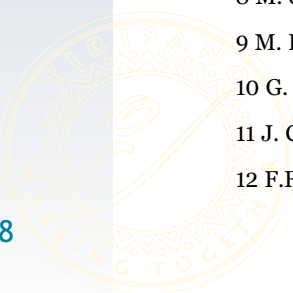
8 M. de Cervantes, *Don Quixote* (English translation: Glasgow, 1901/New York, 1930).

9 M. Proust, *Remembrance of Things Past* (English translation: London, 1966-1970).

10 G. Sand, *Francois de Champi* (Paris, 1869).

11 J. Conrad, ‘Heart of Darkness’ (London, 1902).

12 F. Fanon



13 A.Cesaire

14 Emerson

15 Poirer

16 Poirer

17 Blackmur

18 M.Greene, *The Dialect of Freedom* (New York, 1988), 128-9.

19 F. Nietzsche, *Birth of Tragedy in The Complete Works of Friedrich Nietzsche*, 18 vols. (Londod, 1909-1913).

## **“The Social Bases of Values for South Africa: Prospects and Challenges”**

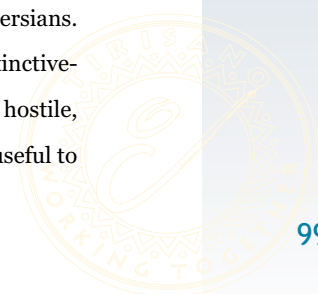
**Keynote Address by Njabulo Ndebele, University of Cape Town**

### **Abstract**

We do not as yet have a common set of values as a people or nation in this country. Nor is there an overarching discourse to accommodate its ‘differences’. South Africa lacks a central idea around which to mobilise its entire people. Our talk about the values of South African people is often in abstraction rather than a reflection upon a concrete reality. Since the end of the political struggle in 1994 we lack the central idea that defines us as South Africans. Even the remaining cultural experiences that once served to bind communities together now often appear as oddities and out of sync in the new world order. Missing in our social calendar are the symbols necessary for expressing a vital sense of community life as South Africans. Symbolic actions are a critical part of the making of a people or nation. Symbols are used to communicate general beliefs and values, and to help form common ambitions and goals in life. We ask, in this context: what would make South Africans once more gravitate towards one another as a people or nation? What symbolic actions around which communities would gather and do things together? What social activities would serve to capture our unity as a people? Ultimately our quest for the values of the South Africans needs to make sense within the realm of social practice. There is a need therefore to build common values and invent social practices that would serve to bring the country together as a people or nation.

### **South Africans in Search of Common Values**

Just under year ago I returned home after living in another country overseas for eighteen months. I recall many times thinking what it meant to be a South African. There were many things about New York that forced me to think these thoughts. Most striking about that city is the many nationalities from all over the world who have established a physical, cultural and economic presence in that world city. Koreans, Indians, Dominicans, Jamaicans, the Irish, the French, Pakistanis, Chinese, Italians, West Africans, Arabs, Persians. The list goes on. They each appear to have brought with them to New York a social or cultural distinctiveness that provides them with a zone of collective comfort in a highly competitive, and sometimes hostile, environment. Soon, however, they fit into a matrix of multicultural functionality that makes them useful to



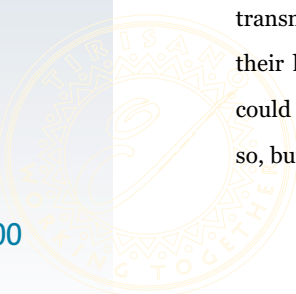
that environment. It is not long before their cultural or physical strangeness is compensated for by their economic usefulness. Their niche in the economic ecology of New York accords them a position within the quilt of multiculturalism, one of the defining features of a world city.

I would then pose the question: if fifty thousand South Africans of various races, classes, ethnic groups, and religions were airlifted into New York, right now, what is it, once they have settled, that would make them gravitate towards one another? What is it that would distinguish them from other nationalities in such a way that their distinctiveness becomes a basis on which they might become economically or culturally useful to New York? Would the answer to this question matter if they were airlifted in one major operation, or if they were carefully brought to New York through a simulation of a migratory process over a determined period of time? Would they be bringing something with them, or would they evolve new forms of social practice, remembering mainly their geographical origins instead of compelling memories of the texture of organised social life?

And so it is that in the calendar of cultural and economic events in New York, many nationalities gather once a year in festivals or carnivals of all sorts to display some essential features of their cultural history. They make statements about themselves through their clothes, their music and dances, their food, their languages, and various other aspects of their culture displayed on floats slowly weaving their way through the streets, and attracting crowds of spectators. What would South Africans display about themselves annually through the streets of a world city?

I want to speculate further about our fifty thousand compatriots of various backgrounds finding themselves in New York at this moment. What is it that they would bring to this new environment? Finding themselves in a strange land, it is highly likely that they would rearrange themselves into social configurations which offered ready comfort to individuals who immediately recognised themselves as having much in common among them. Without a doubt, they would rearrange themselves, if not physically but psychologically, into two major sub-groups: one white, another black. Whatever individuals in these groups come together in any intersection between the two sub-groups occur, such intersections would not be socially significant. It does not matter that our immigrants are relocating to a new environment six years after the first democratic elections of 1994. This is how they are likely to start out.

Our compatriots would certainly bring along with them their many languages. It is highly unlikely though, that those whose mother tongue was not English, whose languages did not exercise a strong presence in the South Africa public discourse on national policy around education, science and technology, commerce and industry, and the law, would exert cultural demands on the public school system. Nor would they embark on a heroic effort to maintain their languages and struggle for their survival through purposeful language transmission to their children. They would not struggle very much to ensure that there was provision for their languages in the school curriculum. They would not establish private schools through which they could ensure that their languages were taught to their children. They may have a political inclination to do so, but they would not be able to marshal a significant social effort to achieve such an objective.



It remains to be seen how much effort they would put, so far from home, into organising celebrations to mark Freedom Day on April 27th of each year. We would have to measure their behaviour in this regard from an assessment of the passion with which the home base marks such a day, and other public holidays. The noticeable diminishing passion with which such days are marked, the further away we move from the historic day of April 27, 1994, might indicate that the political significance of such days has yet to assume a social form with a momentum of its own, independent of its political origins.

Will the African in the black sub-group maintain the tradition of the choral music with their colourful choirs singing and dancing on the spot? Will the sub-group fracture into ethnicities with Indian and Coloured groupings emerging on foreign soil, wondering where they belong? Will the Indian sub-group melt away in new world reconnections in the county of Flushing?

This scenario and the questions it raises are intended to enable us to explore with some detachment the basis of our unity. Can that unity hold outside of the physical borders that compel us to stay together? To the extent that it holds, we might get a handle on the binding factors. To the extent that it cannot hold, we will need to discover factors that bind. This, I think has been the central quest of this conference. Six years into democracy, we still lack a national consciousness. Our communities still need common values in order to create a unifying framework within which a democracy can operate.

I have speculated before<sup>1</sup> that in addition to physical borders that keep us in, forcing us into a national community, there are other potential forces of coherence that may have played a role in preventing us from disintegration in a civil war before 1994. We have in our country...

an increasingly familiar commercial and industrial landscape [that has] progressively drawn the population into a unifying pattern of economic activities. A replicated landscape of major commercial chains throughout the country has, over the decades, become a feature of how the land is imagined. Spatial familiarity of this sort renders the land familiar, less strange and more accommodating wherever you may be in the country. This kind of familiarity may have a binding effect, which cuts across the particularising tendencies of geographic and ethnic location. Linking the country is a complex network of a communications system which promised accessibility of every part of the country to every citizen.<sup>2</sup>

The latest binding factor is our new constitution. It sets out our bill of rights and the instruments of governance, and recognises our rich diversity. In sum, we do seem to have a set of factors in place that have the potential to define us. What we lack is a more compelling social experience of them. What does it take to bring this experience about?

I am mindful of the fact that for black South Africans in particular, the struggle against apartheid had an immensely unifying effect on those abroad. South Africa dominated their dreams, their conversations with



a passion that bordered on obsession. Our country and the struggle presented themselves as the ultimate justification for being alive. It was a purpose that galvanized enormous energies.

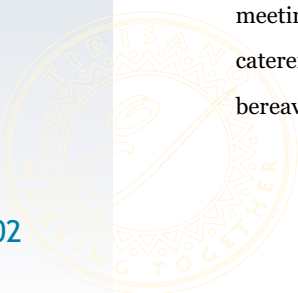
Yet, when I pose the question today, (“Who are we?” “What drives us towards cooperative action?”), silence stares back at me. It is not the silence of emptiness; it is the silence of too much sound yielding little meaning. But these, I believe, are questions we have to strive to answer, not because we too may think we need to have festivals and carnivals in foreign lands, but because the question may force us to reflect on the process we are going through now: the process of becoming; of making sense of all the noises.

The answers might lie in the cycles of daily life in our communities. We need to observe closely what patterns of life yield predictability, offer stability and a sense of purposeful permanence.

The calendar of life in a typical township in the worst days of apartheid was all too short. It was a twenty-four hour calendar. Designed to obliterate any sense of history beyond yesterday, any sense of the future beyond tomorrow. The township was little more than a dormitory, a place of limited social growth. It was the place to which you retreated to sleep after a long day of working for someone. You relaxed in the evening, and then procreated, and then off to work again in an unending day-to-day cycle of activity where any experience of predictability was the measure of the day, the week, the month, and the year. There were very few events of a scale such as would involve communities of people in predictable and purposeful social cooperation of the kind, which results in cultural calendars.

Cultural calendars arise when social activity over time, evolves common values, common adherence to an evolved discipline of rule and regulation, socially programmed anticipation that results in planning as a social activity, not something that bureaucrats do to or for people. Cultural calendars produce communal competences. They bring about a sense of predictability and stability. They provide social cohesion and security. From the perspective of the cultural calendar, the calendar of days, weeks, and months becomes a series of signposts in the passage of social time, not the purposeless measure of life without value.

I want to reflect on a personal experience, which, it seems to me, speaks to the heart of this problem. Some nine months ago my father passed away at the age of eighty-seven. This is how I approached his death and the funeral ahead. Having been an administrator for many years, I instinctively began to draw a list of to-dos, and an action plan. After having lived away from home for many years, I would land with my plans, and to take charge of the situation. I was to be humbled on the third day. A funeral in the township can never be the result of anyone’s plan. The bereaved become a mere reference point for a series of activities for which people emerge as if from nowhere to assign themselves tasks. The grave will be dug; the cow will be bought and slaughtered; the cakes will be baked; the home of the bereaved will be cleaned; the prayer meetings will be held; and on the great day of the burial, the mourners will come, and an army of uniformed caterers arrives to cook and feed the multitudes. And when the last of the mourners have departed, the bereaved remain behind exhausted but satisfied, grateful for having been members of the community.





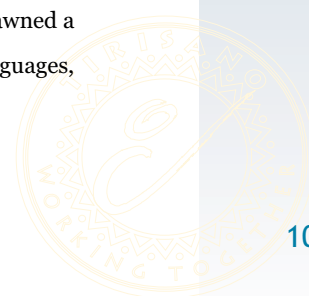
Such social activity around death and burial is a combination of traditional practice and the need to survive in a harsh white world. The social competences of organising a funeral have been acquired and mastered over a long period of time. Because the occurrence of death cannot normally be predicted, these competences are activated whenever needed. Similarly social competences of this nature are activated by the announcement of a wedding or some special festivity.

It will be observed that this kind of activity tends to be restricted to specific events, which centre on individual families, and galvanise social, largely informal, support systems. While their social value is self-evident, they have yet to evolve effectively towards support for civic, impersonal events beyond the immediately personal dimension. We have yet to see a similar galvanising of social support, for example, for a functioning community school system, or for effective local governance. For these, a civic calendar has to emerge triggered by the need for a coordinated social response to a series of community-defined needs. For this to happen, the social support systems we have seen will have to evolve from a survivalist orientation towards the positive ownership of the entire social and civic landscape.

This kind of ownership has yet to occur in any significant way. My sense is that we continue to experience the contemporary civic environment as imposed. It has yet to be a space for self-generated social initiatives such as would transform social effort into a series of reproducible, predictable activities that are then transmitted to future generations. We lost this kind of coherence at some point. We need to get it back over time. A civic calendar might look something like: the beginning of the school year; the election of civic leaders; the beginning of the business year of local government; the local trade fair; the sporting seasons; the choral music festival; a multicultural festival; the celebration of national public holidays.

I want to reflect on one more community experience. It concerns my hometown of Duduza. Although I have talked about this before, it is only now that I am reflecting on it through the act of writing. Duduza has grown phenomenally in the last twenty years. Indeed, the East Rand townships of KwaThema, Tsakane, and Duduza are growing towards one another into a huge mega township. The movement of people from one part of the township to another began to be a problem. And here, one of the ways by which the apartheid landscape impacts on our capacity to assess our self-interest manifests itself. My conception of a transportation service is that of a service that takes me away from the township and back. If I want to go from one part of the township to another, I have to walk. A township taxi would not normally take you from one part of the township to another. A transportation that serves internal township transportation needs could not be conceptualised for some time. Of course this has much to do with size.

I am reminded here of an analogous situation in which for a long time as a young student I could not conceptualise an African Language-to-African Language Dictionary. An African language existed in relation to a European language, into which it was being translated. It was a relationship of dependence. It spawned a service, instrumentalist mentality. On the other hand, a horizontal relationship between African languages, particularly in an urban setting, promised new possibilities and an enabling sense of autonomy.





As Duduza grew in size a local taxi service began. Now you can see the small Mazda 232 cars, called *amaphela*, cars running up and down the streets of Duduza. At first, the established taxi services that use minibuses sought to flex their muscles and run the new service out of business. The community rallied behind the new service. They had recognised a service, which considerably enhanced internal mobility, facilitating easier communication. The economic potential for this development, and the impact it could have on other aspects of township life, has not been fully realised. There has yet to evolve a civic culture that is able to capitalise fully on emerging opportunities and enhance the sense of communal autonomy. But what we do have are the makings of an internal economy that ought to be the focus of policy.

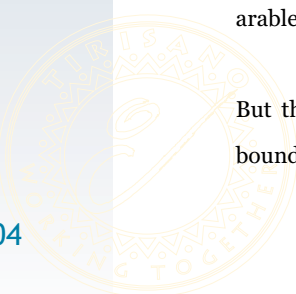
I had begun to speculate on a civic calendar. I'd like to pull that thread back. It should be clear by now that I am trying to highlight the social context of values, to suggest that at stake is our ability to visualise and establish well functioning communities. The school, economic activity, civic authority, and moral institutions form the hub of community life. We have to expose these relationships and rediscover their implications. We ought to be able to recognise forms of social behaviour that result in and embody values celebrated in our constitution. I am attempting to link the community and the school within a framework of social effort that would enable us to reinvent communities.

The beginning of the school year features first in the civic calendar in recognition of the centrality of education in building the ties that bind. More should be made of the first day of school, which involves the entire community in which the school is located. A series of activities building up to that day: acquiring uniforms, books and stationary, registration, etc. are socially cohesive forms of behaviour. Because of poverty and other forms of social dysfunction, purchases of this nature came to be seen as unavoidable commodities rather than as embodiments of responsibility, crucial to the survival of the community.

The schools as public institutions become the focus of the community's local social policy. How many schools should they have? What kinds of schools? How does the community ensure that its schools are adequately resourced? How do they ensure that the school attracts the best teachers possible? What are the languages of the community, and how do the configuration of predominant languages impact on the choice of the medium of instruction? What are community preferences in this regard? How does the school curriculum reflect community needs at the same time as it exposes the children to national and international issues? How does the community ensure that all children in the community go to school?

The values of tolerance, accountability, equity, multilingualism, openness and dialogue make sense within such a context. It is a context within which we strive to achieve a fit between the formal structures of governance and lived life. I am arguing for an approach to values, education, and democracy that focuses on the building of communities, an approach that can be replicated throughout the land. Values, being inseparable from the social experience of their efficacy, are located there.

But the human landscape in South Africa is complex. How do we achieve bonding across community boundaries in a diverse, multicultural society? Since such boundaries may not necessarily be crossed phys-



ically, at least for some time, it is crucial that they be crossed deliberately in other ways. It could be through the curriculum, through the world of work, through the celebration of public holidays in public spaces, through opportunities for diversity to be celebrated. It should be noted here how the Ndebele art forms are now “owned” by most South Africans as one of ourselves by which we identify ourselves in the world. Ethnic based cultural forms tend to reverberate beyond their ethnic origins. The media infrastructure is most likely responsible for this phenomenon.

If our migrants of the year 2001 were unlikely to survive as a cultural entity in New York, how would those that arrive in 2050 rescue them? Hopefully, the new arrivals will do the things their earlier compatriots would not have been able to do. They will make demands on the public school system. They will make sure that their children learn their languages and their history. They will be known for their open-mindedness and brazen independence, passionate about the values of community life. They will set up restaurants with a South African cuisine. Their musicians will be sort after for the distinctiveness of the South African beat. Once in a year they will do what everybody else does back home: come together in a national festival celebrating their diversity. A broad sense of cultural effort will have replaced politics as the single, most important catalyst of value making.

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1 Njabulo S. Ndebele. “Of Lions and Rabbits: Thoughts on Democracy and Reconciliation.” *Pretexts*: Vol. 8 No. 2, 1999.

2 Ibid. p. 154.



# appendices





DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION