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The foundations of a segregated schooling system in the Transvaal 1900-24

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The particular constraints under which the mining industry revolution took place in the late nineteenth century turned racial segregation into an important component of South African capitalism. Those who have examined the roots of mining industry development in South Africa have convincingly argued that the rapid centralization and concentration of mining capital which led to the monopolization of the mining sector was precipitated by the following factors: (i) the geological nature of the gold fields, with a low average of ore and with the vast bulk of the ore deep underground; (ii) the fixed price of gold in the world market, which the mining capitalists could not easily influence; and (iii) the increasing grievances expressed by the working class, particularly white workers, who demonstrated a high level of political militancy and organization.¹ The geological nature of the gold fields accelerated the abandonment of the exhausted outcrop grounds and encouraged deep-level mining, which required supplementary investment of capital and a higher degree of both mechanization and the utilization of skilled labour. The costs of production could not be compensated for by the profit extracted from variables such as the price of gold or the cheapness of machinery. The only variable which could be successfully pressurized in order to raise the rate of profit was labour.

However, the task of reducing labour costs was not an easy one. The social composition of labour in the mines created some difficulties. An overwhelming majority of black, unskilled migrant workers worked side by side with a small but politically active section of white, skilled and semi-skilled workers. While black migrant workers still preserved peasant characteristics which inhibited significant organization against injustices and repression in the mines, the highly proletarianized section of white workers had already achieved relatively experienced forms of political organization.² White workers rapidly became an important force and an obstacle against the policies of the Chamber of Mines, which attempted to reduce wages.³

This characteristic of mine labour favoured a particular development of class and social relations. White workers tended to differentiate and define their class interests along racial lines, regarding their fellow black workers as potential competitors. They directed their grievances against black workers and demanded a privileged status. The

1 See for example F. A. Johnstone, 'Class conflict and colour bars in the South African gold mining industry, 1910-1926', in *Collected Seminar Papers* (University of London, Institute of Commonwealth Studies, October 1969-April 1970); F. A. Johnstone, *Class, Race and Gold* (London, 1976); and A. H. Jeeves, *Migrant Labour in South Africa's Mining Economy: The Struggle for the Gold Mines' Labour Supply, 1890-1920* (Johannesburg, 1985).

2 Amongst African migrant workers, class loyalties were overdetermined by ethnic or tribal affiliations. The predominance of peasant characteristics also inhibited significant forms of political organization or militancy at the workplace. However, many white workers had not only experienced the militancy of the British working class during the nineteenth century, but had also developed a high level of class and political consciousness.

3 Johnstone, 'Class conflict and colour bars', 116.

response by the state and by capital reflected this reality. Colour began to be seen as a criterion of access to rights and power through which whites occupied elite status and superordinate positions in the social division of labour. By contrast, Africans were kept at the opposite pole as a cheap labour force with no rights. Thus, as Johnstone, a leading historian of the industry, has pointed out, 'white labour's claims to rights on grounds of colour legitimized the denial of rights to others on grounds of colour'.⁴ The legacy of colour prejudices which accompanied previous colonial practices, inspired, *inter alia*, by theories of Social Darwinism, were revitalized and formalized in the form of job colour bars. The policies and ideologies produced within this process constituted a legalized system of race discrimination, known as 'segregation'. With the penetration and development of capitalist social relations in the countryside, racial segregation became increasingly a dominant policy.

It is not argued here that forms of racial segregation did not exist before the mining revolution. Discrimination on grounds of colour as part of state policy had been incorporated, for example, in the constitution of the South African Republic (ZAR).⁵ The distinguishing feature here is that the policy of racial segregation as an all-embracing strategy was assumed as a necessary ideological base for capitalist development in South Africa. The institutional barriers imposed to regulate labour relations in the mines were gradually extended to almost all spheres of social life, including education.

The racial structuring of social relations on the gold fields has been extensively studied.⁶ In this article, I shall concentrate on those issues which have affected the building-up of a new educational system based on racial segregation. I shall examine the ideological background which inspired and directed the implementation of racial segregation in education. Ideally, this analysis would involve an examination of the Milner state and its reconstruction policy, as well as the ideology and views expressed by the leadership of the mining sector, missionary societies and other social forces.⁷ This article will focus on Milner's reconstruction policy, leaving other issues for further research. This will provide some insights into the particular way the schooling system in the Transvaal was moulded. Finally, it will be shown how, in the course of the first two decades of the twentieth century, the education system, as a result of the implementation of the Government's policies of racial segregation, became fragmented along racial lines into four schooling systems, both in the structure and in the content of education.

The Milner state and reconstruction policy

Between 1899 and 1902, the Transvaal was heavily shaken by the most destructive war in South African history, the South African War. The causes of this war fall beyond the scope of this article. It is enough to mention that the South African War was ultimately

4 *Ibid.*, 122.

5 The Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek (ZAR) or South African Republic was a Boer republic constituted after the Great Trek following the unification of the Transvaal, with the assumption of Pretoria as its capital, the establishment of a *Volksraad* (parliament) with its *Grondwet* (constitution). It became integrated into the Union of South Africa in 1910, with a provincial administration.

6 Besides the reference already made, see D. Yudelman, *The Emergence of Modern South Africa* (London, 1983); N. Levy, 'The state, mineowners and labour regulations in the Transvaal, 1887-1906', in *Collected Seminar Papers* (University of London, Institute of Commonwealth Studies, 1980); and M. Lipton, *Capitalism and Apartheid in South Africa, 1910-1986* (Cape Town and Johannesburg, 1986).

7 The Milner administration was established in the Transvaal following the breakdown of the South African Republic during the South African War (Anglo-Boer War), 1899-1902.

related to the clash between two totally different and contradictory methods of production: the existing quasi-feudal and communal modes of production and the emerging capitalist mode of production. By the 1890s, the capitalist mode of production had already developed a strong economic base, which was not followed by the building-up of suitable political and ideological apparatuses. It also required an expansion of its social base. These needs could not be met through a simple 'modernization' of the feudal state of the South African Republic. This fundamental contradiction associated with the economic and strategic interests of British imperialism in southern Africa led to the eruption of the South African War. As Legassick has indicated, the war essentially came as a particular form of capitalist revolution: 'a capitalist revolution made from above and not in a situation where the internal capitalist forces could achieve such a transformation'.⁸ To put it another way, the transition from pre-capitalist social formations to capitalism did not follow the European route, where the transition was determined by internal contradictions within feudal society. Capitalist social relations of production were imposed, and became dominant, as a result of the world-scale expansion of European capitalism.

The crucial implication of the profound social and economic change caused by the war was the need for a re-adjustment of the whole superstructure, particularly the education system, to the level of development of the productive forces and the social relations of production. The shaping of this process was bound up with the course of the class struggle after the war and it was profoundly determined by Milner's reconstruction policy.

It was during the reconstruction period (1902–24) that many of the guidelines of twentieth-century segregationist policies were set out, in relation to both town and countryside.⁹ As Marks and Trapido have argued, these policies have to be related 'not only to Milner's particular world-view . . . but also to the far wider set of assumptions held by the British rulers of South Africa at the beginning of the 20th century and their interaction with local conditions'.¹⁰ The reconstruction regime had to set up an adequate policy which could respond to the contradictions which had determined the war and the crisis. It had to meet the needs of capitalist economic growth covering different spheres of social activity, such as the labour supply, the mitigation through education of growing social conflict, and the promotion of the interests of British imperialism. Racial segregation immediately emerged as the dominant strategy in all these spheres. A wide debate took place in the existing newspapers, through the publication of pamphlets, and in the new journals and associations formed at the time. Colonial conferences, sources produced by missionaries and education authorities provided bases for the new policy. Considerable knowledge and information also came from British and American sources. I shall discuss some of the major issues raised in this

8 M. Legassick, 'South African capital accumulation and violence', *Economy and Society*, 3 (3) (1974), 260.

9 Although some policies of racial segregation had been introduced during the latest period of the South African Republic in its efforts towards 'modernization', the most important changes took place during the immediate post-Milner period.

10 S. Marks and S. Trapido, 'Lord Milner and the South African state', *History Workshop Journal*, 8 (1979), 72.

debate, starting from Milner's ideas, which appear to have played a central role in shaping segregationist policies.¹¹

Three main areas were of major concern to Milner: (i) British settlement in the Transvaal and its implications; (ii) the Dutch-English conflict; and (iii) 'native policy', embracing all matters concerning black people. Two principles assume an outstanding importance in Milner's policy. Firstly, there is an underlying assumption that any policy or development should incorporate the principle that South Africa is 'a white man's country' in the sense that the 'white man should rule', on the grounds of his 'superior civilization'. Secondly, related to the principle of white supremacy, there is an explicit directive that the British section of the white population should play a hegemonic role in South Africa.¹² For this purpose, British settlement should be promoted in a selective way by attracting, as far as possible, 'settlers of a superior class' and avoiding a 'white proletariat'.¹³ If any workers had to come, they should be those who could fit into the skilled labour market available.

Milner's views on education reflected the same preoccupations and displayed a permanent obsession with the growing Afrikaner nationalism, which appeared as a potential threat against his imperial ideal. His central aim was the Anglicization of Boer society through a state-controlled schooling system. The importance of the teaching of history, and the question of the medium of instruction, were particularly stressed in his speeches. In 1900, he said: 'My view is that any school relying upon aid from the State should not only teach English, but make English the medium of instruction in all but elementary classes.'¹⁴ History, 'another thing of greatest importance', he continued, should include 'British history and the growth of the Empire which would be of immense use', and not only concentration 'on Majuba with a little Jameson Raid' and similar topics which had some bearing on Afrikaner nationalism.¹⁵

Milner's approach to education was to a large extent influenced by the mining sector and by the Council of Education, Witwatersrand, founded in 1895 to expand education for white children on the Rand. However, the mining sector placed emphasis on the need for technical education. It was argued that as 'the skilled white workman' was likely to be 'the chief factor in a permanent white population the most effective way to maintain the ascendancy of the white man was by higher technical education'.¹⁶ Formal schooling was identified with technical education: 'The days of the rule of thumb miner are passing and the old maxim that "trades cannot be taught in a school", has been supplemented by the at least equally true one that "trades cannot be taught without a school".'¹⁷ More important was the assumption that 'industrial expansion unaccompanied by perfected elementary, secondary and higher education would never

11 Periodicals which played a considerable role included the *South African Mining Journal* superseded by *South African Mines, Commerce and Industries* (SAMJ/SA Mines), the *State* (1908-12), the *African Monthly* (1906-10), and such papers as the *Transvaal Leader*, *Cape Times*, *Christian Express*, etc. Legassick, in a study on the origins of segregation, refers to the role played by societies such as the South African Philosophical Society, the Transvaal Native Affairs Society (formed in 1908) and the Natal Native Affairs Reform Society (formed in 1909). See M. Legassick, 'The making of South African "native policy", 1903-1923: the origins of segregation', in *Collected Papers* (University of London, Institute of Commonwealth Studies, 1974), 5.

12 C. Headlam (ed.), *The Milner Papers, South Africa 1899-1905*, vol. 2 (London, 1933), 467.

13 Memorandum, Sir A. Milner to Major Hanbury Williams, 27 December 1900, in *ibid.*, 242. See also the Interview, Sir A. Milner to a Deputation from the White League, 1903, in *ibid.*, 459; and the letter, Sir A. Milner to Mr Chamberlain, 9 May 1900, in *ibid.*, 144.

14 Sir A. Milner to General Pretymann, Government House, Cape Town, 20 June 1900, in *ibid.*, 133.

15 *Ibid.*, 133.

16 [Column:] 'Leading Articles' [no author shown], *South African Mines, Commerce and Industries*, 27 April 1907, 162.

17 *Ibid.*, 162.

make South Africa self-supporting'.¹⁸ Commenting on the report of the Transvaal Education Department for 1903, the *South African Mines, Commerce and Industries* accused the Government of 'paying too much for police and too little for pedagogics'.¹⁹ Schooling was seen as a more effective and necessary mechanism of social control and stability than repressive institutions: 'The South African Constabulary was a war-time product... More schools, more farm schools... schools supported by local and general taxation if need be, will minimise the demand later on for barracks.'²⁰

'Native policy' appeared to Milner as a separate area which required differential treatment. Labour problems, the question of the franchise, political and civil rights, and education were among the components of 'native policy'. For Milner and his administration, the only form of labour for blacks should be unskilled labour. Franchise for all Africans was considered premature in the Transvaal. The most important element for the formulation of 'native policy' was Milner's idea that 'civilization' should be 'the test of a man's capacity for political rights'. This was extensively discussed in a historical speech, widely known as the 'Watch Tower Speech', which provided the philosophical grounds for the policy of racial segregation. Accordingly, the white man as ruler had to play the role of 'gradually raising' the black man, not to a white level of civilization, that is the level of a 'civilized franchise', but 'up to a much higher level than that which he at that time occupied'.²¹

South Africa must be ruled by voters of European descent. The political influence of the civilised native can never, within any distance of time which is profitable to contemplate, be allowed to preponderate in the government of South Africa... The white race must retain the responsibility of government because of its superior intellectual endowment.²²

Thus, if the black man could never be allowed to preponderate, institutions should be created to keep him at the lowest level.

On this basis, education for Africans required a different and racist treatment. About this, Milner said:

I think... that much more should be done for education of the natives than has ever yet been attempted in the Transvaal. I do not mean that they should be educated like Europeans, for their requirements and capacities are very different, but that they should be trained to develop their natural aptitudes for their own good and that of the community.²³

Neither Milner nor the Rand magnates had seen any necessary connection between African education and the labour requirements in the mining sector. While schooling for whites, for example, had been seen as a necessary step to technical training according to the industrial requirements for skilled labour, African education was only to resolve problems arising out of the contact between a white employer and a black employee and other sorts of labour relations.

The mining sector assumed a more negative position regarding African education. The dominant view was that African education would result directly from labour relations as such. In 1903, the SAMCI made the point that 'a course of six or twelve months labour on the Rand was the easiest and most profound education that can be afforded to the native'.²⁴ There, it reads, 'he learns the value of discipline, regularity,

18 'More schools, less police', 270. [Column:] 'Leading Articles; Mr Tainton's Views', *South African Mines, Commerce and Industries*, 4 June 1904.

19 *Ibid.*

20 *Ibid.*

21 Sir A. Milner to a Deputation of Coloured Subjects, January 1901, in Headlam, *op. cit.*, 213; and 'The Watch Tower Speech', in *ibid.*, 467.

22 Sir A. Milner, 1903. Quoted by Legassick, 'The making of South African "native policy"'.
23 Despatch, Lord Milner to Mr Chamberlain, 6 December 1901, in Headlam, *op. cit.*, 307.

24 [Column:] 'Leading Articles' [no author shown], *South African Mines, Commerce and Industries*, 14 March 1903, 3.

and the ways of the white man'; an African trained to mine work was 'a better animal and a better man at the end of his term than he was when he began'.²⁵ To some extent these statements reflected the particular conditions of the labour market for African workers as perceived by the dominant capitalist forces. With the increasing obstacles imposed by the state, employment for Africans was only open in the following fields: domestic service, industry, municipal employment and farms. In every case, they performed almost exclusively unskilled roles. As Philips has pointed out, 'they were everywhere lifting, carrying, shovelling, wrapping ... generally with that disarming genial good-nature which leads many whites to conclude that they are quite satisfied with what they get in the way of wages, food, and quarters'.²⁶ When it came to skilled or semi-skilled employment, there were limited outlets beyond teaching in the mission schools, working as police and subordinate clerks in the Government, or working in the Municipal and Native Affairs Department, and its compounds.²⁷ Except for these forms of work, the development of basic operative skills, and of certain attitudes and behaviour, would be the main requirements for the training or education of Africans, in the eyes of the mining magnates and education authorities.

Milner did not hope to bring clear-cut formulas for all the problems of reconstruction. Contradictions produced by the war, and the complexity of the inherited institutions and structures, required a profound and long reflection. He thus tried to create an intellectual climate and a basis to encourage legislation and administration along desirable lines for the future. The starting point was necessarily the elaboration of a 'native policy' and its translation into appropriate legislation. At the Intercolonial Conference of 1903, Milner introduced the 'native question'. He also appointed the South African Native Affairs Commission of Inquiry (SANAC), which, in its report released in February 1905, proposed many aspects of what was to emerge as the policy of racial segregation. Though not advocating the total segregation of land areas, SANAC suggested racially exclusive occupation of land areas, separate political representation of blacks and whites, and advocated a policy of gradual and 'assisted evolution' to facilitate the development of Africans in a way which could not merge too closely into European life.

In the sphere of education, the main question posed by SANAC was whether education, as a development of the intellectual faculties by literary instruction, had militated against the African's usefulness as a productive force or had had the effect of making him/her more productive.²⁸ It concluded that while in some cases it had had 'the effect of creating in the Natives an aggressive spirit, arising no doubt from an exaggerated sense of individual self-importance, which renders them less docile and less disposed to be contented ... it had had generally a beneficial influence ... by raising the level of their intelligence and by increasing their capacity as workers'.²⁹

Sanctioning the principle of the racial separation of schools, and the principle that African education should be resolved into a system of state-aided mission schools, SANAC recommended that, as the great demand of South Africa was for unskilled or partially skilled labour, instruction in manual labour should constitute the basis of

25 *Ibid.*, 37.

26 R. E. Phillips, *The Bantu in the City: A Study of Cultural Adjustment on the Witwatersrand* (Lovedale, 1938), 12-13.

27 *Ibid.*, 13. See also N. Kagan, 'African Settlement in the Johannesburg Area, 1903-1923', MA thesis (University of the Witwatersrand, 1978), 12.

28 *South African Native Affairs Commission Report, 1903-1905* (Capetown, 1905), 67.

29 *Ibid.*, 67.

African education. For it has the 'particular advantage ... in fitting him [the African] for his position in life'.³⁰ The Commission also urged that Africans receiving educational facilities should contribute towards the cost by payment of fees or local rates.³¹ Compulsory education was not recommended nor was it considered advisable.³² This ideological environment produced by SANAC was strengthened by the publication of the Transvaal Indigency Commission (TIC) report in 1908, suggesting further discriminatory policies. This Commission had the task of investigating the causes of proliferation of white indigency in the Transvaal.

The importance of the Transvaal Indigency Commission report lies in the fact that it provided the central economic, social and ideological grounds for the implementation of the segregationist policy enacted by the Education Act of 1907. Accordingly, the main problem in the Transvaal was the 'poor white problem', that is the problem created by the growing number of whites 'who though able-bodied, are not competent to do skilled or semi-skilled work, and are unable to obtain employment in rough manual labour in competition with the native'.³³ It argued that white labour was very inefficient and required a high scale of wages as compared to African labour, and that whites could therefore not get unskilled employment. For this reason, whites became indigent.³⁴ It also argued that blacks (including mainly 'coloureds' and 'Indians') were beginning to intrude upon the field of skilled work, thereby narrowing the skilled labour market for whites and thus reinforcing the potential threat of white indigency.³⁵ Consequently the Commission recommended that the virtual monopoly of the unskilled labour market by blacks, and their gradual encroachment on the skilled and semi-skilled jobs as they became more educated, must be prevented 'by the white man himself' with the assistance of the Government. Among the racially discriminatory measures suggested by the Commission, of particular relevance was the improvement of the education of whites on the lines of the Education Act of 1907, which institutionalized the principle of racial segregation in education. Though no specific recommendations were made regarding education for blacks, the central implication of the report was that 'native education' should not be placed on the same footing as that for whites.

So far, the changing social and economic conditions were shown to be accompanied by an ideological climate which directly or indirectly favoured the policies of racial segregation as the appropriate solution for the growing needs and contradictions determined by capitalist development. It became clear that racial segregation as a policy was not a mere eventuality emerging from cultural or racial prejudices, but a systematic body of ideas arising out of a conscious and articulated debate. In the following section I shall analyse the main stages of racial segregation and the form in which it was implemented in education.

30 *Ibid.*, 72.

31 *Ibid.*, 72.

32 *Ibid.*, 71.

33 *Transvaal Indigency Commission Report, 1906-8* (Pretoria, 1908), 4.

34 *Ibid.*, 25.

35 *Ibid.*, 26.

State intervention and entrenchment of segregation in education 1902–10

The South African Republic had declared in its *Grondwet* (constitution) that there would be no equality between whites and blacks.³⁶ Accordingly, blacks were totally excluded from the franchise. However, no specific legislation on these lines existed to discriminate against blacks in education, though the majority – for different reasons – attended the new mission schools established in the Transvaal. No provision was made to prevent black children from attending the same schools as white or mixed-race children. By 1896, there were four private schools in Johannesburg which were attended by white as well as black children, for example St Cyrians School, which opened in 1890. By the end of the 1890s, Government subsidy for some of these schools began to be restricted on racial grounds.³⁷

However, it was not until the end of the South African War that the Transvaal authorities decided to intervene and to gradually institutionalize separation within the schooling system along racial lines. On 6 November 1900, Mr Sargent was appointed Acting Director for the Orange River Colony and the Transvaal, with the task of reorganizing the educational system.³⁸ In the following year, free primary education was introduced for white children in the Transvaal, thus laying the foundations for the racially exclusivist policy in education which began to take shape around 1903.³⁹ In the same year, education for Africans formed the subject of many discussions between the Secretary of Native Affairs and the Director of Education, and it was then resolved to adopt the policy of subsidizing African schools through the various missionary denominations.⁴⁰

Two important steps were taken in February 1903. The first was the passing of the First Education Ordinance, wherein provision was made for the education of African children as a separate matter. It represents the first attempt to formulate the preliminary and provisional principles which would direct education for Africans while 'native policy' was being discussed. As the Director of Education pointed out in his report for 1900–4: 'nothing more can be safely undertaken by Government until a comprehensive scheme for the education of backward races ... has received the approval of all, or most, of the States of South Africa'.⁴¹ In respect of education for whites, the ordinance introduced a state-controlled schooling system (which would determine the structures, control, training and upgrading of teachers). The principle of racially separate schools was implicitly incorporated. Thus, when in April 1903 an Asian, Dr M. A. Pereira, asked Sir A. Milner to allow his children to attend a school for whites, the request was turned down.⁴² Emphasis was laid on the necessity for improving manual training in the education of blacks. Every school eligible for Government grants would register with the Education Department.

36 C. T. Loram, *The Education of the South African Native* (London, 1927), 20–2; and E. G. Malherbe, *Education in South Africa* (Johannesburg and Cape Town, 1925), 228–9.

37 A. L. Behr and R. G. Macmillan, *Education in South Africa* (Pretoria, 1966), 337; and E. H. Behr, 'Three Centuries of Coloured Education in the Cape and Transvaal, 1652–1923', PhD thesis (Potchefstroom University, 1952), 275.

38 N. D. Achterberg, 'A survey of Native education in the Transvaal', D. Phil. thesis, Pretoria (1927), 69.

39 *Ibid.*, 69. See also the Report of the Syndic to the Council of Education (Witwatersrand, 4 September 1903), 2–3, 10.

40 Report of the Secretary for Native Affairs, 1905–6.

41 TED, Report of the Director of Education, 1900–1904, 24.

42 Behr and Macmillan, *op. cit.*, 339.

The second step was the appointment of an organizing inspector of native education in the person of the Rev. W. E. Clarke. Shortly after his appointment Clarke organized a detailed survey of mission schools. He came to the following conclusion:

It seems to be generally recognised ... that the secular education of the native races must depend upon the initiative of the different religious agencies, whose main purpose is to Christianise them and to elevate their moral condition ... The attitude that meanwhile appears best for the Government to adopt ... is to accept the existing organisation, to prescribe a certain course of elementary and industrial instruction, and to subsidise and thereby to control their instruction by means of a system of inspection and quarterly grants.⁴³

Clarke's ideas and proposals played a crucial role in the formulation of the first scheme for African education in the Transvaal as well as in the formulation of SANAC's recommendations on African education. However, he contrasted with more liberal personalities like Bishop Carter, the Rev. H. Junod and other missionaries, who fought for more tolerant initiatives regarding African education. While Clarke confidently expected that there would be a rush to have all schools registered in the books of the Department, so that all might participate in the advantages offered, only some 146 out of 201 African schools applied for registration. Of these, 14 had lapsed again by the end of 1904.⁴⁴

In the meantime a scheme for African education was drawn up on the lines proposed by Clarke and was introduced from 1 January 1904. One of the objects intended was that primary schools should encourage manual work, such as gardening, brick-making, mat-weaving and carpentry (for boys), and needlework and domestic work (for girls).⁴⁵ Particular emphasis was given to the teaching of the English language. On this topic, the Department of Education report for 1903 clearly stated that the 'enormous percentage of energy that is at present wasted or lost through the lack of a common medium of communication between white employer and native employee shows the necessity of prescribing for all native schools a knowledge of English as one of the elementary subjects'.⁴⁶ The omission of religion from the new scheme broke with the missionary tradition of training teachers as evangelists. The Wesleyans were among the first to accept the Government's decision and to arrange the training of their evangelists separately from that of their teachers. After some reluctance a similar step was taken by the Swiss Mission.⁴⁷ A new syllabus was also set out, in 1905, for the training of teachers. A three-year course was instituted with the entrance requirement of Standard III. Industrial training became compulsory to qualify teachers to teach manual instruction in the African schools.⁴⁸

By prescribing the course of instruction to be followed in elementary and industrial schools, a more or less uniform aim was set for the schools for African children. By stressing the importance of manual labour, character and moral training, and the role of English in 'master and servants' relations, the connection between school and workplace was made meaningful. By making grants-in-aid dependent upon the right to

43 Quoted by Behr and Macmillan, *op cit.*, 338–9. Clarke also insisted on the necessity for European supervision over every school for blacks: 'I think we have a greater guarantee, in the first place, for co-operation with the Government in whatever it believes to be the best line, and secondly, I think a guarantee for greater efficiency and better understanding of the essentials of a good school' (Minutes of Evidence to SAAC, 1904).

44 Achterberg, *op. cit.*, 84.

45 A. D. Dodd, *Native Vocational Training: A Study of Conditions in South Africa, 1652–1936* (Lovedale, 1938), 85.

46 Achterberg, *op. cit.*, 74.

47 Letter from Lemana Training Institution to the Rev. Clarke, 18 March 1906.

48 Government Notice, 1 December 1905.

inspect schools, the instruction of African children could be controlled by the Government. The new scheme was not accepted without criticism. The following outburst came from the German missionaries:

The English give us one pound Sterling and wish to have a say in our affairs worth ten pound Sterling. The Government in giving the grant, does not only require us to accept their syllabus, but also demands the right to decide when and how we are to build our schoolhouses, how they are to be arranged and when they are to be repaired; to criticise our teachers, etc.⁴⁹

The Rev. Junod, an influential missionary of the Swiss Mission, criticized the primacy given in the code to the English language over the vernacular. Junod charged the new scheme with placing 'all the strain to make the native an English-speaking boy or girl for the use of the white man, rather than a man capable of thinking by himself and of leading intelligently his life'.⁵⁰ However, only a few missionaries had criticized the new scheme as leading to the entrenchment of inferior education, or as preparing blacks for subordinate positions in the social division of labour. The majority at that time were absorbed by the controversy surrounding religious and secular instruction. Further, criticisms were not directed against the segregationist aspects of the scheme but were centred on the conflicting religious and secular interests of the missionaries and the state. Generally, missionaries accepted separation in school and curriculum as an inevitable differentiation inspired by cultural pluralism and the alleged complexity of the missionary work amongst blacks. They perceived separation not necessarily as an aspect of racial segregation, but as a healthy division of labour or resources. Unwittingly, missionaries were gradually incorporated by the Government's segregationist strategy. Alban Winter of the Community of Resurrection provides the following account of his congregation:

Why this division, it is said. The question was, in fact, raised from the very beginning of our work by Fr. Alston, who, soon after his arrival, wrote on Dec. 1st, 1904:—'To me it is very sad the native and the white work being separated. I have not been here long enough to pass an opinion upon it, but it is quite obvious that the natives just emerging from savagery cannot be treated in the same way as whites, there must be restrictions; there must be in many ways separations. But when they have become Christians it does seem to me that the Altar is one place where they certainly can meet, but it is not so.' This policy was no new one but a continuation of that advocated by Cannon Farmer, the most experienced priest in native mission work in the diocese of Pretoria. In reporting to the Synod of 1904 on mission work he 'showed that European and Bantu were so essentially different that it was almost impossible for one priest to tackle both efficiently'. The committee thought it advisable that missionary work should be extra-parochial, and the diocese divided into districts, with a missionary in charge of each.⁵¹

Another important development was the segregation of schools for 'coloured' (mixed) children. The first schools for mixed children were opened between 1897 and 1902 under the initiative of the Rev. Charles Philips of the Ebenezer Coloured Congregational Church (a separatist Church).⁵² When the state adopted its segregationist policy, they were incorporated into the Government school system for 'coloured' children and as such they were placed on an equal footing with the schools for white children with regard to annual grants, equipment and inspection. In practice they were disadvantaged in terms of space, quality of buildings, human resources and grading. The Director of Education had this to say in 1908: 'The working principle

49 Quoted by Achterberg, *op. cit.*, 72.

50 Memorandum, H. Junod to the Superintendent of Native Education, 30 December, Swiss Mission, 1904.

51 A. Winter, *Till Darkness Fell* (Mirfield, 1962), 8–9.

52 D. J. C. Nolte, 'The educational needs of the coloured people in the Transvaal', paper presented to the First National Coloured–European Conference (Cape Town, June 1933).

which I adopt ... is to grade them one step lower than the schools for white children which have about the same enrolment.⁵³

The policy of racial segregation in education was explicitly declared and institutionalized under the Transvaal Education Act of 1907, which proclaimed the principle of racial separation in schools and imposed the 'colour bar' in the schools for white children. It was clearly stated that 'No coloured child or person shall be admitted to or allowed to remain a pupil or member of any school class or institution'⁵⁴ for white children. Education for white children between the ages of 7 and 14 was made compulsory, and with it white children of both skilled and unskilled whites were placed on a fundamentally different footing from that of either 'coloured' or African children. As Chisholm has argued, free compulsory education had profound effects on consciousness and was part of the various strategies adopted by the ruling class for containing the activities of the white working class, and for building a racial identity between white labour and capital.⁵⁵ Africans were denied the right to free and compulsory education on the grounds that they were still unfit for it. Mixed people had only the right to free education.

The 1907 Act also empowered the state itself to establish Government schools for African children. The first such school was set up in the same year in Klipspruit, but no other schools were founded until many years later. In 1909, African schools were placed under the supervision of inspectors of European education.⁵⁶

In conclusion, the policy initiated by the Milner state in 1902, culminated in 1907 with the institutionalization of segregation in schools and the imposition of 'colour bars' in the schools for white children. Preliminary initiatives had been undertaken to implement racial segregation in the structures and content of the schooling system. However, there were still cases where 'coloured' children attended schools for whites, and African children still attended schools for 'coloureds'.⁵⁷ Indian children also remained mixed with 'coloured' children in some schools. Thus when, for example, the Witwatersrand School Board was set up, one of the first matters to which it had to give its attention was in connection with the presence of 'non-whites' in the schools for whites. For this purpose, the Director of Education sent a directive, in 1910, imposing on school boards the duty of ensuring that the principle of racial separation was carried out.⁵⁸ In the period which followed, new initiatives were put into practice to ensure a more effective implementation of segregation in education.

Segregation in education. 1910–24

Under the South Africa Act of 1910, education remained a provincial matter. All other matters concerning Africans were transferred to the Union Government and fell under the Ministry of Native Affairs. The new authorities were faced with the task of making the principle of social segregation effective in education. Thus, from 1910 onwards a process of reorganization and revision of the system of African and 'coloured' schools was initiated which led to the consolidation of segregationist structures in education. It

53 TED, Report of the Director of Education for the year ending 30 June 1908, 28–9.

54 Education Act of 1907.

55 L. Chisholm, 'Themes in the construction of free compulsory education for the white working class on the Witwatersrand, 1886–1907', *University of the Witwatersrand: History Workshop* (1984), 17–18.

56 TED, Report of the Director of Education for the year ending 30 June 1910, 44–5; and the Report for the year ending 30 June 1908, 29–31.

57 Behr and Macmillan, *op cit.*, 337–8.

58 TED, Report of the Director of Education for the year ending 30 June, 1910, 44.

included the introduction of more rational methods and institutions to render more effective the aims and the role of free compulsory education for white children.

In 1912, after a period of hesitation, a debate took place within the Transvaal Education Department on a revision of African education, which was followed by the implementation of a revised scheme in 1915. I would argue that this initiative constituted the most important factor for the consolidation of African schooling as a segregated system, for it crystallized the idea of segregation not only at the level of institutional structures of control, but also at the level of the content or aims of education. This argument will probably not satisfy the classical liberal thinking which views segregation in education as a merely structural matter, arising out of the physical separation of schools and institutions of control. Racial segregation as conceived by the ruling class was designed to mould a particular type of individual, able to perform particular roles in society, and prepared to accept uncritically the existing forms of domination and subordination. This aim cannot be successfully accomplished simply by separating schools along racial lines, for it requires a special form of moral and behavioural training, and an ideological bias and stereotypes which stress a sense of racial inferiority and cultural differences—factors incorporated in the revised scheme.

The Education Commission of 1912 advanced strong criticisms of the existing system and made radical proposals on the control, content and aims of African education. Firstly, mission education was criticized for attempting to raise Africans 'on the shoulders of the white man in a non-African environment' and for educating them to participate in an economic and social life from which they were barred.⁵⁹ It was maintained that African education should be considered as far as possible from the point of view of the African's 'own possibilities, needs and aspirations'.⁶⁰ It should not be modelled on that of Europeans. It should be dealt with as a separate and distinct problem, rather than to attempt to solve it by considering how the European had been treated.⁶¹ To put it another way, African education had to adjust and conform to the social and economic roles which African people had to perform. Thus, in 1912, the Director of Education determined that the existing scheme 'should be stripped of those portions which have... been taken over from the code for white children, rather than incorporated because of their particular suitability for natives'.⁶² Secondly, mission education was charged with having negative effects on the African as 'it puffed him up', made him disinclined for manual labour and made him an easy victim for agitators.⁶³ The debates were largely directed towards the question as to whether education for Africans should be essentially directed to industrial training or whether it had to keep the literary basis of mission education.

59 E. G. Malherbe (ed.), *Educational Adaptations in a Changing Society* (1934), 111–13.

60 TED, Report of the Director of Education for the year ending 31 December 1912, 92.

61 *Ibid.*, 92–3.

62 TED, Report of the Director of Education for the year ending 31 December 1912, 93–4. Thus, when a revised scheme was sanctioned by the Council of Education, it was characterized by the Director of Education in the following way: 'The distinguishing feature is that it attempts to meet the requirements of the native, not by first considering what is done for a European and then whittling this down to what may be deemed a fair proportion for the native, but considering the needs, possibilities, and legitimate aspirations of the native on their own merits, and developing a scheme which will, as far as possible, meet them' (TED, Report of the Director of Education for 1915, 42–3). Of course these 'needs, possibilities and... aspirations' were not defined by the 'natives' themselves but by the ruling class according to what ought to be the place for Africans in a segregated environment.

63 TED, Report of the Director of Education for the year ending 31 December 1912, 92–3.

In considering these criticisms, the Council of Education (an advisory body which approved the revised scheme) assumed a more liberal position, but none of the central issues contained in the criticisms was dismissed. A remark was made against those who were entirely hostile to literary education:

It is said that we must keep him [the African] in his place, that there is a broad gulf between black and white, or that he is most useful as he is. It cannot be denied that this is approaching the question from the white man's point of view, and that ultimately these arguments reduced themselves to a more or less refined justification of a policy of exploitation.⁶⁴

There would be 'unrest rather than increased efficiency'.⁶⁵ It was feared that Africans would get education through 'less satisfactory channels'. Furthermore, their efficiency is advanced, whether directly or indirectly, 'by being able to read, write and count, even in a limited degree'.⁶⁶ Regarding industrial training, the Council of Education identified two main positions which essentially reflected the racist nature of the class struggle. There was the attitude of the employer, who in practically all cases was opposed to any literary training, taking his stand on industrial training: 'the native's future and functions are in the area of industry, whether on the land, in the workshop, in the garden, the house, or elsewhere, his training should be largely, if not entirely, of an industrial character'.⁶⁷ This was met with strenuous opposition from the white working class which, as the Council pointed out, feared competition in the labour market.⁶⁸ About this, the report of the Council of Education said:

It is felt and argued that, if he is given an opportunity the native will slowly, but not the less inevitably, encroach on the field of labour now occupied by the European, and this is to be resisted at all costs. The education of the native is to be a product of this policy of resistance from his industrial advance. The weight of sound and liberal opinion is, however, emphatically against this conclusion.⁶⁹

Apparently, the views articulated by the Council of Education seemed to contradict the dominant segregationist policy of the Government. For example, in 1915 it went further and stated that a 'policy of intellectual segregation is as impracticable as one of physical segregation'.⁷⁰ But this was not so. The liberal stand taken by the Council of Education reflected the position of the dominant capitalist interests that though segregation was necessary for capitalist development it should not harm labour efficiency at the workplace. It was not a disagreement on the principle and aims of segregation, but rather the methods to be employed. Thus the report of the Council of Education on African Education (1915) can be interpreted as an attempt to bring about a compromise between the hard-line segregationist ideologists representing the white working class, farmers and sections of the petty-bourgeoisie, and the radical liberal position which in some way regretted the use of artificial 'colour bars' as a means to safeguard white supremacy. It emerged as a reminder of the dangers of 'total segregation' in education, for such segregation would have detrimental effects on the economy by reducing the necessary efficiency of black labour. The implicit argument was that segregation should be implemented in such a way that the schooling of Africans could be, as far as possible, functional in its relationship to the economic and social system.

64 Third Report of the Council of Education dealing with Native Education, 1915, 9.

65 *Ibid.*, 10.

66 *Ibid.*, 10.

67 *Ibid.*, 10-11.

68 *Ibid.*, 10-11.

69 *Ibid.*, 10-11.

70 *Ibid.*, 10.

On this basis a scheme was devised which had training as the centre of gravity, including a wide range of items such as industrial training, religious and moral training and 'the training in social and civic duties especially as they are laid down in the laws affecting natives'.⁷¹ The industrial training on which the whole system rested included, in the case of boys, the following forms: gardening, rudimentary agriculture, basket-making, mat-weaving, tree-planting, leading water and the care of trees. Girls were to be trained in sewing and domestic service, including cookery, kitchen work, laundry, the care of clothes and household work. Training as such was defined as covering 'all occupations intended to develop habits and aptitudes which will enable the native to live a better and more healthy life and to render more effective service'.⁷² Thus African education would meet the capitalist need for more productive black unskilled cheap labour while safeguarding the monopoly of the white working class in the skilled and semi-skilled labour market. The revised scheme was introduced in 1915 in African schools. Vacation courses were held at two training institutions, Kilnerton and Pietersburg, for a number of teachers to learn how to implement the new curriculum. Education authorities had, however, to concede to the growing opposition which the curriculum received from teachers and missionaries.⁷³

Another important measure was the segregation of schools for Indian children who hitherto had attended 'coloured' schools, particularly the Burghersdorp Coloured School. Reference was made in 1912 to the provision of separate schools for Indians. Justifying the new development, the Director of Education indicated that 'differences of language, religion, and nationality led to proposals from the Indian community for the establishment of separate schools for Indians'.⁷⁴ The view was endorsed by the Witwatersrand Central School Board, which controlled the implementation of segregation, and by the Council of Education and the Provincial Executive. The first school for Indian children was opened in Johannesburg at the beginning of 1913.⁷⁵ After that the South African education system became fragmented into four schooling systems: 'African', 'Indian', 'coloured' and 'white' education. Regarding 'coloured education', in 1917, the Department of Education was asked to establish a school for 'coloured' children going beyond primary education and to make provision for the training of 'coloured' teachers.⁷⁶ Racial segregation made it impossible for 'coloured' children to attend the existing high schools in the Transvaal. For this purpose, they had to go outside the province. Only in 1918 was the first course beyond the primary school established for 'coloureds' at the Vrededorp School, and a preliminary training of 'coloured' teachers attempted.⁷⁷ However, these improvements, though insignificant as compared to the developments in the schools for whites, were followed with apprehension by the most conservative circles within the education authorities. For example, inspectors of education expressed disapproval at the fact that 'coloured' children were following the same syllabuses and courses of instruction as white children. They suggested a less academic curriculum, with manual work predominating.⁷⁸

71 *Ibid.*, 11.

72 *Ibid.*, 11.

73 TED, Report of the Director of Education for 1915, 42-3.

74 TED, Report of the Director of Education for the year ending 31 December 1912, 94-5.

75 TED, Report of the Director of Education for the year ending 31 December 1917, 82; and 1916, 54.

76 TED, Report of the Director of Education for the year ending 31 December 1917, 82.

77 TED, Report of the Director of Education for the year ending 31 December 1918, 49-50.

78 *Ibid.*, 49-50.

Following the introduction of the new curriculum for African schools, steps were taken towards a reorganization and reinforcement of the mechanisms of control. According to the existing arrangements, the teacher training institutions were inspected by Mr Clarke, the then inspector of white secondary schools, while the inspection of African schools was placed under the responsibility of the district inspectors in charge of schools for whites. The point was made that, with the introduction of the new curriculum, African education had become definitely *sui generis*, and as such its inspection should be in the hands of individuals specially trained and qualified for this work.⁷⁹ Briefly, it was advocated that the administration of education should also be based on the 'racial, economic and social differences' between whites and blacks.⁸⁰ Three 'inspectors of native schools' were appointed in 1918, and African education took shape as a separate area in the Transvaal Education Department.

Further radical changes in the forms of control were suggested by the Native Affairs Commission of 1921. Emphasis was placed on the need for Union (central) control under the Ministry of Native Affairs. This Commission argued that African education, as 'the chief factor in moulding a Native policy for South Africa', should be administered by a body responsible for that policy, that is the Union Government, particularly the Ministry of Native Affairs.⁸¹ This structure would facilitate the necessary co-ordination of educational policy with broader 'native policy'. The Commission also proposed the creation of 'Native Advisory Boards' to retain the co-operation of the missionaries. A Native Education Act on the lines of the Natives (Urban Areas) Bill, which institutionalized social segregation in the urban areas, was also suggested.⁸² However, the only innovation up to 1924 was the constitution of an Advisory Board for African Education in 1924, comprising members of the Transvaal Education Department, including the Director of Education, a member of the Transvaal Native Affairs Department, representatives of missionary societies and representatives of the Transvaal Native Teachers' Association.⁸³ In practice, the Transvaal Native Education Advisory Board became an accessory council dealing almost exclusively with issues related to the ways of implementing state policy more effectively.⁸⁴

Racial discrimination was also reflected in the funding of African education. Traditionally, the funds in the Transvaal came from different sources, the oldest being school fees together with contributions from missionary societies. These were the only two sources until the grants-in-aid were made effective in 1906. Following the idea popular with the Native Affairs Commission of 1921 – that funds for African education should come from African sources – the Transvaal administration decided to impose direct taxes on Africans, with the plea that its increasing expenditure on African education justified such a course of action. Considerable agitation ensued and the authorities were forced to review their position at the close of 1921.⁸⁵ In 1923, the

79 TED, Report of the Director of Education for the year ending 31 December 1917, 83.

80 *Ibid.*, 80-1.

81 'Arguments for Union control and administration', in Report of the Native Affairs Commission, relative to Union Control of, or alternatively Provincial Uniformity in Native Education, 1921.

82 *Ibid.*

83 Administrator's Notice no. 471, 30 September 1924.

84 This is indicated by the minutes of the Transvaal Advisory Board on Native Education.

85 Principles approved by the Pretoria Rotary Club, by the Chairman of the Native Welfare Committee on 26 March 1942. It deals with the question of funding African schools during the 1910s and 1920s. See Winter, *op. cit.*, 50.

Union Government assumed responsibility for all grants for African education. However, these grants still came from a revenue derived from the direct taxation of Africans. Thus blacks were not only compulsorily submitted to an inferior form of education designed to fit them into subordinate positions in the racially organized division of labour, and to make them conform to the developing forms of domination; they also had to pay for it.

By contrast, important developments took place in education for whites. Not only was education for whites made free and compulsory on the grounds of colour but strategies were also devised to make it more effective. Vocational training programmes were introduced for white unskilled workers, and continuation classes were provided for youths engaged in every occupation, under the care of the University and Education Department. These educational initiatives were supported by discriminatory industrial legislation which denied access to semi-skilled or skilled jobs to Africans; for example, the Apprenticeship Act of 1922 was designed to co-opt the white working class into a smoothly functioning system of labour relations and to minimize the contradictions which were increasingly leading to the opposition of white labour to capitalist interests.

Conclusion

In the course of the first two decades of the twentieth century, the Transvaal education system became fragmented along racial lines into four schooling systems (distinguished by their structures and their aims) as a result of the Government's policies of racial segregation. 'Bantu education', 'coloured education' and 'Indian education', which, in parallel to 'white education', were apparently a product of successive Education Acts published during the 1950s and 1960s, had in reality taken shape many years before. It is argued in this article that the particular shape of the education system is bound up with the course of social and class relations produced under the pressure of mining capital on the Witwatersrand.

Class struggle in the gold fields, with the white working class claiming rights on the grounds of colour, together with the increasing threat of the 'poor white problem', determined a racially inspired response by the state and by capital. Tactics of co-option were adopted to 'silence' the growing militancy of white labour, and this led to class polarization, with white workers gradually manifesting a racial identity with the dominant forces. Thus the state intervened in education as part of this strategy, supporting whites in their competition with blacks for both skilled and unskilled labouring positions. 'Poor whites' were equipped with better places in the labour market. Blacks, including 'Indians' and 'coloureds', were segregated in order to minimize the potential threat they represented for whites in the labour market, and to conform to the pattern and needs of capital accumulation. Educational institutions in the Transvaal were gradually reformed or created to meet these demands.