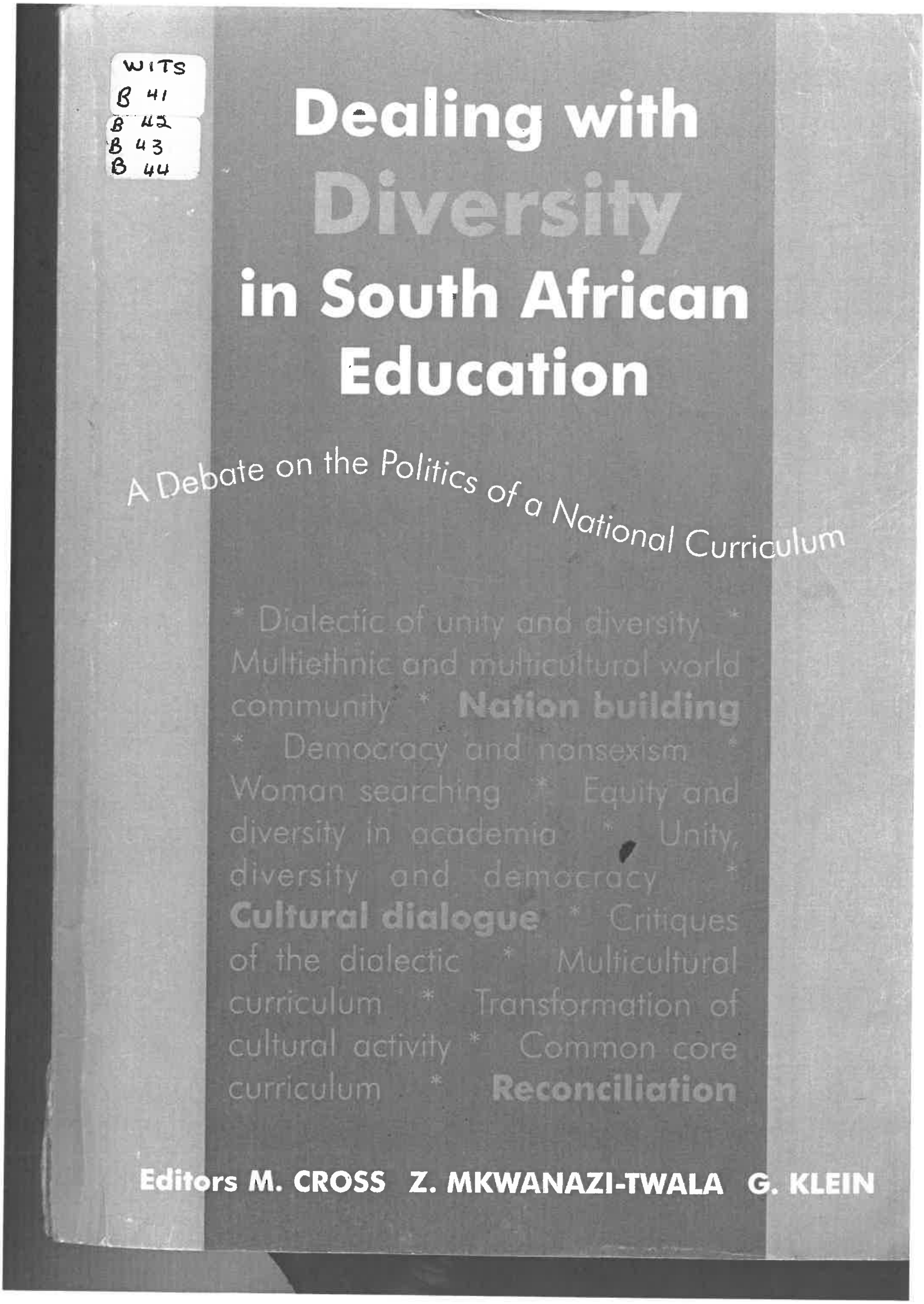

WITS
B 41
B 42
B 43
B 44

Dealing with Diversity in South African Education

A Debate on the Politics of a National Curriculum

* Dialectic of unity and diversity * Multiethnic and multicultural world community * **Nation building** * Democracy and nonsexism * Woman searching * Equity and diversity in academia * Unity, diversity and democracy * **Cultural dialogue** * Critiques of the dialectic * Multicultural curriculum * Transformation of cultural activity * Common core curriculum * **Reconciliation**

Editors M. CROSS Z. MKWANAZI-TWALA G. KLEIN

Dealing with Diversity in South African Education

A debate on the politics of a national curriculum

Editors
Michael Cross,
Zanele Mkwanazi-Twala
& Gillian Klein

17187

First published 1998

© Juta & Company Limited

P O Box 14373 Kenwyn 7790

This book is copyright under the Berne Convention. In terms of the Copyright Act 98 of 1978, no part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means (including photocopying, recording, or by any information storage and retrieval system) without permission in writing from the publisher.

ISBN 0 7021 4343 X

Cover design: Fly Design, Cape Town
Book design: Alix Korte, Cape Town
Subediting and proofreading: Pat Hanekom, Rod Prodgers, Cape Town
Typesetting: Gerhard van Rooyen, Cape Town
Printed and bound in the Republic of South Africa by
Creda Communications, Eppindust II

List of contributors

Michael Cross	Senior Lecturer, Department of Education, University of the Witwatersrand; Editor-in-Chief, *Perspectives in Education*
Zanele Mkwanazi-Twala	Acting director, Quality Assurance, Department of Education, Pretoria
Gillian Klein	Editorial director, Trentham Books, London
Jacob J M Ndlovu	Associate professor, Department of Educational Foundations, University of Fort Hare
Bernie Khoapa	Vice chancellor and Principal, Natal Technikon
Mbulelo Mzamane	Vice chancellor, University of Fort Hare
Penny Enslin	Professor, Department of Education, University of the Witwatersrand
Devarakshanam Govinden	Lecturer, Department of Curriculum Studies, University of Durban-Westville
Rudy Mattai	Professor, Educational Foundations, and director, Center for Interdisciplinary Applied Research in Urban Issues, State University of New York College at Buffalo
Clive Harber	Professor, School of Education, University of Natal in Durban
Neil McGurk	Headmaster, Sacred Heart College, Johannesburg
Jonathan D Jansen	Professor, Department of Curriculum Studies, University of Durban-Westville
Neville Alexander	Director, Project for the Study of Alternative Education in South Africa; vice chairperson, Pan South African Language Board
Rashad Bagus	Lecturer, Department of Education, University of the Witwatersrand
Ian Moll	Director: Examinations, Gauteng Department of Education
David Freer	Acting deputy vice chancellor, University of the Witwatersrand
Crain Soudien	Senior lecturer, School of Education, University of Cape Town
Mokobung Nkomo	Director, New School for Social Research, South Partnership Program, New York

Contents

INTRODUCTION IX

PART I

The Dialectic

CHAPTER 1 ■ 3
The Dialectic of Unity and Diversity in Education: Its Implications for a National Curriculum in South Africa
Michael Cross & Zanele Mkwanazi-Twala

PART II

Extending the Debate

CHAPTER 2 ■ 37
Exploring the Foundations and Implications of Education for a Multiethnic and Multicultural World Community
Jacob J M Ndlovu

CHAPTER 3 ■ 49
Towards a Framework for an Alternative Education in South Africa
Bernie Khoapa & Mbulelo Mzamane

CHAPTER 4 ■ 57
Nation Building, Democracy and Nonsexism
Penny Enslin

CHAPTER 5 ■ 63
Woman Searching in Southern Africa: Questions of Identity and Difference
Devarakshanam Govinden

CHAPTER 6 ■ 75
The Consideration of Race and Ethnicity in Causing Systemic Institutional Changes in Higher Education
Rudy Mattai

CHAPTER 7 ■ 89
Education Unity,
Diversity and Democracy in South Africa
Clive Harber

CHAPTER 8 ■ 93
An Open Catholic School and Cultural Dialogue in South Africa
Neil J McGurk

PART III

Critiques of the Dialectic of Unity and Diversity

CHAPTER 9 ■ 101
The Politics of the Multicultural Curriculum: A South African Perspective
Jonathan D Jansen

CHAPTER 10 ■ 107
Building a New Nation: Promoting Unity and Accommodating Diversity
Neville Alexander

CHAPTER 11 ■ 111
Schooling and the Transformation of Cultural Activity
Rashad Bagus & Ian Moll

CHAPTER 12 ■ 119
Establishing Priorities: The Need for a Common Core Curriculum
David Freer

CHAPTER 13 ■ 125
Equity in South Africa: Multicultural Education and Change
Crain Soudien

CHAPTER 14 ■ 135
Unity, Diversity, Reconciliation and the Curriculum: Musings on the Thesis and the Rejoinders
Mokubung Nkomo

Introduction

Michael Cross, Zanele Mkwanazi-Twala & Gillian Klein

In April 1994 South Africa underwent a fundamental change, from a system of apartheid in which a minority of the population had total dominance and control merely by virtue of the colour of their skin, to a democratic state, elected, for the first time, by universal franchise. The positive outcome and optimistic prognosis does not minimise the enormity of the upheaval. Each individual in South Africa has to learn to cope with the new political and – ultimately – the new social order.

All the contributors to this book are agreed on one thing: education has a crucial role to play in this reordering. How education can best fulfil that role is the matter debated here by academics and educationists from a wide range of backgrounds, and from both inside and outside South Africa.

In 1992 a project began in the context of a research programme by the National Education Policy Investigation, sponsored by the National Education Coordination Committee (NECC). Policy researchers examined the possible approaches to educational development and, in 1993, Michael Cross and Zanele Mkwanazi-Twala produced a working paper, 'The Dialectic of Unity and Diversity in Education: The Implications for a National Curriculum in South Africa'. The paper remains the pivot of this book, around which the remaining thirteen chapters revolve. Published here as Part I, it examines issues of unity and diversity and how they impact on the reconstruction of personal identities in the new South Africa. The conclusions inform their recommendations for a national curriculum.

Cross and Mkwanazi-Twala circulated their paper to a number of educationists – academics, policy analysts and practitioners – for discussion, and selected the responses that most focused upon the central issues and offered greatest enlightenment and extension. Their aim was to provide a basis for public debate among educationists, policy makers, practitioners and students, and all those interested in exploring how education can help to overcome the legacy of differences created by apartheid and forge a new and cohesive national identity.

Part II brings together the papers that build on the ideas presented by Cross and Mkwanazi-Twala. Ndlovu's exploration of culture elucidates the issues of identity raised in Part I, and his analysis of processes in Zimbabwe is highly pertinent to the South African situation. Khoapa has worked with Mzamane to produce a framework for what he calls 'alternative' education in South Africa, which sets out the functions required of education if it is truly to serve the people.

Chapter One

The Dialectic of Unity and Diversity in Education: Its Implications for a National Curriculum in South Africa

Michael Cross & Zanele Mkwanazi-Twala

1. Introduction

Many countries have grappled with the problem of reconciling national unity with cultural diversity. The problem is exacerbated by numerous factors: (1) the presence of ethnic, linguistic or cultural minorities; (2) marked regional claims to autonomy or cultural identity; (3) the influx of migrants of heterogeneous cultural backgrounds; (4) socioeconomic conflict arising out of unemployment or other socioeconomic ills; differences of age group, gender, race and class (Cross, 1992); and (5) what Halls describes as 'gigantism':

> Countries, like much modem architecture, suffer from 'gigantism': psychologically, ordinary people feel unable to identify with large entities, supranational or national. 'Small' is not only 'beautiful', but comprehensible. (Halls, 1983)

These factors can often lead to social conflict or cultural clashes between majority and minority groups, and the assertion by minorities of their will to preserve a separate cultural identity. In South Africa we see this in the discourse of self-determination for particular ethnic groups.

This chapter discusses the important and complex issue of unity and diversity in education and its implications for a national curriculum in South Africa. The aspects examined include a brief historical overview; problems in the conceptualisation of culture; educational perspectives of the main political players; the international experience; and policy options for South Africa. We argue for a concept of education for national reconciliation within the framework of antiracism, and reject the concept of multicultural education for South Africa.

2. Historical Background

South Africa was an extreme case where racial and ethnic differences were used to promote cultural pluralism and inculcate ethnic-nationalist identities. State education policy was guided by the Afrikaner philosophy of Christian National Education (CNE), which advocated that different ethnic groups should have different schooling systems with different curricula, syllabuses and media of instruction. Coetzee (1948: 44) explains it as follows: 'We as Calvinistic Afrikaners will have our CNE schools; Anglicans, Lutherans, Roman Catholics, Jews, liberalists and atheists will have their own schools' (see also Coetzee, 1968).

Christian National Education was translated into state policy in the 1950s and 1960s. The education system was fragmented in its structures and content into four separate and hierarchically different schooling systems: Bantu Education, Indian Education, Coloured Education and White Education.

Following the recommendations of the Eiselen Commission (1953) and the Tomlinson Commission (1955), a policy was designed to develop within the reserves a social and political structure that could preserve 'Native' or 'Bantu' culture. This policy rested on two assumptions: (1) that contact between whites and blacks and the concession of equal rights to blacks endangered the existence of European civilisation and culture; and (2) that if Africans were granted land, education and opportunities for technical training and equal political rights, there would be a 'total collapse of European culture' (Tomlinson Commission Report, quoted in Cross, 1986: 185). Interestingly, culture remained a major foundation of this policy, enforced by the Bantu Education Act of 1954.

The guiding principles of Bantu Education were explained by the Minister of Native Affairs, Dr H Verwoerd, on 7 June 1954. He stressed that the intention was that Bantu Education 'should have its roots entirely in the native areas and in the native environment and native community' (Union of SA: Senate Debates 1954: cols 2595–1622). The Bantu was to be guided to assist his/her own community in all respects:

> There is no place for him in the European community above the level of certain forms of labour. Within his own community, however, all doors are open. For that reason it is of no avail for him to receive a training which has as its aim absorption in the European community, where he cannot be absorbed. Until now he has been subjected to a school system which drew him away from his own community and misled him by showing him the green pastures of European society in which he was not allowed to graze. (Union of SA: Senate Debates, 1954: cols 2595–1622)

Of particular importance to this study is the National Education Policy Act of 1967, which stipulated that education in government schools should have a Christian character and a broad national character and that if the mother tongue was English or Afrikaans, it should be the medium of instruction.

Subsequent commission reports and policy documents reflected the state reform initiative which began in the 1970s (De Lange, 1981; ERS, 1992; ACMSA, 1991; Bennell et al, 1992). The first major effort towards reforming the apartheid education system was made

(2) the freedom of choice of individual parents and the organisation in society (De Lan 1981: 14); and (3) the principle of mother-tongue education as pedagogically valid Lange, 1981: 33).

The following language policy principles were adopted: (a) that pupils learn best wh taught in the language they know best; (b) the right of any group to replace English Afrikaans with an indigenous language as the medium of instruction; (c) the use of mot tongue as the initial medium of instruction and either English or Afrikaans thereafter; (d) the use of the mother tongue as the medium of instruction throughout compuls education (De Lange, 1981: 142–4). Whites were given the choice between Afrikaans English, within a range of options which included the official language in which the pu was more proficient, knew or understood better, or the official language chosen by parent (De Lange, 1981: 143).

Although these principles appeared generally desirable and educationally sound, manner of their implementation was highly contestable. While recognising the principle freedom of choice for the individual and for parents in career and educational matters, government insisted that the new policy had to be implemented within the segregatio framework: 'each population group' should have its own schools and education autho department. It was emphasised that education departments of each 'population group' w essential to do justice to the right of self-determination which was recognised by gove ment policy for each population group (1983 Education White Paper).

Despite general dissatisfaction, the government went on to implement the principle 'own and general (common) affairs', which reinforced the principle of school and curric lum separation. Matters such as education at all levels became 'own affairs' of the whi coloured and Indian population groups. Education as an 'own affair' had to take place w in 'the context of the particular group's own culture and frame of reference'. Race th remained a major feature of the provision of education.

The most significant shift from traditional apartheid educational policies came w *Educational Renewal Strategy – Discussion Document,* (ERS) 1992 and *A Curriculum Mo for South Africa,* (ACMSA) 1991. For the first time race was characterised as an unacce able basis for accommodating diversity. Instead, 'race should not feature in structuring provision of education in a future education model' (ERS, para 2.1, p 20). Moreover, 'div sity in South Africa is nevertheless a reality and will, together with unity, have to be acco modated in a new model irrespective of the future constitution' (ERS, para 2.2, p 20).

3. Proposals for Alternative Education Policies in South Africa

Proposals emerging from the Mass Democratic Movement tend to concentrate on ma recognise the value of affirmative action as a positive mechanism to redress the existing imbalances in education and social life. Surprisingly, the proposals are evasive on the question of unity and diversity in education.

3.1 The African National Congress (ANC)

The ANC's educational perspective is based on the goals and principles of the 1955 Freedom Charter. Broadly speaking, these are:

- the replacing of all bodies of minority rule by democratic organs of government
- equal rights for all national groups
- redistribution of wealth to all South Africans, including nationalisation of the mines, banks and monopoly industry
- the sharing of land among those who work it
- equality before the law
- equal human rights
- employment, housing and peace for all, and
- free, compulsory, universal and equal education for all children, as well as the abolition of the colour bar in cultural life, sport and education (ANC, 1955).

The ANC educational programme developed in the course of the liberation struggle is based on this last goal. It aimed to prepare cadres to serve in the national liberation struggle and the post-liberation phase and to train them to be able to serve society in all fields of social activity. The ANC declared that: (1) its education policy shall be geared towards producing a new type of society 'dedicated to serve the interests and needs of the South African people as a whole', irrespective of race, colour, sex or creed; (2) its educational programme shall draw on the most advanced scientific knowledge of the people of South Africa and the world; (3) 'education shall combat the division between mental and manual training and the artificial separation of the arts and sciences'; and (4) democratic practice shall prevail among students, teachers and the community in all educational activities (ANC, 1982: 218–19).

In its *Discussion Paper on Educational Policy* of 1991 the ANC states that the primary aim of educational policy should be 'to link the education system with the broad social goal of a democratic society in which there is political and social justice for all' (ANC, 1991: 11).

3.2 The Pan-Africanist Congress (PAC)

The educational aims of the PAC do not differ fundamentally f
are some strategic differences. For example, the PAC does
language policy, stating that every individual should be given
ability to speak, read and write effectively an African language
associates education with the development of a socialist soci
extension of a socialist democracy and the involvement of th
decision making and by carrying out a cultural revolution' (PA
placed on Christian education, moral and character training,
well as understanding and appreciating the cultural heritage.
lum that will address the problems of poverty, health and uner
nical, academic and professional training in a system in whic
free access and in a system whose educational aims and ob
and development of a free Azania and all its people' (PAC, 19

3.3 The Azanian People's Organisation (Aza

Azapo's education policy document gives considerable attenti
and education, examining their interplay in the existing educ
dichotomy of 'white culture' and 'black culture'. The documen
nant group for maintaining its position of power by fostering an
in the country, which deprives black people of their own authent
from popular culture. It criticises capitalism for producing an a
motes and deepens sectional and conflicting interests, alienates
of production, stratifies society and its culture and subcultures,
selves and their environment, and educates people to domina
interests and aspirations. As a result, it argues, South Africa
closed society with caste elements, and a culture of subservie
suspicion. Such a culture, it concludes, can only serve to
and oppression of the masses in the name of civilisation and
national culture.

The document warns us that the 'Africanisation or blacknis lexible and developing phenomenon; (4) that culture does not warrant indiscriminate complements such as a 'back to Africa' or 'back to nature' approach; (5) that culture reflects at every moment the material and spiritual reality of society; and (6) that no cultural values should be blindly accepted without critically examining them and eliminating regressive or potentially regressive elements.

At a more concrete level the curriculum should reflect the positive cultural values of every social group through, for example, the inclusion of traditional culture in the form of songs, dances and theatre, rare books, the collection of manuscripts and reference material of all aspects of human experience, the development of African languages without undermining the ideal of national unity and consciousness, the utilisation of resources conducive to a meaningful self-image, and the correction of historical faults such as black–white relationships.

The document suggests important educational strategies to translate the above principles into practice. These include the formation of study groups to break away from the limitations of the official classroom, participation of students and teachers in community-based, cooperative projects, and critical assessment of methodologies, ideas and learning approaches that offer alternatives to the present ones. The document requires participation of black educationists in the process of research, a national project to teach the English language to all black people as the *lingua franca,* and a strategy for nation building and for facilitating communication with the rest of the world. It also requires the infusion of science projects with a political and cultural dimension, the introduction of rural education projects to empower rural people to play an important role in the economy, and the reassessment and reinterpretation of the history of South Africa, Africa and the world.

As culture has been at the centre of major education policy proposals put forward by the state and the Mass Democratic Movement, we shall now discuss in detail the different meanings attached to the concept of culture.

4. The Concepts of Culture and National Unity

In his appeal 'Let's be proud of our ethnicity in the reformed South Africa' Dhlomo (1990: 18) regrets the way apartheid illegitimised and discredited 'natural and positive concepts, such as regionalism, culture and ethnicity'. Under apartheid, he argues, a black person's ethnic origin would decree a deportation from the urban area to a remote so-called independent

> to take another extreme position by totally denying the existe
> innocuous concepts.

He calls for healthy regionalism (and presumably ethnicism), free
or political opportunism:

> A strong and united South African nation of the future can onl
> tions and not the ruins of our rich and diverse cultural and et
> 1990: 8)

At this point, Dhlomo's idea begins to make sense. Implicit in his
the two extremes in educational policies for pluralist societies: th
its emphasis on monoculturalism, and the *salad-bowl* concept wi
regional cultural particularism. The first extreme is a celebration c
the expense of the various microcultures or, at worst, without a
richness of the diverse cultural heritage and cultural roots. Positiv
alism, culture and ethnicity are consciously or unconsciously mu
cept rests on a narrow view of education for national culture wh
schools as socialising children into the universalistic values and
It holds that schools that promote allegiances to ethnic groups
degree of ethnic and social polarisation that would be inimical t
state.

The second extreme (the *salad-bowl* concept) is an opportunis
alism, tribalism and ethnicity for selfish political purposes, whic
attempts to 'Balkanise' the nation-state. In Africa it has assur
Sometimes this perspective emanates from the failure to accc
building, which is an abuse of the *melting-pot* concept without t
of African cultural roots. Countries that had pursued socialist polic
ple. While a major flaw in developed socialist systems was th
ideals of socialism and democracy, the problem with socialist-
that had engaged in building 'New Societies' was their inability t
cept of national culture with the cultural diversity of their societie
It seems that a pragmatic middle of the road choice is desirab

pursued in this study must be understood. We take issue with the arguments put forward by Dhlomo and contend that the controversy surrounding them arises out of common misconceptions of culture in society.

4.1 The concept of culture: Beyond the myths

The concept of culture remains complex – a site of convergent interests rather than a logically or conceptually clarified idea. No single unproblematic definition can be found. Two major perspectives in the conceptualisation of culture best serve our present purposes: (1) culture as apolitical; and (2) culture as having political content.

The first perspective is based on what Sole (1983) calls 'an organic vision of society', which sees the growth of any social entity as analogous to an organically growing body, with all its parts in harmony and free of all disturbances from the outside. It underplays divisions, conflict and exploitation and stresses harmony and stasis. Its proponents deny elements of power and struggle within social groupings. As Sole (1983: 46) points out, cultures are not seen as emerging through a process of contestation between classes and groups within the defined social context, but as a simple and unproblematic accretion of values and traditions by a type of 'group mind'.

The way individuals respond to their social reality is also dismissed as a nonproblem. The individual and society are seen as existing in an organic, reciprocal relationship. A typical example in South Africa is the belief in the existence of monolithic 'black' and 'white' cultures as a reflection of the allegedly black and white nations. In this perspective, culture refers to the 'relationships between elements in a whole way of life' (Hall, 1980: 21). Culture is not a practice, as claimed by some anthropological schools of thought. It is threaded through all social practices and is the sum of their interrelationships. Obviously, an overemphasis on the organic, collaborative nature of culture can lead towards the uncritical idealisation of a past that must be preserved and promoted, as claimed by Dhlomo.

We do not deny that the economic and social changes brought about by colonialism and apartheid have resulted in a considerable cultural commonality. We want to emphasise, however, that because of the divisive nature of the political and ideological system, this commonality remains embryonic. It is inherited in its form and constructed or reconstructed in its content. It has to be struggled for and consolidated. This will certainly require an awareness of the 'contradictions and discontinuities in South African society' and the diversity caused by race, class, ethnicity, geography and other factors.

The second perspective is more sociologically oriented. Initial conceptualisations were developed within a strictly structuralist framework: culture merely reflected the configuration of the material basis and the social relations of production. However, culture was no longer seen as separate from politics nor as neutral. A significant development came with interplay of force and consent in asserting the hegemony of the ruling class. Culture forms the integral part of this process. Complex and interwoven chains of cultural, political and ideological practices work to 'cement' society into a relative, though never complete, unit. For Gramsci, culture is organisation, discipline of one's inner self, a coming to terms with one's own personality, and thus the attainment of high awareness, through which one succeeds in understanding one's own historical value, one's own function in life, one's own rights and obligations. Culture does not evolve spontaneously. It is forged out of struggles for survival with nature and between people.

Significant to this chapter is Gramsci's contention that in society the dominant culture represents itself as *the* culture and tries to define and contain other cultures within its inclusive range. Other cultural configurations will not only be subordinate to this dominant order, they will enter into struggle with it, and seek to modify, negotiate, resist and even overthrow its reign – in Gramsci's terms, its hegemony 'ideology' (Bennet et al, 1986: 197). When one culture gains ascendancy over the other and when the subordinate culture experiences itself in terms prescribed by the dominant culture, then the dominant culture also becomes the basis of a dominant ideology.

For Gramsci, cultural institutions and organisations which help in the dissemination of culture include schools and churches, newspapers, magazines, the book trade and private educational institutions which are complementary to the state system, or cultural institutions like popular universities (Bennet et al, 1986: 194). These operate in conjunction with professions that have cultural activity, such as medicine, the army, law and teaching.

One can also view culture as the vehicle through which social groups develop distinct patterns of life, and express their social and material life experience. It is the way social relations within a group are structured and shaped, as well as the way this is experienced, understood and interpreted. Groups that exist within the same society and share the same historical conditions share the same culture (Clarke, Hall, Jefferson & Roberts in Bennet et al, 1986: 53–4). In this sense, Clarke, Hall, Jefferson and Roberts define culture as the peculiar and distinctive 'way of life' of the group or class, the meanings, values and ideas embodied in institutions, in social relations, in systems of beliefs, in mores and customs, in the uses of objects and material life (in Bennet et al, 1986: 54). To put it differently, culture is the distinctive shapes in which the material and social organisation of life expresses itself. Moulder's metaphor simplifies some of these aspects:

> According to the dictionaries, we call a crop of artificially and experimentally grown bacteria a culture. This fact is worth noting for at least two reasons. Firstly, it reminds us that the word 'culture' is derived from the Latin word *cultura*, a word for farming, for a complex process in which we deliberately and intentionally interfere with nature and try to improve its performance. Secondly, it points to the fact that, *whatever one's culture*

> one is talking about the product of a complex process of socialisation. (Moulder, 1989: 13) [our emphasis]

One assumption that has dominated cultural and anthropological studies in colonial Africa is that African cultures are essentially backward or inferior when compared with Western cultures. African cultures are thus decoded with reference to Western patterns and graded according to a scale of values and classificatory categories such as 'backwardness', 'technological inferiority or superiority', 'traditionality', 'modernity', literary practice, competitiveness and 'free enterprise spirit' among individuals, ownership of private property and a preference for achieved rather than ascribed roles in society. The starting point is a particular context or geographical environment, particular family and social settings, traditions and cultural legacy, feelings and sentiments, assumed as typically European or 'white'. This tendency constitutes what Ndlovu refers to as ethnocentrism:

> Ethnocentrism occurs when people, being steeped and centred in their own heritage and cultural system, judge others who belong to different ethnic groups and cultures by the standards (i e norms, values, and social criteria) which are established . . . in their own particular culture. This stems from the fact that we normally derive our own self-image, our world outlook, our notions of what is right or wrong, natural or unnatural, scientific (rational) or unscientific (irrational), beautiful or ugly, enjoyable or dull, moral or immoral, from our culture. (Ndlovu, 1990: 7)

There is another important hypothesis for an understanding of culture which regards culture as expressing the *totality* of what has been learnt, conceptually and experientially, and how this is processed and reproduced in society, as a result of person-to-person and human-to-nature relationships. This *totality* embraces a way of life, world-view, and the forms of social practice and sentiments. It includes the totality of the behaviour acquired by society: its language, values, customs, the food it prepares and how, the institutions it creates and how, the way of life and its meaning (Nidelceff quoted in Serra, 1990: 12). In this perspective the belief that there is a culture which is superior or inferior to another *per se* is a myth. Only particular aspects of culture can be said to be superior or inferior, better or worse, for example technology or military knowledge. Ndlovu illustrates this argument as follows:

> If anyone should still be unconvinced that no culture is superior or, conversely, inferior to another *per se*, I challenge them to experiment with the San people (Bushmen) on the one hand, and the most 'civilised' among Westerners – take President George Bush and Premier Margaret Thatcher for argument's sake – on the other. Let the two sides go on 'exchange visits', while leaving behind whatever constitutes their normal day-to-day and arrows, ostrich egg shells, fire making sticks, etc. What is more remarkable is that the Westerners' civilisation, sophistication, literacy and modernism is all rendered dysfunctional in Bushman land, where the latter have survived for centuries on end. (Ndlovu, 1990: 7–8)

The fact that Westerners may have in their cultures the necessary technological resources to change the Bushmen's land into a habitat appropriate to their *modus vivendi* does not necessarily imply the superiority of their cultures. Their cultures are *essentially different*.

4.2 A framework for a dynamic concept of culture

A dynamic concept of culture should take into account the following theoretical bases:

(1) Though culture can be conceived of as a *uniting force* binding social groups or classes together, it is also a *divisive element*, which reflects the complexity of societies generally constituted by various subgroups and subcultures in a struggle for legitimacy of their behaviour, values, ideals and lifestyles against the dominant culture of the dominant society, that is, the hegemonic culture. The main forms of these cultures are *class cultures*, which implies that within ethnicity, different and conflicting cultures can develop (Brake, 1980: 6–7). In other words, having a culture means belonging to a group whose members give the same or similar answers to the problems arising out of their own nature, their orientation in time, their relationship to nature, their primary purpose in life, their primary relationship to each other (Moulder, 1989: 13).

(2) The process of race polarisation and its concomitant cultural implications must not be ignored in analysing culture in South Africa. Brake puts it nicely:

> For black people their primary identity, the way in which they are reacted to, and the way in which they act upon the world is mediated by their colour, and the oppression that brings, structurally, politically, psychologically and economically. (Brake 1980: 115)

Without romanticising it, it is race which defines them, which acts against them, and which unites them. Their class position subscribes their economic position, but race is the *subjectivity* in which their class position is lived and shapes their relation to the world.

(3) Culture is *not a neutral concept*. It is historical, specific and ideological. The dominant

to reproduce and amend themselves without contradiction and resistance. A crisis in the dominant culture opens room for opposition, resistance and cultural upheavals which can take different forms and lead to a new hegemonic order (Brake, 1980: 38–40).

(4) Culture is *not a timeless and motionless body* of value systems or lifestyles that remain unaltered by social change as put forward by our common sense. Rather, it is a *dialectical process* which incorporates new forms and meanings while changing or reshaping traditional ones (Lunn, 1986: 5). The new cultural forms emerge as a response to and mediation of social experience. It is not an unchangeable text but a complex, contradictory and uneven process. It is an expression of people's experience and of their action upon their own experience. In this sense people can intervene and create the necessary conditions for the preservation of the positive manifestations of their culture; but they can also intervene and act upon or transform the negative manifestations of their culture.

(5) Culture is not necessarily *homogeneous.* It contains variations and differences that can lead to a development of identifiable *subcultures.* Within ethnic and religious groups, and upper-, middle- and lower-class groups, cultural constellations can also be formed, depending on the existing forms of socialisation.

(6) Culture is a *historically constituted* concept. Whatever one's culture is, it is something that is not given *a priori* but has been artificially created (Moulder, 1989: 13). Thus when one talks of culture one is talking about the product of a complex process of socialisation. As Thornton (1988: 19) expresses it, it is a sharing of a complex intellectual history with the ideas of 'society' organism and nation. The apparent gulf that separates the different 'cultures' in South Africa is a historical product. The cultural differences are themselves created by cultural processes which span and encompass these very differences. If they were artificially created to act against humanity, they can also be transformed to serve humanity. The implication of all this is that culture is acquired through human experience; culture changes as the environment in which people live change, and their perceptions of the world around them change; and nobody's culture is unique (Singer, 1987: 5). As Hoijer states:

> No culture is wholly isolated, self-contained and unique. There are important resemblances between all known cultures – resemblances that stem in part from diffusion . . . and in part from the fact that all cultures are built around biological, psychological and social characteristics common to all mankind. (Hoijer, 1954: 94)

> older than they are and who began to shape their behaviour, beliefs, attitudes, feelings and values from the moment they were born. Secondly, everyone's culture is always changing, because they are always adapting to new groups of people and to new social, political and economic situations. Thirdly, none of the members of a cultural group are totally homogeneous; that is why groups are always coming into existence and going out of existence. Fourthly, no cultural group is totally unique; this is why some individuals from extremely different backgrounds with extremely different life experiences manage to form alliances and to cooperate with each other. Finally, nobody finds it easy to change the culture that they inherit because it has taught them how to behave, as well as what to believe, to feel and to value; and most people, once they have learned these things, want to keep them that way. (Moulder, 1989: 14)

It is thus absurd to conceive of culture as something that should be institutionally protected or preserved. Similarly, it is absurd to deny its political content. What seems urgent is a reconceptualisation of culture with a new ideological and political content based on esteem and appreciation of humanity. In South Africa this cannot for a moment ignore the ideal of nonracialism, nonsexism, democracy and national unity. To put it differently, the educational and cultural struggle should incorporate the struggle for reconciliation, reconstruction and national unity, in which cultural and ethnic diversity is not an obstacle but a fundamental and necessary ingredient.

National unity is a process whereby the mutual acceptance, cohesion and harmony of ethnic, linguistic, cultural, religious, economic and social differences concur to the project of nation building, through the consciousness of common history, common values and common interests. It is a result of social interaction, social mobility and voluntary enculturation. As a historical process it emerges and develops from below, as an inevitable response to social and political contradictions. As an ideal, national culture involves an active and conscious process whereby, through human intervention and creativity and through convergence of customs, practices, beliefs and institutions, the boundaries between ethnically conceived cultures or subcultures are opened to let the universal expression of humanity assert itself.

National culture implies a degree of intellectual and moral leadership committed to the ideal of a nation free of all oppression and exploitation. As Alexander points out, the building of a national culture means 'allowing a core of common cultural practices, beliefs, customs, etc, to develop; a core that is derived from all the different social, regional and language groups' (Alexander, 1988). Further, the creation of a national culture is also a process of transformation, the processing of those cultural practices, beliefs and customs necessary for the construction of a new nation, including those that may hinder the development of a national sentiment. It is not simply a reflection of an established identity, but also

5. Approaches to Unity and Diversity in Education

Governments have responded to the question of unity and diversity in education in various ways. These have been categorised by social theorists in several typologies of policy models (Wirt, 1974; Watson, 1977; Watson, 1979). We shall consider four main policy models: (1) cultural assimilation and integration; (2) cultural amalgamation; (3) insular cultural pluralism; and (4) modified cultural pluralism. These models will be discussed with particular reference to the South African context and the commitment to a united, nonracial, nonsexist and democratic education system. The notion of diversity is used here in its wider sense as encompassing historically constituted race, gender, class, geographical and cultural differences. It is assumed in its historical and dynamic sense.

5.1 Approach A: Insular cultural diversity/pluralism

Insular cultural diversity/pluralism can be expressed by the formula $A + B + C = A + B + C$. It means that diverse cultural groups can coexist and maintain their different identities to safeguard social stability and peaceful ethnic and racial relationships (Appleton, 1983: 72). Switzerland and French Canada are contemporary examples of insular cultural pluralism.

Kallen (quoted in Spencer, 1979) identifies two forms that insular cultural pluralism might take in society: *segregated cultural pluralism* and *integrated pluralism*. Segregated cultural pluralism maintains cultural distinctiveness and identity through geographic separation. Integrated pluralism maintains residential segregation. Patterns of cultural diversity repeat themselves over and over throughout the country, instead of one group being associated primarily with one geographic region. That is, a number of diverse groups would exist within a given geographic area, e g a metropolitan area, but would remain residentially segregated within that area. In both cases, racial and ethnic groups are formally recognised in the constitution as entities with official standing in society.

Insular cultural pluralism implies the inclusion in the curriculum of ethnic studies designed to enhance a positive sense of ethnic identity. Students learn their common history, ancestry and culture and gain a sense of belonging to the entire country. Each cultural group maintains its language. This model is common in countries that have a deep-rooted racial/cultural mix (e g USSR, China, India, Belgium and the Netherlands). It is a policy whereby the rights of minority languages, culture and education are recognised in the National Constitution. Taken to the extreme, insular cultural pluralism can certainly be divisive and patronising. While it seems to have functioned smoothly in countries such as Belgium and the Netherlands, it has resulted in serious frictions in India and recently in movements towards 'Balkanisation' in the former Soviet Union.

5.2 Approach B: Cultural assimilation

model can be formulated as $A + B + C = A$, where A, B and C represent different social groups and A represents the dominant group. According to Gordon (quoted in Appleton, 1983: 27), assimilation may occur on two different levels: behavioural or cultural assimilation and structural assimilation. Behavioural or cultural assimilation refers to the absorption of the cultural behaviour patterns of the dominant culture. The focus is on the acceptance of common values and styles of life. Structural assimilation refers to the entrance of the minority group into the social cliques, organisations, institutional activities and general civic life of the receiving society (i e the dominant culture). The emphasis here is on the increased participation and incorporation in the structural features of society. It should be noted, then, that a minority group may adopt the values and lifestyles of the dominant culture but may choose not to participate in the institutions and group associations of mainstream society. The members thus remain structurally segregated.

According to Watson (1979), cultural assimilation is common in countries that have become multiracial or multicultural largely as a result of immigration (e g the USA, Canada, Australia and recently much of Western Europe) and have sought, through the school system, language and cultural institutions, to integrate immigrants into the mainstream of a homogeneous society. The dominant value system is transmitted at the expense of all other value systems or cultures. Cultural assimilation is very often justified as a means for achieving social equality. It is assumed that assimilation would compensate for the cultural deficit of immigrants and minimise socioeconomic disadvantage, thus equalising society.

The educational consequences of this model are obvious. Teachers are very often selected from the dominant group. The curriculum and syllabuses are based on the values and ideas of the dominant group or culture. The dominant group enjoys 'cultural advantage'. This is very much the reality of most 'open schools' in South Africa.

5.3 Approach C: Cultural amalgamation

Amalgamation is a model that predicts the development of a unique new cultural group resulting from the amalgam or synthesis of previously existing groups. It can be represented by the formula $A + B + C = D$, where A, B and C represent different social groups and D represents the new distinct group. It is a strategy of unification, whereby developing countries seek to create a unified sense of nationhood through the school system, using a national language of instruction and centrally prescribed textbooks and curricula (e g Sudan, Ghana, Chad, Dahomey, Tanzania, Malaysia, Indonesia, Mozambique) (Watson, 1979: 19). A whole generation has to be converted to a new philosophy.

This is the strategy of cultural revolution for the creation of 'the New Man' [sic] adopted by Cuba, Angola and Mozambique. It involves an educational stage designed to alter the mentality of the people in order to eradicate negative traditional cultural practices (supermote a new culture and for this purpose undergo a process of re-education and socialisation into the desired ideal society and values. The educational, ideological and political framework precedes the creation and development of the respective socioeconomic base. The curriculum, syllabuses and methods are integrated and based on old and new value systems, chiefly new. A core curriculum and a core language are adopted.

5.4 Approach D: Modified cultural pluralism

Modified cultural pluralism is common in those countries whose cultural layout is a direct or partial result of colonialism (e g many of the Asian and African countries). It is the unification approach pursued by developing countries such as Nigeria, which try to develop a common nationality while preserving the different minority languages and cultures. Ethnic identity is modified. The interaction between groups is free. Although the existence of minority languages and cultures is recognised, the focus is placed on global rather than local concerns.

Where the ideology of insular cultural pluralism designates a high degree of group distinctiveness, separation and autonomy, modified cultural pluralism sees the development of a substantial common culture with a high degree of interaction between and among diverse groups. This position can be formulated as $A + B + C = A' + B' + C'$ where the superscript, attached to the letters which represent the diverse groups, designates a commitment to a common culture and lifestyle (see for example Appleton, 1983: 72). Through their interaction with one another and their adaptation to the country's experience, the distinct groups in society become acculturated but nevertheless retain their separate identities. Underlying modified cultural pluralism is the assumption that ethnicity, albeit in a changed form, remains important to individuals and that attempts to eliminate it have proved ineffective.

The curriculum of a school system supporting the ideology of modified cultural pluralism would cultivate both a sense of nationalism and a sense of the importance and value of the diversity of the society. The curriculum, school syllabuses and methods would reflect the diversity of cultural practices and identities. Schooling is provided through different language media. The teaching of children primarily in their own language is recognised as both correct and desirable.

The ideology of modified cultural pluralism is the most popular today in the United States. Most advocates of cultural pluralism see ethnic identity and diversity continuing to play some role in society and believe this diversity should be recognised and accommodated by most schools.

A fundamental question now emerges: What are the implications of the above considerations for an educational policy aimed at bringing about unity, democracy, nonracialism and nonsexism and capable of redressing the historical imbalances imposed by the apartheid system in South Africa?

Approach A nor in the narrow assimilationist or integrationist strategies implied in Approaches B and C. A policy model with enough flexibility to cope with the existing layers of identity – cultural and linguistic, local, subnational, national, and international – is surely desirable. It has to be a system in which it is possible to be a worker, Zulu, Motswana, Afrikaner, a South African *and* a member of the international community. An education that concentrates on one identity to the exclusion of the others will ill serve the needs of South African society. Cultural and ethnic diversity should be seen as an enrichment for a national culture, an asset rather than a handicap. It is not necessarily what each of these layers lacks that is essential but rather what each has to enrich a national culture, national sentiment and national unity.

However, a limited degree of assimilation and integration is desirable in the process of nation building, given the divisive impact of apartheid and 'mental colonisation'. This points to a curriculum with an emphasis on global rather than local concerns, on national rather than ethnic or regional interests. The education system will have to emphasise national unity at the expense of group or local diversity, at least until the imbalances created by the apartheid policy of 'divide and rule' are significantly redressed. When balance is restored, those whites and the many blacks who for many years have been withdrawn from their African cultural roots will be able to appreciate and value their cultural heritage.

We therefore favour policy models based on Approach D, Modified Cultural Pluralism ($A + B + C + D = A' + B' + C' + D'$), recognising ethnic identity, a mix between ethnicities, and with all overarched with a new national identity. We tentatively consider two major policy models based on international experiences and taking into account the particular context of South Africa: (1) multicultural education with its various nuances; and (2) education for national reconciliation.

6. Multicultural Education: The International Experience

Multicultural education refers to an educational theory and practice purposely designed to cater for a multicultural society or a society where there is a legitimately accepted diversity of cultures (Gaine, 1987: 30). Cultural diversity is generated by several factors, often in concert, which coexist in a plural social order (Craft, 1981): class, race, sex, region, nationality or ethnicity. Depending on the impact of these factors, the needs of the students may vary widely (Appleton, 1983: 205–6).

Multicultural education was introduced in several cases as a response to conflict in society (Rizvi, 1985). In the USA tensions over issues such as school desegregation and community control, and the civil rights movement, forcefully called attention to the deplorable state of schooling for minority group children and to functionally racist practices in urban inner-multicultural education and 'ethnic-type' curriculum subjects (Mullard, 1980). Multicultural education is open to a variety of interpretations and embraces numerous different strategies and programmes (Birrell, 1981:135), reflecting particular visions of society, different approaches to cultural pluralism and different educational goals. Policy makers, individuals and state agencies frequently attach different meanings to the term 'multicultural education' (Partington, 1985). Some merely acknowledge the diversity of ethnic populations (e g Australia), often in numerical terms, 'by noticing but not valuing this diversity' (Kringas & Lewins, 1981: 9).

Others suggest that the needs of the 'host' society be reconciled with its ethnic constituents, stressing the value of the wholeness of the entire society, the capacity of existing structures to meet the various ethnic needs, and 'mutual understanding and tolerance . . . within a context of unity and diversity' (Kringas & Lewins, 1981: 9). Yet others emphasise the role of political processes on ethnic relations and stress the need to examine questions of political access, power distribution and economic relations. The most extreme interpretations of multiculturalism assert that cultural facts of massive differences in ways of life require equally massive differentiation in educational provision. Apartheid or separate development is the best-known contemporary example of extreme multiculturalism, which sought to promote and preserve separate ethnic and cultural identities. The lack of conceptual clarification is evidently politically quite 'functional' in that it allows everyone involved in educational decision making to use the term in their own idiosyncratic way (Rizvi, 1985: 23).

Nevertheless the concept of multicultural education still remains internationally popular. As Muller (1991: 8) points out, 'despite the backlash and the ongoing hullabaloo, multiculturalism continues to be a central feature of mainstream America' and, in fact, of international educational discourse. Educationists worldwide are continually seeking clarification of the meaning, goals and principles of multicultural education. Common threads include respect for one's heritage, affirmation of one's own cultural values, critique of Eurocentric and Western cultural traditions, self-esteem through pride in one's culture, and the opportunity to recognise oneself in the curriculum.

We shall now examine the way in which multicultural education has been implemented in selected countries, namely Australia, the USA, Mozambique and Zimbabwe, in an attempt to critically assess its characteristics. Both Australia and the USA moved away from initial assimilationist or integrationist educational policies to multicultural education. Mozambique offers an example of the role of education in a process of radical (socialist) political and social transformation against the background of the Portuguese colonial assimilation policy. Zimbabwe comes closest to South Africa: radical transformation of a colonial segregationist education system is being undertaken with great caution and flexibility.

6.1 Australia

society. Initial reform initiatives led to the development of assimilationist alternative educational strategies with the hope of redressing the social and cultural imbalances created by social segregation. However, assimilation soon proved to be ineffective and came to be seen as morally reprehensible. It was ethnocentric and denied the right of certain groups to retain their languages. The non-English-speaking immigrants and the Aborigine communities were neither willing nor able to discard their languages, cultures and ethnic identities.

The failure of the policy of assimilation to minimise social tensions led to a shift to multiculturalism, which became an official government policy in 1978. The same year Galbally was commissioned 'to examine and report on the effectiveness of the Commonwealth's educational programmes and services for those who have migrated to Australia, including programmes and services provided by non-government organisations which received Commonwealth assistance' (Galbally Report, quoted in Rizvi, 1985: 19). The Galbally Committee concluded that 'provided that ethnic identity is not stressed at the expense of society at large, but is interwoven into the fabric of nationhood by the process of multicultural interaction, then the community as a whole will benefit substantially and its democratic nature will be reinforced' (quoted in Rizvi, 1985: 20). It recommended that it was 'necessary for the government to change the direction of its involvement in the provision of programmes and services for migrants and to take further steps to encourage multiculturalism' (quoted in Rizvi, 1985: 19) and the Institute of Multicultural Affairs and the upgraded ethnic radio and television programmes were singled out for this task. Most importantly, schools were seen as a key agency for encouraging 'a multicultural attitude in Australian society by fostering the retention of the cultural heritage of different ethnic groups and by promoting intercultural understanding' (Rizvi, 1985: 20). However, power relations were not altered, regardless of whether these contained oppressive elements (e g reproduction of relations of domination and subordination of women, gender stereotypes and racism) (Rizvi, 1985; 1986). A liberatory programme should certainly challenge cultural features which tend to reproduce the legacy of any form of social oppression. Too much emphasis on ethnic differences diverts attention from structural social inequalities, and ethnic groups become increasingly suspicious of one another (Rizvi, 1985: 27). As De Lepervanche expresses it:

> If we concentrate on drawing cultural boundaries too clearly there is the danger, in a class society of unequals, of isolating those who are occupationally segmented and culturally or racially distinct from others in a similar social position. (Quoted in Rizvi, 1985: 27)

Multicultural education in Australia has, however, contained the crisis in ethnic relations, a problem which drove many political regimes to almost total collapse (e g Mozambique, Yugoslavia, Nigeria, Chad).

tionist and integrationist policies. The USA experienced an educational process similar to South Africa's. Segregated schooling ceased with the *Brown v Board of Education* dispute in 1954, which resulted in official rejection of racially separate schools and inaugurated the era of 'equal opportunity'. This statutory reform was followed by three competing ideologies: (1) cultural pluralism, which was ethnocentric and stressed a strong ethnic identity and alliance; (2) pluralist assimilationism, which, though recognising that ethnic groups have unique identity and cultural characteristics, posited that all groups in America shared many cultural traits; and (3) assimilation, which advocated one common culture for all and supported the 'melting-pot' concept (Banks & Lynch, 1986). The education authorities adopted the last option. Cultural integration based on the melting-pot concept was introduced as part of school desegregation and as an alternative to traditional segregationist policies.

It was believed that minority groups would ultimately be assimilated into the dominant culture, so strengthening national culture. Education was to inculcate a sense of conformity towards 'Americanisation', discourage cultural diversity and force assimilation of ethnic groups into the societal norms of middle-class America. Reaction was dramatic: the 'Great American Dream' (America as a 'melting pot') soon came under fire within American minority circles, who regarded the idea and experience of an educational provision based on a unified culture as repressive and disempowering. Black Americans demanded inclusion of black history and subjects related to their Afro-American heritage; Mexicans and Puerto Ricans ('Hispanics') demanded an education which recognised their historical and cultural contribution to American society. This reaction to assimilation guaranteed a theory of the 'unmeltable ethnics', who sought recognition and acceptance of minority cultural heritages and brought about the shift from assimilation to multiculturalism.

This was made possible through three successive Acts: the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Bilingual Education Act of 1968, and the Ethnic Heritage Studies Program Act of 1972, which made provision for the study of black history and culture and gave recognition to cultural pluralism and multiethnic society and to the cultural heritage of all minority groups. The measures were intended: (1) to afford students an opportunity to learn more about the nature of their heritage and to study the contribution of other ethnic groups to the nation; (2) to reduce educational disadvantages and social divisiveness caused by ignorance or misunderstanding of multicultural influences in the lives of individuals and communities; and (3) to encourage citizens to develop intercultural awareness.

6.3 Mozambique

One of the challenges experienced by African countries in the postcolonial era has been the need to develop an alternative to colonial systems based on racial and cultural segregation and assimilation. The Mozambican Liberation Front (Frelimo) adopted a strategy of *national*

tuguese as a national language of instruction. The Portuguese colonial policy was based the ideology of assimilation and had resulted in an apparent acceptance of Portuguese as t only cross-ethnic communication medium, yet Frelimo leaders were enthusiastic about potential for nation building. It soon became clear that this approach underestimated t complexity of the Mozambican sociocultural reality.

Based on the ideology of Marxism–Leninism and guided by socialist principles a values, the education system was expected to precipitate a 'cultural revolution' which wou alter the mentality of the people in order to eradicate negative traditional cultural practic (superstition, fetishism, obscurantism and magic) and colonial cultural practices (racis tribalism, regionalism, individualism and elitism). What was unique was the challenge negative forms of traditional culture. Education was to promote a new culture, based positive traditional forms but with new content dictated by the ideal of socialism. adopting this education strategy Frelimo hoped to create what was called the 'New Man': society which identified itself with the needs of the peasant/working-class alliance, wi a Mozambican identity and a scientific, materialist and dialectical outlook.

The challenge to negative values was based on the assumption that in tradition societies with characteristically low levels of scientific knowledge, superstition and th supernatural take the place of science and block any scientific analysis of the material an social milieu. Traditional education creates passivity and respect for inherited ideas that a often taken for granted. It encourages the belief in the infallibility of the older generation personified in the elders, and seeks to justify historically sexist values and women's sub mission to men.

According to Frelimo's educational policy, teachers were to promote a new culture. The had to undergo a process of *reciclagem* (re-education) and socialisation into the desire socialist values. The curriculum, syllabuses and methods had to be integrated and syn chronised with the new value systems. A core language – Portuguese – was adopted as th only medium of instruction at all levels of education. Schematically, the model could b represented as A + B + C + D = E, where E represents the national culture of the 'New Man or 'New Society', which Frelimo believed had begun to emerge in the liberated zones. Th task of the new education authorities was to extend this culture to the rest of the country that is, to apply at a macro level what had been generated in a very peculiar micro world The schools of the liberated zones were assumed to be sources of political inspiration an models of the 'new school' for the rest of the country. They were to train *continuadores* - those who would carry on the revolutionary struggle when the present generation died.

The establishment of a Second Republic, which has dissociated public institutions including educational institutions, from party politics and the ideology of Marxism–Leninism has left important sections of the core curriculum and school syllabuses outdated. There seems to be a great need for new conceptual, theoretical and methodological reformulait remain relatively neutral and thus suffer minimal changes with changes of government to right or left (Maximiano & De Assis, 1991: 7)? What role should the curriculum play in the new political and economic context? and so forth. Obviously these questions may lead to new principles and conceptual frameworks and to new curricula, syllabuses, textbooks and classroom interactions. There has also been an attempt to reconceptualise the 'New Man'. A leading educationist has said the following:

> The concept of 'New Man' was a static concept, an unachievable abstraction developed on a Marxist–Leninist basis. Its starting point was a unified and united country from Rovuma to Maputo irrespective of her cultural diversity. What we had forgotten is that every individual prefers the immediate as a starting point. The national is too vast and too abstract. There is speculation that we are now working towards a more dynamic concept: the concept of 'Mozambican Man'. This implies that, to achieve national objectives, the interests of other forces should be accommodated and there should be an attempt to value our national culture in its diversity. (Interview, Z Martins, Maputo: INDE, 16.09.1991)

Educationists are tentatively talking about the need for a curriculum for *national reconciliation* for building a Mozambican nation rather than a curriculum for socialist transformation. National reconciliation is seen as a primary goal that the curriculum should address and is advocated in reaction to the curriculum during the First Republic, which, it is argued, stressed national unity rooted in a peasant–worker alliance and privileged the working class and Frelimo's leadership while undermining the majority of peasants, over 85 % of the population. These educationists assert that social diversity including ethnic, regional and traditional features should be embodied in the national curriculum. They urge a curriculum based on a thorough understanding of the complexity of Mozambican society and reflecting its cultural, social, economic, ethnic and linguistic diversity.

6.4 Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe inherited an education system divided along racial lines with separate schools for whites, Asians, coloureds and Africans. When the Zimbabwe African National Union (Zanu) came to power it inherited a legacy of significant disparities in standards, facilities and educational opportunities, which needed to be removed or minimised within the framework of socialism and nation building. Zanu responded to this challenge by adopting an educational strategy of national unity and a policy conducive to universal education to ensure that every child of school-going age could be at school.

In contrast to Mozambique, Zimbabwe adopted a gradualist approach, concentrating on addressed at a much slower pace with a greater degree of flexibility – and without direct state intervention. Where Marxist ideas, for example, were introduced in education the initiative belonged largely to Zanu or some other interest group, as in the case for the Zimbabwe Integrated Teacher's Certificate (ZINTEC), an innovative approach to teacher training based on progressive and socialist principles.

In somewhat triumphal tone the Minister of Education and Culture Mr Mutumbuka (Atkinson, 1982: 6) defined the primary goal set for education by the government as 'to ensure that every Zimbawean child, whether born on a farm, on a plantantion, on a mine, in the heart of Harare, will get as good an education as the state can provide'. Following an unprecendented expansion of the schooling system, it quickly became possible to ensure that, at least at primary level, every child had a school place. Despite national efforts, all primary school graduates are not easily accommodated at secondary school level. The spectacular growth in education has not been without cost, however. The stubborn problem of how to equalise education in urban and rural areas continues: urban areas still have relatively more and better equipped schools (Chetty et al, 1992: 124–8).

The Zimbabwean government also embarked on a strategy of transformation of the curriculum, taking into account the following issues: the question of identity, school syllabuses and textbooks, and the ideal characteristics of the type of teacher needed for the purpose of transformation. In order to entrench a common identity the curriculum and classroom practices had to instil a sense of commonality and a common loyalty to 'the nation of Zimbabwe', irrespective of whether the people were Tonga, Ndebele, Shona, or of Greek or Pakistani origin. Thus the government insisted that the curriculum emphasise national unity, i e that 'all Zimbabwean people are one' and have a single allegiance to the nation of Zimbabwe. This meant that schools should play a crucial role in correcting the mistakes of the past. Those who had internalised complexes of inferiority were to be given opportunity to walk with their heads held high, to know that they were Zimbabweans and to realise that their culture was equal to any other culture, even though different (Atkinson, 1982).

The assumption was that the classrooom could be the breeding ground of a new ethos in society, uniting all children, irrespective of their ethnic origin and social class. This could eventually generate a degree of commonality and national consciousness. New textbooks were produced, such as the history textbooks written by Beach and Chirenje, which marked a departure from the narrow, racist interpretations of previous Rhodesian school texts. The new textbooks favour accounts which assert African dignity and pride, the rich legacy of precolonial history, and the colonial oppression endured by all blacks.

In addition, it was recognised that in order to achieve the new national goals set by Zanu there was a need for a particular kind of teacher to transmit the ideology of national unity. Teachers were seen as potential agents of change. Mutumbuka characterises a teacher in the context of the Zimbawean revolution as 'a unique species, a revolutionary, a cultural school in the country should have an ethnic and racial mix to ensure that everybody could recognise the multiethnic nature of the Zimbawean society.

However, the process of educational transformation carried out in Zimbabwe has not been effective in redressing the legacy of inequalities in education. The political economy of the cities (including demographic distribution, residential structure and income distribution), shaped by the long history of social segregation, still privileges white children and the emerging black middle-class students in accessing the best schools available in the country. Aggravating the problem are the high costs attached to school fees and uniforms at the more elite schools. These have better premises, facilities and equipment and better-trained teachers. This illustrates that educational expansion and nation building, rather than breaking the barriers which impede access to schools, tend to sanction the role of schools in classifying, labelling and channelling people into different social conditions and class positions, thus reproducing social inequalities. The Zimbabwean education system therefore reflects the main characteristics of classical models of multicultural education: recognition of multiethnicity, the need for unity in diversity, eradication of racial bias in the curriculum and textbooks, and so forth. However, because it did not include positive and proactive strategies to eliminate social and economic imbalances at national level, this is likely to hinder the process of nation building.

7. Policy Options on Unity and Diversity in Education for South Africa

This section proposes two main policy options: multicultural education and education for national reconciliation. These policy options have been formulated taking account of three main factors: the particular context of South Africa; lessons from the international experience as explored above; and the guiding principles formulated by the National Education Policy Investigation (NEPI) Principles and Frameworks Committee. These include:

(a) a commitment to the equalisation of education and the elimination of differences; where differences are to be allowed or promoted they must be argued for;
(b) a commitment to achieving a just balance between egalitarian and libertarian demands, that is, a general commitment to democracy; and
(c) a commitment to affirmative action (NEPI Principles & Frameworks Committee, 1993)

7.1 Model A: Multicultural education

Multicultural education would certainly reform the existing 'multiculturalism' in South Africa and reverse the excessive emphasis on cultural differences promoted by apartheid educa-

(1) As any other policy, multicultural education should start 'where people are' (Appleton, 1983). In essence this means that education should take into account the sociocultural background of children and begin with the experiences they bring into the classroom. In terms of multicultural education the principle simply means that all people should begin by confronting their own economic, social, cultural and ethnic background, since the self-concept of a child can strongly influence how well she/he does in the classroom. Unless people feel good about their ethnic background, they can hardly relate positively to people of different ethnic settings. This applies not only to students but also to teachers, particularly if they are teaching students of different ethnicity. People must find some personal relevance to their own lives in the curriculum and school practice.

(2) Multicultural education should be geared to decentre people and thereby depolarise interethnic hostility and conflict. It must promote social mobility wherein members of different groups see themselves existing interdependently, or else individuals may become so preoccupied with issues of ethnic identity and ethnic self-interest that they may be misled into believing these issues are ends in themselves. Such orientation has often led to a self-indulgent ethnocentrism that may be psychologically gratifying but does little to promote greater intergroup understanding and cooperation. An effective way to decentre a person is by using his or her ethnic background as a cross-cultural bridge, illustrating the parallels between that group's experience and that of other ethnic groups. This does not necessarily imply that multicultural education should result in increasing ethnic consciousness.

(3) The implementation of multicultural education should be a long-term process with enough flexibility to accommodate eventual shifts and changes in the curriculum and school practices. In some countries, for example, many people took up multicultural education with the idea of implementing it in a big way as shock treatment, and soon became frustrated by the slow progress achieved despite so much effort. Multicultural education should begin with modest goals and strategies, such as supplementing the existing curriculum with small multicultural units. This enables teachers to grow in confidence, develop a long-term commitment to multicultural education and actively pursue their personal growth and development in the field.

(4) Multicultural education should be viewed not only as a specialised area of education but also as a general approach to education. Although teachers who are just getting started in the field may wish to begin with small, specialised units of instruction, the most effective approach in the long run could be to incorporate multicultural concepts and

incorporate the experiences and perspectives of several ethnic groups in the curriculum. Since there is little merit in having students memorise a lot of low-level facts about groups, a conceptual approach that provides a framework for understanding the experiences and perspectives of all the groups would seem more effective.

(5) Multicultural education should involve intervention not only in curriculum content but also in the teaching practices and social relations of the classroom. Students are rarely engaged in true dialogue in which they are stimulated to do most of the questioning and analysis and critical evaluation. Classroom interaction constitutes part of the hidden curriculum that transmits powerful subliminal messages to students and socialises them into patterns of conformity, subservience and passive behaviour that are dysfunctional for participating in a truly democratic society. Intervention in the classroom, utilising the learners' culture and experiences as a basis for learning, can dramatically increase student-initiated dialogue in the classroom and greatly stimulate critical thinking. This could in turn lead to a much better understanding of the deeper meaning of democracy, freedom and equality and the potential of students to exert some control over their destinies.

(6) Finally, multicultural education requires special attention to the need for parent or community involvement in school life. In many countries multicultural educators have utilised multicultural resources in their local communities and involved parents in the education of their children. Inviting guest speakers from ethnic groups, visiting museums of social history and exploring various aspects of local ethnic communities are some of the ways in which teachers have utilised multicultural community resources. Such activities stimulate interest, enhance learning and help develop community support for multicultural education programmes, support that is always necessary to sustain them.

7.2 Model B: Education for national reconciliation

The problem with the multicultural education model is that it would do very little to address the existing cultural and social imbalances in South Africa. As we have shown, South Africa experienced a limited case of multiculturalism, which emphasised the role of education in entrenching and reproducing ethnic and racial consciousness while obscuring the dominant relations of power. Tensions and divisions in society were exacerbated. The masses were disempowered and prevented from taking control of their own lives and destiny. South African multiculturalism was based on a typically racist and oppressive value system which stressed racism, sexism, tribalism, individualism, elitism and the like. A meaningful alternative policy should be dynamic enough to redress this legacy and should have enough flexibility to be

principles: unity, democracy, nonracism, nonsexism, nontribalism and the need to redre
the existing imbalances in our society which may hinder the process of nation buildin
Underlying this model is the ideal of national reconciliation. The idea of reconciliation sten
from an awareness of the following circumstances:

(1) Education systems in the Third World and particularly in Africa have ignored the reali
of diversity, social, economic, ethnolinguistic and cultural. Identities emerging out
this complex reality have fuelled interethnic tensions and consequent political confli
often manifested through secessionist movements. Education could play an importa
role in minimising the potential for these tensions.

(2) To minimise these tensions education for national reconciliation should prepare peop
who can both master the skills of intellectual production and use them in engaging t
forces of history in active critical self-consciousness, to filter and challenge the lega
of oppression and exploitation. For this purpose education should give particular atte
tion to the critical understanding of diverse cultural heritages, patterns of cultural repr
duction, structures of oppression and those factors which help reproduce an unequ
and oppressive social order.

(3) Education for national reconciliation should not only incorporate elements of diversi
(ethnic, social or cultural) but also develop critical awareness of the nature of this dive
sity, that is, the nature of the unequal relationship which exists between different soci
groups and regions, and how ethnicity and race as social categories have mediated
reproducing and legitimising the unequal allocation of power and privilege. To lea
about cultures in this light could be a radicalising force in the development of unit
democracy and tolerance.

(4) Racism has become endemic in South Africa. Education towards national reconciliatio
can only accomplish its goals if it is *antiracist* in nature, that is, if it is sufficient
dynamic to eradicate all factors which legitimise, justify or reproduce racism. Thi
means, for example, that the curriculum, the syllabus, textbooks and the curricul
process should include strategies aimed at developing awareness about the practice
racism, racial discrimination and oppression, and their consequences in society.

(5) Recognition of diversity as a factor of reconciliation can only occur when it is integrate
into *a struggle for cultural liberation* of all South Africans, irrespective of origin, ethnic
ty, sex, race, religion and culture. This requires the realisation that the difference
between ethnolinguistic groups are not more significant than the similarities. Commo

sive relationships) can be accommodated to enrich and consolidate commonness, unity and national identity. In Norval's words:

> [I]n our present context, this means that a mere denial of the ethnic modes of identification as 'constructed' by apartheid discourse will be insufficient, for it leaves that terrain open and uncontested. To put it bluntly, arguing that ethnic modes of identification are simply epiphenomenal forms which would vanish with the movement to the 'beyond' of apartheid, toward post-apartheid, will amount to political suicide by forces of the 'left'. (Norval, 1993: 5)

(6) It must be recognised that the reality of society outside the school is much more far-reaching than the school's reality. A progressive curriculum should acknowledge the intimate connection that exists between schools and society. In this regard, the experience of integrated studies introduced in schools such as Sacred Heart College in Johannesburg and described in chapter 8 has been illuminating.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

ACMSA. 1991. *A Curriculum Model for South Africa.* Department of National Education Publication.

Alexander, N. 1986. Approaches to the national question in South Africa. *Transformation*, 1.

Alexander, N. 1988. African culture in the context of Namibia, cultural development or assimilation? Conference of Council of Churches in Namibia.

ANC. 1955. The Freedom Charter. Adopted at the Congress of the People, Kliptown, on 26 June 1955.

ANC. 1982. Education policy. Paper presented to the Seminar on Education, Development and Social Transformation. Gaborone: National Institute of Research.

ANC. 1991. Discussion paper on educational policy.

Appleton N (ed). 1983. *Cultural Pluralism in Education.* New York: Longman.

Atkinson N. 1982. Racial integration in Zimbabwean schools, 1979–1980. *Comparative Education*, 18(1).

Azapo. 1984. Educational policy. In Millar C (ed). *Breaking the Formal Frame.* London: The Open University Press.

Baker G C. 1979. Policy issues in multicultural education in the United States. *Journal of*

Bennell P, Chetty D, Chisholm L, Monyokolo M & Tylor N. 1992. The education renewal strategy: An agenda for negotiations. Discussion paper. Education Policy Unit, University of the Witwatersrand.

Bennet T, Martin G, Mercer C & Woollacott J (eds). 1986. *Culture, Ideology and Social Process – A Reader.* London: The Open University Press.

Birrell R & Birrell T. 1981. *An Issue of People: Population and Australian Society.* Cheshire: Longman.

Brake M. 1980. *The Sociology of Youth Culture and Youth Subcultures.* London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Bullivant B M. 1982. Pluralist debate and educational policy – Australian style. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 3.

Bullivant B M. 1983. Cultural reproduction. *Comparative Education Review.*

Burton T. 1981. Federal multicultural policy and education in Canada. *Educational Research Quarterly*, 7.

Chetty D R, Monyokolo M & Soobrayan B. 1992. A report on current educational policies in southern Africa. *Perspectives in Education*, 13(2).

Clarke J, Hall S, Jefferson T & Roberts B. 1986. In Bennet et al. 1986. *Culture, Ideology and Social Process — A Reader.* London: The Open University Press.

Coetzee J C. 1948. Dubbelmedium-onderwys en tweetaligheid. *Koers*, 16(2).

Coetzee J C. 1968. Christian National Education. In Tummer R & Muir R K (eds). *Some Aspects of Education in South Africa.* University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg: African Studies Programme.

Cole M. 1989. *Education for Equality.* London: Routledge Education.

Coplan D. 1983. Popular culture and performance in Africa. *Critical Arts*, 3(1).

Craft M. 1981. *Teaching in a Multicultural Society.* Brighton: Falmer Press.

Cross M. 1986. A historical review of education in South Africa: Towards an assessment. *Comparative Education*, 22(3).

Cross M. 1992a. Culture, education and national unity. In *Resistance and Transformation.* Johannesburg: Skotaville Publishers.

Cross M. 1992b. Education for a national culture in South Africa: Problems and possibilities. In Freer D (ed). *Towards Open Schools: Possibilities and Realities for Non-Racial Education in South Africa.* Manzini: Macmillan Boleswa.

De Lange. 1981. *Provision of Education in the RSA* (The De Lange Report). Pretoria: Human Sciences Research Council.

Dhlomo O 1990. Let's be proud of our ethnicity in the reformed SA. *Saturday Star* 18 Octo-

ERS. 1991. *Educational Renewal Strategy – Discussion Document.* Pretoria: Government Printer.

Frelimo. 1972. Shaping the political line. *Mozambique Revolution*, 25 June 1972.

Freer D (ed). 1992. *Towards Open Schools.* Johannesburg: Macmillan Boleswa.

Gaine C. 1987. *No Problem Here: A Practical Approach to Education and Race in White Schools.* London: Hutchinson.

Gibson M A. 1976. Approaches to multicultural education in the United States: Some concepts and assumptions. *Anthropology and Education Quarterly*, 7.

Grant N. 1983. Multicultural education in Scotland. *Comparative Education*, 19(2).

Hall S. 1980. Race, articulation and societies structured in dominance. In Unesco, *Sociological Theories: Race and Colonialism.* Poole: Sydenhams Printers.

Halls W D. 1983. Belgium: A case study in educational regionalism. *Comparative Education*, 19(2).

Hannan A W. 1983. Multicultural education and teacher education: The British case with some American comparisons. *European Journal of Teacher Education*, 6.

Holjer H. 1954. *Language in Culture.* Chicago: Chicago University Press.

James A. 1981. Education for a multicultural society: Aims for primary and middle schools. *Education*, 9.

King E W. 1981. The status of ethnic diversity in American classrooms. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 2.

Kravetz N. 1980. Education of ethnic and national minorities in the USSR: A report on current developments. *Comparative Education*, 16(1).

Kringas P & Lewins F. 1981. *Why Ethnic Schools? Selected Case Studies.* Canberra: ANU Press.

La Belle T J & White P S. 1980. Education and multiethnic integration: An intergroup typology. *Comparative Education Review*, 24.

Lewins F. 1979. *Multiculturalism and Ideology.* Minnenone: ANU Press.

Lewis F. 1980. *Ethnic Families and Children's Achievements.* Sydney: George Allen & Unwin.

Lewis F. The Galbally Report. Quoted in Rizvi F. 1985. *Multiculturalism as an Educational Policy.* Victoria, Australia: Deakin University.

Lunn H. 1986. Antecedents of the music and popular culture of the African post-1976 generation. University of the Witwatersrand, MA thesis.

Lupul M R. 1978. Multiculturalism and educational policies in Canada. *Multiculturalism*, 1.

Lynch J. 1982. Community relations and multicultural education in Australia. *Comparat Education Review*, 12.

Lynch J. 1983. Multiethnic education in Europe: Problems and prospects. *Phi Delta Ka pan*, 64.

Male G A. 1980. Multicultural education and education policy: The British experience. *Co parative Education Review*, 24.

Masemann V L. 1979. Multicultural programs in Toronto schools. *Interchange*, 9.

Maximiano E & De Assis A F. 1991. O ensino da historia no periodo post-independenc Conference paper, Maputo, 30 July – 3 August.

McGurk N. 1990. *I Speak as White – Education, Culture and Nation.* Marshalltown: Hein mann Southern Africa.

McLean M. Education and cultural diversity in Britain: Recent immigrant groups. *Compar tive Education*, 19(2).

Moulder J. 1989. Moral education in a multi-cultural environment. *Bulletin of Academ Staff*, 10(1).

Mullard C. 1980. In Tierney J (ed). *Black Kids in White Schools: Multicultural Education Britain.*

Muller J. 1991. Difference, identity and community: American perspectives on the curricu lum. Paper presented to the annual Kenton Conference, October 1991.

Ndlovu J J. 1990. Exploring the foundations of education for a multi-ethnic and multicu tural world community: The quest for unity and harmony in cultural diversity. Presente at the Department of Education Research Seminar, Wits.

National Education Policy Investigation. 1993. *The Framework Report and Final Repo Summaries.* Cape Town: Oxford University Press/ NECC.

Neto A. 1972. Our culture and the New Man. Interview by Julia Herve with Dr Agostino Net President of the MPLA. In *Algerie-Actualité (Algiers)*, 337, 2–8 April.

Norval, Aletta J. Against a theory of ethnicity: Thinking political identities in a post-aparthei context. Paper presented at the conference on *Ethnicity, Identity and Nationalism South Africa*, 20–24 April 1993.

Opper S. 1983. Multiculturalism in Sweden: A case of assimilation and integration. *Com parative Education*, 19(2).

PAC. 1992. Educational Policy. Presented at the PAC conference in Umtata, 1992.

Pannu R S & Young J R. 1980. Ethnic schools in three Canadian cities: A study in multi culturalism. *The Alberta Journal of Educational Research*, 26.

Partington G. 1985. The same or different? Curricular implications of feminism and

Payne C R. 1984. Multicultural education: Racism in American Schools. *Theory into Practice*, 23.

Rizvi F. 1985. *Multiculturalism as an Educational Policy*. Victoria, Australia: Deakin University.

Rizvi F. 1986. *Ethnicity, Class and Multicultural Education*. Victoria, Australia: Deakin University.

Serra C. 1990. Pessoas com maior ou menor cultura ou pessoas com culturas differentes. *Domingo*, 21 October.

Singer M R. 1987. *Intercultural Communication: A Perceptual Approach*. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall.

Sole K. 1983. Culture, politics and the black writer: A critical look at the prevailing assumptions. *English in Africa*, 10(1), May.

Spencer J M. 1979. Horace Kaller's two conceptions of cultural pluralism. *Educational Theory*, 29(1), Winter.

St Lawrence T J. 1976. Multiculturalism in social context: Conceptual problems raised by educational policy issues. *Anthropology and Education Quarterly*, 7.

Thomas R M. 1981. Indonesia's cultural pluralism and education. *Educational Research Quarterly*, 6.

Thornton R. 1988. Culture: A contemporary definition. In Boonzaier E & Sharp J. *South African Keywords*. Cape Town: David Philip.

Union of South Africa: Senate Debates: cols 2595–1622.

Watson J K P. 1977. Education for a multi-racial Britain: Some problems and possible solutions. Paper presented at the Third World Congress of Comparative Education Societies, London, 1977.

Watson J K P. 1980. Education and cultural pluralism in South East Asia, with special reference to Peninsular Malaysia. *Comparative Education*, 16(2), June.

Watson K. 1979. Educational policies in multicultural societies. *Comparative Education*, 15(1).

Wirt F M. 1974. Ethnic minorities and school policy in European democracies: Theory and case studies. Paper presented at the American Political Science Association annual meeting, Chicago, September 1974.