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Insidious Colonialism in Post-Apartheid Education: Interplay of Black Teacher Narratives, Educational Policy and Textbook Analysis

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Abstract

This article focuses on the larger project of identifying oppressive structures (during apartheid more specifically in this instance) and how educational policy/textbooks (post-apartheid) produce transformative knowledge for decolonization. It presents Black South African teacher perceptions and desires of what/how educational policy, history textbooks can intervene in apartheid indoctrination and what role these have in addressing the nation's meta-narrative of equity and social justice. I take up these teacher narratives as a way to further critique textbooks currently used and examine the written and visual content against post-apartheid decolonizing intentions. Teacher narratives and textbook analysis indicate that even prescriptive post-apartheid textbooks struggle to reimagine history wrought through with colonialism. Decolonizing analysis of visual images in the textbooks show how curriculum policy/practice in South Africa is a collision of anti-apartheid desires and post-apartheid reality. By examining grassroots linkages I attempt to expand the current dialogue on educational policy and textbook studies and to contextualize the field, both historically and contemporarily.

Keywords: decolonizing; social justice meta-narratives; textbook analysis; grassroots methodology; post-apartheid education policy

El Colonialismo Pérfido en la Educación Post-apartheid: Interacción de Narrativas de Profesores Negros, la Política Educativa y el Análisis de los Libros de Texto

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Resumen

Este artículo se centra en el proyecto de identificar las estructuras opresivas (durante el apartheid) y cómo la política educativa y los libros de texto (post-apartheid) producen un “conocimiento transformador” para la descolonización. Se presentan las percepciones y los deseos de docentes Negros-Sudafricanos sobre cómo la política educativa y los libros de texto de historia pueden intervenir en el adoctrinamiento del apartheid, además del papel que tienen en el reconocimiento de la meta-narrativa de la nación sobre la equidad y justicia social. Las narrativas de los docentes se toman como una crítica más amplia de los libros actuales y se confiere el contenido escrito y visual en contra las intenciones de descolonización posteriores al apartheid. Las narrativas docentes junto con el análisis de libros de texto indican que incluso los libros de texto post-apartheid luchan para re-imaginar la historia hecha por el colonialismo. El análisis descolonizador de las imágenes visuales en los libros escolares muestran cómo la política y práctica curricular en Sudáfrica choca con los deseos contra el apartheid y la realidad del post-apartheid. Mediante el examen de los vínculos comunitarios “grassroots” se intenta ampliar el diálogo actual sobre la política educativa y los estudios de los libros escolares para contextualizar el campo, tanto histórico como contemporáneo.

Palabras clave: descolonización, meta-narrativas de justicia social, análisis de libros de texto, metodología grassroots, política de educación post-apartheid

While there is a growing body of literature on South African textbook critiques (Chisholm, 2008; McKinney, 2005; Morgan, 2010a, 2010b) this article takes a slight departure from these studies through a decolonizing analysis of educational policy and textbooks via grassroots teacher-oriented narratives and embodied textbook analysis. Such grassroots perspectives assisted both methodologically and analytically to analyze interpretations and desires for post-apartheid education. This article focuses on the larger project of identifying oppressive structures (during apartheid more specifically in this instance) and how educational policy/textbooks (post-apartheid) produce transformative knowledge for decolonization. By examining grassroots linkages (such as historio-political context and teacher narratives) I attempt to expand the current dialogue on educational policy and textbook studies and to contextualize the field both historically and contemporarily.

I begin by presenting a brief historio-political context that examines the post-apartheid emergence of several key educational/curriculum policies and analyze how these policies manifest in textbooks. I apply a decolonizing lens to analyze these historic moments as evidence of the tensions experienced by previously colonized nations as they attempt to disrobe colonial/apartheid oppressions and offer its diverse citizens a liberatory, equitable and inclusive society while at the same time develop social cohesion (see Department of Arts and Culture, *Blue Print for Social Cohesion*, 2012; Nkomo & Vandeyar, 2009).

Historio-political Context

South Africa's political history is complex bound by Dutch and British colonization, segregation and followed by apartheid. While the respective external and internal forces of colonialism and apartheid took place chronologically and through the impetus of different political nation-states and ideologies, the collaborative relationship between colonialism and apartheid safeguarded the continuance of hegemonic White power and control (Molteno, 1986; Prah, 1999; Subreenduth, 2006). Irrespective, education was the lynchpin for maintaining and controlling colonial and apartheid oppressions. Formal schooling and education of Black people in South Africa during Dutch, British and the National Party (apartheid) rule had a ruthless and violent history. In 1948, the National Party introduced

the policy of apartheid, literally meaning “apartness,” and was based on the premise that Whites were superior to Africans, Coloureds, and Indians (referenced as Black in this study) – these are apartheid racial classifications and hence used here to explain apartheid context/history. The National Party legitimized apartheid through the implementation of a number of legislative acts such as The Race Classification Act and the Group Areas Act of 1950. They legislated inferior, segregated schooling for Africans in 1953, Coloureds in 1963, and Indians in 1965. Molteno (1986) states that while the Group Areas Act was intentioned to remove Blacks physically from the context in which the wealth of the land was owned and controlled, “segregated schooling was designed to remove them psycho-ideologically and ‘resettle’ them in their separate ‘places’ of subordination” (p. 93).

It is argued that the 1953 Bantu¹ Education Act was enacted to serve the labor needs of the capitalist class, and reinforce ethnic divisions among Africans with the intent to “retribalise” (Molteno, 1986), resulting in fragmentation and thus diffusing the development of African nationalism (Kallaway, 1986) and aimed at indoctrinating the minds of the Black people (Prah, 1999; Subreenduth 2006). The role education played in institutionalizing and resisting apartheid is well documented and easily accessible (Bundy, 1987; Hyslop, 1999).

Several iterations of educational policy since 1994 testify to the South African government’s keen awareness of the role of education in engendering an equitable and cohesive democratic nation. A review of educational policy reform since 1994 loosely can be categorized into three curriculum transformation/reform eras: The first era of Outcomes Based Education (OBE) and Curriculum 2005(C2005) in 1995 was the initial transformative post-apartheid policy/curriculum. OBE was followed by national curriculum standard revisions: National Curriculum Standards (1997), Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS) in 2002 (see Fataar 2011; Spreen & Valley, 2006). The third era most current education policy: National Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS), implemented during 2010-2012. OBE/C2005, RNCS and CAPS were championed as the ideological and practical means through which education could play the role of promoting equity, human rights, social justice, nationalism, citizenship and cohesion in democratic South Africa.

Each educational policy change was swift and like most colonized nations, South Africa attempted in its post-apartheid educational policy changes to counter colonial and apartheid education with what appeared to be an unbiased curriculum/textbooks that was equitable and student centered (see Fataar, 2011, pp.148-193).

Role of Curricula and Textbooks in Post-apartheid Context

To dismantle the apartheid underpinnings of oppression contemporary South Africa needed to disrupt the operations of othering and objectification that was prevalent during apartheid. More urgently there is the need for decolonizing interventions to offer counter narratives and discourses about marginalized indigenous and Black people in South Africa. South Africa's post-apartheid unitary national curriculum served as vital mode to rectify apartheid inequities, re-center marginalized history and engender student knowledge production.

Textbooks during apartheid provided to Black South African students played a divisive as well indoctrinating role and hence post-apartheid was perceived as the fulcrum for equitable transformation for education and society. One of the first initiatives adopted by the Department of Education was the OBE/C2005. The move to OBE challenged past assumptions under which education was administered for the four racial groups in South Africa. C2005 stressed lifelong learning as the strategic intervention for transforming its current educational system and claimed to contribute to social justice, equity and development. In many ways OBE and C2005 was a response to anti-apartheid doctrine and to indigenous scholars and activists who trumped curriculum transformation as a way to translate political freedom to psychosocial liberation for Black South Africans by eliminating the psychological constraints and prejudices with which people viewed themselves and society (Jansen, 1990). During early post-apartheid discussions, Nkomo (1990), stated that for knowledge to have a democratizing effect on South Africans colossal efforts to decolonize the dominant Eurocentric epistemology had to be a priority project to disrupt the racially-inspired, exclusionary models embedded in the prevailing apartheid epistemological order (p. 313). Nkomo's (1990) intent for massive educational change was to interpose the "doctrine of white supremacy appropriated knowledge, definitions, meanings, and constructed

canons that placed whites at the center of the universe [and theories that have been] formulated on the basis of particularized European experiences but given a universal status” (p. 310). Curriculum was seen as the equity knowledge disseminator, and that if appropriately supported by social and political policies could facilitate the process of mental decolonization (Jansen 1990; Motala & Pampallis, 2002). However by the time CAPS was implemented in 2010 the pendulum had swung back to a narrower teacher-centered curricular focus in response to criticisms against the previous iterations as being too loose and unstructured. The strong conceptual framing inherent in CAPS resembles a more rigid turn to curricular prescription and content-based teaching which unfortunately mirrors the same prescriptive tendencies of apartheid education. Irrespectively, history curriculum plays a pivotal role in all eras in reconstructing and presenting a more equitable and inclusive South African history while ensuring that apartheid atrocities and anti-apartheid struggles capture the stories, knowledge, and everyday survival of the peoples involved.

In this paper I present teacher perceptions and desires of what/how educational policy, history curricula/textbooks can intervene in apartheid indoctrination and what role these have in addressing the nation’s meta-narrative of equity and social justice. I take up these teacher narratives as a way to further critique current textbooks and examine the written and visual content (See Subedi, 2013) against post-apartheid decolonizing intentions. Black teacher perspectives are still resoundingly silent within the dominant discourse of educational policy but more easily accessible within the discourse of textbook/curricula use, professional development, teaching and learning pedagogies in South Africa (see for example Bertram, 2009a; Bertram, 2009b; Brodie, Lelliott, & Davis, 2002; Hoadley, 2008; McKinney, 2005). Even when keeping in mind that the two cohort of teachers presented in this paper cannot generally be representative of South African teachers and that their educational policy and textbook literacies and commitment to social justice actually filters how they read the educational policy and textbooks, their reflections and desires presented here represent critical and enduring implications for the ways in which we re-think curriculum in the forms of school textbooks and dominant curricula resources.

Morgan (2010a) states that textbook studies in South Africa “have not concerned themselves with the theoretical and methodological problems of

textbook analysis as such” (p, 755). This study derives its theoretical, methodological and analytical lenses from a decolonizing theoretical framework (Rhee & Subreenduth, 2006; Smith, 1999; Subreenduth & Rhee, 2010; Thingo, 1986)

Drawing from a Decolonizing Social Justice Framework

A decolonizing project is about ‘unmasking and [the] deconstruction of imperialism, and its aspects of colonialism, in its old and new formations; for the reclamation of knowledge, language, and culture; and for the social transformation of the colonial relations between the native and the settler’ (Smith, 2005 p. 88). In my own decolonizing projects (Subreenduth 2006; 2008; 2010; forthcoming), I have shown how South Africa was and continues to be a deeply stratified nation marked by hierarchical access to knowledge production/re-production, schooling, and learning. The anti-apartheid social justice framework was based on an ideology for decolonizing apartheid atrocities from politics and policies that differently managed, based on race, the daily life of South Africans. Hence, as noted by Mckinney (2005) South Africa’s national unitary post-apartheid educational system has to now take into consideration its diverse learners via textbooks and learning materials. Nkomo and Vandeyer’s (2009) edited book on the transnational complexities of considering diversity while building cohesion in education articulates the complexities of building democratic pluralistic societies informed by social justice and human rights. Keeping this in mind textbooks need to consider its diverse learners and are then meant to play a critical role in newly democratized and pluralistic societies like South Africa.

What epistemological post-apartheid transgressions are needed to counter the apartheid Eurocentric history that excluded and invalidated Black history? South Africa’s current educational juncture – where learners have no lived experience of the apartheid struggle – is critical to ensure historicity of key defining moments in South African history. Therefore, textbook content need to push students beyond their own realities and experiences by providing multiple perspectives and alternative theoretical frameworks from which to re/read their experiences, common sense realities and dominant Eurocentric and canonical forms of knowledge. Willinsky (1998) for example highlights how the legacies of colonialism

and imperialism continue to inform contemporary educational discussions and thus has implications for the ways in which these are taught in K-12 classrooms. hooks (1994) advocates for an engaged pedagogy that provides students with “multiple perspectives, enabling them to know themselves better and to live in the world more fully by reaching critical awareness and engagement” (p. 14). Kumashiro (2000; 2008) advocates an anti-oppressive approach that re-centers marginalized theories, perspectives, discourses that can be done by intervening on repetitive mainstream narratives, images, discourse that frame them as common sense. Giroux (2005) interrogates the political context of knowledge and how knowledge shapes the inclusion or exclusion of perspectives, knowledge and dialogue in schools.

My conceptual framing around decolonizing, social justice and anti-oppressive educational efforts on educational policy, practice and its implications for empowerment and social justice anchor this study within South Africa’s temporal political, cultural and historical context. Such a framing offers spaces for dialogue across and within particular educational issues and examines implications for social justice redress, reconstruction, empowerment within South Africa’s rapidly changing political and social environment still fraught with issues of oppression (political, racial, gender, class, economic) and inequality.

The Study

This article analyzes how curriculum policy emerges and drives curriculum, as well as how this curriculum policy manifests in textbooks. I weave teacher analyses of textbook content with my own analysis of two CAPS-aligned textbooks published in 2012 (Focus: History and Via Afrika: History). This longitudinal study (teacher interviews in 2001-2002’ 2005 and textbook analysis in 2013) offers an alternative perspective to current textbook analysis in South Africa. Typical textbook analysis is undertaken by university professors and other academics, and while some include teacher input on the use of textbooks, teacher perspectives on educational policy and textbook content against post-apartheid decolonizing agenda is lacking.

Grassroots Methodology of Education Policy and Textbook Analysis

My diasporic status as a Black South African woman of Indian descent, who grew up during the apartheid era, then moved to the United States for further higher education studies and eventually live and work in the United States, is also critical to contextualizing this analysis. I bring a diasporic perspective to textbook analysis in South Africa and utilize my apartheid educational/political memory, post-apartheid continuing work with educators to bear on this analysis. Simultaneously, my own experiences with issues of race in the US inform and refract my decolonizing lens (Subreenduth, 2008; Subreenduth & Rhee, 2010). My analysis of the textbooks began with a comparative lens, but organically moved into an embodied (Daza & Huckaby, forthcoming) stance that was tugged by my own desires and expectations of representing apartheid history. As such I found my review and analysis of the Focus text became primary in this study.

My embodied analysis draws from Fairclough's (2001; 2003) use of critical discourse analysis that examines the interconnectedness of discursive practices, events and texts (inclusive of visuals) in relation to metanarratives of society and Luke (1997) and Taylor's (2007) take of critical discourse analysis as situated political practice (politics of educational policy/textbooks) and as a framework of analysis. In so doing critical discourse analysis unveils ideologically shaped power relations that educational policy and texts use to construct representations of the world.

This paper attempts to produce grounded analysis that considers grassroots perceptions (the teachers) of national educational policy, and textbooks (content and pedagogy) against decolonizing post-apartheid meta-narratives of equity and social justice. Part of my decolonizing project is to bring grassroots epistemological understanding to complex historical and political educational agendas. Thus, I deliberately foreground teacher analysis rather than heavily relying on existing scholarship. In doing so I am not devaluing such literature, but rather centering grassroots post-apartheid perspectives within mainstream discourse on educational policy and textbook discourse.

Data Collection

Data for this study come from a longitudinal research project that analyzed how history was (re)presented during and after apartheid through focus group interviews conducted with two sets of Black South African teachers who worked in marginalized school settings. The first cohort of five teachers participated in two focus group during 2001-2002 when OBE/C2005 was introduced and teacher training workshops conducted but very limited post-apartheid textbooks/learning resources were provided to supplement OBE/C2005's ideology of redress. I conducted a third focus group discussion with another set of six Black South African teachers in 2005. These teachers were part of a short-term educator exchange to the US. At this point in South Africa's educational transformation, C2005 had undergone significant revisions and the RNCS was implemented and a number of new history textbooks and resources were available for teacher use. All of the teachers I interviewed taught in upper primary or secondary schools in townships and urban semi-rural areas in KwaZulu Natal in South Africa and taught in either African or Indian majority schools. My attempt in the focus group interview discussions was to get a sense of how teachers perceived C2005, RNCS (the first two educational policy transformation eras) and the textbooks recommended at that time by the educational department as representing South African and world history during and after apartheid. These grassroots narratives are rooted in strong teacher educational policy/curriculum literacies and anti-apartheid commitments and within particular historical, socio-political and educational temporalities.

To offer a longitudinal educational policy and textbook analysis, I utilized the teacher narratives as catalyst for my document analysis of two 11th grade history textbooks that are aligned with CAPS. My analysis draws from/in relation to the teacher analysis and thus afforded inflection points that aligned with significant changes in curricula policy over the time period 2001-2012

Interplay of Post-Apartheid Black Teacher Narratives, Educational Policy and Textbook Analysis

Below I present my interpolated analysis loosely around the three key educational policy eras: Educational Policy Era One: OBE/C2005, Educational Policy Era Two: C2005/RNCS, Educational Policy Era Three: NCS/CAPS: History.

Educational Policy Era One: OBE/C2005

Re-centering African history and identity. Indigenous South African history, politics and struggle was excluded from the apartheid history curriculum. The teachers in the 2001-2002 cohort acknowledged changes to the history content in C2005, however, they felt that it still did not adequately address and include South African history from the perspectives of those previously marginalized. A high school history teacher observed that C2005 continued to mimic the apartheid curriculum in its continued emphasis on European and western history referencing the amount of class time expected to be spent on American history as compared to (South) African history. He insisted that history in the new curriculum also be written such that Black students can “see history as something they can relate to.” This teacher’s comment is reflective of apartheid students’ concerns in a 1980 study by Maurice (cited in Jansen, 1990). It offers a glimpse of students’ call for curricula to reflect and validate their experiences. He quotes students’ articulation about the apartheid curriculum:

Our history is written according to their ideas. Biology and Physics are taught in our schools but which we cannot apply to our everyday lives. We are not told that most diseases of the workers stem from the fact that they are undernourished and overworked. We are taught biology, but not in the terms of the biology of liberation, where we can tackle the concept of “race” to prove that there is no such thing as “race.” We are taught geography but not the geography of liberation. We are not taught that 80 percent of South Africans are dumped on 13 percent of the land ... We are

taught accountancy merely to calculate the profits of the capitalist” (p. 329).

The student’s explicit analysis of the content and intent of apartheid education echoed the intent of knowledge production during the apartheid era where knowledge was presented as facts, was depoliticized and disconnected from politics of lived-history and experience (see Daza, 2013). To address this continued proliferation of a Eurocentric epistemology, another teacher advocated for a rewriting of the history curriculum to include indigenous historians (together with the current academics who write this content) as a legitimate possibility for understanding/knowing “certain stories of the past” that have not been reflected in apartheid history nor did it surface in any substantive manner in C2005.

The teachers’ critique of the history curriculum indicates how C2005, during 2001-2002, maintained the colonial domination of knowledge imposed by the apartheid education system. A system that denied the colonized “useful knowledge about themselves and their world, [and transmitted] a culture that embodie[d] [and was] designed to consolidate a slave mentality” (Mzamane 1990 p. 369). These two teachers, like Mzamane, envisioned that the role of liberation education – the intention of C2005- was to “give people knowledge about their world: how the world shapes them and how they, in turn, can shape the world” (p. 368). By using indigenous cultural forms Mzamane suggested that education for a national culture must be designed to “restore Africans to their history and to liberate the African mind from the vicious Eurocentric beliefs and prejudices” yet according to the teachers C2005 failed to do this.

Educational Policy Era Two: C2005/RNCS

The 2005 cohort of teachers offered a more complimentary analysis of how history and particularly South African history was presented in the texts as well as the possibilities of C2005 in working towards decolonization. By this time teachers had become more familiar with C2005 and had typically participated in C2005 workshop training. The teacher interpretations were a result of revised textbook versions and the RNCS that had impacted a rewriting of C2005. The teachers felt that the revised textbooks privileged

the South African history in the number of pages it afforded it compared to general world history, which was also inclusive of African history. This “big change in content,” as one teacher noted, registered a shift in focus in both textbook and teaching expectations.

[During apartheid the] emphasis was on European civilization – everything was more European. There was a small section on African and South African history. Now it is the other way around. There is very little on European and the emphasis is on South Africa and African culture... not culture so to speak but civilization.

In addition to re-centering (South) African history, it is important to note the renaming that took place in the curriculum/texts. For example one of the teachers explained “we don’t refer to bushman they are now ... the San people – and no longer Hottentots – they are referred to as the Koi people.” Such European settler derogatory terms (bushmen; Hottentots) given to the indigenous people of South Africa during colonialism remained entrenched during apartheid, and were strategic in developing an inferior otherized mentality and identity. Such renaming of the indigenous is an initial step in an effort to decolonize and restore humanity and human dignity. As Smith (1999), Fanon (1990), Mbembe, (2001) discuss, there is a need for the colonized to claim and assert their humanity because during colonialism (and apartheid) they were never recognized as fully human but instead considered to be savage. Anticolonial movements therefore claim humanity as part of their human rights and the connections between “being human and been capable of creating history, knowledge and society” (Smith, 1999 p. 26).

Historical re-imagining of South African History. How is South Africa reimagined and the West/US represented in history texts in era two? Teachers indicate that the West is no longer un-problematically represented as the dominant super power. This implies a conscious attempt by the South African state to disrupt continued proliferation of the Eurocentric epistemology of its apartheid past. To justify the above interpretations the teachers explained how native/indigenous people in South Africa were portrayed during Apartheid: “it was sort of distorted like when they talk about the frontier wars... they talk of hottentot as being the ones who

invaded the white territory, they stole cattle ... the facts were not straight.” Such negative portrayals they stated were presented through the settler perspectives that included settler eye witness accounts and primary source documents offering no opportunity for the learner to engage in perspectives consciousness and historiography.

The teachers reflected on and discussed the changes they recalled in the general history section of the texts that referenced the use of concepts, policies, ideologies and historical figures to demonstrate how the course of world history was shaped. In apartheid texts a teacher noted, “colonial history [was] the focus in the past to show how beautiful, superior ... European history [was without any mention of] the role of African people and their leaders.” The change in texts now the teacher states shows how inhumane the colonizers/apartheid architects were but current texts discuss the strong role African leaders and people played “in terms of bringing up their countries against such inhumanity, oppression that they were facing from the European countries ... we know [now] more the role of the African people against this inhumanity ... how bad this inhumanity [was].”

The teacher emphasized that knowing what this inhumanity was ensures that “we don’t go back to this past.” This teacher speaks to the importance of also disrupting the homogenous notion that African countries were simply submissive to European force and control. His interpretations would indicate that now South Africa is reimagined historically as agents, not simply submissive victims of colonialism/apartheid. He also speaks to the importance of recognizing the role of African peoples in resisting and fighting for their own freedoms – again in an attempt to disrupt the popular notion that African and particularly South African freedom was a result of the intervention of super world powers and not the South African people themselves. A third teacher offered another example of how the texts have rewritten world history. One way new texts rethink the past is to trouble binary constructions i.e. heading more towards the relational effects between nation states, politics, policies, neoliberalism/imperialism. She states that

in the past ...I’m thinking some of these previous textbooks favored America over Russia in [presenting] the cold war ...[Russia is] always portrayed as the bad guys ...[but the new texts] recognizes

the expansion policies, [and how] the Marshall plan ... was for [the US's] own benefit.

The new texts offer students the ability to see how world history is related to the South Africa situation. Such connection, the teacher suggests, is important for students as they become “aware that South Africa is part of that global community.” Teacher interpretations indicate that the new texts seem to provide more nuanced, rather than binary constructions of nations and international relations.

While the 2005 cohort of teachers indicated a more substantive change in history content, the emphasis on the African and more specifically South African historical focus according to them *seemingly* makes the West (also represented by the white settlers in South Africa) peripheral in the textbooks/curriculum resource materials during era two. Having had South African history be so marginalized during apartheid, the insertion by default pronounces a privilege that may not really exist.

ERA Three: CAPS aligned History Textbook Analysis.

The 2010-2012 CAPS clearly delineates expectations for each grade/subject area. Common across all subject areas are certain principles that guides CAPS for grades R-12. Here, I am highlighting principles that connect to this paper's focus on decolonizing knowledge:

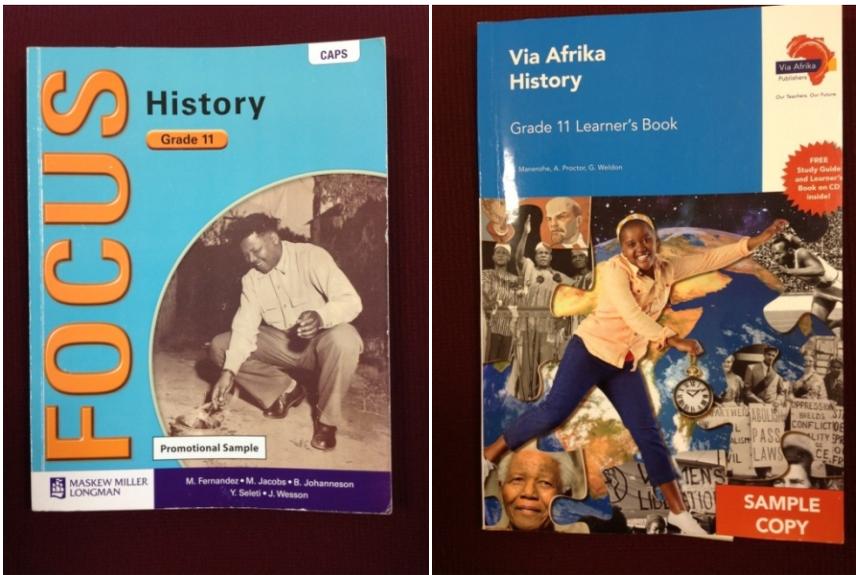
- Social transformation: ensuring that the educational imbalances of the past are redressed, and that equal educational opportunities are provided for all sections of the population;
- Active and critical learning: encouraging an active and critical approach to learning, rather than rote and uncritical learning of given truths;
- Human rights, inclusivity, environmental and social justice: infusing the principles and practices of social and environmental justice and human rights as defined in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa ... and is sensitive to issues of diversity such as poverty, inequality, race, gender, language, age, disability and other factors;
- Valuing indigenous knowledge systems: acknowledging the rich history and heritage of this country as important contributors to

nurturing the values contained in the Constitution; (Department of Basic Education, FET Grades 10-12, p. 4/5)

In this section, I focus on the third era of educational change (CAPS) through a document analysis of two 11th grade history textbooks published in 2012 (Focus: History and Via Afrika History). Utilizing priorities as outlined in the teacher narratives and CAPS above, I focus on how South African history is reimagined/represented in the two textbooks and the implications this has on historiography and decolonizing efforts in South Africa. To do this, I turn my eye to the provocations presented via the visuals in both texts. In brief, both grade 11 history texts exactly follow the outline of CAPS curriculum and are divided into five topics: (1) Communism in Russia 1900 to 1940, (2) Capitalism in the USA 1900 to 1940, (3) Ideas of race in the late 19th and 20th centuries, (4) Nationalisms – South Africa, the Middle East and Africa, and (5) Apartheid South Africa: 1940s to 1960s. Each text has a learner and teacher version. The teacher handbook has prescriptive schedules, assessments, and exams. For this analysis I focused on the learner texts.

Re-centering the Colonial Gaze vs. Post-Apartheid Desire. The cover visual of each text are striking images in themselves and even more so when compared. The Focus text has a black and white photograph (see Figure 1a) of a crouching Black man (a young Nelson Mandela dressed in slacks, shirt and leather shoes) smiling while he is reaching for a small metal pot that is on the ground and seems to have flames in it – against a backdrop of what seems to be in a township. Even if this was a historical moment of the liberation struggle –perhaps Nelson Mandela’s participation in the Defiance Campaign, against the Pass Laws (no acknowledgment of this picture) it is impossible to identify it as such. Interestingly when I circulated this picture to colleagues in South Africa (including those active during the apartheid struggle) no one could locate the photo relative to a specific time, place, or event. The lack of recognition of this visual as being a key marker/clue to the history that is to unfold in the text is stripped of any significant context and instead re-centers the colonial gaze of the Black man resigned to or with his circumstances. His western dress juxtaposed against the pot of fire on the dirt and the outline of shanties conjures the colonial mentality of acculturation without assimilation. In contrast, the Via Afrika text offers a more contemporary and colorful kaleidoscope that captures South African and global historical moments utilizing the globe as

a backdrop and the various historical puzzle pieces with a young Black female learner reaching out across this kaleidoscope (see Figure 1b). This cover sets the expectations of the content of the text. For example primary source visuals show anti-apartheid slogans “Abolish Pass Laws” “Oppression breeds conflict...” held by protestors; a women’s rights slogan “Women’s Liberation”; picture of an aged Nelson Mandela; and African and European political leaders and Black runner. This collage of visuals against its metaphor of a global puzzle and with the learner holding a clock symbolizing time allures the learner into a space that exceed their own realities



Figures 1a and 1b

The performativity of each text cover is powerful as it sets the tone for how the learner engages with history as presented in the books. According to Spivak (1985a; 1985b) “Worlding” speaks of ways in which colonized spaces were constructed and ushered into the world through the Eurocentric mentality and made to be sovereign and normalized. She speaks of worlding as taking place in subtle ways. Her example of how the presence

of the British soldier in India rewrites/worlds the colonial space as an imperial space for the native Indian, simply by his presence, which then dislodges any other discourses. Spivak's (1985a) colonial analysis ironically speaks to the ways in which the Focus text has worlded the Black South African male in post-apartheid South Africa as colonial not de-colonial and has underplayed the historicity of his African locatedness.

Un/Veiling Difficult Histories. In reviewing Topic 5: Apartheid South Africa, 1940-1960s the choice of visuals again powers messages that become normalized and acceptable to the learner as they study apartheid history. To open this topic the Focus text uses a concept map graphic that addresses the key question: How unique was Apartheid? The concept map shows how each chapter addresses this question. The key question itself is extremely nonchalant for a topic so imbued with socio-political complexity and which was fought for and resisted through human sacrifice. The overall presentation of this history and with an essential question that blasé, devoid of any indication of the lived struggles of Black people can only normalize a nonchalant learner engagement with this defining historical era in South Africa. In comparison, when I review the black and white visual of a young Boer child who was suffering from malnutrition during the Anglo-Boer war (See Figure 2a) being presented in the rise of Afrikaner nationalism case study –the visual evokes an emotive connection to the atrocities of the Anglo-Boer War. How is it that one historical atrocity (Anglo-Boer war) in the same text is presented in a way that it intended to connect with the learner emotively and empathetically while another atrocity (apartheid) is presented in a de/politicized and sanitized manner? The *Via Afrika* text offers visual clue into the daily struggle of apartheid by opening up the chapter with a two page spread of the iconic bench that states 'non-whites only' (See Figure 2b).

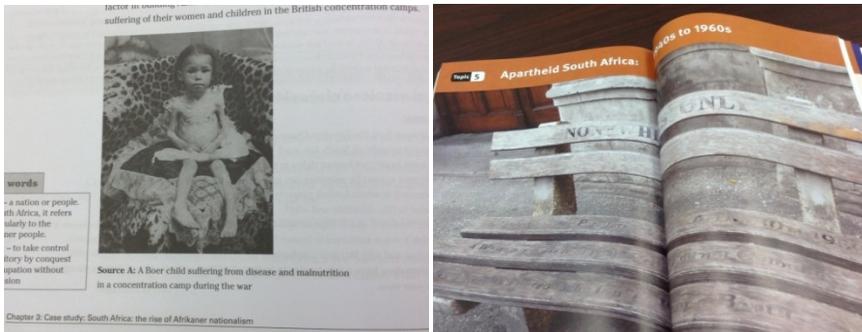


Figure 2a and 2b

Comparatively, the choice of images used to explain segregation and apartheid laws are unsettling. The Focus texts introduced the 1920s segregation through two key visuals (1) a barely decipherable land image showing erosion (Figure 2c; Focus p. 317) and (2) a white farmer on a tractor (Figure 2d; Focus p. 318) to indicate why Black labor was reduced.

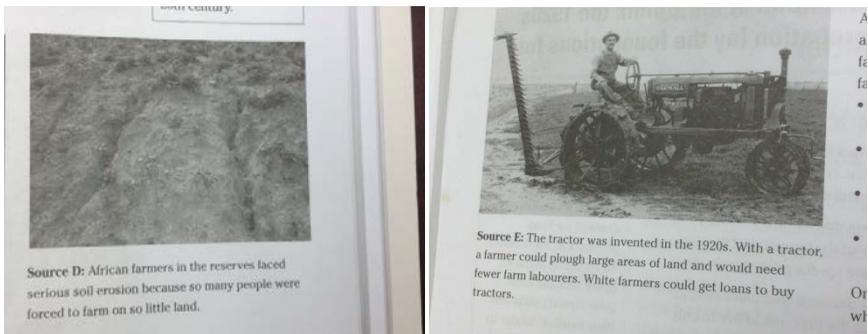


Figure 2c and Figure 2d

The paucity of these visuals render them useless in conveying the complexity of segregation and the labor laws that governed the lives of Black people. Where is the African perspective here? The Via Afrika text offers some of the African context by providing a photograph of the South African Native National Congress and their attempt at developing world allies against the 1913 Land Act. The Via Afrika text introduction to

segregation offers greater opportunity to see the Black South African as an active and engaged subject during apartheid. The last visuals I want to highlight in this section focus on apartheid legislation. The Focus text provides a very innocent visual of a White police officer reviewing in a friendly manner a Black South African male’s reference book (see Figure 3a; Focus p. 332). This visual mutes the violence of the Group Areas Act on Black South Africans. Such friendly encounters between White policemen and African pass holders during apartheid were almost non-existent. Yet this visual project to current learners an amicable relationship that is contrary to the lived consequences of that historical period. On the other hand the Via Afrika text provides visual of a mixed race couple and picture of Sophiatown resettlement (see Figure 3b) and is connected to The Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act and how it affected the lived of this couple. This is followed by explanations on the Immorality Amendment Act and the Population Registration Act –all connected to the visual on the prohibition and struggles experienced by couples who crossed the racial lines to marry.

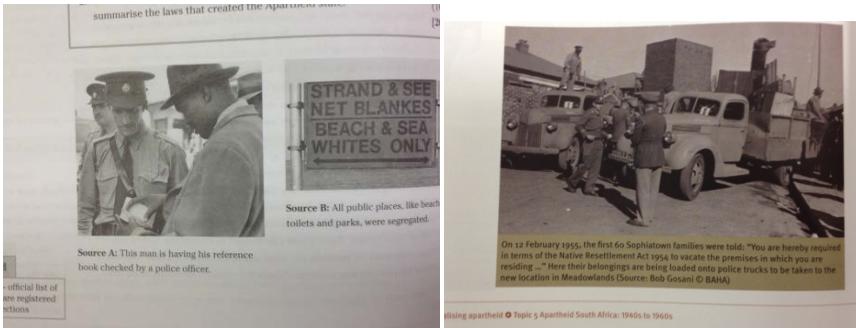


Figure 3a and 3b

Morgan’s (2010a) argument on race/racism speaks to the Focus texts insidious marginalization of historicity in presenting visuals about defining moments of apartheid struggle. He states “textbooks (with notable exceptions) deprive the readers of a real chance to engage and grapple with the complex and controversial subject matter of race and racism. They do this by uncritically submitting to the ideas prevalent of their time without

consciously reflecting on them, and without making their readers aware of the historicity of ideas themselves.” (p. 758)

The title of this section borrowed from Morrison (1995) who calls this insidious behavior a tactic to shape historical experiences “to make it palatable to those who were in a position to alleviate it, they were silent about many things, and they “forgot” many other things. There was a careful selection of the instances that they would record and a careful rendering of those that they chose to describe” (p. 91). Can the effort towards social cohesion lead to some of this un/veiling of difficult history and at the expense of decolonizing the previously oppressed?

The Powerful Presence of what is Absent. I conclude my textbook analysis by noting what is absent in these texts and thus CAPS. The topic on Ideas of race in the late 19th and 20th centuries includes case studies of racism – one on Australia and the other on Nazi Germany and the Holocaust. In both texts these offer visuals and texts that draws the learners’ attention to these atrocities, yet South Africa is not discussed a case study of 20th Century racism. The texts do note that racism in South African will be discussed in the apartheid topic but it certainly does not receive the same critical, if not concerning critique that these two case studies receive. What hidden curriculum message does it convey to students? How can they understand the oppression of racism as larger global concept and phenomenon? What role does indigenous knowledge play in the theories of race in the late 19th and 20th century South African history? With the recent xenophobic conflicts experienced in South Africa another opportunity for students to grasp the relevance of this in their own lives is missed in the discussion on xenophobia. It seems that these troubling events of history is presented as out there affecting those outside of the learners own community.

Other observations of the challenge still present in deconstructing the Eurocentric focus indicate that four of the five chapters heavily focus on European and US history with particular emphasis on the US, Britain, and eastern Europe. There is peripheral mention of Japan with regards to the crisis of capitalism. The significant marginalization of other histories and as it shaped/impacted world history makes visible the continued dominance of the “power of the west” (teacher quote) in world affairs, thus reinforcing its political and economic dominance. The main historical personalities of world history featured are all male and European/Caucasian and

Black/African. This is not any different to the 2005 teacher comments: Two female teachers speak to this during the focus group. The first teacher states “still imbalance in terms of male and female ... I think there are many females who have contributed to our history but they are not part of the textbooks” when I ask if this is with reference to African history and women she states that this is true for history in general. The stark gender inequity in the South African textbooks in 2005 echoed in the words of one of the 2005 cohort female teachers “in all textbooks it is a man’s world – we see it in our textbooks” is still prevalent in the 2012 texts reviewed. According to Kallaway (2012) the CAPS History “makes considerable advances by reasserting notions of historical disciplinarity, [but] it often tends to ignore complexity and context and reverts excessively to narrow notions of race and nationality in what appears to be a quest for ‘relevance’” (p. 28). The teacher analytical narratives and my textbook analysis supports Kallaway’s critique but takes him to task by insisting that relevance is important - that the unveiling of past/present oppressions in textbooks, as an attempt to re-center the relevance of marginalized people’s lives, is critical to a nation’s historicity and decolonizing project.

The teacher analytical narratives and my textbook analysis indicate that despite liberatory constitutional and educational agendas, differential power meddles with textbook content and impacts teaching and learning. Apple’s (1996) discussion on the cultural politics of education discusses what counts as legitimate knowledge, ways of knowing, who is empowered to teach it, ask questions, organize knowledge as evidence of how dominance and subordination are reproduced and altered in society. He aptly synthesizes the current politics in post-apartheid South Africa:

There is a politics of official knowledge, a politics of official knowledge, a politics that embodies conflict over what some regard as simply neutral descriptions of the world and what others regard as elite conceptions that empower some groups while disempowering others (pp. 22-23)

An analysis of the 2012 curricular texts show the challenge that decolonizing is up against. Even prescriptive post-apartheid textbooks struggle to reimagine history wrought through with colonialism. A decolonizing analysis of visual images in the textbooks show how

curriculum policy/practice in South Africa is a collision of decolonizing desires, ideology and practice.

Conclusion

Against the backdrop of major educational policy changes I narrated an interplay of teacher analytical perspectives on educational policy/curriculum and an embodied textbook analysis in order to examine how anti-apartheid decolonizing rhetoric/desires and the post-apartheid educational policy and textbook discourse engenders decolonizing knowledge re/construction. South Africa finds itself at a point where its educational juncture evidences tension between its decolonizing anti-apartheid ideology and its need to build nationalism (see Chisholm 2008) through its social cohesion efforts. Such tensions seem to make indigenous cultural forms and national cultural forms incompatible. With respect to educational policy, and for curriculum, textbooks and educators to produce decolonizing effect, they need to understand the center's ability to map the contours of both the center and the margin and the ways in which the center controls the dialogue about South African history (Spivak, 1993).

The basis of the transformative post-apartheid educational policy, like Kumashiro's (2003) anti-oppressive approach of learning against repetition, intended to interrupt the familiar, the taken for granted irrelevance of previously dispossessed and whose history was made invisible and/or skewed to glorify colonial and apartheid histories, does not quite materialize in CAPS History texts especially the Focus text. What are the implications of such omission, misrepresentations, gaps in presenting defining histories? Such nonchalant renderings can only lead to a reconstructed normalization and common sense consumption/understanding of brutal South African history. While both texts offer topic case studies, pedagogy of case studies and readings about race and apartheid oppressions in textbooks are not enough to engage students and educators in decolonizing knowledge construction. This argument is supported by Kumashiro (2000) who states, "Changing oppression requires disruptive knowledge not just more knowledge" (p. 10). Said (1994) referred to this disruptive knowledge as contrapuntal perspectives. These are perspectives and theoretical frameworks, often by the marginalized, that challenge and reinterpret dominant narratives in order to produce decolonizing readings of

our world and our interactions with it. The analytical teacher narratives and my textbook analysis indicate that such disruptive opportunities are superficial and can't offer critical engagement where learners can examine the specific shape, voice, and expression of racial arrangement and its underlying structure of thought in a society like South Africa and analyze how race is embedded in various forms through political and economic domination, creating social formations that articulate the social, political and ideological. Additionally, despite CAPS principle of valuing indigenous knowledge systems, outside of the renaming of the indigenous, no significant indigenous knowledge is integrated into the text. Fataar (2013) refers to this as the African epistemicide i.e. the “absence of African-centred knowledges and discourses in formal knowledge systems such as schools” caused by “on-going knowledge assertion by dominant players and institutional processes” such as textbook publishers and rapidly changing educational policies (p. 2). If CAPS intent was to strengthen history content knowledge through critical historicity, then it seems that both CAPS and the textbooks fall short of this lofty goal.

Notes

¹The word “Bantu” in the Nguni group of languages mean “people”, however the South African apartheid government usurped this word and officially used it to refer to the indigenous South African (Nkabinde, 1997). See e.g. Hlatshwayo (2000); Kallaway (1986); Nkabinde (1997) for a closer reading of Bantu Education apartheid ideology and labor (re)production.

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