

The impact of role reversal in representational practices in history textbooks after Apartheid

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History became a mere sub-section in the broad category of social sciences in the (then) new Curriculum 2005, significantly diluting it as a school subject. Yet the rewriting of South African history textbooks after the seminal democratic elections in South Africa during 1994 became a tool to counter the Apartheid stereotypes, previously loaded with strong cultural and political content. The focus during the past 10–12 years in South African historiography, on the reversal of the colonial portrayal of Africans, has resulted in the de-mystification of Eurocentrism in textbooks. New myths and new silences were re-instated and ensured that again only one voice is dominant — the voice of black South Africans. Multi-perspectivity, one of the non-negotiable pillars of post-modern historiography, is being disregarded in a country attempting to write a sound report of its past. In this article I address the extent to which white and black role reversal is reflected in representational practices in current South African historiography perspectives. A research group of six academics examined the illustrative material of nine series Grades 4–6 primary school history textbooks to identify the extent of racial representation. Both quantitative and qualitative analyses were conducted. Of all the illustrations in the textbooks, 15% depicted whites, 50% blacks, and 35% blacks and whites together. The qualitative findings suggest that so-called ‘white history’ is marginalized in the exemplars. White role models are downplayed and portrayed only as peripheral figures, making their race indistinct. The “butterscotch-effect” (the light colouring of faces) contributes to the fact that there are no racially marked identities. Learners will therefore have difficulty in identifying with the characters and narrators, especially since attempts to portray multi-perspectivity were found in only two textbooks. The data suggest that Afrikaner nationalist views are being replaced by African nationalist views and that history is again serving an ideological objective by striving to establish a single, simplistic perspective on the past.

*“History, despite its wrenching pain,
cannot be unlived, and if faced with courage,
need not be lived again.”¹*

Introduction

History and history textbooks always have been and still are captured between the poles of romanticised views of nations and distorted images of ‘the other’ (Chernis, 1990; Cole & Barsalou, 2006; Marsden, 2001; Mazabow, 2003). South African historian, Charles van Onselen, describes the history textbook debate as “a playground for ideologues and politicians” (Polakow-Suransky, 2002:3). A clear example of ideological and political influence is the Afrikaner-centred European perspective in history books that during the Apartheid era promoted the positive influence of whites and omitted blacks,

who were at the time seen as obstacles in the path of prosperity (Bam, 1993; De Wet, 2001; Van der Steinen, 1997, Weldon, 2006). When we² started this study, we were convinced that 10 years after the demise of Apartheid South African history textbooks had not nearly accomplished equal representation of blacks and whites. Our assumption was that blacks were still under-represented. After 1994 there was sensitivity and even denial in regard to history, to the extent that “a debate took place among textbook specialists, teachers and parents on whether the past should be taught at all in schools” (Höpken, 2006:21). The importance of history as a subject was diminished when it became diluted in the (then) new Curriculum 2005 as a sub-section of the social sciences learning area (Asmal, 2007; Mazabow, 2003).

To our minds an article was as good as written, and the data would confirm what we already knew. On engaging with the data, however, we realized the rashness of our assumptions. It seemed that although new players had entered the field (of history textbooks) the game had remained unchanged. We started to contemplate whether the broader image of history was again serving an ideological purpose by striving to establish a single, simplistic perspective of the past.

Research focus

It is well established in the literature that under Apartheid the heroic struggle and survival of the white Afrikaner nation formed the core of the South African history curriculum (Asmal, 2007; Bam, 1993; Weldon, 2006). While the impact of history textbooks on social reconstruction in South Africa (SA) has been assessed by many scholars (Asmal & James, 2001; Dryden-Peterson & Siebörger, 2006; Mazabow, 2003), a relatively new perspective (Cole & Barsalou, 2006:2) is that after violent conflict history education is usually burdened with many expectations, but “rarely examined for factual contradictions or tested against reality”. As part of the ongoing debate on representation in textbooks in SA, we attempted to explicate the ideological change in the collective historical conscience of South Africans since the demise of Apartheid. We use a post-modern theoretical perspective to gauge the extent of white and black role reversal in representational practices, as reflected in current South African historiography perspectives.

In the literature review we compare the historical tradition in South Africa during the Apartheid era to history debates during the past 10–12 years to gain an understanding of the current role of history (and history textbooks) in the new post-Apartheid curriculum and we explain how the research group analysed the illustrations in various series of recently published South Africa primary school history textbooks in order to determine the representational realities.

Conceptual framework

Critical theorists agree that textbooks are socio-cultural agents of formal and hidden curricula (Apple & Christian-Smith, 1991; Giroux, 1981; Jansen,

1997). Bourdillon (1992:19) states: “If knowledge is power, then those that control it, are particularly mighty”, yet no report on the past can ever be a single truth — it is always only a selective narrative of what happened (Cole & Barsalou, 2006; Dryden-Peterson & Siebörger, 2006; Van der Steinen, 1997). Chase (1996:1) explains:

Historians aspire to tell the truth, without ever believing that they will do so. They are conscious that the evidential base is fallible and deficient, and that their use of it is necessarily selective. However successful their efforts at empathy and sympathetic reconstruction, historians freely acknowledge that their viewpoint is rooted not in the past but in the present.

As a result of distaste for ‘grand narratives’ many post-modern historiography researchers agree on two matters. Firstly, rewriting history always carries the risk of spreading ideology and thus creating a negative history that can be misused to achieve an exclusive identity (Laspina, 2003; Roberts-Schweitzer, 2006; Sierens, 2000); and secondly, multi-perspectivity in textbooks enables learners to identify with the social worlds represented in such textbooks and at the same time allows them to counter selective perceptions, values and stereotypes (Cole & Barsalou, 2006; Laspina, 2003; McCinney, 2005).

Cole and Barsalou, (2006) warn that history taught in schools in a country that has experienced conflict, is highly susceptible to simplified and biased presentation, but can also enhance social reconstruction, as long as social trust is recreated on the most basic levels. According to Cole and Barsalou, (2006:1) “approaches that emphasize students’ critical thinking skills and expose them to multiple historical narratives can reinforce democratic and peaceful tendencies in transitional societies emerging from violent conflict”. Mazabow (2003:242), relies on the definition of ‘historical consciousness’ (formulated by Rüsen in 1993) which entails the “complex, constantly changing correlation between interpretation of the past, perception of the present reality and future expectations” and regards multi-perspectivity as the primary determining element in the educational value of the subject History in a democratic SA.

‘Knowledge control’ in post-modern historiography is therefore ambiguous. On the one hand the marginalized are encouraged to “empower themselves to transform the present” (Bam 1993:44), and on the other a skills-based multi-perspective dialogue is deliberately sought (Cole & Barsalou, 2006; Dryden-Peterson & Siebörger, 2006; Laspina, 2003). Consequently data analysis and interpretation are also interwoven in this polarisation. We take on cognizance of multi-perspectivity and stereotyping as embedded opposite extremes in post-modern historiography in the interrogation of the data. We attempt to contribute to the literature by investigating whether the focus on Africanisation neutralizes multi-perspectivity in post-history textbooks and, as a result, enforces new stereotypes.

Literature review

Three phases can be distinguished in the SA historiography of the past 10–12

years. The first phase started when 'History from below', as social historiography of the 'ordinary man', replaced the Rankean approach in an attempt to offer different perspectives of the same history (Dryden-Peterson & Siebörger, 2006), i.e. the past was studied as a network of stories through which people gave meaning to their existence, rather than attempting to pinpoint 'the truth' (Bam, 1993; Bundy, 1993; Roberts-Schweitzer, 2006). The so-called History Group, consisting of academics from, among others, the University of the Witwatersrand and the University of Cape Town, attempted during the 1980s to move away from nationalist, Rankean historiography (focusing on heroes and historical events) (Van der Steinen, 1997) through which not only were Afrikaner myths created, but the history of the black population was disregarded (Mazabow, 2003; Van der Steinen, 1997). There were also other role players, such as the Education Research Programme of the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC), who recommended a more critical History that would enable learners to reflect on, evaluate and apply their knowledge (Mazabow, 2003). 'Facing History and Ourselves' (an international organization founded in 1976, delivering classroom strategies and resources) was another role player that assisted a local education project called Shikaya, to help teachers teach new, multicultural civics curricula (Cole & Barsalou, 2006).

The second phase started in the first years after Apartheid was demolished. The sentiment was "It is better not to have history at all than to have that kind of history" (Roberts-Schweitzer, 2006). Through the country's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), set up by the Government of National Unity in 1995 to help deal with the consequences of Apartheid (Promotion of National Unity and Reconciliation Act, No. 34 of 1995), South Africa underwent literal public therapy in order to de-mythologize her history within herself, resulting in confusion in the South African historical psyche (Cole & Barsalou, 2006; Höpken, 2006). Polakow-Suransky (2002) describes this confusion as follows:

You had a paradoxical situation where a society that was going through a very public ritual about confronting the past was simultaneously abolishing history instruction in its classrooms.

At the same time, the government was criticised for the continued use of history textbooks from the Apartheid era — especially in the most impoverished classrooms in South Africa. This was blamed on a lack of funding, but some critics attributed this to an effort to diffuse tension (Polakow-Suransky, 2002).

The third phase started only after the (then new) education minister, Kader Asmal, established a history/archaeology panel to analyse the quality of history teaching and to strengthen the history curriculum. In a speech during which new learning materials were introduced, Asmal (2004:2) set South African history on a new path when he described Apartheid history as the history written by the hunter, and announced that it was now time to hear the history of the lion:

The lion, we have always hoped, will one day have its day ... The lion will one day rise up and write the history of Africa. We know, very well, the kinds of histories that have been written by the hunter. Those books only serve the hunter's interests ... We now want to hear the lion's story. We now want to hear the lion's roar.

Asmal's speech provides a directive vision in regard to the future role of history textbooks in South Africa. In the first statement he makes it very clear that the time has come for "the lion's roar" (Asmal, 2004:2), i.e. a process of Africanisation, but he appears to contradict himself:

In our inclusive memory of the South African past, the legacy of leaders such as Paul Kruger or Anton Lembede, belong to all of us. They cannot be owned by any exclusive or sectional interests in our society. They cannot be used to divide us.

There is a discrepancy between Asmal's "inclusive memory" (Asmal, 2004:2) as a goal and the "lion's roar" (Asmal, 2004:2). In an educational context, Africanisation entails replacing the Eurocentric content of the previous curriculum with Africa-related contents (Bundy, 1993; Van der Steinen, 1997). Asmal suggests that African nationalist views and narratives be used to counter Apartheid history, but at the same time he pleads for a synthesized account of the past.

Little has been written on this discrepancy in African historiography (De Wet, 2001; Laspina, 2003; Mazabow, 2003; Pretorius, 2006; Van der Steinen, 1997). According to Bundy (1993), a single African perspective would conceptually lock history into political history, because although it is reactive, thereby rejecting biases, silences and distortions of white supremacist history, it is at the same time characterized by a process of inversion. In this regard Jansen (1989:220) warns that SA should draw heavily on the experiences of other post-colonial states where "change often amounted to exchanging white heroes for black heroes". De Wet (2001) believes that only blacks' views are presented in contemporary South African historiography while whites are severely criticized.

This is supported by Pretorius's (2006:6) view that new stereotypes and untruths emerge in the name of democracy:

With democracy in 1994 there was a need for a new interpretation of the past — a democratic interpretation which highlighted the experiences of the different groups — more or less affirmative action in history writing. It is important that, in lieu of reconciliation, the pendulum does not swing to the other side. The question is whether the New Big Lie or the New Big Truth is at hand?

The South African nation is as much the product of European intervention as of African tradition (Bundy, 1993; Pretorius, 2006; Van der Steinen, 1997). Dramatically decreasing European content in history textbooks will lead to the elimination of valuable cultural content (De Wet, 2001; Reuter & Döbert, 2002). Representational space for white South Africans should not be confused with moving away from the European model of historiography. Mazabow

(2003) warns against letting learners gauge one-sided accounts and over-simplified issues, and encourages them to ask constantly about who has been left out. Laspina (2003) supports an (integrated) West-in-the-Rest, rather than a (separate) West-and-the-Rest approach. The focus now falls on an examination of representational space in the depictions of racial groups in the exemplars.

Research design

Sampling

The research group examined the illustrative material in nine series of primary school history textbooks on the assumption that the message conveyed by illustrative material is inevitably the message the textbook relays to its readership. Race-patterns portrayed in pictures form part of the reader's active construction of an image of society. Photographs and drawings in textbooks are intended as concrete examples of abstract concepts discussed in the text, and enliven the material, by encouraging students to connect the text to concrete images and features of society (Ferree & Hall, 1990; Homan & Van Praag, 2005).

In South Africa textbooks began playing a reconciliatory role even before Apartheid officially ended in 1994 (Van der Steinen, 1997). For this reason we chose books published from 1987 onward. We chose primary school textbooks for the three reasons emphasized by Cole and Barcelou (2006). In the first place, secondary schools do not treat sensitive issues to the extent that primary schools do. Secondly, there are usually more illustrations in primary school textbooks than in secondary school textbooks. Thirdly, most children in Africa do not continue their education beyond primary school. We limited the data to intermediate phase textbooks because foundation phase textbooks would have been too elementary and senior phase forms part of the secondary school curriculum. We analysed all the series of history textbooks available in our campus library. Two of the sample textbooks were history textbooks combined with other subjects such as geography, entrepreneurship and economics. Four of the nine were complete series (from Grades 4–6), only the Grade 5 and Grade 6 textbooks in one series were available and in four series only the Grade 5 books were available.

Coding

All the material in the sample textbooks was coded for race portrayal in terms of the depiction of whites and blacks. We deliberately did not code other races, as we wished to compare the current situation with Apartheid era textbooks when white was the unmodified norm against which to contrast all 'non-whites' (blacks). The coded material was categorized by clustering the different types of texts, e.g. drawings, cartoons, graffiti, maps, photographs, and symbols. This provided a framework for interpreting the data. For instance, considering photographs immediately foregrounds what Stuart Hall calls "truth-value" (1997:82); cartoons imply ridicule or humour and rely on the

communication of stereotypes (Lester, 1995; Prosser, 2001), while drawings lend themselves to tokenism, e.g. lightly colouring-in faces (the so-called “butterscotch-technique”), which deliberately makes it difficult for learners to distinguish race.

Analysis

A quantitative analysis was done of the representation of whites and blacks in the three main visual categories: drawings and sketches, comic strips, and photographs. The coded illustrations were written up in terms of three representational categories: whites, blacks, and blacks and whites depicted together. We then divided the research group members into three working pairs, which examined the categories qualitatively to determine what the illustrations revealed about the ‘sense of self’ and the ‘sense of others’. The first pair examined the textbooks from a technical point of view, considering aspects like layout, use of the butterscotch-technique, and narrators. The second pair investigated the social and cultural tendencies such as the balance between the portrayal of traditional and modern culture, role models and the extent to which learners could identify socially with the illustrations. The third pair determined the representation of race in the books, focusing specifically on colonialism, racism and forms of ethnocentrism. Different checklists, rubrics and criteria were studied and modified to design three tailor-made rubrics for interpreting the material in the sample textbooks according to the principles reflected in contemporary writing on intercultural learning materials. We involved two sets of objective interpreters. Firstly, we used an assistant to check the correctness of the quantitative analysis. Secondly, each of the three pairs examined each other’s analysis, which added value to the original data interpretation.

Findings

Quantitative findings

Table 1 summarizes the number of white, black, and black and white depictions in the series of textbooks.

A total of 131 (white), 378 (black), and 271 (black and white together) depictions were found in all the textbooks — in other words, 15% of all the people depicted were whites, 50% were blacks, and 35% were blacks and whites together. Two interesting tendencies were noted in the quantitative data. Not a single comic strip, photograph or sketch depicting only whites appears in *On track with social sciences* (Grade 5) (Johannesson *et al.*, 2003; 2004a; 2004b) while illustrations in the book depicting only blacks number 23. In *Understanding social sciences* (Grade 4) (Reynhardt *et al.*, 2004a) there are no sketches or comic strips depicting only whites in contrast to the 15 that depict only blacks. Only one photograph of a white person appears in *Understanding social sciences* (Grade 5) (Reynhardt *et al.*, 2004b), i.e. a photograph of Edmund Hillary. *Social science matters* (Collet *et al.*, 2004) and *People in place and time* (Ranby, 2001a; 2001b) also contain three times as many representations of blacks than of whites and very few representations of whites and blacks together.

Table 1 Depiction of white, black, and black and white (mixed) characters in the different textbooks

	White	Black	Mixed
<i>Looking into the past/Verken die verlede (Grade 4-6)</i> (Clacherty, 1996; Pienaar & Clacherty, 1995; Pienaar, Clacherty & Ludlow, 1996a; Pienaar, Clacherty & Smythe, 1996b)	44	89	64
<i>On track with social sciences (Grade 4-6)</i> (Johannesson, Potenza, Ranby & Versfeld, 2003; 2004a; 2004b)	15	105	51
<i>Journeys into human, social, economic and management sciences (Grade 4-6)</i> (Puren, Heidmann & Simpson, 2000; Willemburg & Simpson, 2001; 2002)	30	53	78
<i>Understanding social sciences (Grade 4-6)</i> (Reynhardt, Morare, Koekemoer & Koekemoer, 2004a; 2004b; 2004c)	13	43	24
<i>People in place and time (Grade 5-6)</i> (Ranby, 2001a; 2001b)	8	37	11
<i>Social science matters (Grade 5)</i> (Collet, Maclagen & Thraves, 2004)	5	21	6
<i>Shuter's social sciences (Grade 5)</i> (Avery, Dalton, Naidoo & Prinsloo, 2000)	3	4	30
<i>Pret en presteer: Geskiedenis (Graad 5)</i> (Grobler, Dhladhla & Bagwandeem, 1996)	8	5	1
<i>Saamwerk vir sukses (Graad 5)</i> (Duff, 2001)	5	21	6

Figure 1 gives a numerical indication of the race representation in the sample.

Qualitative findings

According to the quantitative analysis *Looking into the past/Verken die verlede* (Clacherty, 1996; Pienaar & Clacherty, 1995; Pienaar *et al.*, 1996a; 1996b), *Journeys into human, social, economic and management sciences* (Puren *et al.*, 2000; Willemburg & Simpson, 2001; 2002), *Pret en presteer: Geskiedenis* (Grobler *et al.*, 1996), *Saamwerk vir sukses* (Duff, 2001) and *Shuter's social sciences* (Avery *et al.*, 2000) appeared to be the most balanced textbooks in regard to the representation of whites and blacks. On closer inspection it became evident that *Journeys into human, social, economic and management sciences* (Puren *et al.*, 2000; Willemburg & Simpson, 2001; 2002), *Saamwerk vir sukses* (Duff, 2001) and *Shuter's social sciences* (Avery *et al.*, 2000) are in

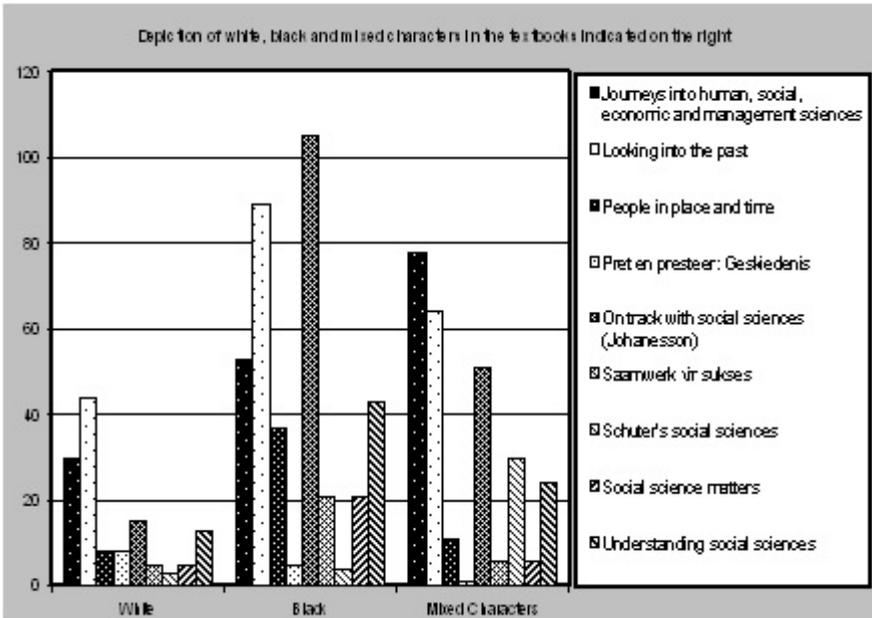


Figure 1 Depiction of white, black and mixed characters in the textbooks indicated on the right

fact not as balanced as we at first believed, as they contain large numbers of butterscotch depictions that influenced the calculation of the number of illustrations. All the characters in *Saamwerk vir sukses* (Duff, 2001) (even a female British settler) are coloured in (butterscotch), while the narrators in *Shuter's social sciences* (Avery *et al.*, 2000) are not easily discernable due to the style of the drawings, most of which resemble caricatures, often used in conjunction with the butterscotch effect (Figure 2). *Journeys into human, social, economic and management sciences* (Puren *et al.*, 2000; Willemburg & Simpson, 2001; 2002) also contains many butterscotch depictions (Figure 3), making it very difficult to distinguish between white and black characters. In this series white people are also shown from behind or in silhouette. This causes the characters to be almost unidentifiable and to appear to be marginal figures rather than main characters.

Only three books seem to be racially 'balanced' while the rest tend to adopt an Africanisation approach. *Looking into the past/Verken die verlede* (Clacherty, 1996; Pienaar & Clacherty, 1995; Pienaar *et al.*, 1996a; 1996b) and *Journeys into human, social, economic and management sciences* (Puren *et al.*, 2000; Willemburg and Simpson, 2001; 2002) do not contain the extreme numbers found in *Social science matters* (Collet *et al.*, 2004) and *People in place and time* (Ranby, 2001a; 2001b), but contain approximately 50% more illustrations of blacks than of whites.



Figure 2 Butterscotch depictions (Puren *et al.*, 2000:156)

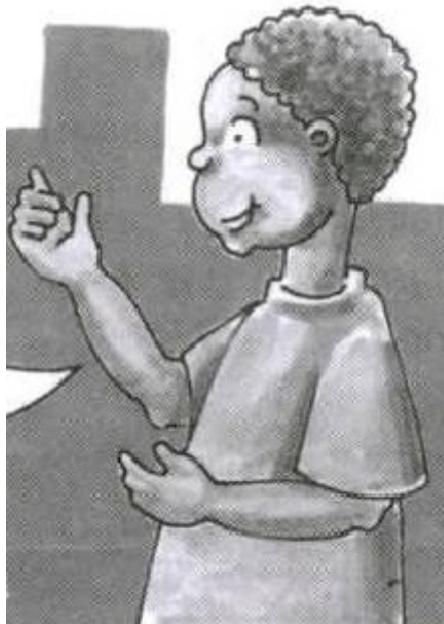


Figure 3 Caricature and butterscotch effect (Avery *et al.*, 2000:24)

In *On track with social sciences* (Johannesson *et al.*, 2003; 2004a; 2004b) there is an interesting phenomenon with regard to illustrations that contain mixed characters. In the 13 (Grade 4) and the 14 (Grade 5) illustrations depicting both races, 27 and 10 whites are depicted, respectively, in contrast to the 54 and 35 blacks.

The covers

From our analysis of the covers it is clear that the expectations created by the covers are not fulfilled in the books and most covers are not at all relevant to the content of the books. Books that were published after the curriculum had been revised in 2002, tend to have geographical rather than historical aspects depicted on their covers.

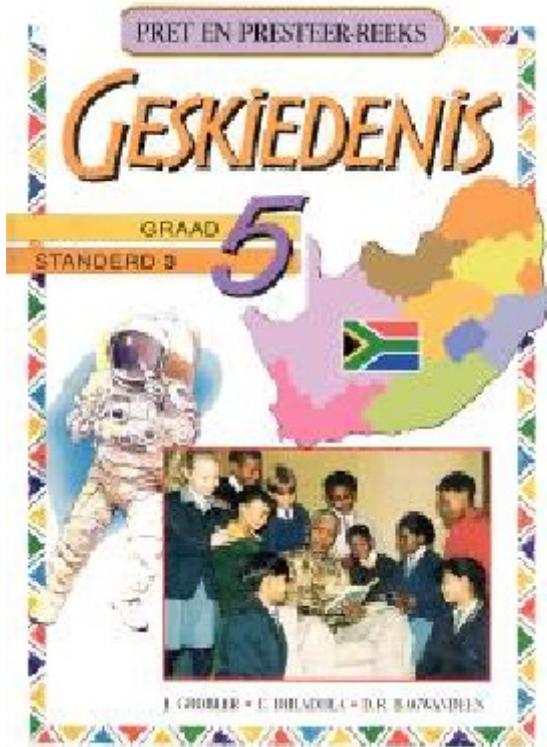


Figure 4 (Grobler *et al.*, 1996)

Expectations in terms of nation-building have not been met in the textbooks under scrutiny. The cover that seems to most successfully promote nation-building is that of *Pret en presteer: Geskiedenis* (Grobler *et al.*, 1996) (see Figure 4). It contains a picture of former president Nelson Mandela (wear-

ing an ethnic shirt) reading to children of different races. The illustrations inside the book do not echo this cover as they are not stimulating and are of limited variety, with only photographs of places and objects, such as pyramids and dams. The same applies to *Social science matters* (Collet *et al.*, 2004). Children of all races and a South African flag are depicted, while very few illustrations of people appear inside the book. The cover of *Shuter's social sciences* (Avery *et al.*, 2000) creates the notion of a racially mixed, colourful book, but the narrators inside are (racially) unidentifiable (see Figure 3) caricatures. The cover of *Saamwerk vir sukses* (Duff, 2001) (see Figure 5) contains a neutral depiction and appears to be Egyptian or Eastern, whilst critical engagement with the South African situation is evident throughout the book through the use of high quality photographs in ethnic frames. *Looking into the past/ Verken die verlede* (Clacherty, 1996; Pienaar & Clacherty, 1995; Pienaar *et al.*, 1996a; 1996b) (see Figure 6) is the only textbook of which the cover and



Figure 5 (Duff, 2001)

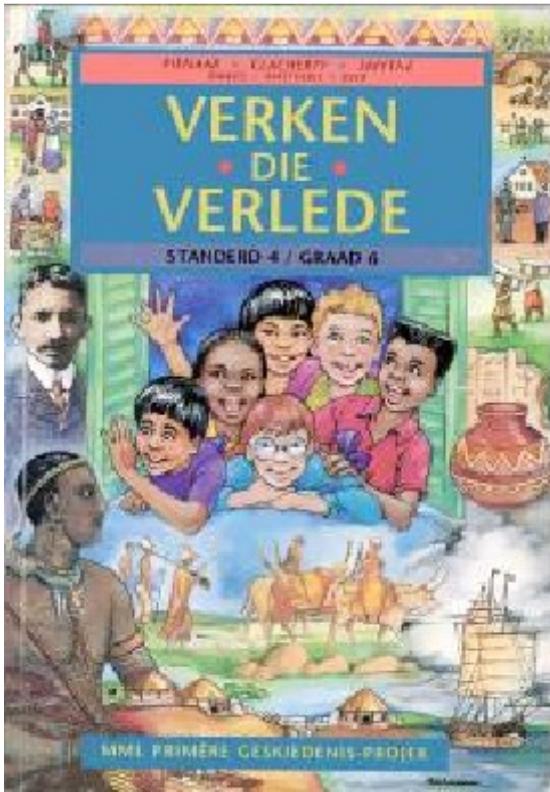


Figure 6 (Pienaar *et al.*, 1996b)

the content are co-ordinated. The seemingly enthusiastic narrators on the cover become an active part of the ‘then and now’ in the book, and they often discuss issues or make humorous comments with which learners can identify.

Certain books stand out with regard to enabling learners to identify with the illustrations. The illustrations in *Looking into the past/ Verken die verlede* (Clacherty, 1996; Pienaar & Clacherty, 1995; Pienaar *et al.*, 1996a; 1996b) are by far the most realistic and authentic. There is no butterscotch effect and even the colour nuances are realistic. The sketched characters in the books of all three grades are modern, smiling and dynamic — to such an extent that the rainbow nation is effectively portrayed. In the Grade 5 and Grade 6 books the same narrators that appear throughout the books also appear on the covers, so that 35 of the 41 illustrations that depict ‘mixed’ races, are of narrators (see Figure 6). Stories told by lay people, e.g. Linda Fortuin’s recollections of District Six (Pienaar *et al.*, 1996b:130), Wietsie Botes’ story about the Great Depression (Pienaar *et al.*, 1996b:140) and Mozane Sestone’s story about the Zulu Kingdom (Pienaar *et al.*, 1996b:88), utilize multi-perspectivity,

as they focus on the oral tradition of both black and white.

In contrast, we found uninspiring caricatures of narrators in *Shuter's social sciences* (Avery *et al.*, 2000) (Figure 3) and ubiquitous narrators in *Journeys into human, social, economic and management sciences* (Puren *et al.*, 2000; Willemburg & Simpson, 2001; 2002) (Figure 2), where the same characters with the same facial expressions create a 'copy and paste' effect throughout the series.

Saamwerk vir sukses (Duff, 2001), *Social science matters* (Collet *et al.*, 2004) and *People in place and time* (Ranby, 2001a; 2001b) do not contain narrators. *Understanding social sciences* (Reynhardt *et al.*, 2004a; 2004b; 2004c), and *On track with social sciences* (Johannesson *et al.*, 2003; 2004a; 2004b) use interesting, modern and dynamic narrators of all races, although it seems as if a template has been applied. The overall effect is stylized and not authentic.

Role models

The third facet is that of contemporary role models. In the analysis we deliberately disregarded inventors and ancient role models in order to be able to identify present (racially determined) heroes. In *Social science matters* (Collet *et al.*, 2004) and *Pret en presteer: Geskiedenis* (Grobler *et al.*, 1996) de-personification, which seems to be a deliberate avoidance technique, is used in the illustrations. Almost no people or role models are shown, only maps and places. Various black role models appear in the remaining books. Depictions of Nelson Mandela appear in almost every book, in some books no fewer than 12 times. In *On track with social sciences* (Johannesson *et al.*, 2003; 2004a; 2004b) five photographs and eight children's drawings of Mandela are included.

Other black role models from the political arena include Thabo Mbeki, Frene Ginwala, Jacob Zuma, Hector Peterson, Steve Biko, Oliver Tambo, Martin Luther King, Lilian Ngoyi, Yusuf Dadoo and Mohandas Ghandi. Cultural role models are, for instance, the painter Gail Mabasa and in the moral arena, Nkosi Johnson. White role models are limited to four men: erstwhile Springbok rugby captain Francois Pienaar, entrepreneur and billionaire Mark Shuttleworth, former president FW de Klerk and Dr Chris Barnard, who performed the first human heart transplant in 1967. The Grade 6 book contains a large photograph of Hamilton Naki (Figure 7), erstwhile gardener at the Groote Schuur hospital in Cape Town, who is said to have been Chris Barnard's main surgical assistant. Naki is depicted as the actual hero behind the scenes although he does not appear on a photograph of the famous heart transplant team in the Grade 4 book (Figure 8).

Colonialism, racism and ethnocentrism

In spite of the few 'healthy' critical photographs dealt with and the multiperspectivity obtained by different narratives of oral history, as discussed, the majority of the illustrative material is one-sided and focuses only on the Africanisation of South Africa's history. In most of the history books examined the so-called white history is ignored in the illustrations. For instance, *Social sci-*



Figure 7 Hamilton Naki (Reynhardt *et al.*, 2004c:84)



Figure 8 Heart transplant (Reynhardt *et al.*, 2004a:18)

ence matters (Collet *et al.*, 2004), more than the others, focuses almost exclusively on black farm-, factory-, and city-workers.

Van der Steinen (1997) maintains that the new history textbooks portray Africans as actors rather than victims. This is definitely the case in the majority of the textbooks scrutinised: black initiation ceremonies are depicted in photographs and most black people are depicted in professional career roles, while whites are sometimes depicted as unskilled labourers. Van der Steinen's (1997) statement does not apply throughout the sample studied, for example, in *Journeys into human, social, economic and management sciences* (Puren *et al.*, 2000; Willemburg & Simpson, 2001; 2002) photographs of black street children and AIDS orphans elicit sympathy; a typical racist SA stereotype is also reversed when a white is depicted as the thief who steals from a black person.

All the books in the sample address racism and colonialism. In *Social science matters* (Collet *et al.*, 2004) racism is addressed directly through a biological comparison between the races. All the books published after 1994, in their stand against racism, contain photographs of the long queues at the polling booths during the first democratic election in SA. In *Journeys into human, social, economic and management sciences* (Puren *et al.*, 2000; Willemburg & Simpson, 2001; 2002) a photograph of a pamphlet discourages people from voting in Apartheid elections. In *People in place and time*, (Ranby, 2001a; 2001b:30), colonialists are described in a cartoon as "the visitors who didn't go home" (Figure 9). The photographs in *Saamwerk vir sukses* (Duff, 2001) illustrate the saying that 'a picture is worth a thousand words'. The impression is created that the photographs were carefully selected to enhance the attempt at critical historical writing. Figures in the photographs are juxtaposed, e.g. two domestic workers looking after a young white boy are sitting on the lawn against a bench with a "Whites only/Slegs Blankes" sign (Figure 10). All the photographs in the book are contained in colourful ethnic frames that emphasize the rainbow nation approach, as well as the Africanisation of history in SA.

Only one book, namely, *Looking into the past/Verken die verlede* (Clacherty, 1996; Pienaar & Clacherty, 1995; Pienaar *et al.*, 1996a; 1996b), not only depicts aspects like pass laws, the resistance movement of 1952, the Sharpeville protest and the Soweto uprising, but also 'white' aspects like SA's role in the Second World War, the Great Depression of 1930, and Boer houses burnt down by British soldiers. Jan van Riebeeck's arrival is presented in a comical, innocuous way. Various perspectives are depicted in a sketch of the arrival of the British settlers. The settlers are uncertain and afraid of the future in the interior (Figure 11), while the Khoi captain views them as intruders who want to take his land (Figure 12).

Ultimately, it can be said that Eurocentrism has been replaced completely by Africanisation. There is clearly not enough social consensus which allows for a break with old myths glorifying one group and demonizing others (Cole & Barsalou, 2006).

2 THE VISITORS WHO DIDN'T GO HOME

The comic below shows the arrival of the Dutch in South Africa and the building of the first permanent European settlement.

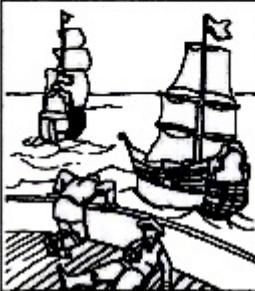
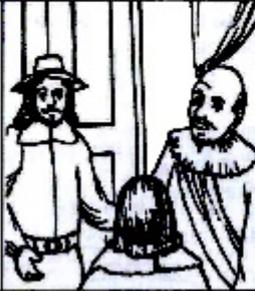
		
<p>1. The journey from Europe to the Cape took about three months. Sailors became sick on the journey and some died.</p>	<p>2. Jan van Riebeeck had orders from his bosses at the Dutch East India Company to set up a permanent base at the Cape. This was to supply the Company's ships with fresh food and water.</p>	<p>3. On April 6, 1652, according to Jan van Riebeeck's diary, 90 people "had come to anchor safely, shortly after sunset in the Table Bay".</p>
		
<p>4. The Dutch sailors worked hard to build the fort and establish the gardens. The wages were low and the people began to complain.</p>	<p>5. After a few years, nine farmers left the Company and became independent farmers. They were called free burghers.</p>	<p>6. More farmers settled on land outside the fort and gardens. This was land that the Khoikhoi used for grazing. They became angry with the Dutch for using their land.</p>

Figure 9 The visitors who didn't go home (Ranby, 2001b:30)

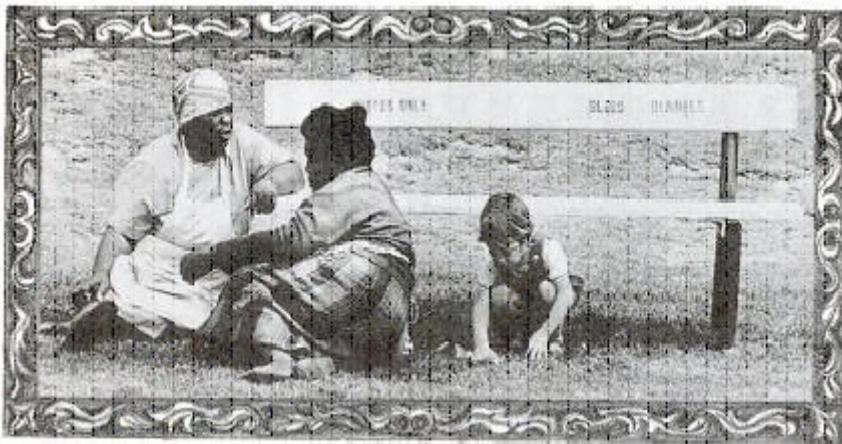


Figure 10 A bench in a park during the Apartheid era: “Whites only”



Figure 11 “How can we farm in this foreign world?”



Figure 12 He: “These are not the first white people to cross the Great River (Orange River), but there have never been so many of them”.
 She: “What do they want? Will they live on our land?”
 Child: Who were the people who crossed the river and where did they come from? Read further to find out.

Conclusion

It is understandable that the new historiography will attempt to reverse the strong racial identities that were characteristic of the Apartheid era. The legitimacy of the new state depends on severe critique of the Apartheid curriculum (Chisholm & Leyen-decker, 2008; Jansen, 1989). From the research it is clear that the Apartheid past, colonialism, and Eurocentrism are indeed fully confronted in the new history textbooks. Bearing in mind that ‘people’s history’ is written explicitly to counter racist and elitist stereotypes and the perversions of Apartheid history, one would expect to find more black than white representations as indeed the quantitative data collected for this article reveal.

The ratio of white and black depictions, however, symbolizes more than that. To have children learn from a textbook in which not a single white person is depicted (*On track with social sciences*) (Johannesson *et al.*, 2004a; 2004b) is (again) fostering a culture of mono-perspectivity, as is the phenomenon of not being able to distinguish between the races due to the butterscotch depictions in at least three of the series under scrutiny. The data show silences and omissions regarding the history of the whites, their aspirations, and

leaders, and new stereotypical messages are deliberately presented to counter Apartheid stereotypes.

Multi-perspectivity in the sense of “conflicting depictions that lead to compromise in opinion” (Bourdillon, 1992:20) is currently the exception rather than the rule. The qualitative data, especially the conflicting messages relayed by the covers, and the deliberate downplaying of white role models, reflects the confusion in the psyche of South African historiography as described in the literature review. Trying to reconceptualize white-male-Eurocentric history has resulted in a process of Africanisation, thus freezing whites in an ‘otherness’ with never-changing identities (this time) — a reversal of the myth on which Apartheid history was built.

Africanisation as a post-colonial approach to history fails in this sample of history textbooks to fulfil the requirements regarding the three pillars of post-modern history (Bourdillon, 1992; Chase, 1996; Cole & Barcalou, 2006; Mazabow, 2003), i.e. there is no single truth or grand narrative, countering (new) stereotypes and the demand for multi-perspectivity.

Since no single truth exists, and multi-perspective history textbooks are a trademark of post-modernist historiography, the data imply that South African historiography is still struggling to cope with the past and has, despite good intentions, not matured sufficiently during the past decade to offer a balanced report on the past.

Notes

1. “The Rock Cries Out to Us Today” by Maya Angelou. Read at United States presidential inauguration.
2. This article is the product of a research group in the Faculty of Education at the University of Pretoria. The members are:
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