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**Dealing with the past, facing the future**  
- A study of reconciliation in the subject of history  
in South Africa

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C-uppsats i historia / Interdisciplinärt  
examensarbete inom lärarutbildningen

Handledare: Laila Nielsen  
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Lennart K. Persson

Rapportnummer: HT08-1040-18-I



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## Abstract

### Examensarbete inom lärarutbildningen

**Titel:** Dealing with the past, facing the future; a study of reconciliation in the subject of history in South African schools.

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**Nyckelord:** Försoningsprocess, post-apartheid, Sydafrika, utbildning

Syftet med undersökningen har varit att förstå en del av den försoningsprocess som Sydafrika genomgått sedan slutet för apartheidpolitiken 1994. Vi har tittat på hur försoningspolitiken är tolkad av den sydafrikanska skolan med fokus på historieämnet. Vi har undersökt styrdokument, National Curriculum Statement (NCS), Manifesto on Values; Education and Democracy, granskat läroböcker samt intervjuat tre lärare i olika skolor i Port Elizabeth för att få svar på frågorna:

- Hur återspeglas och formuleras regeringens försoningspolitik i styrdokument för historieundervisningen?
- På vilket sätt följs styrdokumentens riktlinjer gällande försoningsprocessen i historieämnets läroböcker?
- På vilket sätt implementerar skolorna regeringens intentioner för försoning gällande de mångkulturella eleverna?

Vi har gjort en textanalys av de båda styrdokumenterna för att få reda på regeringens intentioner om hur försoningspolitik är menad att implementeras i historieundervisningen och hur försoningsprocessen är menad att läras ut. Vi har även gjort en textanalys av de sju historieböcker som finns tillgängliga för lärare i Sydafrika under den aktuella tiden för undersökningen. För intervjuer med de tre lärarna är urvalet baserat på skolavgifter vilket automatiskt lett till att det blivit en skola med majoriteten svarta elever med låg skolavgift och en före detta vit skola med hög skolavgift. Den tredje skolan räknas till en färgad och ligger kostnadsmässigt emellan de tidigare nämnda skolorna. Resultatet visar att NCS och Manifesto vill att eleverna ska ha kunskap om sitt förflutna och att försoning är en väg för att nå ett enat Sydafrika. Läroböckerna följer styrdokumenterna men skillnader finns och visar att vissa av dem är mer angelägna om att eleverna tänker kritiskt än andra. Lärarna i skolorna med lägst avgift tycker inte att NCS fungerar särskilt bra eftersom det kräver att eleverna läser mycket själva och får hjälp hemifrån, vilket de inte får.

Att få lära sig om hur ett land med en komplicerad och så nära i tiden historia som Sydafrika har och undervisar sina elever om är lärorikt. En direkt kontakt med skolan i Sydafrika har gett oss en förståelse för de problem som landet har och fått oss att uppskatta den förhållandevis enkla historien som vi i Sverige speglas av idag.

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(P) = Paula

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## Opening

Reconciliation is a popular topic to discuss when South Africa is on the agenda. The Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) defines the concept as:

Reconciliation is a societal process that involves mutual acknowledgment of past suffering and the changing of destructive attitudes and behaviour into constructive relationships toward sustainable peace.<sup>1</sup>

1994 stated the end of the apartheid regime, which was replaced by a new, democratic, political system. However, several centuries of oppression of the black and coloured inhabitants needed to be dealt with, and on the way towards a united South Africa the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (the TRC) played a big role. The commission was finished in 1998 and left some people satisfied and others not. But thinking that the TRC could make South Africa united in an instant would be a big mistake. Problems with the reconciliation process are be seen everywhere in South Africa today. Different actions are taken towards unifying the population. The schools play an important role for this process of reconciliation, because it is the schools that educate the new generations that can bring South Africa towards an equal and united society.

Some research has been done about reconciliation in South Africa but none in direct connection to the school as in this thesis. The South African students are called learners and we chose to use this term throughout the thesis. We are looking at several things that influence the learners. The National Curriculum Statement (the NCS) and the Manifesto on Values; Education and democracy (the Manifesto) gives directions for how reconciliation is intended to be implemented in the education system and taught in the subject of history. Interviewing teachers and looking at the textbooks they use in their teaching gives us an idea of how the curriculum and the political statements about reconciliation work in practice. The main reason for us to travel to South Africa was for the opportunity to visit schools and speak to teachers like ourselves, but with a different view and with a different and perhaps more complicated history to deal with than our own.

This is a study of a process that started in 1994 when the ANC came to power and changed an entire country's social structure and created a democratic society. What we are looking at is how this country is dealing with its past at the same time as it faces the future as a united

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<sup>1</sup> Brounéus, Karen, *Reconciliation – Theory and Practice for Development Cooperation*, SIDA, 2003.

South Africa. History helps shape the present and the future, and the way in which history is depicted affects the choices people make today. We are interested in how a country and people can deal with the legacy of such a difficult past and how they attempt to heal the wounds and divisions. How South Africa teaches their learners about the past without awakening feelings of vengeance from either side and instead attempts to teach them reconciliation. The definition on who is South African today is based on history, culture and a critical consciousness and that is one explanation for why it is important for people to know their history, starting with the learners.

## **Purpose and questions**

The main purpose of this thesis is to understand one aspect of the reconciliation process that South Africa is going through and has been going through since the end of the apartheid era, 1994. We are looking at how reconciliation is interpreted in the South African school system, with focus on the subject of history. The National Curriculum Statement (NCS) and the Manifesto on Values; Education and Democracy (Manifesto) affect the textbooks and these two together affect the teachers. This thesis gives an idea of the reconciliation that the South African school system is aiming at today. We focus on the history education about the reconciliation process that has been going on since the end of apartheid, and not on the whole reconciliation policy.

To see how the reconciliation process is reflected in the South African history education, we discuss the following questions:

- **How does the government's policy regarding the history education about the reconciliation process reflect upon and form the guiding documents for the subject of history?**
- **How do the textbooks in the subject of history follow the guiding documents regarding the reconciliation policy?**
- **How do the schools implement the government's intentions for reconciliation, regarding the multi-cultural learners?**

## **Design of the study**

Below, the sources and methods used to answer our questions will be presented. This presentation will start with the guiding documents, followed by the textbooks and an analysis of the schools implementation of the guiding documents (regarding the reconciliation process), exemplified by three interviews with history teachers. In the section on methods and sources there will also be a part that deals with criticism of the sources and aspects to keep in mind when using them. The analysing tool we have chosen to use is introduced in the same chapter. The third chapter deals with the previous research that has helped us and that we later compare our own study with. Next, the historical background to South Africa and why the concept of reconciliation is so important in this country is given. The background chapter is

divided into one part of general South African history, and one part about South African educational history. The result chapter is divided into the three parts explained above, the guiding documents (the NCS and the Manifesto), the textbooks and the interviews. Each part of the result ends with a summary. In the next chapter the analysing tool is used to analyse the guiding documents and the textbooks and how they reflect the policy of reconciliation. In this chapter we also analyse the interviews and compare them to the NCS, the Manifesto and the textbooks. This gives a picture of the practical implementation of the guiding documents and the policy of reconciliation. The thesis is ended by a discussion, where we discuss our results and conclusions and compare it to previous research. Last of all a summary of the whole thesis is given.

## **Methods and sources**

To fulfil our purpose we use a variety of methods that can be applied to different sources. These methods will be introduced below in the research area in which they belong. The research is divided into three sections in order to gain a closer understanding. These are:

- An analysis of the guiding documents, the NCS and the Manifesto
- An analysis of the textbooks used in the teaching of history
- Interviews with history teachers at three different schools

This is to give us a clearer picture of the process where the guidelines of the NCS and the Manifesto affect the textbooks and how these together affect the teachers who educate the learners.

The research includes grades 10-12 in both the analysis of the NCS and in the interviews with the teachers. In the textbook analyses we focus on grade 12 where the discussion about reconciliation is located. We have chosen grades 10-12 because in grades 1-9 history and geography are taught under the broader subject of social science. How many hours spent on history is for the teacher to decide. It is easier to give a correct picture of the education when history is a subject on its own as it is in grades 10-12. We are both studying to become history teachers in grades 10-12 in Sweden which is another reason why these grades are interesting for us to analyse. Considering that this thesis is focusing on reconciliation it is interesting to see what information is given to the learners as they finish school and what knowledge they are carrying with them into a society struggling for reconciliation.



## **Criticism of the sources**

Criticism of the sources of the NCS, the Manifesto, textbooks and the interviews will be found under each presentation in this method chapter. Regarding the background information, we use books written by several different authors, with different background, and compare the information. This is so the historical background we present is backed up by more than one source. Though South Africa is trying to be a unified country, history is still in many ways a delicate subject and the different groupings and cultures have their own viewpoint, why it is hard to know which facts are neutral. Because of this we have tried to use books that are written by authors from different South African cultures. The information about the educational system today and statistics are collected from books as well as from the South African government's formal web-page.

## **Guiding documents**

After the regime change in 1994, one urgent matter for the new government was to transform the education system and compose a new curriculum on the foundations of the democratic constitution. The first statement named Curriculum 2005 was ready to be used in 1996. The name Curriculum 2005 refers to the year when the curriculum was to be fully implemented. A period of evaluation of Curriculum 2005 resulted in the Revised National Curriculum Statement in 2002 and is the curriculum used in schools today.<sup>2</sup> The purpose from the beginning of this thesis was to look at both these curricula and compare them with each other in order to get an idea of the process of creating new guiding documents in the subject of history for grades 10-12. After days searching for the history Curriculum 2005 we discovered that a specific syllabus for history did not exist before 2002 when the revised statement came in to being. This means that education in history for grades 10-12 had been practised without directions since 1994. We are therefore focusing on the curriculum that has statements for the subject of history in grades 10-12, which is the National Curriculum Statement (the NCS), written 2002. Because this curriculum is the first for history it is not called "Revised". The NCS was implemented in schools in 2005. We are also focusing on the Manifesto on Values; Education and Democracy (the Manifesto). These two are the most important documents that make statements about the subject of history and reconciliation and they complement each other. These statements are political documents and as the former South African Minister of Education, Professor Kader Asmal, put it in the preface to one draft of the NCS:

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<sup>2</sup> Department of Education, *Revised National Curriculum Statement Grades R-9 (Schools)*, Republic of South Africa, 2001 p5-6.

At its broadest level, our education system and its curriculum express our idea of ourselves as a society and our vision as to how we see the new form of society being realised through our children and learners.<sup>3</sup>

The NCS gives specific directions on how education in South African schools should be implemented according to directions from the government. This is why it is important to take a closer look at this for our research. There are different curricula for the variety of subjects but we are focusing on the one that is specific to the subject of history in grades 10-12. This is to get an understanding of how the government wants the learners to understand the South African reconciliation process. We also want to be able to understand what the textbooks are built on and, in the long run, see how teachers implement these ideas in their teaching. The Manifesto is a broad document that complements the NCS with more general ideas and statements about how reconciliation is supposed to be implemented in the whole school system and, for our research, the subject of history.

A qualitative, textual analysis is used for the NCS and the Manifesto and we use both texts as primary sources.<sup>4</sup> Both the NCS and the Manifesto includes one part with general statements for all teachers and learners and one part with more specific statements for the subject of history. Both these parts are analysed. We focus on the concept of reconciliation and how these two documents want the schools and teachers to teach about this concept and what the learners are supposed to have learnt by the time they finish grade 12.

### **Criticism of the sources**

It is important to note that the NCS and the Manifesto are policy documents that showing the government's intentions and not how the reality is today. Because they are political documents, they must be politically correct. They do not include any statements that could be controversial or the debate that preceded the agreed statements. The documents we analyse are based on the South African constitution and the South African Schools Act, and are therefore interpretations of those. There exists several policy documents that concern education, but the two we analyse are the ones that specifically deal with education in history and reconciliation. This means that we can miss some aspects of reconciliation that other policy documents include.

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<sup>3</sup> Department of Education, *Revised National Curriculum Statement Grades R-9*, 2001, p1.

<sup>4</sup> Florén, Ander & Ågren, Henrik, *Historiska undersökningar. Grunder i historisk teori, metod och framställningssätt*, Lund: Studentlitteratur, 2006 p75-76.

## Textbooks

Textbooks are pedagogical instruments for teachers to use in education. They give basic facts with explanations and are fitted to the learner's previous knowledge and grade.<sup>5</sup> With textbooks we mean books that are used in the history education continuously and which include information that is relevant to the subject of history. Other forms of educational material such as reference books, maps, materials handled by the teachers and multimedia materials are not a part of this study.

All teachers and learners in South Africa must have textbooks<sup>6</sup> and that is one reason why textbook analysis is interesting for this study. The focus of the analysis of textbooks is what the books put into the word reconciliation; what the textbooks are discussing regarding the concept reconciliation. We intend to get a comprehensive picture of the information in the textbooks and are therefore trying not to exclude anything. One part of the analysis is quantitative where we are measuring the text mass and comparing the books to each other. The other part is the big one and is focused on the contents of the books. We are looking at the texts' manifested message which means that we are not looking for a hidden meaning in the text, underlying purposes or political ideas. We examine what the texts are telling us and comparing the different textbooks.<sup>7</sup>

The textbooks that we analyse are:

- In search of history
- Shutters
- History for all
- Making history
- Viva history
- New generation history
- Looking into the past

All in all there are 7 different publishers whose textbooks have been approved by the government. All of the books analysed are the latest version, published in 2007. This contains all the history books that are available for teachers and schools in South Africa at the time of this thesis. The reason for choosing to analyze all the books is to get a complete picture of the books used in the subject of history. It is very difficult to find out which books are most

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<sup>5</sup> Selander, Staffan, *Lärobokskunskap*, Lund: Studentlitteratur, 1988, p121.

<sup>6</sup> Department of education, *Learning programme guidelines, National Curriculum Statement grades 10-12 (general) history*, Republic of South Africa, 2008 p20.

<sup>7</sup> Esaiasson, Peter, et al, *Metodpraktikan. Konsten att studera samhälle, individ och marknad*, Stockholm: Nordstedts juridik, 2007, p250.

frequently used. The interviews also show that the teachers have copies of several of the approved textbooks and are able to use information from these different books in their teaching. All the books are fitted to the NCS that came in 2002 and were used in schools for the first time in 2005.

Reconciliation had a big part in education since 1994 and by focusing on history, only one part of this is analysed. It is interesting however to see what the publishers think the concept reconciliation includes and the subject of history is the one subject that are spending time on this. The history subject in grades 10-12 is based on chronology which means that they start in grade 10 with the colonization in the 17<sup>th</sup> century and ends grade 12 with the 20<sup>th</sup> century which includes the struggle towards reconciliation and that is why only grade 12 is the grade that is interesting for our study.

### **Criticism of the sources**

We use the textbooks as primary sources, which mean that we do not need to evaluate if they are telling the truth about the history, we are using them as sources on what kind of history the South African government wants children to learn. As stated above, the textbooks used in the schools must be approved by the government. This means that the information in them is politically correct and compromised. While every school across the nation shares the same curriculum, the textbooks vary in every classroom. There is a problem with representativity, some of the books may be more frequently used than others. There is a problem of visibility as well. The textbooks do not show what other material is used by the teachers in the teaching about reconciliation. Our interviews with history teachers may give us answers of how it works in the schools.

### **Interviews**

The purpose of the interviews is to get a glimpse of how education on reconciliation in the subject of history works in reality. We aim to do this by talking to the teachers who are supposed to implement the government's guidelines and use the textbooks. We chose to conduct three deep, qualitative interviews in order to get an understanding of how the teachers think and teach about reconciliation in grades 10-12.<sup>8</sup> The questionnaire form used for the interviews is available in appendix 1. The interviews are interactive and the amount of time given for each interview is between 40 minutes and 1 hour and 30 minutes. The teachers are used as primary sources, which means that it is the teacher's thoughts and attitudes that we

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<sup>8</sup> Esaiasson et al, 2007, p283-284.

are interested in.<sup>9</sup> We focus our study on schools in the Eastern Cape province, in Port Elizabeth where we and our contact at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University are located. In 1996 the Eastern Capes inhabitants were divided into 80% black, 10% coloured and 10% white. (This division of people according to colour of skin and culture was founded during apartheid and still exists in for example statistics.) These numbers are representative for South Africa in general.<sup>10</sup> The Eastern Cape hosts around 15% of the national population and during apartheid many homelands (overcrowded areas where blacks were forced to live) were situated in the Eastern Cape area. This among other things has contributed to the high poverty and unemployment rate, compared to the rest of the country.<sup>11</sup> There are several private schools in Port Elizabeth but we only visit the government run schools in an attempt to make the schools as comparable as possible. The government run schools in South Africa are partly financed by the state and partly by private fees. The fees are of varied amounts, from 0 Rand to 15 000 Rand (0 Euro to 1 130 Euro) per year.<sup>12</sup>

The Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University has helped us to get in contact with history teachers at the chosen schools. It is difficult to get in contact with schools on your own in South Africa. Help from the university makes the process easier because of the cooperation between these institutions. The schools are strategically chosen using the principle of maximum variation so that we are able to speak with teachers from different areas and schools in Port Elizabeth.<sup>13</sup> The chosen schools differ from each other in terms of the size of fees paid by the parents, the fees are 150 Rand, 800 Rand and 10 000 Rand (11 Euro, 60 Euro and 760 Euro). The cities in South Africa (including Port Elizabeth) are still segregated in terms of culture. Therefore we visit one school which is situated in an area dominated by white culture, one in an area dominated by coloured culture and one in an area dominated by black culture. In so doing all three cultures in the Eastern Cape are represented. The schools are St. Thomas High School, Alexander Road High School and Lungisa High School. We interview one male and two female teachers, who have worked as teachers for different amounts of time. More about the teachers and the schools will be presented as a part of the interview results.

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<sup>9</sup> Esaiasson et al, 2007, p258.

<sup>10</sup> Fiske Edward, *Elusive Equity education reform in post-apartheid South Africa*, Cape Town, 2004, p78.

<sup>11</sup> Lester, Alan et al, *South Africa. Past present and future. Gold at the end of the rainbow?* Pearson Education Limited, 2000, p237.

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.southafrica.info/services/education/edufacts.htm#07> 2008-12-06.

<sup>13</sup> Esaiasson et al, 2007, p291-295.

## **Criticism of the sources**

One problem with the interviews is that we only conduct interviews with three teachers, which makes the results of our interviews a small part of the reality. We must be careful with statements about Eastern Cape or South African teachers in general. We use the interviews to put our research into a context and perspective and as three different examples of how the history education can work in practice. It is, however, important to keep in mind that the interviews were arranged by the university depending on where they had connections as well as our wishes, and perhaps what they wanted us to see. The second problem is that it is hard to know what the teachers tell us, what they leave out and what questions we have missed. Then there is a problem with reliability. There is the possibility that the teachers say what they think they are supposed to say, or what they think we want to hear. The teachers might want to look good, or make the school and South Africa look good or bad. This could be both conscious and subconscious. We keep this in mind when designing our interview questions as objective and understandable as possible. The interview guide is placed in appendix 1.

## **Reconciliation - an analyzing tool**

Reconciliation in the meaning of restoring broken relationships and live in a society coloured by big differences in a non violent way, could be the ultimate goal of conflict resolution.<sup>14</sup> In South Africa the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (the TRC) had the intention to deal with the past in order to clear the ground for the present and build a shared future for the people living in it.

The analysing tool we use in this research is documented by Oliver Ramsbotham, a professor of conflict resolution at the University of Bradford, England. He points out three ways of conflict resolution that could lead to the path towards reconciliation. These are amnesia, public justice and vengeance. With amnesia he means that the society forgive and forget what happened as a way of moving on. With amnesia there is no looking back at the bloodshed, a new history will be written from now on. With public justice the past is to be dealt with in public and collectively. All members of the society have a role to play in the way towards reconciliation to prevent private vengeance. First of all there must be legal justice in the meaning that law will rule in the country. Second there must be some sort of rectificatory justice to deal with the past and the crimes against humanity. Third there must be distributive justice that prevent the political and economical discrimination and as well the inequality of distribution that can be seen as an underlying cause of conflict. Vengeance simply means that

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<sup>14</sup> Ramsbotham Oliver et al, *Contemporary conflict resolution*, Polity press, 2005, p231.

private persons or groups will repay. According to Ramsbotham truth commissions (like the TRC) is to be located somewhere between amnesia and public justice.<sup>15</sup>

These three concepts, amnesia, public justice and vengeance, will be used as a tool for analysing how the NCS, the Manifesto and the textbooks reflect the government's intention for reconciliation.

## Previous research

Several studies have been completed about the post- apartheid curricula; Curriculum 2005 and the NCS that came in 2002.

Gethaun Y Abraham at the University of Gothenburg is currently writing his dissertation about the NCS for grade R-3, focusing on the life orientation subject. In a paper he presented at the 10<sup>th</sup> International Conference of Education in Gothenburg in 2008, he discusses that the NCS is very detailed with planning instructions and that learners have little influences on their own education process. He also discusses the problems with unfair political distribution where children from poor families are delegated to schools with less resources and less trained manpower because they cannot afford better schools. The political system in South Africa today is a problem for the creation of an equal education system for all South African learners.<sup>16</sup> The questions that Abraham is discussing are questions that are relevant for our study though even if we look at different ages and subjects, the same school system is used for the grades 10-12 and injustices like for example school fees exist in the higher grades as well.

Ken Harley and Volker Wedekind write about the political changes and the curriculum changes between 1990 and 2002 in *Changing class, Education and Social changes in Post-apartheid South Africa*, edited by Linda Chisholm. Harley and Wedekind focus on Curriculum 2005 which was intended to serve the new policy stated by the ANC and as followed, a new vision. The Curriculum 2005 brought together teachers and their culturally different classrooms in a non-racist, non-sexist, democratic and equal education. More than 100 publications have been studied about the response to the Curriculum 2005 and results show that schools have reacted very unevenly to the new system. Schools were interpreting

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<sup>15</sup> Ramsbotham et al, 2005, p235.

<sup>16</sup> Abraham, Y Getahun, *Curriculum reform and life orientation education in post- apartheid South Africa*, paper presented on the 10<sup>th</sup> International Conference of Education 26<sup>th</sup>- 29<sup>th</sup> of May, Gothenburg, 2008.

the curriculum in their own way which made the education uneven. Group work was the major symbolic identifier of the Curriculum 2005 and teachers reacted differently to this. Some just arranged the seating in the classroom in a more group friendly way but most of the teachers applied to the new way of teaching. The new system gives the learners greater responsibility for their own reading and teachers felt that they had less control over the learner's education which they referred to as discipline. Former white schools have been able to implement Curriculum 2005 with greater ease than the majority of schools because they have better resources. In 2000, 83% of the schools in South Africa didn't have a library. This is a big problem for a curriculum as hungry for resources as Curriculum 2005 is. In response to the curriculum, teachers expressed hope that the political vision of achieving equity in South African society would be fulfilled.<sup>17</sup> Our study will partly continue the research but with focus on the new statement, the NCS. By visiting different schools located in areas where different colour is represented, we can see how the teachers respond today and what they think about the system in use 2008. This research is also a help to understand the "outcome-based" education that is in function in South Africa through teachers who are working in the system and see the difficulties and the advantages of the system.

Someone who is discussing the opposition among teachers against the apartheid political system is Crain Soudien, who looks at how teachers responded to the apartheid curriculum, published in *The History of Education under Apartheid* edited by Peter Kallaway. The purpose of the study is to look into how teachers in South Africa responded to the curriculum that came with the apartheid regime. 80 interviews have been made over six years during 1993- 1999 and are focused on teachers who started work in the 1950s or 1960s and are now teaching in primary schools in townships. He finds that teachers were trapped between several demands and that teachers, especially in areas like the Western Cape, had a large role in public life and often became the moral conscience of the community they served. He divides the teachers' answers into four different groups which are going from resistance to acceptance of the apartheid curriculum. The result shows that some teachers organised resistance against the education system and that they held on to the ideal of what they experienced was universal education. Some teachers celebrated the arrival of a coloured division but a significant number opposed to be shown as a distinct race.<sup>18</sup> The research throws light upon teachers' role in the community they work in and the resistance that some teachers showed to the

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<sup>17</sup> Harley, Ken & Wedekind, Volker, "Political change, curriculum change and social reformation 1990 to 2002", in Chisholm Linda, *Changing class education and social changes in post-apartheid South Africa*, Cape Town, 2004, p195-216.

<sup>18</sup> Soudien, Crain, "Teachers responses to the introduction of apartheid education", in Kallaway Peter, *The history of education under apartheid*, Cape Town, 2002, p211-222.



apartheid school system gives us an understanding of the results we might see in the interviews with teachers from different groups.

Research about the importance of history is given by June Bam at the University of Stellenbosch who in her paper discusses the problems the government had to deal with when they created the new curriculum in 1994. In order to lay the foundation for a non-racial democratic South Africa, the past had to be dealt with first of all. South Africa is trying to find her way into the global world of markets and productivity at the same time as they are working on nation building and healing. Bam says that this combination often leads to a denial of conflict and refers to a problem called tunnel-vision. History had to fight for a place in the new curriculum against peace studies and environmental education in the creating of Curriculum 2005. Participants felt safer with a diffuse guideline when it came to education about the society, present and past. About the apartheid era a big discussion was held on what was essential for understanding the South African society. Another debate held was about whether teachers were allowed to choose if they wanted to educate about apartheid or not. Bam says that history provides a collective critical consciousness, without history there will be no critical engagement. The definition on who is African today is based on history, culture and consciousness and that is why education in history is important.<sup>19</sup>

Several books about textbook analysis have been written over the years. Especially one of them has helped us to get an understanding of what an analysis in that form really is about. Staffan Selander's *Lärobokskunskap*, tells us what a pedagogical text is and says that there is a meeting between different parts, social pattern and people in an education situation. Meetings between different parts are mostly referred to as the teacher-learner situation. Meetings between social patterns are referring to that learners and teachers are all coloured by the society that they come from. Different languages, habits and norms are put together in one classroom. The text used in school situations are meant to fill functions in the education, not to meet different societies that the learners are coming from. The textbook is according to Selander an instrument to help teachers introduce a new subject area and at the same time, the text gives the learners an idea of what the subject is about. What characterises a textbook is that the text's primary purpose is to introduce meaningful facts in a mini version and explanations to go with that. The textbooks are also meant to fit the learner's educational level and take them a step further to a new knowledge level.<sup>20</sup> Different backgrounds and pre-

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<sup>19</sup> Bam, June, *Negotiating history, truth and reconciliation and globalisation: An analysis of the suppression of*

historical consciousness in South African schools as case study, Stellenbosch, 2000.

<sup>20</sup> Selander, 1988.

knowledge levels are put together in the South African classroom. Both interviews and textbooks will give us an idea of how these classrooms really work. The teachers will tell us whether the knowledge level in the textbooks is fitted to the learners.

Studies have been done on reconciliation, the curriculum and textbooks but none of those we have found are discussing all of them together as we are doing in this thesis. Our research will connect the definition of reconciliation to the NCS and textbooks and then show a part of what it could be like in the society by interviewing teachers in everyday contact to these items. The previous research gives us a help to understand the different parts and then we bind them together in our thesis.

## **Background**

### **General history**

#### **Pre- apartheid**

Official South African history written prior to 1994 stated that most of the country was uninhabited before the arrival of the white colonizers. However, this notion has changed due to the political changes and research in recent times.<sup>21</sup> There existed different cultures and groups in South Africa when the colonizers arrived, from which the black African people in South Africa today derives.<sup>22</sup> The main cultures and languages among the black South Africans today are Xhosa, Zulu, Ndebele, Sotho and Tswana.<sup>23</sup>

The Europeans arrived in South Africa at the end of the fifteenth century and after 1600 the Dutch established a trading post and a colony in the south-western part of South Africa.<sup>24</sup> By the beginning of 1800 the British conquered and incorporated this “Cape Colony” into the British Empire.<sup>25</sup> The colonization resulted in conflicts, not only between the colonizers and the indigenous people, but also among different groupings of black Africans when those who were pushed away by the Europeans settled in areas that were already inhabited by other African groups.<sup>26</sup> Dispute and conflict between the British and the Afrikaners (farmers descendent from the Dutch) made these Afrikaner farmers develop an identity and language

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<sup>21</sup> Johnson, R.W, *South Africa. The first man, the last nation*, Jonathan Ball Publishers, 2004, p1-2.

<sup>22</sup> Mason, David, *South Africa*, Phoenix Paperback in association with The Windrush Press, 2003, p28-29.

<sup>23</sup> <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/194248/ethnic-group> 2008-11-24.

<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/329791/language> 2008-11-24.

<sup>24</sup> Ross, Robert, *A Concise History of South Africa*, Cambridge University press, 1999, p21-23.

<sup>25</sup> Ross, R, 1999, p35.

<sup>26</sup> Ross, R, 1999, p25-35 & Johnson, R.W, 2004, p32-44.

of their own, Afrikaans, as they settled in the interior of the country.<sup>27</sup> Soon these Afrikaners, also called Boer or Trek-Boers, developed their own nationalistic feeling against the English rule.<sup>28</sup> The Anglo-Boer war (1899-1902) resulted in English victory over the Afrikaners.<sup>29</sup> The Afrikaner society turned inward to rebuild its nationalistic feeling, which could be one of the reasons why a brutality towards other African people began and later, why the policy of apartheid was developed.<sup>30</sup>

In 1910 the Union of South Africa was founded and came under white, Afrikaner control. The black African people, who were in majority, did not have any political rights.<sup>31</sup> The Afrikaner leaders passed several segregationist laws, for example the Natives Land Act of 1913, which reserved 87% of the country for white use.<sup>32</sup> This discrimination was met by resistance among the black Africans, for example the formation in 1912 of the organisation that later took the name the African National Congress (ANC).<sup>33</sup>

### **Apartheid 1948-1994**

The black South Africans did not have the right to vote and in 1948 the National Party won the election on their apartheid (which means separateness) politics. This was the start of the 46 year-long period of apartheid in South Africa. The policy of apartheid divided the people into races; blacks (indigenous), coloureds (mix of different groups), Asians (settlers from Asia) and whites (British and Afrikaner). Race and ethnic descent was of vital importance to the Afrikaner ideologists and they were to be kept pure by laws concerning separation. Passports clearly stated if the person was white, coloured, black or Asian and laws stated where people of different races could live. Outside the cities the black people were forced to live in “homelands”, where the land was overcrowded and of poor quality. Racially mixed marriages were forbidden and black and white people were kept separate in public places, even park benches. Different schools and different types of education were developed for black and white people. (Further information about this is given in the part about educational history.) During this time the black South Africans were always severely disadvantaged.<sup>34</sup>

There was a growing resistance among the black people, in which the ANC and other organisations played a big part. After 1960 when the police violently put down

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<sup>27</sup> Ross, R, 1999, p38-47.

<sup>28</sup> Johnson, R.W, 2004, p67-75.

<sup>29</sup> Ross, R, 1999, p71-73.

<sup>30</sup> Daye, Russell, *Political forgiveness. Lessons from South Africa*, Orbis books, 2004, p25.

<sup>31</sup> Ross, R, 1999, p79-85.

<sup>32</sup> Ross, R, 1999, p87-89.

<sup>33</sup> Ross, R, 1999, p85-86.

<sup>34</sup> Ross, 1999, p114-120.

demonstrations, several organisations (including the ANC) were banned. Some of these organisations went underground and launched a military resistance. Some leaders went into exile, but others were tried for treason in South Africa and put in prison. Among those who were tried for treason was the future president, Nelson Mandela.<sup>35</sup> The apartheid government and its police force viciously punished those who tried to resist the laws, worked for, or were suspected of working for the resistance.<sup>36</sup>

By the end of the 1980's internal and external pressure made the apartheid government realise that something had to be changed. The South African economy was stagnating and there was unrest and revolt in large parts of the country. International pressure from a critical global society affected the government by economic sanctions, arms embargo, exclusion from big sports-events and the withholding of foreign investments.<sup>37</sup> The government was not defeated, but they concluded that the best chance of keeping as much power as possible was by meeting some of the demands of both South African and international organisations, and started secret negotiations with the exiled leaders of the ANC.<sup>38</sup> By the end of 1990 the ban on the ANC and other organisations had been lifted, and a number of political prisoners (among them was Nelson Mandela) had been released.<sup>39</sup> The negotiations finally resulted in an interim constitution and the first democratic elections in the history of South Africa were held in 1994.<sup>40</sup> ANC won a majority of the votes (62%), but the National Party retained significant power (20%). The famous Nelson Mandela took the place as president.<sup>41</sup>

## **Post- apartheid**

The new government inherited the responsibility of a country with huge social and economic inequalities (structured in terms of race, class and gender) and were forced to meet the challenge of unifying and healing a deeply divided and segregated country.<sup>42</sup> The most important task was to write a new constitution, to replace the temporary, interim constitution. The new "Constitution of the Republic of South Africa" (Act 108 of 1996) was written by a "Government for National Unity" or "National Assembly" consisting of the ANC, the National Party and Inkatha and was followed by The Bill of Rights.<sup>43</sup> This marked the end of

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<sup>35</sup> Ross, 1999, p129-131, 141-142.

<sup>36</sup> Ross, 1999, p122-124, 140-141 & Davenport, Rodney & Sounders, Christopher, *South Africa. A concise history*. New York St: Martins press: 2000, p 564.

<sup>37</sup> Ross, 1999, p166.

<sup>38</sup> Ross, 1999, p181, 185, 189. & Davenport & Sounders, 2000, p 559-562.

<sup>39</sup> Ross, 1999, p 189. & Davenport & Sounders, 2000, p 559.

<sup>40</sup> Ross, 1999, p191.

<sup>41</sup> Ross, 1999, p195-197. Davenport & Sounders, 2000, p 568.

<sup>42</sup> Lester et al, 2000, p229-230.

<sup>43</sup> Davenport, & Sounders, 2000, p 571-572.

the formal democratic transition<sup>44</sup>, but in reality South Africa still struggles with huge inequalities and segregation that still exists both in the cities and in the countryside. The task of dealing with the legacy of apartheid and reconciling the South African people is a difficult one that the government is still battling with. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (the TRC) constitutes a big part of the South African work for reconciliation. The TRC consisted of three parts that were aimed at: making the truth public (by public hearings of the victims and perpetrators), granting amnesty (to those who told the truth and confessed their crimes), and recommend reparations (symbolic sums of money to the victims). The TRC investigated the human rights violations that occurred between 1960 and 1994. In 1996 the work was started and 1998 Archbishop Desmond Tutu (chairman of the commission) gave the report to the president.<sup>45</sup>

## **Educational history**

### **Pre-apartheid**

Prior to the colonization it is unsure whether farmers in South Africa had any formal schools. However ceremonies and rituals were taught by the older members of the community and history was taught orally through songs and stories.<sup>46</sup> In the early days of the colonial time education was handled by the church and involved prayers and some reading and writing. The first school in the Cape was for the black slaves in order to understand the Bible. When the British took over the rule of South Africa, education became more widely spread. They wanted the inhabitants to speak their language and have their traditions in order to gain social control over the colony. Schools were built and the teachers were from England. In 1839 the Department of Education was installed which gave financial help to the local schools. Primary schools were free but secondary schools were paid for by parents. The opportunity to start your own schools made the education uneven because some of the private schools were good and some were bad and education became dependent on social class in the community. A difference between urban and rural areas became apparent because not many schools were built outside the urban centers and many of the Trek-Boers still did not receive any formal education. The white African inhabitants received their education through missionary schools but like the coloured people most of them did not get any education at all.<sup>47</sup> After the Anglo-Boer war the need for educated workers became more important because of the growth of trade and industry in the towns. The government made social reforms for schooling but was

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<sup>44</sup> Lester, et al 2000, p261.

<sup>45</sup> Davenport, & Saunders, 2000, p 642-645.

<sup>46</sup> Christie, Pam, *The right to learn, a struggle for education in South Africa*, Cape Town, 1991, p30.

<sup>47</sup> Christie, 1991, p30-36.

concentrated on the white poor and middle class and free education was given to this group. Black education on the other hand was not made free and this was a significant step towards the policy of apartheid.<sup>48</sup>

### **Apartheid 1948-1994**

Education for black Africans during apartheid was of poor quality and was designed to prevent them from entering the modern economy. The so-called Christian National Education Policy of 1948 was written for white learners only and no thoughts were given to the non white population. Higher education in math and science was also only available to whites.<sup>49</sup> Prior to the Second World War Fort Hare was the only higher education school open to black Africans and was, in the lower grades, run by the church. White students were privileged with universities of good quality while the black students only had access to institutions with inferior teachers and courses of low quality.<sup>50</sup>

Education, during apartheid, was built on segregation. Groups were never meant to be brought together, on the contrary, it was meant to keep them separated.<sup>51</sup> In 1982 schools for whites stopped being free, the schools took fees from the learners with different amounts which depended on the schools. Classes were of much smaller size than the black Africans schools and the teachers were, in general, more qualified.<sup>52</sup> As late as 1994 the amount the government spent per learner in white schools was more than two and a half times the amount spend on black learners in the townships (informal settlements consisting of shacks or small and poorly equipped houses where the poorest people, mostly blacks, live).<sup>53</sup>

### **Post-apartheid**

The segregation among the inhabitants of South Africa is clearly shown today because of the apartheid era. Large areas of townships hold housings for black people and are separated from previous white areas by highways, rivers and railroad tracks which makes it hard to integrate the different areas. The black middleclass have moved into former white areas but there have been no movements in the opposite direction. The best schools are located in former white areas and black learners commute daily from townships nearby.<sup>54</sup> In 1996, 19% of South Africans aged 20 and older had never been to school. Classrooms today hold as

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<sup>48</sup> Christie, 1991, p48-49.

<sup>49</sup> Fiske, Edward, *Elusive Equity education reform in post-apartheid South Africa*, Cape Town, 2004, p45.

<sup>50</sup> Fiske, 2004, p47.

<sup>51</sup> Christie, 1991, p141.

<sup>52</sup> Christie, 1991, p171.

<sup>53</sup> Fiske, 2004, p44.

<sup>54</sup> Fiske, 2004, p52-53.

many as 50 black learners but the shortage of classrooms is only one problem. In 1996 the majority of these schools didn't even have electricity, 25% had no access to water within walking distance and many of them did not even have toilets.<sup>55</sup>

The work of creating a new curriculum started when the ANC came to power in South Africa 1994. The first syllabus, Curriculum 2005 had the intention to:

...provide an education of progressively high quality for all learners and in so doing lay a strong foundation for the development of all our people's talents and capabilities, advance the democratic transformation of society, combat racism and sexism and all other forms of unfair discrimination and intolerance...<sup>56</sup>

The new governmental system divided the country into 9 provinces. Each province was responsible for areas such as education. The government then allocated each province a certain amount of money which was to be spent in the different areas.<sup>57</sup> Schools were to become self-governing. In order to preserve their former privilege as much as possible, the white Afrikaners pressed for control over their own schools. The schools were allowed to set their own policies, school language, hiring of teachers and schoolfees. This directly affected the new government's effort to promote a non-racial and equitable education system.<sup>58</sup> Schoolfees are obligatory to complement the government's contribution. The high fees prevent black people from applying to some schools because their families have less income than many white families. In 1998 the government tried to reduce this by providing full or partial fees to the low-income families. However class is now beginning to take over race as the determining factor in who attend to the former white schools.<sup>59</sup>

Today the school system is divided into primary and high schools and the National Department of Education is responsible for the entire education system. Primary school starts with grade 0 or R (Receptions year) and goes to grade 9. This is general education and is compulsory for every learner in South Africa. Grades 10-12 are called further education and results in a diploma. Completion of these grades is necessary for entering university and completing higher education. There is a mix of public and private schools and with this system comes different fees. For a government run school with class size between 20-25 learners must pay between 6 000 and 15 000 Rand (450 Euro and 1 130 Euro) per year. Private schools can cost as much as 45 000 Rand (3 380 Euro) per year. The government

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<sup>55</sup> Fiske, 2004, p55.

<sup>56</sup> Department of education, *No84 of 1996 South African School Act 1996*, 1996, p1.

<sup>57</sup> Fiske, 2004, p66.

<sup>58</sup> Fiske, 2004, p69.

<sup>59</sup> Fiske, 2004, p86.

offers free schooling for, what they call “the poorest of the poor”, which comprises of 40percent of the schools in the country. These classes can contain up to 45-50 learners each.<sup>60</sup>

The South African school system is founded on so called “outcome-based education” which has the intention to make the education more related to the real world and make learners think critically and analyse their knowledge instead of just absorbing and repeating information. The teacher is to be a facilitator, a person that encourages the learners to find information for themselves, rather than give information to them as if the teacher is delivering the truth. Learners in grades 10- 12 choose the subjects they want to study and they can combine these in almost any way they want. Different learning fields help the learner to fit their subjects to a specific direction for further studies at university. The learning fields are focused on languages, art and culture, business, technology, human and social sciences or mathematics and computer studies. The subject of history is included in the human and social science field but as already mentioned, the fields are just guides and different subjects can be chosen in any combination.<sup>61</sup>

Research from 2006 shows that in grade 10 almost everyone attended school, but in grade 11 and 12 there is an under- enrolment. Only 58% of the population that were of age to be completing grade 12 were going to school.<sup>62</sup> Information about how many learners study history in grades 10- 12 is not documented.

## **Result**

### **Guiding documents**

The Manifesto on Values, Education and Democracy from 2001 (the Manifesto) and the National Curriculum Statement for history from 2002 (the NCS) are the most important policy documents that make statements about reconciliation and the subject of history. The Manifesto gives broad guidelines for the whole education system and the subject of history, while the NCS gives specific statements that are meant to be implemented in history for grades 10-12. The aspects of these documents that concern reconciliation are analysed below. Both parts that concern reconciliation in education in general and the parts that specifically concern reconciliation in the subject of history are included in the result. After the results are presented a summary is given.

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<sup>60</sup> [www.southafrica.info/about/education/education.htm](http://www.southafrica.info/about/education/education.htm) 2008-10-27.

<sup>61</sup> [www.southafrica.info/about/education/education.htm](http://www.southafrica.info/about/education/education.htm) 2008-12-03.

<sup>62</sup> <http://www.education.gov.za/emis/emisweb/06stats/daddy.pdf> 2008-12-05.



## **Manifesto on Values; Education and Democracy**

In the foreword to this Manifesto the former South African Minister of Education, Professor Kader Asmal, states that when the apartheid era ended in South Africa an idea of unifying the people from different cultures in a democratic spirit was essential. Professor Asmal recognises that South Africa has several problems to deal with, such as HIV/AIDS, unemployment and maintenance of national unity. Education is an essential part of meeting these challenges and enriching the society and its people. Therefore the Department of Education felt a document that develops this idea of unity in the educational arena was important, which resulted in the Manifesto. The first issue, published in 2000, was publicly debated and changed, resulting in the publishing of this Manifesto in August 2001:

Manifesto on Values, Education and Democracy is, as the title suggests, a call to all to embrace the spirit of a democratic, non-racial and non-sexual South Africa.<sup>63</sup>

The Manifesto develops the values in the Constitution, which is seen as a common agreement for South Africa:

The approach of the manifesto is founded on the idea that the Constitution expresses South African's shared aspirations, and the moral and ethical direction they have set for the future.<sup>64</sup>

The Manifesto focuses on the fact that South African society has yet to live up to the values set by the constitution and the statements in the South African Schools Act of 1996. For example the statements that the education system should redress past injustices, combat poverty and intolerance as well as protect and advance the diverse cultures of the country.

According to Asmal, values must be debated and dialogue is important. He thinks that the best way to teach and debate the values of the constitution is to teach the history of the negotiated settlement and the transition to democracy which resulted in the constitution and the Bill of Rights.

The Manifesto states that the constitution recognises:

...that for its vision to be attained the deep patterns of inequality which scar our society and which are the legacy of apartheid and colonialism need urgently to be

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<sup>63</sup> Department of Education, *Manifesto on Values, Education and Democracy*, Republic of South Africa, 2001, p ii.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid*, p iv.

addressed. Nowhere are these scars more marked or more painful than in the educational sector.<sup>65</sup>

The constitution calls for action and the construction of this Manifesto is an example of this action. Ten values that underpin the constitution are identified in the Manifesto: Democracy, Social justice and Equity, Equality, Non-racism and Non-sexism, Ubuntu (Human social dignity), An open society, Accountability (Responsibility), The rule of law, Respect, and Reconciliation. For the purpose of this study a closer look at what the Manifesto says about the value of reconciliation is important.

The Manifesto defines reconciliation as healing and reconciling past differences. The interim constitution states that:

...the pursuit of national unity, the wellbeing of all South African citizens, and peace (is based on) reconciliation between the people of South Africa and the reconstruction of society.<sup>66</sup>

According to the Manifesto the current constitution (from 1996) calls on the whole country to:

...heal the divisions of the past and establish a society based on democratic values, social justice and fundamental human rights.<sup>67</sup>

The Manifesto also states that reconciliation is impossible without acknowledging and understanding the problematic but rich history of South Africa. It is essential that a reconstruction and transformation of South African society take place for reconciliation to be possible.

South Africa's official motto is "Unity in Diversity". The Manifesto states that the subject of history can contribute to this unity by teaching the learners about how the people of South Africa have interacted with each other in the past. It also suggests that the citizens of South Africa must learn to accept that South Africa consists of people from different cultures with different and conflicting experiences of what it means to be a South African. This way the subject of history can teach the learners to interact with each other over the boundaries of culture and colour.

After the Manifesto has explained the values of the constitution it states that values cannot be legislated. It then presents a set of strategies to implement the values in the education system. Among these strategies is the importance of putting history back into the curriculum. The Department of Education is aware that the subject of history has been overlooked in the

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<sup>65</sup> Department of Education, *Manifesto on Values, Education and Democracy*, 2001, p11-12.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid, p20.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid, p20.

development of the post-apartheid South African education system. The Manifesto emphasises that the study of history is essential to promoting human values and tolerance. The effort of putting history back into the curriculum:

...is a means of nurturing critical inquiry and forming an historical consciousness. A critical knowledge of history, it argues, is essential in building the dignity of human values within an informed awareness of the past, preventing amnesia, checking triumphalism, opposing a manipulative or instrumental use of the past, and providing a buffer against the “dumbing down” of the citizenry.<sup>68</sup>

Therefore a panel of historians was appointed to emphasise history and memory in the curriculum. This panel published their report in the year 2000.<sup>69</sup>

According to the Manifesto the subject of history is today intended to help learners develop a:

...commitment to addressing social injustice, abuse of human rights and a deteriorating environment.<sup>70</sup>

History should promote tolerance by making the learners study both their own history, and the histories of others, especially those histories that have been silenced. History should also teach the learners to critically question information. This way history can teach the learners not to forget the country’s painful past and to confront and challenge inequality and the myths of apartheid which reinforces racism.

### **National Curriculum Statement Grades 10-12 (General) History**

The NCS was written in 2002 and was introduced to schools in 2005. An overview of the NCS along with a closer look at the parts that can be connected to reconciliation will be presented below. It is important to note that the word reconciliation is not mentioned in the NCS but the text contains statements which can be connected to the concept of reconciliation.

The NCS is a policy document that the schools of South Africa must follow. It consists of four chapters: Chapter 1 introduces the curriculum and makes general statements about education for grades 10-12, while the rest of the chapters focus on history. Chapter 2 describes the subject of history, Chapter 3 explains what content and competences the learners should be taught and Chapter 4 deals with assessment. The NCS is founded on the basis of “outcome-based education”, which means that it is focused on what knowledge, skills and values the learners should have achieved at the end of the education process. Competence and

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<sup>68</sup> Department of Education, *Manifesto on Values, Education and Democracy*, 2001, p vi.

<sup>69</sup> This report is not part of the research for this thesis but can be found at: Department of Education, *Report of the History and Archaeology Panel*, Pretoria, 2000.

<sup>70</sup> Department of Education, *Manifesto on Values, Education and Democracy*, 2001, p41.

skills are more important than fact-knowledge. This approach is learner-centred and activity-based. Learners are encouraged to think critically and take responsibility for themselves.

The NCS is opened by a reference to the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa from 1996. The constitution states that its aims are to heal the divisions of the past, free the potential of each person, lay the foundations for a democratic and open society and build a united South Africa. The NCS also acknowledges that:

The Constitution further states that everyone has the right...to further education which the State, through reasonable measures, must make progressively available and accessible.<sup>71</sup>

The NCS is based on a set of principles in which social transformation and valuing indigenous knowledge systems are relevant to reconciliation. Social transformation refers to the importance of addressing the legacy of apartheid in all areas of society and especially in areas such as education where the imbalances of the past must be redressed and everyone given the same opportunities. Valuing indigenous knowledge systems is about valuing and acknowledging the different histories and heritages in South Africa, some of which were silenced until recently. All teachers are responsible for contributing to these principles as well as to the transformation of the country's education system.

The subject-statement in Chapter 2 defines history as:

...the study of change and development in society over time and space. The study of history enables us to understand and evaluate how past human action impacts on the present and influences the future.<sup>72</sup>

According to the NCS, the purpose of the subject of history is to teach the learners that memory is important in society and that truth consists of several different voices. Again the importance of indigenous heritage and the previously silenced histories are emphasised. The purpose of the subject of history is also to foster an understanding that identity is a social construction and that prejudices involving race, class, gender and ethnicity must be challenged. Teaching the learners to think in a critical way about society is emphasised. The over-all questions the subject of history should answer are "How do we understand our world today? What legacies of the past shape the future?"

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<sup>71</sup> Department of Education, *National Curriculum Statement Grades 10-12 (General) History*, Republic of South Africa 2002, p1.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid*, p9.

Chapter 2 also presents four “Learning Outcomes” that the learners should have achieved when completing grade 12. These come with a set of criteria to achieve. The Learning outcomes for history are:

Learning outcome 1: The learners will be expected to raise questions about the past and extract and organise evidence.

Learning outcome 2: The learners will be expected to understand key historical concepts and acknowledge different perspectives.

Learning outcome 3: The learners should be able to construct and communicate historical knowledge.

Learning outcome 4: The learners should understand the importance of conservation of heritage and public presentations and the debate surrounding this. Indigenous heritage is emphasised. (Heritage is understood as monuments, buildings, museums, street names, public holidays, traditions and other heritage sites that are preserved and connected to history.)

The prescribed content should serve the Learning outcomes and the teachers are allowed to add some locally appropriate themes. Reconciliation is dealt with in grade 12 as an aspect of two different themes. The first concerns “How did South Africa emerge as a democracy from the crises of the 1990s?” and includes:

- dealing with the past and facing the future;
- new identities and the construction of heritage.<sup>73</sup>

The other theme deals with ideology and heritage and includes:

- What are the ideologies and debates around South African heritage symbols and representations today?<sup>74</sup>

Chapter 4 deals with assessment and different ways of evaluating the learners to determine their progress. The content and competences the learners should have achieved is repeated.

## **Summary**

The Manifesto on Values, Education and Democracy (the Manifesto) was written in 2001, one year before the National Curriculum Statement (the NCS) and is a wider policy document. The Manifesto draws up the direction of reconciliation in the education system and the subject of history, while the NCS gives the specific guidelines on how this is meant to be implemented in the subject of history for grades 10-12. It is important to note that while the Manifesto deals with the definition of reconciliation, the exact word is not mentioned in the

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<sup>73</sup> Ibid, p27.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid, p27.

NCS. Despite this there are many statements in the NCS that can be connected to the concept of reconciliation.

Both the Manifesto and the NCS are based on the constitution and its aim of healing the divisions of the past and redressing past injustices by transforming the society and the education system and making these equally accessible for all. The Manifesto defines reconciliation as healing and reconciling past differences together with unifying the country. The documents also emphasize the importance of acknowledging and accepting the diverse cultures, heritages and histories of South Africa. The NCS especially focus on indigenous knowledge and heritage as a way of making earlier silenced voices heard. While the Manifesto focus on addressing the injustices of apartheid, the NCS does not mention what has caused the past injustices and silencing of some voices.

In this, the history subject can contribute by teaching the learners about South Africa's diverse history and people and about how these have interacted with each other in the past. History can also develop an understanding and acceptance of the fact that there are several different perspectives to history, depending on what culture, race, class and gender you belong to, and that they are all true. This way history can teach the younger generation to accept each other, which is an important part of reconciliation. Both documents view history as a means of understanding the present, and making the learners form an independent and critical view of society.

The importance of memory is emphasised by both documents and the Manifesto continues this statement with the point that the subject of history can contribute to this by teaching about the past that led to the current South African society. This way oblivion is prevented and the learners remember the country's painful past, which is important if they are going to be able to challenge inequalities and the lingering myths of apartheid. In consideration of the importance of history the Manifesto stresses the importance of emphasising history in the curriculum which the NCS is a result of. To implement this notion of history the NCS focus on the importance of a heritage that includes all the South African cultures and the debate surrounding this. The prescribed content for the subject of history that can be connected to reconciliation focus on how South Africa dealt with the past (meaning apartheid) and faced the future, along with the question of a new national identity and heritage.

## **Textbooks**

This chapter shows the results of the parts in the textbooks that focus on the subject of reconciliation. The textbooks are presented one by one and the chapter is ended by a summary and comparison. The length of each book varies between 310 and 420 pages. All the books were published in 2007 and are adapted to the NCS guidelines.

### **In search of history**

Authors: Jean Bottaro, Pippa Visser and Nigel Worden.

The discussion about reconciliation is held in the chapter about democracy and encompasses 32 pages. The textbook is mostly based on the author's text and different activities for the learners and some short sources from speeches and other statements. The book is filled with debating questions which make the learners argue for their statements.

In the first chapter the main question is "How did the new South Africa deal with the past and face the future?" Three different programs that the government came up with are the focus for the book for the nations healing after apartheid: The Reconstruction and Development Program (RDP), the Land Claims Court and the TRC. The RDP aimed to correct the inequalities and included healthcare, welfare, education, housing, land, water and urban renewal. Some successes were notable but not as much as many had hoped for. Land ownership was a key issue because white South Africans controlled the majority of land. People could file claims against the government and get their land back but only if the owner of the land was willing to sell. The book wants the learners to discuss the economic problems that the government was facing and the effectiveness regarding these programmes.

The TRC was not a court of law where people could be prosecuted, its function was to uncover the truth and hopefully to help promote national reconciliation. The book encourages discussion by looking at the TRC like a machine that transforms devils to angels and wants the learners to discuss whether that is a true likeness of the result of the commission or not. The book also discuss the problem that people were dissatisfied with the TRC and that many thought that guilty people could walk free because they had made a public confession. Different testimonies are given to the learners who are to discuss whether they trust these or not.

The second chapter is to give answer to the question: What are the links between heritage and identity in the new South Africa? The learners are to understand the concept of national

building and analyze it like a social construction. The book asks whether there was a need for a new form of nation building and answers the question with motives that people did not feel that they belonged together and that the government wanted a common national identity. A speech from the archbishop Desmond Tutu where he invites the apartheid government to join the new country is presented to the learners who are to discuss the challenge that the old government faced. Symbols are also discussed as building of a new identity. The flag and the national anthem are two things that have been accepted and adopted in the country. Heritage is a good way of understanding national identities. The book discusses the problems that the new government faced, would the white settlers' history be ignored? A page long speech from Thabo Mbeki is to give the answer to this question when he says that South Africa is fumbling along in search for an African identity. The learners are then to explain why some people criticise his speech and whether they think that the speech deals with the problem of an African identity. All public holidays are represented in the text and that these are one way of creating a new and inclusive national identity.

### **Shuters history**

Authors: Dlamini Nsizwe, Susan du Rand, Simon J Haw, Blessing Karaumbidza, Peter Macallister, Trish Middlebrook, Pat Oliver and Adam Rogers.

The discussion connected to reconciliation is located in the Democracy chapter for 10 pages and then in the Heritage chapter for 9 pages. This textbook is mostly based on different sources rather than on the author's text. The learners are to work with questions to the sources but also with texts outside the book where the learners do their own research. Questions for the learners are focused on facts and do not include many questions regarding the learners thoughts.

In the democracy chapter the textbook is focused on dealing with the past and how they prepared themselves for the future. The learners are to answer what it means to be African and the Thabo Mbeki's speech is the underlying material. The learner is supposed to answer questions such as: Who, according to Mbeki, was the country's first freedom fighter? And what document does the expression used by Mbeki come from when he says that South Africa belongs to everyone who lives there? The textbook only mention the TRC. For many the violent past could not be forgotten easily and that is why the commission was set up. Different statements from victims of apartheid are published in the book and learners are to discuss whether they think the victims got what they wanted from the TRC or not. The learners are supposed to form groups and discuss what they know about the TRC. Answers to



questions like reasons behind the TRC, its function and whether the commission was necessary at all are for the learners to find elsewhere, the textbook tells nothing about that. A national identity is, according to the book, created through sports like rugby and soccer and through the new flag. Problems with the decisions regarding the flag are described in the book and the learners are then told to create their own logo based on the South African flag. Three pages are taken up by Constitution Hill which is located in Johannesburg and is a former prison for apartheid resistance. Today the spot is the guardian of the constitution. Learners are then to argue whether it is a place for triumph or despair.

The other chapter is about Heritage and begins with the question: How do heritage sites seek to advance the idea of nation building? Democracy and rainbow nationalism contents these: Reconciliation, The triumph of the human spirit, Redress, Non –racialism, Non -sexism and Anti -class –discrimination. Different sources for the learners are then giving pictures from different prisons like the women’s jail in Johannesburg and Robben Island, both museums today. Learners are then to fit the different prisons to the different concepts or ideologies and the learners are to think of other monuments and museums that are similar to these. The TRC played an important role in dealing with the past. However, there were other important symbolic things such as museums and the Freedom Park which contribute to reconciliation.

### **History for all**

Authors: Elsabé Brink, Anton Ehlers, Kathy Gibbs, Albert Grundlingh, Kachama Mbenga, Jabulani Phelago and Jimmy Verner.

The textbook’s overall meaning is to see what legacies of the past shape the present. Text focusing on reconciliation is concentrated to 4 pages and is found in the chapter about the collapse of apartheid and that amounts to one headline: The Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The book briefly describes what the TRC was about and that amnesty was given to those who admitted their actions during apartheid. The learners are to look at two different pictures and try to say what side they are showing towards Desmond Tutu, Nelson Mandela and towards reconciliation. The learners are also meant to make statements about whether the TRC achieved its purpose. The learners are also to study the final constitution and simply answer the question if they agree that the final constitution is one of the most democratic in the world? The word reconciliation is defined in the text as restoring friendly relations between former enemies. The textbook has a little of everything regarding the reconciliation process. Most of the text is written by the authors and a small part is sources from other texts.

## **Making history**

Authors: Hilary Claire, Raymond Deftereos, Charles Dugmore, Dan Ramoroka, Vernon Titus, Valdi van Reenen.

In this book parts of the chapters “How did South Africa emerge as a democracy from the crises of the 1990s?” and “What are the ideologies and debates around the constructed heritage icons from the period?” is connected to reconciliation. The 17 pages that concerns reconciliation are aimed at teaching the learners how the diverse cultures of South Africa are memorialised and incorporated into national symbols and identity and to look at the past from different perspectives. The book wants the learners to both learn the facts and to debate them. It consists of both sources and texts written by the authors.

The book opens the section on reconciliation with the question of how South Africa dealt with the past and faced the future. The authors’ emphasise Nelson Mandela and his unselfish call for forgiveness and reconciliation after 1994, despite his 27 years in prison. The book states that reconciliation was essential for the future of the South African democracy. The fact is acknowledged that both the apartheid regime and those fighting against apartheid violated human rights. The former enemies had to unite in the spirit of “ubuntu” (the African way of saying that humans are social beings). Sources about reconciliation through the eyes of the ANC are given. The TRC is presented as a way of dealing with the victims of apartheid. It conveyed the truth, gave compensations to victims and amnesty to those who confessed. Sources about the TRC are presented and the book poses the question as to whether the TRC brought closure to people or not.

About identity the book explains that the new national symbols such as the flag, national anthem and coat of arms (national logo) are the symbols of a whole South Africa. White people that stood by the black Africans in the struggle against apartheid are named and the international support for the anti-apartheid struggle and Nelson Mandela is viewed as important. The book emphasizes sports as important for national unity and the importance of creating possibilities for ordinary citizens to participate in multi-culturalism. The new national symbols are important for this purpose. They represent the Rainbow Nation as a:

...combination of our collective past and of our belief on our future as South Africans.<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> *Making History*, p294.

The book ends this part with asking the learners how representative they think these national symbols are for the South African people.

In the part about identity, heritage and ideology the book states that an important task that still needs attention from the South African government is the construction of a new national identity and history that can represent the diverse cultures that live in the country. This involves the question of monuments of the Afrikaner community, which also stands for the oppression during apartheid and the fact that the black and coloured Africans could not create heritage sites until 1994. The monuments of the past are not neutral and the book states that both Afrikaner and anti-apartheid monuments are a part of the South African history. Various sources about monuments, both Afrikaner, black African and anti-apartheid, are given and the learners are encouraged to discuss how representative these are for South African history and what history should be commemorated.

### **Viva history**

Authors: C Dugmore, EA Horner, K Mooney, N Nieftagodien, S Lekgoathi.

In this book parts of the chapters “The birth of democracy in South Africa” and “Ideologies and debates around heritage” are interesting for the topic of reconciliation. This makes up 31 pages. The book wants the learners to understand different forms of justice and the South African choice of restorative justice. They are to learn the importance of a democratic national identity and heritage and how the constitution and heritage symbols contribute to this identity. The learners should also appreciate the link between truth and reconciliation. The book is a mix of sources and text written by the authors and the activities and questions are aimed at making the learners think for themselves and look at issues from different perspectives.

In the chapter about “Dealing with the past and facing the future” the TRC is presented together with new identities and heritage. The textbook defines reconciliation as:

...bringing together former enemies in a manner that promotes forgiveness and healing.<sup>76</sup>

This book focuses on the fact that South Africa needed to deal with the past in order to reconcile and move towards the future. The authors explain the difference between retributive and restorative (redistributive) justice. The South African choice of restorative justice means finding the truth as well as healing and reconciling both victims and perpetrators. The African spirit of “ubuntu” is emphasised. The TRC is an important part of this and the book puts the

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<sup>76</sup> *Viva History*, p243.

TRC into perspective by examples of both restorative and retributive justice. The learners are asked to discuss the choice of restorative justice as well as the effects of the TRC. They are given several sources on applications for amnesty and the TRC's notes on these. The book puts forward arguments both for and against the success of the TRC and its contribution to reconciliation. The authors conclude that:

Alternatively, it is easy to see that it neglected the destructive forces of apartheid in a broader sense.<sup>77</sup>

The book emphasise the Rainbow nation and explains that South Africa emerged as a new nation was a diversity of cultures living together after the democratic transition. The learners are asked to discuss identity, if there is one or many in South Africa and if it is possible to combine these. A source presents the constitutions contribution to reconciliation, and the learners are asked to analyse this. South Africa's new national symbols: the flag, the national anthem and the coat of arms are presented. The learners are asked to present their own background, heritage and culture to each other and to think about how the diversity of cultures can be celebrated. The learners are asked to discuss the choice of making eleven languages official and what truly unites the South African people.

In the chapter about heritage the book focuses on what the debate around South African heritage symbols and representations and concludes that heritage today is about social transformation from the colonial and racist past. This chapter focuses on the question of including the indigenous heritage and preserving the hidden histories of the past as well as museums about the apartheid era and monuments commemorating the transition to democracy. The learners are asked to interview an older person about what they think is important to South African heritage. The book states that public history is often linked to who is in power, which is also the case in South Africa. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century the Afrikaner renamed towns and erected monuments to reflect their identity and neglected the indigenous heritage, which the book compares with propaganda. The learners are presented with sources on laws about heritage sites and asked to discuss the different meaning of heritage sites for different cultures. The book poses the question of how South Africa should preserve its painful history and discuss what should be done to Afrikaner monuments that to many is important, but to others is linked to the oppression of the majority of South Africa. A short explanation of the discussion of renaming towns and streets today is given and the learners are encouraged to debate this. The importance of memorializing the popular culture of the different cultures in

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<sup>77</sup> Ibid, p252.

South Africa (for example musicians) for a national identity is discussed, and the learners are asked to continue the discussion in the classroom.

### **New generation history**

Authors: Fiona Frank, Jabu Hlongwane, Gengs Pillay, Lindiwe Sikhakhane, Carol-Anne Stephenson, Reggie Subramony.

The content that concern reconciliation makes up 30 pages and are to be found in the chapters about “South Africa’s road to democracy” and “Ideologies and debates around heritage icons”. The book is based on text written by the authors with some elements from other sources. The questions regarding the sources are fact-based. The aspects the book want the learners to understand are about the process of forgiving and healing, the new inclusive heritage and national symbols, and the value of these. The understanding that power relations affect how public history is described and that there are several different perspectives and viewpoints on heritage is also emphasised.

In the part about “Dealing with the past and facing the future”, this book emphasises the TRC’s role in the process of healing, forgiving, reparations and nation building. The authors stress that the commission was requested by the new constitution and its purpose was to make sure that the violations of human rights during the apartheid era are not forgotten. The book focuses on the fact that even if the TRC has been criticised, it still contributed to acknowledging the pain and suffering of the victims of apartheid and enabled many people to forgive the perpetrators, thus humanising the country. The authors stress the importance of recognising and condemning the violations of human rights from both the apartheid regime and the organisations fighting against apartheid. However, the textbook presents sources that only show crimes committed by the apartheid regime.

The book focuses on the importance of creating new national identities and heritage now that South Africa is a democracy. In this the national symbols are important. The new South African flag, national anthem and coat of arms represent compromise, multi-culturalism and the Rainbow Nation. The indigenous knowledge and history are also emphasised. The book explains all of the South African official holidays which celebrate freedom and reconciliation. At the end of this part the book concludes that South Africa emerged as a new nation and was welcomed internationally as a “miracle” after 1994. The book tries to infuse a sense of importance and responsibility into the learners and states that everyone in South Africa is

responsible for making a meaningful contribution to the growth and development of South African society and that:

Hopefully, the struggles of the past and the challenges of the present, will lead to a life of economic stability, peace and prosperity for our children, the new generation!<sup>78</sup>

The book focuses on the challenges of and debate about democratising identity and heritage. This includes the new national symbols, new museums about earlier marginalised people, sites commemorating the freedom struggle as well as the question about old monuments. Most of the heritage-sites in the country today commemorate the colonial legacy or Afrikaner and apartheid ideology. The issue is about taking down these to get rid of the past or preserving them to redress past injustices. Two sources are presented to the learners, both from speeches from the ANC-government about heritage. The book asks the question whether South Africa should concern itself with these questions when so many of its people struggle with their every-day life, but states that the threat is that:

Whites may understand apartheid as being “over” and not engage with the issue of redressing inequalities.<sup>79</sup>

According to the book the constitution is about allowing different political, social, cultural and religious interests to co-exist and the book recognises both African and Afrikaner nationalism as well as other political organisations.

The meaning of the “Rainbow Nation” is explained as a country where the different cultures can live together and where all the people have embraced the concept of “Ubuntu”. The debate about name-changes (from names which reflect the apartheid regime to African names) is depicted. The learners are presented with sources on views concerning the name changes, both opposing and in favour and are asked to debate the topic.

### **Looking into the past**

Author: Yonah Seleti, Peter Delius, Claire Dyer, Logan Naidoo, Jimmy Nisbet, Christopher Sounders and Glynis Clacherty

The book is chronologically written and ends in 1998. Facts are given to the learners with text by the authors and not many examples are taken from other documents or speeches. In the chapter about the democracy process, which includes the years from 1948-1998 Mandela is

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<sup>78</sup> *New Generation History*, p284.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid*, p381.

mentioned but only in ways that he was released from jail and that a democratic process was started. There are no discussions about the TRC and other actions taken to achieve reconciliation. Eleven pages focus on this era but none of these have any connection to the discussion about reconciliation.

### **Quantitative comparing summary**

In this part we summarise the textbooks and measure the text mass and what each of the books discuss. We have created three columns. In the first column we document the number of pages in each book concerned with reconciliation and other associated themes. In the second column we sum up what the textbooks discuss about dealing with the past and facing the future. In the third column we document what the books say about identity and heritage.

	<b>Area</b>	<b>Pages focusing on the reconciliation</b>	<b>Dealing with the past, facing the future</b>	<b>Identity and heritage</b>
<b>Textbook</b>				
	<b>In search of history</b>	32	-The Reconstruction and Development Program (RDP) -The Land Claims Court and - TRC	- Everyone are Africans - Symbols: flag and national anthem - An African identity
	<b>Shuters history</b>	19	-TRC - Africa belongs to everyone - Reconcile through sports	- Symbols: prisons become museums
	<b>History for all</b>	4	- TRC	- None
	<b>Making history</b>	17	- Ubuntu - TRC - Nelson Mandela	- Symbols: flag, national anthem, coat of arms, monuments - National unity through sports - An African identity
	<b>Viva history</b>	31	- TRC - Rainbow nation - Ubuntu	-Symbols: flag, national anthem, coat of arms, rename towns, museums and monuments - Importance of every culture in the country - Popular culture as unifying
	<b>New generation history</b>	30	-TRC - Rainbow nation	-Symbols: flag, coat of arms, national anthem, monuments - Name changes
	<b>Looking into the past</b>	0	None	None

The table shows that varying amounts of pages are spent on the reconciliation process. With 32 pages “In search of history” has the highest number of pages dedicated to reconciliation and “History for all” has the least with only 4 pages dedicated to reconciliation. All of the books deals with the reconciliation process and all of the books except “History for all” discuss different symbols as a search for a new identity of South Africa. “Looking into the past” is not a part of the comparing process because it does not discuss any of these areas in the history. “In search of history” is the only book that discusses other governmental undertakings towards reconciliation except the TRC.



## **Qualitative comparing summary**

Six of the seven books deal with reconciliation as an important aspect of moving forward from apartheid. Only one book, “Looking into the past”, does not mention reconciliation at all. “Looking into the past” does not include anything that happened after 1998, but the reconciliation process had already started by then, so that should not be a reason for leaving out reconciliation. “History for all” gives reconciliation little interest compared to the remaining five books. It is also the only book that does not include the two aspects of “dealing with the past and facing the future” and identity and heritage in the parts that concern reconciliation. “History for all” along with “Shuters history” has a selective content. The books that are most similar regarding the content are “In search of history”, “Making history”, “Viva history” and “New generation history”, which include several different aspects of reconciliation.

An inclusive national identity and the acceptance of the different cultures and heritages that exist in South Africa seem important in most of the books. “Making history”, “Viva history”, “In search of history” and “New generation history” all include statements that all South Africans should be made to feel included in the national identity.

None of the books take a pronounced stand for any of the sides in the conflict, but “History for all”, “New generation history” and “Making history” focus on the anti-apartheid view of reconciliation and the human rights violations committed against them. The most neutral books are “Viva history” and “In search of history”. “Viva history” clearly states that reconciliation is a process where former enemies come together as equals. Both “Viva history” and “In search of history” give the learners information and ask them to form their own opinion. The books encourage the learners to debate and discuss different issues and to view these from different perspectives. “In search of history” is aimed at teaching the learners a critical way of thinking and can sometimes be extreme and provocative. For example “In search of history” wants the learners to discuss if the TRC can be compared to a machine that makes angels out of devils. “Making history” has a mix of fact-based and debate questions for the learners. But “Shuters history”, “New generation history” and “History for all” has a more fact-based approach and the questions for the learners are aimed at making them understand the text, not discuss it.

In conclusion, “Making history”, “New generation history”, “In search of history” and “Viva history” have all similar content and similar approach. Reconciliation is viewed as important

and several different aspects of reconciliation are included. An inclusive South African identity is also emphasised. “History for all” and “Shuters history” have a more selective content and “Looking into the past” stand out because it does not even mention reconciliation. The books try to be neutral, but “History for all”, “New generation history” and “Making history” has more focus on the black African viewpoint. The books with the most neutral and debate- and critical thinking-centred approach are “In search of history” and “Viva history”. All of the textbooks that deal with reconciliation, except “History for all”, divide reconciliation into two parts. One part is dealing with the past and making sure the truth is heard and remembered, and then moving forward and facing the future. The other part is creating a new national identity and heritage that includes different perspectives and cultures.

## **Interviews**

All of the interviews follow an interview guide (appendix 1) and the result of each interview is put under the headline where the answer belongs. The interview guide is only used like a guide during the interviews and the teachers could answer the questions in any order they liked. We have only made sure that all of the questions are answered when the interview is finished. We conducted the interviews this way because we did not want to control the interviews too much. We prefer letting the teachers talk and discussing their responses with them.

## **Background to Port Elizabeth settlement areas**

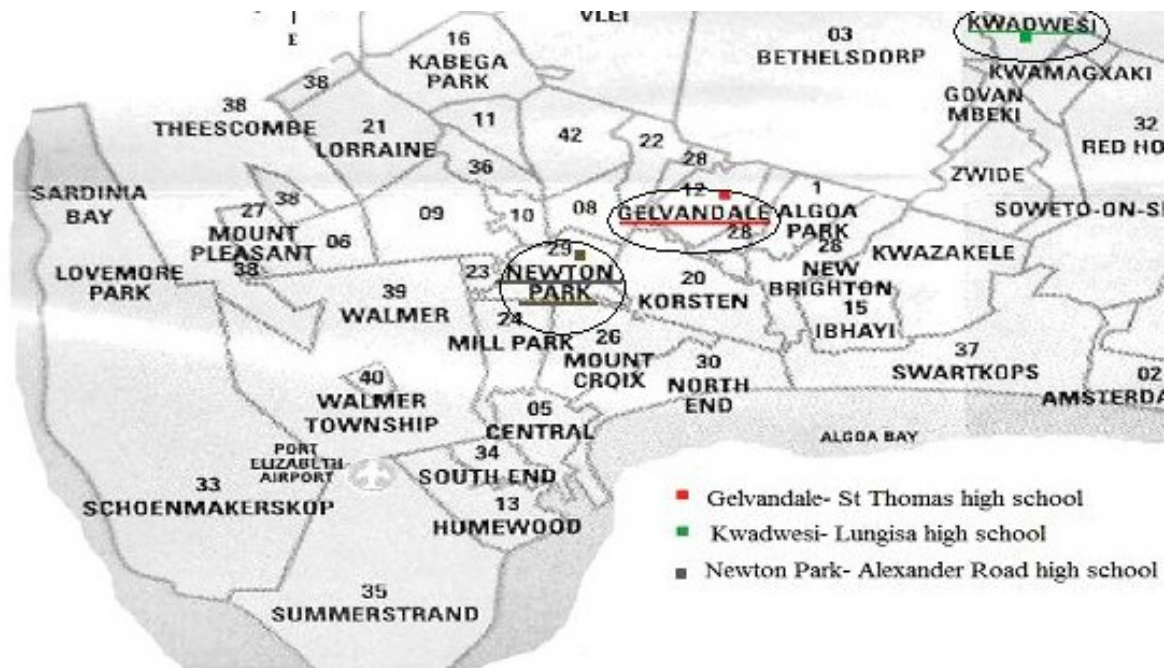
The city of Port Elizabeth was founded in 1815. The early townships were occupied by Europeans. In 1847 the Municipality of Port Elizabeth set up distinct native locations outside the centre of the town to ensure greater control over the indigenous inhabitants. When the bubonic plague broke out in 1901 the government again decided to segregate the dominant ethnic groups of the city. The government decided to remove black Africans from centrally located areas to locations like New Brighton and Kosten. By 1911 the population in Port Elizabeth was highly segregated.<sup>80</sup> During the 1940s property ownership was mostly restricted to white South Africans. For example, Newton Park was sold to Fairview Suburban Estate Company and only white Europeans were allowed to stay in the area. Subsequently Asians and coloured Africans were forced to move out of this area. South End was an area without racial restrictions and many coloured and Asians moved there instead. Areas that were predominantly white during this time were Newton Park, Algoa Park and Humewood.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> Agherdien Yusuf et al. *South End- as we know it*, Saltville, 1997, p1-2.

<sup>81</sup> Agherdien et al, 1997, p3.

Even today certain cultural groups dominate specific areas in Port Elizabeth. Township areas are home for mostly black inhabitants and areas like Algoa Park and Summerstrand are places where mostly white people are settled. The map below gives an idea of the areas in Port Elizabeth. The schools that we visited are also marked on the map.



### **St Thomas High School, Gelvandale**

The school is located north-west of the centre of Port Elizabeth and was built by the Catholic Church in the early 1900s. Previous to the apartheid system the area was predominantly white but other cultures were accepted. In the 1960s the white South Africans moved out of the area because of the politics of apartheid. The area is now an area with mostly coloured inhabitants and some black. In 1985 the school became a governmental school with 1200 learners from grade 8 to 12. The cultural composition of the school is approximately 60% coloured and 40% black. English is the teaching language and the schoolfee for 2008 was 800 Rand (60 Euro).

Mr Fahltein is coloured and has worked as a teacher since 1987. This means that he has worked as a teacher during and after apartheid. He teaches history in grades 10-12. In grade 10 he has twenty-five learners, in grade 11 none and in grade 12 fifty-one learners split into two classes. The interview lasted for 1,5 hours.

### **About reconciliation**

Mr Fahltein says that: “We want all the people of South Africa to come together as one nation”. It might be one nation today consisting of different cultures, cultures that should not lead to discrimination and instead move together to one nation. What happened in the past is

the past and now it is time to look forward. Before schools were separating white from coloured, but now it is a mix. People do not go out and look for reconciliation, actually the first time many learners hear about apartheid is when the teacher talks about it. The learners live in a non apartheid society and Mr Fahltein is shocked over the learners' reaction towards what he teaches them, the learners do not believe it is for real. The one time the learners understand the problem is when they look at their own township. Now they are allowed to go to school in a coloured area but after school they go back to their township. They can see that there are no white people staying in certain areas and the same thing for the black and the coloured. That is the way they know that apartheid really happened, through their own experience. Some parents talk about it but most of them do not.

### **About the teachers' work**

In grade 10 Africa is the focus of the learner's education, in grade 11 the learners learn about European history and the First and Second World War. In grade 12 the learners again focus on African history, concentrating especially on local history. They concentrate a lot on the American history because it is similar to the history of South Africa, both have a racist history, and then they compare their histories. They look at the democratic process which moves away from apartheid to what they have today: democracy. Reconciliation is only discussed in grade 12 and that is only one chapter in the book and in grade 10 and 11 it is not discussed at all. Mr. Fahltein thinks that there is too little time for discussing reconciliation but that he spends more time on it than what is in the book. Because he also is an examiner he knows the examination questions and can therefore choose to spend more time on some chapters and exclude others. When a holiday is coming up he takes time off from what they are doing and talks about that instead. He thinks that there is too little time for apartheid and that there should be more time spent on reconciliation.

### **About changes in the history subject**

The biggest change from the apartheid era is the focus on local history instead of European history. Today the book starts with Africa and then looks out on the world. The books from before 1994 told the western story for an example in the grade 12 when they handled the Cold War. Today they look at both sides of the conflict and the learners are free to make up their own mind about responsibilities in the conflict. Some textbooks went from one extreme to the other after the ANC had taken over. There was a new way of learning called "outcome-based education" but this method needs a lot of resources and schools in South Africa do not have that. So the new system does not work. The method of learning that is used in European countries can not be used in South Africa because learners here do not have the same

knowledge that the learners in western countries do. The learner's parents can not help their children because they do not know how to read. The government changed the system again to the NCS and that is what is used now. Mr Fahltein believes that in two years time the school will not teach history, because of the new subject choices. Only schools with highly qualified history teachers will be able to continue to teach history. When the learners choose their subjects they think about future career opportunities and subsequently disregard history.

The changes in the system mean that learners now get less information from the teacher than previously. The learners receive key questions and are then supposed to go and work on their own. However, according to Mr Fahltein the learners are not ready for this. He says that South Africa is a third world country and that the government is giving it a first world education system and he thinks that it is not a good idea. The learners are not ready, they do what the teacher tells them to do and will not go and study for themselves. There is too little interest for the subject from the learner's side.

### **About the curriculum**

Mr Fahltein says that the NCS is a good curriculum but he can not on the other hand say that the old one (Apartheid curriculum) was bad. In the old curriculum the books focused on the white side of the history and the books used today look at history from another angle. There must be more than one way of looking at history and the learners must know that. Mr Fahltein has no freedom in choosing the textbooks and neither have the learners, but he can choose not to discuss every part of the book because he is an examiner. During apartheid he took other information like local history into the classroom even though others thought that it was wrong and that it was not in the textbook. The teachers tend not to follow the assessment guidelines fully. Instead they look at them like guides, the most important thing being that the learners understand the content. It is easy for the government to come up with a plan of reconciliation but it is up to the society to make it happen. It is not easy to make white South Africans living in Summerstrand move to the Gelvandale area.

Mr Fahltein does not think that there will be any changes in the racial division that exists today, and he thinks it is difficult to say whether the government has been successful or not.

### **About the material used by the teacher**

The textbooks refer to the NCS and there are certain learning outcomes to fulfil. There are different key questions that the learners will have to know which will come in the exams. The books used by the teacher are "New generation history" for grade 10, and "Viva history" for

grade 12. Mr Fahltein knows something about the authors of these books. Some of them were on the committee when the changes in the curriculum were made and are examiners today and make the exam paper. The authors of these books write about what the government wants and follow the NCS. Mr Fahltein thinks that each different cultural group will teach differently. For example, white South Africans may think that there is too little emphasis on Afrikaner history in the book.

Good books, according to the teacher, should not give too much information instead they should refer to sources where the learners can get information. The problem is that the learners do not do that. The books offer knowledge at the correct level but in the wrong way because the learners do not do as it says. The history teachers get a list of books from publishers and then they order one of these. So the teacher brings in information from all of the books into the classroom and in the book that the learners have.

### **Lungisa High School, Kwadwesi**

Kwadwesi is located in the outskirts of the city, north-west of central Port Elizabeth. It is a black middleclass area surrounded by townships. The learners are 100% black but most of them come from the townships rather than from the immediate area surrounding the school. The school was built in 1990 and extended in 1995 with a new building for the learners in grades 8-12. The languages spoken in the classroom are Xhosa and English. All of the learner's home language is Xhosa but since the examination test and textbooks are in English the learners have to practise their second language. There are 1400 learners in the school and the fee for 2008 was 150 Rand (11Euro). The interview took 40 minutes.

Mrs Kuhene is black and has been a teacher since 1995 and teaches history for grades 9-12. This year she does not have any grade 10 learners but two classes in grade 11 with fifty-eight learners and two classes in grade 12 with forty-six learners.

### **About reconciliation**

When we asked Mrs. Kuhene what reconciliation meant to her, she connected it to the TRC. She says that it had a positive impact on some and a negative impact on others. Some people still do not know what happened to their children or parents. For those who know what happened to their family, the truth was a good thing. The school is teaching their learners that they are brothers and sister and not to hate each other. The learners do not bear resentment to one another. We can not forget the past, we must know the history to be able to face the future. Some people have made their mistakes and the learners must see what was wrong and what was right. If it was right they can apply it and if it was wrong they have to think about

what went wrong and then do it right. The learners wonder why they have to know about the past and she answers them by saying that they have to know about the past to prepare themselves for the present and the future. What happened in the past can happen again. Mrs Kuhene says that the learners think they know what happened during apartheid but they do not. They know that Mandela went to jail but not the facts and exactly what happened. The learners can not feel hatred they have not experienced. Mrs Kuhene says that everything is fine now so what is the point of being angry with something that they do not remember.

### **About the teachers' work**

Mrs. Kuhene deals with reconciliation when that chapter is to be done in the book. It can take two weeks or a month until the learners have understood the chapter. She thinks it is important to teach about apartheid because the learners hear about it from their parents and it is important to know. The parents make their children take subjects that they are good at, it does not matter if the learner does not like history, if he or she is strong in that and weak in other subjects that is the subject to read. The learners must like to study because history is a subject in which you read a lot. Mrs. Kuhene does not want to complain but she says that the learners do not have a passion for school and that this affects the teachers.

### **About changes in the history subject**

Mrs. Kuhene started working as a teacher in 1995 which means that she did not work during the apartheid regime. The curriculum did not change at once so she has seen some changes. Aspects have been put aside to make way for the TRC and they are now looking at other countries with the same background as South Africa. The books compare South Africa with a country like USA and what happened there.

### **About the curriculum**

In the NCS, the learners will have to search for information by themselves, but for learners from the townships that becomes difficult. Mrs. Kuhene is using the old system of teaching as she calls it and just goes to the classroom and teaches. If she gives them an assignment, like a project, and sends them to the library only a few of them are going to go and do the assignment she says. She is still struggling with the new system and thinks that it will take time before the learners get used to this new way of working. She says that the learners in grade 8 are getting used to it but for the learners in grade 11 it is difficult. What she likes is that they now are looking at South Africa and then comparing it with USA and Germany and the learners can see that there was racism going on in other countries as well and that it had its own costs even though it did not happen to the same extent as it did in South Africa. She likes

the fact that the NCS also looks at what impact apartheid has in the present. The consequences of the past can be seen today. She thinks that there is a little bit of freedom in the NCS. There are just topics and then she picks out what she wants to talk about and chooses books and other sources to teach about. She thinks that overall the NCS is good and she does not miss anything in it.

### **About the material used by the teacher**

Mrs. Kuhene uses the book “Viva history” but the publisher gives them all the books so the teacher chooses material from all of them. She uses all sorts of material as long as it is relevant to the subject. The learners have no influence on the material chosen, they get the books and do as the teacher tells them. She does not think that “Viva history” is a good book but she had to choose that one because of the financial situation at school, even if others are better. “Viva history” makes the learners bored she says, it never gets to the facts. The learners want facts and the book takes too long before it gets there. She knows nothing about the authors of the books but knows that it follows the guidelines in the NCS. The textbook is fitted to the learners’ knowledge level, they have some problems she says but for the learners who want to learn and really does study it works out just fine.

### **Alexander Road High School, Newton Park**

This school is situated west of central Port Elizabeth in Newton Park, an area dominated by white culture. When the school was built in 1955 only white children were allowed to attend, but today over half of the learners are black or coloured. Because there are several coloured neighborhoods close to the school a lot of coloured learners have started attending the school in recent years. English is the language spoken in the classrooms. The school teaches grades 10-12 and has about 1200 learners. The schools fee is 10 000 Rand (760 Euro) per year.

Ms Bulbring is white and has worked as a history teacher since 2006. She has only experience of the NCS education system. This year she teaches eighteen learners in grade 10 and sixteen learners in grade 11. Ms Bulbring does not have any grade 12 learners this year. The interview with Ms Bulbring took 50 minutes.

### **About reconciliation**

For Ms Bulbring, reconciliation is about not ignoring the past, and instead “talking about it openly and then coming to a place of healing”. She says that reconciliation is about not denying anybody’s history and trying to understand each other. Reconciliation is also about not forgetting that apartheid happened, but to move forward, and to come to terms with what



happened. Ms Bulbring wants the apartheid era to be remembered. According to Ms Bulbring, Alexander Road is working for multiculturalism and the embracing of all the different South African cultures, by making the classrooms multicultural. All schools are supposed to work for this according to the NCS. Alexander Road does not have specific events which promote reconciliation but the work for reconciliation is always present. Ms Bulbring says that the school is racially and culturally mixed and that there is no racism from the teachers or learners. She explains that people today are categorized according to culture, which coincides with the colours. But ofcourse the cultures differ within the colours as well.

Ms Bulbring thinks that it is good that the school is culturally mixed, it has helped her. When she started teaching she was nervous about using the word black and about stepping on anyone's toes. At first she came up with the terms: brown (black, colored, Indians) and pink (British, Afrikaner) people. But now she is comfortable with referring to people as black and white. She says that she can make jokes and say what she wants because the learners know that there is nothing racist about it. Ms Bulbring thinks that when the children attend a culturally mixed school they learn about each other, that they are not different from one another and that they must live together. Some learners that attend Alexander Road are raised in conservative Afrikaner families who have racist tendencies, others come from black families that are still angry. When they interact with each other in school they begin to understand each other, black, white and coloured learners become good friends and they are totally integrated. Ms Bulbring is very positive about this and Alexander Road High School and she can not imagine teaching in a totally white, black or colored school.

### **About the teachers' work**

Ms Bulbring follows the textbooks which are planned chronologically so that grade 10 deals with the years 1750-1850, grade 11 with 1850-1950 and grade 12 with 1950 till today. It is grade 11 that deals with the apartheid era. But grade 10 builds up to the apartheid era, looking at slavery and the movement of Zulu-tribes. Learners in grade 10 also discuss what racism is and the fact that it originated with slavery. Power and inequalities in society are also dealt with. Grade 11 concerns colonialism, imperialism, going in to apartheid and the different aspects of apartheid. A whole term in grade 11 is focused on apartheid. Grade 12 contains the civil rights movement and reconciliation. But reconciliation is built into the whole NCS. Ms Bulbring deals with apartheid and reconciliation in all the grades by doing heritage-assignments on for example public holidays (about the freedom and democracy), letting the learners study personal history, how the learners are affected (advantaged or disadvantaged) by the apartheid history and what colour of skin they have. Even when she is not looking

specifically at apartheid, questions about apartheid are raised and she includes it in the teaching.

At first when she starts a chapter on apartheid the learner's reactions are often: "Not again", they think that there is too much talk about that subject. The generation attending school today was not there during the apartheid era and has not done anything wrong. The learners do not see colour anymore. They feel: "Why are we still doing this, can we not just get on with life? There is so much talk of white people did this, and the black people suffered. Let us just move on now, it happened." Ms Bulbring compares this to the Germans dealing with the memory of Hitler and Nazism. But when Ms Bulbring continues the subject about apartheid the learners realize that they do not know all the facts and by the end of the chapter they appreciate it.

Ms Bulbring thinks that history is a very important subject for the pursuit of reconciliation and that history should be a core subject. History is essential because it forces the children to think for themselves. It teaches the children who they are in society, what has gone before them, how they can contribute to society and to see the whole picture. Therefore history is vital in South Africa.

### **About the changes in the history subject**

According to Ms Bulbring the subject of history has become much more about understanding and perspectives and less about dates. She thinks that "Everything is history" and that the subject is about how we got to this point. But today history is a struggling subject in South Africa. Not many learners want to study history, which Ms Bulbring thinks is a problem.

### **About the curriculum**

"The new syllabus (the NCS) is fantastic", Ms Bulbring says. It forces the children to think for themselves, and to be more active. She says that the learners are working with the content and doing their own research at a higher level than before without realizing it. The learners in grade 12 this year are the first to write examinations on the NCS. According to Ms Bulbring the NCS is very "outcome-based" and is aimed at making the teachers use new methods. She says that she rarely stands before the learners and lectures or uses straight-off knowledge questions. She uses debates, discussions and poses a key-question in each lesson. She asks the learners to think, gives them references and lets them figure out what actually happened. Ms Bulbring also wants the learners to tell her if they agree or disagree with the sources or her, as

long as they can validate their opinion. This way she wants the learners to apply their knowledge, form an opinion and understand different perspectives.

Ms Bulbring says that the NCS specifies things that have to be covered in the teaching, but that there is freedom in how to teach it. For example she thinks satire is important and teaches apartheid through cartoons, not that much through the textbook. The learners have to understand the backgrounds to understand the cartoons. Grade 10 is slightly freer than grade 11 and 12 because the teacher sets the examinations her/himself. But Ms Bulbring follows the NCS because she thinks it is perfect, she just includes extra things sometimes. Grade 11 and 12 have externally set examinations, which means that the teacher has to cover the right themes so the learners do well and pass.

Ms Bulbring has not taught the Curriculum 2005 and is not sure about the details, but she thinks that it was not so different from the NCS, which is also “outcome-based”. Both the Curriculum 2005 and the NCS geared away from the old Afrikaner schooling system towards a learner-centered and group work approach. Ms Bulbring says that teachers have to use the guidelines, but that they are very broad and if you teach well, you will cover them anyway. She uses different assessments and checks that the activities she has planned for the year cover the underlying themes of the NCS and meet the guidelines. She cannot check this for every lesson, which would be too time-consuming and that is not how she understands that the NCS should be used. It is necessary to understand the outcomes the NCS is aimed at, but they can not all be used in every lesson. Books cover the outcomes as well and the examinations are based on them.

### **About the material used by the teacher**

Ms Bulbring says she has plenty of freedom choosing the textbook, but that she has to be careful because of the externally set examinations. The books need to cover the main areas of the examinations. The government has not prescribed one specific textbook, several books are approved. But Ms Bulbring likes some of the books more than others. Her learners use the Oxford; “In search of history”, and she copies from other books. She knows that she is privileged to be able to do that. Ms Bulbring and other teachers are trying to push for one textbook that the government endorses which covers everything in the exams. The problem is that one publisher will get all the money if that happens. Ms Bulbring also uses other books and materials. The learners have no influence on which book they use but they can choose subjects when she has research lessons in which she teaches them how to look for reliable sources. Ms Bulbring thinks the books are perfectly fitted to the learner’s knowledge level,

and the ones she uses follow the curriculum 100%. She trusts and mostly uses two books. One is “In search of history”, because the publisher, Oxford, is a reputable name and she thinks it is well formulated. The other one is “New generation history”, which is written by (among others) Gengs Pillay, who is involved in setting the national (external) exams, he will surely follow the outlining of the exams. Both books are in line with each other, but she likes “In search of history” slightly better. Pillay is the only author Ms Bulbring knows anything about, but she thinks she should learn more about the others because she is always telling the children to be critical of the information and who is giving it.

### **Comparing summary**

Here the results will be summarised in the areas that have been used during the interviews. This is to make the material easy to work with and to be able to see the differences and similarities between the teachers’ answers.

#### **About reconciliation:**

**St Thomas:** Mr Fahltein says that South Africa might be one nation today but it has different cultures that should not lead to discrimination, instead move together to one nation. What happened in the past is the past and now it is time to look forward.

**Lungisa:** Mrs Kuhene connects reconciliation to the TRC. She says the TRC had a positive impact on some and a negative impact on others. Some people still do not know where their children or parents are. It is a good thing for those that do get to know what happened to their families, the truth is a good thing.

**Alexander Road:** Ms Bulbring says that reconciliation is about not ignoring the past, and instead talking about it openly and then coming to a place of healing, not denying anybody’s history but understand each other. This does not mean forgetting that apartheid happened, but to move forward, and to come to terms with what happened.

#### **About the teachers’ work:**

**St Thomas:** Reconciliation is only discussed in grade 12 and that is only one chapter in the book. Mr Fahltein thinks that there is too little time for discussing reconciliation but that he spends more time on it than what is in the book. But that is not enough according to him. There is too little time for apartheid and there should be more about reconciliation.

**Lungisa:** Mrs Kuhene deals with reconciliation when that chapter is to be done in the book. It can take two weeks or a month until the learners have understood the chapter. The learners do not have the passion for school and that affects the teachers as well.

**Alexander Road:** Grade 12 contains the civil rights movement and reconciliation. But reconciliation is built into the whole syllabus. Ms Bulbring deals with apartheid and reconciliation in all the grades and lets the learners study personal history, how the learners are affected (advantaged or disadvantaged) by the apartheid history and what colour of skin they have.

**About changes in the history subject:**

**St Thomas:** The focus is now on local history instead of European history. Today the book starts with Africa and then looks out on to the world. The NCS needs a lot of resources and schools in South Africa do not have that. Learners do not get much information from the teacher any more. The learners receive key questions and then they are supposed to go and work with these on their own, but the learners are not ready for this.

**Lungisa:** Some aspects have been put aside because the TRC are now in the books. They are looking at other countries with the same background as South Africa.

**Alexander Road:** The history subject has become much more about understanding and perspectives, and less about dates. Ms Bulbring says that everything is history and the subject is about how we got to this point.

**About the curriculum:**

**St Thomas:** The NCS is a good curriculum but Mr Fahltein can not on the other hand say that the old one (Apartheid curriculum) was bad. In the old curriculum the books focused on the white side of history and the books used today look at history from a different point. There must be more than one way of looking at history and the learners must know that.

**Lungisa:** The learners will have to search for information by themselves now, but for learners from the townships that becomes difficult. Mrs Kuhene is still struggling with the new system and thinks that it will take time before the learners get used to this new way of working. Overall the NCS is good and she does not miss anything in it.

**Alexander Road:** Ms Bulbring thinks that the NCS is fantastic. It forces the learners to think for themselves and be more active. The learners are working with the content and doing their research at a higher level than before without realizing it. The NCS specifies things that have to be covered in the teaching, but she thinks that there is freedom in how to teach it.

**About the material used by the teacher:**

**St Thomas:** Books used by Mr Fahltein are “New generation history” for the grade 10, and “Viva history” for the grade 12. The authors of these books write about what the government wants and follow the NCS. The books are fitted to the learner’s knowledge level but in a

wrong way because the learners do not do as it says. He gets different books from publishers which he uses in the classroom.

**Lungisa:** Mrs Kuhene uses the book “Viva history” but the publishers give the teachers all the books so she chooses material from all of them. She does not think that “Viva history” is a good book but she has to use that one because of the financial situation in the school. The textbook fits the learner’s knowledge level, they have some problems she says but for the learners who want to learn and who do study it works out just fine.

**Alexander Road:** Ms Bulbring thinks she got plenty of freedom in choosing the textbook, but that she has to be careful because of the externally set examinations. The book needs to cover the main areas of the examinations. She thinks that the books are perfectly fitted to the learner’s knowledge level, and the ones she uses follow the curriculum. Books used in class are “In search of history” and “New generation history” but she has access to the other publishers as well.

## Analyze

### Guiding documents and textbooks

Here we will discuss two of the three questions that this thesis aims to answer: How does the government’s reconciliation policy reflect upon and form the guiding documents for the education in history? And how do the textbooks in the subject of history follow the steering documents regarding the reconciliation policy? We will use the analysing tool that we argue for on pages 14-15 and discuss how the NCS, the Manifesto and the textbooks react to the three concepts: amnesia, public justice and vengeance.

When the two political documents that prescribe the guidelines for teaching about reconciliation and history are put together (the Manifesto containing vague policy statements and the NCS more direct guidelines), three aspects of reconciliation can be observed: Understanding and remembering the history of injustices, unifying the diverse people of the country and developing a common identity, and making society equal. The NCS divides this view of reconciliation into two parts. One part is called “dealing with the past and facing the future” and the other part concerns identity and heritage. Most of the textbooks follow this structure.

## **Amnesia**

It is hard to conduct a historical research in a country where all old things are thrown out. Many of the old textbooks, both from before 1994 and after, have been disposed. It is therefore very difficult to get hold of old material to analyse. Despite South Africa's outspoken path of remembering the past injustices, this unwillingness to preserve things shows a desire to get rid of the past and instead move towards the future. There is no need for preserving things that are no longer in use, it is the present and the future that matters. Another important thing to notice is the fact that South Africa did not have a curriculum for history grades 10-12 until 2005. Of course there was a massive job after 1994 of creating a new syllabus, but for some reason history was neglected. The question is if history just was not considered important or if it was and is a delicate subject to deal with for the Department of Education, which therefore did not know how to handle it. This shows a willingness to forget rather than remember the past, which could be connected to the concept of national amnesia.

On the other hand, an extensive work of "putting history back into the curriculum", as the Manifesto calls it, has been going on since 2001. This shows a new interest from the government and Department of Education for the subject of history. The Manifesto clearly states that the subject of history can prevent amnesia and make the learners remember the past injustices so it never happens again. The importance that the learners understand South Africa's difficult history for the healing of the country is emphasised. Even if the NCS does not mention reconciliation it embodies the policy of the Manifesto which states that reconciliation should be taught and includes statements that clearly can be connected to reconciliation. The NCS includes two aspects that can be connected to reconciliation. These aspects concern how South Africa dealt with their past and faced the future, and a unifying and inclusive South African identity and heritage. The aspect that is called "dealing with the past and facing the future" can be seen as an attempt at preventing amnesia because it includes handling South Africa's history.

All the books, except "Looking into the past", specifically deal with the concept of reconciliation. The books clearly follow the NCS and have also divided the information about reconciliation into "dealing with the past and facing the future" and an inclusive South African identity and heritage. The books emphasize the importance of conveying the truth, and remembering the injustices of South Africa's history. The books also describe how South Africa conveyed the truth through the TRC. This can be seen as steps to prevent amnesia. Most of the books acknowledge the fact that there could exist several different perspectives

on what the truth is. Several of the books encourage the learners to think critically about history which also can be connected to the way of preventing of amnesia.

### **Public justice**

The NCS and the Manifesto clearly state the importance of making education equally accessible for everyone and to help distribute knowledge to all the different groups in South Africa. This can be seen as an aspect of public justice, with focus on the distributive part. The fact that the NCS is very specific in its guidelines implies that the South African government and Department of Education wants to make sure learners all over the country get the same education and prevent differences in the teachings as much as possible. This can also be viewed as a part of the distributive aspect of public justice. South Africa is redistributing knowledge, education and the opportunities that follow to the whole population, including the groups that were marginalised during apartheid. Despite the local differences in culture and economy, all learners should have the same education.

This is however not the reality. The South African system of schoolfees, where the schools set the fee themselves, together with huge economic differences in what the parents can afford to pay, makes the education unequal. The children whose parents can afford to send them to an expensive school receive a better education than those whose parents can only afford to pay a small schoolfee, or nothing at all. The schools with higher fees can afford to appoint more qualified teachers, better school buildings, more and better access to material and so on. This system along with the fact that the lower class in South Africa still mostly consists of black South Africans, result in that many black children still receive a poorer education than many white children. This, in turn, contributes to an unequal society. There is a political will to redistribute resources and make the education equal, but the desire and the resources are not enough. The laws that made black, coloured and white South Africans different is gone, but the current system contributes to sustaining the economic differences between these groups.

The NCS and the Manifesto specify that the education in history for grades 10-12 should include South Africa's path of public justice in the part about "dealing with the past and facing the future". The part that deals with identity and heritage and the focus on the indigenous heritage can also be viewed as an example of redistributing the power over history which can be connected to distributive, public justice. By emphasising an inclusive heritage and history, focus is shifted from the white history to everyone's history. And by specifically emphasising the indigenous knowledge and heritage, the forgotten and repressed histories of South Africa gains a bigger part of history and society.



The textbooks (again except “Looking into the past”) follow the guidelines of the NCS and include South Africa’s path of public justice, the TRC. They support the chosen path of truth and reconciliation and several of them discuss this choice and how it worked out. The books also include the aspect of an inclusive identity and heritage, and refer to South Africa as the Rainbow nation. Some, but not all, of the books have the same emphasis on the indigenous knowledge and history in the part about reconciliation as the NCS and the Manifesto. By giving both sides of the conflict (both the Afrikaner, and the black and coloured cultures) focus, the books teach the learners about all the cultures and histories and how to respect these. This follows the guidelines of the NCS and the Manifesto and helps giving the different cultures their place in society and history in the minds of the younger people.

The South African textbooks must be approved by the Department of Education before they can be used in the schools. This means that most of the books are quite similar and follow the guidelines of the NCS. In turn, this means that most of the learners get the same information through their textbooks, which contributes to a more equal education. Just as the specific guidelines of the NCS, this similarity can be seen as a way of redistributing knowledge.

### **Vengeance**

Neither the NCS, the Manifesto or the textbooks show any sign of vengeance. However the NCS and the Manifesto are political documents and it would not be politically correct and accepted for a democratic government to promote vengeance. The Manifesto recognises the difficulty in dealing with South Africa’s past and states that history can be used for preventing thoughts of triumph. This means that such feelings do exist in the country, but that the education system aims to prevent these feelings of triumph and vengeance. All the cultures in South Africa should be a part of the history, but not one more than the others.

The textbooks follow the NCS and are approved by the Department of Education and are therefore politically correct as well. How come “Looking into the past” does not even mention the reconciliation process is difficult to explain because of shortage of information. The textbooks explain the wrong doings that the apartheid regime and its supporters committed, as they were made public by the TRC. Some of the books focus on these deeds against the black and coloured people and emphasises them as victims. But other books emphasise that crimes also were committed in the struggle against apartheid. None of the books take an outspoken stand between the sides and though they present facts about the violations committed during the apartheid era, they do not show or promote vengeance.

## Interviews

There are, in the NCS and the Manifesto, specific guidelines on how teachers should implement the government's wishes to reconcile the learners from different cultures and in the future, the country. The Manifesto says that the South African motto is to Unite in Diversity and that the history subject, by looking into the past, can teach the learners to interact with each other over the boundaries of culture and colour of skin. History can also, according to the Manifesto, teach the learners not to forget the country's painful past and to confront and challenge inequality and prejudices that reinforces racism. The history curriculum has only existed for three years and teachers are still adjusting to the new education system. The NCS it self is filled with details on what should be taught in the different grades and specific questions for each of the chapters that the learners must know when the exams take place at the end of the year. Not much room is left for the teachers to improvise and the reasons for this could be several. As we discuss in the analyses of the NCS, the Manifesto and the textbooks, this can make the education as equal as possible. But the teachers that work in the reality always have some power over what and how they teach. As our interviews show, the teachers in different schools have different possibilities to work from and plan their teachings differently according to economy of the school, culture of the learners and the teachers own experience.

The teachers follow the NCS in different ways and their thoughts about the NCS are also different from each other. Mr Fahltein at St Thomas thinks he has a lot of freedom and is not controlled fully by the NCS. He looks at it as guidelines and then he educate in his own way. Mrs Kuhene at Lungisa thinks there is some freedom in the way to teach the learners, that just the topics are prescribed and that she chooses how to teach. Ms Bulbring on the other hand seems to follow the NCS to the letter and also use the key questions for every lesson. The NCS can and has been interpreted in different ways. While Mr Fahltein looks at it as a guide, Ms Bulbring follows it very strictly and Mrs Kuhene lies some where in between. Why Mr Fahltein can use the NCS as a guide instead of an instruction book can be explained with the fact that he is an examiner, he decides what the learners are to be tested in at the end of the year. Therefore he does not have to go through every chapter in the book and all of the parts from the NCS. Ms Bulbring who has been a teacher in South Africa for 2 years might not have the experience that Mr Fahltein and Mrs Kuhene have and neither Ms Bulbring or Mrs Kuhene have the ability to go to far outside the NCS directive because they are not examiners.

According to the NCS the learners are to think critically and take responsibility for their own education. In the visited schools this works out differently. In Ms Bulbrings classroom she thinks this works out well, the learners are forced to think for themselves and they now do their research on a higher level than they did before. Both Mr Fahltein and Mrs Kuhene think that their schools and learners are not suited to the new way of learning. Mrs Kuhene has abandoned the activity and learner centred system and works with a one-way teaching because the learners do not do the research for themselves. They expect her to give them the information. Mr Fahltein says that the NCS is formed to suit a developed country's school system and not a developing country, so the learners do not benefit. The NCS seems, according to the teachers, to work in the former white schools but not in schools with mostly coloured and black learners. The teachers from these schools say that the learners are not ready, that they do not get the help they need from their parents because the parents are not educated. But the access to knowledge is also to be found in well functioning libraries and access to internet. The methods of the NCS seem to function better in the school with the highest fee, thus the school with most resources. The schools with lower fees, fewer resources, and learners that come from economically poorer and less educated families have more problems with implementing these modern methods. These economic and educational differences coincide with skin-colour and culture. Among the families that can only afford to pay a lower schoolfee, the majority are black or coloured. These problems show that the resources are not enough to give all learners an equal education, which disfavour the already disadvantaged groups and contribute to maintain the difference and segregation regarding skin-colour and culture. The problems also show the discrepancy between the government's intentions and the reality. Economic and social class and status is taking over race as determining quality of education and opportunities. But to a great extent, the class-boarders still follow those of skin-colour and culture.

All three teachers are pleased with the NCS they say but many things that they discuss show the opposite. Regarding reconciliation the teachers come from backgrounds that had different roles in the apartheid system. The NCS says that the legacy of the past creates the future, but learners do not seem to know about the history. The only way the learners reflect about the past is when they look around and sees that there are only black neighbours, Mr Fahltein says. The fact that some learners hear about apartheid for the first time from their teacher show what an important role teachers play in teaching reconciliation to the younger generation. But the society and the families around the learners also play a big role in shaping the learners values and views of the world. The black learners look into their past and see oppression from white people and when they look at how the world of today they still see that there are big

differences between themselves and the white inhabitants. In schools like Alexander Road where cultures are mixing, the road to reconciliation seems easier to walk than in township schools or schools where there are only one cultural group of learners. In Alexander Road the learners were good friends over the boundaries of colour and culture. This helps create an understanding of each other and helps to heal the divisions in the generation that is growing up. In schools where the learners do not meet children from other cultures, they do not get to see and understand what unifies them with the other South African cultures.

Reconciliation is, according to the NCS in focus in grade 12 and depending on the books used by the teachers the time spent is different. Mrs Kuhene teaches reconciliation to her learners when that chapter is coming and time differs from two weeks to a month. For Mr Fahltein the same structure in teaching is applied but he thinks that there is too little time spent on the reconciliation part. Ms Bulbring says that she discuss reconciliation in all of the grades even though she follows the NCS to the letter. All three teachers think reconciliation is a good thing, but the question is if they would be able to say the opposite. Ms Bulbring is very positive and thinks the process of reconciliation has come a long way. Her learners are good friends with each other over the boundaries of culture and skin-colour. Ms Bulbring sees reconciliation as coming to a place of healing by talking about the past. Mr Fahltein recognises the importance of teaching and speaking about the past, but seem more eager to put the past behind and move toward the future. Mrs Kuhene strongly associate reconciliation to the TRC and does not see it as an ongoing process as much as the other teachers do.

Ms Bulbring says that there are some students that come to the school with feelings leaning towards vengeance, but after attending school together with children from different cultures, they learn to live together and reconcile. Both Ms Bulbring and Mr Fahltein say that some learners, both black, coloured and white, express attitudes of “stop talking about the difficult past, and let us move forward”. They both understand these attitudes, but sees the importance of remembering and dealing with the historic legacy. Mr Fahltein says that he thinks teachers from different cultures have different ways of teaching. The difference we noticed was regarding the teacher’s attitudes towards reconciliation. Ms Bulbring (a white teacher in a multi-cultural school) was the teacher that was most willing to talk about reconciliation, apartheid and South Africa’s different cultures, both with us and the learners. Mr Fahltein (a coloured teacher in a school with black and coloured learners) seems more eager to let the society forget and move on. Mrs Kuhene (a black teacher in a school with only black learners) is less willing to talk about reconciliation and apartheid. As stated above, she sees

reconciliation as finished, not as an ongoing process. We will not draw any further conclusions about white, black or coloured teachers in general, these are only three examples.

## **Discussion**

When living in a new country so different from home, new situations appear to adjust to and finishing this thesis in time was one of the hopes but nothing we took for granted. As often happens, changes take place during the process of writing and new knowledge leads on to other paths for reaching the goal. We did not know what to expect when we left for South Africa. Perhaps reconciliation was not that big of a deal that we thought it would be. But on this point we were right, reconciliation is an ongoing process in South Africa. Sometimes we had to pinch ourselves to realise that this is a country that SIDA names a developing country and depending on whom you talk to or what area you are visiting it could be a developed country like Sweden. But when we looked outside that protected area we saw townships and a country where the resources are very unjustly distributed. Looking at the unfair system with schoolfees the road towards an equal society seems almost impossible. But when we visited the schools where the learners that attend represent a mixture of cultures, as Alexander Road, this gives us hope that the younger generation will learn to live together and be able to make the society more equal in the future.

In some self-criticism we have tried to be as open-minded as possible and not to let our preconceived ideas get in the way when writing the thesis. However we cannot deny that everyone carries a frame of reference. We come from a westernised Swedish society and are conducting research in a society that is in some ways completely different from our own. South Africa has a very complex history and consists of several different cultures, all of which are unfamiliar to us. We do not understand the South African society (or societies) and the political and educational system. In a period of two months we had to learn about the context in which our sources exist. This makes it hard for us to understand the whole picture, which leads to the risk that we misinterpret the meaning of a text or a sentence. On the other hand an outside view can be an advantage. It can make us see things that a person who lives in the society would miss or take for granted. This discussion is always important for historians, who are almost always looking at societies that differ from their own in terms of time and/or space.<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> For more on this discussion, see Esaiasson, 2007, p 250-254.

Our discussion about the government's intentions to make the education as equal as possible by making the guidelines in the NCS (in our case for history, grades 10-12) strict can be connected to Getahun Abrahams article. Abrahams article is presented in the chapter about previous research and focuses on the guiding documents for the lower grades. His research shows that the curriculum for the lower grades also is very specific. Abraham discusses the inequalities that the South African system of school fees creates as well. These inequalities are clearly shown in the higher grades this thesis is focused on. In the analysis we draw the conclusion that schools and teachers interpret the NCS different and have different abilities to follow the guidelines and methods. This is supported by Harley and Wedekind's research, also presented in the chapter about previous research. They focus on Curriculum 2005, but the methods in the NCS are very similar to those in Curriculum 2005. Harley and Wedekind conclude that the former white schools have been more successful in implementing these methods because of their better resources. Our interviews also showed this advantage as to the former white schools, and those with high school fees. In other words, there is the same problem of implementing the NCS as with the case of Curriculum 2005. Both curricula are "outcome-based" and require schools with resources. This affects the already economically disadvantaged children negatively, of whom many are black or coloured. In this way the colour of the skin contributes to determine the quality of education, and thus opportunities and future economic and social status.

Crain Soudien has conducted research about teachers' role in the community they work in and the resistance many teachers made towards the apartheid school system before 1994. Our thesis shows that the teachers play a great role in the education system, but that they are very dependent on the schools resources and pre-conditions. One of the interviewed teachers, Mr Fahltein, worked in his school during the apartheid era. According to him he was able to resist the apartheid education system by not complying with all the guidelines in the apartheid curriculum.

June Bam argues that history was a sensitive subject when Curriculum 2005 was written. There was a discussion about what was essential for the learners to know about the apartheid era and history had to fight for a place in the syllabus. This supports the conclusions in this thesis that the fact that there did not exist a curriculum for history between 1994 and 2002 can be connected to the indecisiveness the sensitivity of the subject resulted in. Both Bam and this thesis discuss the fact that this hesitancy can be a sign of denial (as Bam describes it) or amnesia. Bam suggests that this denial and amnesia can be a result of South Africa's efforts to gain a place in the global market. But in our thesis we also show that a lot of effort has been

taken to “put history back into the curriculum”, and both the NCS and the Manifesto makes statements that clearly can be connected to reconciliation. This shows a will to remember the history and that South Africa has chosen its own way of “dealing with the past and facing the future”. This thesis has been giving an insight in this ongoing process.

The process of writing this study has created many questions and there is not enough room to answer these in this thesis. There are several aspects that would be interesting to take a closer look at. One example is how the subject of history and the South African school system treats and depicts the history of apartheid, not only reconciliation. For a study about this, guiding documents, textbooks in history and history teachers would also be interesting sources. Another subject that would be interesting to complement this thesis is how the concept of reconciliation is reflected in the rest of the guiding documents and/or textbooks for other subjects and grades. It would also be of interest to extend our research and make more interviews and observations on our subject to get a broader picture of the reality in the different schools. While writing this thesis we noticed that the coloured culture is somewhat forgotten in the discussion about apartheid and reconciliation. There is a lot of talk about black and white, but coloureds are often left out. During apartheid they were also severely disadvantaged and are also a part of the conflict and the society that needs to reconcile. Mr Fahltein, the coloured teacher we interviewed expressed this as well. Further studies on the coloured people’s experiences during and after apartheid would be interesting.

## Summary

This thesis discusses the reconciliation process in South Africa that has been going on since 1994 when the ANC came to power and the apartheid era ended. Focus is on history education and the questions the study aim to answer is:

- How does the government's policy regarding the history education about the reconciliation process reflect upon and form the guiding documents for the subject of history?
- How do the textbooks in the subject of history follow the guiding documents regarding the reconciliation policy?
- How do the schools implement the government's intentions for reconciliation, regarding the multi-cultural learners?

To answer the questions a text analysis has been conducted on the two guiding documents that give directions to the textbooks used in schools and to the teachers in the subject of history. These are the National Curriculum Statement (the NCS) and the Manifesto on Values; Education and Democracy (the Manifesto). A text analysis has also been conducted on the seven different textbooks in history that are available to schools and teachers in South Africa. Interviews have also been made with three teachers at different schools chosen both regarding school fees and the learners' colour of skin.

When the ANC came to power in 1994 a process started to reconcile the inhabitants in South Africa that for centuries had been separated by colour. SIDA's definition on reconciliation is that it is a process where mutual acknowledgment of the past, the sufferings and the destructive attitudes from that time is changed towards a relationship in peace. The result of the study shows that the NCS does not mention the word reconciliation but describes what the Manifesto clarifies should be taught. The NCS and the Manifesto state that the learners must know about their past and that reconciliation is one way in reaching a united South Africa. The textbooks follow the NCS which is no surprise since the textbooks must follow the government's directions (or they will not be published). But there are differences between the textbooks, some are more eager than others that the learners think for themselves and critically examine the positive and negative effects of the reconciliation process in South Africa. The teachers' opinion whether they implement the government's intention of reconciliation in the classroom or not changes from school to school. All the teachers think that the NCS is a good curriculum but the teachers in the schools with mostly coloured and black learners think that the learners do not have the knowledge to study on their own. The



learners are according to the teachers dependent on the teacher giving them the information. The NCS is a resource demanding curriculum and many of the schools in South Africa do not have the access to a library or the internet which problematizes the learning. In former white schools it seems that the learners have acclimatized easier to the new curriculum and the reason for that might be found in the access to more resources and educational material.

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## General questions about the school

Name of the school:

Grades in the school:

Teacher's name:

How many years he/she has worked as a teacher:

Grades the teacher educate in:

How many learners in the school:

How many learners the teacher has:

How many learners per class:

Percent white/coloured/black and other:

School built in year:

Fees:

## Questions about reconciliation in general

1. What does reconciliation mean for the teacher?
2. How does the teacher's school work with reconciliation?
3. How are the learner's reactions and attitudes towards the work of reconciliation?
4. What could the school do differently in the work of reconciliation?
5. What are the effects of the fact that there only are white, black, coloured learners for the work with reconciliation?
6. How does the teacher feel about the expressions: forget the past, remember or get even? Why?

## Questions about the teachers work

1. Does the teacher work with reconciliation in his/her history-courses?
2. How does the teacher work with this?
3. Does he/she teach about apartheid?
4. How much time and effort does the teacher use to teach about apartheid and reconciliation?
5. Do the learners want to read about apartheid-history?

6. Has the teacher got a work-schedule or term-planning we can see? (Where we can see how much time apartheid and reconciliation takes up in relation to the whole course.)
7. Does the teacher think the history-subject in school is important to reconcile/learn the children to live together/unify the country?
8. What effect does the teacher think the fact that a lot of learners doesn't choose to read history after grade 9 has on the work of reconciliation?

### **Questions about changes in the history-subject**

1. Can the teacher see any changes in the history-subject before 1994 and today?
2. What has changed?
3. How do he/she feel about that?
4. Does the teacher feel that he/she misses anything in the subject?

### **Questions about the curriculum**

1. What can the teacher tell us about the curriculum? When it came? Changes?
2. What does the teacher think about the curriculum? (What is good, bad?)
3. How much freedom has the teacher got to choose what he/she should teach about?
4. Does the teacher use "Learning programme guidelines" and "Assessment guidelines"?

### **Questions about the material used by the teacher**

1. How much freedom has the teacher got in choosing the textbook and teaching-material and influence what the school buys?
2. Do the learners have any influence on which material that is used?
3. What textbook does the teacher use in history? (Year and writers?)
4. Does the teacher think that is a good book on the subject of apartheid and reconciliation?
5. What does the teacher know about the authors of the textbook?
6. Does the teacher follow the book?
7. Is the book fitted to the learner's knowledge-level?
8. Does the teacher think that the learning material, the book, fulfills the guidelines of the curriculum?
9. From which year are the books and how often are they exchanged?
10. Does the teacher use any other material? Why? What?

