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Late-Apartheid Education Reforms and Bantustan Entanglements

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Abstract

South Africa's social and educational historiography has rarely singled out specific bantustans for special attention; rather, it has analysed these as part of South Africa's broader segregationist and apartheid strategy. This article shares and builds on this perspective, extending the analysis by looking more closely at four specific bantustans—Bophuthatswana, Venda, KaNgwane and KwaZulu—and the links between their local and more broadly South African reformist and transnational developmental discourses during the 1980s. It examines how different educational networks formed “discourse coalitions” across these bantustans through the participation of educational reformers and experts in key education commissions and educational projects and initiatives. The article explores the roles of individuals involved in the development of educational reforms and their circulation both across the bantustans and between these bantustans and South Africa. It shows how discourses about education reform in the bantustans and South Africa deployed the language and concepts of development education, which integrated these bantustans into a reformist agenda prolonging rather than dismantling apartheid. The article casts new light on the cross-border relationships around education that bound them to one another and South Africa.

Keywords: bantustans; South Africa; education history; education networks; discourse coalitions; development education



Introduction

The role of modernising developmentalist discourses in shaping South African education throughout the 20th century has recently been given new life by Meghan Healy-Clancy in work on its gendered character.¹ Like Cynthia Kros, she draws attention to the modernising, “developmentalist colonial” discourse and assumptions that the Eiselen Commission, the basis for the 1953 Bantu Education Act, shared with other contemporary late-colonial texts.² The “developmental colonialism” that informed the Eiselen Commission and is examined by Healy-Clancy and Kros found new continuities in the development of the bantustans.³ This article intends to explore some of the networks and developmentalist discourses through which selected bantustan educational projects were legitimated and framed in the latter half of the 20th century. As such, it tries to show how entangled bantustan educational projects were not only with one another but also with broader South Africa educational reformist ideas adopting transnational developmentalism. These entanglements arose through “discourse coalitions” formed on the basis of alliances between social and political actors based in universities and in the political sphere. Whereas the concept of “discourse coalition” has been used to refer specifically to “alliances . . . between certain representatives (or groups of representatives) of the social sciences, on the one hand, and certain political actors (or groups of political actors) on the other,”⁴ a network is more loosely defined as the connections between different groups of people and/or individuals. The increasing use by the National Party of international developmentalist discourse in the 1980s to reshape apartheid assisted in the creation of these “discourse coalitions”—here the research for the De Lange Report, which was instituted in the aftermath of the 1976 Soweto revolt and intended to reform apartheid education, played a key role.

South Africa’s social and educational historiography has rarely singled out specific bantustans for special attention; it has rather analysed these as part of South Africa’s

1 Meghan Healy-Clancy, “Mass Education and the Gendered Politics of ‘Development’ in Apartheid South Africa and Late-Colonial British Africa,” in *Empire and Education in Africa: The Shaping of a Comparative Perspective*, ed. Peter Kallaway and Rebecca Swartz (New York: Peter Lang, 2016), 177–204.

2 Cynthia Kros, *The Seeds of Separate Development: Origins of Bantu Education* (Pretoria: Unisa Press, 2010).

3 The term “bantustan” implies a critique of these ethnic-based formations as apartheid creations, and this is the term generally used in this article when referring to these entities, without inverted commas. “Homeland/s” was the term preferred by the regime, with its implied logic of ethnic self-determination. It is used here in reference to government policy and discourse. It should thus be read as having inverted commas throughout, even though they have been omitted after the first reference for ease of reading.

4 The notion of “discourse coalition” is drawn from Jürgen Schriewer, ed., *Discourse Formation in Comparative Education* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2003), 74.

broader segregationist and apartheid strategy.⁵ This article shares and builds on this perspective, extending the analysis by looking more closely at four specific bantustans and the links between them. It examines how different educational networks also formed “discourse coalitions” across four bantustans—Bophuthatswana, Venda, KaNgwane and KwaZulu. It attempts to show how these facilitated the use of common approaches to education that were differently interpreted and realised within specific contexts. All four bantustans under consideration were integrated into or through networks, which enabled the development of common discourses relating to the nature of change. These networks interacted with, but were also quite distinct from, more radical anti-apartheid networks found in the National Education Coordinating Committee (NECC), for example, which refused any participation in apartheid state structures.

Two of the case studies here draw on material gleaned from research conducted on the transition from mission to Bantu education. This research focused specifically on the educational projects in Bophuthatswana and KwaZulu.⁶ This article adds two other bantustans—Venda and KaNgwane—and shifts the focus to one of networks across rather than within bantustans. The article proceeds by firstly providing brief background on each of the bantustans, and then examines the nature of the educational networks, reports, projects and ideas that spanned bantustan borders and drew their elites into reformist policy-making national circles.⁷ The reports and the ideas in them are examined in the context of a discussion of the educational projects developed in each bantustan to illustrate these broader networks and coalitions. Three of the bantustans under discussion produced reports and recommendations to reform education. At the time, Peter Buckland, a young education policy academic and later planner, argued that these reports, being “the reports of officially appointed education experts, can most usefully be viewed as educational discourses designed to elicit consent for shifts

5 See for example contributions by Frank Molteno, “The Historical Foundations of the Schooling of Black South Africans,” and Pam Christie and Colin Collins, “Bantu Education: Apartheid Ideology and Labour Reproduction,” in *Apartheid and Education: The Education of Black South Africans*, ed. Peter Kallaway (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1984); Ken Hartshorne, *Crisis and Challenge: Black Education 1910–1990* (Cape Town: Oxford University Press, 1992); Elaine Unterhalter et al., eds., *Apartheid Education and Popular Struggles* (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1991); Crain Soudien, “‘What to Teach the Natives’: A Historiography of the Curriculum Dilemma in South Africa,” in *Curriculum Studies in South Africa: Intellectual Histories and Present Circumstances*, edited by William Pinar (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 19–49.

6 Linda Chisholm, *Between Worlds: German Missionaries and the Transition from Mission to Bantu Education in South Africa* (Johannesburg: Wits University Press, 2017).

7 The Transkei produced the Taylor Commission report on teacher training in 1977 that became the blueprint for redeveloping teacher training. See Sidwell Vusumzi Sinda Ngubentombi, “Teacher Education in Transkei: A Critical and Comparative Study of the Evolution of Selected Aspects of Its Administrative, Curricular and Course Structures as an Indicator of Future Policy and Planning in the Provision of Teachers” (PhD thesis, University of Natal, 1984), 208–228.

in actual education policies negotiated in the broader political context.”⁸ In addition, however, they exemplified the collaboration of liberal and ethnic nationalist groups across and within specific bantustans and South Africa. To illustrate the argument, this article draws on both primary and secondary sources. These include different types of published and unpublished government reports, as well as articles contemporary to the period under discussion.

The slim extant literature on education in the bantustans was generally written in the course of the bantustans’ creation, either for the purpose of assisting in building an education system for the particular bantustan or in opposition to it. Its focus is mostly local. In terms of the former, many social actors who were to play a role in building the bantustans produced local histories or situation analyses of education, as the basis for recrafting education in ethnic territorial form. In keeping with the apartheid project that conflated language, ethnicity and nationality, they constructed these histories in “tribal” terms. Examples of these are Jacob Malao’s MEd at Potchefstroom University on planning an educational system for Bophuthatswana and a doctoral thesis on teacher education by Oscar Dhlomo, who was appointed Minister of Education and Culture in the KwaZulu legislature in 1977.⁹ Each is specifically focused on constructing an understanding of the issues at hand within the framework of the bantustan. The more critical literature was developed within the context of opposition to bantustan politics and is exemplified on the one hand in the meticulous documentation of developing inequalities by the South African Institute of Race Relations (SAIRR)’s *Annual Reports* and, on the other, in academic articles such as those on the *Ubuntu-botho* curriculum that Inkatha introduced into KwaZulu schools.¹⁰

More recent work is scarce. Here Laura Phillips’s research on administration at the local level of school governance in Lebowa points to how chiefs, principals and school committees, who were given different types of authority in the school under Bantu

8 Peter Buckland, “Education Policy and Rural Development in South Africa,” unpublished report (Mafeking: University of Bophuthatswana, ca. 1984), 2.

9 Oscar Dhlomo, “An Evaluation of Some Problems in Teacher Training with Special Reference to Teacher Training Colleges in KwaZulu” (DEd. diss., University of South Africa, 1980); Jacob Malao, “Planning an Educational System for Bophuthatswana” (MEd thesis, Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education, 1983), 89.

10 SAIRR (South African Institute of Race Relations), *Annual Reports* (Johannesburg: SAIRR, 1961–1990). The SAIRR *Annual Reports* collated general educational statistics and information, including for the bantustans, on an annual or biannual basis. Praisley Mdluli [Blade Nzimande], “Ubuntu-botho: Inkatha’s ‘People’s Education’,” *Transformation: Critical Perspectives on Southern Africa* 5 (1987): 60–77; Gerhard Maré, “Education in a ‘Liberated Zone’: Inkatha and Education in KwaZulu,” *Critical Arts* 4, no. 4–5 (1988–1989): 126–139; Johann Graaff, “Education as an Instrument of War: The Case of KwaZulu/Natal,” <https://hdl.handle.net/10539/25644>, in Heather Jacklin and Johann Graaff, “Rural Education in South Africa: A Report on Schooling in the Bantustans,” 1994, <https://hdl.handle.net/10539/25539>. The reports were completed in 1994 but remained unpublished. They have now been digitised and are available online.

Education regulations, vied over and abused its resources.¹¹ As one of the first studies to re-examine bantustan educational history, it points to the weaknesses in the official data of the time and the discrepancies that exist between non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and official bantustan sources.¹² Another case study of Bophuthatswana's educational initiative showed how such initiatives brought together people from mission-education backgrounds and the arena of education development who drew on international progressivist and child-centred discourses dominant at the time, which legitimated the project.¹³

Phillips refers to and draws on the comprehensive overview by Heather Jacklin and Johann Graaff that was conducted as part of the National Education Policy Investigation (NEPI) for the NECC between 1990 and 1992.¹⁴ Once the African National Congress's (ANC's) education department was re-established inside South Africa, it drew on the NECC's policy deliberations and the people involved in them in crafting its own Education Policy Framework.¹⁵ However, the report on the bantustans appeared in 1994. Unlike the other NEPI reports, it was too late to be published; its relevance was also questionable at a time that bantustans became history. Nonetheless, it presented the view that "a number of mechanisms ... quite independently of apartheid and Bantu Education, are likely to prolong the disadvantages of rural status." Bantustans, the authors argued, were "not simply passive extensions of a uniform Bantu Education system. Each ... has made something different of what they started with. And this 'something different' is a function of personalities, political, economic development and historical accident."¹⁶

The report is valuable not only as a source of information but also for its perspective and as an example of a particular method. The perspective asserts the importance of "the rural" as a distinct geographical space, while the method yields a combination of policy information on enrolments and achievements and sociological insights based on notions of spatiality. Its argument about the distinctiveness of each bantustan is important but to some extent obscures both the linkages between the bantustans and white South African

11 Laura Phillips, "Principals, Chiefs and School Committees: The Localisation of Rural School Administration in Lebowa, 1972–1990," *Journal of Southern African Studies* 41, no. 2 (2015): 299–314.

12 Phillips, "Principals, Chiefs and School Committees," 308fn58.

13 Linda Chisholm, "Bantustan Education History: The 'Progressivism' of Bophuthatswana's Primary Education Upgrade Programme (PEUP), 1979–1988," *South African Historical Journal* 65, no. 3 (2013): 403–420; Chisholm, *Between Worlds*, ch. 8.

14 See Heather Jacklin and Johann Graaff, "Final Report on Homeland Education," <https://hdl.handle.net/10539/25640>, in Jacklin and Graaff, "Rural Education in South Africa."

15 African National Congress Education Department, "A Policy Framework for Education and Training," Johannesburg, 1994, http://www.africa.upenn.edu/Govern_Political/ANC_Education.html, December 19, 2017; see also Linda Chisholm, Shireen Motala and Salim Vally, eds., *South African Education Policy Review, 1993–2000* (Sandown: Heinemann, 2003).

16 Jacklin and Graaff, "Final Report on Homeland Education," 15.

liberals and the common policies pursued within them via the Development Bank of Southern Africa, for example.

Jacklin and Graaff were particularly interested in the negative effects of the model of state-aided community financing that emerged in the bantustans, the harnessing and role of non-state institutions for infrastructural development, and the establishment of model schools to pioneer alternatives and teacher policy. In terms of the latter, their work reveals the policy preoccupations of the Development Bank with the maldistribution of teachers and the quality of education being provided in teacher training colleges. After financing many new colleges in the bantustans, the bank eventually advised virtually every bantustan administration to reduce the number of its colleges. Jacklin and Graaff's work suggests strongly that the bank helped to disseminate a discourse and strategies of intervention framed around the notion of "development" and, as Tapscott has pointed out, played a "major role in the propagation of 'development' thinking" and "also served as a focal point for 'development' practitioners."¹⁷ This article further explores these arguments, but first it is necessary to provide some contextual background on the differences and commonalities between each of the bantustans under consideration.

Contextual Background: Bophuthatswana, KaNgwane, KwaZulu and Venda

South Africa's bantustan policy, initiated by the 1951 Bantu Authorities Act, resulted in four "independent" and six "self-governing" territories by 1980.¹⁸ Here, Africans were supposedly to exercise their political rights. They were all based on putative ethnic, cultural and linguistic commonalities. They had their own departments of education, separately funded and staffed but controlled from Pretoria. Despite the differences among them in status—two achieved "self-governing" status and two "independence"—the four bantustans analysed in this article (Bophuthatswana, KaNgwane, KwaZulu and Venda) were linked in two main ways. First, and similar to other bantustans, they were economically and politically dependent on South Africa, serving as reservoirs of labour and dumping grounds for those removed and resettled from "white" South Africa, as well as being sites for the redirection of the political and educational aspirations of black people. Secondly, they were connected through the narrow, vocationalised school curriculum that they followed, the educational "expert" networks that crossed their borders and the reformist thrust that emerged within the South African state after the student revolt of 1976. During the 1980s the bantustans that are the focus of this article

17 Chris Tapscott, "Changing Discourses of Development in South Africa," in *Power of Development*, ed. Jonathan Crush (London: Routledge, 1995), 185.

18 For a history, see Laura Phillips, "History of South Africa's Bantustans," in *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of African History*, ed. Thomas Spear (Oxford Research Encyclopedias, 2017), <https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190277734.013.80>.

elaborated educational projects seemingly unique to each, yet alongside and often in association with a broader reformist political project initiated by the South African state in response to widespread social resistance.

Educational reforms within the bantustans were mainly centred on the curriculum. All of them followed the Bantu Education curriculum designed for and implemented in both urban and rural African schools. However, those in rural areas and the bantustans received fewer resources than African schools in urban areas.¹⁹ Mostly, the curriculum followed in the bantustans consisted of three languages and mathematics or numeracy in Grades 1 and 2; environmental studies, health education, gardening (for boys) and needlework (for girls) in lower primary classes; and social sciences, general sciences and either agricultural sciences or needlework in higher primary classes. At junior secondary, the majority of students in the general stream did three languages, general science, agricultural science, history and geography. Most students in matric, which very few achieved, took English, Afrikaans, an African language, biology, biblical studies and one other subject such as history/geography/agricultural science, business economics, economics, maths/physical science. The number of students taking maths and science was miniscule.²⁰ The presence of NGOs and prestige international and project schools, drawn to the bantustans for different reasons, made little systemic impact. African teachers' professional associations had a long-standing presence in areas that became bantustans, but unions did not enter the bantustans until the late 1980s.²¹ The South African Democratic Teachers' Union, formed on 6 October 1990, was active in almost all the bantustans by 1994. However, neither the teacher associations nor the nascent unions in the 1980s played a role in curriculum experimentation, the former being more concerned with salaries and conditions of service, the latter with bringing the apartheid system to an end.

Teacher training colleges and universities were expanded in these pseudo-“homelands” to produce the teachers and bureaucrats for the system. But education as a whole, and secondary and teacher education in particular, was underfunded relative to education for those designated as white, Indian and coloured, or as Africans in urban areas. Low-budget primary schooling for Africans was financed at least partly by the use of African women teachers, who were not only seen as “by nature” more suitable for work with children,

19 See for example NEPI (National Education Policy Investigation), *Education Planning, Systems and Structure: Report of the NEPI Education Planning, Systems and Structure Research Group; a Project of the National Education Coordinating Committee* (Cape Town: Oxford University Press and NECC, 1993).

20 See for example Heather Jacklin, “Schooling in KaNgwane,” <https://hdl.handle.net/10539/25642>, “Schooling in Gazankulu,” <https://hdl.handle.net/10539/25649> and “Schooling in KwaNdebele,” <https://hdl.handle.net/10539/25645>, in Jacklin and Graaff, “Rural Education in South Africa”; no page numbers are provided in the original text.

21 See for example R. L. Peteni, *Towards Tomorrow: The Story of the African Teachers' Associations of South Africa* (Algonac: Reference Publications, 1978); see SAIRR, *Annual Reports*, passim.

but who could also be paid less than their male counterparts.²² Teacher training colleges increased in number in the bantustans during the 1950s and 1960s to meet the demand for primary school teachers, but the quality deteriorated over time as entry requirements were lowered and more qualified teachers left the system. As repression intensified in the 1960s, the proportion of African teachers in secondary and high schools possessing university degrees dropped. In 1965, only 25.5% of African teachers had university degrees. From the 1970s, the structural pressure on secondary education was compounded by the employment in secondary classes of teachers trained only for the primary school level. The level of functional illiteracy in the general population was high. The educational challenges overall were significant.

By the 1970s, when South Africa began to be challenged by the industrial strikes of 1973, the achievement of independence in neighbouring Mozambique and Angola in 1975 and the Soweto revolts of 1976, the formation of the bantustans was in full swing. Bophuthatswana and Venda accepted self-governing status in 1972 and 1973 respectively, becoming nominally independent in 1977 and 1979. While KwaZulu and KaNgwane accepted self-governing status in 1977 and 1981, they rejected independent status. This says something about the relationship of the bantustan leadership to the concept of “independence”: while chiefs Lucas Mangope of Bophuthatswana and Patrick Mphephu of Venda had few qualms about accepting independence and working with Pretoria, Enos Mabuza of KaNgwane publicly aligned himself with the ANC during the 1980s, while Mangosuthu Buthelezi used his connections to the ANC but also fought a bitter war with them.²³

Reformist Educational Networks, Projects and Ideas

Following the youth revolt of 1976, which continued to gather momentum and organisational depth across the country for the next few years, the South African state began a process of reform, which in education was expressed in the establishment in 1979 of the De Lange Commission of Inquiry under the auspices of the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC). Its report in 1981, an effort to reform education within the framework of existing apartheid structures still premised on separate development, brought together and built a consensus among moderate educationists from business, universities, government and teacher organisations.²⁴ It provoked strong criticism for its approach to change: it was seen as part of a coordinated “total strategy” to maintain apartheid; it failed to break decisively with apartheid educational structures; it embodied

22 Shirley Mahlase, *The Careers of Women Teachers under Apartheid* (Harare: Sapes Books, 1997), 170; Healy-Clancy, “Mass Education and the Gendered Politics,” 187–189.

23 In a refashioned South Africa post-1994, Bophuthatswana was integrated into the North West province, Venda into Limpopo, KaNgwane into Mpumalanga, and KwaZulu into KwaZulu-Natal.

24 HSRC (Human Sciences Research Council), *Report of the Main Committee of the HSRC Investigation into Education: Provision of Education in the RSA* (Pretoria: HSRC, 1981).

a “technicist” approach; and it embraced the limited view that reforming education would and should meet the needs of the capitalist economy. In this respect, it shared the dominant human capital-based consensus of World Bank approaches to education.²⁵

In parallel with this process, bantustan leaders had begun flexing their muscles through the appointment of commissions of inquiry for the reform of the education system within their specific territorial spheres of authority. New discourses of development and reform helped to legitimate bantustan leaders in contexts where their authority was deeply contested. In 1977, the year that Bophuthatswana accepted its independence, Mangope established a commission of inquiry for the reform of education in Bophuthatswana.²⁶ It predated the establishment of a similar commission for South Africa (the De Lange Commission) by two years. Bophuthatswana’s commission resulted in the introduction of a Primary Education Upgrade Programme (PEUP).²⁷ The commission’s recommendations included a comprehensive reform of the structure and pedagogy of the primary education curriculum, including the introduction of an early childhood programme; the phasing out of double sessions in Grades 1 and 2; the extension of the school day to include more music, drama and physical movement classes; the division of social studies into history and geography in Standards 3 and 4; making religious education a non-examinable subject; and, from the first grades, the introduction of English alongside Setswana. It advocated increased “activity, participation, creativity, problem-solving, individual responsibility”—ideas central to progressivist, child-centred approaches in education.²⁸ A year later, in 1978, Buthelezi unveiled his *Ubuntu-botho* syllabus for KwaZulu schools.²⁹ As a form of citizenship education, it celebrated Zulu ethnicity and history. Buthelezi then set about creating the Inkatha Institute, a think tank headed by University of Natal academic Lawrence Schlemmer, through which he set up the Buthelezi Commission in 1982,³⁰ which had an educational component. In Venda, a commission of inquiry into education was also appointed, with it reporting in

25 See for example Mervyn Hartwig and Rachel Sharp, “The State and the Reproduction of Labour Power in South Africa,” John Davies, “Capital, State and Educational Reform in South Africa,” Peter Buckland, “Technicism and de Lange: Reflections on the Process of the HSRC Investigation,” and Linda Chisholm, “Redefining Skills: Black Education in South Africa in the 1980s,” in Kallaway, *Apartheid and Education*.

26 Republic of Bophuthatswana, *Report of the National Education Commission: Education for Popagano* (Mafikeng: Government Printer, 1978).

27 For further discussion, see Chisholm, “Bantustan Education History” and Chisholm, *Between Worlds*, chap. 8.

28 Republic of Bophuthatswana, *Report of the National Education Commission*, 35–36; see also Chisholm, *Between Worlds*, chap. 8.

29 See Gerhard Maré, “Education in a ‘Liberated Zone’”; Mdluli, “Ubuntu-botho”; Daphna Golan, “Inkatha and Its Use of the Zulu Past,” *History in Africa* 18 (1991): 113–126; see also Chisholm, *Between Worlds*, chap. 9.

30 Buthelezi Commission, *The Requirements for Stability and Development in KwaZulu and Natal*, 2 vols., (Durban: H+H Publications, 1982).

1982.³¹ It too initiated a PEUP. KaNgwane, somewhat reluctant and late off the starting blocks, appointed its commission in 1988.

A Bophuthatswana–Venda connection in the spread of the PEUP was possibly the presence and involvement of German mission education-related individuals in both bantustans. A driving force of Bophuthatswana’s PEUP was Christel Bodenstein, who was connected by marriage to the Hermannsburg Mission Society, which historically had focused its mission efforts on the Tswana in the western Transvaal. Lucas Mangope had a close relationship with his former teacher, the Hermannsburger Heinz Dehnke.³² In addition, upon Buthelezi’s recommendation, he appointed Wolfgang Bodenstein, brother of Christel Bodenstein’s husband and a doctor at the mission hospital at Applesbosch in Zululand, as his advisor.³³ The Berlin Mission Society, another German-speaking mission, was well established in Venda, its missionaries having been responsible for the establishment of mission schools, translation of the Bible and preparation of school readers. Erdmann Schwellnus of the Berlin Mission Society had founded the Tshakhuma mission station in the northern part of the country among the VhaVenda in 1874. The Giesekkes arrived in the early part of the 20th century. Marriage between the Giesekke and Schwellnus families bound the two mission families. Their educational endeavours included the establishment of primary, then secondary schools and finally a teacher training college—the Vendaland Training Institute (VTI) at Tshakhuma (renamed Tshisimani College in 1973). This history is documented by Helga Giesekke.³⁴ Like the Bodensteins in Bophuthatswana, the Giesekkes in Venda were closely connected with, and uncritical of, the bantustan leadership. Although there were tensions between Hermannsburgers and members of the Berlin Mission Society, it is likely that the PEUP in Venda was facilitated by links between the two.

Buckland’s comparison of the main concerns and categories of the De Lange Commission of Inquiry with those of the three reports developed in Bophuthatswana, KwaZulu and Venda shows that “a focus on provision, ‘equality of opportunity’ and manpower planning” characterised all four. Buckland has argued that these reports are significant not so much for the influence which experts wielded, as recommendations were seldom implemented, but rather for “generating the language of legitimation for education policy.”³⁵ Each report is characterised by a detailed outline of different aspects of provision, their shortcomings and what needed to be done. This included management

31 Republic of Venda, *Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the System of Education in Operation in the Republic of Venda* (Thohoyandou: Government Printer, 1982).

32 See Chisholm, *Between Worlds*, 17 and chap. 8.

33 Email communication with Maren Bodenstein, daughter of Hans and Christel Bodenstein, March 10, 2012.

34 Helga Giesekke, “The First Hundred Years of the History of Education in Venda, 1870–1970” (Unpublished manuscript, 1977), ii, Accession 89, August Hesse Collection, University of South Africa Archives, Pretoria.

35 Buckland, “Education Policy and Rural Development,” 21–22.

structure, educational structure, supportive structures and programmes for educational provision including infrastructural provision, provision for teacher training, language, special educational needs and non-formal education.³⁶ Buckland notes that what is striking about all three reports is that although the authorities commissioning them saw the areas under their control as primarily rural, the recommendations are overwhelmingly urban in focus.³⁷ The role that the notion “rural” plays in the development discourse of the three bantustan reports is ill defined and inconsistent. As such, they can be seen to be assimilated to a more universalising discourse, characteristic also of the De Lange Report. A decade later, Jacklin and Graaff would argue more forcefully for specific attention to, and solutions for, rural areas.³⁸

A common network of development-education experts who contributed to these reports circulated among at least three of the bantustans—Bophuthatswana, Venda and KaNgwane. At the centre stood Ken Hartshorne, a former principal of the Wesleyan Kilnerton College in Pretoria who became a key bureaucrat within the Bantu Education system from the 1950s onwards. He was instrumental, among other things, in reforming and redesigning the structure and curriculum of African teacher education qualifications in the early 1970s.³⁹ When he resigned from his position as education planner in the Department of Education and Training (for African schools in urban areas) shortly after 1976, he joined the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits)’s Department of Adult and Continuing Education. At this point he became actively engaged in the Bophuthatswana educational inquiry, in which he was a driving force. In 1988, Mabuza commissioned him to evaluate the KaNgwane education department and make recommendations based on his findings.⁴⁰ Jacklin suggests that he was a consultant to “a number” of bantustan education departments prior to 1988. His work and that of others on Bophuthatswana’s initiative was cited in the Buthelezi Commission’s report, and so his work had been closely followed. The consultant engaged for the Venda report, Bob Smith, was a roving British development-education academic closely connected with the Bophuthatswana educational reform experiment. A second report was prepared for Venda by Don White, the Dean of Education at Wits, who was close to Hartshorne both in age and ideology.⁴¹

36 For the De Lange Report, see HSRC, *Report of the Main Committee of the HSRC Investigation*; C. van Zyl, *The De Lange Report, Ten Years On: An Investigation into the Extent of the Implementation of Recommendations of the 1981 HSRC Investigation into Education* (Pretoria: HSRC, 1991).

37 Buckland, “Education Policy and Rural Development,” 20.

38 See Jacklin and Graaff, “Final Report on Homeland Education.”

39 Hartshorne, *Crisis and Challenge*, 239.

40 Jacklin, “Schooling in KaNgwane.”

41 Don White, “Venda Teacher Training Strategy: A Master Plan for the Provision of Suitably Qualified Teachers for Venda” (Thohoyandou, 1992), cited in Johann Graaff, “Teachers without Classrooms: Education in Venda,” <https://hdl.handle.net/10539/25647>, in Jacklin and Graaff, “Rural Education in South Africa”; no page number in original.

While the evidence for mission networks fostering education links between bantustans is tenuous, there is strong evidence that internationally trained, university-based policy experts played an important role in channelling ideas about education reform to the bantustans. One important Bophuthatswana connection with KaNgwane was Buckland, a talented educationist based first at the University of Cape Town and then at the University of Bophuthatswana (Unibo), where he developed an interest in policy and planning. As shown above, he was an early and influential critic of the reformist National Party's De Lange Report as well as of bantustan reformist education and curriculum policies. In 1988, he took up a position with Mabuza as the First Secretary for Education and Culture. Shortly after his stint in KaNgwane, he cut his teeth as an education policy analyst while working for the Urban Foundation in Johannesburg and in the NECC's NEPI. Like Hartshorne, who also engaged with the "progressive" NECC's policy processes between 1990 and 1992, Buckland easily traversed different worlds, which were often hostile to one another. Following a period as Superintendent-General of Education in the new province of Gauteng, he went on to become a senior education advisor at the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (1997–2002) and lead education specialist at the World Bank (2002–2010).

Significant among these educational reformers and policy experts was their appropriation of contemporary, internationally prominent education development concepts and models for the purposes of bantustan educational development and planning—whether this was child-centred education in the case of Bophuthatswana, teacher development models in the case of Venda, education planning in that of KaNgwane or "basic needs" approaches as in KwaZulu. At the time, the principal educational approaches in South African universities were dominated either by the fundamental pedagogics of Afrikaans-speaking and bantustan universities or, with some exceptions, the foundations-of-education approach of English-speaking universities. Deeply embedded in fundamental pedagogics were the racial, paternalistic assumptions of Christian National Education about the relationship between black and white, and teacher and student. Its key claims to universality and scientificity functioned as the ideological underpinning of teacher training under apartheid education.⁴²

Peter Randall's survey of the history of education in South African universities, conducted on the eve of the transition to democracy,⁴³ argues that neither Afrikaans- nor English-speaking universities' schools of education studied South African education with reference to either its history or key challenges. In English-speaking universities, "the orthodoxy that ruled ... concentrated on Western schooling. Where it considered

42 Peter Randall, "Historico-pedagogics and Teacher Education in South Africa, 1948–1985," *Perspectives in Education* 11, no. 2 (1990): 37–46; Paul Beard and Wally Morrow, eds., *Problems of Pedagogics* (Durban: Butterworths, 1981).

43 Peter Randall, "The Role of the History of Education in Teacher Education in South Africa, with Particular Reference to Developments in Britain and the USA" (PhD diss., University of the Witwatersrand, 1988).

schooling in South Africa at all, it dealt almost exclusively with the development of a public school system for whites.”⁴⁴ From the late 1970s, this perspective began to be challenged at Wits through the work of Peter Kallaway and his colleagues.⁴⁵ However, given the prevalence of these extremely narrow approaches at all universities, developmentalist methods claiming to address local contexts and challenges of inequality appealed to many who sought different approaches to the analysis and change of inequality in South Africa. When these were used—either by former officials of the Bantu Education department, such as Hartshorne, British development experts, young South African educationists or German mission-education-linked liberals—they were promoted as enabling a more “practical” and less “theoretical” approach to education than that offered by universities. In this sense, it could be argued that the ambiguities opened up by the pseudo-independence of bantustans paradoxically enabled new links and discourses that had their roots in much older colonial developmentalist approaches.

The intellectual and policy networks operating in Bophuthatswana, Venda and KaNgwane do not appear to have intersected directly with those in the formulation of the *Ubuntu-botho* syllabus in KwaZulu. This syllabus provided for a curious blending of Black Consciousness with the celebration of ethnic history that was the hallmark of Inkatha.⁴⁶ Praisley Mdluli and Gerhard Maré both claim that it was developed by the Natal African Teachers’ Union, the schools’ Inspectors’ Association and University of Zululand academics who were also members of Inkatha.⁴⁷ J. K. Ngubane, an Inkatha intellectual, was influential in developing the idea of Ubuntu. Oscar Dhlomo, the first KwaZulu Minister of Education and Culture, piloted the syllabus based on this idea through the KwaZulu legislative assembly. Dhlomo had himself travelled extensively across the United Kingdom, United States and African countries researching trends in teacher training shortly before the unveiling of the syllabus. It is possible that those elements in the syllabus that focused on black history and citizenship were adopted and adapted from these international contexts for local purposes. However, as several writers have pointed out, the main purpose of the syllabus was propagandistic in its presentation of the history of black liberation in South Africa as having purely Zulu antecedents. As in the other bantustans, the *Ubuntu-botho* booklets or textbooks were a celebration of Inkatha and Zulu ethnic history, embodying the view that education should be shorn of its European elements to be made more local and relevant.⁴⁸

44 Randall, “The Role of the History of Education,” 15.

45 See for example Kallaway, *Apartheid and Education*.

46 See Golan, “Inkatha and Its Use of the Zulu Past,” 120.

47 Mdluli, “Ubuntu-botho,” 61; Maré, “Education in a ‘Liberated Zone,’” 131.

48 See for example *Ubuntu-botho* [Good citizenship], Ibang 7 (Pietermaritzburg: KwaZulu Booksellers, 1989); also Golan, “Inkatha and Its Use of the Zulu Past.”

Inkatha intellectuals such as P. C. Luthuli and E. P. Ndaba, who were based at the University of Zululand, were deeply influenced by fundamental pedagogics.⁴⁹ However, several of these intellectuals were also connected—through the Buthelezi and De Lange commissions of inquiry—with white liberals and reformists such as Ken Hartshorne, Bob Smith and Don White, to mention some of the citations in the Buthelezi report’s education section. In this sense, the apartheid bantustan ethnic project was also harnessed through education policy and development experts towards a broader reformism.

The broader reformist consensus of which the Buthelezi Commission was a part was expressed in the HSRC commission of inquiry appointed to make recommendations on education in 1979. The main committee, headed by Professor J. P. de Lange of the then Rand Afrikaans University, was made up of 26 members. It was dominated by the educational establishment—senior officials and administrators from government and tertiary educational institutions. The commission did not include a single recognised leader of the popular opposition, and brought together a pro-government constituency including a number of Broederbonders and the ubiquitous Ken Hartshorne.⁵⁰ Among the six black people on the committee was Professor A. C. Nkabinde, the rector of the University of Zululand and a leading figure in Inkatha and also contributor to the Buthelezi Commission. The principles on which its members found common agreement and that represented the reformist consensus revolved around the notion of “education of equal quality.”

For its members, the principle that “equal opportunities for education, including equal standards of education, for every inhabitant irrespective of race, colour, creed, or sex, shall be the purposeful endeavour of the state” appeared to be a major departure from what was then government policy.⁵¹ However, this did not amount to a rejection of educational segregation or the broader political and economic framework within which education occurred, a criticism made by those who were not part of the consensus. Nor did the principle that there should be recognition of what is common and diverse “in the religious and cultural way of life and the languages of the inhabitants” inspire confidence that this was a major step away from separate but equal education.⁵² Other

49 P. C. Luthuli was a professor of philosophy of education at the University of Zululand. His MEd, “The Metabletic Nature of the Aim in Education for the Zulu People” (University of Zululand, 1977) and his PhD, “The Philosophical Foundations of Black Education in South Africa” (Unisa, ca. 1981), promoted the idea of an African philosophy for a new Zulu system of education. E. P. Ndaba also wrote within the framework of his Afrikaner mentors, fundamental pedagogics: E. P. Ndaba, “A Psycho-pedagogical Study of Differentiated Education and Its Significance for Education in KwaZulu” (DED thesis, University of Zululand, 1975).

50 HSRC, *Report of the Main Committee of the HSRC Investigation*; see also National Education Union of South Africa (Neusa), *De Lange: Marching to the Same Order* (Johannesburg: Neusa, 1982). http://www.historicalpapers.wits.ac.za/inventories/inv_pdf/AK2117/AK2117-J3-21-AV2-001-jpeg.pdf. AK2117, Wits Historical Papers, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg.

51 HSRC, *Report of the Main Committee of the HSRC Investigation*, Principle 1, p. 14.

52 Neusa, *De Lange*, 5.

critical principles included the need to “harmonise” the educational aspirations of people with the “manpower needs” of the country and to ensure public provision of schooling and recognition of the role of the private sector in schooling in informal education. Its proposals included recommendations for the restructuring of education in pre-basic, basic and post-basic education and considerations of the relationship between centralised and decentralised governance.⁵³ The reformist consensus therefore appeared to be a way of harnessing the collective forces invested in apartheid education, whether through “white” South Africa or the bantustans, in a common exercise that both legitimated and sought reform of the existing system within a framework of gradual change.

The work of the Buthelezi Commission was conducted in parallel with that of the De Lange Commission of Inquiry. Its committee members represented the commercial, industrial and academic elite of Natal and Zululand. Its education section was written by a number of people, including academics from the University of Natal (on financing and non-formal education respectively) and the sugar industry’s Tongaat Group (on the responsibilities of the private sector). The remaining sections could have been compiled from contributions cited in the references by Inkatha intellectuals such as Oscar Dhloomo, P. C. Luthuli, S. B. Mdluli, A. P. E. Mkhwanazi, E. P. Ndaba, S. D. Nene, A. C. Nkabinde and C. L. S. Nyembezi—all of whom were referenced as having written and prepared for the report either a joint or an individual memorandum on integrated schooling in KwaZulu and Natal. Although the education section is cast as an attempt to map the educational situation in the bantustan of KwaZulu and the province of Natal across different sectors, it is significant, as Buckland points out, that a key international source that informs the thinking of parts of the report is *The Education Dilemma: Policy Issues for Developing Countries in the 1980s*, edited by John Simmons and prepared for the World Bank.⁵⁴ It was used to represent educational issues in the bantustans as those belonging to “developing countries” as a whole. Its overall message was that the expansion of formal education in the 1960s and 1970s in newly independent African countries had not led to modernisation or narrowed income distribution between rich and poor or propelled school-leavers into jobs or developed rural areas. Added to these hard truths came the recognition that greater local African content or rurally oriented curricula would not necessarily make education more relevant or equip people for work or stop schools alienating children from their parents.⁵⁵ So even as the report’s educational recommendations were mainly limited to the need for unitary planning, new emphases in teacher education and inter-university collaboration, its main conclusion was that the issue at root for education in KwaZulu was “one of articulating the educational needs of a Third World society with those of a geographically-interlocked modern First

53 HSRC, *Report of the Main Committee of the HSRC Investigation*.

54 John Simmons, ed., *The Education Dilemma: Policy Issues for Developing Countries in the 1980s* (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1980); Buckland, “Education Policy and Rural Development.”

55 Simmons, *The Education Dilemma*, 371–372.

World Society.”⁵⁶ What is important here is the language of development, which lent the initiative a more radical and international tone, and provided a language for displacing and reconceptualising the apartheid realities within a more neutral space. This language of development was an element of all bantustan education reports considered above.

Conclusion

KwaZulu’s *Ubuntu-botho* syllabus and Bophuthatswana’s and to a lesser extent Venda’s PEUPs for all intents and purposes died when the bantustan system came to an end. The development planners and “experts” who transmitted common policy proposals across their boundaries moved on, some into, or closely connected with, the post-apartheid governing apparatus. Education-planning tools and methodologies circulated and became familiar within education departments. The overall reformist consensus developed by the De Lange and Buthelezi commissions provided social actors, some of whom became absorbed into a new state, with a language of policy current in international development agencies. They would have been able to adapt quickly to new requirements.

The educational legacies of specific bantustans were thus paradoxically both lasting and short-lived. This article has examined only a few instances of cross-border connection through a development discourse. Much more work is needed on the processes whereby black public servants in the educational bureaucracies of bantustans were also circulated into new positions in the post-apartheid administrations. Many of these were schooled in a reformist and mainly conservative consensus that crossed the boundaries between bantustans and South Africa. This is important not only for understanding the legacy of the bantustans and their education systems, but also the history of educational reform in South Africa.

Finally, with reference to arguments about the “rurality” of bantustans necessitating specific types of solutions, it is clear that networks involved in reformist “discourse coalitions” were integrating thinking about conditions in the bantustans into universalising discourses that undermined their specificity. Despite the specificity of location, these “discourse coalitions” simultaneously separated and integrated bantustans. By developing policies and initiatives for specific bantustans they defined their particularity; but by the commonness of the discourse and approach, they integrated them. More work would need to be done on the other bantustans to tease out the specific cross-border liberal and ethnic nationalist networks operating there.

56 Simmons, *The Education Dilemma*, 373.

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