PSYCHOLOGY IN SOCIETY

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Psychology in society is a journal which aims to critically explore and present ideas on the nature of psychology in apartheid and capitalist society. There is a special emphasis on the theory and practice of psychology in the South African context.

This issue was produced by the Durban editorial group.

CONTENTS

EDITORIAL

Psychology has not always been secure in its social
articulation, and a number of contributions in this issue
highlight the problems of psychology in society in the present
political conjuncture in South Africa. Berger and Lazarus in
their article, 'The views of community organisers on the
relevance of psychological practice in South Africa', show in
their research work with community organisers how invisible
psychology is in working class areas. Of concern to community
psychologists like Berger and Lazarus is the community
perception, if not stereotype, that psychology is clinical
psychology. And the perception of this clinical psychology is of
a very individualised, socially disconnected kind: the treatment
of mad individuals in psychiatric hospitals. It is an indictment
on a psychology which sees itself as contributing to the
alleviation of suffering of people in the ordinary experience of
their lives, that it is so absent from the lives of communities
that need it most. The Berger and Lazarus article also raises
the problems which will be faced by any group of psychologists
who try to intervene with community and working class groups for
whom psychology is at best a foreign practice and at worst a
mystified practice.

'The organisation of appropriate social services in South Africa' - OASSSA - has to a large extent engaged with the whole question of socially articulating psychological practice. In the article by OASSSA chairperson, Lloyd Vogelman, the development of OASSSA is presented in the context of simultaneously criticising the practice of bourgeois psychology. While the OASSSA criticisms are mostly focussed around 'applied psychology', they also have pertinence for research practices in psychology and the education of psychology students. The significance of the OASSSA criticisms is that they are responded to in the very important work that OASSSA has been doing with predominantly black working class communities. In other words, OASSSA has tried to re-conceptualise and re-structure the practice of health care in a more democratic way and in a way which consults with the community about what their needs are. The OASSSA article in this issue, which has been given in numerous forums around the country, can be considered as OASSSA's current position paper. OASSSA is a dynamic and self-critical organisation and hence this position paper must also be seen as work in progress.

There is a danger that in trying to develop a social articulation for psychology, an exclusive emphasis is given to oppressed and black groups. In other words, 'social' becomes over-identified with black, oppressed people, working class, etc. While this might be appropriate as a historical corrective it has the tendency to be patronising towards certain social groups and is furthermore theoretically incoherent in re-constituting

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psychological practice. It is in this regard that work on the psychological aspects of conscription and 'National Service' becomes particularly important. Alan Flisher in a important article, 'Some psychological aspects of commencing "National Service" in South Africa', discusses from a developmental perspective the impact of commencing one's military training at the present time. This is not only an issue for those individuals who will fulfil their military call-up, but it is an important issue for all of us in a society hell-bent on militarist responses to social, economic and political crises. Flisher's work is especially needed at a time when severe repression and censorship allows for very little discussion about the effects of militarisation on individuals' lives and on wider social relations.

'Psychology in society' has not seen itself as only a 'psychology' journal, but rather as a journal in the human and social sciences. The focus is predominantly on psychological matters and not in a narrow sense, and hence the commitment of the journal to encourage contributions relating to broader issues in the human and social sciences. Mark Townsend's article, 'Open, repressive, or black education?' is an evaluation of a conference held at the Umlazi campus of the University of Zululand on the state of the social sciences in black universities, sponsored by ASSA and the Ford Foundation. However, his article goes beyond a mere evaluation, and further illuminates the problems faced by the social sciences in these universities. His point of entry to this latter task is by

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situating the problems of teaching social science in black univerisities _within the context of a debate that took place in the pages of the 'Times Higher Education Supplement' (21-02-86 & 27-06-86), between Christopher Forsyth, fellow of Robinson College, Cambridge and A.C. Nkabinde, rector and vice-chancellor of the University of Zululand. The thrust of this debate, which Townsend joins, is the characterisation of the white English speaking universities as being liberal, open and anti-government institutions of higher learning, while the black universities (or 'bush colleges' as Forsyth calls them) are repressive and controlled by government nominees and supporters. Townsend's discussion of these issues revives an imporant debate among social scientists and academics about the role of universities in contemporary struggles in South Africa.

Another arena where the struggles facing social science are particularly intense is the industrial sphere. The whole nexus of knowledge/power is brought sharply into focus in the intervention of social science in the struggles between capital and labour. In this issue Grahame Hayes reports on a one-day conference organised by the Natal Industrial Psychology Group in September last year. The conference was concerned to critically evaluate the role of industrial psychology in the context of the present crisis in South Africa, and to see how more appropriate responses could be developed.

This issue ends with two book reviews which deal with social groupings often ignored in psychological research. The first is a review by Joha Louw-Potgieter of Moscovici's book, 'The age of the crowd', and the second review by Jo Beall is on the local publication, 'Divide and profit: Indian workers in Natal'.

With this issue we welcome Jean Benjamin and Anna Stroebel to the Cape Town editorial group. By having editors from the University of the Western Cape we broaden our Cape Town base, as well as now 'feminising' the Cape Town editorial group. Gillian Finchilescu and Bruce Irvine are now both in England, and hence have left the Durban editorial group to hopefully become our 'foreign correspondents'.

This issue of 'Psychology in society' has come out later than originally intended. The first reason relates to a re-scheduling in production dates, and the second reason has to do with the political economy of the 'poor'! We hope the travails of 'independence' will soon be overcome and we can produce 'Psychology in society' as timely as our bourgeois colleagues manage with their journals. We would like to apologise to our subscribers, readers, and supporters for these production delays.

THE VIEWS OF COMMUNITY ORGANISERS ON THE RELEVANCE OF PSYCHOLOGICAL PRACTICE IN SOUTH AFRICA

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Sandy Lazarus
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An increasing number of psychologists are expressing their discontent
with mainstream psychology and the role of the psychologist in South Africa.
They are calling for a theory and practice 'relevant' to the South African
context (Anonymous, 1986; Dawes, 1985; Lazarus, 1985; Moll, 1983;
Psychology in Society, 1983).   The heightened level of political conflict
in this country has highlighted the dilemmas of the practising professional
and thrown many psychologists into a state of insecurity, confusion and
self-doubt.   At the same time however, the 'crisis in psychology in South
Africa' has produced much positive debate and activity around the 'restruc-
turing' of psychology and the development of appropriate social services.
Concerned psychologists are re-evaluating their current practice - in
response to the needs and demands of a changing society.

Psychology in South Africa has come under attack on a variety of levels. The population of psychologists is predominantly white male middle class, and working mostly with educated middle class people (Jordaan & Jordaan, 1984; Swartz, Dowdall & Swartz, 1986). Furthermore, mental health services in South Africa reflect broader class, race and gender inequalities in the society. Facilities are generally poorly developed, inaccessible to the majority of the population, and have a 'curative' emphasis (Savage, 1979; Solomons, 1979). The field of industrial psychology has been criticised for supporting management through focusing on industrial efficiency and the reduction of conflict, while power structures in industry and the role of trade unions have largely been ignored (Fullagar, 1984). Likewise, in providing vocational guidance and administering psychological tests, educational psychologists fulfil a significant function in the present education system. They contribute to the streaming process whereby, on the basis of academic achievement and 'individual merit', children are allocated to positions in the social division of labour (Psychology in Society, 1983).

The training psychologists undergo has been said to perpetuate an elitist professional ethic and to be based on an uncritical decontextual-ised and imported 'non-African' psychology. This psychology has been criticised elsewhere for tending to psychologise the causes and cures of human functioning and suffering and for neglecting to consider political, cultural and ideological factors (Jacoby, 1975; Lichtman, 1982). Psychology in South Africa has been noted for its lack of critical analysis of the structural conditions which are at the root of many problems considered important to address (Dawes, 1985).

Dissatisfaction with current psychological practice in South Africa

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has led to the search for a socially relevant psychology; alternative or appropriate practices which respond to the needs and concerns of the majority of South Africans in the building of a future democratic society. It is not the aim of this paper to deal with the complex and varied theoretical issues involved in this process, but rather to present the findings of an exploratory study (Berger, 1985) which attempted to contribute to the present debates.

The research elicited the views of people involved in progressive organisations, on the discipline of psychology as practised in South Africa. The basic assumption underlying the endeavour was the necessity, as discussed above, for formulating alternative approaches and modes of functioning as well as determining the psychologist's position within the broader democratic movement in this country.

The participants in the study were 20 'community organisers' (13 women, 7 men) involved in different organisations in Cape Town. They were active in Christian, grassroots and general resource organisations as well as trade unions. While participants spoke in their personal capacities, it was felt that their experience within the organisations gave them some insight into the experiences, feelings and perceptions of members of the communities with which they worked. The majority of participants had received some form of tertiary education, while some had fulfilled the role of 'lay' counsellors.

After discussions with various people involved in community work in Cape Town, the researcher (S. Berger) made contact with participants. Twenty semi-structured interviews were conducted in a uniform manner during June/July 1985. Discussion centred around the following broad areas of inquiry:

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- links between personal problems and social, political and economic
  conditions

- utilisation of 'helping services' in the community

- views on psychologists and psychological practice

- framework for a 'relevant' practice and future role of the psychologist

- the relationship between psychological practice and political struggles
  in South Africa.

A diary was kept by the researcher throughout the research period in order
to record impressions of the research process during a most turbulent
political time.   Interview responses were content analysed and a qualita-
tive descriptive account of responses drawn up.   It should be noted that
participants' comments are not statements of fact, but rather reveal their
view on the issues under discussion.   A brief report of the main 'findings'
follows.   Certain quotes from the interviews have been selected and are
included to illustrate some of the points raised.

FINDINGS

Political nature of the 'individual's' problems

Participants outlined what they saw as links between broader political
and economic structures and what are usually identified as personal problems
or as 'individual pathology'.   Subjective experiences of anxiety, frustra-
tion and depression were described, and seen as being generated by basic
conditions of poverty, unemployment, overcrowding and lack of recreational
facilities in residential areas.   These, as well as the incidence of
alcoholism, crime and family conflict, were to be understood as people's
responses to stressful situations and extremely oppressive social conditions.
Comments included:

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"Work pressure, high rents really work on a person ... you don't
get mad for nothing"

"Man ... his mind is entangled with family needs ... he becomes
aggressive with his family because he doesn't know how to handle
it"

"Factory work is enough to drive anyone mad ... a lot comes out
as violence in the family".

Many participants stressed a need for an awareness of the political
nature of personal experiences and concerns; this was particularly
important in order to counter feelings of self-blame and powerlessness.
It would facilitate united action to challenge underlying social structures
and would enable people to see that

"it's the way that society has been structured that made them
be where they are, go through what they're going through".

Utilisation of 'helping services'

Participants stated that people would often tend not to seek outside
help but rather to sort problems out themselves. This possibly involved
an acceptance of the situation as it existed. Thus it was said that

"people bottle up"; "people accept things"; "people get by".
The point was also made that more basic material concerns were prioritised
and people were more likely to seek help and advice for 'tangible' problems,
that is, more pressing concerns which were related to basic material needs.
They were less motivated to look for what was termed "a shoulder to cry on".
One person said that

"generally psychological problems are secondary ... are not pulled out
as a problem to be dealt with ... other problems take all your energy".
Many participants stated that it was generally felt that there were few
social services available and that there was a lack of knowledge of those
which were. In the main, people considered professional services to be

expensive and inaccessible.   Nevertheless, it was said that professionals
were frequently regarded and relied upon as advice-givers and problem-
solvers.   Organisers indicated that the support systems most frequently
utilised were religious ministers, family members, friends, social workers
and doctors.   This naturally depended on the nature of the concern.
Choice of support was also largely determined by whether or not the person
was regarded as trustworthy.

Image of psychologists and psychological practice

The clearest point made was that people have generally had very
limited experience of psychologists and were basically unaware of the
work that psychologists performed.   Contact with psychologists appeared
to be limited for two major reasons:

(a)   their inaccessibility to the majority of people in Cape Town -
      psychologists were not established in the community;   they did not
      actively expose the role they fulfilled and their services were seen
      as expensive;

(b)   the nature of their work - psychologists treated 'mad' people and
      middle class people;   they did not have an understanding of community
      issued and the concerns of the oppressed.

It was said that

"psychology is very foreign to the community"
"psychologists are not known in our community"
"people won't think of going to a psychologist".

While most people have had little direct contact with psychologists,
they do have certain basic conceptions of what psychologists do, and a
particular image of psychological practice.   Most participants stated that
psychologists dealt with 'mad' people.   The following statements exemplify

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this:

> "There's the idea of someone coming to treat your mind"
> "If you need a psychologist you have broken down totally;
>   you're loony"
> "Psychologists care for sick people".

They were therefore seen to deal with severe problems and were to be met
in traumatic situations.   They were clearly associated with psychiatric
institutions which had a very negative image.   As a result psychologists
were regarded with some caution, and even suspicion.

Most organisers regarded the second major focus for psychological
practice as individual counselling.   This was described in terms of the
development of a relationship with clients, listening and talking to them
in order to help them work through personal experiences and problems.
There was some positive feedback about this function:

> "It helps to speak about your problems ... and the psychologist
>   gives you a hearing"
> "They help in relieving emotions ... making you stronger".

Many organisers felt however that the way in which this was presently
conducted was not appropriate for or accessible to the majority of South
Africans.   It was said that while psychologists could offer assistance
and guidance, at the present time "the oppressed are not benefitting from
psychologists' skills".   Psychological practice was seen to aim at a small
grouping of middle class people.   Some participants felt that in fact, it
could only address "middle class problems".   Statements indicating this
included:

> "Psychologists serve the rich, help them solve their problems"
> "Problems in working class areas can be addressed by other people
>   ... don't need psychologists".

It was said that psychologists focused on "businessmen", "the elite" and

"housewives with money". The cynicism with which middle class problems were frequently regarded, became generalised to psychologists through their association with and focus on those concerns. Thus it was said that

> "a lot of middle class people are indulgent about their psycho-logical problems"

> "psychologists in private practice are ripping off the middle class who have problems or imaginary problems".

The framework of psychotherapy was posed as being a problematic one. Factors such as the cost of therapy and of transport, time involved, regularity of appointments and language used, precluded the involvement of most working class people and made it accessible to only a small grouping. Furthermore, organisers condemned work on an individualistic level when it attempted to 'readjust' people to "fit back into society, into the system".

The issue of neutrality on the part of the professional was also referred to by some participants who felt that psychologists and other professionals could not be apolitical: "There are claims of neutrality but this is a myth".

Psychologists were identified with the privileged and powerful classes in this country, and were perceived to have little understanding of the concerns and realities of the oppressed. Politically progressive psychologists were regarded as the exception.

Framework for an appropriate practice

Various areas of socially useful activity were identified by parti-cipants. Suggestions included:

- research: for example, examining the ways in which social forces

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interact with personal factors; how people are affected by, and respond
to, social, political and economic structures, and providing feedback of
research findings to the community;

- education/dissemination of information: for example, providing informa-
  tion about stress reactions, emotional disturbances and possible coping
  strategies, as well as information about existing social services;
- counselling: based on a political analysis of the problem and aimed at
  empowering people; also including crisis intervention work to provide
  short term relief;
- group work: for example, involvement with organisations around issues
  of group functioning and group dynamics;
- training of non-professionals: for example, in areas of counselling
  and research; providing psychologically-oriented skills training.

More significant than the particular area of activity was the psycholo-
gist's approach to her/his work. Participants considered this to be of
crucial importance. In this regard, it was suggested that psychologists
actively make themselves and their resources known and available to the
general public as well as to progressive organisations. "If you don't
make yourself visible people don't know you're there".

Psychologists should also attempt to demystify their work and break
down the negative stereotypes associated with psychologists and psychological
problems. Many participants felt that the psychologist should aim to
'deprofessionalise'. This would involve acknowledging and utilising the
more valuable skills while removing the present rigid division of skills
and exclusivity in training. It would serve to challenge the existing
situation where "professionals tend to monopolise the skills they have".
It was felt that psychologists should guard against "seeing themselves as

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Good Samaritans", but rather attempt to break down power inequalities and democratise the professional-client interaction, and to "move with the people and not just help them". Many participants felt that the preferred mode of operating was the collective; that psychologists would be most effective if working within a team.

The issue of credibility i.e. acceptance in the community, was also raised. It was said that psychologists should actively and consistently show their commitment to act in the interests of the community in order to gain credibility "so people trust you and know you're genuine". They could work directly with community or service organisations, or be attached to an established and trusted institution or organisation in an accessible location. "People won't respond if it's alien, use structures they're used to".

Psychological practice and political struggles

Lastly the relationship of the psychologist to political struggles and social change was discussed. Most participants acknowledged the importance of providing immediate relief for the individual in distress. This need not imply adaptation to or acceptance of the status quo but rather the development of coping strategies in order to more effectively challenge the roots of one's problems. Counselling could facilitate the process of "mak(ing) you aware of things ... look(ing) at options and alternatives". However, reflection without action was useless -

"When people reflect on their problem and understand it but the community doesn't have the resources, what's the point?"

Psychological help should therefore be based on a political understanding of these problems and involve empowering the individual through 'reflection and action'. This would enable people to analyse their positions within

the wider context -

> "see the total situation and how they fit into that situation and what their contribution (is) towards making this a better society".

Participants stressed that it was impossible to remove oneself from the political situation in South Africa and that psychologists, like other professionals, needed to define their role and social responsibility in helping to bring about change in this country. As such it was considered important for them to use their "skills and insights to strengthen the democratic movement".

In speaking about the relationship between political activity and professional work, organisers suggested that psychologists put political content into their work, engage in general political activity and be available for consultations and training. However, while the potential contribution of all helping professionals was considered to be valuable, it was felt that their limitations must be accepted. Ultimately political and economic change was seen to be of primary importance because

> "you can treat one Johnny today, but there will be ten thousand more Johnnies on your doorstep until things change".

Research Process

The research process in itself became a significant aspect of the present study. The socially aware researcher within the academic environment faces the dilemma of how to conduct a study which fulfils the requirements of a 'scientific' endeavour but which is also socially useful. The balance must be maintained between satisfying conventional criteria for 'acceptable' research within the academic community, and at the same time being responsible to participants of the study and to other

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social groupings. The issue of accountability is therefore a central one in this context. A further issue touches on the researcher's interaction with participants and the way in which the research and researcher are viewed. In this regard, the need to establish trust and gain credibility in the eyes of participants was highlighted in this study. Some participants expressed scepticism about research in general. One person said:

"No reflection on you but ... nothing comes of it usually. People (are) sick of it ... nothing they will benefit in the end."

With regard to willingness to participate, another person stated that

"people need to know that they have something to give and can get something in return."

DISCUSSION

It is possible at this point only to highlight and briefly discuss a few of the issues raised during the interviews. It is important to bear in mind that the present study was exploratory in nature involving discussion with a small (and specific) grouping with a certain political consciousness and organisational experience (although the group was by no means homogenous). The focus was on the 'image' of psychology at present as well as on directions for an alternative approach for South Africa. Most participants felt that the issues covered in the interviews were not usually discussed in their circles and that these concerns were not presently a direct part of the struggles in which their organisations were engaged. It is significant to note that participants spoke about psychology predominantly in terms of clinical work. In addition, many of the general points raised referred not only to psychologists but to all professionals in this society.

Generally a critical view of psychology emerged. It was felt that a more 'relevant' practice could be developed through the actions of progressive psychologists. The responsibility lay with psychologists themselves to define a role and future direction appropriate to the South African reality.

With regard to the issue of professionalism, participants considered professional knowledge and skills as crucial for any society. However, they identified the problem as lying in the monopolisation of skills by an elite grouping. They felt that this tended to foster a dependency on the 'expert' who assumed responsibility for and ownership of the person's problems. This was reinforced by the 'clients' who regarded professionals as advice-givers and problem-solvers offering expert guidance and assistance.

Many people appear to regard psychological disturbance as a 'condition' quite distinct from their everyday distresses and concerns. This point is stressed by Hayes (1983) who argues that the mental health dimension of workers' problems is seen as separate from their daily struggles and is 'given over' to a group of experts. Bannister (1983) in assessing psychotherapy, asserts that it is based upon the transferral of the power to resolve conflict from the community to the professional. It emphasises individuality as opposed to the collective and is linked to an ideology based on the concept of the expert (middle class professional).

The issue of democratisation of the professional-client interaction cannot simply be resolved through the willingness of the professional to discard her/his professional role and 'divest' herself/himself of the accompanying expert status. Though this might be a worthy aim in certain instances, the process depends on the participants, the nature of the interaction, as well as the context and broader power structures within which it

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occurs. Swartz & Swartz (1986) have described resistances (by psycholo-
gists and 'clients') to this process encountered by some psychologists
involved in a particular community intervention. They emphasise the non-
rational factors implicated in the power of the expert status. While the
issue of deprofessionalism is an important one, caution must be exercised
so that, in trying to be democratic, psychologists are not unnecessarily
devaluing their professional resources. There is a place for 'appropriate'
use of expertise (Swartz, 1986).

Participants' criticism of professionalism also extends to the problem
of compartmentalising skills within different professions and drawing
distinct boundaries between different areas of expertise and specialisation.
This issue points to the functioning of professional associations and organ-
isations which control the entrance, training, registration and practice of
professionals within a particular discipline. These structures and controls
exist within larger social institutions and broader power structures.
Organisers in the present study indicated that professional services should
be 'opened up' and integrated into existing community social support net-
works. This would allow practitioners to challenge the present demarcation
of specialist functions and to unite with community workers on different
terrains. It would also help to break down the mystique surrounding the
psychologist as the professional who deals with 'human behaviour' and
'mental functioning' and with what are frequently regarded as rather foreign
and frightening aspects of a person's life. In addition, it would challenge
the unequal distribution of resources in this country, making services
available and ensuring the dissemination of skills to non-professionals in
the community.

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'Relevant' approach

Based on the present study, a 'relevant' psychological practice could include the following elements:

- a political consciousness and understanding of the social context within which psychologists practice, and of the effects of broader power structures on their work;

- attachment to an established and trusted organisation or institutional structure in an accessible location;

- use of resources in a collective teamwork approach;

- exposure of skills and resources; attempting to counteract public wariness in relation to psychological services;

- dissemination of skills; challenging the monopolisation of skills by an elite group;

- establishment of trust and credibility as well as showing commitment and accountability, as a basis for interaction between psychologists and the community; and

- alignment with and support of progressive groupings and the democratic movement generally.

Involvement in the struggle for a new social order does not preclude the need to address people's more immediate problems. Crisis intervention and psychological and emotional support are therefore considered to be important. Psychologists could help people to use their own strengths and develop existing coping mechanisms. Political awareness and motivation on the part of the psychologist does not imply that the psychologist need impose her/his values onto a client, but rather allow the person to gain a heightened awareness of personal and particular responses to material conditions and circumstances and thus be better able to make informed choices. This function may best be served by emphasising group and

community work rather than the traditional individual orientation.

The wide use of the term 'relevant' conceals the ideological differences on which various conceptualisations of a new relevant role for psychologists are based (Swartz, 1986). A relevant psychology may be seen in terms of a practice rooted in a critical analysis of the South African social formation. This would involve a reconsideration of fundamentals such as how the subject matter of psychology could be construed, who the target groups of psychologists should be, how professional training (methods, content, focus, etc) would need to be conducted, and which skills and services would be appropriate to South African conditions. The issue of relevance therefore goes beyond purely pragmatic concerns in relation to future practice.

Various initiatives have been taken as a result of psychologists feeling the need to re-evaluate their current practice in South Africa. An example of this has been the formation of OASSSA (Organisation for Appropriate Social Services in South Africa) which has arisen out of a perceived need to respond more appropriately to present conditions in South Africa (in particular the high level of repression). This has seen the beginning of a united and co-ordinated response on the part of progressive psychologists and other people involved in the social services who have established a forum within which to debate, organise and formulate appropriate practical interventions. The recent development of this organisation in the Western Cape area has, we believe, begun to some degree to respond to the problems outlined by the participants in the present study.

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However, there are still many challenges to meet in order to develop a relevant psychological practice in South Africa.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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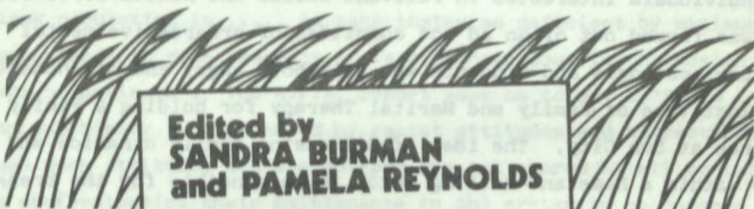
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GROWING UP IN A DIVIDED SOCIETY

THE CONTEXTS OF CHILDHOOD IN SOUTH AFRICA

RAVAN PRESS

Edited by
SANDRA BURMAN
and PAMELA REYNOLDS

Growing Up in a Divided Society

The Contexts of Childhood in South Africa

eds. Sandra Burman and
Pamela Reynolds

What is it like to grow up in South Africa now? What are the complexities of society that shape childhood and how do children's experiences contribute to the design of the social fabric? Researchers in a number of disciplines draw on their observation of and participation with children to present some answers. The first chapters place childhood in such contexts as family structure, child health, child care and education. Then follow studies which range through issues as varied as teenage pregnancies, the socio-political conundrums faced by Jewish children, and the rootlessness of children who grow up on the streets. Taken together the evidence demonstrates how different-ly childhood is experienced in a divided society. The issues are complex and of critical importance for South Africa today, yet little is known about them. This book will help professionals, university students, and the general reader to understand the intricacies.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN APPROPRIATE PSYCHOLOGY. THE WORK OF THE

ORGANISATION OF APPROPRIATE SOCIAL SERVICES IN SOUTH AFRICA

LLOYD VOGELMAN

(OASSSA CHAIR)

Before addressing the question of what is an appropriate psychology
in South Africa and OASSSA's contribution to it, let me give you a brief
history and description of OASSSA. OASSSA was established in 1983 and
represents progressive psychologists, psychiatrists, social workers and
other individuals interested in relevant social and health services.
OASSSA was formed out of an ad hoc committee of progressive mental
health professionals and students who felt both angry and disenchanted
at the Institute of Family and Marital Therapy for holding a Family
Conference at Sun City. The idea of discussing family dynamics and
therapy within a homeland setting which is responsible for the break-up
of thousands of families was seen as insensitive and anti-social. Since
then OASSSA has grown enormously and we have members scattered
throughout the country, and have major branches, one in the Transvaal
and one in the Cape. Work within OASSSA takes a variety of forms, ---
emergency services training, research, education, media and information,
therapeutic treatment. I will focus more specifically on these
activities later in my paper.

In attempting to discover what an appropriate South African psychology is, it is important to make this discovery using three primary principles of analysis. The first is that people's psychological and physical health are linked to their living and working conditions. These conditions are determined by the position of power that people have. Thus mental health and politics (and in the South African situation, Apartheid) cannot be separated. Resettlement, migrant labour, racism, exploitation, repression are all practices stemming from an Apartheid and undemocratic society. All these practices are the cause of ill-health, we therefore cannot divorce our understanding of the psyche from our understanding of society.

Politics however not only determines people's life's chances, it also determines who will get good psychological care and who won't. This brings me onto the second major principle, namely that psychological services and practices within South Africa are an irrational to people's pathology. This of course means that psychology is not generally successful at alleviating mental suffering.

Mental health care, where it exists, is in most cases characterized by segregation. In terms of staffing, and facilities, the services available to Blacks are inferior to that provided to whites. Services for Blacks are inadequate and insufficient. To quote from the American Psychiatric Association report of 1978 "Mental health care provided for the Black population is ..... in many instances deficient by minimum standards (and) in some respects it is even hazardous to the health and survival of patients". The A.P.A. report goes on to say : "South African psychiatry is influenced by racist attitudes and stereotypes. Although such attitudes and stereotypes are not shared by all mental health professionals, their maintenance in the system is encouraged by official policies and they leave a distinctive stamp in the development of psychiatry."

Another characteristic of South Africa's mental health care practise is its commercial form. Thus illness, pathology or the desire to relieve anxiety becomes a commercial transaction between a professional and his/her client. The seller makes a profit out of the transaction. By mental health services taking on a commercial form, services are directed towards those who can pay. This helps to explain in part why mental health care becomes urbanized, since there tends to

be greater concentration of wealth in industrial and city areas. Commercialization and privitisation results in the notion that if individuals want psychological assistance, they should expect to pay for it. The crazy logic of all of this is that if psychologists and psychiatrists want to continue working, they require people to have psychological and psychiatric difficulties.

Finally in contrast to official policy, South African mental health care still lays great stress on curative treatment. This is reflected by only 4% of the Health budget being allocated to preventative care.

All these characteristics mean that psychological services and practise are insufficient, out of reach and incapable of meeting the mental health needs of the majority of South Africans.

The third principle that needs to be considered when analysing psychology in South Africa, is psychology's role in reinforcing and reproducing power relations in South Africa. When discussing power relations, it is crucial to note that the majority of people are excluded from political power and control of their social and economic lives. While it is essential that we as psychologists focus on the oppression and exploitation that millions suffer under, it is vital that we also concern ourselves with the struggle against Apartheid. It is obvious to most that the struggle for a different social, economic and political system within South Africa is intensifying. Prior to the State of Emergency, mass actions and the growth of organization were the order of the day. The question I will attempt to address later in this paper is how does psychology assist progressive organization and the process of transformation towards a democratic South Africa ?

To stem the tide of opposition and to preserve the present social system, which is based on Apartheid and capitalism, an ideology which can explain why there is fragmentation, oppression, exploitation and a State of Emergency is required. Psychology's contribution to an ideology intent on rationalizing racism and exploitation in the Southern African and African setting has not gone unnoticed. Such psychological research and knowledge is given legitimacy because it is done under the guise of science. The conclusions from some of this psychological and psychiatric research (Levy, Bruhl;) is that Africans have a prelogical mentality, are unable to engage in abstract thinking and learn from experience. Furthermore it is argued that Africans do not individuate

and thus require external authority all their lives. Ritchie (1943) in
discussing African parenting states :

> The world (of the African) is thus divided into forces : a
> benevolent power which would give him everything for nothing
> (the mother during the first year), and a malevolent force which
> would deprive him even of his life itself (again the mother, due
> to the severe weaning). This high contrast in feelings of
> acceptance makes him dependent on a mother or mother-surrogate
> all his life. The individual personality is never liberated and
> brought under conscious rational control and self realisation in
> thus unknown.

In attempting to explain why West Africans should not have control
of their work, Parin and Morgenthaler (1970) utilise psychoanalytic
concepts.

> In the case of the Africans .... there was no ethos of work that
> existed as a continuing and effective inner structure. With
> regard to their working behaviour they did not seem to possess
> any super-ego, but seemed to operate solely on the pleasure
> principle, where inner satisfaction and feelings of guilt were
> not effective. Only such factors as a command from an external
> authority; imitation of and identification with, a prestige
> bearer; reward and punishment .... were of some efficacy.

The Socio-political explanation given in terms of this
psychological theory is that the European colonialist or settler should
act as a mother or father surrogate for the unindividuated and infantile
African. This perspective is illustrated in a different but similar
form in Apartheid or reformist ideology which posits that because
Africans are still primitive and not sufficiently socially developed, we
must let evolution play its role until Africans are ready for political
power in South Africa.

The necessity for psychology to help justify Apartheid by
researching and documenting the psychological differences between the
races is clearly expressed by Robbertse (1967):

Members of the Psychological Institute of the R.S.A. are
encouraged to undertake research in this field on a greater
scale because it concerns the scientific basis of seperate
development and this strikes at the root of our continued
existence.

With reference to Robbertse, at least he is aware of the
non-neutrality of psychology and how it is and can be used for social
engineering. The notion of neutrality and the emphasis on the
individual results in psychologists receiving a training which ignores
socio-political conditions. As Beit-Hellami (1974) puts it:

Clinical psychologists often discuss theories of human nature
but refrain from talking of theories of society. It is assumed
that we can leave the task of dealing with the nature of society
to others and the decision to do that relegates the political
implications of psychology to the professional unconscious,
where it is destined to be repressed unless covered through some
radical treatment or severe trauma (p.76).

Psychologists have also tried to avoid politics by suggesting that
they engage in pure rather than applied research. This distinction is
inaccurate since all research can be applied and may have social
consequences. The most striking illustration of the false dichotomy
between pure and applied research is seen in Einstein's work. (Webster
1982). Einstein was not to realise how his abstract theory and academic
mathematical formula's would assist in the development of nuclear
weapons. Einstein was to comment later "Had I known, I would rather
have been a watchmaker." As Webster (1982) remarks:

The Classical liberal view of science did not prepare Einstein
for these problems, for it teaches that science is neutral.
Thus the liberal conception of science fails to provide an
adequate sociological model of the practise of science (p.6).

Having argued that our work as psychologists has social
consequences and is not value free, we cannot escape choices and
interests. Are we going to side with the Government or are we not? Are
we going to side with the oppressors and exploiters or with the
oppressed and exploited ? and are we going to side with the working
class and progressive organizations or are we going to work for
management and independently ?

Within OASSSA our position is spelt out by our statement of
principles:

> As a group we are committed to the mental health and social
> welfare of South Africa's people, and to the development of
> appropriate social services. We are aware that in South
> Africa there are specific economic and political structures
> which contribute to most social and personal problems.
> Apartheid and economic exploitation provide the base for
> poor living conditions, work alienation and race and sex
> discrimination which are antithetical to mental health. Our
> commitment as social service workers demands that we
> continually expose the effects of these conditions and
> participate in efforts to change the structures that
> underlie them. We are committed to working together with
> other democratic organisations which are involved in the
> same or similar efforts.

> We need to identify and overcome the limitations which
> restrict our efforts. These include restrictive and unjust
> legislation, the isolation of the various mental health
> disciplines and the control of skills by a professional
> elite. In order properly to serve our community, we must
> work for a broad and unified discipline, for the sharing of
> knowledge and skills with the community at large and,
> ultimately, for an economically just and democratic society.
> WE THEREFORE AIM TO
> - unite social workers, psychologists, psychiatrists and
>   other social service workers who are interested in
>   working towards appropriate social services in South
>   Africa
> - examine and research the causes of social and personal
>   problems as extensively and as rigorously as possible
> - service and aid progressive organisations
> - reduce disciplinary isolation and define and work
>   towards a unified discipline of social service
> - provide a forum for the discussion of existing social
>   services and protest actively against these where they

are inappropriate

- share our knowledge and skills as widely as possible
through workshops, conferences, publications, the
establishment of a resource centre and involvement in
the community
- develop models of appropriate social service and assist
wherever possible with their implementation.

The difficulty of course is putting these principles into practise.
I will use the specific work of two of the OASSSA interest groups - the
Research and Emergency Services Group (E.S.G.) - to illustrate some of
our practical attempts to put our principles into practise.

Briefly - the Research Group responds to the research needs of
progressive organizations, and is beginning to undertake its own
initiatives in gathering information about mental health and socal
services in South Africa.

- the OASSSA ESG together with NAMDA, DESCOM and NUSAS Health
Directive provides counselling, first aid and legal skills to members of
progressive organizations, the majority of whom emanate from the
townships.

Of primary importance to us in OASSSA is linking our knowledge and
skills that we have been fortunate enough to develop as intellectuals
and clinicians, to the work of progressive organizations. In so doing
it is hoped that the sharing or our knowledge and skills will be of
benefit to those who most require it and to the working class of South
Africa, both for now and the future.

Thus for example the Research Group, has done research, for
progressive trade unions into maternity rights, and work stress. At
present there is an attempt to investigate children under repression, so
as to improve our understanding and clinical treatment of these
children. These research projects are not undertaken because of
academic interest, they are done on a basis of a service. Our research
is therefore, in part, determined by the practical need of an
organization, whether it be for industrial negotiation or clinical
treatment.

Another useful illustration of the relationship that can develop between clinicians and the needs of progressive organizations is the work of E.S.G. With the Vaal uprisings of September 1984, organizations within the Vaal made repeated requests for medical and psychological assistance. In many cases these requests could not be met, primarily because of police cordons and the police and army presence at local medical facilities. The latter resulted in the injured fearing arrest and some dying unattended. One strategy designed to counteract this was the training of those township residents who belonged to progressive organizations in counselling and first aid.

The objectives and what this programme has accomplished is the following:-

(1)   The imparting of skills to township residents so that they may effectively deal with acute physical and mental pathology.

(2)   Providing community organizations with some degree of control, self-sufficiency and confidence to deal with health crises.

(3)   Through the acquisition of counselling and first aid skills, the foundation for a future community controlled mental and medical health service can be established.

(4)   To ensure that the training programme and ESG trainees are accountable to progressive organizations.

One aspect of process of accountability involves a serious evaluation by the groups we train of the ESG course. From their responses we have changed, adapted and restructed the course. Our initial starting point was to use orthodox crises counselling techniques with a smattering of Rogerian theory and practise. We soon learned our mistakes - trainees became frustrated with the concept and technique of reflection and our counselling skills were often inappropriate to deal with the material difficulties that often manifested as the presenting problem. The upshot of this was to restructure the course, so as to concentrate on listening skills, problem solving techniques, indentifying particular symptons and providing knowledge about when to refer individuals for professional help. In addition the course began with situating psychological difficulties within a social analysis of South African society.

The experience of ESG has provided another important lesson for progressive psychologists - - people generally know how to cope with

their problems and provide emotional support for others. Where we as progressive psychologists can play a role is to assist people in analysing situations more coherently, providing information which may help in the formulation of solutions, share our therapeutic skills and offer our services to those who need psychological assistance.

Having mentioned accountability in relation to the ESG this issue is particularly significant when it comes to psychological research. The close link that accountability fosters between the researcher and the struggles of the oppressed and exploited, ensures that the subjects of a study do not become objects of study. Progressive psychological research demands that the subjects of a study give direction to and have control over both the study and the research report. This is often difficult for professionals and intellectuals since their role becomes defined as assistant rather than as expert and leader.

Traditional notions of science and research methodology are continually being challenged within the research domain of OASSSA. We do not believe in only acquiring information through objective measures (questionnaires, records), statistically analysing the data and then developing conclusions. We acknowledge the importance of empirical data but also stress an understanding of people's subjective experiences. In so doing we define mental health science as more than what academic psychologists or psychiatrists do. The idea that all mental health knowledge produced outside universities or other academic institutions, is not scientific, is unacceptable. The songs, stories and writings of miners, detailing their living conditions provide us with significant material if we are to understand the psychology and stress of mine workers in South Africa. It is apparent that the position that the production and reproduction of mental health knowledge only takes place in 'scientific' institutions is of benefit to the so called scientists and the ruling class. The former continue to receive legitimacy, acknowledgement and comfortable salaries. The latter continue to have their interests served by scientific institutions which assist in reinforcing the dominant ideology and capitalist social relations.

I have alluded earlier to the nature and inadequacies of mental health services and practices in South Africa. Inequality in mental health services in South Africa is overt. It manifests itself for instance in the racial imbalance of mental hospital beds, qualified

psychologists, social workers, psychiatrists and psychiatric nurses. It reflects itself in the gross disproportion in the financial allocation for white mental health compared to black mental health. Since our society is divided along class and racial lines, it becomes obvious that similar divisions will exist in the mental health system.

What is less obvious and more difficult to confront is how do you transform the mental health service and practice in South Africa ? How do you take a mental health system that has been plagued with fragmentation, a lack of coordination, inefficiency, racism, sexism and classism for over a hundred years and transform it? This question together with the fact that mental health practise reinforces present social relations, means that we cannot merely wait for a new government to take power before we democratize psychology and health services in South Africa. Mental health care is unlike clay it cannot easily be moulded. A change of government will still leave us with inappropriate training and skills, professionals and bureaucrats who will resist any movement towards change and too few practitioners to meet the mental health needs of the majority of South Africans.

We need to be aware that a new government with new policy makers does not mean that we can abolish all past practices and services and start anew. This is because the establishment of a new and vital mental health infrastructure is costly, reparative work needs to be continued, and the skills of many practitioners would be wasted.

I say all of this bearing in mind that transforming psychological practice in South Africa still requires gaining political power (and a new government) and that certain political struggles will take priority at different times. But for those practitioners who are aware that democracy is a process, not an event, the process of democratising psychology must begin now, not later. We must start to develop new insights into pathology, psychological practise and our society, we must gather new skills, we must begin to form new organizations and importantly we must, together with progressive organizations develop a programme of action, that will guide our activities and work. I believe that while OASSSA has a long way to go in achieving these objectives, we have in our short existence made a start.

In the short and long term, the path towards a democratic psychology and psychological health in South Africa is dependent on a

number of fundemental changes.

(1) The abolishment of Apartheid and the creation of a non-racial
unitary and democratic South Africa. This would rid us particularly of
the homelands and all physical and emotional deprivation that is
associated with them.

2) People should have control over all aspects of their lives -
health, work, education and politics.

3) To ensure that work and living conditions are not a threat to
people's mental or physical health.

4) The development of a National Mental Health programme that
emphasizes preventative mental health care. Psychology must therefore
begin to concern itself more with health than illness.

5) Mental health practitioners must begin to offer their services to
progressive organisations and to those individuals and communities that
require them most.

6) Research must be conducted for progressive organizations and in
terms of what is locally relevant rather than what is internationally
acceptable (Dawes 1986).

7) Training programmes must be changed so that we produce graduates
committed to a South African, not an Australian or American future.

8) We must use our collective power as mental health practitioners to
challenge exploitative practices and work towards the above mentioned
changes.

Ladies and Gentlemen, we are confronted by a choice. We can choose
to ignore the South African reality and thereby tacitly support the
present system. Or, we can choose to involve ourselves in understanding
our practice as clinicians and the challenges confronting us.

Rejecting our present practise and health system is not a negative
choice. It is a choice that ackowledges the importance of change and
the implications of our work. It recognises   the necessity of
skills but rejects the idea that certain skills are superior to others
and how these skills are utilised.

South Africa is in the midst of a bloody war. The majority of
South Africans are seeking liberation. We want a society where children
will not die in infancy, where people will build houses and live in
them, where people will not die or suffer longer than necessary because
of an inadequate health system. We as mental health practitioners must

not absolve ourselves from new visions and the struggle for a new
society. We must commit ourselves to a democratic South Africa. For
this is the only guarantee for peace. Let us go forward together and
build a new future.

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SOME PSYCHOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF COMMENCING 'NATIONAL SERVICE' IN SOUTH AFRICA

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There is agreement across the entire political spectrum that South Africa is currently in a state of rapid social change. Partly as a consequence of this, the South African government allocates a vast amount of funds, resources and personnel to the South African Defence Force. So far as military personnel are concerned, the International Institute for Strategic Studies estimates that there were 83 400 South Africans in military uniform in 1985 : of these, 53 300 or 65% are conscripted "national servicemen" (Objector, 1985). In the light of this, it is obviously important to consider the psychological effects of "national service". Indeed, Feinstein et al (1986) include the examination of the impact of national service on the conscript as an example of the kind of study that psychologists wishing to do "relevant" work could be contributing in the field of conscription. There is certainly a dearth of both empirical and theoretical work in this area. For this reason, much of the discussion below is based on the personal experience of the author, particularly in the clinical setting.

This article will begin by delineating its scope. Thereafter a theoretical framework involving crisis theory will be presented in which the subject matter will be embedded. Finally, an attempt will be made to integrate the psychological and ideological dimensions.

SCOPE OF THIS ARTICLE

In attempting to explore the psychological effects of "national service", it is necessary to choose between providing, on the one hand, comprehensive but superficial coverage and, on the other hand, more restricted but more penetrating coverage. In confining myself to the psychological effects of commencing "national service", I have obviously tended towards the latter option.

There are two principle reasons for focusing on the initial period of "national service". Firstly, it would appear that the early months of training are the most stressful (Steinberg and Durrell, 1968). Indeed, McCabe and Board (1976) analysed the admissions to an in-patient psychiatric treatment facility from a group of trainees undergoing a year of military training in the United States Air Force; they found

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that two-thirds of the admissions occurred during the first ten days of service. Secondly, the way in which a conscript copes with the initial period of "national service" is likely to have considerable impact on the rest of his military experience; this point will receive further attention below.

In order to convey some notion of the diverse psychological manifestations of "national service", and in order to situate the topic in this appropriate context, some of the areas that have been omitted from the ensuing discussion will be listed :

- the psychological effects of the knowledge that one will be required to render "national service" in the future
- the emotional impact of "national service" on significant other people in the conscript's life, e.g. family, friends, girfriends (Cronje, 1977; Lagrone, 1978, 1982; Morrison, 1981; and Rodriguez, 1980)
- the exacerbating influence that "national service" could have on individuals already suffering from a psychiatric disorder (McCabe and Board, 1976; and Steinberg and Durrell, 1968)
- the psychological consequences of combat or operational circumstances (Block, 1969; Donnelly, 1982; El Rayes, 1982; Gous, 1976; Noy, 1982; and Rachman, 1982)

- psychological sequelae of military service (Figley, 1978; Louw, 1977)
- the psychological implications of choosing to avoid "national service" by going to jail, leaving the country or conscientious objection.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

It is necessary to provide a theoretical framework in order to understand an individual's response to commencing "national service". An appropriate framework would appear to be that provided by crisis theory. Although several types of crises have been described, two are relevant for this article, viz. developmental and transitional life crises. Developmental life crises refer to the periods of disorganisation and upset occurring at the various stages of the normative life cycle of individuals or families. Transitional life crises, on the other hand, refer to the intellectual or emotional upset that can take place when individuals are faced with important changes in their life situations.

Although there is obviously a large amount of overlap between these two kinds of crises, it is useful to regard the commencement of "national service" as having aspects of both developmental and transitional life crises. Each of these components will be explored in greater detail.

THE DEVELOPMENTAL COMPONENT

Erik Erikson (1950, 1956, 1959) has provided us with an epigenetic model to conceptualise the process of human development. More specifically, he has described the problems and dilemmas confronting individuals he describes as being <u>late adolescents</u>, which would include most conscripts. He chooses this term because it has the proper double meaning - later stages of adolescence and belated adolescence (Erikson, 1959). He regards the geat task of adolescence as being the establishment of a <u>sense of identity</u>; this can be said to have been attained when

> the individual comes to be and feel most himself, and this in pursuits and roles in which he also means most to some others - that is, to those others who have come to mean most to him (Erikson, 1959, p 76).

A <u>sense of identity diffusion</u> is said to exist when a person is temporarily or permanently unable to establish a satisfactory sense of identity (Erikson, 1959).

This crisis is one of a series of crises from birth to death. It does however occupy a special position with respect to the other crises since it is situated between childhood and adulthood. The late adolescent is thus in a psychological stage between

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the morality learned by the child, and the ethics to be developed by the adult. It is an ideological mind - and, indeed, it is the ideological outlook of a society that speaks most clearly to the adolescent who is eager to be affirmed by his peers, and is ready to be confirmed by rituals, creeds and programmes which at the same time define what is evil, uncanny, and inimical. In searching for the social values which guide identity, one therefore confronts the problems of <u>ideology</u> .... (Erikson, 1950, p 254, emphasis in the original).

The overwhelming majority of conscripts are late adolescents. They are thus attempting to establish a sense of identity, which includes the important aspect of <u>ideological</u> identity; this will receive greater attention below.

Superimposed on this developmental life crisis is the transitional life crisis of commencing "national service".

THE TRANSITIONAL COMPONENT

As was implied above, the transitional component of the crisis of commencing "national service" refers to the intellectual or emotional upset that occurs as a result of important changes in the conscript's life situation. Just how important these changes are can be gauged by referring to the Social Readjustment Rating Scale developed by Holmes and Rahe (1967). Various life events are listed, and scores are

assigned that indicate the stress potential of each event. Death of a
spouse has a stress potential of 100 stress units. Table 1 indicates
the life events applying to almost all young men commencing "national
service", together with their stress potentials.

TABLE 1. Life events and stress potential applying to most young men
commencing "national service" (Source : Holmes and Rahe, 1967).

LIFE EVENT	STRESS POTENTIAL
Change to a different line of work	36
End school	26
Change in living conditions	25
Change in work hours or conditions	20
Change in residence	20
Change in recreation	19
Change in church activities	19
Change in social activities	18
Change in sleeping habits	16
Change in number of family get-togethers	15
Change in eating habits	15
TOTAL	229

As Golan (1978) points out, these values need to be viewed with some circumspection as they "would have different weightings for different individuals at different times in their life cycles and would probably be influenced by a large number of extraneous and intervening variables" (p 77). Furthermore, there is some overlap between the various events; it may, for example, not have been justified to include both 'end school' and 'change to a different line of work' in Table 1.

Notwithstanding these cautions, some indication of the severity of the stress that commencing "national service" involves can be gained from the consideration that the probability of developing medical or psychological problems is greater for an individual with a score greater than 200 points than for an individual with a score less than 200 points (Holmes and Rahe, 1967).

In addition, there are further sources of stress that confront the conscript that are not listed in Table 1. These include :

- isolation from civilian life and previous support systems
- rank structure and strict discipline
- demands where there is an expectation of high performance and a
  fear of punishment. In an authoritive hierarchy there is a
  greater chance of being sanctioned and when this happens "the
  individual is allowed no face-saving expression : insolence is
  ground for further punishment" (Langrone, 1978, p 1041)

- subordination of the interests of the individual for those of the group
- excessive physical exertion
- handling of lethal weapons
- lack of privacy
- rumours
- possibly broken relationships or marital problems as a result of separation.

In the light of the large amount of stress to which soldiers commencing "national service" are subjected, it is to be expected that a significant number of them will be precipitated into a state of active crisis. Caplan's (1961) classic definition of crisis is applicable to this situation. He defined a crisis as :

> A state provoked when a person faces an obstacle to important life goals that is for a time insurmountable through the utilisation of customary methods of problem solving. A period of disorganisation ensues, a period of upset, during which many abortive attempts at solution are made (i.e. the state of active crisis). Eventually some kind of adaption is achieved which may or may not be in the best interests of that person and his fellows (Caplan, 1961, p 18, parentheses added).

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An important corollary of this definition is that the period of disorganisation is temporary, some adaptation is achieved, usually within four to six weeks (Hirschowitz, 1972; Golan, 1978).

Hirschowitz (1972) has delineated three phases that the person in the state of active crisis predictably negotiates. These are the impact phase, in which the person is dazed and experiences "fight-flight" responses, the recoil-turmoil phase, in which feelings such as rage, anxiety, depression, guilt and shame are prominent, and the adjustment phase, in which the person begins to feel hopeful about the future as knowledge and understanding are sought in an attempt to come to terms with the situation.

It was mentioned above that the way in which a conscript copes with the initial period of "national service" is likely to have a considerable impact on the rest of his military experience. The reason for this is that any crisis, including the crisis of commencing "national service", can be regarded as a turning point in life development. On the one hand, there is the danger that the soldier's response to the crisis will be postponed or maladaptive - in this case, he will function at a lower level at the termination of the crisis than before the crisis. On the other hand, there is the opportunity to develop unrealised personal resources in response to the situation - in this case, he will

function at a higher level at the termination of the crisis than before the crisis (Halpern, 1973). It is noteworthy that the Chinese idiogram for crisis consists of two characters, one indicating danger and the other opportunity (Watts, 1980). The danger and opportunity of the crisis situation are multiplied by the person possibly using the same coping mechanisms in future crises (Caplan and Grunebaum, 1967; Hirschowitz, 1972; and Pasewark and Albers, 1972). In other words, the soldier's response to the commencement of "national service" can have repercussions not only for the remainder of his time in the S. A. D. F. but for the rest of his life.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Before making an attempt to integrate the psychological and ideological dimensions to the commencement of "national service", it is appropriate to summarise the contents of this article so far. Most young men entering the S. A. D. F. are late adolescents who are experiencing developmental life crisis in that they are attempting to establish a sense of identity (including the important component of ideological identity). They are then subjected to a transitional life crisis as a result of the far reaching changes and profound stresses in their lives. A significant proportion will be precipitated into an active crisis.

The conscript thus experiences a transitonal life crisis <u>superimposed</u> on a developmental life crisis. Each is likely to exacerbate the other. Thus, it is considerably easier to arrive at a satisfactory sense of identity if the environment is conducive to self-exploration and risk-taking, which is not the case when in the midst of an enormous transitional life crisis. Conversely, the transitional aspects are more likely to be constructively resolved in the absence of a developmental life crisis as there would be a firmer sense of identity on which to base a response.

Furthermore, the resources that are necessary in order to resolve a crisis satisfactorily (e.g. time, empathic listeners) are simply not available during basic training. Of course, the S. A. D. F. does have psychologists, chaplains and social workers, but their usefulness in this regard is limited by three factors :

- it is often difficult to obtain an appointment to see them due to administrative considerations
- there are relatively few of them and they therefore tend to be very busy
- their responsibility is primarily to the military system and not to the individual in crisis.

It was mentioned above that the period of disorganisation associated with a crisis is temporary and that some adaption is usually achieved within four to six weeks. It should be clear that, because circumstances are not conducive to reducing the crisis in a constructive manner, the danger aspect of the crisis will predominate at the expense of the opportunity (with the consequences intimated above).

Furthermore, it was implied above that the individual in crisis is particularly open to new perspectives in the adjustment phase of the crisis sequence. The dominant perspective available to conscripts is that provided by the military establishment. This is done formally by means of lectures and by the less formal communication of attitudes and beliefs. It is thus not surprising that conscripts tend to adopt the values, standards and outlook of the military establishment as they attempt to resolve their crisis predicament.

But how does this adoption of this ideological perspective help to resolve the crisis? As far as the developmental component is concerned, the importance of the ideological dimension to the establishment of a sense of identity in adolescence has been emphasised above. Thus, the conscripts sense of identity diffusion is reduced by

adopting a ready-made sense of identity. Furthermore, the intensity of the <u>transitional</u> life crisis is reduced since the individual is provided with a meaning system whereby to understand and justify his situation.

The adoption of this ideology by national servicemen is an explicit intention of the policy makers in the S. A. D. F. In the words of Brigadier J E Louw :

> In the process of mobilisation, members are isolated from their orientation groups with which they have identified themselves over many years and which have afforded them emotional security.

> Briefly, this amounts to members being isolated from their primary orientation groups during mobilisation, and being socialised in a system of values that are peculiar to a military organisation as orientation group. In order to be efficient, <u>these members have to accept the standards and values of the military organisation as their own.</u> This means accepting a new group membership, and this affords the member a feeling of security as he is assured of the group's support as long as he respects the accepted standards of the group (Louw, 1977 p 22, emphasis added).

There is however a broader dimension to this issue. Skinner (1985) has drawn attention to the rôle of the military in terms of inculcating in conscripts those ideological perspectives that are necessary for the survival of the ruling classes in South Africa. It is hoped that this article has elucidated one possible mechanism whereby this process is achieved, thus providing an example of the interdependence of psychological and political levels of explanation.

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OPEN, REPRESSIVE, OR
BLACK EDUCATION?

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On Friday, 31st May 1986 the Umlazi Extramural Division
of the University of Zululand was host to a conference of relevance
to all of us connected to black universities in South Africa.
Funded by Ford Foundation and organized by the Association of
Sociologists of South Africa (A.S.S.A.), the aim of the conference
was to discuss the state of the social sciences at black SA
universities. At least one delegate from each of the black
universities was invited to give a short description of the
situation at his or her university. It came as a shock to realize
that most of the black universities were closed due to boycotts
at the time of the conference. While some of the papers were
stimulating, enlivening and critical, others were tired, boring
and confused. George Orwell may perhaps have squirmed in his grave
at the poor language usage of some of the delegates but, given
the style of today's academic discussion, this is hardly surprising.

While this essay is mainly about the conference, it may be of interest to relate the issues raised here to the debate about South African universities that has arisen in the columns of the Times Higher Education Supplement, where a fellow of Robinson College, Cambridge University, Christopher Forsyth, and the rector of the University of Zululand, Prof A.C. Nkabinde, have been discussing similar issues.

But before going any deeper into the debate, it would perhaps be relevant to explain what sort of model of debate I have in mind. In a polarised situation very little communication takes place. The partisans on one side disagree with everything offered by the partisans on the other. The voices get louder and the terminology becomes more and more insulting. This is not the kind of debate I have in mind. Rather, I would advocate a more responsive, open debate. This presupposes that each participant, while presenting a particular point of view as cogently as possible, remains open to the possibility of changing his or her mind when faced with more convincing arguments to the contrary. One should be prepared to review all one's prejudices, theories and presently-held standpoints if need be. If this openness is not present, the debate (especially in SA today) will degenerate into futile argumentation. Hopefully this essay will contribute to the discussion in this spirit.

Since access to the 'facts' of the situation is uneven, it seems inappropriate to attempt to assess the objective, factual reality of the various arguments. Where one side is able to marshall a formidable artillery of facts in support of its arguments while the other side, due to its being so narrowly circumscribed by a hostile environment, is virtually defenceless, it is not fair to take 'the facts' as proof. In such a situation no doubt the debate will be reduced to a straight fight between the positivists and the structuralists once again (because they are the only ones with a body of facts at their disposal) and no headway will be made. But really, no array of facts is likely to affect the debate because the issues revolve primarily around

perceptions, which are virtually unverifiable. Consequently, Nkabinde's attempt to refute Forsyth's contention that the black universities are dominated by SA government nominees by means of a table setting out the 'objective data' of the situation is ineffective. No amount of data from the Department of Information, or the Frankfurt School, is going to make any difference --- no one is likely to be persuaded. In this debate the only ones likely to be able to contribute meaningfully are the phenomenologists, i.e. those who accept that no one knows what he is talking about and that we are all stumbling about equally in the dark.

On the other hand, this is not to dismiss the influence of one's political faith or one's philosophy of education. This will unavoidably direct and inform our appraisal of the debate. We should perhaps then be constantly aware, and make others aware, of the standpoint from which we are viewing the situation. Although no one will be able to claim absolute impartiality at the end of it, at least this will assist us in giving each other a fair hearing in the hope that some communication might take place.

A TYPOLOGY OF SOUTH AFRICAN UNIVERSITIES

Before going on to discussing the problems experienced by black universities, it may be relevant to examine the differences between the various SA universities for the purposes of clarity. For at the ASSA conference these differences were mentioned continually; and Forsyth and Nkabinde mention them as well. In so doing they have developed a typology of SA universities.

Basically, there are three types of university in South Africa :

(a) the 'open' university --- the long-established English universities (Cape Town, Natal, Witwatersrand and Rhodes) built from private funds and catering mainly for the white, English-speaking, professional class, but adhering to the liberal traditions of open debate and admission on merit, rather than on race or religion;

(b) the 'repressive' university --- the Afrikaans universities

(Pretoria, Stellenbosch, Potchefstroom, OFS,
RAU, UniSA and Port Elizabeth) catering mainly
for the production of the governing bureaucratic
class, and adhering to the conservative
traditions of white racial admission, Calvinism
and rote-learning, as opposed to debate; and

(c) the 'black' university --- mostly new state-built universities
established for the different black ethnic
groups (Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Zululand,
Fort Hare, Venda, Vista, Turfloop, Western Cape,
Qwa Qwa, Durban-Westville) catering mainly for
the production of teachers and other personnel
of the various ethnic groups' governments,
and thus inheriting the state's bias towards
accentuating cultural differences and rote-
learning.

These, then, are the three main types. As we are here
primarily concerned with the black universities, I would like
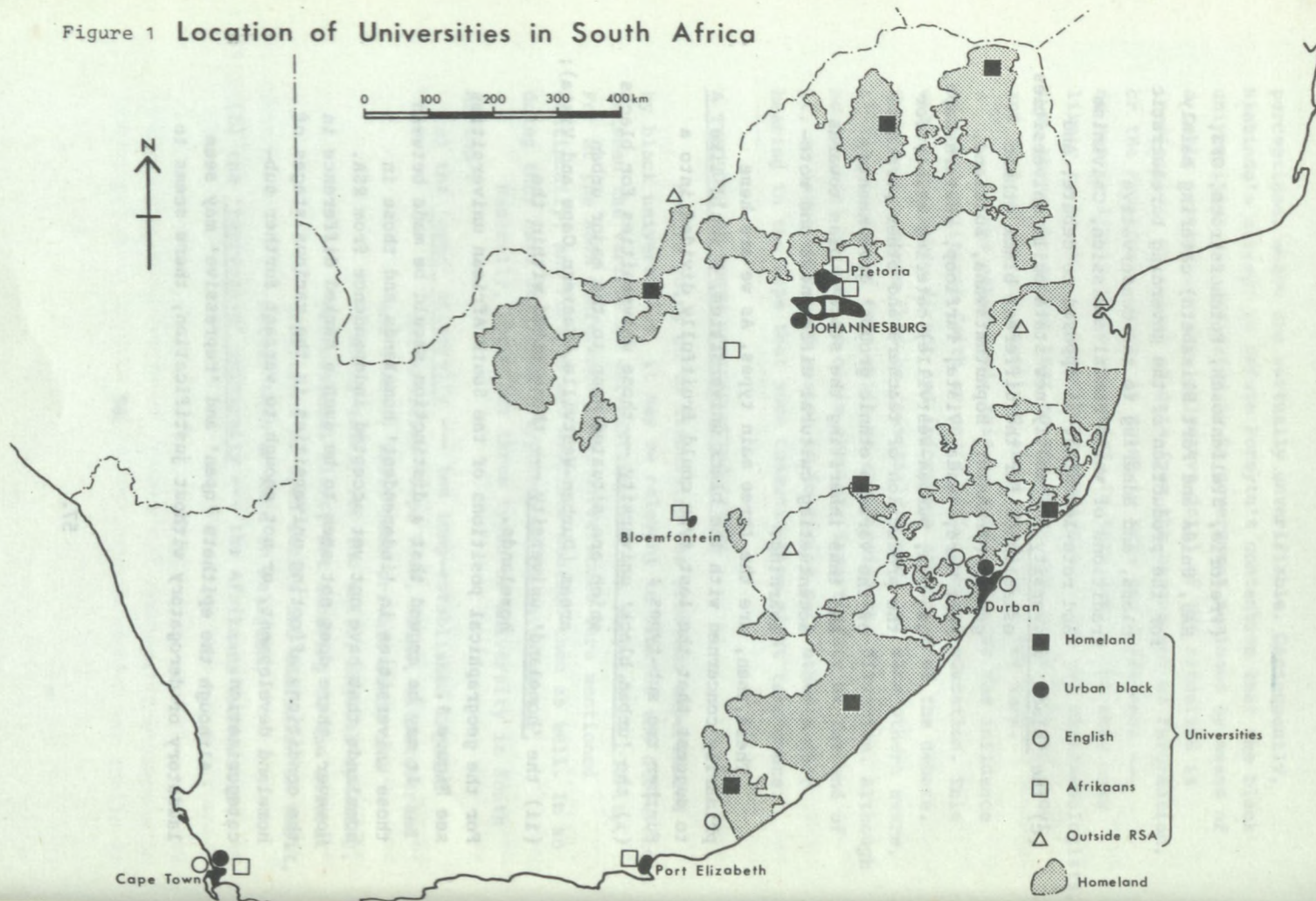to suggest that the last type could fruitfully divided into a
further two sub-types :

(i) the 'urban black' university ---those universities for blacks
which are situated near to the major urban
areas (Durban-Westville, Western Cape and Vista);

(ii) the 'homeland' university --- those sited within the
homelands.

For the geographical positions of the South African universities
see Figure 1.

It may be argued that a distinction should be made between
those universities in 'independent' homelands and those in
homelands that have not yet accepted independence from RSA.
However, there does not seem to be such a marked difference in
the conditions affecting universities in the various stages of
homeland development, or not enough to warrant further sub-
categorization.

Although the epithets 'open' and 'repressive' may seem
laudatory or derogatory without justification, there seems to

Figure 1 **Location of Universities in South Africa**

Legend:
- ■ Homeland
- ● Urban black
- ○ English
- □ Afrikaans
- △ Outside RSA

Universities

- Homeland

Locations labelled: Pretoria, JOHANNESBURG, Bloemfontein, Durban, Cape Town, Port Elizabeth

Scale: 0 100 200 300 400 km

N (north arrow)

be no way of avoiding the use of such terms. Merely the perception and description of these institutions as 'open' or 'repressive' by a sufficient number of people is enough to show the currency of such perceptions, and enough to warrant our acceptance of these terms here. Again, whether one accepts or rejects these terms will largely depend on one's political ideology or one's educational philosophy.

PROBLEMS IN THE SOCIAL SCIENCES AT BLACK SA UNIVERSITIES

Since the passing of the Bantu Education Act of 1953, the position in black schools has deteriorated alarmingly. The educational protests that eventually resulted in the Soweto riots of 1976 and have continued to disrupt black schooling in the decade since then, have a factual origin few would deny. It does not seem necessary to discuss whether Bantu Education really is a tool of oppression --- it is definitely perceived as such. The detention of scholars under the age of 16 for public violence, the popular slogan amongst the youth "No education before liberation" : these things are hard to ignore. The poor quality of black education was brought up early on in the conference and was referred to repeatedly throughout. Inevitably, this affects how well trained the teachers in black schools are, how well equipped the black students entering university are, and how able the lecturers at black universities are to teach realistic, relevant social science. The view that SA's black education is a snake feeding on itself, or a machine grinding itself down to nothing, was expressed by many. And merely "improving our pedagogical techniques" will not alter this. Being structurally induced, this problem can only be alleviated through structural change. And some delegates called for a greater commitment to bring about such a change.

However, there is another factor that, while seemingly absent from black schools, looms overwhelmingly large over black universities, and perhaps this is where we should link up with the Times Higher Education Supplement debate. The opinion of delegates at the conference that the black universities at which

they work are dominated by conservative Afrikaans bureaucrats
was expressed so often that it would be difficult, as Nkabinde
has tried to do, to refute. Seemingly, this problem manifests
itself in mainly two ways.

Firstly, student grievances ignored by the administration
of the university result in protest marches and boycotts, to
which the administration responds by calling in the police
(and the fact that so many black universities were closed at the
time of the conference due to scenarios of this kind would tend
to support this view).

Secondly, in the academic departments, faculties, senates
and councils highly placed conservative Afrikaans academics are
so dominant that the younger black academics' efforts and
aspirations are continually stymied. For example, annoyance
was expressed at the fact that external examiners are usually
chosen from the 'repressive' Afrikaans universities. (On the
other hand, the 'open' English university academics were blamed
for not wanting to dirty their hands by touching goods so soiled
by apartheid and for refusing to help in this regard.) The young
black lecturers said that they feared to say what they really
thought, or even to try to change their syllabi to incorporate
their real, honestly-held scientific opinions and subject matter,
for this would invariably lead to conflict with their conservative
department heads and prejudice their chances of promotion.

It would seem that from 1959, when the Extension of
University Education Act (which brought about the establishment
of the 'bush colleges', as they are sometimes known) was passed
and when the founders of the black universities were recruited,
till today the conservative authority structure has been retained.
As the UWC delegate argued (and Forsyth supports this contention),
UWC may be an exception to this rule. However, it seems to apply
to all the other black universities.

The concentration on political factors so far may obscure
from recognition an element essential to any educational
debate : one's educational philosophy. Nor is it so simple that
we can say that a conservative will automatically opt for merely
improved techniques of data-gathering while a radical will opt

for an education that liberates. Instead of looking at the division between the two main factions in terms of politics, it may be more valid to try to explain the division in terms of more basic differences in philosophy. It may be an over-simplification but there seem to be two main approaches to education here.

The one philosophy looks at knowledge as an entity, or something that can be acquired by swotting or rote-learning. According to this way of thinking, the lecturer carries the burden --- the lecturer imparts knowledge to the student who in turn goes home to swot the information and reproduce the lecturer's version as closely as possible in tests and examinations. Questions in class are purely for purposes of clarification, not for truly questioning the validity of what the lecturer is saying. The rationale behind this approach is that upon going out into the professional world the student will be equipped to walk into the job and continue practising the methods and techniques learnt in class.

The other philosophy of education asks the question : But what if you encounter something in the outside world for which you have not been trained ? and suggests a different method. This philosophy denies the existence of a body of knowledge that one can apply to solve all problems, and concentrates on independent work, discovering problems and devising solutions for oneself. By encouraging seminars and critical debate the burden is shifted from the lecturer to the student. The idea is that upon entering the professional world the student may not know how to do the job at all but whatever the task he or she will soon master it because of the problem-solving skills acquired in the self-education process.

Disagreement over the philosophy of education could be seen as the core of many of the delegates' objections to the way that social science is taught at today's black universities. The campus is seen as dead, uncritical, half asleep, a place where nothing of interest happens, where there are no stimulating debates, and where everyone is involved in cramming for exams. By and large it would be true to say that the rote-learning

philosophy was said to be propounded by the older, conservative academics in control while the the critical-debate philosophy was pleaded for by the younger academics. An alternative explanation could be in terms of what each teacher hopes to achieve : whether one hopes that one's students will be able to enter a profession without problems, or whether one hopes that one's students will emerge from class as balanced human beings with a greater moral purpose. The dictum of Socrates (and echoed by Thoreau, Tolstoy, Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King) that "an unexamined life is not worth living" is hardly something the academies can afford to ignore; but neither is it realistic to overlook the fact that we need to eat to live. Unanimity is unlikely to be reached over this.

There is also a tendency amongst administrators of educational institutions throughout the world to measure these institutions in terms of how many students pass, fail, achieve greatness, etc --- as if the university was some kind of sausage-machine, as if we were all merely entrepreneurs in the "business of education". It is not surprising that the more idealistic academics rebel against this view of their work.

Some delegates from homeland universities mentioned problems related to their geographical location. By design it seems, these universities have been situated as far from the urban areas as possible, which results in a sense of isolation felt by both students and lecturers. As is clear from Figure 1, the homeland universities are all at least 150 kilometres from the nearest city. Incidentally, this isolation coupled with the fact of the closures of most of the homeland universities would seem to refute the opening sentence of Forsyth's THES article :

> "Only the most uncritical and isolated
> of South Africa's universities have
> escaped disruption since the state of
> emergency was declared on July 22 last
> year."

In fact the opposite may be true, i.e. that only the 'open' and 'repressive' universities have escaped disruption, for neither the English nor the Afrikaans universities have been closed down.

Another internal issue that cropped up regularly at the
conference was the way in which money is spent at black universities.
As Forsyth puts it,

> "... considerable capital sums have been
> spent on the development of these universities
> by the South African government so they often
> have grand modern buildings and other
> facilities..."

At the conference the grandness of the buildings was attested to
but described as irrelevant to the real problems facing black
universities. The high student-to-lecturer ratio is simply
not redressed by such expenditure. When a lecturer is expected
to teach first-, second- and third-year courses continuously
throughout the year and is the only member of the department,
the size and magnificence of the buildings and lecture halls
pales into insignificance. Whereas funding is withheld from
what most of the delegates regarded as worthy projects,
e.g. inviting world-renowned authorities to speak, organizing
debates or conferences, and generally keeping abreast of the
social sciences elsewhere, it is granted to improving the
exterior facade of the university in order to impress visitors.
One delegate called the black universities "Asinamali Institutions"
in this regard.

Thus it would appear that the internal dynamics of the
black universities keep them in a permanent state of disequilibrium.

However, in a time when the country is experiencing
something of a crisis or upheaval, it is perhaps not surprising
that one of the major problems referred to at the conference
related to environmental influences from outside the campus.
And in this respect there are major differences between the
homeland and urban black universities. Whilst the influence
of the townships on black universities in urban areas is
powerful and all-pervasive, the same influence on the homeland
universities is indirect. When there is widespread violence in
Soweto, Vista University cannot simply ignore it and continue
with classes. The same applies to UWC when Elsie's River is in

riot. Even though UDW is more insulated from the townships, nevertheless it always seems to be disrupted during the surrounding township upheavals.

On the other hand the homeland universities are so far from the urban townships that they are not immediately affected. Here a very different political climate prevails, one dominated by the homeland government within whose territory the university falls. Apart from the general curbs on freedom of speech and the right to democratic participation that apply to the South African society at large, there are additional and seemingly much more frightening curbs in the homelands. Direct homelands government intervention on campus occurs too frequently to be dismissed as a figment of the academic's imagination : detention, deportation, personal violence --- it all serves to increase the fear one has of speaking one's mind. Those who get involved in community projects are most open to this kind of harrassment.

This inevitably has the effect of making academics too frightened to participate closely in community affairs and encourages a retreat to the ivory tower of positivism. Small wonder that the only academics who seem to survive are those who espouse the positivist approach. Furthermore, as ethnic creations, the homeland universities serve to enhance cultural differences to the detriment of the universal values the university is supposed to espouse, it was argued. In this way they bolster the position of the "little chiefs", as one delegate called them, and ignore the plight of 'the people' or the working class. To counter this there was the plea for all of us to become "committed social scientists", despite such undeniable obstacles.

The influence of the homeland government on the black university was so strong, some argued, that it corrupted the proper academic learning process by engendering fear in students and lecturers : students refuse to discuss topical issues concerning the homeland; lecturers are unhappy about quoting local examples unless they coincide with homeland ideology; prominent people from off-campus refuse to come and discuss

controversial local problems. Thus, although certain academics may be committed to teaching relevant social science and to changing the society, there are such high risks involved that only those prepared for banishment are ready to take them. Given this setting, it seems unlikely that the "strategies to promote freedom of speech on their campuses" (that Nkabinde says the homeland universities have devised) will have any effect since they only involve student participation in certain internal university affairs.

From the foregoing it might seem that no criticism was directed at the 'open' English universities. This was not the case. In fact, in contrast to Forsyth's praise for the 'noble' stand made by the open universities in the struggle against apartheid, many delegates supported Nkabinde's contention that the English universities do not have an unblemished copybook in this regard. The fact that most of the external examiners are chosen from Afrikaans universities is due to the elitist, condescending attitude of the English university academics towards the black universities. Even the English academics' description of the black universities as 'disadvantaged' was objected to on the grounds that this presupposed that black universities should strive to emulate the English universities. While perhaps not guilty of producing bureaucrats for the state, the English universities have produced professionals for industry who were generally inimical to the interests of the working class and by and large favoured capital and the upper classes, some felt. For social scientists more interested in the working class there were definite advances in working at black universities. In this way the patronising attitude of the English universities was seen as counter-productive towards improving the situation at black universities.

CONCLUSION

Although I have tried to be as impartial as possible, it is unavoidable that this is nothing more than a partial account. Others who attended the conference may have come away with a completely different impression and may heartily disagree with

this version. The braai and informal discussions afterwards
may inadvertently have affected my consciousness and served
to accentuate certain impressions. Nor would it be just to say
that every delegate subscribed to all the views above. The
fact that the delegates were drawn mainly from the younger
members of staff at the black universities may have distorted
the picture somewhat, so that these are really only the problems
the 'young Turks' experience with the 'old guard'. Similarly,
it would be untrue to say that there was absolute agreement
amongst those who attended. There were disagreements; and
anyway many people will not express their opinions when they
realize that they are patently in the minority.

However, there is one aspect that I think that most of us
who attended the conference will agree about : the fellow-
feeling or feeling of solidarity with people at other black
campuses. And since we come from such isolated, scattered,
small campuses this is a very positive thing.

As I have said, this essay may be a load of poppycock.
However, it is difficult, if not impossible, to deny the
predicament in which the black universities find themselves
when we are daily reminded of its reality. Perhaps a fitting
example illustrating this can be gleaned from the ILANGA
newspaper editorial (28-30 August,1986 issue) deploring the
reaction of SA's Minister of Education, Dr Gerrit Viljoen,
to the offer made by some Western countries to fund 500 black
students to study overseas. Minister Viljoen's reaction was
that SA did not need their money.

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3

THE POLITICS OF INDUSTRIAL PSYCHOLOGY

A report on a one-day conference/workshop (3 September 1986)

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Durban

The political history of South Africa is full of many years of difficult struggles, major democratic setbacks, and occasionally some significant victories against the apartheid state and capital. It would be difficult in view of this to single out one year which was 'worse' than any of the others. However, in the event of any prizes for the hall of horrors which is our political history, 1986 should feature very prominent.

1986 saw the 'removal' of the state of emergency, only to have it reinstated with more vigour and commitment in June, just prior to what the state saw as a major potential popular mobilisation around the 10th anniversary of the 16 June student uprising of 1976. The farce of democracy was carried even further in December when wide-ranging press clamps were introduced. The state is not well, and during 1986 used a massive security force deployment in the townships and black communities in an attempt to contain any further deterioration of its ailing legitimacy.

The state's legitimacy has been threatened and challenged in most areas which it administers: education; housing; security; welfare; health; industrial relations.

The extent and nature of the crisis facing the state and the ruling class in South Africa is both deep and structural. This is not meant to imply that the state is weak and is about to collapse. On the contrary, this state has an enormous and powerful repressive apparatus at its disposal, which 1986 saw only a glimmer of its 'effectiveness'. The state will continue to use its mechanisms of coercion to maintain control in an attempt to (re-) establish its legitimacy. It has gone about this in a way which has dealt severe blows to many progressive organisations, to the extent that many organisations with the possible exception of some of the trade unions are hardly able to function at the moment. Hundreds of activists and unionists have been detained; meetings have been prohibited; organisations have been restricted; vigilantes have harrassed and killed activists and unionists; information has been restricted; and the list goes on.

The brutality of the state's actions in 'containing' popular political opposition to its policies and practices has had contradictory effects. There has been a retreat in certain areas and also a pessimism about the nature of democratic struggle, but there has also been an increasing resolve to establish a democratic order in South Africa no matter how high the sacrifices. And what in some senses has been particularly significant about the challenges to the state and the actions

especially of the seurity forces, has been the politicisation of organisations and groupings who previously have tried to keep out of the political arena. 1986 seemed to have been the year when even relatively conservative groupings and individuals felt compelled to respond, in some way, to what has been a dramatic and tragic year of political repression, violence and counter-violence. Innocence, if it ever was much around, was dealt a final blow in South Africa last year.

This is the context in which the one day conference-workshop organised by the Natal Industrial Psychology Group (affiliated to the PASA Institute of Industrial Psychology) has to be assessed.

The programme of the one day conference-workshop entitled, 'Perspectives on psychology: Its role in South Africa today and tomorrow' held at the Elangeni Hotel ('') in Durban on 3 September 1986, put the concerns of the conference as '...designed to contextualise Psychology more clearly within the realities of the current South African situation. Perspectives and options for the future will be explored'. Clearly, on the face of it, a very conjunctural analysis was being called for. The purpose of this report is to assess the political articulation of industrial psychologists vis-a-vis the current social crisis in South Africa. Before doing this it is useful to give a brief description of the structure of the day's proceedings.

The morning or conference part comprised of five papers that were read with time for discussion after each presentation. The order of presentations was as follows:

1. An overview of the current status of psychology in South Africa - Professor Deo Strumpfer (UCT).

2. Psychology: The servant of apartheid - Dr Ari Sitas (UND).

3. Psychology and the social sciences: The way ahead - Bonginkosi Nzimande (Univ. of Zululand).

4. Psychology.....Community, labour and the organisational setting - Rod le Roux (Industry).

5. Psychology...Alternative models and practices: A case-study - Lloyd Vogelman (OASSSA, Transvaal).

The afternoon or workshop session comprised of two small working groups whose aims were to '...identify, extend and confirm the major themes which emerged from the morning's presentations and discussion. And to make specific recommendations for translating these themes into a working praxis for South African psychology tomorrow'.

I shall concentrate this report on the analytic strands which emerged from the formal papers in discussing the relationship between industrial psychology and political developments in this country. I shall do this by making some general comments and criticisms, rather than focussing on the details of each paper (Papers were not given out, and in any case I only managed to get three of the five papers that were presented).

There certainly was agreement amongst all five speakers that we were living in 'troubled times'. The crisis facing South African society was evident to everyone. The details of <u>how</u> to 'contextualise psychology' (from the advertising prgramme), and especially industrial psychology in the current situation seemed to be the central question which only a few of the speakers

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managed to address, albeit too briefly.

Deo Strumpfer of UCT presenting the first paper gave (in his own words) a 'middle-of-the-road' presentation of industrial psychology in South Africa. He sketchingly presented a 'history' of industrial psychology revolving around what he called 'two cultural clusters' of English and Afrikaans perspectives. He concluded his rather uncritical survey of industrial psychology by discussing professional psychology, and especially in relation to PASA, who he saw as a dynamic and open association whose conference (October 1986) was going to focus on a more relevant psychology and also of how psychology should respond to the social crisis in South Africa at the moment.

He concluded his talk more critically by saying that there was no such thing as an apolitical psychology, but everyone wanted to practice it! He remarked that there had been calls to develop a psychology _in_ Africa, a psychology _of_ Africa, calls for action but nothing had been done. Industrial and organisational psychology was becoming aware that it could no longer be a servant of management, and needed to go into new fields. Clearly Strumpfer knows where psychology in South Africa has come from, and where it has got to, although he did seem stuck as to where and how it should now proceed. Outside of a few critical remarks he concluded rather nihilistically saying, 'We (as industrial psychologists) stand condemned, we condemn ourselves. I hope the other speakers will deal with this.

Most of the other speakers did deal with this, although their presentations tended to be analytical rather than formative or

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prefigurative of industrial psychology in a different social order, with the possible exception of Lloyd Vogelman's paper on OASSSA. Industrial psychology was seen to be implicated, both consciously and unconsciously, in the power relations of apartheid and capitalist society in South Africa. Although Rod le Roux's paper addressed the question of power quite directly, he tended to focus on what he called a pragmatic approach to the problems facing 'labour', 'community', and the 'organisational setting' in a way which underestimated the fundamental conflicts between labour and capital. le Roux's pragmatism runs the risk of trying to 'neutralise' what are essentially irreconcilable political and class interests, in a manner which boils down to a set of pleas for understanding, trust, and acceptance of the different values between the 'contestants' in the industrial sphere. While this basic humanism might be commendable in the current context of repression and brutality, it is not something which easily translates into appropriate action at an organisational level. Le Roux's argument might leave the individual industrial psychologist with a better understanding of the power relations and values inherent between what he refers to as 'labour', 'community', and 'organisational setting', but does it really give industrial psychology as a <u>collective</u> an edge on how to transform its practice/s.

Ari Sitas, who spoke about industrial studies/research in general, while focussing on his own discipline - industrial sociology - and to a lesser extent industrial psychology, discussed some of the structural constraints facing industrial practitioners which would put a limit on and at the same time

complicate le Roux's pragmatism and humanism. The thrust of Sitas's argument was to investigate the range of responses that industrial researchers could and had made to the contradictory realities which constitute the objective world of industrial production. The nature of involvement of the state, labour, and management since the early 1970s has certainly changed the character of the industrial sphere, and hence complicated the relation of social science research to industry. This changing nature of the industrial terrain, and especially in a more politicised direction, has lead to a bit of a crisis for social studies of industrial life.

According to Sitas management needs a super-technocrat. A person who is able to understand and deal with the complexities of industrial relations; a person who at a technical level can ensure productive stability and capacity; and a humanist to 'smooth over' the social relations of production. The implications of all this is that management do not really need industrial psychologists at all. According to Sitas there are a number of objective factors working against industrial psychologists in their attempts to intervene in and with industrial organisations. A management that needs a super-technocrat to control production and a capitalist society that sees people as functions and not as individuals, leaves the industrial psychologist little space in which to recover the 'collapse of the individual'.

It was this issue of the collapse of the individual as a socio-historic feature of industrial capitalism, and the simultaneous

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'championing' of a humanism by industrial psychology trying to reclaim the individual as the site of their practice, that Blade Nzimande addressed in the first part of his paper. He tended to cast the problem of individuality and sociality too abstractly and hence set-up a predominantly epistemological solution to what is also a major substantive issue. The decline in the power that ordinary individuals have over determining their lives, working or other, is a very practical issue which raises important organisational and political questions for the underclasses, and hence it is a pity that Nzimande's paper stressed the theoretical aspects of this problem.

In the second part of his paper, which sat a little uncomfortably with the first part, he detailed five challenges to psychology, and especially industrial psychology. These challenges were: a need to go back to theory; a focus on issues rather than techniques; a problematising of capitalism; a need to understand apartheid; and a fresh look at professional training and practice. While some of these issues were dealt with by the other speakers, the one which was avoided and glossed over by most speakers was the whole question of capitalism. If industrial psychologists, or other psychologists for that matter, are going to try to understand their 'roles' in a society, and particularly in a society in a state of crisis, then it is important to analyse the nature of the society and its social relations that they are trying to articulate with. This question cannot be 'left alone' by social scientists, because it is then that we unwittingly become the 'servants of power', the 'servants of apartheid', the 'servants of anybody' who wants our

'services'. Social scientists need to address the question of the nature of the society in which their practices are located and 'needed', so as to be aware of whose side they are on, because it is an ideological contortion that we are on nobody's side, we are neutral.

The most clear statement of a 'taking sides' psychological practice came from OASSSA in Lloyd Vogelman's paper (This paper is reproduced elsewhere in this number). OASSSA's commitment based on a critique of health practices under apartheid and capitalism is to provide a service to predominantly working class groups who are usually deprived of adequate social and health care. It is also OASSSA's commitment to research and understand the bases of these social, economic, and political 'deprivations', and the effect that they have on the psychological health of members of the working class. In understanding the class character of South African society OASSSA has been able to coherently respond to the social and psychological needs of oppressed and working class communities in developing a 'new' practice of psychology. This is not to say that OASSSA's formulation is complete or even satisfactory, as the organisation is continually being self-critical. OASSSA has at least taken the first step towards developing a transformative practice for psychology in contributing to a just and democratic society.

While all the papers were engagingly discussed after each presentation, the one that drew the most, and the most intense discussion was the OASSSA paper by Lloyd Vogelman. It seems that the reason for this was related to how it indirectly reflected on the state of industrial psychology which was the focus of the conference after all. OASSSA had identified the social interests in society and had clearly chosen where it located itself - it is partisan in other words - and as a result of this 'choice' had been able to develop a specific range of practices. The commitment of OASSSA was the source of irritation to some members of the conference still locked into the value-neutral ground of a positivist industrial psychology. OASSSA's commitment was also the source of excitement for some members of the conference as it offered them a potential way-out of the dilemmas currently facing industrial psychology.
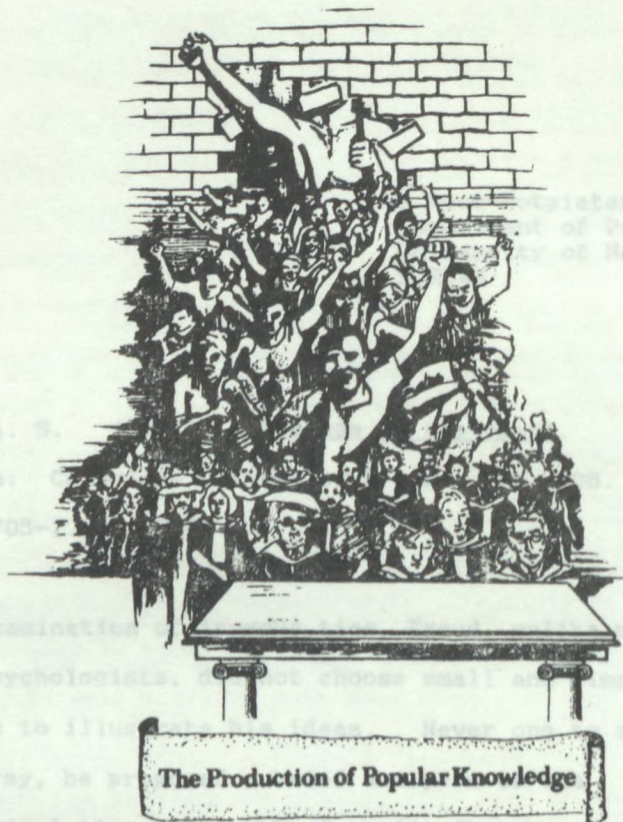
It is difficult to assess what the one-day conference achieved with regard to informing future industrial psychological practices. Putting five fairly diverse and detailed papers into a morning session did not really facilitate detailed discussion and criticism. Sadly it seemed that in a Foucauldian sense the conference stood out as a 'spectacle of denial'. Industrial psychology did not want to be associated with the repression and violence currently part of South African society, but did not know how to develop practices which would negate these structural contradictions of reform in so far as they affected the practice of industrial psychology. Until industrial psychology can develop a collective and organisational response to the

contradictory locations it finds itself in in the capitalist
social formation that South Africa is, it will find its attempts
at self-criticism and social protest disconnected from the
practices of transformation in this country. Its liberalism and
humanism will remain a 'spectacle of denial', and not a challenge
to this repressive and brutal capitalist order.

The Production of Popular Knowledge

Contents

THE AGE OF THE CROWD

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Moscovici, S.   (1985).   The age of the crowd.

Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.   Pp. 408.   ISBN:

0-521-27705-1.   £10.95.

In his examination of ingroup ties, Freud, unlike most

social psychologists, did not choose small and simple forms

of groups to illustrate his ideas.   Never one to avoid

controversy, he proposed a brief analysis of the

psychological ties within the Catholic Church and the

army.   It could be said that Serge Moscovici in his latest

book, The age of the crowd, continues this tradition of

controversy and range of explanation in social psychology.

In the introduction of this book, Moscovici explains his personal position as regards the science of mass psychology. Writing this book on mass psychology was for him a difficult and painful task, because "at every turn, one discovers a rather unflattering picture...of public life, leaders and the masses" (p. 9). He aimed "to penetrate as deeply as possible a branch of knowledge which has taken a long, hard look at our age, examined the domination of man by man without indulgence and shown the ways of using this power in mass societies. I refuse its view of history, I doubt its truth, but I accept the phenomenon" (p. 11). When reading the book, it is necessary to keep these personal views in mind, because at times it is difficult, if not impossible, to distinguish the ideas of Le Bon, Tarde or Freud from those of Moscovici. The fact that Moscovici took each writer's line of reasoning to its logical extreme to show us the intellectual framework of the science that they jointly established and then applied this to present-day examples, should not be viewed as his unconditional support for these ideas. Moscovici, the social psychologist who critically questioned the conformist American ideology which spawned the Asch paradigm and who set out to document the way in which a consistent minority can bring about social change, does not share the view of society and the "anti-crowd prejudice" of these early writers: "I recoil from the vision of man and society that it proposes" (p. 10).

In the first part of the book, the reasons why a science of
the masses came into being and the themes it deals with, are
explored.   One of the main reasons proposed is the collapse
of the pre-capitalist ancien regime and the resultant change
in the religious and political framework, plus the breach in
the stable rural world of families and neighbourhood
groups.   From these roots crowd psychology emanated as a
rival discipline to sociology and history, aiming to solve
the enigma of how masses are formed from individuals.

The second and third parts of the book concentrate on how Le
Bon invented the science of crowd psychology by means of his
description of crowds: a collection of individuals who are
united mentally and act in an unconscious, hypnotized
manner; the leader and the past playing a powerful role in
mobilising the crowd; and the notion of suggestion based on
a sovereign idea (i.e. revolution, the fatherland, etc.).
The charismatic leader, and the skilful use of language and
images in propaganda were also explored by Le Bon, "the
Machiavelli of mass societies" (p. 55), in his overtly
political work.   Of specific interest in the second part of
the book, is Moscovici's description of Le Bon's background,
the reasons why Le Bon was never accepted into academia in
France and past and present French unwillingness to
acknowledge this recalcitrant scholar's contribution to
psychology.

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In the fourth and fifth parts Moscovici deals with Tarde's
contribution to crowd psychology: the notion of natural and
artificial crowds; the power of the leader over the crowd;
and a theory of mass communication, centring on suggestion
and imitation. Moscovici shows how crowd psychology, from
being a study of specific phenomena, was transformed by
Tarde into a study of society in general and thus made the
laws of politics, sociology and history subject to the laws
of psychology.

According to Moscovici, the structures of crowd psychology
had been created by Le Bon and Tarde; the only ingredient
lacking was the vital spark, or motive power. This was to
be provided by Freud. In a brilliant historical
psychological description in the last part of the book,
Moscovici contextualises Freud's ontogenetic theory of
ingroup ties and phylogentic theory of the development of
society (mainly contained in Group psychology and the
analysis of the ego). Freud's Moses and monotheism is
explored for the insights it provided into different types
of leaders and the creation of a people. The manner in
which French psychoanalysts derogated Freud's works
containing these theories as the fantasies of an ageing man,
is severely criticised by Moscovici. Provocative until the
last, Moscovici ends his book with an application of the
principles of crowd psychology applied to the Moscow trials
and the rise of Stalin.

Should one seek a clear explanation based on rationality for the rise of the masses in this country, I am doubtful whether this book would provide it. However, any serious scholar with an interest in mass psychology will find Moscovici's acute analyses of a wide variety of mass phenomena - from hysteria in sport stadiums to De Gaulle's power over the French people - stimulating. It is recommended that the reader also refer to recent work on crowd psychology within the framework of social identity theory (see Reicher (1982)). Together these two different approaches to crowd psychology might provide interesting contrasts and challenging debates.

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DIVIDE AND PROFIT

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DIVIDE AND PROFIT: INDIAN WORKERS IN NATAL by Shamim Marie
(Worker Resistance and Culture Publications, Durban: 1986. Cost is
R4,50 and R2,00 to trade union members).

This book is the first from Worker Resistance and Culture Publications.
It is aimed not at an academic readership but rather at workers and
is accompanied by a slide-tape package if desired. As stated in the
introduction, 'It is hoped that the book will be used in a number of ways.
Some may want to read it for interest and maybe enjoyment. It could
be used as a resource for organisation or it could be used as part of
shopsteward and worker discussion or education' (Marie:1986,5).
This is not to say that it should not be read by academics as well,
however, and not only for enjoyment. For the book provides an excellent
example of how to make a vast collection of material and difficult
concepts accessible to a wider audience, a useful and necessary skill
for intellectuals to develop.

The aim of the book is obvious and clearly stated in the concluding
paragraph:

> 'It is only through uniting together with African
> workers and fighting on as workers did on the farms
> and mills, and in the 1940's and 1950's, that
> Indian workers will win a better life in the factories,
> in the communities and as part of the oppressed Black people
> of South Africa' (Marie:125).

In an attempt to contribute towards the achievement of unity amongst
African and Indian workers in the trade unions in Natal today, the book
seeks to explain historically, the reasons for present divisions amongst
them and to show that in the past Indian workers were militant and that
African and Indian workers have united as workers against employers.

The task is a daunting one. The period covered is one of 125 years and
the processes at work complex, from the development of capitalism and
industrialisation in Natal, to the proletarianisation of the African
population of the region. During this period, Indian workers moved from
a position where, as indentured labourers they were undoubtedly at the
bottom of the economic hierarchy, to a position where they became an
aristocracy of labour or moved out of the working class altogether.
To trace this history with detailed accuracy would be impossible in 130
pages and, in any case, this is not the aim of the book. For this
reason, the book might offend scholars of the field by its brevity, its
glossing over of what might be deemed crucial aspects of this history
or what might be perceived as inaccuracies. However, the book is not
aimed at an audience of specialists and, moreover, by virtue of its
methodology, which includes a heavy reliance on interviews with workers
and working class leaders of the time, their perceptions of the past
necessarily prevail.

The book is divided into three parts. The first focuses on the period
up to the end of indenture when Indians were mainly field and mill
workers and before the development on a large scale, of manufacturing
industry in Natal. This is the least contentious section as it represents
a keen synthesis and presentation of the available material on the period.
Accepting Hugh Tinker's characterisation of indentured labour as 'a new
system of slavery' (Tinker:1974), Marie traces the reasons for the
importation of indentured labour; the experiences of Indian immigrants
on arrival; their treatment on the plantations, the mines and other places
of work; how conditions deteriorated; the attitude and actions of the
colonial state in support of employers; and the way in which indentured
labourers attempted to ameliorate their conditions and fight against
their exploitation, culminating in the much celebrated 1913 strike.
Highlighting the theme of the book, the first section concludes:

'The story of the workers on the farms and mills is
the story of the bosses who looked for ways of getting
and keeping cheap labour. But it is also the story of
the workers who fought back in whatever way they could
in separate struggles as Indian and African workers.

The bosses used the differences that already existed
among Indian and African workers to further divide and

to create suspicion among these two groups of
workers. They did this as we saw through employing
African workers to beat up Indian workers on the bosses
orders, through employing them in different jobs and
through keeping them apart in separate accomodation (sic)'
(Marie:34).

The theme of militancy of Indian workers and of the divide and rule tactics
of employers and the state, is continued in the following sections.

Part two, which is the longest section of the book and perhaps the one
covering the most complex issues, covers the period from the rise of
manufacturing industry in Natal and the formation of trade unions by Indian
workers from 1917, to the clampdown on the South African Congress of
Trade Unions (SACTU) in the 1960s. It deals with a number of issues which
are far from straightforward, such as the relationship between the trade
unions and Indian political organisations (not always concerned to represent
the interests of the Indian working class within the context of communal
politics, let alone the working class at large) as well as the thorny
problem of the 1949 clashes between Indians and Africans in Cato Manor.
In no instance are the problems whitewashed and are dealt with with
sensitivity, albeit superficially. With regard to the Cato Manor riots
it is concluded that 'some of the scars of 1949 remain to this day. And
for as long as communities are forced to remain apart from each other
it will be difficult to wipe out the feeling of mistrust that these riots
created' (Marie:71).

Nevertheless, much of this section is dedicated to the celebration of
instances of Indian and African worker unity, notably during the Falkirk
strike in the 1930s and the Dunlop strike in the 1940s. It shows that
unlike African workers, Indian workers were allowed to live in the urban
areas and thus came to be seen by employers as a stable workforce and
worthwhile to train for skilled jobs. Further, because legislation
prevented African workers from joining unions, Indian workers came to be
better organised at this time. This in turn meant that employers used
unorganised migrant African workers against organised Indian workers
whenever necessary. Despite factors such as these which mitigated against
it, there were instances of worker unity such as at Falkirk and Dunlop,
which are remembered by Marie's informants for the unity which existed
amongst Indian and African workers at the time.

The final section looks at the ambivalent position of Indian workers
from the 1960s. On the one hand they suffered under the impact of apartheid
laws such as the Group Areas Act and forced removals and were militant
in their subsequent organisation in community organisations around issues
such as rents. On the other hand, through comparatively better educational
opportunities than Africans (due to the needs of a rapidly expanding
economy and attempts by the state to 'buy off' Indians and Coloureds)
Indian workers gained an advantage over African workers in the factories.
Moreover, in the absence of SACTU, Indian unions affiliated to the
conservative Trade Union Council of South Africa (TUCSA), becoming little
more than 'benefits unions' and operating closed shop agreements with
employers, which all served to distance them further from African workers.
Marie argues that factors such as these serve to explain why Indian workers
were relatively untouched by the growth of worker militancy and organisation
from the early 1970s and why 'The unions today in the 1980's are concerned
that Indian workers are not joining' (Marie:105).

The remainder of the book is concerned to point out the benefits of what
are termed the 'fighting unions' affiliated to the Congress of South
African Trade Unions (COSATU) for the future of the South African working
class as a whole and the difficulties which are posed by a divided working
class, something of which employers are well aware. It concludes with the
injunction for all workers to unite.

Clearly the writing of such a history is no easy task and is one that lays
the writer open to all sort. of criticism from specialists and academics,
particularly historians schooled in the need for 'objectivity' and the need to
avoid the pitfalls of 'the concerns of the present colouring the past'.
However, this is not something which should put people off. Marie's is
a pioneering work and no more guilty of present concerns colouring the
interpretation of the past than any other, although it is far more obvious
in this respect and thus perhaps, more honest.

Furthermore, the pitfalls which are possible when taking on
a project of this magnitude, for example problems of brevity, omission
or distortion can be avoided or minimised, as I believe has been done
with Divide and Profit, by the adoption of a certain methodology. Marie
has relied heavily on interviews with some of the surviving workers involved

in the struggles of the past and her interpretation of events is
coloured by their perceptions. The use of oral history is as valid
a methodological choice as reliance on more conventional documentary
sources. This needs to be said given that another recent publication
on Indian labour history in Natal which reaches somewhat different
conclusions with regard to the 1930-1950 period (Padayachee et al:1985),
is more heavily dependent on written sources, although equally informed
by concerns of the present.

In addition to there being methodological justification for Marie's
approach and conclusions, that historical investigation and interpretation
are informed by present concerns is also justifiable. In the words of
Raphael Samuels with whom I would concur:

> 'Meaning is only made manifest retrospectively
> and this is not only a matter of knowing what
> happened - the historians peculiar if sometimes
> ambiguous advantage of hindsight but also of
> being able to offer new interrogations of the
> past on the basis of present day pre-occupations
> and experience' (Samuels:1981:xlv/xlvi).

In this regard there is one criticism I feel is necessary of Divide
and Profit, and that is its failure to take gender into account, a
surprising omission given Marie's concern with the position of women.
Whilst already covering a vast array of material and concerns, I believe
a gender-sensitive perspective would have enhanced this popular history
particularly as Indian women have played such an important role in Natal's
labour history, notably under the indentured labour system and in the
clothing industry, but also as reproducers of labour in the household.

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TWO BOOKS from
## Worker Resistance and Culture Publications

Qabula, Hlatshwayo and Malange are familiar names in Natal's worker movement. They are increasingly becoming familiar names nationwide as their reputation as "Worker izimbongi" is spreading with every major issue in the country. By now thousands of people have witnessed their powerful oral poetry at mass-meetings and at worker and community gatherings. They are part and parcel of an exciting and militant cultural movement which is daily becoming central to the lives of working people in South Africa: indeed, a "Black Mamba Rising" in dignity.

This book gather's together Qabula's, Hlatshwayo's and Malange's poetry from the beginnings of 1984 to the launch of COSATU in November 1985, it captures the oral peotry from the time Qabula started wandering through worker gatherings with his "Praise Poem to Fosatu" to the time when he and Hlatshwayo orated their joint composition, **Tears of a Crator**. In between these two major compositions, the poems here, sometimes in short and harsh lines, sometimes in complex Nguni symbolism, capture the power, the commitment and the pride of the progressive labour movement.

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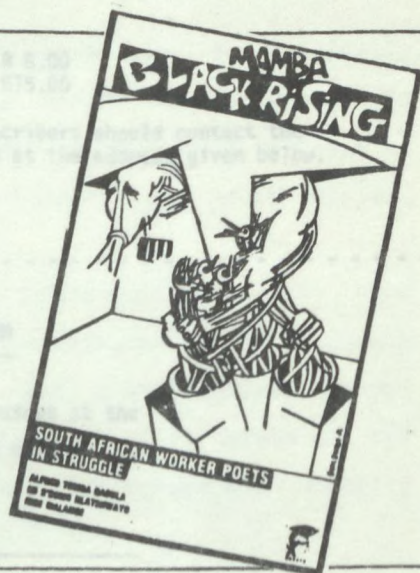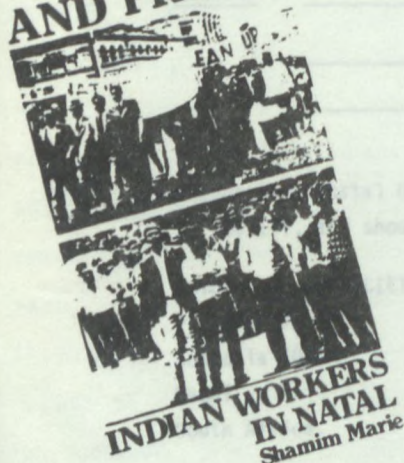
This book looks at the history of Indian workers from 1860 to the present. It tries to show how the actions of the bosses and the laws of the government have created and reinforced divisions between Indian and African workers. There were times when the workers were able to unite together, but more often Indian and African workers were involved in separate struggles.

In the days of early industry Indian workers were militant and organised. The bosses then used African workers against Indian workers.Today, in the 1980´s, it is the African workers who have come together in strong unions and a militant federation, COSATU. Most Indian workers are not involved in these unions.

These experiences are looked at, and where possible this is done through the words of workers and organisers who try to understand the divisions and the way forward to unity.

Price R4.50

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'Psychology in society' is a journal which aims to critically explore and present ideas on the nature of psychology in apartheid and capitalist society. There is a special emphasis on the theory and practice of psychology in the South African context.

The editorial collective welcomes contributions which will develop debate on psychology and psychological issues in South Africa. In addition to articles and book reviews, short discussions on previously published material or on issues of the moment will be encouraged. Contributions should not normally exceed 6000 words in length.

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