

EDLS 018

Educational Reform in South Africa

Lecture 1



Getting to know the country

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- 1961 South Africa becomes a Republic and sheds British rule but is not allowed to stay in the Commonwealth.
- 1964 During the Rivonia trial Nelson Mandela and 7 others are found guilty and sent to Robben Island on a life-long sentence. Mandela said among others the following:

Africans want a just share in the whole of South Africa; they want security and a stake in society.

Above all, we want equal political rights, because without them our disabilities will be permanent. I know this sounds revolutionary to the whites in this country, because the majority of voters will be Africans. This makes the white man fear democracy.



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During my lifetime I have dedicated myself to this struggle of the African people. I have fought against white domination, and I have fought against black domination. I have cherished the ideal of a democratic and free society in which all persons live together in harmony and with equal opportunities. It is an ideal which I hope to live for and to achieve. But if needs be, it is an ideal for which I am prepared to die.

He also explained why the idea of peaceful resistance had been abandoned and a military wing (Umkonto we Sizwe) was established for the ANC.

Former colonies surrounding South Africa became independent.

- 1966 – Lesotho
- 1966 – Botswana
- 1968 – Swaziland
- 1975 – Mozambique
- 1975 – Angola
- 1980 – Zimbabwe
- 1990 - Namibia





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16 June 1976

"I saw a child fall down. Under a shower of bullets I rushed forward and went for the picture. It had been a peaceful march, the children were told to disperse, they started singing Nkosi Sikelele. The police were ordered to shoot."

These are the words of Sam Nzima, recalling the events of 16 June 1976, when over 500 people were killed as they protested over the imposition of Afrikaans as a medium of instruction in township schools.

Nzima's photograph of the dying Hector Pieteron being carried by a fellow student was published around the world, and came to represent the anger and tragedy of a day that changed the course of South African history, sparking months of clashes between police, schoolchildren and protesters. Hector, 12, was one of the first casualties of what came to be known as the Soweto Uprising.





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The first casualty

Hector was not the first child to die in the 1976 Soweto uprising. Another boy, Hastings Ndlovu, is believed to have been the first child to be shot on that fateful day. But in the case of Hastings, there were no photographers on the scene, and his name never became famous. It is believed that Hastings died several days after the shooting. Eliot Ndlovu, father of Hastings, passed away in 2004.

Demonstrated ability of youth to take part in struggle. Were encouraged to resist and to make schools ungovernable.





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Alexander – sorcerer's apprentice

The tale begins as an old sorcerer departs his workshop, leaving his apprentice with chores to perform. Tired of fetching water by pail, the apprentice enchants a broomstick to do the work for him - using magic he is not yet fully trained in. The floor is soon awash with water, and the apprentice realizes that he cannot stop the broom because he does not know how. Despairing, he splits the broom in two with an axe, but each of the pieces transforms into a whole broomstick. The broomsticks take up pails and resume their work, now faster than ever. When all seems lost in a massive flood, the old sorcerer returns and quickly breaks the spell, saving the day.

In some versions, the sorcerer expels the apprentice for causing the mess. In other versions, the sorcerer is a bit amused at the apprentice and he simply chides him.





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1983

The 1961 Constitution is amended to give the vote to Indians and Coloureds as well. A tricameral system of government is introduced (a parliament consisting of the House of Assembly for Whites, the House of Representatives for Coloureds and the House of Delegates for Indians. Voter turnout for the latter two is very low and they carry no legitimacy.

The history of education for Black (including Coloured and Indian) people before 1910, after 1910, after 1983 (see Coetzee, Malherbe Vol I and II, Hartshorne, Kallaway, Behr).






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Before 1910 (when the Union was established) there were 4 provinces that controlled education:

- 1 The Cape Province 1652 –
- 2 Natal 1836 –
- 3 Transvaal 1836 –
- 4 The Orange Free State 1836 –



The Cape Province fell under Dutch rule first, then under English rule, briefly under Dutch rule again and then for the better part of the 19th century under British rule. Natal was under British rule, the Orange Free State was independent but spent a short time under British rule in the 1850s while the Transvaal remained independent despite efforts by the British to annex it. In the Cape schools remained essentially multiracial but during the 1800s children of colour tended to attend missionary schools. In the other three provinces schools were basically mono-racial while missionary societies provided education and teacher training for the other population groups.

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In 1910 education was assigned to the provinces and "native education" became a separate responsibility of the various provincial councils. The systems for white learners were well funded and the systems for the other learners were neglected although the curricula were often the same. The ANC and other organizations were not satisfied with the separate systems and opposition grew steadily. Education was not compulsory for groups other than whites.



People of colour could generally not go to "white" universities. 3 universities for blacks, 1 for coloureds and 1 for Indians were created. When the TBVC countries came into being, they each established a university. Separate teachers' colleges for all groups existed in both the Republic and the TBVC states and the SGTs.

After 1983 education for coloureds was controlled by the House of Representatives, that of Indians by the House of Delegates, that of Blacks by the Department of Education and Training in the areas outside the TBVC countries and the SGTs. Education for whites was controlled by the House of Assembly.

The constitutional system after 1983 angered the Black population as it made no provision for their participation in politics in South Africa as a whole and resistance was intensified among others through the United Democratic Front.



This constitution classified matters of state into own and general affairs. Education was classified as an own affair for whites, coloureds and Indians and as a general affair for Blacks outside the TBVC countries and the SGTs.



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After 1983 the following education departments operated:

1. The Department of National Education (general affairs)
2. The Department of Education and Training (for Blacks outside the SGTs and the TBVC countries)
3. The Department of Education and Culture (House of Assembly for Whites)
4. The Department of Education and Culture (House of Representatives for Coloureds)
5. The Department of Education and Culture (House of Delegates for Indians)
6. A departments in each of the TBVC countries
7. A department in each of the SGTs (homelands)





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1990
The ANC and other banned political organizations are unbanned and Mr Nelson Mandela is released from prison.

1992
Education Renewal Strategy Framework of the then government. Race not a valid basis for differentiation.

1994
South Africa's first democratic elections are held. The ANC wins by a large margin. A government of national unity (GNU) is formed by the ANC, the National Party and others under the leadership of Mr Nelson Mandela with Messrs FW de Klerk and Thabo Mbeki as Deputy-Presidents.

After a relatively short time the National Party withdraws from the GNU 1996.



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1994

- Policy Framework Training of the ANC White Paper on Education and Training (official policy on education of the new government)
- The South African Qualifications Authority Act of 1995
- The South African Schools Act of 1996
- The National Education Policy Act of 1996
- The Higher Education Act of 1997
- The Employment of Educators Act of 1998
- The Further Education and Training Act of 1998





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1999

- The ANC wins the second democratic elections
- Thabo Mbeki becomes president.

2004

- The ANC wins the third elections with an even greater majority.
- Thabo Mbeki begins his second term of office as president.





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2007

- Mbeki loses the leadership of the ANC to Jacob Zuma.

2008

- The ANC recalls Thabo Mbeki as South African President and he resigns.
- Kgalema Motlante elected as South Africa's third President.
- "Terror" Lekota, Minister of Defence and other politicians resign from the ANC and begin a new party to contest the 2009 elections.
- **Challenges faced in education in 1994**
- Mobility eradicate all unfair discrimination on the basis of race, gender, language and religion.
- Expansion of secondary and further and higher education.





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2008 continued ...

- Address the skills shortage.
- Equalize spending and ensure inter-provincial equity.
- Redress past discriminatory practices equity in terms of race and gender and handicaps.
- Improve the performance of the system – in light of poor performance in international testing instruments and school-leaving exams.



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- Improve the qualifications and performance of educators.
- Normalize spending patterns – not too much on staff graded education and training systems.
- The values base to cement democratic gains provide suitable training programmes.
- Integrate all former systems in terms of human resources etc.
- Development of suitable learning support materials.
- Quality assurance at different levels.

