

INTERNATIONAL & DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION

Curriculum Studies in South Africa

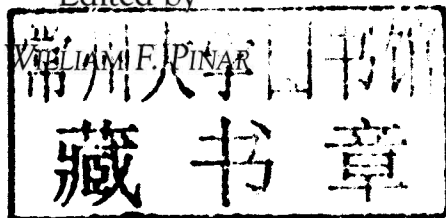
Intellectual Histories & Present
Circumstances

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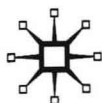
CURRICULUM STUDIES IN SOUTH AFRICA

INTELLECTUAL HISTORIES & PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES

Edited by



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Series Editors' Introduction

John N. Hawkins and W. James Jacob

Having contributed a long line of books and scholarly works on curriculum studies, it is a pleasure to add a volume by William F. Pinar to the International & Development Education Series. *Curriculum Studies in South Africa: Intellectual Histories & Present Circumstances* presents a case study of South Africa and its often controversial issues related to education. A historical overview is interwoven throughout the text as the senior contributors touch upon issues such as post-apartheid curriculum studies, critical incidence autoethnography, and the need for authentic teaching and learning.

In an orchestrated and historical dialogue, Pinar assigns each contributor with the charge to provide a critical review of the South African curriculum context. A focus on the “internationalization” rather than the “globalization” of the curriculum is a distinction the editor highlights in the preface. The internationalization dialogue extends beyond the contributors of the volume to include two international scholars, Hongyu Wang of China and Elizabeth Macedo of Brazil, who engage the six South African scholars with a series of questions and commentary, which is summarized by Pinar in chapter 7. A critical stance against colonial and neocolonial influences of curriculum meddling are addressed from a variety of historical and contemporary perspectives. How to pursue an effective international dialogue—by learning with and not necessarily from international examples—in curriculum studies while maintaining an education unique to the needs of South Africa is a challenge highlighted in this volume. With a population and economy that has been hit hard by the HIV and AIDS as well as the recent global economic crisis, South Africa is distinctive in theory and practice with respect to curriculum studies in the contemporary and post-Apartheid society. Home to the world's largest number of AIDS orphans, South Africa is facing unique curricular issues inherited from previous South African generations and not necessarily

comparable to most other national contexts. Curriculum studies for South Africa remains at the forefront of sustained political, economic, and psychosocial change. Pinar and his colleagues address many of these issues in this compelling addition to the International & Development Education Series.

Abbreviations

ANC	African National Congress
APN	Academic Policy Network
BAGET	Bachelor of General Education and Training
BPaed	Bachelor of Paedagogy
CHE	Council on Higher Education
CNE	Christian National Education
COTEP	Committee on Teacher Education Policy
CUMSA	Curriculum Model for South Africa
C2005	Curriculum 2005
DAS	Development Appraisal System
DoE	Department of Education
EASA	Education Association of South Africa
FET	Further Education and Training
FP	Fundamental Pedagogics
GET	General Education and Training Phase
HEQC	Higher Education Quality Committee
HDE	Higher Diploma in Education
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
IKS	Indigenous Knowledge System
INSET	In-Service Education of Teachers
IQMS	Integrated Quality Management System
IWC	Integrated World Capitalism
MEd	Master of Education
Natsoc	Naturalist Society
NCS	National Curriculum Statements
NECC	National Education Crisis Committee
NECC	National Education Co-ordinating Committee
NEF	New Education Fellowship
NEPI	National Education Policy Initiative
NQF	National Qualification Framework

LO	Life Orientation
OBE	Outcomes-Based Education
PBTA	Peninsula Biology Teachers' Association
PEI	President's Educational Initiative
PGCE	Postgraduate Certificate in Education
RDDA	Research, Develop, Disseminate and Adopt
RNCS	Revised National Curricular Statements
RSA	Republic of South Africa
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning
SADTU	South African Democratic Teachers' Union
SAJE	South African Journal of Education
SAQA	South African Qualifications Authority
SRC	Student Representative Council
TIMMS	Third International Mathematics and Science Study
TP	Teaching Practice
TRC	Truth and Reconciliation Commission
UCT	University of Cape Town
UDW	University of Durban-Westville
UKZN	University of Kwa-Zulu Natal
UNISA	University of South Africa
UWC	University of the Western Cape
VOC	Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie
WITS	University of the Witwatersrand
WSE	Whole School Evaluation

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Introduction

William F. Pinar

But we all know that each generation has its own test.

Jane Addams (2002 [1902], 5)

While the internationalization of the academic field of curriculum studies has been under way in many countries for decades, its institutionalization—in the establishment of an international association (www.iaacs.org)—and its theorization (see Overly 2003; Pinar 2003; Trueit et al. 2003) are relatively recent. Internationalization can provide scholars with critical and intellectual distance from their own local cultures *and* from those standardizing processes of globalization against which numerous national cultures—and the school curricula designed to reproduce those national cultures—are now reacting so strongly. In this collection one discerns the promise of the internationalization of curriculum studies.¹ It is a promise kept by the scholars whose work comprises this collection.

The history of internationalization undermines the present promise of dialogic encounter among colleagues working worldwide. The reality is often the uncritical importation of concepts from other countries: evidently the case of outcomes-based education in South Africa. The calling of curriculum studies is, in part, the comprehension of what is at work and at stake in such political maneuvers. Through study and dialogical encounter scholars can distance themselves from their own situations as they come to understand others'. The promise of internationalization is the intellectual advancement not only of nationally distinctive fields but of a worldwide

field of curriculum studies structured by knowledge of the national, the local. This is, I suggest, the test our generation must pass.

The problem with the project of internationalization is world history. Even in cosmopolitan projects, traces of imperialism and colonialism are discernible (Pinar 2009). Even in the present project I cannot but hear previous occasions when resources were removed from South Africa and converted into commodities exchangeable in a first-world economy. The fact that engagement in this project was voluntary updated but did not necessarily erase these historic echoes. It is the dilemma facing the internationalization of curriculum studies: how to engage in international conversation cognizant of world history and present injustices but not fated to reenact them. Certainly, I discerned that dilemma. What it meant was a continuing caution in my analytic efforts, an anxiety that any analysis risked neocolonial appropriation.

True, I reassured myself, I had built into this project protections against such appropriation. The “final word” went to the South African scholars. The “panel” posing questions to these scholars about their draft chapters comprised of two theorists whom I knew would be cognizant of such traces. I kept prominent before me (as if on the computer screen) my anxiety that theorization risked reinscribing historic traces. I was determined to engage in this work first and foremost as a colleague, animated by my professional obligation to understand another colleague’s work on its own terms. Given that individuality is rarely separable from that national (and/or regional) history and culture in which it takes form, the individuality of these colleagues was, for me, primary.²

If individuality is paramount, why choose the nation as a unit of analysis? While the nation may be in “retreat” (Strange 1996)—relegated to reactive roles in economic globalization—it remains the imaginary and material site in which much of humanity experiences daily civic life.³ The nation remains the site in which political debates over school reform have occurred; that is clearly the case in South Africa. It has been the case in the United States (Pinar et al. 1995), and it is the case in Canada (Tomkins 2008 [1986]). Since the 1980s school reform has been increasingly cast in economic terms. As the chapters in this book show, in South Africa the racial and the economic became intertwined. National politics gets played out on the backs—and in the minds—of schoolchildren and those who teach them.

Given the primacy of the nation in curriculum reform, I have focused on “internationalization” rather than “globalization.” Not only does internationalization point to the national context in which global politics is enacted, but, for my purposes, the term underlines the promise of the next stage (our generational test, recalling Addams) in curriculum studies.

Internationalization denotes the possibility of nationally distinctive fields in complicated conversation with each other. In this collection we glimpse a “micro-enactment” of such internationalization in exchanges between South African scholars and two non-South African scholars, one a Brazilian scholar working in Rio de Janeiro and the other a Chinese national working in the United States. In Chapter 7 Professors Elizabeth Macedo (Brazil) and Hongyu Wang (United States) pose questions to and comment on the replies from the South African scholars: Professors Ursula Hoadley, Wayne Hugo, Lesley Le Grange, Labby Ramrathan, Crain Soudien, and Yusef Waghid. In these exchanges distinctions were drawn and comparisons were made—between Brazil and South Africa, between China and South Africa, between the United States and South Africa—but always in the service of understanding curriculum studies in South Africa. The emphasis here is not upon comparison but upon understanding the singularity of the nationally distinctive field through study of its intellectual history and analysis of its present circumstances, with each domain clarified in dialogue with colleagues working elsewhere.⁴

Both Professor Macedo and Professor Hoadley characterize scholarly dialogue as relatively absent from the Brazilian and South African fields. Macedo wonders whether the focus upon an external “object”—foreign scholarship—distracts scholars from engaging each other directly and focusing on issues specific to the nationally distinctive field. Hoadley seems disinclined to cite this particular external object as the distracting element, focusing instead on the character of knowledge production within South Africa, and suggesting it is the nature of theory to proliferate its own separate languages that create a Babel discouraging dialogue. In contrast, empirical research focuses attention on the same observable and measurable object. I wonder whether what makes the object distracting (and silencing) is not its externality but its elusiveness. When elevated above “horizontal” relations (implying dialogue among equals) the object constructs a vertical slide (as it were) on which scholars necessarily slip as they climb toward the object (forever) just above them. Hoadley’s invocation of empiricism recalls science’s confidence that the characteristics and functions of external objects can be ascertained by protocols of observation and measurement, elevating investigators above the object. Is it, then, only when scholars are subjugated to the object on which they are focused that conversation among them is rendered less relevant, as they must devote themselves to what is above and beyond them? How would such a fundamental structure of relations become instantiated in a scholarly field?

In the South African instance, the obvious answer is colonization, replicated in a subjugated relation to foreign scholarship. A supplementary and perhaps less obvious answer is suggested by the structural relation

instantiated in the United States.⁵ The U.S. field was structured around school improvement, reaching its nadir during the George W. Bush Administration, when the capacity of schools (now construed as academic businesses with bottom lines, such as scores on standardized tests) for raising student test scores was traced back to education professors' university classes. The Bush Administration demanded curricular alignment among its objectives, the content of university-based courses in teacher education, and outcomes in schools. Even a less fascistic structure nonetheless positions education faculties as a lever legislated by government to lift a massive institution (the school) in which society, history, culture, and family are personified in students. In the scramble to achieve the impossible, university-based faculties focus on the elusive external object (the school), not the articulation of its meaning in complicated conversation among themselves.⁶

I invoke "internationalism" to suggest a solidarity⁷ beyond borders that a shared concern—our academic discipline devoted to understanding curriculum—might support. Wang recalls Kristeva's conception of nation without nationalism; such a conception constitutes a prerequisite for internationalism among curriculum studies scholars. While reality requires us to retain the nation as a key category of analysis and even as a bulwark against the crushing standardization of globalization, we must not succumb to the nation's political socialization.⁸ We are not representatives of our respective governments, condemned to reenact international conflicts, but independent scholars devoted to understanding our local situations through conversation with colleagues unfamiliar with them. The critical distance such conversation entails—which is one benefit of internationalization—enables understanding of both one's own situation and the situations of one's colleagues.⁹

Proximity is a persistent problem in curriculum studies. In the United States, it was proximity to schools—including the expectation that university-based academic work should translate into specific institutional improvements—that slowed the pace of intellectual advancement during the Tylerian era (Pinar 2008a). During the Bush Administration, funded research was mandated to be quantitative and directed toward raising test scores, an ideological effort to muzzle scholars in schools of education, which had been historically caricatured (by U.S. conservatives) as sites of leftwing indoctrination. Proximity seems not to be a problem in Canadian curriculum studies, nor does it seem to be one in South Africa—at least not yet. While national agendas drive curriculum reform, South African scholars seem free to participate, critique, and even ignore these agendas.

In South Africa proximity would seem to be primarily a function of individual preference. Lesley Le Grange, for instance, replies to my question regarding this problem by writing: "my work is not simply shaped by

these agendas but has offered critical responses to societal events and government agenda." As the post-Apartheid teacher education coordinator at what was then the University of Durban-Westville, Labby Ramrathan reports that he was not coerced into compliance with national directives to restructure offerings as "programs directed at satisfying national needs." Wayne Hugo believes that "there was subtle pressure on academics to toe the governmental line." And now, Ursula Hoadley reports, there is "more pressure for universities to work with ministries." Rather than theoretical research, there is a press for "policy prescriptions." There may be, then, a problem of proximity coming.

We achieve and maintain distance from governmental initiatives past and present by studying both, and by studying the scholarship of scholars working elsewhere. One opportunity the internationalization of curriculum studies presents is distance from the everyday reality of one's own situation. While essential to understand on its own terms and for its own sake, the scholarship of colleagues working elsewhere also enables us to discern the specificity—even the arbitrariness—of the local. Specificity is scarcely limited to the national, of course, as nationalism itself has destroyed specificity, most prominently the indigenous. In the present volume the indigenous is referenced on more than one occasion, including in terms of efforts to Africanize school knowledge.

The personification of specificity is the individual; the "subject" is the lived site of remembrance and reconstruction. Understanding the subjectivity of the internationalization of curriculum studies accompanies my efforts to understand the field's intellectual history and present circumstances,¹⁰ as the individual personifies that history and those circumstances. Before composing these chapters, the South African scholars consented to answer my questions concerning their intellectual life histories and present involvement in curriculum studies. With permission, I have drawn from their answers to introduce the South African scholars whose chapters comprise this collection. Concluding the collection is the "final word" of the South African scholars.

The South African Scholars

Crain Soudien labors to advance the humanist project beyond its historical character—and specifically its "white character."¹¹ Coming to this undertaking as a "politically oppressed but privileged person," Soudien rejects the "ethnicization, racialization, and masculinization" that accompanied European domination. First influenced by Marxism (before he became

disappointed by socialism's "impatience with non-Western understandings of the world"), Soudien found that poststructuralism supported his skepticism about vanguardism, with "its authoritarian inclinations." While it is informed by social events, Soudien's ongoing project is by "no means a response" to them:

I am very aware of the way in which the conjuncture in which we find ourselves in the world today, as opposed to the specific manifestations the South African situation takes, as the defining problem that is guiding my work. This conjuncture, in some ways the triumph of a white and European appropriation of our now universal inheritance, is what I want to be able to say I am committed to challenging.

That challenge proceeds by "understanding the constitutive social character of communicating and learning across difference." In particular, Soudien looks to anthropology and postcolonial theory to provide clues about where to go.

Soudien complains that curriculum history is underdeveloped in South Africa, a problem he helps correct in his essay (Chapter 1). For Soudien, social difference—not reform—drives curriculum development in South Africa. Such social difference is local and particular, but it is also global, rendering curriculum development processes tantamount to acts of "incorporation into the dominant ideological structures of the world." Soudien links this incorporation to processes of internationalization, a term he associates not only with colonialism but also with early European efforts to deracialize the curriculum. Politically (and specifically for the ANC [African National Congress]), as Soudien shows, this racial "evisceration" mutates into rhetoric of "racial unity."

The project of "whiteness" remains invisible to itself, Soudien suggests, so that even in post-Apartheid South Africa, education remains a black aspiration and a white reality. Curriculum reform becomes the management of racial integration, specifically of the "integration of black people into the hegemonic order," and thereby "is perpetuating older forms of discrimination." Such integration is recoded as the cultivation of rationality, underscoring "the extent to which subjectivity in South Africa is a raced, cultured, gendered, and classed experience." As it did during Apartheid, such a conception of subject formation functions to "normalize identity in racial terms."

Understood historically, then, curriculum development in South Africa has always been—since the arrival of the Dutch in the seventeenth century—an international phenomenon. By importing a curriculum model (from New Zealand and the United Kingdom) to structure post-Apartheid

reform, policymakers ignored history, proceeding as if “the social context” of South Africa were “empty.” In so doing, reformers reproduced both South Africa’s history and its social structure. Soudien’s analysis of curriculum studies’ present circumstances intersects with the global crisis. “The systemic nature of this crisis,” he points out,

manifesting itself at the individual level as a crisis of the self—identity, identification, and community-making—but at the community level as a crisis of sustainability, is at the forefront of my mind. The urgency of the message of climate change has simply confirmed for me the interconnectedness of the puzzle of being, at the individual and larger social level and the importance of education against this.

As a literal reality and a political metaphor, the crisis of climate change communicates the urgency of the situation in South Africa and of Soudien’s project.

Wayne Hugo provides a theoretical elaboration of how “hierarchical networks work.” He does so not only through analyses of major educational theorists—among them Piaget, Bloom, Bernstein, and Gagné—but historically, working his way from Plato, Aristotle, and Augustine through to the present, concluding with implications for the South African present (Chapter 2). As a high school teacher, Hugo experientially found that a “hierarchical organization and understanding of your subject at school level was vital to being able to teach creatively and knowing how to move freely through its structures.” Not only material conditions and social challenges have inspired Wayne Hugo; spiritual experience has been formative as well. He also acknowledges colleagues and friends (often intersecting categories for him) in his formation.

Curricular integration in post-Apartheid South Africa “went too far,” Hugo judges. Expecting underprepared and overworked teachers in poverty-stricken conditions to achieve predetermined outcomes without detailed curriculum content training amounted to leaving them in a “desert with only signposts for survival.” For him, however, and for other teachers he knew in Johannesburg, “nothing much changed in my classroom or those of my colleagues. We still taught our own lessons in our own way.” The experience left Hugo with “an allergic reaction to the romantic tradition of progressivism as it played out in South Africa,” a reaction nourished during graduate studies in the 1980s. Why?

Because it [progressivism] idealized the learner, idealized the teacher, idealized the classroom, set the whole vision up of creative paths discovered and scaffolded within different contexts getting to the same end point, obscuring the difficulty of the whole process, not recognizing that it was precisely