

“Enhancing our freedoms: Education and citizenship in South Africa”¹

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1. Introduction

Marking the coming of democracy at the conclusion of his *Long Walk to Freedom* Nelson Mandela (1994:751) said:

Some say that (the liberation of the oppressed and the oppressor) has now been achieved. But I know that that is not the case. The truth is that we are not yet free: we have merely achieved the freedom to be free, the right not to be oppressed. We have not taken the final step of our journey, but the first step on a longer and even more difficult road. For to be free is not merely to cast off one's chains, but to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others.

Twelve years after these momentous words were spoken, it remains appropriate that we continue to assess where we are in the great journey Mandela talks of. For us in education, and I think of education in the broadest sense possible here, not only is it important that we can answer the questions of

1. whether the citizenship rights of all our children are being met and fulfilled, and
2. whether those young people who would have found themselves on the outside of the world of opportunity and achievement are now included in the project of education, but,
3. critically, also, what inclusion means for them.

What does it mean for the formerly disenfranchised to be in a social space that is now democratic? The basic issues underpinning these questions are those of citizenship. To understand how citizenship might be understood in relation to education I begin with a review of the debates around citizenship, and then look at what the implications of these are for discussions of citizenship and education. Using these, I focus on the education context in South Africa. In developing this sequence of foci, I work with the argument that the foremost function of education is to prepare young people for citizenship, ie civic, social and political participation, and attempt to reposition this discussion in relation to the earlier critique I develop of the larger citizenship debate.

2. Citizenship debates in the contemporary era

A quick review of the citizenship discussion internationally will show how time and space have come to produce a discussion that has gone in a range of different directions. Not

¹ This is a working document not for quoting.

unexpectedly, the mainstays of the modern citizenship discussion remain in place. They take their cue from Marshall's (1950) *Citizenship and Social Class and Other Essays*, and his well-known proposition that "citizenship can be expressed most fully within a liberal democratic state and that when civil, political and social rights are secured, all members feel they are a part of society and willing to participate within it" (Arcodia, 2006). At the core of the discussion are the traditional concerns of modern democracy – the rights of justice, freedom and equality. In relation to these a vibrant debate has developed which has seen the most eminent contemporary philosophers staking out their positions. The American philosopher Rawls has been the leading figure in this development and has been most consistently responsible for elaborating the meaning of what he has called the 'first virtue of social institutions', namely that of justice. For Rawls (1971) justice provides a moral frame for modern democracy to come to full expression. It governs the conduct of people in relation to each other. He argues that a well-ordered society requires individuals with highly developed moral sensibilities:

If men's inclination to self-interest makes their vigilance against one another necessary, their public sense of justice makes their secure association together possible. Among individuals with disparate aims and purposes a shared conception of justice establishes the bonds of civic friendship; the general desire for justice limits the pursuit of other ends. One may think of a public conception of Justice as constituting the fundamental charter of a well-ordered human association. (Rawls, 1971:5)

Central to Rawls' argument is the idea that justice is concerned with establishing the priority of that which is right over that which is good. While goodness can be determined in different kinds of ways, the principles of what is right and just place limitations on the individual's ability to privilege his or her own best interests. In framing his argument Rawls distils two principles of justice. The first is the citizen principle (Butts, 1988:3): "Each person is to have an equal right to the most extensive total system of equal basic liberties with a similar system of liberty for all" (ibid). The second, dealing with the regulation of the social and the economic, urges that "social and economic inequalities are to be arranged so that they are both:

- a. to the greatest benefit of the least advantaged... and
- b. attached to offices and positions open to all under conditions of fair equality of opportunity" (Butts, 1988:3-4).

Responding to Rawls, radical communitarians such as Sandel and McIntyre (Mulhall and Swift, 1992:217) suggest that the liberal approach errs in projecting citizens in identity forms that are *distinct* from their interests (what they consider to be good and desirable). Sandel, for example, argues that Rawls' conception of the person is metaphysically flawed, and, in so far as this conception rules out the possibility that a person's being is constitutively attached to his or her ends, is invalid and incoherent (ibid:41). Also evident in the work of MacIntyre (1981, 1988 and 1990) is the trenchant argument that liberalism, in its absolutising of the notion of rightness, is responsible for promoting a neutral conception of what is good. In attempting to transcend tradition liberalism conjugates identity in the logic of a universalist and tradition-independent language and in the process disguises its own deep encultured history. Following in this tradition Taylor (1990) shows how much a traditional Rawlsian position absolves the citizen from the responsibility to act. Citizenship in the position taken by Taylor demands that the individual commits him or herself to a moral position. Practical reasoning, or a deontological approach is central to the active citizen. Mulhall and Swift (1992:119) paraphrase Taylor's position in the following way: "In... Taylor's claim... we

cannot do without the wide-ranging and fundamental distinctions which go to make up a thick theory of the good because in their absence we have no way of articulating the moral point of the actions and feelings that our moral institutions enjoin upon us....” The citizen in this argument is a moral actor not by choice but obligation. He or she has to act, guided by practical reasoning, to clarify what the public good might come to mean.

Other positions have developed in relation to and in conversation with those established by the communitarians. Cox (1995), for example, like Sandel, takes issue with the idea of the citizen as a competitive individual. She urges the need for a conception of the citizen which goes beyond economic frameworks and recognizes the location of human beings within what she refers to as social networks and the social, as opposed to the economic, capital that animates their relationships with one another. Much of her critique is underpinned by an anxiety about a rapacious and destructive individualism that an interest-maximising citizenship notion authorizes: “If he takes over, he will destroy society because social connections have no place in a world of self-interested, competing individuals” (Cox, 1995:2).

Coming to the discussion from another angle are a whole range of commentators who have become concerned about its inability to address issues of difference and are interested in understanding what are thought to be the new questions of gender, cosmopolitanism, internationalism, migrancy, and globalization. Meehan (Wiener, 1997:1), for example has expressed concern about the emergence of

a new kind of citizenship that is neither national nor cosmopolitan but that is multiple in the sense that identities, rights and obligations, associated... with citizenship are expressed through an increasingly complex configuration of common community institutions, states, national and transnational voluntary associations, regions and alliances of regions.

In terms of the issues as they relate to gender, commentators such as Benhabib (1995) have argued that the female citizen is located within a set of tensions “which illustrate the struggles women have waged in relation to the exclusive elements of liberal democratic citizenship” (Arnot and Dillabough, 2000:2). An important argument that gender theorists make is that citizenship denotes an empty space because liberal democracy conceives of it as a largely abstract concept: “in theoretical terms [it is an empty space] that could be occupied by anyone, assuming that anyone and everyone has the power to occupy such a space” (ibid:3).

The context for much of this new work is the eruption and proliferation of new social developments challenging the inherent notions of homogeneity and universality of identity. Prompting these developments the following have been crucial: the rise of modern and new formations such as the European Union, the dissolution of large 20th century empires such as the Soviet Union, the emergence of the United States as a single power-bloc, the forced migration of large population groups in several parts of the world and the increase in significance of institutions of global governance. In taking stock of these developments, the work of Hardt and Negri (2000) is of critical importance here in promoting the notion of ‘global citizenship. They describe global citizenship as a counter-intuitive, blue-print/less development that presents itself as the anti-thesis of empire. To empire’s assimilative grip, it offers a conception of citizenship that retains a location within modernity, but is always, also, on its edge, operating in opposition to its disciplining conventions. While conventional understandings of citizenship depend on the disciplinary modalities provided by institutions (prisons, schools, hospitals, universities, etc), their global citizen operates through flexible

networks in which individuals constantly renegotiate their membership. In the process, through these modalities of negotiation, society becomes more deeply democratic. While this argument has attracted strong critique (see Painter, 2003), it has introduced into the discussion powerful and new conceptions of the subject.

Significant as these discussions have been, and we can see clearly how they reflect, on the one hand, the political developments of the post-Soviet Union era and particularly the collapse of communism, and, on the other, the related but still separate evolution of the notion of the subject that post-modernism has precipitated, the discussion, importantly, has remained within the logic of the European debate. At its heart continues to beat the paradoxical pulse of a rugged individualism framed within the parameters of a pervasive European, and even asocial individualist, trajectory for becoming. It is within this paradox that difference is trapped. Difference is permissible as long as it takes expression within the discursive rules of the hegemonic order. In terms of this, the difference of multiculturalism comes to interrupt the discursive order, but it does so on an exceptionalist basis. Difference is permitted only on the condition that it will, finally, accede to the teleology prescribed by the West. In this encounter, invariably, the discussion has come to figure itself around abstracted notions of individual rights in which consensual understandings of the priority of what is right have come to obscure the continued experience of marginalization and oppression by significant groups and individuals in society.

To supplement these approaches, it is necessary to bring into perspective a reading 'from below'. A more inclusive reading, it is suggested here, builds off Mr Mandela's concern about 'enhancing the freedom of others.' The idea of 'enhancing' the freedom of 'others' recognises the radical otherness of those living outside of or in opposition to the logic of the hegemonic order and brings the discussion within range of the subalternist perspective emanating from India. Important in this discussion is recognising the proposition that democracy does *not* need to be reproduced only in the normative image of Western capitalism and that the global history of capitalism does not "reproduce everywhere the same history of power" (Chakrabarty, 2002:13). Chakrabarty argues, for example, that traditional Marxist approaches have fused power and capital and so, in the process, have effectively erased the presence of other forms of power operating alongside and within the hegemonic frame of capitalism. In the case of India a "heteroglossic structure" emerged that was "irreducibly plural... interlocking within itself strands of different types of relationships that did not make up a logical whole. One such strand critical to the functioning of authority... was that of direct domination and subordination of the subaltern by the elite" (ibid). A particular form of capitalism thus emerged which was directly related to its colonial origins in which the capitalist class failed to bring to a conclusion its universalizing project and had to come to the understanding that its acceptance of the continued existence of other forms of domination was unavoidable. As a consequence, Guha (Chakrabarty, 2002:13) argued, "vast areas of life and consciousness of the people" escaped any kind of "bourgeois hegemony."

The relevance of this last approach for the South African context is clear. Moving into focus here are the conditions described by Mamdani (1996) in his characterization in Africa of the logics of citizenship and subjecthood. In this treatise Mamdani makes the argument that there are parallel authority logics operating in the African context in the form of citizenship identities that respond to Western modes of governance – the democratic state in which citizenship is reproduced and validated through democratic representation. Opposed to this, are traditional forms of political participation where fealty to a traditional order, and specifically the institution of a leader, validated through blood, kinship or tribe, continues to

determine the character of political life. In the former one operates as in independent subject. In the latter one is a dependent subject.

The challenge this description poses for the citizenship discussion is intense. It emphasizes the difficulty of reading and managing forms of politics, identity and difference outside of the analytic theory of a totalizing Western framework for citizenship. What this analysis does is explain that we are confronted with a politics of difference which is not easily subsumable within a universalizing theory of the subject. Instead, importantly, it points to a key feature of the modern condition in the post-colonial world, that individuals live across what might be thought to be incommensurable difference. There are many individuals and groups, as the work of Fabian (1998) is making clear, that subjectivities, animated by discourses that operate off logics that are autonomous from Western thought, continue to exist deep inside the heart of the mainstream. Significant about this discussion is that in their everyday lives human beings are *managing* this incommensurability and that they don't exist as two impermeable life-spaces. The content of this process of symbolic management remains under-described. Fabian's work is important here in showing how people translate meaning across time and space, how they are able to take the meaning systems of European and African culture and re-configure them inside complex new hybrid forms. Important for us in understanding our complex world of rights and responsibilities is recognizing how citizenship is configured in this space. What we need, therefore are the development of discourses – forms of description and practices - able to recognize and accredit radical difference when it arises and how this difference operates in the quotidian. In the context of this, as I shall argue below, the demands that are placed on education are greater than they have been hitherto.

3. The notion of citizenship in education

Education, almost everywhere, is a crucial vehicle for the promotion of citizenship. Its development, not unexpectedly, has been shaped by a concern with what it can offer the development of citizenship. It has, as a consequence, most frequently been projected in the couplet of Citizenship Education (CE) where education stands in a *service* relation to citizenship. As Arnot and Dillabough (2000:4) say, "it offers a citizenry schooled to display 'enthusiastic loyalty' to the nation state; or it prepares a citizenry to use its vote rationally and with understanding; or it acts to destabilise vested power relations and establishments." This approach has dominated the discussion where, according to Deuchar (2004) citing Oliver & Heater (1994), it first appeared in England in about 1880 and remained prominent until approximately 1950. It appeared to disappear for about forty years and then re-emerged in the 1990s. During its re-emergence, it had to contend with key developments in political life and in the social sciences and in debates between liberals and communitarians in particular.

In terms of the debates in the citizenship arena, as we saw above, shifts take place around conceptions of what it means to be a citizen from the perceived asocial and abstracted individualism of liberalism to the engaged moral position demanded by some communitarians. In this shift civic participation moves into focus as a primary feature of modern citizenship. In it, as Lawson (Deucher, 2004) says, the citizen both has rights and obligations. In order to become this kind of citizen, the individual requires both knowledge and skills.

The question of where and how this skills development is to be done focuses the discussion squarely on education. In contrast to 'hand-maiden' approaches to education which see it, most crudely, fulfilling the particular agenda of a political party, shifts in the citizenship

discussion have now come to focus on the fact that current educational strategies do not adequately prepare learners for adult lives as responsible citizens. While education is supposed to prepare young people for work, personal and social development and citizenship (Deuchar, 2004), the critique (see Arnot and Dillabough, 2000) is that schools have been sites for the reproduction of gendered (and raced and classed) identities. Responding also to developments in the social sciences with respect to globalization, the argument (see Unterhalter, 2000) has also been made that much modern educational practice, driven by agencies such as the World Bank, has universalized the identity of the educated subject around strident human capital ideals and therefore effectively sanctioned the marginalisation of groups outside of the mainstream. Finally, it is argued that globalization has had a profound impact on the economic, political and educational policies of nation states. The issues raised by globalization are complex and what needs to be highlighted here is that it has raised questions about the notion of a nation-state and the citizen bounded by geography and a singular identity. There is an urgency, commentators such as Unterhalter (2000) argue, for the emergence of a form of education that will help young people cope with the issues and challenges raised by globalization.

These influences are reflected differently in different definitions of citizenship and education and both citizenship and citizenship and education remain contested concepts (Osler & Starkey, 2003). The definitions reviewed below reflect how the influences reviewed above are reflected in them. LT Scotland defines citizen education as:

Education for citizenship should aim to develop capability for thoughtful and responsible participation in political, economic, social and cultural life. This capability is rooted in knowledge and understanding, in a range of generic skills and competencies including 'core skills' and in a variety of personal qualities and dispositions. It finds expression through creative and enterprising approaches to issues and problems (Scotland, 2002:7).

Two issues needed to be highlighted about this definition. Firstly, the definition is limited to the individual in a nation state. Participation is conceived of as individual participation and the assumption is that the individual shares the values reflected in a common political, economic, social and cultural life. Secondly, citizenship education is defined as a competency/skill. Malgahneas & Stoer (2003) question these assumptions. The move towards performance outcomes or competencies, according to Malgahneas & Stoer (2003) is located in the changing needs of capitalism and the labour market. Drawing on Braverman's (1974) thesis they argue that reducing it as a competency or skill serves to depoliticize it and ties it very directly to the needs of the labour market. Citizenship and education, as a consequence, are reduced to serve the changing needs of capitalism.

The assumption of shared values also raises questions about multicultural societies and the challenges for citizenship as a global phenomenon (Osler & Starkey, 2003). They suggest that while citizenship is legally anchored in sovereign nation states, current contests demand a much broader definition. Furthermore, participation also needs to be aligned with values of social justice. Drawing from UNESCO's 1995 framework that citizenship and education should involve accepting personal responsibility and recognizing the importance of civic commitment, they suggest citizenship and education should have the following components:

- working collaboratively to solve problems and achieve a just, peaceful and democratic community;
- respecting diversity between people, according to gender, ethnicity and culture;

- recognizing that their own worldview is shaped by personal and society history and by cultural tradition;
 - respecting the cultural heritage and protecting the environment;
 - promoting solidarity and equity at national and international levels.
- (Adapted from UNESCO, 1995)

This approach is extremely valuable. In terms of it education has to confront the challenges posed by the modern citizenship debate. It retains the classic liberal understanding of the primacy of the individual but, critically, makes that individual a thoroughly social and contextualised being. In this he or she respects difference and is called upon to work, critically, with difference and sameness around him or her. The ethic of justice continues to hold the discussion in place.

But even this approach does not go far enough. At its heart remains the epistemological puzzle posed by subalternity – that of *radical* difference, the challenge of incommensurability. While it addresses the question of respect for cultural heritage, presumably that of others, it does not pose the question of the kind of education that is needed to deal with translation across incommensurability. The challenge posed by subalternity, is how traditional values or indigenous knowledge systems – in India, here in Africa and in many other parts of the world - are *already* engaged in articulation with the global world. While it is true, as Seepe (1998) and others imply, that intense processes of cultural alienation have taken place within African communities as a result of colonial domination, what his kind of critique underestimates is the extent to which African people continue to hold on to their own cultural practices, and have taken these practices into modernity – into the very arena where dominance is proclaimed symbolically – particularly into the institutions and practices defined by ideas of rationality such as humanism, individualism, democracy, parliament, systems of justice, education and so on that emerged in Europe in the 18th century. I argue that this hybridity is redefining modernity, and, indeed, their own traditions. Domination in this situation is not a one-way process. It is this practical experience of learning and relearning that happens informally amongst people – an experience of concentrated education – that we are needing to understand. If we are to understand how to use education as a site for promoting citizenship, we need to understand these new complex identity forms that have emerged around these instances of practical translation that are playing themselves out around us everyday.

4. Education and citizenship in South Africa

What are the implications of this discussion for South Africa? How might one use this analysis to make sense of what is happening in education and, specifically, in relationship to its significance for citizenship?

There are a number of preliminary points one needs to make about the new South Africa in the context of our first president's observations. The first is that formally, the arrival of democracy in 1994 resolves the strife in the country around the question of citizenship. After 1994, all South Africans, nominally at least, attain the status of full and equal citizenship. With democracy also comes a process of legislative and policy renewal in key areas of social life. New laws are promulgated relating to health, housing, social welfare and education. A new Constitution (Republic of South Africa, 1996) is adopted in 1996, widely acknowledged as a leading exemplar of inclusion. Extra-ordinarily, in the second instance, in it, and still, significantly, budding off it, as we are now witnessing with the legislation around same-sex marriage, is a range of far-reaching proclamations relating to citizenship and

citizenship rights. The making of the Constitution sets in train a human rights logic, in some ways at odds with public sentiment, especially in the area of sexual rights, that requires a level of civic imagination which takes South Africans, black and white, into new identity territory.

4.1. The Policy Framework in Education with respect to Education

Important developments have also been registered at the level of education. Focused on South Africa's past of inequality and oppression, the state set about to dismantle what it had inherited from apartheid. As Bloch (2005:9) points out "Within the fiscal landscape... there has been a massive emphasis and priority on the education budget with some 6% of GDP and approximately 21% of the national budget being allocated (to education) at its height." A sum of approximately R65 billion (US\$6 billion) was allocated to education in 2003.

Important symbolically, the 17 odd racialised education departments in the country were dissolved into a single national education department which assumed responsibility for developing a set of signature policies of which the most important was the South African Schools Act (SASA) of 1996 (Department of Education 1996). In terms of this Act, the schooling system was redefined as a single non-racial and equitable system. Significantly, also, the SASA made an attempt to bring disaffected parents back into the schooling system through the establishment of school governing bodies which gave parents considerable power over how their children's schools were to function. Some of these powers, it needs to be noted, have recently been reduced. Accompanying this were legislative and policy regulations aimed at shaping (i) the learning environment and (ii) the organisational and bureaucratic infrastructure. Driven by the rights discourse to be celebrated later in the Constitution, a series of education white papers, laws and policy frameworks developed by the Department of Education emerged after 1994. The first of these was Education White Paper 1 (Department of Education (DoE) 1995), and the most recent the Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS) (DoE, 2002). Amongst the most important of these policies, from a citizenship perspective, was the National Education Policy Act (NEPA) (DoE, 1996a). Significant also, in this same citizenship context, was Education White Paper 6 (DoE, 2001b) which encapsulated the state's thinking on special education and the rights of people with disabilities. The NEPA sought to inscribe in law the policy, legislative and monitoring responsibilities of the Minister of Education and to formalise the relations between national and provincial authorities. For the purposes of the focus of this paper, significant about it was that it affirmed the principle of "the advancement and protection of fundamental rights of every person" spelt out in Chapter 2 of the Constitution with respect to a number of areas, such as equal access to education, protection against discrimination and protection of their language rights.

The NEPA, however, was only a 'framework' instrument. Its purpose was to lay down the guidelines for the determination, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of national policy. It did not specifically speak to the detail of educational practice, its shape, scope and the modalities to be pursued within it. This was left to a number of subsidiary but key policies and laws such as the South African Schools Act (RSA, 1996b), the Higher Education Act (RSA, 1997), Education White Paper 6 on Inclusive Education (DoE, 2001b), and Curriculum 2005 (DoE 1997), a policy adopted by Executive decision (and its revision, the Revised National Curriculum Statements (RNCS) (DoE, 2002)).

The SASA, promulgated in 1996, was the cornerstone piece of education legislation to be passed by the new government. It finally dismantled the apartheid education apparatus by bringing the 14 separate education authorities under one system of administration and put at

the disposal of the state legal instruments that regarded and treated everyone equally. Specifically, it prohibited discrimination, granted all learners right of access to quality education, and made schooling compulsory for children aged seven to 14. A central innovation was the provision for democratic parental participation through School Governing Bodies (SGBs) for all public schools. From a legal point of view the purpose of SASA was to lay down the rules for the democratic governance of schools. In addition, it outlined school funding norms that prioritized redress and targeted poverty in funding allocations to the public schooling system. The Act outlined the powers and duties of various members of the school community with respect to school governance.

In undertaking this policy programme, the state, speaking sociologically, sought to place the classic freedoms of the modern era in people's hands: the rights to free speech, the rights of parents to start their own schools and, significantly, the rights of people to be educated in the language of their choice (i.e. those languages recognized in the Constitution). Critically, these rights, one could argue, sought to specify and regulate the rules of comportment for the 'good' citizen – whether it would be as a parent, teacher or pupil. These forms of comportment, embodied the 'ideals' for citizenship that the new state sought to promote. This was an important development, given where the discourse on citizenship in the country had been before during the apartheid era.

Following these developments, compulsory education was introduced with the consequence that South Africa now has reached its enrolment goals in terms of primary universal education where figures approaching the 100% are being reached with Gross Enrolment Ratios (GER) standing at 103% in 2001 in the compulsory phase of schooling (see DoE, 2003:11). It is also apparent (see Bloch, 2005:9) that the country has gone beyond its gender balance targets.

A critical citizenship innovation was the introduction of the new curriculum, Curriculum 2005, and its revision, the Revised National Curricular Statements (RNCS) in 2002. In tandem with this, and in some ways to support it, the government also put in place the following: Quality assurance mechanisms for appraising teacher development and school improvement; The South African Council for Educators, a statutory body for the regulation of the profession and the development of the educator corps. Curriculum 2005 (C2005) based on an outcomes-based approach sought to place emphasis on learner-centredness in contrast to the apartheid government's rote learning approach. Underpinning the new curriculum was the establishment of a qualifications framework under the jurisdiction of a body called the South African Qualifications Authority. The overarching objective of the framework was to introduce the principle of vertical and horizontal portability of qualifications (and skills) into the general educational system with the objective of opening up and democratising learning pathways for the country's socially and educationally diverse population.

These achievements, in relation to what pertained in South Africa before 1994, are considerable. In terms of what they stand for, important gains have been made for developing citizenship rights.

These developments, signally, were to be filled out and elaborated in a number of key policies providing the 'ideological' substance for the 'good' South African citizen. The most important of these was the state's pedagogical blueprint, Curriculum 2005 (DoE, 1997). Other more explicitly political documents were the Department of Education's *Manifesto on Values, Education and Democracy* (DoE, 2001a).

In terms of initiatives such as these, with hindsight, we can now see that an important focus of Professor Kader Asmal's tenure at the Department of Education from 1998 to 2004 was that of giving our education system a moral base off which to work. Driven by an abiding interest in cultivating in South African subjects the values of justice, respect and equality, his era can now be characterised as the era of citizenship. His vision as he put it, was "to find a path towards freedom that is not anarchic, a path towards good citizenship that is not totalitarian" (Asmal, 2002:7). Amongst these was the addition to the new curriculum of a Working Group on Values in Education, the establishment of a committee to examine human rights and inclusivity in education and the organisation of a number of key conferences involving teachers, including a large conference focusing on the teaching of history (Jeppie, 2004).

In these initiatives he sought to elaborate what was meant by democracy, non-racialism and non-sexism. In the *Manifesto on Values, Education and Democracy*, for example, ten fundamental values were described, namely, Democracy, Social Justice and Equity; Non-Racism and Non-Sexism; Ubuntu (Human Dignity); An Open Society; Accountability and Responsibility; Respect; Rule of Law; and Reconciliation. The Manifesto further identified 16 strategies for familiarising young South Africans with the values of the Constitution, which were to find expression in the Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS) (2002), the document that emerged after a process of enquiry into the efficacy of the original C2005. These included: Nurturing a culture of communication and participation in school; Role-modeling and promoting commitment as well as competence amongst educators; Ensuring that every South African is able to read, write, count and think; Infusing the classroom with a culture of human rights; Learning about the rich diversity of cultures, beliefs and world views within which the unity of South Africa is manifested; Making multilingualism happen.; Ensuring equal access to education; Promoting anti-racism in schools; Freeing the potential of girls as well as boys; Dealing with HIV/AIDS and nurturing a culture of sexual and social responsibility; Making schools safe to learn and teach in and ensuring the rule of law; and Nurturing the new patriotism, or affirming a common citizenship. Four cornerstones have been identified as central strategies to 'seed' democratic values in this context: critical thinking, creative expression through art, a critical understanding of history, and multilingualism. In the SASA, these were spelt out as follows:

... provid(ing) an education of progressively high quality for all *learners* and in so doing lay a strong foundation for the development of all our people's talents and capabilities, advance the democratic transformation of society, combat racism and sexism and all other forms of unfair discrimination and intolerance, contribute to the eradication of poverty and the economic well-being of society, protect and advance our diverse cultures and languages, uphold the rights of all *learners, parents and educators*, and promote their acceptance of responsibility for the organisation, governance and funding of schools in partnership with the state. (RSA, 1996b:2) (All italics in the original)

In asserting these values, the new state showed how integral education was to its intentions of promoting inclusion. While it is not always seen as a separate component or aim, the Manifesto on Values, Education and Democracy (DoE, 2001a) clearly articulates the essential components of citizenship in this project: participation, and civic and social responsibility, democracy and social justice, multiculturalism, nationalism, and critical thinking.

What is striking about these developments is the attempt to integrate and deal with many issues simultaneously, the most important of which are education and equity for the purpose of building citizenship. Together, these initiatives are extremely impressive.

4.2. From Policy to Practice at a Systemic Level: The Big Picture

Given the discussion above, the question arises of how this impressive platform translates into practice. In assessing this, our point of departure must be that the system's capacity to meet its commitments to full and free education in the last twelve years has been good on some fronts but troublesome on others. Access to education is a particular challenge. This, as a particular right, is important for us to analyse more carefully in light of recent debates on social justice and equity pertaining to other areas of social provision such as housing, health, water and sanitation (see, for example, Alexander (2002), Bell (2001), Terreblanche (2002), Bond (2003), Seephe (2004), and Marais (1998)).

While the official statistical record might show that national enrolments are excellent, with Gross Enrolment Ratios (GER) standing at 103% in 2001 (see DoE, 2003:11) in the compulsory phase of education (the General Education and Training Phase), questions have been posed about simplistic readings of the meaning of access (see Pendlebury and Enslin, 2004; Chisholm 2004; Fiske and Ladd, 2004 and Nelson Mandela Foundation, 2005). There is evidence in recent research (Enslin and Pendlebury, 2004: 45 and Porteus, 2000: 22) that the statistical claims themselves need to be viewed with some caution. Enslin and Pendlebury (2004: 45) report, for example, of a study carried out in the Rustenburg district in 2002 where researchers were able to collect the names of 1178 school-going age children who were out of school.

Beyond claims to accuracy questions have also arisen about the government's commitments to early childhood education, increasing access to adult basic education, achievement rates at the terminal grade 12 level, about the ability of the education system to retain learners in school beyond the compulsory phase of education, and, significantly about the quality, and indeed value, of the education being provided by the system. Enslin and Pendlebury (2004: 45) reading the 2000 School Register of Needs (the last to be released) and the Department of Education's 2000 Education for All Report, point to the considerable achievements made by the post-apartheid government, such as the increase in Education for Learners with Special Needs schools (369 by 2000), improvement in the numbers of schools with potable water and in the provision of toilets (virtually universal). They make the point, however, that "across the system, social justice in educational access, participation and outcomes is far from achieved, especially for rural children, the poor, illiterate and semi-literate youth and adults, and children with disabilities" (Enslin and Pendlebury, 2004: 44). Government itself (see Department of Education, 2002) has recognised that major challenges exist. It has, however, presented these challenges in limited terms (*ibid*) referring to historical backlogs and poverty – about which nobody could reasonably argue of course – but has not, it is suggested here, problematised its own role in the continued failure to move the beachheads of disparity, lack of progress in achievement and the downward spiral in morale (see Phurutse, 2005; Hall, Altman, Nkomo, Peltzer and Zuma, 2005 and Shisana, Peltzer, Zungu-Dirwayi and Louw, 2005) that continue to characterise the educational landscape.

Working in 14 schools across three provinces the Inclusion/Exclusion study conducted by the author and colleagues (Soudien and Sayed, 2003) showed how schools used mechanisms in the new policy, such as the powers devolved to school governing bodies, to sustain, and in some cases, reconfigure old hierarchies. The study revealed how complex and nuanced the processes of access had become in many schools. While no schools were

overtly discriminating on the basis of 'race', class or gender, in practice all of these factors were in use as schools introduced language tests through interviews and entrance examinations, consistently pushed up their fees to maintain what they thought were 'good' standards and presented themselves as bastions of one or other culture. With respect to class, the Soudien and Sayed (2002) study evidence suggested that there was a domino-effect playing itself out within the school system. When the apartheid system began breaking down, the flow of children within the system took place in fairly predictable ways. Previously excluded African, coloured and Indian children moved in large numbers into the formerly white schools. African children began to move into formerly Indian and coloured schools. For African schools, significantly, this amounted to a flight of the more economically stable elements within their midst, leaving those schools largely with the poorest members of the community. This amounts to class following its own interests. Naidoo's (1996) work provides support for this line of thinking. He suggests that the process of integration followed distinct socio-economic paths in KwaZulu-Natal in both ex-NED and ex-HOD schools. Significant about this development is the impact it has on the poor of all colours who find it difficult to exercise choice in the same way as their more affluent counterparts. As a result they are locked into what one might call sink-hole syndromes where the schools they are forced to attend become the dumping grounds of the larger system. Open as schools had formally become, in practice they remained sites in which dominant groups exercised their hegemony.

The way the privileged schools operated produced another kind of exclusion and denial of access. As the work of a number of scholars suggests (see Naidoo, 1996; Soudien 2004) most of the schools where integration, however that concept is defined, was taking place, continued to operate around the limited cultural orientation of their middle-class settings. Children of the poor, children who were of non-English or Afrikaans-speaking backgrounds, and even, children who were not of the same ethnic group in black schools, were forced to confront the reality that their new schools placed no value on the languages, values and traditions that they had grown up with. Upon entering these schools they had to put aside their own cultures and take on the culture of the school. In this respect approaches to access in integrating schools were distinctly assimilationist. Cultural access was denied. Significantly, while the Inclusion and Exclusion study showed how exclusion operated in former Model C Schools (formerly white schools), it also showed how exclusion worked in the schools of the poor. Of significance in these terms, was the use of school fees as a means of regulating access and admission processes. The commodification of education in this regard is stark, and all schools, in one way or another, had to subject themselves to market principles.

The work of Fiske and Ladd (2004) has been critical too in confirming the fractures of race and class in the new South Africa. They suggest that while South Africa has made good progress in some respects, "(a)long other dimensions, however, equity has remained elusive for reasons largely related to the country's historical legacy and the pressures it faced as a result of the new global economic environment" (Fiske and Ladd, 2004:233). They emphasize how the new opportunities that have become possible are available only to black families in urban areas with the ability to pay high school fees, transportation and other costs. Most black families, they explain, continue to live in townships and rural areas that were part of the apartheid system and most attend schools that continue to be poorly provided for and have poorly trained teachers: "(i)n short, South Africa has done little since 1994 to 'level the playing field' for all students through redress of the many legacies of apartheid" (Ibid.)

The Nelson Mandela Foundation Report (2005) documents in great detail the enormous hardships experienced by South Africa's rural communities. Striking in the report is the scale of rural poverty – the pervasiveness and depth of want, hunger, deprivation and neglect in the country. The report is full of tables, statistics and qualitative information telling of ubiquitous need, of gutted roads, of decaying amenities, of over-crowded and ill-equipped classrooms, of poor and inappropriate classroom materials (and also, it needs to be said, of other kinds of needs, such as personal care and adult attention.)

Chapter Four in the report documents in fine detail the circular outcomes that are produced by the extent of the poverty experienced by people. The drinking water situation is highlighted, showing how lack leads to ill-health or community conflict. Important statistics to which the report points include the following: of the schools surveyed only 45% had access to drinking water, only 43% access to electricity, and only 22% access to a telephone.

These weaknesses at the level of resources have, not unexpectedly, found expression at the level of learner attainment where it has become painfully apparent how deep the historic divides in the country remain.

The dimensions of South Africa's educational quality challenges have only recently come into clear perspective and have emerged out of the following:

- The Third International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) carried out in 1994/1995 (Howie, 2001:12).
- The Southern and Eastern African Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality (SACMEQ) (<http://www.sacmeq.org>) tests carried out, in two waves, first amongst a number of countries in the region in the late 1990 without South Africa and between 2000 and 2003 (SACMEQII) with South Africa.
- A national Grade 3 cohort analysis looking at attainment rates for literacy and numeracy, and
- Four iterations, two grade3 and two for grade 6, of attainment tests in the Western Cape between 2002 and 2005.

Both the TIMSS and the SACMEQ studies involved scientifically determined groups of learners in their samples. With respect to the TIMSS study, South Africa, as one of 41 countries and the only African country in the list, had tests carried out on approximately 15,000 students in over 400 schools distributed around the country. The study was repeated in 1998 in 37 countries (TIMSS-R). While an important core of countries remained from the first phase of the study, the second involved, significantly, a number of countries with similar developing-economy profiles to South Africa. The Western Cape tests were more comprehensive and involved every school in the province where there were more than 50 students in a grade. In each wave over 30,000 students were tested.

The findings of the various tests were remarkably similar and all showed exceedingly low levels of competence across the nation for both mathematics and reading. The 2001 national Grade 3 systemic assessment (the final report appeared in 2003) reported an average score of 30% for numeracy and 54% for literacy (2003:24). The Third International Mathematics and Science Study Repeat (TIMSS-R) placed Grade 8 South African learners 44% below the mean scores of all participating countries. South African pupils, moreover, came last in the list of 39 countries and attained a mean score of 275 out of a possible total of 800 marks (Howie, 2001:18). Significantly, the best performing pupils in South Africa scored at the level of the mean of pupils in leading countries in the list such as Singapore. Fewer than 0,5% of South Africa's pupils featured in the international top 10% benchmark (Howie, 2001:19). In

the Monitoring Learner Assessment (MLA) study for Grade 4 students, South African learners attained an average numeracy score of 30%, placing it last amongst the 12 participating African countries (Taylor et. al. 2003: 19-27). The calamity of these scores was repeated in the SACMEQII evaluation for grade 6 which showed that relative to the pre-determined mean of 500 points as a benchmark for the project, South African learners scored below this value for both Mathematics (486,2) and Reading (492,4) (Moloi and Strauss, 2005, 65)². The study found that the modal competence level for reading for Grade 6 learners in South Africa essentially stood at Level 3 (Basic Reading). This was only achieved by 19,1 percent of the learners in the study (Moloi and Strauss, 2005, 67). Only 26% of the learners could read above a Level 4 standard (independent reading). In mathematics the modal level of attainment for Grade 6 learners was Level 2 (Emergent Numeracy), which was attained by 44,4 percent of the learners: "(i)n addition, there were 7,8 percent of the learners who achieved only Level 1 (Beginning Numeracy). All together this left less than 50 percent of the learners reaching competence levels higher than Emergent Numeracy" (Moloi and Strauss, 2005, 68-69).

The Grade 6 tests in the Western Cape Education Department amongst 34, 596 pupils in 2003 showed similar results:

- i) 15,6%, 5, 243 out of those tested, passed the numeracy test at the Grade 6 level,
- ii) only 35% passed the literacy test at the Grade 6 level, and
- iii) 63,3% of the learners failed both tests at the Grade 6 level (Western Cape Education Department Media Release, 25 May 2004).³

The cumulative effect of these developments is to present a system of education that has become configured around the vectors of race and class. Significantly, the Department of Education is acutely aware of these issues and has taken steps to modify the way the system deals with issues of access. In 2002 the then Minister of Education, Kader Asmal, appointed an internal task-team to undertake an investigation into school financing and resourcing. The task team reported in March 2003 (Department of Education, 2003) and made a number of important recommendations, most notable amongst which were proposals to abolish school fees in the schools of the poor and the commitment on the part of the state to 'top-up' the funding that would have been derived from parental contributions.

Important a step as the above initiative has been, it has been subjected to criticism by key groups such as the Education Policy Unit at the University of the Witwatersrand (see Motala, Perry, Sujee and Fleisch, 2003), which argues that the policy fails to engage with Rawls second-order requirement for equity, namely the need to properly address issues of redress in the interests of maintaining the practice of equality as sameness across the system. Interestingly, and ironically, where redress mechanisms have been instituted they have often been packaged in regressive ways and have succeeded in generating the very opposite of what had been intended. The most critical case in point, in terms of this, was the teacher rightsizing/retrenchment exercise carried out in the mid-1990s which resulted in over 12,000 teachers in the province of the Western Cape alone losing their jobs and an estimated

² The process of conducting this test, such as the development of the sample, and analysing the results can be found in the report by Moloi and Strauss, 2005. However, the full results are available on the SACMEQ website www.sacmeq.org/indicate.htm.

³ The full results are contained in a report of the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) entitled "Grade 6 Learner Assessment Study 2003." This report can be accessed through the offices of the Research Division of the WCED. Please note that figures cited here have been made public through media statements released by the WCED.

43,000 country-wide in danger of being retrenched (see Chisholm et al, 1999; Vally and Tleane, 2001:193, Gilmour, 1997 and Soudien, 2001). The intention of this policy, from which the system has yet to recover (and which remains, inexplicably, under-researched) was to redistribute resources so that schools of the disadvantaged would receive the same per capita subsidy as those of the advantaged, but the outcome was egregious. Not only did the system lose some of its most qualified teachers, but, paradoxically, class sizes in most schools of the poor remained high as even poorer institutions found themselves having to lay off staff Vally and Tleane, 2001). The work of Weber (2006) and an unpublished master's dissertation by Gasant (1997) looking at the impact of this policy on classrooms and the quality of teachers' work remain to date the only significant examination of the matter.

An important conclusion to which one can come using these studies is that there has been, through the mechanism of decentralisation, a displacement of race, class, gender, ethnicity, religious identities, and sexual disposition, away from the central state to the institutional site of the school. The effect of this is to disguise and to hide the difficulties surrounding issues of access and the conflict that arises as a result of this where it happens. While individual parents have complained to the educational authorities about their children not being admitted into particular schools, the structural relocation of responsibility for achieving equity and redress to the local school has served to take the struggle out of the public domain. Where complaints and grievances are being lodged, they are handled within the legal framework of what are clearly now a school's rights as opposed to the individual's rights. As such, the state's decentralisation plans does not address what it sought to, namely, the endemic sense of powerlessness and alienation black parents in particular felt about schools. It is clear that the terrain of participation is framed essentially as a middle-class competence. Working-class and poor communities, because of their vulnerable situations, culturally, economically, invariably find themselves struggling to be heard by their better-off compatriots.

4.3. Practice at the Level of the School

How policy plays itself out and becomes the subject of debate, discussion and simply experience in every-day school life is not easy to demonstrate. While there is a growing body of literature which looks at the question of social inclusion and exclusion in South African schools (see, *inter alia*, Carrim, 2003 and Sayed and Soudien, 2003a) the subject remains largely unexplored. The *Education Inclusion and Exclusion: Policy and Implementation in India and South Africa* (Sayed et al. 2004) study, referred to above, undertaken by colleagues in India and ourselves is an exception.

Drawing from this study, the paper moves on to examine how the various constructions of citizenship operate at the school level and how schools promote and/or hinder access to the rights of citizenship. Our focus in terms of citizenship focuses mainly on participation looking at school governance and curriculum.

4.3.1. Civic participation in school

SASA, as mentioned above, gave parents the responsibility for managing the schools their children attended and officially legitimated parental participation in the life of the school. The Act required schools to establish school governing bodies (SGBs) composed of parents, educators, learners (in the case of secondary schools) and members of the school support staff. Significant about the Act is that it gave parents decision-making responsibilities in areas of school-life that shaped and even qualified the rights environment of pupils and how they experienced their citizenship in the school. These responsibilities included:

- The levying of school fees
- Developing a school language policy
- Determining the school's access policy; and
- Determining a code of conduct for learners.

Importantly, SGBs were also responsible for recommending educators' appointments and appointing those paid from school fees. Some SGBs have what is called Section 21 status (a Section in the Act) and have additional responsibilities such as maintaining the school's property, paying for services, purchasing text-books and determining the extra-mural programme of the school.

In theory these policies provide ideal opportunities for the development of citizenship and broadens the notion beyond that of the status of a curriculum subject. Instead it allows learners the opportunity for direct exposure and civic responsibility for aspects of their own learning. For parents it continues the emphasis on continued participation and civic responsibility. As to whether this remains a potentially valuable space for citizenship depends on the kinds of issues and challenges being faced by schools. Specifically, do conditions on the ground militate against the development of more participatory and multicultural practices in these spaces?

The data on standards and inclusion from the project suggest that SGBs rather than promoting equity, solidarity, diversity and collaboration continue to mirror class and race divisions and inequalities. Schools continued to maintain particular identities and often used discourse about standards to justify this. The most complex illustration of the school asserting its privileged identity (but not uncommon, it needs to be said, in former white English-speaking schools in South Africa) was found at a Cape Town primary school where the Christian ethos of the school enabled and facilitated the preservation of distinctly exclusionary social practices. This ethos obscured the complex ways in which a middle-class and 'white' English-speaking notion of the ideal pupil and the ideal parent served to marginalize parents who did not fall easily into those descriptions.

While this school had all the formal trappings of democracy (e.g. a democratically elected school governing body), this democracy was practised under the protection of the ethos of the Christian family. In this school the metaphor of the family powerfully subsumed all the complex differences within the school within a harmonious construction of inclusiveness. Elaborating the implications of living within a happy, family environment, the principal projected himself as a benign father. 'Family' was strongly reproduced through the invocation of gender and the deployment of gender identities within the school. These allowed the school to draw on existent and strongly encoded social structures within the school, many of which were not as familiar and accessible to parents who were not 'white' and middle-class. For example, women exclusively ran The Mother Programme and The Catering Committee. This assumed that most mothers who had learners at the school were not working, or had flexible working schedules. These structures and approaches were important mechanisms for the reproduction and the maintenance of the school's essential 'white' and middle-class identity. Projecting these approaches as 'family-orientated' allowed the school to assimilate newer parents, and even non-middle-class parents into its social project. Parents of learners of colour thus had access and rights of way in the school, but decidedly so on the school's terms, and these were ratified and endorsed by the SGB, of course under the caring gaze of the 'white', Christian, father-principal.

Important about these illustrations is the degree to which school governance provides schooling communities the manoeuvrability to negotiate their own agendas in entirely legal

ways. Talking of the situation in England, Ball (2003) says that what the middle-classes do is to mobilize around the contradictions in the system. The expression that this takes in South African schools is that not only do they believe that they are operating within the ambit of the law, but, more, that they are exemplifying the spirit of the law.

4.3.2. Curriculum and citizenship: Mediating C2005 at the schools level

A further example of citizenship as participation focuses on how the way C2005 is mediated at the school level became a key markers in projecting particular images of what a citizen is. C2005, as suggested above, is skills-based. As such, it only provides educators with guidelines and 'outcomes' that ought to be achieved, but does not prescribe either what content ought to be used or the ways in which lesson should be designed. However, to maintain some degree of standardization in the system, educators are to ensure that they teach in ways that are consistent with the principles of C2005, i.e. those of learner-centredness, the promotion of critical and independent thinking among learners, etc. These requirements notwithstanding, there is a discernable difference in the ways educators in the different schools reached in this study approached the curriculum. Language was the key factor. While all the schools expressed, and manifested, a commitment to Curriculum 2005, the way they negotiated the terrain of language use in the curriculum, contradicted its inclusionary intentions.

Clear examples of the problem around language occurred at former white schools, former DET schools and at ex-HOR and ex-HOD schools. At a former white school, evident was the fact that parents wanted their children to learn English and so while the school offered Xhosa as a second language, English was privileged throughout the school. At another former white school the approach taken was that English represented a commitment to 'standards'. At a former DET school learners who were not English proficient were either excluded or enrolled in lower classes.

The fact that most of the learners were non-English language mother tongue speakers made very little difference in each of the schools. Few of the schools made any efforts to use the learners' first languages in a formative and affirming way. English was dominant everywhere. Signage was invariably in English, and sometimes in Afrikaans. Classrooms contained charts written in English (and a small number in Afrikaans). As a consequence of this, English was the dominant language at the schools. A learner's competence was invariably judged on his or her ability to write and read and speak English "well". Flowing from this, or partly as a result, a large number of 'African' learners struggled at the school. Few excelled or achieved very high pass rates.

Interestingly, this structured exclusion was a process in which 'African' parents, educators and learners were often complicit. At most of the schools, the parents made it clear that speaking English properly was the major motivation for sending their children to these schools. It was often 'African' educators who were the subject of their complaints and 'African' educators whose teaching competence they doubted. Learners were themselves not innocent bystanders in these processes. 'African' educators complained about the ridicule to which 'African' learners because of the way in which they spoke English and their 'African'-accented English subjected them.

5. A Closer Look at the Policy

In an earlier paper (see Soudien and Sayed, 2003b) I argued that the ways in which the textual meanings of educational policy are interpreted at the school level does not robustly

engage with the histories of race and class. In assessing the whole picture, and returning to the analytic framework generated above, this argument needs to be modified. I argue here in this paper that young people's citizenship rights have remained unfulfilled in important ways. I want to suggest here that this challenge stems from ambiguities that are embedded within our Constitutional frame itself. This, I suggest, initiates and permits the institutionalization of a particular trajectory for the public discourse around citizenship and that this trajectory constitutes the conditions around which citizenship can be struggled for. Critical about these conditions is that they frame citizenship within the parameters of middle-class modernity. This is the major conclusion to which I come.

The central effect of the policy is to condition the citizenship discourse in two ways: firstly, around what one might describe as the *how* and, secondly, around the *what*. The *how* talks to the conditions of participation and effectively takes in the discussion of the structure of social engagement. The *what* refers to the substance of that which is engaged, particularly that which is both offered up but also constructed as the object of the citizenship discourse.

In terms of the conditions of participation, it can be argued that the *how* derives its character precisely from the structural limitations placed on poor parents and poor learners and on the latitude provided to wealthier parents and wealthier children to enter into and to engage with the practice of schooling. While it is recognized from the perspective of the structure-agency debate that the world is not only given to people and that people make their worlds too, it is argued here, nonetheless, that in the present conjuncture political conditions do not favour forms of agency that are radically questioning of conventional and mainstream modes of decision-making and the exercise of power. Instead, a distinct universalization of social protocols has taken place around a middle-class model of social engagement and social relations. This model has come to condition and even provide implied comment on the complex ways of being and decision-making that continue to exist within communities that are not wealthy and middle-class. These modes of being, whatever their ontological character (and it must be noted that at no stage has there been an attempt in this paper to romanticize these), are effectively and structurally penalized. It is true, of course, that the policy and the law scrupulously avoids the stigmatization of these identities and the ways of being that surround them, but in the very act of ignoring them, it subordinates them. The effect of the policy is thus to produce, right from the outset, conditioned and proscribed rights of citizenship for parents and children who are not middle-class and wealthy.

With respect to the *what* the policy produces ideological conditions in which the possession of Western cultural capital comes to define what is at stake as a right. Despite an awareness in many communities of multiculturalism and the importance of multiculturalism, rights with respect to difference are conditioned by their proximity to what is perceived as 'high culture' – English and middle-class forms of deportment. Value is thus placed on difference in distinctly relational terms. The stronger the relation of the difference to that perceived as the 'high culture' the more it is valued. The effect is to construct an implied schedule of rights, with the rights to English, to middle-class forms of address, aesthetics and practices registering strongly and the ultimate argument that, as attributes to be acquired, these constitute universal rights. Other forms of difference, in relation to the middle-class, become constituted as *special* rights and are treated as special alongside of rights to middle-class universalism.

The effect of these approaches to citizenship is to set up the citizenship discourse in a very particular way in South Africa. At one level, with the privileging of middle-class approaches and ways of being, access to citizenship rights, the rights of participation and to social benefits, are set inside of the discourse of the normative order of the middle-class. Using this

framework, it becomes possible to imagine South Africa within an entirely seamless modernist discourse. This discourse presents South Africa as an unremarkable case within the family of modern nation-states where rights are exercised and claimed much as they would in other countries of the world. But when the seamlessness of the discourse is ruptured, and it is made apparent how much the discourse of citizenship is framed around a normative middle-class order, it becomes apparent how much more complex the nature of disenfranchisement is for those who are poor and black and not entirely within the universe of middle-class life. It is at that point that the relationship between citizenship and education becomes critical all over again and raises the question acutely of what exactly education is for.

There are complex issues at play here. Clearly, we need to acknowledge, almost nowhere in the world today, even in those parts of the world that are most 'alienated' (from the kind of democracy that is regarded as being normative for everyone else), has the power of modern education escaped the attention of elites and dominant social groupings. All education systems operate around the primacy of Western cultural capital with its distinct practices, habits, ways and values. Crucial about this development is the perception that has been cultivated of this cultural capital in relation to other cultural capitals such as various indigenous knowledge, religious and other spiritual understandings of the world.

While there is a great deal that can be said about the hegemony of Western forms of cultural capital (see for example Soudien, 2004), important about it for this discussion is the impact that it has had on educational practice in South Africa and especially the choices that have been made in educational policy. Critically, inclusive as educational policy has attempted to be in South Africa, it has come to settle around normative markers - literacy and competence in the global economy - that advantage English-speaking middle-class groupings and disadvantage others who do not fit this profile or who struggle to obtain the attributes of English-speaking and middle-class behaviour. This development is epitomized by the SASA in its attempts to regulate and shape democratic behaviour, and C2005 and the *Manifesto* in their objectives of specifying the content of the modern citizen's character.

A strong middle-class teleology is evident in the SASA. This is evident in the political preoccupation of SASA, in the context of the degradation of the system that took place during apartheid, with the *re*-restoration of the form of the modern school. The SASA says, for example, that its purpose is "(t)o provide a *uniform* (our emphasis) system for the organisation, governance and funding of schools" (RSA, 1996b:2). This uniformity is predicated on the coming into being of an integrated system inhabited by clearly defined and ordered citizens - 'learners', 'parents' and 'educators' who are both the subjects *of* education and the subjects *for* education. To them are accorded the *rights* to be derived from the new system but also the *responsibilities* for making it what it should be. What we argue is that the ahistorical and globalized ideas deemed necessary to ensure participation amount to regulating participation with middle class 'western' parameters. South African educational history is characterized by a long history of parent, teachers and student participation in a range of civic struggles. What these documents serve to do is to depoliticize these and reframe them within competencies required in the current global context.

Working with C2005, with all its complex modernist vocabulary, young marginalized people, and sometimes their teachers, are forced to operate in the hegemonic world of globalization signposted by people other than themselves. They come face-to-face with what Partha Chatterjee (1999:5) describes as "the imposition of high culture on society" and find themselves, as he says elsewhere (Chatterjee, 1999:30), having to develop a "discourse in which, even as it challenge(s) the colonial claim to political domination, it also accept(s) the

intellectual premises of 'modernity' *on which colonial domination was based*.". Central to this developing discourse is learning how to manage themselves – particular their participation – within the new democracy. This, we argue constitutes the abiding paradox for South Africa's citizenship discourse. The new inclusive policy that emerges in the raft of documents, policies and laws that emanate from the country after 1994 deliberately presents itself as an inclusionary one but it does so within the parameters of a pre-eminently modern middle-class discourse.

The challenge now is that of how a country engages with this 'high' road and still remains alert to the challenges of including all its people, in all their diverse manifestations, whether they present themselves as sophisticated urban workers, as deeply rooted rural peasants or even as people living in-between these worlds, having to make meaning across the divides of modernity and tradition. This is a difficulty, it is argued here, that gives the discourse on citizenship in South Africa its particular character.

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