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HISTORIOGRAPHY OF SOUTH AFRICAN SOCIAL WORK: CHALLENGING DOMINANT DISCOURSES

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Abstract
The task of examining the origins and development of social work is fraught with competing narratives. In South Africa individualist, liberal, colonial, masculine and "white" discourses prevail. The dialectical-historical perspective, rather than chronological "progress", shows how socio-political and economic dynamics are formative of societal conditions and of social work, which in turn has a role in shaping these dynamics. The fiction of purely historical records of progress and freedom of choice is challenged, and hegemonic and counter-hegemonic discourses uncovered. Social workers are urged to be engaged with the full complexity of events emerging from the class and race-based antagonisms of South African society.

HISTORIOGRAPHY OF SOUTH AFRICAN SOCIAL WORK: CHALLENGING DOMINANT DISCOURSES[1]

Linda Smith

INTRODUCTION

The task of examining the origins and development of social work in South Africa and internationally is fraught with competing histories and narratives, as well as lacunae and discontinuities. Individualist, liberal, colonial, masculine and "white"[2] hegemonic discourses generally prevail (Gebhard, 1991; Marks, 1987; Tsotsi, 2000; Worden, 2008). Foregrounding counter-hegemonic discourses and narratives becomes nearly impossible unless a constantly critical and sceptical gaze is adopted.

How events and developments are understood is determined by which version of history is used to interpret them. Generally, historical development is described by means of chronological listings of events, personalities or laws passed. However, these approaches neglect the interconnection of wider forces that shape people's lives, institutions and disciplines (Harman, 2008). Moments in history are better understood when viewed as being related to socio-political, economic contexts and circumstances around peoples' livelihoods and how these are fought out in social conflicts, resulting in changes in wider societal relationships. Such an historical materialist perspective is of particular importance in the historiography of social work, as the very origins of social work are found in the dynamics of the capitalist system and the resultant conditions of poverty and social conflict.

Developments (in social work) are not merely a matter of choices made by its early protagonists and a "natural progression" of theories and practices. A dialectical-historical investigation counters the fiction of a purely historical record of "progress" and freedom of choice, devoid of contextual interpretation, and allows for probing the impact of these conflicts and forces on the shaping of social work (Hill, 2009). Hill (2009:612) maintains that:

> *"The universal, transhistorical principles of rights and justice that were associated with the individualistic portrait of mankind that capitalism promoted, suggested a degree of freedom that was wholly incommensurate with the structures ultimately imposed upon its 'freely' contracting subjects."*

Such a perspective reveals various formations of social work knowledge development. Gramsci (1935) argued that any system is maintained in two ways. The more obvious is the political realm (the state), which controls through force and laws. This is complemented by subtle but essential system-maintenance performed by the private realm (civil society), which produces consent without the threat of force (Roelofs, 2007:479).

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[1] This article is based on the author's unpublished PhD study, (South African) Social work education: Critical imperatives for social change (2013). The historical background and context to the empirical research study, conducted from a depth-hermeneutic approach, form the content of the article.
[2] Throughout racial categories are placed in single quotation marks to alert readers to their contested nature.

Social work knowledge thus becomes internalised and consented to through hegemonic discourses of state reports, laws, the findings of commissions, and teaching and writing activities. According to Hill (2009:616), Gramsci calls for a "counter-history" to displace "given thought" and release "common understandings" from their privileged positions. A historiography of social work therefore requires 'common understandings' to be challenged and alternative narratives to be foregrounded.

Liberal and Afrikaner nationalist discourse may therefore be challenged and displaced by a counter-history which acknowledges the significant role of capital industrialisation and racist, exploitative relations of production. Ideologies which interpellate social workers through uninterrogated common understandings of histories during the process of education (Althusser, 1971) may be challenged by a historiography which recognises relations of conflict and exploitation and imagined freedoms of choice and progressions (cited by Boswell, Kiser & Baker, 1999:361).

This article attempts to provide a description of socio-political contexts and developments at various stages of South African history which elucidate various conflicts and progressions. These developments and progressions of context determine the nature of social work and are in turn also impacted and influenced by it.

PERSPECTIVES, THEMES AND CHRONOLOGY IN SOUTH AFRICAN HISTORY

Discourses in social work history may be linked to three broader competing discourses in South African historical analysis, namely the broadly Marxist, the liberal and the nationalist. Different conceptions of structural processes shaping South Africa's social development are linked to "varying perceptions of the motivation of actors involved in social change and the way societies operate in general" (Lester, 1996:1).

The Marxist, revisionist and "black" radical revisionist paradigm, largely reflected in the works of H.J. and R.E. Simons, M. Legassik, S. Marks, S. Trapido, S. Johnson, C. Bundy, P. Bonner, I.B. Tabata, D. Taylor, H. Jaffe, M.W. Tsotsi, was a radical "reinterpretation of South Africa's past" (Visser, 2004:10). Apartheid is described not as the irrational racism of a pre-industrial colonial frontier, but as the direct product of South Africa's unique process of industrialisation. Segregation was developed to nurture early industry such as mining and capitalist agriculture (Worden, 2008:3). Poverty, deprivation and cheap labour were integral to maintaining the industrial system, and segregation and apartheid resulted from the class domination of capitalists rather than only from racial domination. The central issue is the relationship between capitalism as a mode of production and apartheid's racial structures (Lester, 1996).

Liberal historians such as M.W. MacMillan, C.W. De Kiewiet, E. Walker, T.R.H. Davenport (Cell, 1989; Visser, 2004), "part of the wider community of liberal economists, anthropologists, sociologists and political scientists, came into prominence between the two world wars and had intellectual foundations in classical liberalism" (Visser, 2004). They trace the origins of segregation to the Afrikaner, frontier tradition of racism (Cell, 1989). South Africa was viewed as a "dual economy" with two distinct

societies – a white urban, capitalist, agrarian system and a rural impoverished and stagnating African sector (Worden, 2008:2). Developments are explained by virulent white Afrikaner racism arising at the frontier of the Cape Colony and later during the Great Trek. Early structural consequences of exploitative relations of production which used both 'race' and class as a convenient stratifying force are downplayed.

The nationalist perspective in, for example, the works of J.A. Wiid, G.D. Scholtz, F.A. van Jaarsveld, H.B. Thom (Visser, 2004) described and viewed South African development in terms of the building of the Afrikaner "herrenvolk" nation state and the unified experience of the Afrikaner "volk" (Worden, 2008:96). Apartheid thus became an important means of constructing political identity, forged out of Afrikaner diversity.

Additional perspectives have developed, including a more "nuanced version" incorporating oral history, the importance of gender and more postmodern historiographical trends (Worden, 2008:3). A post-colonial understanding also highlights the dynamics of colonialism and imperialism (Lester, 1996:13). White supremacy and power structures of the white/black master-servant relationships are described by Tsotsi (2000) as being the necessary result of imperialist exploitation, colonial conquest, white domination and capitalist exploitation.

The development of social work therefore covariates with socio-political events. Various South African socio-political phases may be described (Bundy, 1992; Lester, 1996; Worden, 2008); the following are used in this historiography: pre-colonial era and colonial conquest; industrialisation and mining revolution of 1870s-1920s; 1920s until 1948; the apartheid era; 1985-1994 as era of violent repression, resistance and change; and the post-apartheid era.

HISTORICAL ERAS AND HISTORIOGRAPHY OF SOCIAL WORK

Pre-colonial era and colonial conquest

1400s	Navigators representing the Portuguese royal house and mercantile interests, establish a monopoly of the Cape sea route to India
1500/1600s	Southward Nguni migration and European settlement
1658	First slaves brought to the Cape
1686	Legislation prohibiting marriage of "full colour" freed slaves and Europeans
1790s	Wars of colonial conquest on Eastern frontier
1795	Formation of London Missionary Society
1799	Rebellion by Khoi and San servants lasting four years
1806	British colonial control
1820	European settlement schemes
1820s	*Mfecane* and expansion of Zulu kingdom
1834	Slave emancipation
1830s	Emergence of capitalised farming gentry
1856	Xhosa cattle slaughtering

Describing colonialism for what it was is important in accounts of social and political processes. Poverty and inequality existed in the pre-colonial era, but their effects were muted by mechanisms of kinship, reciprocity and institutionalised forms of welfare (Bundy, 1992). Earlier African societies were both ante-capitalist and anti-capitalist (Césaire, 1955). The colonial conquest is described by Césaire:

> *"It is not evangelization, nor a philanthropic enterprise, nor a desire to push back the frontiers of ignorance, disease and tyranny, nor a project undertaken for the greater glory of God, nor an attempt to extend the rule of law. To admit once and for all, without flinching at the consequences, that the decisive actors here are the adventurer and the pirate, the wholesale grocer and the ship owner, the gold digger and the merchant, appetite and force, and behind them, the baleful projected shadow of a form of civilization which, at a certain point in its history, finds itself obliged, for internal reasons, to extend to a world scale the competition of its antagonistic economies."* (Césaire, 1955:33)

Colonial conquest by the mercantile Dutch East India Company and the British resulted in "racism, slavery, attempted genocide, expropriation of land of indigenous people and exploitation of their labour as forced labour. Here lie the roots of national oppression" *(*Legassik, 2008:441). Massive structural inequalities were introduced in the form of slavery and "reduction of the Khoikhoi to landless labourers" (Bundy, 1992:27). The "wars of conquest" of the late 1700s (frontier wars, annexations and alienation of Xhosa land) brought further inequality, transferring property ownership and creating new relations of production (Bundy, 1992:28).

Colonisation enabled European construction of an inferior African "other", objectivised for cheap labour. The psychology of inferiorisation is described by Fanon (1963) as dehumanising and a "colonisation of the mind" enabling the later powerful forces of industrialised capitalism. Racism may therefore be contested as a primary motive in the early colony, as it is both colonial racism and capitalist accumulation formed the basis for the later structuring of society.

Colonial racism is the story of how Europeans defeated, robbed and ruled "blacks" for the enrichment of "whites" (Tsotsi, 2000:6). Massive inequality was structured along racial lines, with the entrenchment of racist policies from as early as 1686, when Europeans were prohibited from marrying freed slaves of "full colour" (Tsotsi, 2000:25). Slavery was a basis for accumulation and "helped to ingrain racially coded relations of coercion and subordination in colonial culture" (Bundy, 1992:27).

Liberal, philanthropic organisations such as the London Missionary Society (sent missionaries to South Africa in 1799) centred on converting the "heathen" to Christianity and spreading "civilisation". However, beyond Christian liberal discourse and missionary zeal was a capitalist and imperialist motive. William Wilberforce, leader of the London Missionary Society, for example Tomkins (2007) and Majeke (1953), wrote that Christianity teaches the poor to be diligent, humble, patient and obedient, and to accept their lowly position in life, making inequalities between themselves and the rich appear to be less galling (Majeke, 1953). A central tenet of missionary ideology was

the expansion of industrial capitalism and empire. Dr John Philip, the representative of the London Missionary Society in South Africa, states:

> "While our missionaries are everywhere scattering the seeds of civilisation … they are extending the British empire … Wherever the missionary places his standard among a savage tribe, their prejudices against the colonial government give way, their dependence upon the colony is increased by the creation of artificial wants … Industry, trade and agriculture spring up … and every genuine convert becomes the friend and ally of the colonial government." (Philip, 1821, cited by Bundy, 1979:39)

Social work and the era of colonial conquest

The history of South African social work is interwoven with the history of colonisation and imperialism. Colonialism disrupted and denigrated traditional forms of social relations, and the social work practice which grew from this context was characterised by paternalism and welfare policies that favoured whites as the welfare elite (Patel, 2005).

Liberal and Afrikaner nationalist agendas characterised descriptions of social work development. Even a seminal social work text such as that of McKendrick (1990) described early colonial relations using a liberal hegemonic discourse of the benevolent European who found it "desirable to have a fresh source of supplies" at mid-voyage. McKendrick (1991:6) maintains that initial contacts between "whites" and Khoi were friendly, but that "stock thefts committed by the Khoi led to a war followed by an attempt by the whites to define a boundary to the land which they occupied". No analysis is given of the reduction of the Khoisan to a servile labouring class under the control of colonists (Lester, 1996). Explaining war as resulting from "stock thefts" (McKendrick, 1991) obfuscates the loss of traditional grazing land and independent means of subsistence in the Cape Peninsula. After conquest, the Khoi were incorporated into the colonial agricultural economy. These material relations formed the basis for later "systems of segregation and apartheid" (Lester, 1996:25).

As in Europe, early philanthropic social work arose from class-based structures of society. In South Africa welfare was focused on ("white") orphans and juveniles, with an orphanage established by the Dutch Reformed Church in 1814. In Britain, for example, Mary Carpenter established a "working and visiting society" in 1825, and a reformatory in 1852, typical of philanthropic liberalism. Her essay of 1851 was entitled "Reformatory Schools for the Children of the Perishing and Dangerous Classes and for Juvenile Offenders" (Smith, 2002). The Poor Laws of 1834 stigmatised the poor and social work was dominated by the ideology of individualism, which found the explanation for poverty in the character of the individual client rather than in social or economic structures (Ferguson, 2008; Lavalette & Ferguson, 2007).

In the colonies the philanthropic movement overlapped with liberal-utilitarian projects around reform and incarceration of "deviants" in colonial prisons, lunatic asylums and hospitals (Sen, 2005). These were seen as "enclaves of disciplinary power". Scholarship generally emphasised the "utility of deviance in the extension of the state into the uncolonised spaces of native society" (Sen, 2005:8).

In India, as in South Africa, social work activities focused on juvenile reform and colonial capitalism. Satadru Sen (2005) describes the gathering of career jailers, bureaucrats, native authority figures, women social workers, capitalists and religious colonisers around the project of juvenile reform. These were part of a group of "formidable social workers and colonial child-savers" such as Florence Nightingale, Mary Carpenter, Emily Hobhouse (known as a founding social worker for work in concentration camps during the South African war), Elizabeth Fry and Jane Addams (although respected for her more radical approach in the settlement movement (Reisch & Andrews, 2002). They were "women driven by middle-class anxieties about urbanity and colonialism … armed with great religious and cultural confidence, and an expansive notion of 'women's work' and a willingness to take on entrenched bastions of male authority in assorted bureaucracies" (Sen, 2005:18). They are also described as being "reactionary in their attitude to the poor, the foreign, the heathen and the non-white" (Sen, 2005:19). Such were the hegemonic discourses of the origins of social work in the colonies.

Industrialisation and mining revolution 1870-1920

1867	Discovery of diamonds in South Africa
1877	First American Charity Organisation Society
1884/85	Berlin conference to formalise "scramble for Africa"
1894	South African Glen Gray Act
1898	New York School of Philanthropy established as first school for social workers
1899	Outbreak of South African War (until 1902)
1900	Emily Hobhouse, British social worker, forms Relief Fund for ("white") South African women and children
1902	Charlotte Maxeke, first South African social worker
1908	First Child Welfare Society in South Africa (Cape Town)
1910	Establishment of Union of South Africa, with the interests of mining capital paramount (Jan Smuts, minister of mining)
1912	Founding of African National Congress
1913	South African Natives Land Act
1914	First World War
1918	Status Quo Act fixing job colour bar in favour of "white" miners

Rapid transformation of the South African economy as a result of diamond and gold mining intensified social inequalities through the demand for labour (Bundy, 1979:28). Structuring of society was greatly affected by the economic interests and imperatives of mining capital after the 1870s (Legassik, 2008; Lester, 1996). Legassik (2008:441) maintains that "the real impact of capitalism came only with the discovery of gold and diamonds" as mines used pre-existing structures of segregation to obtain cheap labour. Segregation thus served the interests of capitalism rather than merely being an ideology of Afrikaner nationalism – mining capitalisation exacerbated early racial domination and stratifications (Legassik, 2008).

The Native Affairs Commission of 1905 with its territorial and political segregation between "black" and "white" laid the basis for future racialised policies. The gold mines further established patterns of hierarchy and inequality in labour, with deep divisions along race and skill lines, reserving certain tasks for "white", better-paid miners (1911 Mine Works Act) (Bundy, 1979).

The reserves in the rural areas reproduced cheap labour, which led to the underdevelopment of these reserves. An example of such coercion of rural migration to supply labour needs was the Glen Gray Act 25 of 1894 (Thompson & Nicholls, 1993:58) on land tenure and labour extraction. It eliminated communal tenure of land and provided for the allocation of no more than one single plot to "black" heads of households. This aimed to force Africans off the land and make them wage workers (Ncapayi, 2005:24).

Extra methods to create a labouring class for the mines included "the legislative power of the state and the creation of monopolistic recruiting organisations" (Webster, 1978, cited by Thompson & Nicholls, 1993:59). Legislation included the Squatters Law (1895); the Pass Law (1896) and the Land Act (1913), which reserved less than 10% of the land for Africans (Patel, 2005:67). It is argued that the primary goals of the later Union Government of 1910 was industrialising the country and turning it into a capitalist state (SA History Online, 2013).

Increased levels of poverty among "white" Afrikaners, cattle losses during the 1890s rinderpest epidemic and destruction of Boer farms during the South African War made a "mass phenomenon of Afrikaner proletarianisation" (Bundy, 1979:30). This drove thousands of "poor white" Afrikaners from the rural areas to cities. State welfare and social work services were later directed mainly to this group. "White" migration and the threat it posed to "black" workers then led to various forms of "black" worker resistance and militancy between 1915 and 1917 (Worden, 2008).

Both Afrikaner nationalist and liberal writers used discourses of racial pluralism, assuming race groups to be real categories and discrete entities, while generally neglecting economic interests. Generally, the spread of capitalist social relations was obscured by attention to racial categories, pluralism and liberalism (Lipton, 2007:9).

EARLY DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIAL WORK PRIOR TO 1920

Liberal analysis and the structuring of Afrikaner nationalist state policies produced discourses of "protectionist" segregation (Worden, 2008). These ideologies and hegemonic racist discourses, together with international liberal and philanthropic influences, produced an indefensible form of social work.

The formal international history of social work used similar narratives, describing it as arising from philanthropic, religious and gender struggles in response to poverty, from an individualist and moralistic perspective. In the late 1860s British social work tended to mirror the concerns, fears and prejudices of the Victorian middle and upper classes regarding the "problem of the poor", seen as threatening the social fabric of British cities (Ferguson & Woodward, 2009). The middle class of the mid-nineteenth century had

"tolerated the poor living in overcrowded squalor and dying of disease and hunger", but later fears around the spread of diseases to the rich led to interventions from which groups of capitalists set out to profit, employing new groups of workers to supply them (Harman, 2008:380).

Explanations for poverty were sought in the character of the individual, rather than in social and economic structures. The "friendly visiting" of the Charity Organisation Societies (COS), founded in 1869 by Octavia Hill, for example, focused on assessing "deserving" recipients. The "poor need to be coerced into behaving morally" (Ferguson, 2008:40). "When an applicant is truly starving he may be given a piece of bread if he eats it in the presence of the giver" (Lewis, 1995, cited by Ferguson, 2008:90). Dominant discourses claimed that misguided interference in market forces would undermine family responsibility and that charity had a negative impact, as it would "undermine character" and be wasted on the "undeserving poor". These arguments were based on Social Darwinism and eugenics, maintaining that some people were beyond help as a result of weak genetic inheritance (Ferguson & Woodward, 2009:18). As will emerge later, eugenics and its racist discourse would form the basis for development of social work in South Africa during the 1920s and 1930s.

The poverty of "black" and "white" groups were dealt with in markedly different ways in South Africa in the early 1900s (McKendrick, 1990:10). "White" poverty was the primary focus of the state and "poor whites" were viewed as degenerate. Concerns around the health and wellbeing of communities developed around the "sanitation syndrome" and concerns that "black" inhabitants spread infection led to removals and racial segregation (Worden, 2008:47).

There are various narratives of South African social work of the early1900s. One is about Emily Hobhouse, a British welfare campaigner, in the Boer concentration camps of the South African War between 1899 and 1900. She is commonly credited for being the first social worker in South Africa, opposed to the Boer War and denouncing the activities of the British government. In 1900, she formed the Relief Fund for ("white") South African Women and Children (Spartacus Educational, 2010). Similarly, the formation of the Afrikaansche Vrouwe Vereeniging (AVV) (Afrikaans Women's Association) in 1904, which later became the Afrikaanse Christelike Vroue Vereeniging (ACVV), is described in formal discourses as being the first welfare organisation in South Africa arising from racialised "white" philanthropism with a commitment to build "Taal en Volk" (Language and the People) (Du Toit, 2003:27). According to Vincent (1999), this arose from the "volksmoeder" (mother of the nation) discourse on the gendered role of Afrikaner women in "white" Afrikaner Nationalism, which fused racialised Christian charity with an Afrikaner nationalist mission (Du Toit, 2003).

However, other discourses remained hidden, emerging only when archival sources are explored. These include the work of Charlotte Maxeke (1874-1839), a campaigner for women's and workers' rights, as a "native welfare officer" in juvenile welfare at the Johannesburg Magistrate's Courts. Berger (2001:554) refers to A.B. Xuma's pamphlet on her life: *Charlotte Manye (Mrs. Maxeke) or What an Educated African Girl Can Do.*

The pamphlet includes a brief foreword by W.E.B. Du Bois, Maxeke's teacher and friend at Wilberforce University.

Although social work activities remained in the religious, philanthropic, "welfare" realm of social control, rehabilitation and work with the indigent, a more radical social work developed in the resistance movements and political organisations. There was no formal social work training and most "social workers" practised as such on the basis of their leadership skills, social commitment, liberal ideals and educational advantage.

It was, however, the liberal and philanthropic form of social work, geared to the maintenance of the status quo, which first became formalised, especially as the state gained control of such activities and training institutions, dictating and structuring the form and content of the unfolding profession.

1920s until 1948

1920	"Black" mineworkers' strike and co-option of radicalised skilled workers
1922	Trade union militancy and general strike of "white" workers (Rand Revolt)
1924	Pact government of General Hertzog
1924	First social work diploma course, University of Cape Town
1929	Formation of South African Institute of Race Relations
1930	Formation of Race Welfare Society
1930-38	Great Depression
1932	Report of Carnegie Commission of Inquiry into the poor "white" problem
1932	Stellenbosch University offers first degree course in social work
1933	Verwoerd becomes Chair of the Department of Sociology and Social Work at the University of Stellenbosch
1934	South African Party (Smuts) and National Party (Hertzog) form "fusion" government
1937	Establishment of Department of Welfare
1939	Beginning of WWII
1943	Founding of the Non-European Unity Movement
1944	Post-war Planning of social welfare

It is particularly in this era that formal social work emerges from the socio-political context, while it also has an impact on the socio-political context. These processes and developments will be described concurrently as they overlap.

During the early 1920s "white" workers fought, with increased militancy, to maintain their positions by opposing the appointment of cheap "black" migrant workers, which led to the Rand Revolt in 1922 (Worden, 2008). This led to a drive towards racial segregation and after the Pact government of General Hertzog came to power in 1924, attention was turned to the problem of "white" indigence (McKendrick, 1990:10).

The focus of welfarist groups from the 1920s was with sex and social hygiene, relating to eugenics and Social Darwinism (Glaser, 2005). Mass female urbanisation had implications for urban planning, public health, social services and juvenile delinquency, and welfare organisations worked on perceived "problems of uncontrolled sexuality"

(Glaser, 2005:302) such as population growth; premarital sex and pregnancy (damaging the stability of the urban family); venereal disease; "cross-racial" sex which challenged racial boundaries; and young aggressive male sexuality, which posed a potential security threat to women (Glaser, 2005).

The Race Welfare Society (1930), led by H.B. Fantham (Dean of Science of the University of the Witwatersrand from 1923 to 1926), used theories of eugenics to limit the fertility of "poor whites", cultivate a healthy and productive "white" population and avoid "white race degeneration" (Legassik, 1976). The formation of the South African Institute of Race Relations in 1929 was another example of the liberal effort supporting the state's segregationist policy. By the 1930s the state was increasingly concerned about urban, unemployed African women.

Leading South African liberals such as Alfred Hoernlé (Professor and presenter of the Phelps-Stokes lectures of 1939) and Winifred Hoernlé (Anthropology lecturer at the University of the Witwatersrand and "experienced in welfare services for blacks") (Dubow, 1995) became involved in the Race Welfare Society in 1935 after it changed its focus to all race groups. This was in reaction to rapid growth in the urban African population, the visible problem of "black" poverty and the need to limit African population growth (Dubow, 1995:178). It later became the National Council for Maternal and Family Welfare (Glaser, 2005:317).

After the Race Welfare Society had expanded services to include "African" people, it became attractive for liberals to join, to "help Africans", while still adhering to government's segregationist policies (Dubow, 2000). Another example was the Joint Committee for Non-European work, formed under the Johannesburg Child Welfare Society (JCWS). Wilfred Hoernlé became president of the JCWS in 1951.

Welfare activity also focused on work with young people, such as the establishment of racist, segregated youth movements – Boy Scouts and Girl Guides for "Europeans", wayfarers and pathfinders for "non-European children". Hoernlé also appears in the report of the Post-War Planning conference at the University of the Witwatersrand (1944:125) as a chairperson of a discussion session on "social research in the planning of social welfare work".

The liberal support for segregationist and anti-socialist policies is apparent in Hoernlé's writing (1939, cited by Legassick, 1979:231):

> *"The great task of South African development was to guide the gradual transformation of the mass of natives into the class of wage-earning labourers … wisely on such lines that the creation of a corrupt, discontented, and dangerous industrial proletariat is avoided."*

And so, social work, within the framework of state policy and legislation, comfortably embraced liberal "status quo maintenance" activities. McKendrick (1990:12) uses a liberal perspective in ascribing this to "the long-ingrained racial attitudes of white persons, reflected in discriminatory state-sponsored social welfare and social assistance programmes". Lowe (1988:24) also sees apartheid as having developed from Afrikaner

nationalism, which arose as "a reaction initially to British imperialism, and later to internal racial/ethnic forces" as well as from religion, specifically Calvinism.

The 1932 Report of the Carnegie Commission of Inquiry played a role in solidifying "white" Afrikaner political and economic dominance. It was foundational in terms of policy, ideology and the discipline of social work and its institutions. Such foundations are described as:

> "prime constructors of hegemony, by promoting consent and discouraging dissent against capitalist democracy ... Their influence is exerted in many ways, among them: creating ideology and the common wisdom … and supporting those institutions by which policies are initiated and implemented." (Roelofs, 2007:480)

The "Poor White Study" of the Commission was widely recognised as an important factor leading to the rise of the National Party, with its 1948 general election slogan, "The white man must remain master" (Carnegie Corporation of New York, 2004). Following its recommendations, the Department of Social Welfare was established in 1937, signalling a conscious state decision to become more involved in (white) welfare programmes (McKendrick, 1990:12).

Earlier, in 1926, the Pact government and its Economic and Wages Commission had put forward an important ideological perspective, using a structural approach and acknowledging circumstances rather than personal culpability in poverty. However, the Carnegie Report was a "backlash" against this project of welfare state building, emphasising psychological traits and "retarded adjustment" (Seekings, 2008:520). This shift is of relevance to the formalisation and professionalisation of social work in South Africa with its remedial and pathologising discourse. "The poor needed to be rehabilitated through developing new personal and psychological qualities" (Seekings, 2008:521).

Non-profit organisations and churches, mainly funded by the state, were important in building institutional and infrastructural capacity in schools. The Dutch Reformed Church (DRC) and the ACVV (Afrikaans Christian Women's Association) built and managed many industrial and agricultural schools (Fourie, 2007:1288). It provided programmes for young women from rural areas, such as poor relief, hostels for work-seekers and services for unmarried mothers.

The complicity and collaboration by social work with racist segregationist and "protectionist" policies linked well with liberal ideologies of the time. For example, the Race Relations Report (1936) on the 1936 social work conference in Johannesburg, attended by social workers of all races, but predominantly "European", described the "remarkable extent" to which non-Europeans had benefited from the development of social welfare activities. Legassick (1976:235) quotes from the 1936 report of the Native Affairs Commission:

> "There can be a Bantu nation in South Africa, every member of which can be proud to be a South African … The ideal is to recreate a Bantu world which

shall be enlightened by our religion and ethics, and instructed by our economic experience … a world in which the interests of each in its own sphere shall be paramount, without detriment to the other. All our legislation aims at doing this.*"*

In spite of claims that the paramount interests would be "without detriment to the other", liberalism acted ideologically and institutionally to reproduce differentiated structures of South African racialised capitalism (Legassick, 1979).

FORMALISATION OF SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION 1920 – 1948

South African social work education dates back to the 1920s, but the Carnegie Report led to its formalisation (Seekings, 2008). The first university training was offered at the University of Cape Town in 1924. Founding figures of social work education were Professor Bateson of the University of Cape Town (representing liberalism) and Professor Verwoerd of the University of Stellenbosch (representing Afrikaner nationalism). Other training institutions followed, such as the institutions of the Dutch Reformed Church, the Minnie Hofmeyr College for "coloured" women and the Huguenot College for "white" women (previously Friedenheim College) in 1931, the Transvaal University College in 1929 (the University of Pretoria), the University of the Witwatersrand in 1937, Jan Hofmeyr College for "black" social workers in 1941, DeColigny Training Institution (Dutch Reformed Church Seminary in Transkei), and the Strydom College Training School (Ntusi, 1997; Van der Merwe, 2011).

The curriculum content was based on British and American models, with a clinical approach inhering in the philosophy of personal responsibility (Kotze, 1998). The basis for training was the welfare system of the day, with therapeutic and restorative approaches (Lombard, 1998:17) with a strong focus on the hegemonic discourse of the Carnegie Report. Social work education had to adhere to policies such as separate higher education institutions and services according to racial categorisation (Social Welfare Post-War Planning Conference Proceedings, 1944).

"Early moves were largely stimulated by a genuine desire to train 'black' social workers to work with the problems experienced by 'black' people" (McKendrick, 1990:182). Such statements may be interpreted as (liberal) Gramscian "common understandings" which have a privileged location in the uninspected realm of the consciousness (Hill, 2009).

A prominent institution at the time was the Jan Hofmeyr School of Social Work in Johannesburg, opened in 1941 by Rev. Ray Phillips and supported by, among others, Job Richard Rathebe (trained as a social worker in the USA and member of the South African Institute of Race Relations) and A.B. Xuma (President of the ANC in 1940) (Jan Hofmeyr School of Social Work pamphlet, 1940). Some well-known graduates from the college included Ellen Kuzwayo, Joshua Nkomo, Winnie Mandela and Gibson Kente. Funders included the Union government, Transvaal Chamber of Mines, the Phelps Stokes Fund and the Carnegie Corporation (Phillips' News, 1943), all institutions with clear liberal ideological positions. In a newspaper article about the School, the evidence

of hegemonic liberal discourse and the misrecognition of relations of conflict and exploitation are evident:

> The need for such a school has long been felt. The impact of Western civilisation upon us has uprooted us from the anchor of the ancient life of our race, and thus has created social problems that can only be dealt with by trained men and women … It is becoming clearer and clearer to many Europeans that the welfare of their race in this country is bound up with that of the African race. They realise that as corn and tare [an undesirable weed] cannot grow side by side without the one overwhelming the other, so civilisation and barbarism cannot be allowed to grow side by side. (Bantu World, 1940)

In spite of such racist and imperialist discourse, the Hofmeyr College later seemed to pose a threat to state ideologies. It was taken over in 1950 by the state and later closed down due to the undesirability of admission of "alien" black students from outside South Africa and claims by government officials that the educational level was unnecessarily high (Lowe, 1988:27). It had produced important leaders in the welfare and political field.

Apartheid era from 1948

1950	Population Registration Act; Immorality Act; Group Areas Act; Suppression of Communism Act
1952	Launch of defiance campaign
1955	Congress of the People in Kliptown and adoption of the Freedom Charter
1956	Mass demonstrations of women against Pass Laws
1956-1961	Rivonia treason trial
1959	Formation of Pan Africanist Congress (PAC)
1959	Extension of University Education Act
1960	Sharpeville shootings and banning of ANC, SACP and PAC
1969	Formation of South African Students Organisation led by Steve Biko
1976	Student protests in Soweto
1977	Murder of Steve Biko and banning of Black Consciousness organisations
1983	Formation of United Democratic Front

Further development of Afrikaner nationalism and Afrikaner ethnic identity transcended economic concerns and was not only connected to the material realm of capitalism – it was "firmly planted in a worldview determined by ethnicity" (Lester, 1996:98). Apartheid objectives preserved Afrikaner identity, protected white supremacy and economic privilege, prevented African urbanisation and social advancement and elevated the Afrikaner community (Lester, 1996).

The Bantu Authorities' Act of 1951 undermined local chiefs by making them responsible for tax collection and agricultural "betterment schemes" (Worden, 2008). Rural and urban protests such as defiance and pass laws campaigns failed to adequately challenge the state and the ANC was "uneasy in its proletarian alliance" (Worden, 2008:113). The Non-European Unity Movement advocated for boycotts and non-collaboration, focusing on working-class interests and refusing to recognise race as a

valid category of political organisation (Worden, 2008:115). The Freedom Charter of 1955 and the subsequent charterist ideology united various groupings, including the Communist Party, which had accepted the principle that a national-democratic stage of revolution had to precede socialist transformation (Hudson, 1988, cited by Worden, 2008; Legassik, 2007).

Apartheid's "second phase" of separate development enforced segregation and "influx control" and superseded the earlier economic motives of segregationist policies (Worden, 2008:121). The Extension of University Education Act of 1959 impacted on social work training institutions, creating separate-race educational institutions and restricting admission of "other-than-white" students to "non-racial" universities such as in Cape Town, Natal and the Witwatersrand. "Black" university colleges became independent Universities in 1969 (McKendrick, 1991:185).

Concern mounted in the 1950s about the visible "white" working-class youth gang subculture in welfare circles. White delinquency was blamed on inadequate parenting, particularly among working and single mothers, and the response to this was the development of youth movements and programmes on health, marriage and family life (Glaser, 2005:323). At the same time youth gangs developed in the "African" townships, "asserting a particularly aggressive form of masculinity" (Glaser, 2005:323). By 1964 birth control among Africans was high on the state agenda, with a cabinet memorandum stating that it was in the long-term interest of the state to reduce the size of "non-white families".

The emergence of Black Consciousness among university students and led by Steve Biko was a powerful new strategy to act as the Hegelian anti-thesis to the thesis of white racism (Biko, 1978). This movement was also committed to social development among rural black communities. The emergence of movements such as the Black Peoples Convention in 1972 united various groupings of the black consciousness movement, posing a threat to the state.

The absence of an appropriate social work response to these circumstances demonstrates the nature of social work as an instrument of the state. It was only on the marginal fringe of "alternative welfare structures and social movements" that a social work of resistance was practised.

Gradually, after 1948, various welfare alliances splintered and by 1960 "welfare became synonymous with 'white' welfare under Nationalist rule. As 'white' families stabilised and poverty declined, government welfare services could cope with the small numbers who fell through the cracks" (Glaser, 2005:327). The provision of welfare services among African people was greatly neglected and apartheid social welfare was tied to the political and economic objectives of the time, focusing on social control and adaptation to an unjust social system (McKendrick, 1990; Patel, 2005)

In the narrative of "white" social welfare and social work, 1978 saw the promulgation of three simultaneously enacted regulatory and controlling laws (Patel, 2005:73). These were the National Welfare Act 100/1978, the Social and Associated Workers Act 110/1978 and the Fundraising Act 107/1978 (Greater Johannesburg Welfare, Social Service and Development Forum, 1999). Social workers rendered services only to their

"own group" and salaries were differentiated. Conflicts of class and exploitation received little attention, subsumed by the liberal narrative which interpreted those conflicts as deriving from race and Afrikaner nationalism.

However, community work, especially in the alternative social development and political movements, did have a radical and transformative character in challenging apartheid social welfare (Patel, 2005:79). For example, a two-day strike, one of the first social work protest actions, occurred in Cape Town in 1980. An important role player in resistance against apartheid was the South African Black Social Workers Association (SABSWA). For example, in 1977 the Black People's Convention (BPC) convened a consultative meeting with various organisations at Hammanskraal to develop strategies to frustrate the pending "independence" of Bophuthatswana from the Republic of South Africa. Present were SABSWA (Mpotseng, 1978), among others. Another example of social work activity in resistance to the apartheid regime during the early 1980s was found in the activities of BABS (Build a Better Society), working in the Cape Flats and beyond, to conscientise and mobilise people around basic human rights and community development. These and many other alternative and progressive practices contributed to the evolution of a just social welfare system after 1994, although formal discourses around such activities are minimal.

Transition 1983-1994

1985	Declaration of state of emergency and violent repression by the apartheid state
1986	Repeal of Pass Laws
1987	"Washington consensus" as the start of the neoliberal era of global capitalism
1988	FW De Klerk replaces PW Botha, who resigned as president of South Africa
1988	Extensive banning of anti-apartheid organisations
1989	Launch of the mass democratic movement civil disobedience ("defiance") campaign and resistance
1989	Women's protest march in Cape Town
1990	Unbanning of ANC, PAC and Communist Party
1993	Negotiations and Interim Constitution
1993	Transitional Executive Council signs IMF loan agreement with a commitment by the ANC to the freedom of the market rather than regulatory interventions
1994	Democratically elected Government of National Unity

During the 1980s global neoliberalism, ideological shifts in policies of the North and the economic crises of the South undermined many social policies in both rich and poor countries, including South Africa. "Social policy was given a residual role of coping with the consequences of socially blind macroeconomics" (Lund, 2006:vii). The South African government, like other conservative governments such as those of Thatcher and Reagan, embarked on a process of change in the welfare system based on the logic of the market

(Sewpaul & Holscher, 2004). This "New Right" cleverly diluted the more radical tradition (Ledwith, 2001; Mishra, 1999; Sewpaul & Holscher, 2004). According to Patel (2005:77), critical observers believed that political change was inevitable and that privatisation (of welfare) would prevent a post-apartheid government from adopting radical redistributive policies. Transitional state structures had committed to neoliberalism, agreeing to "manage the economy responsibly" in order to obtain a loan of US$850 million from the International Monetary Fund in 1993 (Sewpaul & Holscher, 2004:70).

In the mid-1980s there had also been a revolutionary upsurge of mass worker organisation and resistance to the repressive apartheid regime. There were numerous general strikes, boycotts, marches and other protest actions. According to Legassik (2007), by the early 1990s 4 million workers were participating in political strikes. With such mass resistance, the "negotiated settlement" (ensuring the upholding of liberal capitalism) was entered into between the ANC and the government. Top businessmen were instrumental in moving forward the negotiation process to avoid the impending revolution (Legassik, 2007). Social democracy is said to have been based on "statist economic models … as a way of breaking the power of white-owned corporations", creating opportunities for the "black" elite to enter business (Mbeki, 2009). It is argued that for the ANC the "political/ideological project of nation building became paramount and supplanted … the socio-economic features of the crisis" (Marais, 1996, cited by Legassik, 2007:433).

In this context, social work generally remained true to those who held "hegemonic discursive power in society, namely a "new right", neoliberal and managerialist South African social welfare system operating on discourses of modernity" (Sewpaul & Holscher, 2004:94).

In the late 1980s some sections of the welfare sector organised themselves to resist racist and unjust policies (National Welfare Forum, 2013), as "progressive social workers of various persuasions" questioned their own roles in human service delivery (Ntebe, 1994:41). Important initiatives included the Free the Children Campaign, the National Children's Rights Committee and the Detainees Parents Support Committee (SA History Online, 2013). The political resistance movements such as the "black" student movements and women's movements provided an important platform for social work participation and mobilisation. Legendary social workers such as Helen Kuzwayo and Winnie Mandela were actively involved in these organisations (Norward, 2007). Similarly, conferences demonstrating such shifts included: University of the Western Cape "Social Welfare at the Watershed", 1987; University of the Witwatersrand "Towards a Democratic Welfare System – Options and Strategies", 1989; Maputo "Health and Welfare in Transition", 1990; and the University of the Western Cape "People's Health and Social Services", 1991, along with numerous other seminars, workshops, discussions, protest pickets. Progressive social workers were thus in search of a unitary, non-racist, democratic welfare system, best enacted through a radical social work approach (Ntebe, 1994:43).

Current era since 1994

1996	Adoption of the South African Constitution
1996	GEAR economic policy adopted
1999	Thabo Mbeki elected as second president of SA
2002	Government HIV/AIDS anti-retroviral rollout plan announced
2005	Rise of formalised resistance through social movements such as Abahlali Basemjondolo (shack dwellers movement)
2008	Global economic crisis and rise in anti-capitalist and anti-war movements
2011	Mass revolutionary upsurges such as the "Arab Spring"
2011/2012	SAP statistics describe approximately 11000 protest/mass action events
2012	Marikana massacre

The 1994 elections were characterised by hope for social justice. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission attempted to bring about healing after centuries of oppression and injustice and the South African Constitution, adopted in 1996, is considered to be one of the most progressive in the world, ensuring protection of human rights for all.

However, in 1996 the South African government adopted the neoliberal Growth, Employment and Redistribution programme (GEAR) in keeping with pressures from global economic institutions. The global shift to neoliberalism was a commitment to rampant capitalism and the logic of the market as the solution to the world's problems, dictating an unfettered free market, fiscal discipline and privatisation (Noyoo, 2003:37). This was a shift from the Redistribution and Development Programme (RDP) designed to meet basic human needs and redistribution (Adato, Carter & May, 2006). Only a few protective aspects of social policy were retained and the emphasis was placed on "the deserving poor", mitigating the worst effects of structural adjustments (Lund, 2008).

The changes were mostly political and socio-economic. Transformation is said to have failed due to the choices made by government which "strengthened the minerals-energy complex (MEC), introduced financialisation and allowed capital flight, hastened deindustrialisation and amplified poverty, unemployment and inequality" (Bond, 2012).

The levels of poverty and social injustices among "black" communities led to mobilisation of social movements such as Abahlali Basemjondolo (shack dwellers movement), the Landless Peoples Movement, the Anti-eviction Campaign and the Anti-privatisation Forum (Ballard, Habib & Valodia, 2006). Outrage at conditions of suffering and injustice challenged structural conditions of unequal power relations and class conflict and social mobilisation seems to have become "a conventional vehicle for the attainment of democratic rights for ever increasing numbers of citizens" (Tapscott, 2010:275) in the transition from race-based to class-based apartheid.

A recent critically significant moment in South African history was the Marikana massacre of 16 August 2012, when 34 striking miners were killed by the South African police in what seemed to have been a deliberate ambush of the striking workers. While South Africa is said to be the wealthiest country in the world in terms of its mineral resources (Amandla, 2012), the paradox of high levels of exploitation and social

injustice associated with mineworkers and the majority of South Africans is clear. Analysing the massacre, Kassrils (2012:7) states: "much lies behind the catastrophe: chiefly the exploitative mine owners and the horrendous conditions under which our country allows mineworkers to toil and their communities to fester".

Understanding neoliberalism in the political economy of South Africa is critical for the analysis of current realities. Formulations of the current ANC government are "a narrow liberal understanding of freedom and representative democracy, a conception of social capital emptied of an understanding of power relations, a state that hovers above class contradictions to regulate class conflict and a productivist conception of economic change; more growth and industrial jobs" (Satgar, 2012:5).

Social work after 1994

Social work evolved after 1994 within this neoliberal context. By 2001 approximately 27 laws administered by the Department of Social Development were amended or repealed, and new laws adopted by the legislature (Patel, 2005). The White Paper for Social Welfare (Department of Welfare, 1997) outlined broad policy guidelines with principles such as democracy, equity, ubuntu, non-discrimination, human rights, people-centredness, human capital, sustainability and partnership. Social workers were thus required to depart radically from the forms of intervention and service provision of the apartheid era.

However, a social work "business" discourse emerged, as the culture of neoliberalism has "colonized the public sector as business thinking and practices crossed the public-private sector divide and were transplanted into activities such as social work" (Harris, 2002:5). Social work was expected to function, as far as possible, as if it were a commercial profit-making business. This mirrored an international trend. For example, in Britain a similar crisis in the early 2000s led to the drafting of the Social Work Manifesto, a statement of social workers' commitment to social justice, renewed radical efforts towards creating an equal society and resistance against neoliberal, managerialist discourses (Ferguson, 2008).

In South Africa developmental discourse gained dominance, often presented from a neoliberal perspective of entrepreneurship and free market participation. Social development's social justice aims include promoting social and economic development, facilitating participation of the socially excluded; improving the quality of life of people; building human capabilities; promoting social integration; and promoting human rights (Midgley, 2001; Patel, 2005; Patel & Midgley, 2004, cited by Patel, Hochfeld, Graham & Selipsky, 2008). In itself, social development pursues important social justice ideals; however, when transposed onto a neoliberal capitalist agenda, it becomes co-opted for the maintenance of the corporatist and capitalist system.

Community and social development, as espoused in the White Paper for Social Welfare (Department of Welfare, 1997), became the urgent project of social work education. For example, at the conference on the transformation of social work education in 1998, Lombard (1998:18) made a plea for a paradigm shift beyond the casework-community work dichotomy towards social development. This shift focused on empowerment; non-remedial intervention; participation and networks; and concern with economic

development (Gray & Simpson, 1998), although neoliberal capitalist discourses remained dominant.

To some degree social work has acknowledged the destructive and oppressive nature of its past and the imperative for a critical perspective. For example, the social work Standards Generating Body (SGB) of the early 2000s identified, among others, the following learning outcome for social work training (13 of 27):

> Identify, select and implement various techniques, methods and means of raising awareness, developing critical consciousness about the structural forces of oppression, exclusion and disempowerment, and use such awareness to engage people as change agents.

CONCLUSION

The historiography of social work and the interconnection of events and wider forces in history that shape people's lives, institutions and even disciplines (Harman, 2008) are more fully understood from a historical-materialist perspective. The origins of social work in South Africa are found within the forces of racist capitalism, social conflict and unequal power relations – shaped by the hegemonic ideologies of the various eras during the 20th century and even earlier colonial and imperialist origins. Through hegemonic discourses, social work generally supported the maintenance of the racist status quo and the capitalist mode of production, with individualist and liberal ideologies of freedom of choice and personal responsibility.

Social work, on the other hand, has also played a challenging role in forming and shaping society through resistance and struggles against oppressive dynamics. These radical responses offer counter-narratives and challenge the hegemonic discourses of South African social work. They provide hope and inspiration for a social work which strives for social justice and a better society.

The dialectical-historical perspective rather than a purely historical or chronological record of "progress" allows for socio-political dynamics to be understood as formative of societal conditions as well as of social work. If societal conditions as well as social work are formed by socio-political dynamics, activists for social change such as social workers, community members, workers and new social movements are in turn able to intervene in a meaningful way in these socio-political dynamics. Such is the urgent imperative for social work: to respond to its call to be a social justice profession and resist status quo maintenance and oppressive hegemonic discourse. Consistent critical consciousness, examination of and contribution to new discourse and action are essential.

Such critical consciousness will allow social work never to be disengaged from moments like the Marikana massacre and other forms of oppression and brutalisation (Smith & Alexander, 2013). It demands that social work engage with the full complexity of events emerging from the class- and race-based antagonisms of South African society. Understanding and engaging with current crises and conflicts as heralding a transformational and revolutionary moment in history allows for social work to respond by playing a role in this history as well as being shaped by it.

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