**Chapter Two**

**Ideology and Change:**

**From Segregation Towards Apartheid**

**Origins and Myths: Trusteeship, Segregation and Governance**

**Myths of Origins and Nationalism**

Southern Africa is harsh, a land of drought and flood, poor soils, and extremes of heat and cold. The sun is white and sharp, while the night comes quickly and deeply on the land. Within this harsh environment, African traditional life was stable, though sometimes fatalistic, and based on intricate rules that governed relationships. There was little room for individualism in traditional Southern African society. Moreover, the desertification of Northern Africa and trade patterns cut off the sub-continent from technological transfer until after 1500.

Much remains to be learned about the history and values of pre-colonial societies and rulers in Southern Africa. However, in understanding traditional authority, several themes stand out. Over many centuries, African polities developed social values and forms as well as cultural traditions. These included the economic obligations of rulers, the rights of subjects, and the basis of political legitimacy (Thompson 1995). As Soga in *Amaxhosa Life and Customs* (as cited in Mostert 1992, p. 199) writes, there is an image of comfort and trust projected in traditional leaders: “The chief resides in the life and well-being of the tribe, and [is] the repository of wisdom, endowed with the power to guide the collective members of the tribal body….”

Pre-colonial African society was a complex social and economic order. Societies were able to maintain cohesion through organized community relationships. Values existed within traditional organizations and processes which were both flexible and subtle and, within the context of communalism which these values represented, non-deterministic. For some, traditionalism has a "continued vitality and contains the 'pulsating remains' of African kingdoms and chiefdoms" (Fredrickson 1995, p. 104).

In contemporary Africa, the terms traditional and tribal tend to be used interchangeably. While this terminology cannot be avoided given their contemporary usage in Africa, accuracy suggests that traditional values and structures reflect those attributes that existed in Africa prior to 1800. When one refers to "tribal administration," tribal chiefs, and headmen in South Africa, one is discussing the modified (and to critics, corrupted) forms of traditional authority that have evolved since 1800.

African value systems have evolved as well and will continue to evolve in Africa. Knowledge, religious values, and technological transfers from other parts of the world have influenced these values over the past three hundred years. In this chapter, we examine the process of social transformation and the origins of a liberal tradition in South Africa which were fundamentally compromised as a result of the nineteenth century cultural myths created by British rule.

South Africa was created through the use of myths that reinforced existing prejudices that could sometimes be used to political advantage. This chapter examines the ways in which these myths came to define reality. In South Africa, myths were transformed to suit different societal norms and perceived needs. In the first half of the twentieth century, Afrikaner mythology was able to assume racism rather than to create it since similarly racist views prevailed in Europe and North America (Thompson 1985). Core values were often shaped and altered by the mythologies of one or more social or ethnic groupings. Many of the myths defined historically continue to form South African social relationships and are an inheritance of the new non-racial South African state.

**Counter-narratives**

Myths and value systems led to the historical definition of South Africa in racial, social, and organizational terms. The Dutch in the Cape, and their successors, developed a variety of myths that defined political values in the nineteenth century during and after their migration into the South African interior (Walker 1968). Nationalism, colonialism, liberalism, and modernization all influenced (and competed with) the dominant world view of white South Africans, that came to be known as apartheid, and led to the contemporary form of the institutionalized state created after 1948.

One of the myths to come out of the nineteenth century treks (literally, travels) was the image of the Afrikaner as a rural people linked to the frontier by a history of farming. Following from this was what De Klerk (1975, p. 16) called the growth of an "...extreme individualism, so that communal centres were slow to come into being." Internally, Afrikaners as a group were said to be committed to democratic participation. The mandate of the Afrikaner, he continued, was to create a new society in South Africa and "...a revolutionary age in which an attempt was made to restructure not only Afrikaner, but South African society generally: radically, fundamentally, rationally, and for all time" (De Klerk 1975, pp. 90-91). In reality, however, Afrikaners over time and into the late twentieth century would go through an "...embourgeoisement--becoming an urban and suburban middle class within an industrializing society" (De Klerk 1975, p. 90).

Externally, especially in terms of social relationships, Afrikaner authority and dominance was assumed. As one Afrikaner legislator, Van Nierop, put it in the early 1930s, “[T]he white man has come to South Africa to rule, and... the white man is not going to allow that right, which is his prerogative, to be taken away from him by any other section of the population” (as quoted in Lewson 1988b, pp. 78-79).

Suspicion of authority among Boers also related to concerns about corruption, which defined the Dutch East India Company regime from the 17th century onward. Almost from the beginning, Company officials used their position to enrich themselves. The Dutch East India Company used a system of regional governors, called Landrost (magistrates) to control territory. Two Dutch Governors, a father and son, defined Company rule in the Cape. Governor Simon van der Stel served from 1679-1699 and his son, Willem Adraan van der Stel served from 1699-1707.

Within a decade of his appointment, Simon van der Stel faced the first of many revolts against taxes and corrupt practices against government authority in the Cape. Van der Stel senior modified the wine concession to his advantage. Burgers (citizens) sent a protest petition to Amsterdam signed by 63 free settlers. This was followed by a counter petition with 240 signatures. The Company supported the Governor’s decision against the Burgers.

Resistance against the authority of the Governor followed. In 1705 Adraan van der Stel was driven out of the Cape by a successful colonial revolt amid accusations of corruption. In 1707, the Company directors dismissed Van der Stel (the son) and proclaimed that Company officials could not own land or trade. Nonetheless, by the 18th century corruption had become a way of life within the Dutch East India Company.

The pattern continued into the 19th century. In 1821, the local *Landdrost* (district administrator), Jacob Cayler, used his office both to acquire land and slave labor and to obstruct justice. In the Cape, Thompson (1995) notes, such corruption carried on well into the early British period. Both the Cape as well as the interior Boer republics were well known for their high levels of patronage and corruption. Many administrators in the nineteenth century saw patronage and corruption as part of the privilege of high office.

Geertz (1971) writes that among conservative white South Africans, there has long existed a stereotype of Africans that they had a static past and their history was buried in the mists of some unchanging primordialism. This stereotype continued well into the twentieth century by both whites and those of mixed race. A South African of Mixed Race claimed in conversation with Picard, “You can take the African out of the Bush but you can't take the Bush out of the African” (Research Diary, June 2, 1987). From first contact, Europeans, both Dutch and English, saw Africans as static in terms of culture.

As a traditional people, Africans were said to follow an authoritarian pattern of leadership. This justified the authoritarianism of the “native” administrator. As one ex-Colonial governor, Sir Mervin Wheatley said of South Africa, “[O]nly ‘experienced administrators’ could really get inside the heads of ‘unsophisticated tribesmen’ and discover what they really wanted” (James 1994, p. 590).

In reality, archeological research and oral tradition in South Africa show us that South African iron age peoples and their successors were not static, but dynamic and ever changing (Maylam 1986). Traditionalism, as mythology, was also contradictory. While all of the chief’s authority was said to come from the people, at the same time, the traditional leader could do no wrong. In the local tongue, Morena Ke batho (A chief is a chief by the people); Morena ha a fose (The chief can do no wrong).

A related myth among white South Africans was that the various black societies of South Africa and white South Africans were "all foreigners to Southern Africa" having migrated to the area some 300 years ago, when evidence suggests that their ancestors migrated to South Africa thousands of years prior to the modern era (AD) (*Progress* 1973, p. 12). One version of this myth suggested that the Bantu-speaking peoples migrated into what is now South Africa in the seventeenth century, crossing the Limpopo River after the arrival of Jan van Riebeeck at the Cape in 1652.

In 1660, Jan van Riebeeck, the leader of the first Dutch settlers, planted a hedge of wild almond trees. The bushes were planted to keep the Khoi Khoi (the indigenous population of the Western Cape) and their cattle out of the tiny European settlement. These wild almond trees (in many cases toxic) still stand near Table Mountain and for many symbolize the bitter harvest that segregation and apartheid created among the peoples of Southern Africa. To Allister Sparks (1990, p. xvii), these bitter almonds are symptomatic of "the division that runs through the psyche of the nation." This division was defined by the myth of origins that started with that planting.

The myth of origins remains vivid in South Africa. Many in the Dutch Reform Church approached racial confrontation wedded to the concept of entrenchment that saw the Afrikaner as the original settler of South Africa. This allowed many religious leaders of the Dutch Reform Church to support apartheid. The myth of origins deliberately separates white South Africans from blacks in terms of culture, religious values, and their world-view.

From the beginning of European settlement, the myth of origins of the Bantu-speaking peoples and the claim of prior arrival by the Dutch was both a justification and excuse for their exclusion from the political structures in the South African colonies, the Boer republics, the Union, and the post-1960 Republic. Africans, the myth suggests, were both separate peoples (nations) and new arrivals in South Africa. As a result, the myth went on, Africans had no claim over South African land. As Floyd (1954, p. 177) writes, since Africans were the last to arrive in the Southern African region, to many of the former white right wing:

Excepting the Indian, the Bantu have the least claim of all the races in South Africa to this term [native], if the country as a whole is kept in mind.... Over the greater part of South Africa the Bantu did not spread naturally, but were spread by the white man using him as a servant or labourer.

The architects of apartheid would use the myth to justify the separation of Africans from the core state and the creation of the ten homelands (or Bantustans) after 1948.

Though the myth of origins had no justification in historical fact, it defined the relationship between settlers and African society in the nineteenth and much of the twentieth century. As late as 1954, one observer would still argue: “The Bantu people are recent arrivals in the country and crossed the borders of what is now the Union, towards the end of the 16th century, [somewhat] before the first white settlers landed at Cape Town” (Floyd 1954, p. 178).

The myth that Africans were not South Africans was widespread and persistent among whites throughout Eastern and Southern Africa. Some international observers have perpetuated the myth that black South Africans were not Africans at all, but that all black South Africans came from different ethnic groups. The American author, Allen Drury (1968, p. 29), promoted this myth in the 1960s[[1]](#footnote-1):

[T]here is only one common factor – pigmentation. There is no unity of interest, no singleness of concept or purpose, not even, in most cases, mutual friendship. They [Africans] hate each other. They would kill each other if [whites] didn’t stand between them, just as they do all over Africa today, where the white man’s restraining influences have been removed. They are as different from each other as night from day.

It was but a short step from being foreign to not being human. On the local radio station by the mid-1970s one might hear: “The only other exciting thing that happened this week was a dog fight...oh yes, a kaffir was killed in the [mine] shaft” (Picard, Research Diary, June 18, 1975).[[2]](#footnote-2)

Theories of Bantu migration into South Africa were inaccurate by at least 2000 years. Archival evidence suggests that pre-Bantu peoples entered the Iron Age about the same time as Europeans. Historians, by the mid-1970s at the latest, knew that African peoples had already settled south of the Limpopo by the third century A.D. Recent archeological discoveries confirm that an iron age people lived at Tzaneen (Silver Leaves) in the Northern part of South Africa as early as 270 A.D. More contemporary theories suggest that the origins of humankind are in a core area running from Kenya and Tanzania down to the northern part of South Africa.

Archeological evidence in the last half of the twentieth century should have laid to rest "the well-worn myth that Bantu-speaking Africans arrived south of the Limpopo at much the same time as whites were first settling in the Western Cape” (Maylam 1986, p. viii). Long after the apartheid government came to power in South Africa (as late as the 1970s), the myth of the empty land, perpetuated by the Afrikaner, should have been dead. However, myths, continues Wheatcroft (1993, p. 16), would perpetuate the mythology that "[t]he Bantu began to arrive on the Limpopo in the sixteenth century and pushed into the lush grazing lands...settling..." in South Africa at, or shortly after, the arrival of the Europeans.

**Afrikaner Civil Society and Cultural Hegemony**

South Africa in 1800 was not yet a colonial society in the modern sense, since the settler community did not have strong links with an imperial power. Dutch ties with the Cape were limited by the end of the eighteenth century, since Dutch influence outside of Asia had waned by the beginning of the Napoleonic Wars. When the British took over South Africa in 1815, ethnic and racial attitudes had not solidified in the Western Cape under the Dutch and French Huguenot settlers.

From the beginning, Afrikaners exhibited their frontier origins, and the "Cape burghers, in general, showed a notable determination to protect their civil liberty and economic interests against [the Dutch East India] Company restrictions" (Davenport 1997b, p. 24). Civil liberties were defined largely for white groups, however, rather than the country as a whole. Unlike the situation in the rest of South Africa, Cape Afrikaners in the nineteenth century became part of a prosperous middle class and they served as local administrators and military officers. Some Afrikaners were able to accumulate vast holdings in the wine districts and became prominent in other areas of agriculture and commerce.

Historically, prior to 1800, the concept of a "colony" implied the presence of settlers in a territory, but did not imply external domination. By contrast, imperialism suggested external domination that may or may not have included the establishment of settler communities. The system of worldwide expansion by European countries, which evolved in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, reflects the latter pattern, while the seventeenth and eighteenth century relationship between South Africa and Holland reflects the former. In the settler situation in Southern Africa prior to 1820 and the beginning of British settlement, (especially in South Africa), the migrants saw themselves as carrying the state with them from the mother country to the colony (Walker 1968).

Willem de Klerk (1975) claims that both Boer and Bantu suffered through the same type of imperialism in late nineteenth century South Africa and that their competition in the twentieth century was related to it. Though there is some truth to this, the African experience differs and cannot be separated from the colonial/settler assumptions of black inferiority and white society’s right to racial domination that evolved in the nineteenth century and became worldwide in the twentieth (Van zyl Slabbert 1992a). I.D. MacCrone, a psychologist, has gone so far as to contend that during the eighteenth century the Europeans in South Africa had no sense of innate racial superiority over the indigenous peoples (Thompson 1985). Prior to 1800, De Klerk (1975, p. 74) writes:

there was as yet nothing of the cultural destruction of a subject people which would cause so many of the colonial peoples of the twentieth century to react in violence and bitterness. The very nature of early Afrikaner society was un-colonial in the sense in which Fanon and a great many other kindred spirits of our time have looked at the phenomenon. The Afrikaners themselves had revolted against colonialism.

Whether or not the distinction is somewhat extreme, the MacCrone thesis does make an important point about the lack of a universal reference point to cultural differences prior to 1800. Though the cultural integration of the Khosian peoples began earlier, the loss of indigenous culture, values, and language, accelerated after the beginning of British rule in 1806.

Afrikaner consciousness, despite their long history, remained derived from Europe, as that was their cultural value system (Lester 1998). Cultural chauvinism in the eighteenth century was based on links to Europe defined by class relationships. Slaves were legally outside of this cultural hierarchy. Interaction between the Dutch government and society was limited to the European settlers. Non-Europeans were considered external to the social system. Slaves were the responsibility of their owners and all others, "Bushmen" and "Hottentots,"[[3]](#footnote-3)were considered the responsibility of the defense forces (Walker 1968).

Separation rather than assimilation (such as that which characterized Brazil and parts of West Africa) characterized both Dutch and British approaches to imperialism, at least in part because of definitions of status, coming out of different European legal systems, particularly with regard to the status of European men and women which required a color bar to protect moral behavior and religious beliefs (see the essays in Elphick and Giliomme, 1979).

The British imperial decree that had abolished slavery in December of 1833 seemed to suggest a different pattern of race relations from indigenous subordination under the Dutch, and that that British hegemony threatened Afrikaner society. Shortly thereafter, the trekkers (literally travelers) fled from what they felt were intolerable conditions and the fear of what they perceived as economic hardship and alien political and cultural domination. Above all, the trek was inspired by a need to escape from distant foreign authorities and the changes they mandated in Boer relationships to former slaves. As they saw it, the British were imposing an alien value system, ruthlessly and efficiently designed to destroy the Boer way of life. The British had abandoned the proper way of handling white‑black, master‑servant relations. To many of the Dutch settlers, British abolitionism offended the laws of God and the modalities of human belief.

The great treks of the Boers in the nineteenth century stimulated the frontier value system among Afrikaners already established in the eighteenth century. The trek was far from without purpose. Davenport notes, it was not based on some sort of "Germanic wanderlust" or "spontaneous folk migration” (1997b, p. 40). Rather it was the best solution that Eastern Cape Afrikaner frontier leaders could devise to escape imperial rule. The settlers decided to withdraw from a situation that had become intolerable to them.

Observers of South Africa have long noted the role that these Afrikaner values, what T. Dunbar Moodie (1975) calls the Afrikaner civil religion, have played in the country's history. Moodie has suggested that over time an Afrikaner political culture and ethnic nationalism evolved out of a civil religion in which the Afrikaner minority justified their political behavior through the belief that their divinely ordained national existence depended upon retaining control of institutionalized state structures.

One theory of apartheid is that it came out of the Afrikaner civil religion and that it was, thus, specifically Afrikaner in origin (Giliomee & Schlemmer 1989). This ideology was said to be necessary to maintain Afrikaners as separate from the African peoples of the sub-continent and outside of British imperial control. Early European contact with the Bantu-speaking peoples of South Africa in the middle of the eighteenth century had an important impact on Afrikaner civil religion. As we will see below, critics of this thesis say the origins of apartheid are more complicated than that.

Others have argued that Afrikaner nationalism is in part at least linked to the harsh treatment of the Boers during the 1899-1892 Anglo-Boer war. The war ended with the British creating concentration camps for civilians and a scorched earth policy that left many Afrikaners deeply impoverished for decades. Afrikaners as well as black South Africans died through starvation, disease and extreme poverty and for most of the twentieth century Afrikaners were held in contempt by many of their fellow white South Africans (For examples see Spies 1977 and Giliomee 2003). While there is much truth to this argument it is also important not to condone the treatment of non-whites under apartheid after 1948 when millions of South African citizens would come under harsh treatment by the South African state merely because of their physical appearance and culture.

The fear of being swamped by the preponderance of Africans in Southern Africa dates from contact between the two peoples in what is now the Eastern Cape. As the historian Willem de Klerk (1975, p. 26) asks about Afrikaner ideology, "To what extent [did] the statement of such fundamental human rights, protected and sanctioned by divine Authority, [constitute] the first formulation of a secular faith [and radical Afrikaner racial politics]?”

**Intimate Administration and the Red Blanket People**

In racial terms, South Africa evolved as part of the British Empire. Imperialism as a set of attitudes began to develop almost from the beginning of British contact with Bantu speakers and especially the Xhosa. In 1847, a colonial officer, Sir Harry Smith, who later served as Governor of the Cape, "seized the opportunities of the British Empire...to satisfy an infatuation with the romance of personal kingship in isolation from close vigilance and interference" (Mostert 1992, p. 762). In his arrogance, Smith demanded to be addressed as "Inkosi Inkhulu," or Great Chief, a pattern that would be passed down later to South African rulers until the early 1980s.

 Sir Harry Smith took it as his special task to break the power of the chiefs. In order to demonstrate his power over Xhosa society, “Smith used to make black leaders kiss his feet as a mark of respect. The Amakhosi [chiefs],” Holland (1990, p. 17) writes, “...were outraged that white men thought themselves superiour and viewed the Xhosas as savages.”

Many Xhosa in the early nineteenth century resented the "dictatorial manners" of the British and memories lasted a long time on this incident. According to No Ta Tsumbana in 1990, a then 78- year-old cousin of Nelson Mandela, an image of Xhosa chiefs kissing Smith's feet was passed on to the future South African President by his grandfather (Holland 1990). Among others, the Cape authorities had deposed Mandela's father (a local chief) for "insubordination" and a lack of respect for authority (Ottaway 1993).

The "bush" bureaucrat, throughout British Africa, distinguished between "traditional Natives" who maintained their historical customs and dress and urbanized Africans who adopted European customs. For many Europeans in Africa, assimilation ruined the "native." Elspeth Huxley (1950, p. 164) spoke for many when she wrote disparagingly that educated Africans had "...a need to imitate European manners and master western techniques in every way.… [They had a] ridiculous insistence on following the English curriculum slavishly as if it was a sort of magic." As the author Anthony Trollope (1987, p. 8) put it:

The friend of the aborigines...seems to me to ignore the fact--a fact that presents itself to my eyes--that the white man has to be master and the black man servant, and that the best friendship will be shown to the black man by seeing that the terms on which the master and servant shall be brought together are just. After that...the more we do to promote the working of the coloured man, the more successful we are in bringing him into harness, the better for himself and for the colony at large. A little garden, a wretched hut, and a great many hymns do not bring the man any nearer to civilization. Work alone will civilize him.

To many a Native Commissioner, liberalism was the true enemy. In his 1937 study of racial attributes in South Africa, MacCrone (p. 281) notes:

The resentment felt against those who advocate a more liberal policy toward the native...is partly a reflection of the frontier mentality that regards any interference of such a kind as an act of hostility...it is still considered by many that to describe a man as a negrophilist is to have effectively disposed, not only of him, but of his views as well.

To many Europeans in the nineteenth century, cultural differences were absolute. Rulers and ruled must be separated from each other even in the 13 percent of South Africa that had been “reserved” for Africans. Those who administered in the African reserves should not identify too closely with those they administered. In the African reserves the government established segregated urban centers such as Umtata, where white Magistrates, traders and missionaries could live in separate autonomous enclaves within the reserve areas (Davenport 1997b). A. G. McLoughlin (1936, p. 88) warned, "The successful Native administrator need not necessarily be a negrophilist in the Exeter Hall sense of the word." Floyd (1954, p. 195) went further:

These people [Africans] are still a "child race" and their minds, judged by European standards, are immature. Even educated and so-called advanced Natives are strikingly childlike. Their background is that of a nomad people, who knew no settled country or abode for any length of time.

To the district officer in the Eastern Cape, all Natives fit into two categories, "school” people and "red blanket” people. "School men," as opposed to "red men," attended schools and "took their place in the European scheme of things" (Welsh 1999, p. 292). Red blanket people represented the un-educated traditional rural dweller in the Transkei (Roux 1964). They were red because they covered their whole body, including their hair and their cloaks, with ochre clay. To the colonial administrator, the tribal authority was organic and "the tribal unit originate[d]...by continual biological and spiritual cohesion around an inner core” (Tomlinson 1955, p. 175). For many administrators, the red blanket people represented the native at his best. School people, on the other hand, represented assimilated Africans, a group held suspect by many whites. McLoughlin (1936, p. 88) makes this distinction:

The red native (as often as not a better man socially, morally, and a better citizen than some inferior example of a class that prides itself on superior attainments--as often as not only a matter of dress and mock piety), is the backbone of native society: he and his people under good leadership are as capable of progress as any other section.

**Nineteenth Century Liberalism and the Policy of Identity**

Much of nineteenth century British colonial policy in South Africa was intended to placate the ever-increasing demands of self-defined liberal missionaries, cloaking their Victorian social change policy in religion. The Victorian mission saw as an ideal nineteenth century Victorian England, which should serve as the model of a civilized society for Asia and Africa. Imperial historians prior to World War II often ascribed philanthropic motives to British colonialists in the nineteenth century and these historians saw colonial administrators, in the nineteenth century Exeter Hall[[4]](#footnote-4) tradition, trying to protect the African population from settler greed and avarice (De Kiewiet 1937).

The Exeter Hall liberals of the Aborigines Protection Society, the Society for the Extinction of the Slave Trade and for the Civilization of Africa, both challenged the customary traditions of slavery in the Cape and would lay the foundations for segregation policies that would define South Africa by the beginning of the twentieth century. It is also certainly true that nineteenth century missionary schooling provided the "oppressed" with the skills "to put forward a refined political argument in English” (Krog 1998, p. 46).

By mid-nineteenth century, some Xhosa leaders began a process that produced a new class of Africans who took on English names, adopted western practice, and wore imported clothes. “The Methodist influence," in particular, is said to have "made for...stability" within the urban black community (Krog 1998, p. 145). This new African elite were "Christian, articulate, model Victorian gentlemen in their conservatism, respectability, and sobriety, but alive to the responsibility that had devolved upon them" (Mostert 1992, p. 1257). They bought land and adopted British middle-class values of social and political justice (Thompson 1995). Around the turn of the century, a small group of these African elites had developed, forged in part by the colonial order and missionary activism.

Christianity brought literacy and education to the Eastern Cape. As a result, Xhosa society quickly produced well-educated elites who, in large part, inherited the political kingdom in South Africa (Johnson 2004). A Victorian Christian liberal (reflecting “small government” economic and political values) ideal survived until well into the twentieth century among both white liberals and educated Africans. More than any other colonial official, it was Sir George Grey who defined his liberal policy as that of an assimilation embedded in the Victorian ideal in South Africa.

Christian, and in particular Methodist, beliefs contributed to the "emergence of an assured and cultivated elite" in South Africa (Welsh 1999, p. xxii). These beliefs were mediated by a social order that was largely stable and contained. In the evolving nineteenth century traditional model of democracy, (multiple political parties and pluralist interest groups) participation was “essentially discursive: everyone should be free to express their views ‘without interruption,’ despite any ‘hierarchy of importance,’…among the speakers. Meetings would end in ‘unanimity’ or consensus or not at all” (Lodge 2006b, p. xi).

Political leaders such as Nelson Mandela reflected an Anglo-Methodism and a classically liberal education (Lodge 2003). At the same time, Mandela retained an admiration of the organization and structure of traditional African society and the ascription process of kinship. Mandela, brought up as a ward of a royal regent, is portrayed as having aristocratic or even royal status, but, according to Tom Lodge (2006b), is sincere in his belief in liberal institutions. His political style was defined by a convention of good manners, mutual respect, and conversational exchanges intersecting with a rhetoric of discourse.Lodge describes Mandela as being “culturally syncretic” (Lodge 2006b, p. 79).

**Sir George Grey and the Policy of Identity**

The Cape's "liberalism" is often linked to Sir George Grey's policies. His policy of identity was based on the denial and negation of indigenous political and judicial institutions and culture. In theory at least, the policy accepted equality for all of those who shared a common European culture (Kotze 1969). The price to be paid for assimilation was the loss of Xhosa and eventually all African culture. There would be no recognition of customary law among Africans. This meant, in effect, the total disregard and eventually the destruction of indigenous local institutions and values.

Sir George Grey arrived in Cape Town as Governor General and High Commissioner in 1854. Grey viewed the resolution of conflicts between the Cape settlers and the African population as part of a common political problem. In 1855, he spoke to the Cape Parliament "about the need for a common southern African native policy, centrally controlled" (Welsh 1999, p. 124). Of all the problems he had to handle, "that of the eastern frontier, which he saw as a continuous line from the mouth of the Kei River to the upper Caledon valley, was the one which exercised him most"(Welsh 1999, p. 124).

Grey appointed a Chief Native Commissioner and three Deputy Native Commissioners to administer the territory between the Kei and the Keiskama Rivers in the Eastern Cape. The area came to be known as the border region of South Africa because it bordered two homelands, the Ciskei and the Transkei. It contained the cities of East London, Grahams Town and King Williams Town.

The agenda of Grey’s appointed British Magistrates was to transform Xhosa society as part of a civilizing mission. As did many British colonial administrators, Grey saw in African culture "the last manifestation of cultures that were worthless. The imposition of English law upon the indigenes was the first requirement to civilize...." (Welsh 1999, p. 166).

 The Grey Commissioners were given a mandate to bring traditional authorities under their supervision and control. Chiefs were stripped of their traditional authority. They were to be paid annual salaries and became dependent upon the colonial government. In effect, this cultural imperialism amounted to a total “disparagement and disregard of the indigenous judicial and political institutions" of the Xhosa people (Kotze 1970). Under this policy of identity, "[t]he ideal of the period," according to McLoughlin (1936, p. 72), "was the rapid assimilation of the Native by conversion into civilized members of the Empire.”

Grey firmly believed in the creation of a multi-racial society in South Africa based upon eventual equal rights for all (Welsh 1971). And yet, both segregation and separate development have their origins in Cape policy. "The mere fact," as Kotze (1970, p. 79) points out, "that an Eastern frontier problem existed in the Cape Colony is proof that initially, a policy of territorial segregation was followed in this Colony too.” Grey's annexation policy and his colonization plans should be seen in conjunction with other aspects of his policy. An increase in the European population of the Eastern Cape, he felt, would result in an increase in African employment. A paid labor system was to be the key to the British “civilizing agency” in the Eastern Cape.

Grey announced his policy of identity, based on the missionary goal of African assimilation of western religious and social values to replace African language and custom, as part of his consolidation of British rule over the Transkei and the Ciskei. Under Grey's policy of identity, relationships in the British-governed Cape were based on the assumption that "the interests of blacks in the Eastern Cape should be made the same as those of Whites” (Kotze 1970, p. 28). There were several political components to Grey's policy of identity. These included the formal annexation of African areas, the curtailment of the judicial authority of chiefs, direct magisterial control over reserve areas by a European district officer, and the movement towards an over-arching goal of "civilizing" the African population of South Africa through a pattern of taxation to stimulate employment.

As annexations occurred in the mid-nineteenth century, it was thought possible to assimilate the Xhosa and make them "civilized" citizens of the British Empire. This colonial belief “was reinforced by constant evidence of colonial achievement in restoring peace among warring peoples, exorcising corruption, [and] instituting sound administration” (Kruger 1959, p. 22). It was thought that under the guidance of the missionaries and through the rule of British law, Africans would quickly drop their cultural values and customs and would become "Black White men" (Muller 1924, p. 6).

Throughout the nineteenth century, the missionary community influenced colonial policy in the Eastern Cape. Such influence continued in South Africa and would characterize the overall scramble for Africa at the end of the century. British policy, supported by mid-Victorian, liberal missionaries in the Cape, had been to promote assimilation of both Afrikaners and the Bantu-speaking peoples through a common English medium education and African conversion to the Christian religion.

Assimilated blacks could be, and some were, integrated into Cape society. British administrators in the Eastern Cape during this period practiced what might be called a "form of cultural imperialism" as they promoted assimilation (Dubow 1987, p. 74). Among Africans in the late nineteenth century, the use of words such as "progress" and "improvement" suggested a Victorian visionof a modernizing world order (Marks 1986).

In both the Western and Eastern Cape, Grey’s administrative policy was similar to the policy of assimilation practiced by the French and Portuguese in their colonies and was aimed at the disintegration of African culture in the Eastern Cape. Conversion to Christianity led to the emergence of an influential, assured, and confident African elite by the end of the century. By 1900, indigenous traditional elites who had not resisted colonial rule were incorporated into virtual protectorate status by the British and Cape governments.

**From Assimilation to Segregation**

In the early nineteenth century, the London Missionary Society sent a number of "radical" missionaries to South Africa (Thompson 1995). The liberal missionaries, J.T. van der Kamp and Dr. John Philip, both regarded the Khoi and the Cape Coloureds as free men whom they pledged to defend. Both were also absolute segregationists who believed that only separation would allow for the protection of indigenous peoples from the sins and the moral and cultural destruction inherent in urban life (Marquard 1968). The new “liberalism” of segregation, that had its origins in the ideas of Philip and Van der Kamp, would strengthen and deepen throughout the nineteenth and into the twentieth century. The "protection" they defined became the basis for South African social divisions throughout the twentieth century.

By the 1890s, thinking about the Eastern Cape in London and Cape Town had changed greatly. No longer was there an assumption that Africans could have identical interests to those of Europeans. At the end of the nineteenth century, missionaries and many administrators in the Eastern Cape became "ever more skeptical of the potential for success of the Victorian civilizing mission" and promoted the idea of trusteeship as a permanent form of administration of the Xhosa-speaking peoples (Dubow 1987, p. 79).

 Late nineteenth century politicians such as Cecil Rhodes rejected assimilation and the corollary that Europeans and Africans could live together in order to create a multi-cultural society in the Cape. Segregation would define social and legal relationships. An assumption of cultural segregation had settled into the social landscape of the Cape.

Trusteeship defined a subordinate relationship between a "primitive" community and the colonial power, in which the latter "protected" the subordinate community, militarily and politically, from its regional enemies and European rivals. To those advocating trusteeship, there would be no equality between Africans and Europeans. Both politicians and administrators, in dropping the integrationist approach of the earlier period, began to treat African traditional law as a permanent entity (Welsh 1971).

It was British settlers in the Eastern Cape, Natal, and near the mineral mines who defined segregation in South Africa in its modern sense and contributed to the evolution of segregation towards apartheid. By the end of the nineteenth century, both Afrikaner and British settlers had adopted a Victorian morality and taste in the Cape that defined attitudes towards culture and language (Crapanzano 1985). Both were cultural chauvinists who looked down upon Khoisian, San, and Bantu speakers as heathen savages (Giliomee 1979c).

Many British intellectuals took up segregation as a policy position in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. By the time of Union in 1910, both missionaries and administrators had rejected assimilation and integration. South African liberals instead of promoting assimilation had taken to advocate separation as a way of "protecting" Africans from a corrupting white society and the evils of big city life. Segregation, for the liberal, was related to images of the "noble savage" and stereotypes related to it (Frankel 1999, p. 95).

**Social Engineering and Trusteeship**

**The Stallard Commission and Segregation**

Following the Anglo-Boer War, after a nine-year inter-regnum under direct British rule, South Africa was united in 1910 as the Union of South Africa with a population of just over twelve million people. Under the leadership of Louis Botha (and after his death in 1919, Prime Minister Jan Christian Smuts), South Africa began to practice protectionism and segregation throughout the country. Reserve land, less than 10 percent of the whole, was allocated to the African majority and the country’s mining, agricultural, and industrial sectors all began to develop. Table 2.1, while widely underestimating the population gives some sense of the racial distribution at the time the Union of South Africa was created. A majority of Africans lived in the rural areas (2,420,000) while (2,053,000 lived on white farms and 1,404,000 lived in urban area (Johnson 2004, pp. 113-114).

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| **Table 2.1**The 1911 population of South Africa(Rounded Off)Africans 4,000,000Whites 1,200,000Coloured 770,000Indians 220,000Total: 6,000.000Note: These 1911 figures are significantly below the later reported estimates which suggest a figure of closer to 12 million South Africans in the Cape Province. |

At the end of the First World War, mining interests determined that white mine workers in the Rand were too expensive and they began to hire black African South Africans to do unskilled jobs underground using work patterns similar to those adopted in Kimberly in the 1880s. White labor unions were incensed and went out on strike, one of the most disruptive and violent in South Africa’s history. The Smuts government, in response to the 1922 mining disturbances, appointed a commission to examine African migration to the cities. The commission was headed by Col. C.F. Stallard. Stallard was an English-speaking South African, an ardent segregationist and the head of the pro-empire Dominion Party.

One of the approaches to government inherited from the colonial period was the tendency to address important political issues, and at the same time postpone difficult decisions, through the establishment commissions and/or committees of inquiry controlled by representatives of the dominant political party or ethnic group (Seegers 1994). The Stallard Commission, and later commissions appointed both by the United Party and later the Nationalists, were examples of this tactic.

The Stallard Commission Report (1923) further moved the South African government toward contemporary forms of trusteeship and bureaucratic control over black South Africans (Stadler 1987). As a result of the Stallard Commission, "government policy increasingly moved away from any superficial observance of Victorian philanthropy and assimilation. Policy now became one of the growing exclusion of Africans from citizenship rights…" (Rich 1988, p. 287).

Stallard was concerned with the protection of white privilege and unambiguously defined the city as a whites-only structure. To Stallard, the urban areas "...were the white man's creation, and... Africans had a right to be there only in so far as they were ministering to the white man's needs” (Davenport 1997b, p. 340). Stallardism projected a very much prescribed role for Africans in South Africa's cities. According to the Stallard Commission (See Davenport 1997b), Underlying urban segregation policies was a goal of reducing the power of Africans in the urban areas by making it difficult for him to gain a stake in the city or town or, indeed, in his own urban location. The Stallard Commission made clear that a person of property could not be denied the municipal vote.

Stallard prescribed a theory of social management that presaged the apartheid system of bureaucratic control over black South Africans. Africans would exercise whatever rights they had in the reserves. In urban South Africa, blacks would be the objects of administration. In each city and town, Stallard recommended the establishment of municipal departments solely for the administration of native affairs with a vague advisory role for native advisory boards. The long-term effect of the Stallard report was that African rights became defined in such a way as to exclude membership in a common civil society, creating an authoritarian overlay to what would be a kind of social anarchy below.

The 1923 Natives’ Urban Areas Act followed from Stallard and laid the foundation for strict influx control (the movement of Africans into and out of the urban areas) twenty-five years later after World War II (Stadler 1987). This act defined all aspects of township administration until the early 1970s creation of Bantu Administration Boards (Davenport 1997b; Desmond 1971). The Act allowed for a small, segregated, permanent African settlement in cities and towns (Lewsen 1988a). After the passage of the 1923 Act, city councils throughout the country established separate departments to administer black townships. Each department employed a location Superintendent (or in the larger cities a Manager) of Native Affairs who ruled their locations with a partly elected urban advisory councils. These men, as would be the case with subsequent generations of urban administrators, had frequently served in the police or in the rural administration. The 1923 Act provided a foundation for all future government policy since, as Meredith (1988, p. 37) notes:

[a]s far as possible, [natives] were to be kept in segregated “locations” administered and financed by a separate system of local government. To ensure this policy worked, the Act provided for “influx controls” regulating the entry of Africans into urban areas through greater use of the pass system.

The "hostility clause" of the 1923 Act, which provided that black militants immediately be transported to the reserve areas, ostensibly was directed against "agitators who sought to create feelings of hostility between black and white…” (Roux 1964, p. 175). After 1923, the major components of urban apartheid, forced removals, influx control, and temporary "matchbox" housing, all came into place (Swilling 1988, p. 184).

Urban Africans, from the 1920s on, encountered a maze of regulations relating to movement, particularly in the urban areas. Violation of the Natives’ Urban Areas Act carried the threat of repatriation to the countryside or imprisonment. By the beginning of World War II, there were at least seven different pass documents that might be needed for Africans to travel in the urban areas of South Africa. This included a "traveling pass," which "required permission from rural magistrates and district commissioners before the railways would issue a ticket to the urban areas" (Walshe 1987, p. 311). And apartheid would only begin after the National Party victory in 1948.

Trusteeship and segregation were closely identified with the United Party of J.B.M Hertzog and Jan Smuts between 1934 and 1939. The United Party coalition drew five defensive battle lines against urban African pressure: authoritarian rule under the Native Administration Act of 1927, territorial segregation under the 1936 Native Trust and Land Act, the Riotous Assemblies Act of 1930 as a security net, communal representation under the 1936 Representation Act, and urban segregation with influx control under the 1937 Native Laws Amendment Act (Davenport 1997b). Finally, the 1943 Lansdowne Commission defined trusteeship as the method to be used to preserve and develop the existing economic and social structure of Africans living in the reserves where traditional structures could be sheltered and developed.

**The Fagan Report and the Last Gasp of Liberalism**

“White South Africans are born paternal” is a comment of a South African acadmic that has developed a great deal of traction among the country’s intelligentsia (Picard, Research Diary, August 2, 1990). The concept of liberal segregation, as it developed in South Africa prior to 1948, was one of paternalism. Pragmatism, patience, and flexibility were others. Liberal segregation depended to a strong degree on the acquiescence and collaboration of English-speaking commerce and business, a moderate African leadership, and largely Afrikaans-speaking South African political leaders.

There was clearly a strong paternalistic element to the theory in that liberal segregation “seemed to be the means to establish separate African territorial areas which could divert the energies of aspirant African politicians away from the towns and cities of 'white' South Africa" (Rich 1988, p. 283). To a minority of liberals, however, trusteeship began to lose its credibility during the inter-war years and, by the late 1930s, the liberal position within the United Party had shifted back towards assimilation. Where in earlier years to be a segregationist was to be "a liberal, a negrophilist and a humanitarian, the reverse was now true" (Giliomee & Schlemmer 1989, p 20).

Integration began to come back into fashion among some liberals just prior to World War as critics of trusteeship began to posit what was called an "adaptionist approach," suggesting, in paternal fashion, that cultural contact and integration were necessary to transform African culture through exposure to the outside world. Westernization and modernization would occur as a result of increased integration with European society. Liberal thinkers buttressed this concept of adaptation with academic references to anthropological concepts of African cultural cohesion and evolution.

The liberal author, Alan Paton, and the Anglican priest, Father Trevor Huddleston, best represented this liberalism in the 1940s and 1950s (Kanifer 1993). Liberal values were embedded in the non-racial Liberal Party, founded and led by Paton, that included a number of militants, including a small group that later opted for violent opposition to the regime. Liberal academics advocating adaptation included Lucy Mair, Monica Hunter, and Ellen Hellman (Rich 1984). These individuals, and a number of other liberal intellectuals in the newly formed South African Institute of Race Relations and in the liberal wing of the United Party, moved cautiously towards an integrationist approach to the “native problem”. These neo-assimilationists became the primary antagonists of the new National Party ideology during and after World War II.

What passed for liberalism in South Africa was fundamentally conservative in a non-ideological sense. Particularly after 1948, fear of the National Party government led liberals to strongly warn African political leaders to be cautious. The liberal argument was that though blacks had legitimate grievances, to articulate them too forcefully would antagonize white South Africans and aggravate the racial divisions in the country. As Edward Roux (1964, p. 74) put it as early as 1948, “It was the old story of liberalism in South Africa. The Natives must not put forward extreme demands: this would simply play into the hands of the reactionaries.”

The post-war period in South Africa might be labeled the "tale of two reports," the Fagan Report vs. Sauer Report. The National Party response to Fagan was authored by Paul Sauer, who would serve as a Minister in the first National Party cabinet (Sauer will be discussed in chapter three). In August of 1946, Smuts appointed a Commission on Native Laws chaired by Justice H.A. Fagan to examine the future of urban Africans. The purpose of the document was to make policy recommendations on African urbanization. Judge Fagan, a Smuts ally, had become Minister of Native Administration in 1939. The Fagan Commission report, published on the eve of the 1948 elections, was the most liberal government document ever printed in South Africa to that time (Evans 1997). Fagan's views came to define a "liberal" anti-apartheid form of segregation and dominated the United Party and its successors until well into the 1970s.

As the source of liberal thought throughout the 56 years of National Party rule, the Fagan Commission remained important. The Commission, which the United Party and Prime Minister Smuts ultimately accepted, (just prior to their electoral defeat) called for the stabilization of African labor in urban areas. Black South Africans, according to the report, should be accepted as a permanent part of the urban population. The Commission report "had poured cold water on the view that urban Africans were in any sense temporary visitors" to the urban areas (Welsh 1994b, p. 142).

The Fagan Commission recommended a system of urban influx regulation, based upon Section 10 of the Natives Urban Stabilization Act of 1945 and on a Union‑wide system of labor bureaus and labor registration. Regulation would replace influx control and, in order to stabilize urban black labor, workers were to be allowed to bring their families with them. Moderate African political leaders, within the Native Representative Council (discussed in chapter three) had pushed very hard for this change. The Fagan Commission did not recommend that the system of migrant labor be legislated out of existence or stopped by administrative decree, however, nor could the stabilization of labor be forced on employers (Davenport 1997b). Fagan left open the possibility of future racially mixed settlements (Stadler 1987).

Though the defeat of the United Party by the Nationalists led to the rejection of the Fagan Report and its proposals, the document has a contemporary ring to it. The report, which was published in March of 1948, contained a great deal that was acceptable to moderate black public opinion at the time and Fagan's recommendations were similar to the suggestions made by the advisory Native Representative Council. The rejection of the Fagan Report, Davenport (1997b, p. 245) notes, represented a turning point in the history of South Africa.

[The Report] represented the most considered view of which the combined thinking of the Smuts ministry, prodded by the Natives' Representatives, were capable under conditions of extreme political stress. Published two years earlier, in time to enable the Government to put some of its ideas into practice, there was an outside chance that it might have changed the direction of South African policy; but appearing so near the end of the Government's term, with none of its recommendations yet tested in practice or in public debate, it offered the electorate a liberal aspiration rather than a policy....

Jan Smuts's protegé, the liberal J.C. Hofmeyer, who had promoted the Fagan Report, has often been identified with the liberal wing of the United Party. Many liberals within and even outside of the United Party have long felt that with his leadership apartheid could have been avoided. The death of Hofmeyer, the United Party defeat in the 1948 elections, and the assumption of power by the National Party ended this liberal tendency within the United Party and closed the book on liberalism in South Africa for another 40 years.

**The National Party Challenge**

A group of Afrikaner exclusivists created a nationalist party in 1915. Many Afrikaners saw the then South African Party, led by Louis Botha and Jan Smuts, as too pro-British and too moderate on race relations. The National Party, led by J.B.M. Herzog, first came to power in 1924 and merged again with the South African Party in 1934 to be named the United Party.

A group of Nationalists again split from the United Party at the beginning of World War II to protest the entry of South Africa on the side of Great Britain. The latter group, led by D.F. Malan, called themselves the “purified” National Party and built themselves into a formidable political force among white voters during the war years. As we will see this “reconstituted” National Party came to power again in 1948, championing a right-wing ideology that they called, “apartheid.”

The National Party in 1948 fought the election on the basis of the slogan, “Die kaffer op sy plek en die koelie uit die land,” or “the Kaffir in his place and the Coolie out of the country” (Drury 1968, p. 305; Van Onselen 1990). It worked. After the 1948 elections, a new ideology, apartheid, replaced the trusteeship philosophy of the United Party. After coming to power, the new National Party Government quickly rejected the Fagan Report and its recommendations for correcting the evils of the migrant labor system and the reform of the pass laws.

In opposition, the United Party gradually abandoned its ideas of trusteeship, which had characterized it as an Empire Party, and elements within the party came to advocate a policy of assimilation and common citizenship for all “civilized” South Africans (Benson 1966). However, liberal whites in the United and, later, Progressive Parties remained comfortable with the Fagan Commission conclusions well into the 1980s. For the majority of whites, however, apartheid would come to define the South African institutional state almost to the end of National Party rule in the 1980s.

**The Origins of Social and Economic Segregation**

**and an International Context of Liberalism**

**Liberal Debates and the Special Issue of Land Segregation**

On May 31, 1910, the British colonial government created the Union of South Africa, made up of the Cape, Natal, the Orange Free State, and the Transvaal. It was founded as the fourth British self-governing Dominion after Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. The Dominions came to be defined as independent following the Statute of Westminster. Under the Union, only whites enjoyed the full franchise with non-whites given limited voting rights only in the Cape.

From the beginning, in the Union, individual land tenure was denied, for example, to blacks in the Orange Free State (Davenport 1997b). Urban land was rented from city or town authorities. Land segregation, which had its origins in British policy, meant that rural Africans at the time of Union "had long since lost faith in the capacity of the British Empire to force the Boers to improve the lot of blacks on white farms...." (Davenport 1997b, p. 55). That said, by the time of Union in 1910, South Africa had been segregated for over 200 years.

European conquest in the Cape was followed by the introduction of European title over land in the conquered areas. In the Eastern Cape, some land alienation occurred among the "detribalized" Mfengu and the Griqua (related to the Xhosa people). The latter received freehold and quit-rent title, which is a rent paid in lieu of feudal (share cropper) services. Security of title, even between these two peoples, was precarious. Outside of the Eastern Cape, secure land titles remained the white man's privilege. Land in the Reserve areas or on Crown land remained communal.

African residents in South Africa's cities, if they could not be controlled in terms of behavior and morals, had to be kept to their own areas so that social decay did not destroy the fabric of South African society. Segregation was supposed to protect whites from disease and immorality. The 1905 Lagden Commission proposed residential and territorial separation of blacks and whites. Urban blacks would live in “locations” on the fringes of cities and towns (Mostert 1992).

Lagden recommended the complete separation of Africans from whites throughout the country (Davenport 1991). In the Commission's view land was to be "demarcated into black and white areas 'with a view to finality'" (Davenport 1997b, p. 332). According to the Commission, "The main recommendation of the report was that whites and blacks should be kept separate in politics and in land occupation and ownership on a permanent basis" (Meredith 1988, p. 34).

Lagden called for the coordination of all African policy based on the segregation of land between Africans and whites (Welsh 1999). Forty years of Union government only partly achieved this goal by 1948. The Commission made a number of proposals for the separation of blacks and whites, politically and territorially, while leaving the substance of political power in the hands of the white legislature. The early Native Administration Bills tried to separate African from European land administration. They became “the kernel of what later became the fully-fledged system of apartheid" (Welsh 1999, p. 385).

Prior to 1913, reserved lands provided Africans with a base for economic and political life. A first step in the movement towards what would later be known as apartheid occurred in 1913, when a definition of land rights by race was embedded in the Land Act of that year. The Land Act of 1913 proscribed Africans from acquiring land outside of the "scheduled areas" of what came to be known as the Native Reserves.

The purpose of the 1913 Land Act was to rid South Africa of African ownership, to provide a basis for the elimination of tenant farming, and to limit African subsistence farming to the reserves. The Act eliminated black farmers as a competitive economic force against whites. Initially, however, the 1913 Land Act had little impact on African settlement patterns and little changed administratively in the reserves during the first fifteen years of Union government. South African land policy from 1913 had as its goal the prohibition of "white landlords and black tenants from farming-on-the-halves or sharecropping in regions where agricultural producers were said to be in the greatest need of wage labour" (Jeppe 1980, p. 87).

Traditional, social, and political structures among Africans began to break down in the urban areas of South Africa after World War I. Community development activities in the urban areas of the city included hospitality groups, whose function was to distribute food and drink at feasts. These groups acted as a tool for getting things done by cutting across location and lineage. Crosscutting cleavages between and among ethnic groups began to develop. These changes threatened the cultural assumptions of liberal intellectuals. Liberals developed an ideological link between modernization, "sanitation, and morality [which was] manifested in calls for slum clearance and new [segregated] locations..." (Hammond-Tooke 195, p. 38). Segregated land use was the answer for many intellectuals.

Outside the Cape, an important component of the power of traditional authorities was control over the allocation of traditional land. This control was based on the idea that the chief administered traditional law on behalf of the tribe. Land control and allocation were important in both authority and status terms for traditional leaders. When the power of chiefs was limited after the 1927 Native Administration Act, the power to allocate land was the sole area of political autonomy held by chiefs and separate from the magisterial controlled native administration system (Campton 1977).

The land laws of 1913 and 1936 closed off options for access to land because Africans had no right to own land in South Africa outside of the reserves. In the 1930s and 1940s, agriculture began to be capitalized and many blacks were proletarianized, a fact which distinguished South Africa from the peasant economies of Africa to the north. After the enlargement of the scheduled areas in 1936, just over 13 percent of the total land area of South Africa was designated for eventual incorporation in the reserve areas, an area never entirely utilized during the apartheid period. In the Tswana-speaking areas, for example, only a portion of black areas that were allocated to Setswana speakers (in terms of the South African Bantu Trust and Land Act of 1913). Few Trust Lands, were ever bought by tribal groups or individuals. As of 1990, this modest goal established in 1913, had not been met and certain "scheduled" lands remained in European after non-racial government had been achieved (Lessons 1998).

Stories of the ridiculousness that flowed out of post-Lagden apartheid practices abound (Welsh 1999). In one incident, a Mr. Herman Otto [owner of a farm at Hartebeespan] had permitted his servant to celebrate the wedding of his servant’s daughter on his property. The father therefore killed a couple of oxes, and his invited friends helped in cooking. However, despite getting permission the result was “A tragedy! We were all arrested through the permission of the magistrate of Maquassi.… We were taken in front of the magistrate, and no question was asked to anyone about us about her or his guilty. 7 days [in jail] 10 shillings was the fine.…” (Van Onselen 1990, p. 227). A subsequent investigation confirmed the story (Van Olselen 1990, p. 228)

Though the host had received permission from the landlord and the manager of the nearby diffings [farm] to hold a "wedding feast," and though he had the necessary permit to brew beer [the police] ... had raided because the document had not been "ratified" by the police and some of those at the gathering had been guilty of defaulting on tax payments, or of being without appropriate passes. Those arrested…appeared before the Native Commissioner on a range of charges.

**The Economic Legacy of Segregation**

To understand the South African economy is to be aware that its "roots lie in the central assumption on which colonialism and imperialism were based: the entitlement of a settler to extract and exploit resources" (“Lessons for a Corrupt” 1998, p. 21). British colonialism introduced the "economic muscle and bureaucratic sophistication of an advanced capitalist country...and helped to bequeath a powerful state structure" (Beinart 1994, p. 3). Evidence from recent historians suggests that economic motives strongly influenced the decisions of both colonial administrators and settlers.

British administrators and both British and Boer settlers saw a need to create a cheap labor pool for settler agriculture, mining and commerce. Racial policy followed from the need to create this labor pool and, in order to do so, the colonial regime had to destroy the self-sufficient agricultural communities of the Transkei, the Northern Territories, and Natal. Such things as the enforcement of vagrancy laws, the imposition of service contracts, taxation, and the direct authoritarian control of the colonial government in the Cape and Natal were all directed at securing an adequate supply of wage labor (Cope 1989).

There was surprising continuity over labor policy from the beginning of the British period through the last decade under apartheid (c.1980-1990). In October of 1854, the MacFarlane Commission (Report 1854) had made recommendations on the establishment of an "abundant and continuous supply of Kaffir labor for wages" (Kotze 1970, p. 53). According to Swilling & Boya (1995, pp. 171-172) historically,

[t]he apartheid city was founded on raw mineral extraction. This commenced on a large scale in the late 19th century with the discovery of massive deposits of diamonds and gold in the hinterland and of equally massive amounts of coal to fuel South Africa's industrial revolution. The notion that modernization was dependent on the exploitation of natural resources underpinned the values that have since determined the way the urban infrastructure has been built up

The levying of taxes in 1879 was directed towards forcing rural Africans into the labor market. Both partition and the creation of a supply of rural workers would long be the cornerstone of the South African apartheid system. By the end of the nineteenth century, Bundy (1972, p. 369) writes:

black farmers were producing more maize than white farmers, which was why they did not want to work on white farms, or in the mines. In the Eastern Cape, by the mid-nineteenth century a moderately prosperous African peasantry had developed from farming as a result of individual tenure conditions.

By the beginning of the twentieth century, however, most African farmers were struggling, both from the pressure of squatters on their land, as well as by the regulations that limited African economic activity. Administrators took steps to discourage further individualization of land tenure. This decision led to the destruction of the self-sufficient agricultural communities of the Eastern Cape. The Glen Grey Act of 1894 and the Land Act of 1913 eventually drove Africans off the fields they had plowed. As a result, black farmers “were turned into a reservoir of cheap labor for business” (Krog 1998, p. 315).

The image in the rural areas of South Africa continued to be that of deprivation and poverty. To many whites, black South Africa was a reservoir of squalor and crime. An early government commission described the African reserve areas as follows: "A Native area," the Commission reported in words equally descriptive today (Butler, Rotberg and Adams 1977, p. 11),

can be distinguished at sight, by its bareness.… Two areas with fertile valleys containing great depth of soil... show some of the worst donga erosion in the Union.… In the rest of the Union the same causes are at work... and they will inevitably produce the same effects in the near future - denudation, donga erosion [washed out gullies], deleterious plant succession, destruction of woods, drying of springs, robbing the soil of its productive properties, in short the creation of desert conditions.

The economic context of the land segregation in South Africa is important. The entire system influenced the administrative culture of the segregated African reserves. The function of these areas, was to act as a labor reserve for the mines, industry, and commercial agriculture. According to the Lansdowne Commission on Mine Wages in 1943 (Solvo 1976, p. 136), the reserve system

aims at the preservation of the economic and social structure of the native people in the native areas where that structure can be sheltered and developed.… The ability of the mines to maintain their native labor force by means of tribal natives from the Reserves at rates of pay which are adequate for this migratory class of native but inadequate for the detribalized native is a fundamental factor in the economy of the gold mining industry.

**A History of Cheap Labor**

The "poor white problem" in South Africa cast a shadow over South African politics and race relationships for most of the twentieth century. The Afrikaner farming system in South Africa never completely recovered from the devastation of the Anglo-Boer War. In the decade after Union, fewer and fewer young people could be absorbed into agriculture. By the 1920s, young Afrikaner whites began to leave the rural areas for South Africa's cities and towns in search of jobs. With little stake in the private sector, they, and their children in turn, came "...one by one to stand in the long queues of people desperate for jobs in the public service" (Seegers 1994, p. 51).

The immediate origins of the economic conflict between black and white lay with the urbanization process that occurred in the 1920s. This period saw a dramatic increase in the number of poor, unskilled urban whites, from 4,000 in 1921 to 140,000 in 1923. Whites, especially Afrikaners, saw urban blacks as a threat to their economic status. The problem had rural origins. Afrikaners on the platteland, (the high elevation areas of the Western and Northern Transvaal which are generally flat and with few trees), had difficulty in facing the "profound economic change that, by the 1930s, had pitched hundreds of thousands of Afrikaners into an abyss of poverty and degradation" (Meredith 1988, p. 16). Afrikaners were spurred towards an ethnic nationalism, in part because of the humiliation many suffered as they slid into rural poverty. Though the problem of impoverishment had evolved over a long period of time, beginning with the closing of South Africa's frontiers in the late nineteenth century, it reached its peak at the end of World War I.

In the 1920s, as the implications of urban migration became clear, proponents of segregation demanded that blacks be moved out of the towns and cities of the Union. The Prime Minister at the time, General J.B.M. Hertzog, had a deep commitment to a policy of complete separation of the races. The National Party under Hertzog spoke of a "retribalization" of African society, the development of a more uniform pattern of rural reserve policies, and the increased use of traditional leaders. Under Hertzog, and during the Fusion period that brought Jan Smuts back into Government (the South African and National Party came together to create the United Party that governed from 1933-1948), policy makers were influenced by a series of anthropological studies which "...presented the image of a cohesive and unchanging African rural culture" (Worden 1994, p. 78). Officials in the Department of Native Administration began to search for and foster traditional culture.

Competition between whites and Africans for jobs was real. Nationalist politicians, led by General Hertzog, set a goal to oust Africans and Coloureds from their jobs in the urban economy. Africans could, "irrespective of their talents, toil and sweat as labourers in the deep levels of the Witwatersrand gold mines, at the current wage of three shillings a day; or they could wait for jobs to arise in the African reserves, at some indefinite time in the vague future, when 'improved economic development' resulted in sufficient opportunities of employment" (Hepple 1967, p. 32).

The threat of urban blacks and the increase in the number of unskilled white South Africans, mainly Afrikaans-speaking, led to the demand for "civilised labour” practices to exclude blacks from both private sector and public sector employment. The "civilised labour" policy was meant to ensure public sector employment for less skilled Afrikaners. and, through this policy, large numbers of Afrikaners began to enter the lower levels of the civil service in the 1920s. This eventually resulted in the public service becoming an Afrikaner preserve.

Afrikaner racism "flourished in the heat of competition between poor whites and poorer Blacks for homes and jobs in the industrializing cities" (Lewsen 1988, p. 37). The major target of the Nationalist Party during the 1920s and 1930s was the African worker. The goal was to remove Africans from industrial employment and replace them with unemployed Afrikaners. The black worker would be left with only temporary unskilled work in the mines, ousting and replacing foreign blacks (from Southern and Central Africa). Working in the mines was difficult and most white Afrikaners did not want to work in the mines until the world-wide Depression left them no choice. As blacks were replaced by whites in the 1930s, Africans would have to move back to the reserves and hope for employment in some future period of economic development.

Throughout the inter-war period, Nationalist intellectuals portrayed Afrikaners “as a deprived, defeated, oppressed, and exploited people" (Lewsen 1988, p. 31). To solve the problem of white poverty, they argued that cheap black labor would have to be removed from the urban labor market and the power of the state would have to be used to promote a volks kapitalisme "people's capitalism" for Afrikaners (O’Meara 1983, p. 26). There was a great deal of "talk within Nationalist circles about a state take-over of the diamond and gold mines" (Pallister, Stewart & Lepper 1988, p. 57). The state had to provide employment for Afrikaners, a pressure which increased after the beginning of the worldwide depression.

The South African Native Economic Commission (SANEC) report, released in 1932, projected a far-reaching program for the future that incorporated the ideas of more liberal advocates of protective segregation in the 1920s. The Economic Commission concluded that most Africans would have to stay in the reserves, but the reserves would have to be developed and made ecologically, economically, and agriculturally viable. "Development and social modernization," the Commission concluded, "should come from within the 'tribal' system under the chiefs” (Beinart 1994 p. 118). This model of traditionally induced modernization came directly out of British colonial training manuals.

During the Depression in South Africa, the size and function of the bureaucracy increased in both white and black areas. The Department of Native Administration, reflecting the liberal segregation of the day, established a program to provide state aid to African agriculture. The Department of Native Administration proclaimed the "Betterment" program in 1939, which included a villagization program, fencing, livestock culls, and the separation of arable land from grazing (Beinart 1994, p. 129). Land purchased for African occupation was to be planned before it was distributed.

Whites were heavily impacted by the Great Depression. By 1939, the majority of Afrikaners, though they still dominated the farming sector, were living in cities and towns and they worked as miners, skilled laborers, and junior level civil servants. Unemployment was very high. It was in the harsh urban environment that "the poor white found himself on an equal footing with the Black person, both members of competing proletariats, and all the Afrikaner had to assert his superiority was his white skin, his racial status symbol" (Sparks 1990, p. 133).

In spite of attempts by Hertzog to reduce black employment in the urban areas, a two-track labor policy developed in South Africa based on segregationist and, later, apartheid assumptions. Black cheap labor was deemed essential for the developing mining, industrial, and agricultural sectors. Skilled and semi-skilled work was left to whites. By the 1940s, economic considerations complemented liberal theories of capitalism and had become a major factor as urban black South Africans competed for jobs with Afrikaners.

With the end of the Second World War, labor became more costly. The demographics in South Africa were changing. As early as 1959, South African labor economists had become aware that white skilled labor could not keep up with the economic growth in the country. Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, the white skilled labor pool began to shrink. As early as 1979, whites could only produce one in four of every skilled worker needed to staff South African industry. This led to the labor reforms that opened up the economy to black South Africans in the 1980s (Giliomee 2006).

Indeed, domestic migrant labor would continue to be supplemented by labor drawn from the limitrophe (in the watershed of the Limpopo River) countries of the Southern African region. However, outside these specific areas, leaders in the private sector (reluctantly), the state sector, and the white trade unions agreed that the bulk of the black urban populations should be returned to the rural reserves. Hertzog's racially based labor policy came to define black-white relationships and racial policy in South Africa for over 40 years.

**Trusteeship and International Norms**

Twentieth century developments in South Africa illustrate the continuity of racially based bureaucratic rule that ran from the pre-1910 period, through the pre-nationalist period (1910-1948) to the apartheid era itself. Events that occurred in South Africa mirrored international trends in Europe and North America and changing elite values in terms of race, culture, and European Imperialism. In particular, the English-speaking countries, including the United States, all practiced a form of paternalistic segregation and trusteeship. Both the so-called white dominions and the rest of the British Empire were strictly segregated.

South Africa was not always the "polecat of the world," to use former Foreign Minister Pik Botha's famous phrase. At the time of the Boer rebellion, (1899-1901), those “national pariahs [of the apartheid period] possessed the sympathy of the world. Their cause was a popular one among the liberals and humanitarians they despise so deeply now" (Sparks 1990, p. 129). Internationally, from the beginning of Union in 1910, South Africa's segregation policies "were considered respectable...at the time, abroad as well as in South Africa" (Meredith 1988, p. 38). South Africa, before and after Union, fit broadly into the patterns of administrative control of evolving settler colonies within the British Empire and in the United States. As former South African President, F.W. de Klerk correctly points out, until “the middle of the century, racial discrimination was more the norm than the exception that governed the interaction between people of different races throughout the world” (De Klerk 1999, p. xix).

Racial thinking in South Africa between the wars was in line with the thinking in other British settler colonies in Africa. Parallels, which were drawn with Kenya and Rhodesia, remained important considerations until well after the Second World War (Hailey 1957). Debates in all settler colonies revolved around increasing political responsibility for the settler community and increasing controls on the African majority, particularly in the urban areas. South Africa in 1945, was “bound with the other white dominions to preserve western civilization…and…shared with them an identity defined by the liberal habits and heritage of the British Commonwealth” (Beinart 1997, p. 23). In South Africa, of course, the threat of majority rule, at the national level, meant that African political identity would be defined only in the native reserve areas and in rural local administration throughout the twentieth century.

Ideas about a racial order were both a part of the South African intellectual tradition and the world's intellectual environment down to the middle of the twentieth century. "South African racial segregation," according to Paul Rich (1988, p. 282), "progressively acquired the trappings of a social theory that could be buttressed by the authority of 'race experts', successfully disguising its racist character through a pseudo-scientific discourse…." The puritan ethic, which defined apartheid, reflected the dominant value system of capitalist-based Protestantism imposed by Northern Europe (Germany, Scandinavia, and Holland and North America, the U.S. and Canada) on their overseas empires. The social historian Willem De Klerk (1975, p. 175) put it this way: “It would be far better to understand it [South African ideologies] all, not as an isolated phenomenon in a 'very strange society', but as essentially part of the general picture of Puritan man, willing power but at the same time seeking divine approval.”

In 1948, when the nationalist government came to power, South Africa stood within the mainstream of a Eurocentric imperial view of the world. As Allister Sparks (1990, p. 506) notes: “Until World War II the kind of pragmatic segregation that was practiced in South Africa was scarcely out of tune with racial practices throughout the Western world. More stringent perhaps, but not so much as to attract attention or criticism. It was still the age of imperialism.”

**Conclusion**

There is a logical sequence of events that followed the abandonment of assimilation in the Cape that led first to the trusteeship concept and then to a continuum of paternalistic segregation ending with legalized racial exclusiveness, or apartheid, in 1948. National Party bureaucrats and politicians were heavily dependent on the previous experiences of the state's native policy after Union (Rich 1988). That continuity was defined by “liberal” segregationist thought (trusteeship) in South Africa and Britain after the Anglo-Boer War. In terms of racial policy, the Cape Colony was different from the rest of South Africa. At least nominally, its economy and its local government were open to all races.

Liberalism, assimilation, segregation, and reform all informed the racial debate after 1910. There was an assumption of permanent bureaucratic state control over the African population of South Africa as a white self-governing Dominion within the British Empire. For most white leaders, rather than assimilation in a multi-racial or non-racial state, advocates of trusteeship argued that Africans in the Union were permanent "wards" of a superior European society.

Liberal segregationists argued that Africans should be controlled directly through a hierarchical system that linked paramount chiefs, indigenous headmen, and sub-chiefs to the white state structures in Pretoria. Advocates of Trusteeship have long used the ethnic diversity argument to defend cultural and, thus, urban segregation.

Throughout the apartheid period, the debate about trusteeship occurred at two levels, both within the administrative apparatus of the Native Administration Department and between policy-makers within and outside of government. Anti-assimilation views united English-speaking administrators with Afrikaner intellectuals and English and Afrikaans-speaking political leaders.

Prior to 1948, there was considerable debate between the advocates of trusteeship and separate development. While the debate was real, the differences between the two sides should not be overdrawn. It might be argued, in fact, that the trusteeship idea was a pre-requisite to the shift towards separate development that occurred after 1948. Within the context of the debate, the overall assumptions of both sides ensured a continuity of policy with regard to race until the end of the twentieth century.

1. Drury is quoting a South African Information Officer. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. The quote may be apocryphal. Picard first heard it in 1975 from a colleague in Botswana, who has requested anonymity. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Bushmen were and are a derogatory term for San or Basarwa while Hottentot was a derogatory term for Khoi [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Exeter Hall was the celebrated gathering place in the Strand for the missionary and humanitarian societies that represented liberal thought in Britain. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)