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THE FUTURE OF THE PAST IN SOUTH AFRICAN SCHOOLS

Curriculum development, school leaving examinations and  
syllabus design and assessment in History :  
A comparative study.

THESIS

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To the memory of  
Professor Winifred A. Maxwell,  
Professor in the Department of History,  
Rhodes University, 1954 - 1975.

*Who showed what a powerful influence  
love for one's subject could be when  
combined with a deep interest for the  
individual.*

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	v
ABSTRACT	vi
INTRODUCTION	viii
 PART ONE - PATHWAY TO THE PRESENT	
Chapter One : The curriculum: Increased control by Whitehall and Pretoria	1
Chapter Two : School leaving examinations : Catering for the masses	30
Chapter Three : History as a school subject: Syllabus evolution in England.	47
Chapter Four : Assessment in History (from the "old" to the "new") and History in South African schools (where content is king)	81
 PART TWO - THE PRESENT : A COMPARATIVE SURVEY	
Chapter Five : The senior secondary curriculum and school leaving examinations: Centralized structuring and differentiation to serve the masses	102
Chapter Six : History syllabuses: Focused flexibility versus a rigid content-based approach	112
Chapter Seven : Assessment in History: Two approaches to differentiation	130
 CONCLUSIONS AND SOME THOUGHTS ON THE FUTURE	
Appendix 1 : Two examples of assessment experimentation quoted in Steele	173
Appendix 2 : A "tentative" hierarchy of criteria for an exercise designed to assess the concept of cause (Adapted from Medley (1988) and Macintosh (1979)).	174
Appendix 3 : Context analysis of a South African History teaching journal	176

	<u>Page</u>
Appendix 4 : Assessment objectives in GCSE objectives	177
Appendix 5 : Southern Examining Group GCSE History	178
Appendix 6 : Examples of Question types used in GCSE examination papers	184
LIST OF REFERENCES	191
OTHER SOURCES CONSULTED	197

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## ABSTRACT

This is a two-part study dealing with the curriculum, school leaving examinations and History as a school subject in England and South Africa.

Part One is a developmental study. Developments in the curriculum of both countries since the Second World War are traced. In England this period is characterised by a shift from a somewhat *laissez faire* approach of the authorities at Whitehall to the curriculum of individual schools to the prescription that seems inherent in the National Curriculum. The outstanding development in South Africa during this period has been the introduction of a system of differentiated education.

In contrast to minor developments in the South African school leaving examination system, England has witnessed the consolidation of the two-tier GCE and CSE system into a single examination at 16+, the GCSE.

In discussing developments in History as a school subject, one is struck by the growth of the "new history" in England (this is described in some detail) against the relative lack of development (at "official" syllabus level) in South Africa where the subject remains rooted in the "traditional", chronological, content-based approach.

Part Two of this study compares the current situation in England and South Africa at both the macro (ie. curriculum and school leaving examination systems) and micro (ie. History as a subject in the curriculum) levels.

At the macro level the curriculum and school leaving examination systems in both England and South Africa are contrasted and one notes an increasing trend towards centralization in both countries. At the micro level use is made of "official" syllabuses and examination papers to contrast the "new history" approach in England with the "traditional" approach in South Africa.

In the conclusion two broad possibilities for curriculum reform in South Africa are considered: Broad reform across the curriculum on the one hand and reforms in History on the other.

## INTRODUCTION

In 1982 Tony Boddington, the director of the Schools Council History 13-16 Project, between 1975 and 1977, visited South Africa to conduct a series of seminars. In these he introduced the new approach to history that had been developed by the Schools Council researchers to groups of teachers, lecturers and education department officials. This visit was followed by one from Henry Macintosh, the secretary of the Southern Regional Examinations Board. His involvement in the Schools Council History was mainly in developing appropriate means of assessment for the new approach .

The opportunity for the author to attend the seminars conducted by both men in Cape Town turned out to be a highly stimulating and somewhat frightening experience. He was stimulated by the novelty of the Schools Council approach with its seemingly vast difference from what he understood history as a school subject to be. At the same time, the possibility that the basis of teacher-training (i.e. exposure to the facts of the past in an academic course and a method course revolving around history as product) and much of the classroom activities in this country was being seriously questioned proved to be an unsettling thought. The author became convinced that there had to be some form of experimentation with the Schools Council ideas and material at the school in Cape Town where he was a history teacher responsible for classes from standard six to matric. Having secured the necessary permission, the "What is History?" component of the Schools Council course was incorporated into the standard six syllabus where it was enthusiastically received by teachers and pupils alike. Unfortunately, it was

not possible to use Schools Council material in any of the other standards but attempts were made to inject some of the spirit of the "new" approach into the other history courses at the school mainly through the approach in the classroom and by some assessment adaptations.

As the pupils who had been exposed to the "What is History?" course moved through the high school, it became apparent that the "new" approach became less relevant to both them and their teachers, particularly in the senior secondary phase. Here the pressure built up on teachers and pupils alike to prepare for the final matriculation examination with its emphasis on knowledge of content and essay-writing skills. Not surprisingly then, the "new" approach, which in many ways was at odds with the approach necessary to achieve success in the senior certificate examination, was conveniently forgotten.

As the 1980s wore on the lack of any "official" reaction (i.e. by education departments and in this particular case, by the Cape Education Department) to the "new" ideas proved to be both frustrating and perplexing. It was frustrating because dabbling with the "new" approach seemed to be a fruitless exercise. Even though official reactions to new subject approaches are often slow, it seemed perplexing that no serious consideration had been given to the Project ideas as late as 1988, although it had started in England as early as 1972. The author wondered why the Education Department (of the Cape in his case) had not at least initiated some sort of debate among its teachers.

This question seemed particularly relevant as History teachers were struggling to maintain numbers at the senior secondary phase where history is an optional subject. This was confirmed in the writings of Van den Berg and Buckland (1983), in discussions with other history teachers and in his own experience at three large English medium boys' schools in the Cape Province.

The author's coursework year for a Master's Degree in Education showed that the Education Department at Rhodes University was very well aware of the Schools Council History 13-16 Project and, more generally, of what may be termed the "new history" movement (this term will be explained later in the thesis). All history method students, whether at the diploma or higher degree level, are exposed to the "new history" and they spend much of their coursework time exploring its nature and implications. As Boddington and Macintosh visited Cape Town, Pietermaritzburg/Durban and Johannesburg, one assumes that the same situation exists in the Education Departments of the English language universities in those centres. This being the case, one can assume further that there is a growing body of practising history teachers that has some idea about the "new approaches" in history. This prompted yet another question. How far are teachers in South Africa able to contribute to the development of the subject they teach?

\* \* \* \* \*

The many questions that arose out of the author's experiences with the "new history" pointed to the need for some sort of detailed study. This need seemed to be strongly reinforced by the intense education debate in South Africa. Ever since

the Soweto unrest of 1976, education has found itself on centre stage in all the unrest periods that have occurred since 1976. The flames of debate have been fanned by the appearance of the De Lange Report in 1981 and by the Government's reaction to it; by the introduction of a new constitution in 1983 and by the growth of the Peoples Education movement that rose out of a rejection of the present system of education. It seems a particularly appropriate time for all educationists in South Africa at whatever level they serve, to take a careful look at what they are doing with an eye to the development of courses that will take us into the 21st century.

Interest in the Schools Council History caused him to become interested in a wider sense in education in England.\* Some major educational developments had recently taken place in England: the appearance of a single examination at 16+ (the GCSE) in 1985 and the Education Act of 1988. It could therefore be asked: What could be learnt by tracing developments in education in England and South Africa and by drawing the contrasts that existed between the two countries? The study, therefore, would focus not only on history, but would also look at this subject in the context of the curriculum and school leaving examinations. Current curriculum theory argues strongly against a narrow focus on single aspects of the curriculum. The whole curriculum with its inter-related facets, should be kept in mind, even when one is considering a single subject or component.

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\* England and Wales have a common education system, while Scotland has its own system.

It was decided that this study should be conducted on two levels and in two parts. At the macro level, the curriculum and public school leaving examination systems of England and South Africa will be investigated to discover both similarities and differences between them and the impact that they may have on senior secondary history. The micro level of the study will focus on history as a subject in the senior secondary curriculum of both countries, where an attempt will be made to explore the nature of the subject.

The first part of the thesis is a developmental study with two broad objectives:

1. To trace:
  - (a) the evolution of the "new history" in England
  - (b) syllabus development in history in South Africa between 1970 and 1988.
2. To place these developments in history in the broader context of curriculum development in England and South Africa since World War Two.

Part two of the thesis is a comparative study of the objectives which are closely related to those of the developmental study. In this case, the objectives are to compare:

1. The current curriculum and public examination systems and
2. Current senior secondary history syllabuses culminating in a public/school leaving examination in England and South Africa.

It is hoped that it will be possible to draw some conclusions that may serve as a guide to curriculum planners and, more particularly, those involved with the design of history syllabuses in South Africa.

The four chapters of part one focus on the curriculum and school leaving examinations in both countries, the development of the "new history" in England and history in South African schools. This part includes a brief consideration of current curriculum theory.

The period bounded by the Education Acts of 1944 and 1988 in England was characterised by considerable curricular freedom as far as individual schools were concerned. The general nature of the curriculum in English schools is discussed, as are some of the strengths and weaknesses of the *laisse faire* approach of central authorities to the curriculum. Another outstanding trend in English education during this period was the ending of the tripartite school system and the growth of a system based on Comprehensive Schools. As this had considerable implications for the curriculum, it is also covered in the first chapter. Finally, consideration is given to the development of the National Curriculum, an event of considerable importance given the strong possibility that it has abruptly ended "the period of curricular freedom" in England.

The most outstanding post World War Two event as far as the South African curriculum is concerned, was the introduction of a differentiated system of education in the early 1970's. South Africa, like many other countries around the world, was responding to the challenges created by the need for a system of education to suit the masses rather than the talented elite. It was believed that a finely tuned system of differentiation would cater for the masses and allow for the maintenance of standards that had already been achieved. The

discussion of the South African curriculum in this differentiated system is seen against the background of the increasing pressure that education has faced during the 1980's.

Since World War Two, there have been a number of important developments in public examinations in England. The Education Act of 1944 led to the creation of the GCE system in the early 1950's. Unfortunately, this system tended to serve only the Grammar Schools and pressure built up for a system of public examinations at 16+ that would serve the Secondary Modern Schools. The result was the creation of the CSE system in the mid 1960's. This dual examination system at 16+ became increasingly problematic as it functioned in a school system characterised by an ever-increasing number of Comprehensive Schools. The pressure grew for a single examination at 16+, but many years were to go by before it became a reality in 1988 when the first GCSE examinations were conducted.

By contrast, the South African school-leaving examinations system has remained free of major upheaval since World War Two. The "package-type" examination sat by pre-war matriculation candidates remains essentially intact. From time to time adjustments have been made to the system, the most important of which was to accommodate the system of differentiated education. Developments in the public/school leaving examination systems in both countries are traced in chapter two.

Having considered the macro issues of curriculum and school-leaving examinations, the focus narrows to fall on history as a subject in the school curriculum; more particularly, the curriculum in the senior secondary school. Perhaps the most important part of this study is that which traces the development of the "new history" in England. At the outset, the point is made that the "new history" is based on ideas that can be traced to the early part of this century, and an attempt is made to explain as clearly as possible, what is meant by the term "new history". Before looking at the "new history" itself, detailed consideration is given to four factors that are considered to have played a major part in its development:

1. The perception by teachers of a crisis facing their subject.
2. The academic debate on the nature of history.
3. The findings of developmental psychologists.
4. The use of objectives to focus teaching, learning and assessment.

In analysing and describing the "new history", much attention is paid to the Schools Council History 13-16 Project. It must be emphasised, however, that in this study the term "new history" is not synonymous with the Schools Council approach. The Schools Council syllabus should be seen as the outstanding, and arguably, the most important practical example of the "new history". It is thus used to illustrate many of the features of the "new history".

A new approach to a subject will obviously involve new methods of assessment. Chapter four traces developments in the assessment of history from the old style, fact-by-fact mark schemes designed to test mastery of a body of content in

the main, to the present approach in the GCSE examination where, in addition to knowledge, a candidate's ability regarding a battery of skills and concepts is also tested. Perhaps the most outstanding feature in the assessment of the "new history" has been the introduction of assessment objectives which serve to fine-tune the whole assessment process. In a discussion on "new approaches" to assessment, it is possible to demonstrate how the content, question-type and mark schemes used for any particular question, are all linked by the assessment objective(s) for that question (i.e. they all have to be appropriate to the objective(s) concerned).

Developments in history syllabuses in South African schools are examined on two levels; the official syllabus and unofficial experimentation at individual schools. There is unfortunately little evidence that the "new history" has had much impact on official/departmental syllabuses which remain embedded in the "traditional" content-based approach. There are, however, a number of teachers who are aware of the "new history" movement and who have experimented with aspects of the "new" approach at their schools but who, to some extent or other, are frustrated by the lack of a concerted "new history" movement in South Africa.

Part two of the study compares the current situation in England and South Africa at both the macro and micro level. The curriculum and public examination system in South Africa is compared with the recently introduced National Curriculum and GCSE examination system. Here the focus falls on the trend towards increasing centralization in both countries, on

the school structure within which the curriculum operates as well as the nature of that curriculum and on the examination system in each country.

A comparison of history syllabuses and assessment in history has been achieved by an analysis of current syllabuses and of recent examination papers. For England, the syllabus and examination papers of the Southern Examining Group were used to illustrate how history operates within the GCSE system, while for South Africa, use was made of eight departmental syllabuses (all derived from the core syllabus) and their respective examination papers. As far as the syllabuses are concerned, their general layout, introductory remarks, aims and approach to content, have all been contrasted. The key role played by assessment objectives in GCSE syllabuses is discussed and contrasted with their complete absence in South African syllabuses. When comparing assessment, attention is drawn to the different way in which differentiation is achieved. The assessment package of each syllabus is analysed and described and the practical way in which these packages are implemented is illustrated by an analysis and comparison of recent examination papers.

In the conclusion, two broad possibilities for curriculum reform in South Africa are considered:

1. Reform across the curriculum linked to broad educational reform.
2. Reform of a single aspect in the curriculum: History.

These are based on:

1. Conclusions drawn as a result of this study;

2. Criticism of both the current English and South African education systems with respect to the curriculum, public examinations and of history as a school subject,

and at the same time keeping in mind the danger of making suggestions on the basis of comparative studies in education.

## THE PATHWAY TO THE PRESENT

## INTRODUCTION

In order to understand as fully as possible the *status quo* in England and in South Africa, developments over a period of years in the curriculum, school leaving examination systems and in syllabus design and assessment in history will be traced.

The periods over which these developments have been traced were determined very much by the fact that the focus of this dissertation is on the present. In the case of England the passing of the Education Act in 1944 seemed to be a logical starting point when discussing evolution towards the National Curriculum and the GCSE examination. As far as developments in the field of history are concerned the year 1970 has been chosen as it was in the late 1960's and early 1970's that history teachers, dissatisfied with what one may term the "traditional" syllabus, began to explore alternatives. The modern South African curriculum is traced from the passing of the National Education Policy Act in 1967, while the story of our national examinations system begins in 1916 when the Joint Matriculation Board was set up. The starting point for a brief look at developments in syllabus making and assessment in history in South Africa is the introduction of a system of differentiated education in 1972/73.

## CHAPTER 1

## THE CURRICULUM : INCREASED CONTROL BY WHITEHALL AND PRETORIA

In modern times the word curriculum has become broad in its connotation, but for the purposes of this dissertation the term will be used in a more narrow, perhaps old-fashioned sense.

Tunmer defined curriculum as "the range of compulsory and optional activities formally planned for an individual pupil by the school" (Tunmer, R, 1981, p.30), while Glover saw curriculum as "the full range of experiences to be gained by the pupil at school" (Glover, P H, 1988). In taking Tunmer to task for a narrow definition, Buckland offered an even broader interpretation. He claimed that Tunmer's approach "ignores the interrelationship between the organization of knowledge and the distribution of power in society" (Buckland, F P, 1982, p.167). He saw the curriculum as a process rather than as a product: the living evolving thing rather than a blueprint.

These definitions are, however, too broad to use as a suitable starting point for this study as the focus will be on what may be termed the "subject curriculum" which Richmond has defined as "a suitable collection of subjects which may be studied separately or in relation to each other" (Richmond, W K, 1971, p.4). The subject curriculum may also be seen as subjects offered by an educational authority, a

school or a pupil and perhaps more important the way in which they are offered (e.g. groupings, time allocated to each, assessment arrangements, etc.). Although this is a narrow interpretation of the term curriculum, in itself it has far-reaching implications and while it is not the purpose of this study to discuss these in detail it would seem appropriate at this point to touch on a few of them.

Perhaps the central question that curriculum planners face today is: What subjects does one include in the curriculum? One can only begin to address this question after one has determined clearly the purpose for which a curriculum is being designed. Agreement on the aims and objectives for a system of formal education is not easily reached. Factors such as ideology, economics and the many diverse claims that are made on a curriculum (such as producing "well-rounded" human beings on the one hand and manpower for the country on the other) often wreck the efforts of the best planners.

The selection of content to satisfy the aims and objectives behind a curriculum is also a matter of considerable difficulty. Curriculum theorists grappling with problems in this area can be placed along a continuum bound by the following two extremes: on the one hand there are those who believe that the traditional subjects still form a valid basis for curriculum content while on the other there are those who believe that the traditional subjects are themselves the cause of many of the problems concerning the curriculum and have developed new approaches to the structure and organization of knowledge. In 1969, R S Peters expressed

the standpoint of the "traditionalists" thus:

"Too often reformers pass from the undeniable truth that the present subject-centered curriculum is often boring to the conclusion that it should be abandoned and a topic centred one substituted for it. They do not consider sufficiently seriously the less radical suggestion that the more traditional type of curriculum could be more imaginatively and more realistically interpreted."

(Quoted in Whitfield, R C, 1971, facing page.)

J S Bruner (1966) was one of the early pioneers who investigated the possibility of breaking the bounds that are found within a subject-curriculum, while Phenix (1964) and Hirst (1970) also worked along these lines when they developed six "realms of meaning" and seven "forms of knowledge" respectively. In attempt to find a rationale other than the traditional subjects for the compilation of a curriculum Hirst offered seven "forms of knowledge" (Mathematics and logics, Physical Science, History and human sciences, Literature and fine arts, morals, religion, philosophy). However, his critics argued that his approach was still very much subject orientated. At first glance Phenix's "realms of meaning" (symbolics, empirics, synnoetics, ethics/morality, synoptics) seem to have broken away from the "traditional" subjects. However, there is a place for these subjects in Phenix's scheme of things. For him, subject disciplines become multi-functional in that some serve in more than one area/realm.

The nature of the curriculum in both countries at present would seem to indicate that those responsible for turning curriculum theory into practical reality are not yet ready for the ideas of Bruner, Phenix, Hirst and others (or is it

that their theories have been rejected as impractical?) and have been prepared to face the problems which go with creating a subject-centred curriculum in the modern world. The major problem that has to be faced is one of quantity and it manifests itself in two ways. Firstly, there is an ever-increasing number of subjects which make a claim for inclusion in the curriculum and secondly, there is the information explosion that has touched each individual subject. Richmond (1971)\* and the Schools Council (1975)\*\* have each offered a set of criteria in an effort to address the first problem while new approaches to history as a school subject have grappled with the second (e.g. Schools Council History 13 to 16 Project).

Curriculum planners are also dependent upon the research work of developmental psychologists and unfortunately this is another field fraught with uncertainty - witness the

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\* Standards on which to base the selection of components of curriculum:

1. Is the subject-matter significant to an organised field of knowledge?
2. Does the subject matter stand the test of survival?
3. Is the subject matter useful?
4. Is the subject matter interesting to the learner?
5. Does the subject matter contribute to the growth and development of a democratic society?

(Richmond, W K, 1971)

\*\* Criteria to be used in order to judge the claim of a subject to a place in the curriculum.

1. Its intrinsically human worth-whileness.
2. Pupil interest.
3. Its ability to help develop experience, knowledge and skills which they would be unlikely to acquire otherwise.
4. The wishes of the pupils and parents.

(Schools Council Working Paper 53, 1975).

challenge to Piagetian thinking by researchers such as Vygotsky (1962) and Bruner (1966).

As many thousands of educationists around the world faced up to the challenge of curriculum development it became clear that haphazard, piecemeal, "natural", single-subject development was no longer good enough. It is argued that curriculum development must be a continuous process and that one should always keep the whole curriculum in mind when planning further developments. One can suggest at least seven reasons for the need for ongoing development:

1. Mass education has caused the academic curriculum that developed between the 17th and 19th centuries to become inadequate. This curriculum was designed for an "able minority" and geared to the occupational requirements of what used to be called the "learned professions" (Richmond, W K, 1971, p.16).
2. As living standards improve so demands on education increase and become more diverse.
3. The information explosion has caused attention to be "diverted from subject-matter (and the accumulation of facts and information to be committed to memory) to the search for organizing principles around which knowledge can be acquired". (Richmond, W K, 1971, p.17).
4. The intricate and sophisticated division of labour in the world which poses the question: Where do you leave off general education (the basic minimum being defined as numeracy and literacy) and proceed with more specialized training?
5. A need to cater adequately (in an interesting way) for children who are forced to stay at school for a longer period of time.
6. The fact that children mature earlier puts different demands on the curriculum.
7. The influence of new media/channels of communication.

With the curriculum under pressure from so many quarters the need for development has been recognized in both countries under study in that both have permanent agencies whose function is curriculum development. These agencies are there to serve the modern trend in curriculum theory which sees the curriculum as something dynamic and alive, something which should be constantly adapting to the ever-changing world in which it operates.

\* \* \* \* \*

Against this (brief) curriculum theory background the actual curriculum development that has taken place in both countries may now be traced.

Although the 1870 Elementary Education Act aimed to make universal education possible, it was not until the second half of the 20th century that this ideal managed to work its way through to secondary education. Secondary education in the first half of the present century was characterised by its elitist orientation. During this period the school leaving age was 14 and the numbers of pupils that went on to secondary school was small\*. The curriculum on offer at these schools was designed to cater for this elite minority, making it possible for them to go on to university and then take up their places in the professions and the civil service.

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\* In 1911 there were only 11 500 pupils aged 16 and 5 000 aged 17 at secondary schools in England.

However, between the turn of the century and 1944 the question: "Who should go to secondary school?" was often discussed and the framework for the universal secondary school education of today was gradually laid down. Four of the more important developments can be briefly described:

1. In 1904 the Board of Education laid down certain **regulations for secondary schools**. Among these were the nature and duration of the course ("general instruction over at least four years") and the composition of the curriculum expressed in terms of subjects taught\*, time allocated to each in the timetable as well as some indication of the nature of the science course to be offered.
2. In 1920 the Board of Education published a report on the issue of **free secondary education** in which it stated clearly that the principle of compulsory attendance was a closely related matter. This would have significant implications for education at this level as secondary schools would be required to cater for the masses and not the elite. The report expressed the concern of some about the lowering of standards. From the point of view of the curriculum, the problem that would have to be faced was that of providing for the needs and ability of the masses without lowering standards that the elite had come to know and expect. Some sort of broadening was necessary.
3. The two Hadow Reports (The Education of the Adolescent and The Primary School), gave clear expression to a **division between primary and secondary education**. The 1926 report also made a distinction between two types of schools at the secondary phase: Grammar Schools which follow "a predominantly literary or scientific curriculum (i.e. academic) and Modern Schools which follow a "'realistic' or practical trend" (curriculum).
4. The Spens Report published in 1938 defended the organization of the secondary school curriculum on a subject basis and appealed for the establishment of Technical High Schools, thus creating a **tripartite school system**. The Norwood Report which was published in 1943 justified the tripartite school system on the grounds that there were "three main types of curriculum" and in the same year the "White Paper on Educational Reconstruction" appeared which formed the basis of the 1944 Act which was to be the dynamo to drive education for the next forty-four years.

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\* "English language and literature, at least one language other than English, Geography, History, Mathematics, Science and Drawing, with due provision for manual work and physical exercises, and, in the girls' school, for housewifery."

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The period 1944 to 1988 is bounded by two important education acts both of which had considerable implications for the curriculum. The tracing of curriculum developments up to 1988 is designed to give a broad perspective on the present situation in England. For the purposes of this study three outstanding trends can be discerned during this period. Firstly, one notes the decline of the tripartite school system and the emergence of a system dominated by Comprehensive Schools. Secondly, the curriculum has seen some dramatic changes particularly towards the end of the period in question. The 1944 Act ushered in a period in which schools had considerable freedom of movement in planning the curriculum they offered, freedom which has been abruptly terminated through the introduction of the National Curriculum by the Education Act of 1988. Thirdly, in the sphere of school leaving examinations there was the movement from a more academic GCE Ordinary Level examination to the all purpose GCSE examination. It is the intention here to deal with the first two trends. The examinations issue will be covered where it relates to curriculum; a more detailed study will be found in the chapter dealing with examinations.

Some of the significant provisions of the Education Act of 1944 (also known as the Butler Act) were that it created a Ministry of Education, prescribed free secondary education for all and raised the school leaving age to 15. Clearly 1944 was a watershed year dividing the time when secondary education was enjoyed only by the privileged few from that when it became a right. The tripartite school system was

accepted as were the Hadow ideas for primary schools. Apart from accepting that the secondary school curriculum be organized on a subject basis, however, the act was vague on this level of schooling. The age of freedom and flexibility had dawned for the secondary schools.

As mentioned earlier, an outstanding trend of this period was the demise of the tripartite school system and the emergence of a system based largely on Comprehensive Schools. It seems opportune at this point to differentiate between Comprehensive and Multi-lateral schools. Put simply, a multi-lateral school was one which catered for all the curriculum needs of the children; in other words it would provide for children wishing to follow academic (the Grammar School), technical (the Technical High School) or "practical" - "non-academic" (the Secondary Modern School) courses under one roof. The children, however, would still be placed in one of the three streams on the basis of the 11+ examination when they began the secondary phase. The Comprehensive school (many of which grew out of Multi-lateral schools) has a basis for its existence the belief that it is wrong to force children into particular study directions at the early age of 12 and that it is better for them to follow an open/flexible curriculum in the first two to three years of secondary schooling before making a choice with regard to a more narrow field of study (vocationally oriented) in the final year or two leading up to a school leaving examination.

In general terms it is probably fair to say that the technical schools were never really able to root themselves in the British system and that they simply faded away, their

functions being taken over by the Grammar, Secondary Modern and the emerging Comprehensive Schools. The movement towards Comprehensive schools was therefore really an attack on a dual school system which divided the children into an academic elite and "the rest". Reasons for this trend towards Comprehensive schools are threefold: practicality, the academic debate and politics.

In areas with small populations (e.g. parts of Wales), Comprehensive schools started out of practical necessity. The sparse population simply did not justify the existence of three or even two separate schools. On the academic front the educational theory on which the Hadow, Spens and Norwood reports had based their arguments for the tripartite system was questioned. It was discovered that the identification of the top 25% of the population at 11+ was far from foolproof. In 1959 the Crowther Report expressed itself as follows on the 11+ exam:

"Once it is agreed, as more and more people are coming to believe, that it is wrong to label children for all time at eleven, the attempt to give mutually exclusive labels to the schools to which they go at that age will have to be abandoned."

(Tunmer, R, B.Ed. lecture notes, 1988),

The 11+ exam, designed to group the children three ways at the end of their junior school years so that they could then move on to the "correct" secondary school, came under ever-increasing fire during this period. Baron wrote of a system that made the last two years in the junior school a nightmare for children, parents and teachers (Baron, G, 1965, p.100). At the emotional level the system came under pressure from the many disappointed parents of children who had failed the

11+ and, to make matters worse, mistakes made in the placement of children proved difficult to rectify as transfer between Grammar and Secondary Modern schools was beset by many practical problems. It was not surprising, then, that an issue which affected the broad masses of the population so directly should be drawn into the political arena.

The elitist nature of the tripartite system was called into question. It was pointed out that with such a system there could never be any talk of equality in education or of equality of opportunity on leaving school. This was a revolt against any form of educational privilege by social class. A system based on Comprehensive schools seemed to be the answer and the first moves towards such a system (apart from Comprehensive schools that developed as a result of practical necessity in small communities) can be traced to local authorities controlled by the Labour Party which began to create Comprehensive Schools in their efforts to achieve social unity.

Local initiative was given added impetus in 1965 when the Labour Government announced that it was its policy to end 11+ selection and to create a school system based on Comprehensive schools. It was believed that this system would facilitate the breaking down of class barriers. It would also cater for late (academic) developers and offer a wide variety of courses.

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When considering the secondary school curriculum in England between 1944 and 1988 one would expect to find a complex variety set against the fragmented school system. Furthermore the principals of schools had considerable freedom in determining the curriculum offered by their particular schools. However, surveys revealed much common ground. Commenting on the curriculum in secondary schools Peterson wrote:

"Given the large measure of self-determination which schools enjoy, they appear remarkably similar in their broad characteristics. Despite differences of type and size and age range, patterns of curriculum and organization have much in common. The answer surely lies in the uniquely English system controlling the curriculum of the secondary school by an immensely elaborate battery of externally administered public examinations the first section of which is taken at the end of the period of compulsory education" (Peterson, A D C, 1980, p.278).

In 1965 the CSE examination was introduced to cater for school leavers who did not have the ability to succeed in GCE 'O' level examinations. This theoretically made it possible for the top 60% of the population to leave school with a certificate indicating what they had achieved in particular subjects. In 1973 the school leaving age was raised to 16 with a consequent increase in the number of pupils entering for public examinations (the CSE examinations in the main).

Set against the backdrop of these two developments, Her Majesty's Inspectorate conducted a survey of secondary schools between 1975 and 1978 and as a result was able to describe and comment upon schools. They found that in the first three years in the secondary school the basic approach was to keep the curriculum as broad as possible; the programme followed by all pupils being essentially the same

with all traditional subjects represented. In the fourth year the number of subjects studied by each pupil was considerably reduced and the pupils were able to choose from a complex system of options.

It was pointed out that the fact that pupils dropped a number of subjects at the end of the third year (i.e. at 14, or approximately the standard 7 level in South Africa) was an important factor to keep in mind when designing syllabuses. Although the pupils offered fewer subjects during the "second phase" of their secondary schooling there was an expansion in the number of subjects offered by the school and at this point one begins to see differences between the curriculums of different kinds of schools.

There was no agreement on when "phase two" began. It was accepted, however, that it lasted until a child reached the age of 16, the school leaving age. At this point a large number of pupils offered themselves as candidates for GCE 'O' level or CSE examinations in one or a number of subjects. In the final phase of schooling, the "Sixth Form", there was a sharp contraction in the number of subjects taken by a pupil (about 3) and also in the number of subjects offered by the school at this level. At the beginning of the "second phase" and particularly in the final phase, subject choice had a direct bearing on future career and academic directions. In concluding the section on the curriculum, the survey supports the principle of freedom of choice as being sound, but they say that the move to a very wide choice has its drawbacks:

"Each addition, considered by itself in these terms,

might be justified but perhaps too little account has been taken of the cumulative effects of continuous expansion." (HMI, 1979, P.43).

Questions that arise here are: at what level (national/central government or local education authority) should any limits be set and what should be the extent of the limits? In 1970 the Department of Education and Science issued "Circular 10/70: The Organization of Secondary Education" which stated:

"The Government, however, believes it is wrong to impose a uniform pattern of secondary organization on local education authorities by legislation or other means."

This suggested that the feeling still held that central government should keep a gentle, fatherly eye over education allowing many of the decisions that counted to be made at the local level. The National Curriculum introduced by the Education Act of 1988 has, in a sense, brought the central authorities into each classroom in that the curriculum and syllabuses are now determined in London. A question that needs answering is how did England progress from the situation in 1970 to that in 1988? Perhaps the answer lies in the generally held belief that each system contains within itself the seeds of its own destruction. In the case of the curriculum in England (if one may use the word system in this regard) the seed may well have been the excessive freedom that secondary schools had to create their own curriculums. In the 1960's and 1970's educational theorists gradually increased the focus on curricular issues, a focus that laid bare curricular reality at secondary schools.

In an attempt to grapple with the pressures being placed on the curriculum by a proliferation of subjects, each making a claim for a place in the curriculum, educationists explored the idea of a core curriculum. Tripp and Watt defined the core curriculum as the "basic skills and knowledge which all children should possess", and saw this concept as a reactionary response to the curriculum innovation of the 1960's and 1980's (Tripp, D H, and Watt, A J, 1984, p.131). They pointed out that there is little agreement on what is left out in the wide range of subjects and disciplines in order to create a core. If one also reduces the core to basic literacy and numeracy, then these skills would achieve a special status and all others (many of which could be regarded as equally essential in basic education) would suffer.

In 1977 the Department of Education and Science (DES) published a document entitled "Curriculum 11 - 16" in which it offered eight "areas of experience"\* which it suggested could form a core curriculum. The "areas of experience" were clearly influenced by theorists such as Phenix and Hirst in that they were an attempt to break the restrictions of a subject based curriculum. In the same year the HMIs indicated that they were not enthusiastic about "centralization, minimum goals and basic skills"

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\* 1. Aesthetic and creative      5. Physical  
 2. Ethical                              6. Scientific  
 3. Linguistic                            7. Social and political  
 4. Mathematical                        8. Spiritual

("Education", 25 February 1977, p.139). In other words, they were not yet ready to accept the idea of a core curriculum imposed by central government. The HMI survey of secondary schools published in 1979 described the existence of a core at these schools as follows:

"Core subjects present what each individual school considers, as a matter of policy, essential to all its pupils." (HMI, 1979, p.21).

While Grammar schools tended to offer a large core, Mathematics, English and Physical Education in some form or other formed the cores of most secondary school curriculums.

In an article that proved prophetic, Peterson (1980) claimed that the controlling forces in the senior secondary curriculum were the Independent Examining Boards whose curricular and examining procedures were "harmonised" by the Schools Council in which the dominating influence was the Teachers' Unions, and pointed out that none of these bodies was directly accountable to the public. He argued that in the "age of accountability" this system was unlikely to survive and that the government was bound sooner or later to be drawn in. Less than two years after the publication of this article the House of Commons Select Committee on Education, Science and the Arts claimed that "the 1944 Education Act should be strengthened to give the Secretary of State power to intervene in schools where a nationally agreed curriculum was not being provided" and they believed that "curriculum guidance from the centre is justified" ("Education", 19 February 1982, p.125).

In the early 1980's the focus in education was fixed firmly on examinations as England worked towards the introduction of the GCSE examination in January 1985 (the first common 16+ examinations were written in June 1988). The result was that the curriculum debate seemed to fade a little. In July, 1987 however, the GCSE more or less following its predetermined course, the DES published a consultation document entitled "The National Curriculum 5-16" placing the curriculum firmly in the centre of the education debate again. Further, the DES indicated that there was some urgency in the matter by resolving to enshrine the new curriculum in legislation the following year and to put it into operation the year after. Three of the issues dealt with by the document were standards, the components of the curriculum and the formation of a National Curriculum Council.

After just more than a year of intense debate (as can be seen by the many conferences held country-wide and the content of regular educational publications such as "Education" and the "Times Educational Supplement"), the Education Act of 1988 (Baker Act) was passed which placed the National Curriculum on the statute books and set in motion its implementation.\* The age of complete freedom in England had ended.

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In tracing curriculum development in South Africa, it is proposed to explore briefly two areas: developments in the administration of secondary school education and developments in the curriculum itself.

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\* This is referred to briefly in Chapter 6.

When the Union of South Africa was created in 1910 it was decided that the four provinces (previously the colonies of the Cape of Good Hope, Natal, the Orange River Colony and the Transvaal) would control all education other than higher for a period of five years "and thereafter until Parliament otherwise provides" (Rose, B, and Tunmer, R, 1975, p.11), thus allowing the old departments of education of each colony to continue operations with relatively little disruption. The wording of the South Africa Act clearly indicated that this state of affairs was not necessarily meant to be permanent. Between 1910 and 1967 a number of commissions with differing terms of reference stressed the need for greater centralization in some way or other, but at the end of the period control over secondary education was still very much in the hands of the provinces.

Two reports which commented on the need for greater centralization were those of the Van der Horst Commission (1928) and the De Villiers Commission (1948). The former stressed the need for a "general educational theory or philosophy upon which educational administration could be built" hinting that a single educational authority for the country was necessary (Rose, B, and Tunmer, R, 1975, p.24), while the latter expressed concern "at the disorganization and malaise which they detected in the education systems they were examining ..., regarded the provinces' jealous retention of their rights as intractable and irresponsible... [and stressed the need for] a fully co-ordinated national education policy and administration" (Rose, B, and Tunmer, R,

1975, pp. 35, 36 and 41).

In the period under review one can cite examples of instances where the provincial authorities lost ground. The first being the process which saw technical education become the responsibility of the Union government which occurred between 1917 and 1922. In accordance with the implementation of its apartheid policies after 1948, successive Nationalist governments took control of Black (1953), Coloured (1963) and Indian (1965) education from the provinces, leaving them in control only of White education.

An important event in this gradual centralization was the creation in 1962 of the National Education Advisory Council which was designed to give effect to the government's concept of "Union policy but Provincial control" (Rose, B, and Tunmer, R, 1975, p.50). The work of this body focused on the creation of a national education policy, something which became a reality with the passing of the National Education Policy Act in 1967. The significance of this Act has been expressed thus (Rose, B, and Tunmer, R, 1975):

1. Many conflicts that existed between central and provincial government were resolved.
2. The central government took for itself the right to determine broad education policy.
3. It was made possible for central government to return control over technical and vocational education at school level to the provinces. This was effected by Act 41 of 1967.
4. The Committee of Educational Heads (a forum for inter-provincial co-operation) came into being. This body took over some of the functions of the National Advisory Education Council and became an important factor in South African education.

5. The organization of the National Advisory Education Council was modified.
6. National educational policy was described in broad and "very vague" terms.

Against the background of these developments the nature of the secondary school curriculum will briefly be discussed.

Initially secondary education in the Cape Colony - as in Britain - prepared pupils for university study. The University of the Cape of Good Hope controlled curriculums, syllabuses and examinations. After 1910 this situation continued and after 1916 the Joint Matriculation Board became the controlling force in the secondary school curriculum.\* A system of grouping subjects for the purposes of matriculation exemption gradually came into force. In 1931 a combination of six subjects offered as follows was the requirement:

1. An official language (first language).
2. Latin, Greek, French, German or other official language (first or second language).
3. A science or mathematics.
4. A subject from group two or Mathematics, Italian, Portuguese, Spanish, Hebrew, Xhosa, Zulu, Tswana, Sotho.
5. } Any two subjects from an extensive prescribed
6. } list, which included several "Social Science" subjects like History and Geography.

(Malherbe, E G, 1934, pp.86-7).

However, in South Africa - as in England - voices were raised against this heavy emphasis on academic training. In his

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\* Details concerning the composition and functioning of this Body will be given in the chapter on examinations.

annual report Dr de Vos Malan, the then (1947) Superintendent General of Education in the Cape, called for a restructuring of the secondary school system so that these schools could meet the needs of all adolescents and not merely those of an academic minority. The need for some secondary school experience (at that stage in the Cape, a pupil could leave school in standard six) created the problem of educating average pupils in an acceptable fashion, a problem which had to be addressed. In 1948 the De Villiers Report which had much influence on provincial education departments expressed concern at the (almost entirely) academic nature of secondary schools in the country. The four departments were forced to take a good look at themselves and as a result some progress in the addressing of this problem was made most particularly in the Transvaal where the Van Wyk Report on Differentiated Education (1955) had considerable impact. Here, amongst other matters, the need for vocational education was stressed and it was felt that large Comprehensive high schools would be the best means of serving this need as well as that for a "general" (old style) education.

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A new era in South African education was ushered in with the passing of the National Education Policy Act (Act No. 39) of 1967 which made possible central control (certainly in terms of policy making) and through this a more uniform system of White schooling in the Republic of South Africa. It was this piece of legislation that made it possible after 1972 to implement a system of differentiated education throughout the country.

This system is based on the report of the Human Sciences Research Council (1971) which suggested that the basis of a national system of education should be:

1. A South African philosophy of life as a point of departure.
2. Christian National Education.
3. Differentiation.

The whole issue of differentiation was central to the report and should be seen against the background of compulsory secondary education for all White children throughout the country which in turn led to ever-increasing numbers in such schools. Clearly not all children would be interested in or capable of benefitting from an academic education.

The Report claimed (p.123) that people are "qualitatively unequal" and that provision should be made for this in education through a system of differentiation: differentiation in fields of study (curriculums), syllabuses and examining. Crucial to this system was a well-developed school guidance system which would have as its major responsibility the task of channeling each child along the best educational pathway (curriculum), out of the many offered, in terms of that individual's abilities, aptitudes and interests.

The school system into which differentiation was to be built was determined on the basis of the phases of development of a young person, a theoretical "typical child" according to physical and psychological development. The idea was that school levels 1 to 7 would make up the primary school phase with level 7 (standard 5) acting as a bridging year to the secondary school phase (levels 8 - 12). Levels 7 to 9

(standards 5 to 7) was seen as a transition-phase in which there would be a move from a class teaching and skills orientation to one revolving around the teaching of specialized subjects. At this stage subject choice would be introduced on a limited scale. This was also seen as an exploratory period during which pupils should be exposed to a broad group of subjects. Unfortunately the freedom to explore at this stage is limited by the insistence that the two optional subjects that the children choose in standards 6 and 7 are examination subjects. Syllabuses in these subjects often form a continuous unit developing the skills and concepts through a study of carefully selected content from standard 6 through to standard 10. This forces many children to make important curricular choices as early as standard 5 as it is difficult to "pick-up" certain subjects in standard 8 when the final phase of schooling begins. With regard to the final phase of schooling (senior secondary) the report expressed itself in broad terms as follows:

"Education is one of the ways in which the child is led to adulthood, with the subject matter as a specific means which is employed to bring adulthood to its realization" (p.177);

and

"In secondary education, therefore, there will be a shifting stress from general education to specific vocationally-directed education, with the accent on the latter in the senior secondary school period" (p.178).

During this final phase, pupils should be able to choose a combination of subjects which will point to possible vocational fields. Further, the report makes an interesting distinction between what it calls "vocationally-directed education" and "vocational training" and it points out that there should still be a stress on the formative side of

education at this final phase.

In the report, stress is laid on the necessity for a core curriculum consisting of examination and non-examination subjects:

"In the educational systems of various countries, a core curriculum of compulsory subjects is one of the most striking principles of differentiated education. The aim of this core curriculum is not only to prepare the child for a career, but also to educate him as a culturally-formed human being." (p.29).

At the senior secondary level the core subjects are religious education, physical education and guidance (formative subjects) and the two official languages (examination subjects). It is at this level that differentiated education comes fully into effect,

"in accordance with the ability, aptitude and interest of the pupils, to be co-ordinated with post-school training, so that the manpower requirements of the country can be satisfied." (p.181).

To cater for the ability of the pupils, subjects would be offered at two levels (Higher Grade and Standard Grade) and the pupils would be free to choose the standard in each subject that suits him. The aptitude and interest of the pupils would be covered by the "choice subjects" (normally four) in each individual pupil's curriculum. However, the report stresses that:

"Subjects must not be chosen at random but must be co-ordinated with the pupils post-school training or pursuit of a profession." (p.182).

The way in which the subjects are related to one another in the curriculum will be discussed at a later stage.

The report was adopted by all the education authorities in the country and it had been fully implemented by 1976 when the first school leaving examinations were written on a differentiated basis.

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Although the curriculum at senior secondary level in 1988 was still largely running along the guidelines laid down by the 1971 report, the period since 1976 has witnessed some momentous occurrences on the South African scene which, without any doubt, would impact with great force on any major curriculum reform that might be undertaken in the foreseeable future.

In the same year that the first differentiated examinations were written at the matriculation level, major unrest with strong educational overtones erupted in Soweto and spread around the country, and in 1980, following further unrest and widespread boycotts of schools, the Cabinet requested the HSRC to conduct an investigation into all aspects of education in South Africa so that an education policy could be formulated which would allow all peoples of the country to reach their potential and would promote the economic growth of the country. Guidance was also requested on ways and means of providing equal education for all population groups.

The findings of the De Lange Committee appeared in published form (De Lange Report) the next year and led to widespread debate in educational and other circles. The Report was critical of the curriculum in operation at South African high schools at the time. Four criticisms can be cited:

1. It was found to be too abstract and academic. Syllabuses and teaching methods in most subjects did not provide enough concrete experience to back theoretical concepts (particularly in science and mathematics) with the result that there is a heavy emphasis on memorization and little on insight.
2. The bureaucratic nature of the curriculum hampered innovation and experimentation. The report found that innovations were initiated from above, the purposes of these new developments tended to be poorly explained with the result that implementation was often poor. At the same time, it was pointed out that little was being done to train people interested in curriculum or subject development.
3. A lack of a "whole curriculum" perspective in South Africa, and the role that each subject should play in the curriculum as a whole.
4. All syllabuses were dominated by the demands of a final "academic" examination.

The school system which the report believed to be best suited to the country was one that was made up of a Basic Phase (school years 1-6) and a Post-Basic Phase (school years 7-12), the latter being divided into a Junior Intermediate level (school years 7-9) and a Senior Intermediate level (school years 10-12).

When considering the curriculum of the future, the report commented in more general terms rather than making specific proposals. It felt that the curriculum should ensure general formative education to 14 or 15 years, continuing education at the secondary level catering for the needs of the individual and the demands of society and progression to tertiary education. It also made an appeal for curriculum development to be built into the total planning of education so that it takes place on a continuous basis and can therefore keep pace with the changing demands made on education.

As far as management of education was concerned, the report recommended a three-tier system consisting of a single ministry of education, Councils and Departments of Education responsible for a defined geographic area at the second level and at the local level, school boards and school committees.

As indicated earlier, there was widespread reaction to the De Lange Report but obviously the most important was that of the government which came in the form of its "White Paper on the provision of Education in the Republic of South Africa, 1983". In the light of a new constitution which was already under consideration, the proposal for a single ministry for education was rejected. The New Constitution which came into effect in 1984 saw education as being an "own affair", each population group (Coloureds, Indians and Whites) having control through its own house of parliament and Council of Ministers over education of its own people in the context of the group's culture. Black education, outside the independent and semi-independent homelands, would continue to be administered by the Central government's Department of Education and Training (DET). The following matters in education were considered to be "general affairs": financing, syllabuses (curriculum), examinations and certification and matters concerning teachers (e.g. salaries, conditions of employment, professional registration). These would all fall under the control of a White minister in the Cabinet.

With regard to compulsory school attendance the Government accepted the proposal that six years of formal schooling was a goal it would work towards. In effect this means

compulsory primary schooling for all population groups.

The White Paper expressed the Government's view of curriculum reform in very general terms:

"In rectifying the imbalance resulting from the over-emphasis on academic education, it is therefore necessary to guard against over-emphasising career education at the expense of the ideal of a general formative education." (p.34).

Perhaps more significant in terms of the curriculum was the acceptance, in the first instance, of the recommendations for curriculum agencies which could undertake research on a continuous basis and could thus initiate reform as and when necessary. Secondly, approval was given for a new certification council to take over from the Joint Matriculation Board.

The impact of these developments between 1967 and 1984 is reflected in the current (1989) situation in our schools which will be discussed in Chapter 6. They also form the basis upon which any projection into the future will be made. This will receive some attention in the conclusion.

## CHAPTER 2

## SCHOOL LEAVING EXAMINATIONS: CATERING FOR THE MASSES

It is the purpose of this study to focus narrowly on the examination that marks the terminal point of a secondary school career. In the two countries with which we are concerned this is an external examination. Even schools offering Mode III examinations in England still have to submit syllabuses and examination papers for approval and moderation, and examination scripts also have to be moderated. In most cases the examination is fully external with the school having a limited or even no say at all in the final assessment of its pupils. When discussing assessment in history later in this thesis, the aim will be to narrow the focus down to assessment in the subject in a school leaving examination.

Some of the philosophy and the issues that surround this type of examination will be discussed as the development of the systems in England and South Africa are traced.

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Public examinations which proliferated in England from about the mid 19th century were designed in the main to set standards which would determine entrance to universities, the professions and the civil service. Through these examinations the growing middle class, and the fortunate few from the working classes able to win scholarships to Grammar Schools, were able to aspire to and achieve in fields of endeavour previously the preserve of the upper classes.

In 1917 the Secondary School Examinations Council was set up to control the various examining boards which offered public examinations at two levels. Firstly there was the School Certificate which was taken at about 16 years of age after four to five years of secondary education. In order to achieve success in this examination at least five subjects had to be passed at one sitting. There was also rigid prescription of the subjects that had to be taken (English, Mathematics, a foreign language, Science and one other subject). On successful completion of this examination, and after two more years of schooling, a pupil could then sit the Higher School Certificate examination where one had to offer three subjects in either a science or arts direction.

Two notable features of the School Certificate examinations were that a "package" of subjects had to be written during one examination period and that an attempt was made to create a balance in a candidate's curriculum by demanding a spread of subjects, which should reflect the needs of "liberal" education.

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In contrast to this the General Certificate of Education system (GCE) initiated in the early 1950's was a "single subject" examination. More able pupils, however, tended to turn into a group or "package" type examination (i.e. where a particular set of subjects is written off during the same examination) because of the requirements of employers or institutions of further education.

The Ordinary level examination ("O" level) was used both for school leaving and employment entering purposes as well as a step to the sixth form which was a specific preparation for university entrance, and so was found almost exclusively in Grammar Schools. For school leaving and employment purposes it was agreed that a pupil need to be examined only in subjects relevant to his future occupation. Even though some pupils used it as a school leaving examination the "O" level was designed to be taken by no more than the top 20% to 25% of the population.

The Advanced level examination ("A" level) was taken after a further two years at school and served as a passport to the universities and the professions. For those going on to the sixth form a minimum of five "O" levels and two "A" levels was required. Although this retained elements of the "package" idea it is important to note that there were no restrictions on how the package was to be made up. At this point it should be noted that although the introduction of the GCE system changed the purpose and structure of school leaving examinations in England, the method of assessment in many subjects hardly changed at all. This point is well illustrated in history where the general essay remained the basic method of assessment.

From the outset teachers at Secondary Modern schools entered their more able pupils for "O" level examinations. With time, however, a growing number of teachers and parents expressed the need for a certificate to which the middle 50% of the population could aspire. It should be something

tangible that they could take with them at the end of their school careers which would indicate what they had achieved in certain subjects. The result was the introduction of the Certificate of Secondary Education (CSE) examination\* in the mid-1960's designed to run parallel with the GCE "O" Level examination, be taken at 16 and to serve all but the top 25% and bottom 25% of the population.

The nature of the CSE system attempted to modify some of the criticism of examinations in general and of the GCE system in particular at that time. Some of these criticisms were that the schools (teachers) had little or no control over the examinations and some teachers even felt that these were out of step with the school system. Many teachers complained of the "backwash" effect of public examinations, in other words: the influence exerted not only on what is taught, but how it is taught (more attention being paid to aspects of subjects that are easily measured). It is important to note that this effect is felt many years before pupils face an external examination.

The Beloe Report of 1960 stated that:

"The examination dictates curriculum and cannot do otherwise: it confines experiment, limits free choice of subject, hampers treatment of subjects, encourages wrong values in the classroom." (Schools Council Working Paper 53, 1975, p.103).

An outstanding feature of the CSE was that it was designed to be controlled by teachers and not its users (e.g. employers)

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\* This was also a "single subject" examination. It was administered by fourteen regional boards in England.

in the hope that a break could be put on the powerful influence exerted by examinations on the curriculum. Ideally the curriculum and syllabuses should exist in their own right, independently of any examining system and examinations should merely serve the curriculum by assessing the extent to which curricular aims and objectives have been achieved. Whether this ideal can ever be achieved is a moot point, but the CSE did set out to be of service to all schools rather than determine what went on in them.

The attempt to meet this ideal can be seen in the development of three (or even four) modes in both CSE and GCE examinations. In Mode 1 the examination board provided the syllabus, set the examination and employed examiners to mark the work. In Mode 2 the school (or the individual teacher) designed the syllabus and the board set and administered the examination. In a Mode 3 examination the school carried out all three functions with the board merely moderating the work and awarding grades based on moderated results. Schools were even allowed to follow what became known as a "Mixed Mode" which consisted of various combinations not provided for in Modes 1, 2 or 3. The Mode 3 type examination became increasingly popular in CSE examinations\* but this option was not often taken up in GSE examinations, although it was also available in that examination system. The major significance of the introduction of both the CSE examination and the mode system is that they gave practising teachers considerable

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\* When expressed as a percentage of all modes, the schools using it rose from 8,9% in 1966 to 21% in 1974. (Smith, C H, 1976).

latitude to experiment with syllabuses and assessment at the "sensitive" school leaving stage. Much of the developmental work that took place in the "new history" did so in the context of CSE examinations and the freedom allowed by the mode system.

Against the background of an increasing trend towards Comprehensive schools in England this dual examination system at 16+ produced some awkward problems such as the difficulty faced by teachers in trying to decide whether a "borderline" pupil should enter the CSE or GCE examination (sometimes these pupils were entered for both which caused further problems for both the pupil and the school). The fact that a grade one pass in the CSE examination was equated with an "O" level pass did not eliminate this problem. Another problem that some teachers faced was having to teach both GCE and CSE syllabuses. More and more people argued that there could be a single examination at 16+. These problems, however, were not dealt with for many years, as will be shown later in this chapter.

After a series of meetings held in 1970 the Schools Council\* resolved to investigate the feasibility of a common system of examination at 16+. The next year the Council issued what turned out to be a very influential document, Examinations Bulletin No 23: "A Common System of Examining at 16 plus".

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\* The Schools Council for the Curriculum and Examinations began its work in 1964. It was entrusted by the government to find ways and means of reviewing and reforming the school curriculum of England.

The document made a strong plea for the retention of some form of significant teacher input into any new system. Drawing a distinction between teacher participation (in the GCE system) and teacher control (over the CSE system) it stated that:

"Regionalism is essential for teacher control. The new system should reflect the best teaching practice, in that the examination should be the servant not the master of the curriculum. This implies teacher involvement at the point in the structure where decisions are taken. Further, if teacher opinion is to be given adequate representation the new system must provide for teacher accountability" (p.15). (Emphasis is that of present author.)

Given this plea for teacher involvement in the new system, the document indicated that cognizance had been taken of the influence that higher education has on school curriculums and examinations.

In the Bulletin, the Schools Council identified seven principles upon which a common system of examinations at 16+ should be based:

1. It should build on what is best in the CSE and GCE "O" level systems.
2. It "should be based on the view that the curriculum comes first and that the purpose of the examination system is to assess the work and the attainments of the pupils..." (p.7).
3. It should provide for a variety of modes of examining.
4. It should make provision for a variety of suitable methods of assessment.
5. It should be controlled by teachers.
6. It should make use of moderating procedures so as to maintain standards.
7. It should provide a measure of attainment.

If a single examination at 16+ were created how would the results be interpreted? The bulletin indicated that a system of grading would be used and made the following recommendations: Firstly, there should not be categories of pass and fail. This would allow users (e.g. employers) to fix their own qualifying levels to the grades. Secondly, there should be between five and nine grades. The system should be designed to assess performance in each subject from the fortieth percentile to the top of the ability range. Thirdly, there should be an unclassified category (i.e. lower than the fortieth percentile).

Before any implementation of such a radical scheme could be considered, it was recognised that aims and particularly objectives would have to be stipulated in greater detail and with much more precision for the examination as a whole and for any particular subject in it. Until this happened the principles linked with assessment methods and levels of attainment could not be realized.

It is interesting to note that this early statement of intent remained central and essentially unchanged when the GCSE examination system was introduced in the mid-1980's.

An important aspect of the document was that it set out a timetable for the introduction of the new examination (p.24-27) beginning in 1971 (i.e. immediately) and ending with the writing of the first examinations in 1977, the new syllabuses having been introduced in the schools in 1975. In fact, the GCSE criteria were published only in 1985 and the first GCSE

examinations were written in 1988. In accounting for this time lag there is an interesting story which illustrates the painful process inherent in any major innovation in education.

The first step in this process was the setting up of studies in different subjects to find ways of assessing across a broad ability range. Although the Department of Education and Science (DES) did not give its approval to the new examination, three examining boards in the north of England decided in 1974 to launch their own joint CSE/GCE "O" level examinations as an experiment (the first to be written in 1976). In 1975 the Schools Council came back into the picture with the publication of "Examinations at 16 plus: proposals for the future. The report of the Joint Examinations Subcommittee of the Schools Council", designed to serve as a discussion document in that the Council would only advise the Secretary of State once it had received responses from all interested parties. These would include the feasibility/developmental studies and experimental examinations already in progress. It also makes the point that a common examination would enable schools to make their own decisions about streaming, banding, setting and mixed ability teaching and to avoid splitting pupils up into GCE and CSE classes early in their secondary school careers. In stressing the urgency in implementing the new examination the report hoped that by 1981 the examination could be fully operational. The reaction to the report can be summarized by saying that there was general agreement on the need for a common examination at 16+ but that there was also a need to

resolve a number of problems with more intensive study:

1. There were doubts about whether the courses for the new examination would form a suitable foundation for sixth form courses.
2. It was pointed out that such a major educational upheaval would be costly.
3. There were those who expressed fears for educational standards. This concern arose, in the main, from doubts expressed about a single examination being able to differentiate adequately over the full ability range that was presently being catered for by two examination systems. The feeling was that a single system would involve a compromise and a consequent shift in standards that would adversely affect those at the top of the GCE range (the new standards would not stretch them) and those at the bottom of the CSE range (they would find the lowest grade of the new system beyond their reach).
4. Some believed that at least five years would be needed to develop appropriate syllabuses to serve the new system.

In the end, economic problems and doubts predominated:

"As the Secretary of State grappled with the problem of public expenditure cuts demanded by the Treasury, he received a recommendation from the Schools Council to set up a new examination system at 16 plus, the costs of which are unknown and the structure uncertain." ("Education", 16 July 1976, p.53).

Education Minister, Mrs Shirley Williams, decided not to give immediate approval to the new scheme but appointed a "steering group", the Waddell Committee, to make a study of the proposals of the Schools Council. In justifying her decision, she wrote: "it is more important to make the right decision than a quick one" and that "a revised scheme would have to last for the rest of the century". ("Education", 29 October 1976). These words seem ironic in the light of the fact that when the "revised scheme" eventually did come into operation there was not much of the century left and it seemed destined to be eclipsed by reform on a greater scale, The National Curriculum.

Matters seemed to be reaching finality in 1978 when, in July of that year, the Waddell Committee issued its report urging the government to take action. Despite lively political and educational debate, the Government published a White Paper in October proposing to set up the single examination system. There was, however, a further delay caused this time by politics in the form of a Conservative Party victory in the election of May 1979. Mrs Margaret Thatcher, a previous Secretary of State for Education, gained an easy victory and by July Mr Carlisle, her Secretary for Education, decided to suspend implementation of the new examination on the grounds that it would not guarantee standards. The next year he announced his version of a common 16+ examination but the matter stalled again under Sir Keith Joseph, his successor as Secretary of State for Education, over the question of the national criteria and upholding standards. In a draft policy document published at the end of March 1982, four tests by which a single system must be judged were set out:

- " - to do justice to all pupils in the range of ability for which GCE and CSE examinations are designed;
- to set standards at least equal to those of existing examinations at 16 plus;
- to promote good educational practice and give schools and pupils an incentive to demonstrate their attainments;
- to make arrangements intelligible to parents and employers and demonstrably more efficient in the use of resources than the present arrangements."

("Education", 2 April 1982).

In effect, Sir Keith Joseph's tests for acceptability do not differ significantly from the seven principles of the 1971 Schools Council Bulletin No 23. Each of his points is

contained either explicitly or implicitly in the earlier publication.

Finally, in June 1984, the government gave approval to a single examination at 16+. The General Certificate of Secondary Education system (GCSE) would have four outstanding characteristics:

1. Fewer examining bodies or boards.
2. Syllabuses based on national criteria.  
These criteria are a nationally agreed framework based on agreed principles which all syllabuses must follow. The criteria laid down that any syllabus should be distinct from the syllabus of any other subject and they must include:
  - a. A statement of educational aims,
  - b. A sufficient body of knowledge,
  - c. A sufficient range of skills,
 and the above should readily translate into a set of educational objectives:
3. Differentiated assessment to stretch the most able and motivate the less able.
4. The results will be allocated to grades related to the extent to which the pupils can meet pre-determined syllabus criteria. The technical term used for this is grade related criteria. Some of the implications of this system will become apparent as this thesis unfolds.

Even though there were those who claimed that the final steps to the first examinations were carried out with far too much speed, the lead up to the first examinations in June 1988 - eighteen years after the Schools Council resolution - was relatively smooth; however, even at its birth, the new system seemed to have an unsure future. If in the past it had been bedeviled by economics and politics, it was now threatened by "an enemy in its own camp - in fact the leader of its camp - as it were" - its camp being education, its leader, the curriculum: The National Curriculum. At best the GCSE will survive with some modification, at worst

the whole examination system (including GCE "A" levels) faces another major upheaval. The new system really does seem to have been an unfortunate victim of the times.

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By comparison with England, there has been a relative absence of major reform in the South African school leaving examinations system (since 1910). Only the establishment of the Joint Matriculation Board (JMB) and the introduction of a differentiated system of education would seem to qualify as truly significant developments.

It is interesting to note that the Joint Matriculation Board was established in 1916, a year before the Secondary Schools Examinations Council in England. Both bodies had as their prime function, the facilitating of the transition between secondary and university education; both offered a "package" type examination designed to ensure a spread of subjects over the curriculum, a "liberal education"; both were prepared for only a limited number of candidates that would enter school leaving examinations each year and were therefore subject to increasing strain over the years because of the rapid increase in numbers entering school leaving examinations and the wide range of ability of candidates attempting these examinations.

South Africa, however, with the exception of the implementation of differentiated education in the early 1970's, has tried fewer alternatives in dealing with the assessment problem, and as yet, none as radical as the GCE, CSE and GCSE. It is possible that the proposed South African

Certification Council, designed to take the place of the JMB and due to begin functioning in the early 1990's, may be forced seriously to consider more radical approaches to assessment at the school leaving stage.

A feature of the composition of the JMB is that a large proportion of its members were (and still are) drawn from the universities. In 1973 the Board was made up of forty-four members, twenty-seven representing the universities and seventeen the education departments and the schools (Malherbe, E G, 1977, p.429). This made sense in the early years when the Board was primarily concerned with what was essentially a university entrance examination. In more recent times the heavy university influence on the Board has come in for criticism mainly because this is considered to be at odds with a school leaving examination that no longer only caters for those wishing to go to university. Malherbe (1977) commented as follows on this matter:

"Throughout its history, the matriculation examination has been dogged by a conflict between the interests of the schools that have to cater for the many, and the interests of the universities that have to cater for the few." (p.431).

The criticism is that the universities have too much say in syllabuses, examinations and subject groupings (curriculum) with the result that the school curriculum is too rigid and too academic (Behr and MacMillan, 1966, pp.73-4).

In the early 1920's the feeling grew that JMB examinations were out of touch with school reality and the Cape and Transvaal introduced their own examinations and certificates. However, the JMB still had to oversee these exams (e.g. by

approving syllabuses and moderating examination papers). At first many schools were not keen on these examinations and still entered pupils for JMB examinations, but in 1932 the Cape made it compulsory for the pupils at government schools in the province to enter its examinations. Natal was the last province to introduce its own school leaving and matriculation examinations in 1953, the Orange Free State having done so in 1939.

At this stage it must be stressed again that the matriculation/school leaving examinations in South Africa have always been of the group or "package" type. Over the years changes have been made to matriculation and school leaving requirements such as the pass mark in individual subjects and the aggregate, and also in subject groupings, but the basic approach, even after the introduction of the differentiated system, has remained the same.

As already mentioned in the previous chapter, pressure gradually built up against the narrow nature of secondary education in South Africa, public examinations at times being the focus of particular attention. In 1938 a study showed a poor correlation between matriculation results and the success of first year students at university and in 1948 the De Villiers Commission reported scathingly that:

"They [matriculation examinations] do not measure what they purport to measure and consequently cheat the schoolmaster, the scholar, the employer and the university professor" (Malherbe, E G, 1977, p.469).

This was often argued as a case of trying to serve too many masters and ending up by actually serving none. One of the reasons for the introduction of the system of differentiated education in 1971 was to broaden education in an effort to serve the various clients better. It is at the senior secondary level that the full effects of differentiation is felt. Most subjects are offered on two levels, higher grade and standard grade. In very simple terms, the idea is that a higher grade course is more academic in terms of its content and methods of assessment. This enables the final school leaving examination to discriminate better between those aiming at matriculation (technically 3 out of 6, but in many cases - often all - of their subjects being on the higher grade) and those only interested in a school leaving certificate (most of their subjects on the standard grade).

While there is no doubt that the introduction of the differentiated system gave more meaning to examinations, thirteen years of working in the system has exposed its limitations in terms of the changing face of South Africa. The acceptance of the government of the De Lange recommendation for a "council for standards, evaluation and certification" is encouraging. In accepting the necessity for such a body, the White Paper (1983) declared:

"While the JMB is primarily a national body for determining school-leaving standards with a view to university entrance, it exercises a strong, indirect influence on the overall school system and indirectly also sets the standards for admission to other tertiary institutions.

It is desirable that the new certifying council should introduce more nuances into the standards for withdrawal from the school system and entry to the labour market and for admission to institutions for tertiary education ....

The Government considers it essential for the certifying council to have significant research capacity with a view to the drawing up of scientifically acceptable curricula" (pp.10-11).

It would seem that such a council may have the capacity to initiate and generate meaningful examinations and even curriculum reform once it takes over from the JMB in the early 1990's.

The tenor of the criticism of the South African school leaving examination system has been overwhelming in the direction that one examination cannot meet the needs of all candidates. It would, however, seem important that in our search for a better system, we take careful note of the English experience where, after a period of about twenty years (1965 to 1985) in which there were two examination systems supposedly catering for different needs, there has been a recent return to a single system for all pupils at 16+.

## CHAPTER 3

HISTORY AS A SCHOOL SUBJECT: SYLLABUS EVOLUTION IN ENGLAND  
OLD IDEAS BECOME THE "NEW" HISTORY

The purpose of this developmental section of the thesis is to describe and account for the growth of the "new" history in England since 1970 in order to understand more fully the meaning of this term "the new history" and also to achieve deeper insight into the present situation of the senior secondary syllabuses.

From the mid-1970's the term "new history" was increasingly used, in a general sense, to describe the movement away from the chronology-bound and content-based approach to the subject at school, and more specifically to describe the work of the British Schools Council. Jenkins and Brickley (1988) defined two types of history:

- a. "Traditional" history with its heavy national content, chronological base and factually accumulated knowledge and
- b. "New" history where the subject is seen as one that focuses on a process (i.e. historical enquiry) not a product (i.e. the facts of the past). The past is seen as a resource for creative activity with an emphasis on constructing a range of histories from a range of sources.

The use of the word "new" in this context can be dangerously misleading as it gives the impression that history teachers of recent times have discovered something completely new in the subject. This is not the case at all. If one analyses the "new" history one finds that many of its facets\* (see p. 48 for footnote) are based on ideas that had their origins in the early part of this century.

Criticism of history as a school subject is certainly nothing new. In 1807 Baldwin commented: "Too long have their tender memories been loaded with a variety of minute particulars which, as they excite no passion in the mind, and present no picture, can be learned only to forget" (Steele, I, 1976, p.1). This kind of criticism has, over the years, elicited many varied responses from history teachers. Adamson made a plea for teaching history backwards (i.e. with the present as the starting point) in 1912, a year after Gooche's "History of our Time" suggested topical relevance in the subject. Keating, in his "Studies in the teaching of history" (1910), advocated the use of evidence, inquiry methods and the development of historical skills, and in 1911 "A history of England for schools with documents, problems and exercises" was published to give effect to this approach. In 1927 F C Happold appealed for "historical training" rather than a "mere teaching of history" in schools. He emphasised the importance of pupil activity, projects and independent work, and was one of a number of teachers and academics who expressed disquiet at the way history was examined (i.e. the testing of content through essay questions). Ten years after

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\* Aspects of the "new" history that can be traced back to ideas that were developed before World War Two:

- A. New approaches to content
  - (i) A break with the chronological "march through the ages".
  - (ii) A stress on contemporary history.
- B. The idea of developing skills by exposing children to evidence from the past.
- C. A focus on the nature of historical enquiry rather than on the story of the past.

the first School Certificate examination, Happold (1928) made some practical suggestions in an essay entitled "A new type of question in history papers" where he advocated questions based on documents which he believed could test the critical faculties of children. As Lamont points out, these ideas had no immediate impact:

"Sixty teachers who met at Oxford in 1930 ... resolve[d] to keep intelligence and history apart: they expressed their approval of the conventional examination papers" (Ballard, M, 1971, p.193).

If the novelty of the "new" history does not lie in the ideas that form its base, where then does it lie? The answer is perhaps to be found in the fact that these ideas have not remained in the "ivory towers" but have penetrated into the everyday classroom and (more importantly) into the examination hall, exposing many teachers and pupils to this much broadened approach to history at school. To these teachers and pupils this history is "new".

The "new history" may be summarised as a method which uses varied approaches to content and also uses the raw material of the past (evidence) to introduce children to the process of historical inquiry, and so helping them to become proficient in the skills linked to such a process. It also aims to familiarize them with concepts inherent in history. Children become familiar with aspects of the past (product) and with the way in which the past is recreated (process).

\* \* \* \* \*

Before considering how the varied approaches to content developed or how skills, concepts and the extensive use of sources came to be introduced into history at school, one

needs to study carefully the role of "major influencing factors" which have contributed to the "new history movement". It may be argued that there are four such factors:

1. Periods of crisis for history as a school subject, as perceived by teachers;
2. The continuing academic debate on the nature of history;
3. The research findings of developmental psychologists;
4. Work pioneered by Bloom and his co-workers in the 1950's in developing a taxonomy of educational objectives and tailored by Coltham and Fines in 1971 to suit history in particular.

\* \* \* \* \*

During the 1960's, history teachers in England became particularly concerned about the survival of their subject in the school curriculum where its continued existence seemed to be threatened by increasing demands made by "new" disciplines (e.g. computer studies, sociology) for a place in the curriculum. In a world in which science and technology had become increasingly prominent, history seemed particularly vulnerable. The idea of integrated studies developed by curriculum theorists seemed to offer a solution to the pressure on the curriculum. History was sometimes combined, along with other subjects such as economics and geography, in an integrated subject, "social studies". This was not an acceptable solution to many history teachers. A consequence of all this pressure was that a number of history specialists were forced to reflect deeply upon their subject. Initially the picture they presented was a bleak one and if anything

this tended to heighten the crisis.\*

There were, however, those who refused to be consumed by this pessimism even though they had to face up to criticism that history is fit for adults only; it is a dead subject because of its heavy reliance on memorization; it is irrelevant to modern life; it is dull. The changing nature of history as a school subject in England at the present moment (1989) and the fact that history has been accepted as a "foundation subject"\*\* in the "National Curriculum"\*\* is largely the result of the extensive work of these people.

\* \* \* \* \*

The nature of any school subject will obviously be influenced by the ongoing academic debate on its nature. It is quite possible that the pure content-based approach of the "traditional" history owes its origins and its longevity to the powerful influence of 19th Century historians such as Leopold von Ranke who believed that it was possible to

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\* Examples of this bleak picture are the publication between 1965 and 1967 of "The teaching of history in secondary schools" (Third Edition) by the Incorporated Association of Assistant Masters and "Studies in the Nature and Teaching of History" by Burston and Thompson, as well as Professor Barraclough's address to the Historical Association ("History and the Common Man") in the same period. All these focused on the inadequacies of the syllabus then in use (Ballard, M, 1971, p.194). Mary Price's article "History in danger", which appeared in 1968 furthered this concern. In 1969 Fines noted:

"Above all the same nonsensical methods decried years ago continue in schools: notes are dictated, passages learned off by heart, vast periods are scampered over so quickly that no real understanding can possibly be achieved, and the fetish of chronological sequence holds sway in spite of everything that has been said against it."  
(Steele, I, 1976, p.2).

\*\* These terms will be expanded upon in Chapter 5.

achieve an objective truth. For pupils at school, objectivity lay in the body of facts handed on to them by academic historians which reached them through the medium of the text book. The basic premise behind "traditional" history was that the purpose of history teaching was to impart information. "History education was the teaching of content" (Rosenzweig, L W, Weiland, T P, 1986, p.266). The focus was very firmly on the "product" of history.

Over the years the idea that history is a body of knowledge has been questioned and rejected by numerous academics and practising history teachers. To the advocates of the "new" history, there was more to the subject than the product. Their focus widened to include the process of history.

While there was agreement about there being a product and a process aspect in history, there was little regarding the exact nature of each or of the relationship and balance that should exist between the two in a course of history at school. When Burston (1954) wrote that "subjects may be distinguished either by the field of knowledge they study ... or by their aims and methods" (p.10-11), he did not go on to define either. In 1963 he advocated a move away from the content-based approach when he wrote that "history does not consist of a series of basic facts which everyone should know, but rather involves the imaginative recreation and understanding of the life of some past community" (Burston, W H, 1963, p.137).

Watts (1972) pointed out that defining history in terms of content was out of date. He claimed, however, that any definition of history in terms of "technique" would be problematical as history did not have such a unique technique. He developed a definition of history in terms of response: The response of the investigation grounded in the reality of the past (p.43).

The Assistant Master's Association (1975) also supported this approach to history: "If history in schools is regarded as an approach to knowledge rather than a body of knowledge, then it will be of great value" (p.5); ten years later Thompson argued similarly: "The focus of study in schools should not be on the past as such and what has happened, but rather on how we come to acquire our knowledge of the past" (Dickinson, A K, et al, 1984, p.169); and in the same year Her Majesty's Inspectorate (1985) claimed: "History is concerned not with the conveying of accepted facts but with the making of informed judgements, and to the displaying of the evidence on which those judgements are made" (p.1). Earlier Limm (1980), however, pointed out all these claims for history as a recreation of the past are not clear cut:

"However, though there may be agreement that history is a process, there has been disagreement as to the nature of that process. How historical 'facts' are established, what constitutes explanation and understanding in history, and what criteria are used for selection are all unsettled areas in the philosophy of history". (p.27).

Perhaps the most important of all is the possibility that the shift in emphasis from product to process may have played a part in causing a fundamental change in the nature of history as a school subject. Boyce (1986), in South Africa, made it

quite clear that history was not a structural or "building block" subject where certain skills and concepts have to be mastered before you proceed to the next stage, and his view was supported by Watts (1972)) who wrote:

"... sequential and hierarchical structures of knowledge, building up from lower-order to higher-order principles, which are very useful in analysing learning in mathematics, the sciences, languages and some of the social sciences ..., are simply not relevant to history." (p.49).

Recent developments, however, indicate that the "new" history may well have elements of structure in its make up. Certain history specialists working in close collaboration with developmental psychologists are exploring such possibilities. Evidence of this work can be seen in the age-graded objectives for history teaching to be found in a number of publications\* and in the concept of "attainment targets" in the National Curriculum.\*\* On the other side of the Atlantic, Rosenzweig and Weinland (1986) felt that history was not being "consistently taught" as pupils moved from standard to standard and they made the following suggestion:

"History curriculum developers must think more in terms of building skills and experiences related to a child's developmental level in a consistent twelve-year process." (p.272).

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\* Publications such as:

- A. Sylvester, D, (1980).
- B. Lally, J, and West, J. (1981).
- C. "History in the primary and secondary years: An HMI view" (1985).

\*\* "Attainment targets cover the range of knowledge, skills and understanding which pupils should be expected and helped to master as they progress through school" (National Curriculum, 1989, para 3.11) (Present author's emphasis).

Though the National Curriculum seems set to turn every subject into a more or less structured subject, it is by no means certain that history will easily fit this mould. There is much work yet for the "psychological/history" partnership.

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An outstanding feature of modern education is the fact that the growing child with his developing needs and capabilities has come to occupy the central position in the education process. No longer is it good enough to subject a child to the rigours of an academic discipline without careful thought being given to the ability of that child to cope with, and benefit from, such an exposure. Very often this results in considerable adaptation of academic subjects for use in schools. This is a result of the research partnership that exists between those working in the field of developmental psychology and those in education.

The work of Jean Piaget has had considerable impact on teaching practice. Although it is true that teachers of history have, in many cases, considerably refined his ideas after having been influenced by the work of other psychologists and, also, by applying their own specialist and common sense knowledge of their subject and the classroom, it is equally true that his work has not been totally rejected by any history specialist. It is thus important that Piagetian theory and its impact on the teaching of history, should be considered briefly.

According to Piaget, there are three basic stages to the

cognitive development of a child:

1. Pre-operational (2-7 years)
2. Concrete operations (7-11,5 years)
3. Formal operations (11,5 years onwards)

At the pre-operational stage no concepts\* are formed, the child just builds an increasing number of mental representations in his mind. The stage of concrete\*\* operations is characterised by an ability to organize thoughts. Thinking grows from what the child can perceive through his senses. Piaget believed that logical deductive reasoning began from the age of seven onwards but at this (concrete) stage, the child only had the ability to deal with the observable and tangible. At the stage of formal operations, the individual developed the ability to generate thinking processes in his own mind; to think in the abstract, suggest possibilities and deduce general covering laws.

During the 1960's various researchers in the field of history teaching based their work on Piagetian theory. As a result of their work, the future of history as a school subject began to look very bleak indeed.

Hallam's research led him to conclude that in history children reached the stage of concrete operations at about

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\* A concept is a generalization which arises when we organize (operate on) the mental representations that exist as a result of a number of experiences.

\*\* The word "concrete" is understood to mean available at first-hand, often tangible, experience.

twelve, while the formal operational stage was only reached between 16,2 and 16,6, clearly much later than the ages suggested by Piaget for other disciplines. Later research indicated that many children did not even reach this stage at sixteen, the final year at school for many (Honeybone, M, 1971, pp.148-149). A reason offered for this discrepancy is the fact that Piaget did his experiments on subjects operating physical experiments in the natural sciences and thus the thinking of the subjects was always concerned with the concrete whereas history exists largely in the mind. Research showed that "... children develop the capacity to think in the abstract rather later in history than in other areas of the curriculum, and it is likely that many children leave school still operating at the concrete operational level" (Steele, I, 1976, p.16).

Although many history teachers became pessimistic about their subject at school, there were those who accepted what they saw as a challenge to take a critical look at the nature of history as a school subject and at Piagetian theory. Some, who accepted the basic validity of Piaget's theory, investigated the possibility of accelerating a child from one level of thinking to another through a particular syllabus and through teaching strategies designed for this purpose.\* Others have focused their criticism on Piagetian theory and have found it weak in the following areas:

1. Its emphasis on physical activity.
2. Its rigid stages through which all must pass.
3. Its ignoring of the different kinds of thinking required in different subjects.

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\* The approach of the Schools Council 13-16 Project is a good example.

The Schools Council researchers were critical of the findings of early Piagetian researchers as they said that this research was done in a period when teachers were concentrating on transmitting a body of knowledge and not necessarily trying to improve the thinking abilities of their pupils. Implicit in this criticism is the claim that if you design a course in history accordingly, that is if you change the methodology, you can improve the thinking ability of children, and this is what they set out to do.

History teachers came to reject the pure content-based approach of the "traditional" syllabus as they generally agreed that history is not an established set of facts from the past. Researchers who developed the Schools Council History 13-16 syllabus, believed that all one could say about history is that "it is about the human past ... and it involves the concept of time past" (A new look at history, 1976, p.16). Martin Booth rejected the idea that history was in any way a problem-solving subject. The function of the historian is "... to recreate a credible understanding of the world we have lost" (Portal, C, 1987, p.27). He saw the historian as a creative artist who needs imagination and historical knowledge.

A consequence of this departure from the content based approach to history at school was that the seeming stranglehold that the Piagetian approach had over the subject was broken simply because it could not be rigidly applied to the "new" history, as the type of thinking required in this approach was much broader. History concerns thinking about

human relations and society and this calls for speculative reasoning and directed imagination.

Martin Booth saw a Piagetian approach as "limiting and restricting" as it dealt with only "a small part of what it means to think historically ... there is a place for such rigorous, logical thinking but to concern ourselves with this alone is to rule out a range of imaginative and empathetic elements which bring the dry bones of the past to life and turn historical knowledge into historical understanding" (Portal, C, 1987, p.26).

Two areas important for the teaching of history that Piaget's theories tended to ignore and which have received some attention from other researchers, are those of the imagination (the affective domain) and creativity (inductive reasoning).

Researchers such as Vygotsky and Bruner clearly influenced Watts (1972) who identified two basic types of thinking: A - thinking of the expressive arts and R - thinking of logico-mathematical reasoning. In history, he claimed that a combination of these thinking types is used (AR thinking). He argued that "pre-operational, associational thinking enables the child to make sense of non-observable, non-experienced, even abstract concepts" (p.31) and that it is therefore possible to start teaching history at an early age, even before the emergence of operational thinking at about age seven. This is done by building history around stereotypes which "are distinctive, colourful memory aids to

children, and are clues to stored associations" (p.92). "These stereotypes are enriched by further associations and refined and actualized by experience" (p.31).

A criticism of the Piagetian approach is that it ignores the fact that history is essentially a creative subject. Piaget focused on the ability of children to "problem solve", to practise deduction (analysis) rather than induction (synthesis). The ability of children to be creative (in the sense of synthesis) and the thinking processes involved in this kind of activity were ignored.

Booth argued that inductive thought is what the historian engages in as he tries to build up a picture of the past. He is practising synthesis (i.e. putting together the story of the past) rather than analysis. At school, children can experience this by being exposed to open-ended situations. Inductive thought at an abstract level can be attained at fifteen and can be assessed but it is dependent on:

1. Knowledge of the period (facts).
2. An understanding of the concepts of the period.

Booth comes to the conclusion that "our history teaching should concentrate on the acquisition of knowledge and concepts but should give frequent opportunities for the use of this information in an inductive context" (Booth, M, 1978, p.8).

A major weakness of Piagetian theory from the point of view of the "new history" then, is that it ignores inductive thinking. However, as has already been pointed out, the existence of age-graded objectives as a vital component of

the "new" approach is indicative of the fact that the fundamentals of Piagetian theory remain valid for some who have been involved in the "new history" movement. At the same time, the refinement and broadening of Piaget's ideas cannot be ignored in the light of the profound influence this has had on the development of the "new history" which, in turn, has contributed to the growth of these ideas in developmental psychology. At the time of writing, it would seem that the "psychological-historical" partnership still has much ground to cover in trying to unravel the realities of the developing mind and it seems reasonable to suggest that one can expect a rich harvest from this partnership in the next decade.

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A prominent feature of current history syllabuses in England is a statement of assessment objectives. This can be traced back to the work of Bloom (1956) and Coltham and Fines (1971) who can be considered to be pioneers in the development of general educational objectives (Bloom) and in the tailoring of educational objectives to suit History in particular (Coltham and Fines). Their work has had a profound impact on the way in which the "new history" has developed and for that reason deserves special consideration.

For many years, the method of syllabus construction was that a statement of syllabus content was preceded by a number of very general aims for its study. These aims, however, said very little about what pupils actually did in the classroom. As a result of work done by people like Bloom, it is now commonly demanded that aims are translated into objectives

that have meaning in the classroom. It is important, therefore, to define the terms: aim and objective.

An aim is a general expression of intent, an expression of what we are trying to achieve through a whole course of work. Aims tend to be expressed more vaguely than objectives and they are also less finely focused. An example of a broad aim behind a course of history may be "to develop an appreciation and understanding of the past."

An objective, on the other hand, while also being an expression of intent, is more precise than an aim. Objectives normally derive from aims (i.e. aims are broken down and more precisely expressed) and more often than not reflect what a teacher is trying to achieve in a much shorter span of time (e.g. a unit of lessons or an individual lesson). An objective derived from the aim above could be expressed: "to understand the causes of World War Two after a study of international relations during the 1930's."

Objectives themselves may be divided into two categories. Firstly, there is the non-behavioural types which tend to be more open-ended and which do not specify the precise behaviour that the pupil should display (the objective just cited would qualify as an example of this type). Secondly, there are behavioural objectives which indicate precisely what the child will be able to do at the end of a learning experience. These objectives are the most finely focused and precisely expressed and tend to reflect what a teacher is trying to achieve in a short span of time (e.g. a

lesson or part of a lesson). The example of the non-behavioural objective could produce the following behavioural objective (BO): "After studying a document relating to the Munich Conference of 1938, a map showing the countries of Europe in 1938 and a series of cartoons commenting on the conference, the pupils must write down the names of the countries that were (a) directly affected and (b) indirectly affected by decisions made at the conference, and they should in a third column (c) be able to give some sort of explanation as to why they have placed each country in column (a) or (b)."

If aims reflect what we are trying to achieve through a study of history and determine the nature of the basic structure of the course (i.e. syllabus) being studied, objectives reflect what we are trying to achieve in a teaching situation. They will determine the content of a lesson, and will influence the teaching strategy of that lesson and the methods of evaluation that will assess the effectiveness of that lesson.

In the 1950's, Bloom and his co-workers developed a taxonomy of educational objectives for the cognitive domain.\* The basic skill of the taxonomy is the acquisition of knowledge which then develops through comprehension, application, analysis and synthesis to the most sophisticated of the

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\* The cognitive domain has to do with the skills of the mind and range from knowing through remembering, thinking and problem-solving to creating.

objectives which is the ability of a person to practise evaluation.

Bloom saw the taxonomy as "a classification of student behaviours which represent intended outcomes of the education process" and he believed that "curriculum builders should find that taxonomy helps them to specify objectives so that it becomes easier to plan learning experiences and prepare evaluation devices" (Bloom, B S, 1956, pp. 12 and 2). He also believed that the taxonomy would help educators discuss problems with the curriculum and evaluation with greater precision.

The work of Bloom, the curriculum reform movement of the 1960's (which produced Nuffield science and the "new mathematics") and various schemes of integrated work in the humanities also influenced history teachers in England. Some of the results were:

1. Increasing use of source material in history teaching.
2. Syllabus experimentation.
3. A search for more valid forms of assessment.

The pamphlet published by Coltham and Fines in 1971 formed a theoretical basis for this re-thinking. According to Betts (1982) the pamphlet "provided a rationale for the rejection of chronology by the Schools Council History 13-16 Project team" and he also noted that Gunning (1978) had applied Bloom's taxonomy to historical studies "with the intention of making history skills-based rather than chronology-based". (p.10).

Coltham and Fines (1971) said that an educational objective

describes:

1. What a learner can do as a result of having learned.
2. What an observer can see the learner doing so that he can assess whether the objective has been achieved and it indicates
3. The educational experience that the learner requires if he is to achieve the objective.

Working from this definition they put forward a four part structure in which various objectives could be fitted:

1. Attitudes
2. The nature of the subject
3. Skills and abilities
4. Educational outcomes

Although a glance at Table 1 will show that Eggleston and Kerr were the first researchers to publish their ideas on educational objectives in history teaching, later literature on this subject leaves one in no doubt at all that the Coltham and Fines booklet had the greater impact. The table gives some idea of the extent of the interest that was generated by the work of Coltham and Fines. It is interesting to note that while the early theorists from Eggleston and Kerr (1969) to Roberts (1972) did not link their objectives to "age stages", this has become the vogue with those writing in the 1980's. It seems clear that despite the criticism of the Piagetian approach it still exerts a strong influence on the thinking about what children can be expected to do at different "age" stages.

TABLE I

## OBJECTIVES IN HISTORY TEACHING : A COMPARATIVE TABLE

SOURCE	ATTITUDES	NATURE OF DISCIPLINE	SKILLS AND ABILITIES	EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES	OTHER
Eggleston and Kerr (1969)	Interest, Enthusiasm Persistence <u>Empathy</u>		Knowledge of facts <u>Fact finding</u> Visual Awareness/ Observation Description	Understanding: Cause and effect (motivation) Relevance of history to present day Understanding view of other places and times Understanding maps and diagrams	
Coltham and Fines (1971)	Attending Responding <u>Imagining (Empathy)</u>	Nature of Information Organizing procedures Products	<u>Vocabulary</u> <u>Analysis *</u> <u>References</u> <u>Extrapolation</u> <u>Memorisation</u> <u>Synthesis</u> <u>Comprehension</u> <u>Judgement/</u> <u>Translation</u> <u>Evaluation</u>	Insight Knowledge of Values Reasoned judgement	*Analysis and evidence are seen as the same skill
Macintosh (1971)	<u>Empathy</u>		Knowledge of facts: of historical interpretations of relationships (i.e. cause and effect)  <u>Fact Finding</u> <u>Criticise Evidence</u> (i.e. detect bias, conflict, gaps) Translate Evidence (i.e. from graph form to written form) <u>Analysis and Synthesis</u>		
Roberts (1972)	<u>Historical imagination</u> ( <u>Empathy</u> )		<u>Analysis</u>	Historical origins of political/social problems Concept of Change Concept of Causation Comprehension	

SOURCE	ATTITUDES	NATURE OF DISCIPLINE	SKILLS AND ABILITIES	EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES	OTHER
Sylvester (1980)	<u>Empathy</u> (12-14)		<u>Reference and Information Finding</u> (12-18) <u>Chronology</u> (12-14) <u>Language</u> (12-18) <u>Evidence</u> (12-16) <u>Synthesis</u> (12-18)	Empathetic Understanding (16-18) Historiography (18)	
Lally and West (1981)			<u>Time</u> (9-13) <u>Authenticity</u> (9-11) <u>Evidence</u> (9-13) <u>Observation</u> (9-11) <u>Deduction</u> (9) <u>Vocabulary</u> (9-13)	Concepts (9-11)	
HMI view (1985)	<u>Empathy</u> (8-16)		<u>Chronology</u> (8-14) <u>Reference and Information Finding</u> (8-16) <u>Analysis of Evidence</u> (8-16) <u>Synthesis</u> (8-16) <u>Language and Historical Ideas</u> (8-16) <u>Asking historical questions</u> (8-16)	Note: Many of the skills and abilities develop to a level where insight and understanding are required	

## NOTES TO TABLE I

- For the sake of comparison, the objectives of the various authors have been forced into the framework of Coltham and Fines. The appendix is therefore the author's own interpretation of the objectives given in each source.
- No attempt has been made to analyse table I in detail as this was considered to be beyond the scope of the thesis.
- The heavy concentration in the skills and abilities section would tend to confirm one of the major weaknesses of objectives in history teaching (i.e. limited attention to the affective domain).
- Seven sources have been compared. Objectives underlined in:
  - Red appear in six sources
  - Green appear in five sources
  - Blue appear in four sources
  - Black appear in three sources
- The figures in brackets after a particular objective represent the age range considered by that author to be most appropriate in which to work towards that objective.

As is the case with any pioneering work, that of Coltham and Fines has been subjected to some fierce criticism. Dickinson and Lee (1978) claim that precise objectives are very difficult to formulate in history:

"The complex thought processes involved in exercising judgement ... - in deciding on the weight to be given to a range of different considerations, cannot be represented by a list of behaviours." (p.29).

They further claim that the objectives approach will distort history:

"We think that the fully-fledged 'behavioural' objectives approach offers only spurious precision, and that it is likely to do more harm than good by distorting history for the purposes of assessment" (p.37).

They are also critical of the Coltham and Fines pamphlet itself:

"a major difficulty in discussing their pamphlet is that their sometimes rather vague analysis results in a number of contradictions" (p.36), and "Coltham and Fines are presenting less a list of objectives than a partial analysis of history" (p.37).

A further difficulty is the sheer number and range of possible objectives. The literature on this topic that has appeared since 1971, gives one an idea of the extent of this problem (see comparative list of objectives in Table 1). A comparison of the categories of objectives offered by various writers will show that there is a certain amount of agreement but that we are nowhere near a universal set of objectives and, in a subject like history, one wonders whether this is attainable.

Writing more than a decade after the publication of the "objectives pamphlet", Fines (1983) gave three reasons why the use of objectives is important in history teaching:

1. For effective assessment.
2. To help keep teachers within the confines of their discipline (Is an approach doing justice to the nature of history?)
3. To facilitate further development in the teaching of history.

While conceding that there are problems inherent in such an approach, he lists three particular problems (p.164):

1. Drawbacks from splitting a "unitary discipline" into many parts.
2. The difficulty of reducing certain elements of history to objectives and the consequent danger of those elements being ignored.
3. Few objectives defined for history can be said to be unique to the subject.

While the whole issue of objectives was (and remains) a controversial one, there is no doubting its influence on the "new history movement" in England. Evidence of this can be found in numerous writings some of which are referred to in Table 1. It will also be shown later in this thesis that the National Criteria - General Criteria of the GCSE demands that in the syllabus for each subject there shall be a statement of assessment objectives. The attainment targets of the new National Curriculum are also likely to be expressed in the form of objectives.

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In tracing the development of the "new history" in England, one is struck by the significance of the appearance of the Schools Council History 13-16 syllabus in 1975. This can indeed be seen as an event that firmly established the respectability of the "new history". Up to this point, development in history syllabuses had revolved around different approaches to content. There were variations in what went into syllabuses and also in the way in which those syllabuses were organized. It was in going beyond a pure content-based approach that the Schools Council Researchers

broke new ground. Before considering the Schools Council approach it would be useful, therefore, to review these content developments as content must be an important element - some may feel that it is the fundamental element - in any history syllabus.

History only began to be taught in its own right in the 19th Century where the emphasis was on Britain as a great power (studied through military and diplomatic history) and the guardian of liberty (studied through constitutional and political history). The 20th Century saw a broadening of the scope of the subject to include social and economic history as well as, particularly after World War Two, the history of other countries in their own right. This was mainly as a result of, and in order to cope with, living in a shrinking world. As a result of the work of academic historians of the scientific school, the subject has also been studied at greater depth than ever before. The 20th Century knowledge explosion has certainly not passed the history teacher by and he has ever increasingly been faced with large volumes of content.

The "traditional", chronologically-based, "sweep through the ages" syllabus came increasingly under pressure. Those who claimed that, as far as possible the past should be studied in its entirety with as few artificial divisions as possible, found it difficult to counter the criticism that if one were to strive to achieve this at school it would cause the subject to be studied in such a superficial way that the whole exercise would have very little meaning. Teachers

influenced by the work of Piaget criticised the fact that this approach ignored the child:

"... the choice of material for the child is determined, not by the intellectual or emotional capacity of the learner, but by the sequence of historical events".  
(Boyce, A N, 1968, p.35).

Those who clung to the chronological-outline syllabus believed that this was the best way to lay a framework that was necessary for "a future study of history". Their belief was also grounded in the idea that history is a study of development.

Some teachers began to experiment with variations on the chronological theme, three of the more significant being:

1. The line of development approach
2. The "patch", era or topic approach and
3. The regressive approach.

Steele (1976) pointed out that each of these approaches has its strengths and weaknesses, and that each is therefore capable of serving particular purposes better than the others. It is up to the teacher to choose the most appropriate approach, given his aims and objectives for a particular course or course segment.

A study of the development of transport in Britain is an example of the first variation. Supporters of this variation believed that it was superior to the "traditional" approach in that it allowed for a study in more depth without sacrificing the important (to them) aspect of chronology. Critics, however, believed that the gloomy prognosis thrown up by researches interested in the ability of children to handle time concepts indicated that an approach should be

found where chronology played a less significant role.

In the topic approach a shorter period of the past is the subject of a detailed study. An example of a topic that could be approached in this way is "Elizabethan England". Such a study would enable the pupils to discover and develop an appreciation for the unique aspects of a particular period. This approach rests on the premise that history teaching is aimed at introducing pupils to historical thinking (advocated by Burston, 1963). There is thus no need to cover vast areas of the past.

As indicated earlier the idea of a regressive study of the past arose (in Britain) in the early part of this century. This approach which has gained considerable support in recent times, has as its rationale the idea that the fundamental purpose of history at school is to help pupils gain an understanding of the contemporary world. The regressive approach traces the issues of the contemporary world (for example, the Irish question, race policies in South Africa, the Middle East conflict) backwards in time in order to achieve this goal. It is claimed that this makes history more relevant and that consequently pupil motivation is better. Those who emphasise a study of contemporary history, however, are asked to consider that they may be distorting history by forcing the past to serve the present. The critics of contemporary history often use as a starting point for their argument the idea that the past should be studied for its own sake. The detailed case that they develop for this idea is not relevant to this study.

While history teachers debated on these approaches to syllabus compilation (which might be described as the "shape" that a syllabus should take) without reaching any agreement on an ideal approach, the issue of the actual content of a syllabus was also receiving attention. As mentioned earlier, the increasing output of academic historians as well as the ever-changing world scene caused the history teacher to face complex problems when trying to answer the seemingly simple question: "What history shall I teach?" In 19th Century Britain all appeared to be so straightforward: One studied the history of Britain (the nation) and the Empire (the world) and the heavy emphasis was on diplomatic and political events, sometimes referred to as "drum and trumpet history". By the mid-20th century, the world had changed in many ways and these changes were often reflected in the increasing demands made on history teachers. Some of the new emphases that were given serious attention, were the need to study world history (not from a particular standpoint); contemporary history; local and environmental history (especially useful for introducing pupils to the skills of the historian), national study (to emphasize responsible and critical citizenship) and social history (to show that history is also about the common man). No final concensus was reached on the priorities for each of these issues or for their relationship with "traditional" history content.

One influential response to these arguments was that of Watts (1972) who developed the idea of a discontinuous syllabus. He challenged the chronological approach claiming that it is not essential for children to know detailed chronology in

order to experience history:

"... we can begin ... by discarding the supposition that it [the syllabus] has to be continuous, progressive and increasingly specialized over the whole span of school life. There is in fact no objective evidence to support this familiar scheme." (p.84)

Watts believed that different approaches and a wide variety of content could be accommodated in a discontinuous syllabus:

"History teaching might be arranged in a series of blocks, each of which could aim at different objectives, select different material and use different techniques." (p.86)

There are obviously many ways to interpret the idea of a discontinuous syllabus, the best known example being that developed by the Schools Council researchers.

\* \* \* \* \*

The Schools Council History 13-16 Project was set up at Leeds University in 1972 where it operated in an experimental way for four years. The project team adopted as a point of departure the standpoint that history is not a body of knowledge structured on chronology. They rejected the traditional syllabus as being narrow in that it only allows one, in one dimensional form, to grapple with the events of the past and they introduced the idea that there are many dimensions to history (that is, to the established past and to the nature of the subject itself). Their belief is that history should be seen as a form of knowledge where the "heap of materials" that survive from the past form the basis of an enquiry into the past which in turn allows us to paint a picture of the past. For them, history should never be the passive acceptance of information gathered by others.

The team saw history as being unique in two respects; firstly, as a discipline, and then in its ability to satisfy

some of the needs of adolescents. The syllabus that was developed was designed to satisfy five needs of adolescent pupils\* through their experiencing a variety of content and through an introduction into the nature of the subject.

Having rejected a purely chronological approach, the team developed a discontinuous syllabus revolving around five themes. In an introductory theme, "What is History", an attempt is made to introduce the pupils to the nature of the subject by focusing on chronology, the handling of evidence, the nature of evidence (its types and problems) and on asking questions in historical research. The local history segment, "History Around Us", involves field work and some basic research in the area where a pupil lives. One objective here is to stimulate interests that could develop into leisure activities. The "Study in Development" component is designed to teach the concepts of change, continuity and development in history. Pupils are also introduced to the complexity of causation in human affairs. The topic chosen by the project team for this component of the course was a study of "Medicine through the ages". The main objective behind the "Enquiry in Depth" (the equivalent of a topic or "patch") is to help children understand through an empathetic approach

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\* The need to:

1. Understand the world in which they live.
2. Find their personal identity by widening their experience through their study of people of a different time and place.
3. Understand the process of change and continuity in human affairs.
4. Begin to acquire leisure interests.
5. Develop the ability to think critically, and to make judgements about human situations.

(Schools Council, 1976, p.12).

and to develop some feeling for people in a different time and place. "The American West 1840-1890" for example, proved to be a popular topic of study. "Modern World Studies" hopes to help children understand their present world through a careful look at the origins of some contemporary world problems (e.g. European Unity, the Irish Question, the Arab-Israeli Conflict).

This syllabus was not simply developed to give effect to the idea of a discontinuous syllabus, it was in fact a vehicle to carry what was, indeed, "a new look at history". The spotlight of "traditional" history was fixed firmly on the **product** of the past (i.e. the facts of the past as established by historical research). The focus of the "new look history" had shifted. It falls mainly on the **concepts** inherent in history and on the **process** of historical enquiry with an emphasis on the development of the skills necessary to conduct such an enquiry.\* Finally, it is the opinion of the writer that two important factors governed the "new look" syllabus: Firstly, and most important of all, the child (in this case, the adolescent) his needs and abilities;

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\* Historians have been unable to reach agreement on the nature of their subject on the basis of the **products** of history. The Schools Council researchers believed that there was more chance of agreement being reached on the basis of the **process** of history which they claimed was characterised by:

1. An enquiry into the past using evidence from the past.
2. The posing of three basic questions about the past:
  - a. What happened?
  - b. When did it happen?
  - c. Why did it happen? (concept of causation)
3. An enquiry about change (concept) in human affairs.
4. An attempt to understand the unique nature of events and individuals (the past does not repeat itself).
5. An empathetic and imaginative recreation of the past.

("A new look at history", 1967, pp.16-18).

secondly, that every component of the syllabus should have a purpose. Many educationalists supported the Project's ideas; Steele (1976), for instance, summed up the Schools Council approach thus: (Emphasis is that of the present author)

"...History 13-16, is an uncompromising single subject project and is designed to lead pupils on to a new style GCE or CSE examination..... history is not seen as a body of knowledge which must be learned, but as a method of analysing the past through the application of particular **skills** and **concepts**. This approach can be seen as a reflection of Bruner's assertion that for children of all age groups "there is an appropriate version of any skill or knowledge." (p.94).

Bruner believed that "the assumption that children should master, in imperfect form, the **conclusions** of the specialists in a subject [was a] fallacy enshrined in the traditional curricula" (Ballard, M.(Ed), 1971, p.200). He felt that the child should be exposed to the **mode of enquiry** of the specialist in the belief that it was more important to grasp the structure of a subject than any of its content as this would then act as a frame of reference for any further work in that subject.

In a chapter which he contributed to Ballard (1971), Lamont noted four developments which he believed had resulted from Bruner's ideas:

1. A rethinking on curriculum reform to accommodate this broadened view of history.
2. The appearance of **source-kits** that have as their basis problem-solving (not mere illustration).
3. The increased amount of research on "the capacity of young children for historical thinking".
4. Promising developments in CSE examinations where a move away from a watered-down form of "O" level paper (i.e. essay papers with a framework of subheadings provided for each essay so as to help the pupil) was noted. The developing trend was to require candidates to react in various ways to sources provided in the exam paper.

"Hence the paradox: in reacting against the "academic"

aridities of the conventional examination paper many of the CSE papers moved closer to the academic criteria of the professional historian."  
(Ballard, M.(Ed.), 1971, pp.200-202)

Coltham (1971) mentioned a re-assessment of the nature of history as a school subject because it contained no package of generally accepted facts. Instead, children should be exposed to "the historian's method of working [so that they] shall realize that evidence, rather than received opinion, is at the core of the subject" (p.31). Working with sources has certainly become a central feature of the "new history" and in keeping with the broad nature of the "new" approach a far wider use is being made of sources than was the case. The use of sources in the "traditional" approach was largely confined to illuminating and reinforcing content. While in an approach based on the process of historical enquiry, sources are used to support, justify, modify and criticise the products of historians or even other sources, and also to develop in a child some of the skills that the historian needs in order to practise his craft.

Ben Jones (1973) noted that "the Enquiry Method is no innovation; lively teachers have used it for years. What makes it new is the structuring of material in terms of skills and educational objectives" (p.14) and a glance at Table 1 will show that "Skills and Abilities" is one of the four categories of objectives developed by Coltham and Fines and that the other sources referred to have all objectives linked to skills. It will be noted, however, that a considerable variety of skills is mentioned and that there is not a very high degree of agreement between the sources. Only empathy and "analysis of evidence" receive general

recognition as skills to be developed through a study of history.

Closely bound up with both skills and objectives is the idea that children should develop an awareness and appreciation of key concepts that are inherent in the process of history. One can readily identify five concepts:

1. Cause and consequence
2. Change and continuity
3. Empathy
4. Evidence
5. Chronology and time

These concepts are linked to skills and objectives in that they are often broken down to a series of skills which are easily expressed in a graded set of objectives which in turn helps to determine whether a pupil does have some understanding of a particular concept. For example:

1. Cause and consequence. Can the pupil:
  - (a) distinguish between long and short term causes?
  - (b) recognise a variety of causes?
  - (c) recognise degrees of importance of causes?
2. Change and continuity. Can the pupil:
  - (a) explain this concept using clearly-defined bases of comparison?
  - (b) note points of contrast and similarity?
3. Empathy. Can the pupil:
  - (a) make an imaginative reconstruction of the past?
  - (b) show that he is aware of anachronism?
  - (c) Consider opposing viewpoints
    - (i) of people in the past?
    - (ii) of historians?
4. Evidence. Is the pupil:
  - (a) aware of bias and the incomplete nature (gaps) in evidence?
  - (b) aware of the wide range/diversity of evidence available?
  - (c) able to link particular types of evidence with particular periods in the past?
  - (d) able to distinguish fact, opinion, prejudice and value judgements?
5. Chronology and time. Can the pupil:
  - (a) display a sense of the passage of time?
  - (b) display mastery of the modes of both calculating and communicating the measurement of time?

(c) relate time factors to an historical argument.

\* \* \* \* \*

The focus of this thesis is curriculum and syllabus development on the one hand and external (school-leaving) examinations and assessment on the other. In order to make this exercise manageable, the important aspect of classroom strategy or teaching method - that which brings the syllabus to life and links it to a system of assessment - has had to be relegated to only the briefest of mentions.

Dickinson and Lee (1978) make it quite clear that the "new" approach to history has major implications for teaching method.

"The 'new view of history' evolved by the project has revolutionary implications for the classroom practice of history. For these implications to be confronted teachers require a great deal more support and guidance than it has so far been possible to offer." (p.47).

Shemilt's (1980) evaluation study of the Schools Council History 13-16 project indicates that this approach makes exceptionally heavy demands on teachers, "problems ... derive not so much from pupils' limited intellectual competence as from the greater demands made upon teachers' skill and understanding" (p.10). He also indicates that there is evidence that the ability of pupils to think more abstractly was accelerated by the type of teaching they received. Teachers trained only in the skills and techniques designed to help children master a body of content have found adapting to methods suitable to the "new history" heavy going. The "talk and chalk" approach with the teacher more often than not at the centre of operations imparting knowledge to the pupils has to be greatly reduced in a "new history" course

which does not accept that there is a fixed body of knowledge in history:

"History is a subject of debate, not of authority, of interpretation rather than judgement, that it is necessary to be critically aware of the extent to which history is the opinion of historians." (Watts, D G, 1972, pp.52 and 53).

The "new history" demands an enquiry-based approach in which pupil activity becomes paramount. The teacher, to an extent, moves into the background and becomes more of a facilitator and guide. It is important that teachers become skilled in the use of strategies such as small group work and role play if they wish to follow a "new history" course successfully. Dickinson and Lee (1978) lay great stress on the difficulties in getting teachers to change their teaching strategies. They point out that this cannot be done clinically (e.g. with new materials or by directives from those in authority), but only by involving teachers themselves in a process of change, perhaps by allowing them to question current practice thereby arriving at new definitions of practice.

Having traced the development of the "new history" and having pointed out that there are considerable implications in the "new" approach for method, it is now possible to focus on assessment in history and to consider in some detail how "new" approaches to be subject have influenced the way pupils' work in History is assessed. This is the topic of the next chapter.

## CHAPTER 4

## ASSESSMENT IN HISTORY (FROM THE "OLD" TO THE "NEW") AND DEVELOPMENTS IN SOUTH AFRICA (WHERE CONTENT IS KING)

It has already been established that the "traditional" syllabus revolves around a body of content. Assessment in such a syllabus was aimed, almost exclusively, at determining the extent to which a pupil had mastered the content. Knowledge of facts was being tested and success was dependent upon the powers of recall of a pupil.

A typical GCE 'O' level paper (the assessment vehicle) of the late 1960's consisted of a number of essay questions (twelve to fifteen) out of which the pupil could choose four or five. Some Boards offered a short-answers question as an alternative to one of the essays. All questions were marked by the use of point by point marking schemes, which rewarded accurate factual information and little else.

Criticism of this system, centered on the fact that it is only able to test a limited range of abilities (e.g. comprehension, factual recall, communicative powers), has abounded for years. As early as 1973, for instance, the book "Practical approaches to the New History" (Ben Jones, Ed, 1973) found fault with the "traditional examining system" on the following grounds:

1. The exam structure (i.e. five essays written in two and a half hours) puts a premium on memory, the development of which becomes a major classroom activity.
2. The pre-occupation, of the administrators of examination systems, with reliability distorts history badly. Reliability can only be achieved by marking to a clearly defined mark scheme. The implication is that the mark

scheme is itself the correct answer, which gives little room for an independent or personal interpretation of the facts.

3. The validity of the examinations in history was questionable as no Board at the time (1973) had a set of assessment objectives linked to an examination syllabus.

The conclusion was that "a wide gulf has developed between good history teaching and successful history teaching for examinations" (p.119).

Suggestions for the broadening of the scope of assessment in external examinations was, however, often met by a negative response from examiners. For example:

"Once you depart from this measure (factual knowledge), once you start trying to give marks for 'historical judgement', imagination, understanding, even the ability to use evidence, you will find your standards in hopeless confusion, subject to a series of whims and fancies." (Gibson, M, 1969, p.21).

\* \* \* \* \*

Fortunately, in England the judgemental words of any examiner were never final as far as curriculum development was concerned. There were three reasons for this in, possibly, an ascending order of importance:

1. There were a number of examining boards, and a school could choose the examination which suited its teaching style best.
2. The Boards controlling CSE examinations were less bound by "examination tradition":

"Although 'O' level seems almost past hope, the CSE offers an examination structure which can be adapted by an enterprising teacher." (Ballard, M(Ed), 1971, p.9).

By 1979, the GCE Boards still followed, in the main, the traditional essay approach, while CSE Boards had introduced documents, photographs, cartoons, maps, statistics and structured essays into their final papers and some Boards had introduced a personal topic (project) as part of their assessment package.

3. Most important of all was the existence of the mode system (the details of which have already been

explained in Chapter 2), which gave enterprising teachers considerable freedom to experiment with various forms of assessment in 16+ examinations and thereby the opportunity to initiate reform. (See Appendix 1 for examples of the kind of experimentation that took place.) A survey conducted by Bucknall (1974) led him to conclude:

"that ... history teachers had opted for Mode Three because it was flexible, it gave teacher control over syllabuses and forms of examination, and the latter could then be matched with teaching methods." (p.361).

He also believed that in teacher controlled examinations "the functions of teacher and examiner are merged, and the teaching objectives also become the examination objectives." (p.363).

The influence of educational objectives on the development of the "new history" has already been established particularly from the point of view that the syllabus has ceased to be a simple statement of content to be studied. The trend in England now is to determine a syllabus after making a clear statement of general aims which are given formal stiffening through the use of assessment objectives. The "traditional" approach was to decide upon a body of content first and then to ask the question, "How shall we go about examining it?" The danger of this approach is well expressed by Ben Jones (Ed) (1973):

"The danger of stating one's objectives in terms of content only is that coverage of that content becomes all important. Unless content is used for some purpose instead of as an end in itself, it becomes meaningless." (p.191).

History teachers working in the area of educational objectives have suggested a wide range of skills and abilities that can be developed through a study of the product and the process of history. These have in turn led to lists of skills and abilities (see Table 1) being used for assessment objectives. Assessment in history has broadened considerably, from what the child knows to what he can do.

\* \* \* \* \*

Once again, attention must be given to the pioneering work of the History 13-16 Project. The Schools Council researchers asked three questions:

1. What content is most appropriate for the objectives set?
2. Which methods of assessment will best serve the objectives set?
3. What scheme of marking will do justice to the responses of the pupils?

They were aware that the product of the past (i.e. content) was diverse in its nature and that different periods of the past (e.g. contemporary or ancient) and different approaches to the past (e.g. study of a theme or the study of a topic/patch) each had their strengths and weaknesses in relation to any set of aims and objectives. They then claimed that a discontinuous syllabus might enable content to reflect a particular purpose. For example, the "Study in Development" ('Medicine through the Ages') is suited to illustrate concepts such as cause and consequence, continuity and change and also certain time concepts, while the "Enquiry in Depth" (e.g. The American West 1840-1890) provides an opportunity to develop the skill of empathy and to gain some understanding of the complexity of relationships. The matching of content and objectives has come to be a very important aspect of the "new history".

\* \* \* \* \*

In an approach where objectives play such a crucial role, it is obviously important that the methods of assessment are also carefully considered. A broader approach to assessment has developed in response to the broader approach to the subject.

Macintosh (1971) suggested that a "composite" form of examination; one which uses "a number of different approaches to assessment", would be the best approach to satisfy a syllabus based on "a clear statement of objectives". His version of such an approach was three-pronged:

1. A multiple choice objective question section designed to test knowledge.
2. A section where stimulus material tests the ability of pupils to work with evidence (i.e. extract facts, detect bias, translate information).
3. An essay section designed to test the ability of the pupil to select appropriate information having analysed a problem and then "to present a coherent historical narrative by drawing together evidence from a variety of sources" (synthesis).

Later, (Ben Jones, (Ed.) 1973) he elaborated and added a fourth prong by providing for course assessment or a project.\* He identified ten skills which he believed could only be assessed via a "composite" approach. **Knowledge\*\*** would be best assessed by multiple choice objective items. **Comprehension, interpretation and translation** would be best assessed by problems based on a series of sources. Here the pupil would be expected to:

1. identify and outline the main points in a source;
2. interpret information presented in a variety of forms;
3. alter material given in one form to another;
4. formulate relevant questions about the source.

Carefully structured essay questions would be used to assess **analysis and extrapolation**. These essays would also be based on sources. The pupil would demonstrate his powers of

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\* The idea that certain objectives were best assessed via course work had been raised by Roberts (1972) in an article in "Teaching History".

\*\* He believed that knowledge involved more than bits and pieces of information that one can uncritically recall. Recognition and some understanding were included in his definition.

analysis by:

1. detecting inconsistencies in and between sources;
2. identifying different points of view;
3. detecting bias and identifying its causes;
4. identifying and describing the connecting links between the component parts of a situation;
5. recognising gaps in evidence;

and those of extrapolation by:

1. drawing tenable inferences from evidence;
2. filling in gaps with tenable suggestions;
3. formulating reasonable hypotheses.

Open-ended essay questions were, in his opinion, the most appropriate means of assessing synthesis, judgement and evaluation, which a pupil displays by:

1. producing an accurate picture of conditions;
2. modifying a point of view by rejecting irrelevant evidence;
3. making use of relevant evidence from a wide variety of sources;
4. arguing a case "in the round";
5. accepting or rejecting conclusions, giving reasons for doing so;
6. evaluating different interpretations in the light of evidence.

Finally, he believed that the use of reference skills was best assessed by the teacher on a continuous basis or through a project, although these could be used to test other skills as well.

The assessment package developed for the Schools Council History 13-16 Project on the one hand, and that developed by Culpin and Webster (1978) on the other, are similar in that each has two written papers and a school-based assessment component. One of the written papers is based on syllabus topics, while the other is based on source material. A major difference between the two is to be found in the method paper where the Schools Council approach uses unseen sources and that of Culpin and Webster uses sources chosen from syllabus

topics themselves. The latter approach was used because they believed that "some background knowledge was desirable before introducing candidates to source material" (p.40). It is interesting to note that a limited amount of introductory background information is provided in the History 13-16 method papers.

This three-legged approach has come to characterise most of the syllabuses in England as will be borne out in an analysis of current GCSE examination papers. Within this approach three basic question types have been used: short answer, structured and open-ended essay questions, with structured questions being used ever-increasingly as they have been found to be an assessment tool of great flexibility.\* A further feature in the assessment of the "new history" has been the wide and increasing use of source/stimulus material as a basis for questions.

In two articles published in "Teaching History", Macintosh (1979) analysed some problems relating to the first three (1976-1978) CSE examinations on the Schools Council History 13-16 Project. He found that, contrary to expectations, the paper on syllabus topics (Paper 1) was more problematical than the paper on historical method (Paper 2). The main reason for this "lay in the heavy demands the questions made upon detailed knowledge of specific content [which] .... was assessed as an end in itself and not as a vehicle through which candidates could demonstrate their mastery of the

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\* In contrast to the open-ended essay, which leaves the structure of argument to the pupil, a structured essay makes clear the constituent parts of the topic which has to be handled.

**Project's aims"** (p.23) (Present author's emphasis). He then gives examples of questions which could be used to overcome this problem. The major problem faced by Paper 2 is the finding of a format "which [is] both manageable and realistic" in the context of a timed, written examination. The format of the 1976 and 1977 papers was the "array",\* while the 1978 paper was based on two topics, and a list of other possibilities indicated that at the time of writing there was an open mind on the issue and certainly no finality. Macintosh also commented on the "closed-set"\*\* approach to Paper 2, indicating that examiners were aware that the material could not be tested in its broad historical context, but that a pre-test had shown that the skills that this paper was supposed to test had, in fact, been assessed. He refuted the criticism that this approach tested little more than comprehension, saying that this could be overcome by appropriate questioning techniques.

It is important to note that implicit in Macintosh's two articles and explicit in Shemilt's "Evaluation Study" (1980) is the point that "the examinations are highly experimental and a fairly rapid evolution may be anticipated" (Shemilt, D, 1980, p.6). This is important because of the major role

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\* "'An array' consists of a selection of between twelve and twenty pieces of material based upon a single topic as, for example, short extracts from both primary and secondary sources and visual material such as pictures, maps and cartoons. (Macintosh, H G, 1979 (part two), p.25).

\*\* In a "closed-set approach, the answers to all the questions are to be found by reference to the sources given in the examination paper. The pupil is not expected to draw on any contextual knowledge he may have.

played by the Schools Council History 13-16 Project in developments that led to a common examination at 16+ in 1988. Proof of the influence that the work of Schools Council researchers had on the GCSE Criteria for History is to be found in the fact that the Schools History Project (SHP to give it its current title -since the demise of the Schools Council) was the only GCE/CSE syllabus that satisfied the "Criteria" without major adaptations (Williams, N, 1986, p.9).

Much of the "rapid evolution" of the Schools History Project took place in the broader context of moves towards a common examination at 16+. The Schools Council History 13-16 examinations at both the "O" level and the CSE had much in common, the only major difference being in Paper 1, where the GCE examination made use of essay questions requiring extended writing, while the CSE examination favoured structured questions. In the Joint Syllabus (1985) developed by the Schools Council, a combination of structured questions and questions requiring extended writing (with a shift to include slightly more of the latter) was allowed for in Paper 1 and it was decided that space for answers would not be provided for on the question paper (as was the practice in CSE examinations) but that a system of asterisks would be used to indicate the required length of answers (\* about two lines, \*\* about ten lines, \*\*\* an essay). It was felt that these relatively minor adjustments would be enough to ensure differentiation across the full GCE/CSE ability range.

However, to put differentiation in history into its proper perspective, it should be noted that in actual fact it was achieved "by outcome", that is by the level of response which candidates of different abilities make to questions set.

\* \* \* \* \*

This leads us to a consideration of the final question concerning assessment in the "new history" : a suitable scheme of marking. In the early days of the development of "new history" in England, it became clear that the fact-by-fact marking schemes were not suitable for assessing the work of pupils in a skills-based approach. Ben Jones (1973) suggested the awarding of a multiple impression mark; ideally by three people. However, it was mainly those responsible for the CSE Schools Council History 13-16 examinations who developed a marking strategy for the "new" approach.

In 1979, Macintosh published a two-part analysis of some of the problems that were faced in the assessment of the first three CSE examinations. In the first article, which focused on Paper 1, he drew attention to the unsuitability of the traditional approach to marking. He pointed to the fact that the use of rigid, analytic mark schemes only set out "the dimension within which the answer ought to be provided and not the nature of the answer itself. ... [Furthermore] an important issue when marking answers to questions designed to assess specific aims is the extent to which the markers reward evidence in the answers that the aims have been met or the skills mastered. A traditional mark scheme does not do this" (p.24). In the second article, he described in some

detail a new marking approach that was tried out in Paper 2 in 1978: a criteria-based approach. This concept now deserves some consideration.

Essentially, there are two bases for assessment:

1. The norm-referenced approach is one in which a pupil is judged according to how well he has done in comparison with norms established by a group. It aims to spread out the individuals in a group in a particular way and is focused rather on the rank ordering of individuals than what they have actually done.
2. The criterion-referenced form of assessment assesses a pupil according to how well he has done in relation to some pre-determined criterion (for example, running a four-minute mile). Here the focus is on the actual performance of each pupil and it should be noted that the criterion can be adjusted to take account of a wide range of differences. For example, this system can be used to assess the extent to which a pupil understands a particular concept (e.g. causation), or has mastered a particular skill (e.g. exposing deficiencies in evidence); in this way it is suitable for assessment of the "new history".

The examiners used three stages to develop a marking scheme for the 1978 examination:

1. Tentative hierarchies of criteria based upon progressive levels of abstraction were developed for each question before the examination. This was done by deciding upon a baseline answer (an answer which was the least acceptable) (Level 1) and then working up from there. (See Appendix 2 for an example of a hierarchy and Appendix 5 for examples from GCSE specimen papers of how this approach works in practice.)
2. After the examination, the "tentative criteria" were adjusted by accepting or rejecting the original criteria or adding others.
3. The weighting of each question was done after the criteria had been adjusted. Marks were thus allocated on the basis of the actual response levels of the pupils in the sample.

Looking to the future, Macintosh (1979) highlighted three areas in which the system had much potential:

1. Its ability to accommodate open-ended responses.
2. Some tentative research indicated that it might be able to discriminate across the full ability range, pointing

- to possibilities for a common examination.
3. The post hoc finalization of the mark scheme allowed for experimentation in question setting without threatening standards.

Two areas associated with the operation of the marking scheme were considered by Macintosh to need particular attention. These were the nature of the criterion levels themselves and the training of those entrusted with marking scripts.

Chapters 7 and 8 will reveal the extent to which the "new history" developments that have been described up to this point dominate the "History Criteria" and examination techniques of the new GCSE examination.

\* \* \* \* \*

In contrast to the developments in England over the last two decades, there has been little discussion on issues other than content in South Africa. On the evidence available, (Published syllabuses and senior certificate examination papers), the "new history" has had little impact on history syllabuses and assessment at the "official" level in South Africa. Since 1839 when the subject was included in the curriculum of Cape schools for the first time, the debate among teachers and syllabus compilers has revolved mainly around what to teach: content, and how to assess it. The controversial issues that arose in this context were very often a reflection of broader political developments in southern Africa.

In 1839 pupils in the Cape Colony studied a history which revolved around Britain and the Empire, using British text

books. This influence even spread to schools in the two Boer republics before the turn of the century. There was naturally strong resentment among Afrikaners at the negative way they were portrayed in these books, but a lack of school texts by South African authors meant that little could be done about this problem. After the Anglo-Boer War, E B Sargent, Director of Education for the Transvaal, felt that it would be better not to teach South African history for a time because of the "still open war wounds" and South African history was played down, leaving Britain at the centre of the stage. If anything, this actually increased the desire among Afrikaners for a South African history. This became a practical proposition in the 1920's with the appearance of a number of "home-grown" text books. However, as a pure South African history became entrenched in history syllabuses, it became the turn of the English-speaking community to complain about the past portrayed in school text books, a view created in the crucible of intense Afrikaner nationalism that grew out of the Anglo-Boer War.

In more recent times, the criticism, particularly that emanating from the Black, Coloured and Indian community, directed at school history has broadened considerably. This is most noticeable in the criticism of the advocates of "People's History". Their dissatisfaction goes far beyond the content on offer in departmental syllabuses to the very nature of that history itself, which they see as part of a system of repression under which they live. There is no evidence of any attempt at the "official" level to counter this vociferous and broadly-based criticism with even some of

the ideas that have come out of the "new history" movement in England. The South African syllabuses remain firmly bedded in the product of history. This heavy focus on content sees all syllabus revision become mere content adjustment. In its extreme form, this can result in the "villains" of the old syllabus being changed into the "heroes" of the new. Some might feel that this is all that would happen were "People's History" to become the official syllabus. It may be argued that if syllabus revision in South Africa reflected the latest scholarship on the subject, (i.e. that there is more to the subject than a body of content to be studied) we would be able to break free from many of the awkward problems that are inherent in a content-based approach: particularly in the South African context.

Over the last twenty years, there have been two major opportunities for syllabus innovation, but in both cases all that really resulted was some content adjustment. Even the arguments of Van den Berg and Buckland (1983) when they commented upon the old (1973) and the new (1983) syllabuses were largely content-based. They did, however, add a plea that a more rational context and interpretation of this content would enable some of the techniques of the "new history" to be applied.

TABLE 2THE SOUTH AFRICAN SENIOR SECONDARY  
HISTORY SYLLABUS IN OUTLINE

General History	South African History
Std 8 French Revolution (1789) to Revolts in Europe (1851)	Cape under British rule (1806) to Sand River and Bloem- fontein Conventions (1854)
Std 9 Industrialization and democratic development in Britain (1815) to Collapse of Old Empires (1919)	The British government and the Boer republic (1854) to Union (1910)
Std 10 Treaty of Versailles (1919) to International relations (1970) 1945 - 1970	Union (1910) to 1970

A glance at Table 2 will show that the syllabuses follow, to a large degree, the "traditional" chronological approach. As far as the syllabuses went, differentiation was achieved by reserving certain items for higher grade study only (e.g. The Rise of Japan in Standard 9 and South African Economic and Social Matters in Standard 10). One assumes that the thinking behind this approach was that higher grade pupils could cope with more content and that certain items were more complex than the rest, and the ability to master them was the mark of a higher grade pupil. It is interesting to note that in the current Standard 9 syllabus, higher grade pupils study the discovery of diamonds and gold while the standard grade pupils study only the discovery of gold. One wonders whether it is possible to understand the one without the other and whether one should attempt to differentiate by simply pruning content.

Van Jaarsveld (1964) indicated that differentiation could be achieved by varying the aims and objectives of syllabuses, teaching methods, the nature of subject matter and evaluation. In the differentiated system introduced in South Africa, differentiation in history is achieved via three of these aspects only. Syllabus aims are common to both grades, and objectives, derived from aims, are not a feature of South African syllabuses. Differentiation in syllabus content has already been illustrated and in the in-service courses that launched the differentiated history syllabuses, attention was paid to teaching strategies that could be employed in order to achieve differentiation in the classroom.

It was in the area of evaluation that history experienced the greatest changes when differentiation was introduced. An attempt was made, particularly through the essay questions, to broaden the scope of assessment. This was done by introducing a marking system (for essays) which, in addition to content, was designed to assess factors such as "insight and understanding", the "logical presentation of the facts" and "meaningful conclusions". Successive senior certificate examination papers also showed considerable broadening in the type of non-essay questions being asked. This included the increased use of stimulus material (such as documents, maps and cartoons), along with multiple choice items, short paragraphs and short (two or three lines) explanations / definitions. However, in both the essay and non-essay sections, the focus remained very firmly on knowledge of content. In the non-essay sections, marks are awarded for facts only, and although provision is made in essay questions for assessment of "other factors", content remains paramount.

This point may be illustrated by describing the approach of the Cape Education Department in this matter. Twenty-five marks in a higher grade essay question are for content (facts). Once the pupil has scored a mark out of twenty-five this is converted to a mark out of sixty, after the examiner has considered the quality of the answer (where those "other factors" are taken into consideration). However, it is not correct to think that thirty-five marks are awarded for factors other than content. This may be demonstrated as follows:

A pupil scores a mark for content. This mark is converted to a symbol on an eight point scale (A-H). The examiner then considers "other factors" and awards a final mark within a narrow range which is determined by the symbol awarded for factual content. (One is free to move to a maximum of 10% more or 10% less than the symbol awarded for content.) In other words, although the "other factors" play some part in assessment, the final symbol is largely determined by factual content.

The system is rigidly applied and the examiner does not have the freedom to break the bounds set by the content mark.

When it comes to evaluation, differentiation is achieved in three ways:

1. Via the structure of the paper. In a higher grade paper (in the Cape Province), three quarters of the marks are allocated to the essay section, compared with two-thirds on the standard grade.
2. In the nature of questions set. The following example serves to illustrate this point (the two questions have been taken from examination papers of the Cape Province):

**Standard Grade:**

"Relate the events which led to the outbreak of the Second World War under the following headings:

- |  |       |
|--|-------|
| A. The crisis in Sudetenland.                                      | (10)  |
| B. The Munich agreement and the annexation of Bohemia and Moravia. | (15)  |
| C. The invasion of Poland.   | (15)  |
|  | [40]" |

**Higher Grade:**

"Explain and evaluate Hitler's actions regarding Czechoslovakia and Poland during 1938 and 1939 with reference to his ideals of restoring Germany's eastern frontier to gain more living space for Germany and to unify all German-speaking people within the Third Reich.

[60]"

3. In the assessment approach to essay questions. At the Standard Grade, the emphasis is on the knowledge and understanding of the facts that relate to a relatively straight forward question. At the higher grade, not only must a pupil demonstrate a good grasp of the facts, but there must be evidence that he is able to use these facts in reacting to a more complex problem that he would need to analyse carefully before putting pen to paper.

\* \* \* \* \*

In the early 1980's, there was a major syllabus revision across the curriculum and in 1985 a new history syllabus appeared. (It is JMB policy to revise syllabuses every ten years). The most significant developments came in the area of content where changes were mainly as a result of the criticism that the Standard 10 syllabus, in particular, was overloaded. Essentially, this involved a downward shift of material from Standard 10 to Standard 9 (e.g. the Paris Peace Conference and the League of Nations) and from Standard 9 to Standard 8 (e.g. Industrialization) and the introduction of a choice between certain topics. Acceptance of the principle of choice has had two important consequences. Firstly, the syllabus has become more flexible and this has made possible the introduction of new material. Secondly, it has now become possible to study topics in more depth, and in a sense the "overloaded syllabus" criticism has been overcome.\*

There were minor adjustments to the aims and evaluation aspects of the syllabus but these had no significant impact on the approach to history in South Africa as far as "official" syllabuses went.

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\* What teachers actually mean when they voice this point of view is that there is not enough time to cover a syllabus in a meaningful manner, therefore they are reduced to an unsatisfactory "slide through the past".

Although departmental syllabuses show little sign of the influence of the "new history", this does not mean that South African educators are unaware of these trends. There has, in fact, been considerable exposure of these ideas in this country. In the main, this was due to the visits of people like Boddington and Macintosh in the early 1980's. Both were intimately involved with "new history" developments in England. Evidence of the fact that many South African history teachers have been exposed to the "new history" is to be found in the numerous articles in the journal for history teachers "Gister en Vandag, Yesterday and Today" (See Appendix 3), in the method courses being offered at a number of South African Universities and Teachers' Colleges and in the experimentation that has gone on at the individual school level, particularly in Natal. This experimentation has two guises. Some schools have made direct use of Schools Council History 13-16 project material\* and have woven it into the curriculum that they offer, while others have approached aspects of the South African syllabus with a "new history" rationale. Obviously, this experimentation is limited by the fact that senior certificate syllabuses have a different rationale and that pupils need to be exposed to the skills upon which success in the matriculation examination will depend. For a start, they will need to develop the capacity to memorize a considerable number of facts and it will also be important that they refine their essay writing skills.

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\* The Pietermaritzburg publishing house Shuter and Shooter are agents for Schools Council History 13-16 material in South Africa. It is also worth noting that in their text book series "History Alive", there is evidence of the influence of the "new history".

For the teachers involved in this experimentation, being torn between two approaches is hardly ideal, but they probably believe that their charges will be better (in terms of the development of thinking skills) for having experienced aspects of the "new history" and that the difficulties and contradictions that exist in such a situation are simply (further) occupational hazards with which every teacher has to cope.

In concluding this section, it is worth stressing again the powerful influence that examinations exert, particularly the external variety, and most particularly those that form part of a highly centralized education system. Until the "new history" ideas make an "official" impact in South Africa (i.e. become part and parcel of some departmental syllabus), developments in this regard will always take place within (some would say, severe) limitations.

## THE PRESENT : A COMPARATIVE SURVEY

## CHAPTER 5

THE SENIOR SECONDARY CURRICULUM AND SCHOOL LEAVING  
EXAMINATIONS : CENTRALIZED STRUCTURING AND DIFFERENTIATION  
TO SERVE THE MASSES

With the Education Act of 1988 on the British statute books and the implementation of the National Curriculum in England over the next few years already in progress, it was felt that it would be useful to compare some aspects of this "future curriculum" with that currently being practised in South Africa.\*

Although critics in both countries have questioned the respective curriculums for their fundamental lack of a clear set of educational aims and objectives, it is possible to detect general aims behind each system. The South African system was designed particularly to broaden the curriculum on offer at the senior secondary level so that the pupils and the manpower needs of the country would be better served. The general aim behind the National Curriculum is to standardise schooling, raise the standards of teaching and learning and to make the schools more accountable to their consumers. The former is to be achieved by exposing all children to what will basically be the same "broad and balanced" range of subjects and the latter by requiring schools "to publish the unadjusted examination results of pupils in aggregate, at ages 11, 14 and 16" (National Curriculum, 1989, 7.4).

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\* The present curriculum in South Africa can be traced back directly to the introduction of a system of differentiated education in the mid-1970's.

A feature of both systems is the high degree of control by the central authorities over each. In South Africa the hold that the central (political) authorities have over education has increased gradually over a number of years to the point where the 1984 constitution makes the curriculum (syllabus) a "general affair" and thereby the responsibility of the Department of National Education. The National Curriculum can be seen as a dramatic break with tradition in England in that there has been a shift from professional to political control of the curriculum.

One must not forget (particularly at the senior secondary level), other agencies, institutions and interest groups, which have a direct or indirect influence on curricular matters. Even here the governments in both countries have attempted to concentrate as much power as possible into their hands by creating their own agencies to advise them on curriculum development based on ongoing research.

In South Africa, the multi-racial South African Council for Education was established in 1985 to "advise on a macro-policy for education". There are also numerous standing curriculum committees which function as part of the Department of National Education. These committees are subject-orientated and they conduct research into their respective disciplines which then forms the basis for development within that subject. The various departments of education are all represented on these committees for each subject which meet from time to time to consider trends in the subjects of their concern, with a view to the

implementation of subject syllabuses for their particular department. The Joint Matriculation Board, which has had a powerful influence over the curriculum in South Africa, particularly at the senior secondary level, is to be replaced by the South African Certification Council, also a statutory body, created by an act of parliament in 1986. It is due to begin functioning in the early 1990's. This body will also be expected to conduct or initiate research on curriculum development.

There are two central agencies in England concerned with curriculum development in terms of the 1988 Education Act. One is the National Curriculum Council (NCC) which must review all aspects of the curriculum, and advise the Secretary of State for Education on the topic and inform the profession and the public. The second is Schools Examinations and Assessment Council (SEAC) which is expected to act in a similar way to the Curriculum Council in matters concerned with examinations and assessment.

\* \* \* \* \*

Before describing the composition of the curriculum, a brief word on the school structure in each country designed to implement these curriculums. The National Curriculum envisages four "key stages" during the compulsory schooling of a child:

- a. Key stage 1: two infant years at age 5-7
- b. Key stage 2: four junior years at age 7-11
- c. Key stage 3: first three years of secondary schooling at age 11-14
- d. Key stage 4: final two years at age 14-16

(National Curriculum, 1989, 3.13 and 3.14), while the HSRC Report on differentiated education (1971) broke the twelve

years of schooling into four phases (see Chapter 1). This study is obviously concerned with the fourth stage in each case.\* Details of how the National Curriculum will be implemented at the various "key stages" have not yet been worked out, but at the moment the idea is that at the primary school level the children will spend most of their time "acquiring knowledge, skills and understanding within the core subject areas" with the full range of foundation subjects coming into operation during "key stage 3". At "key stage 4", the document indicates that, "some extension of the curriculum and choice of emphasis is necessary and desirable" and relates this to the writing of a school leaving examination at the end of this stage (at present the GCSE). (National Curriculum, 1989, 4.8 to 4.12). Clearly the NCC has much work to do in setting out the details of this framework.

The National Curriculum is to consist of:

- " - Foundation subjects - including three core subjects\*\* and seven other foundation subjects\*\*\* ...;
- Attainment targets, ... covering the ages 5-16, setting objectives for learning;
- Programmes for study\*\*\*\* specifying essential teaching within each subject area;
- Assessment arrangements related to the 10 levels of attainment" (National Curriculum, 1989, 3.3)\*\*\*\*\*

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\* Note that in England there is a fifth level of schooling (the sixth form), years 12 and 13 at age 16-18.

\*\* English, Mathematics and Science. These subjects "encompass essential concepts, knowledge and skills without which other learning cannot take place effectively" - language, numeracy and scientific method (National Curriculum, 1989, 3.7).

\*\*\* Technology (including design), History, Geography, Music, Art, Physical Education, and a modern language (for pupils at key stages 3 and 4).

Note that religious education remains compulsory for all pupils as laid down in the 1944 Education Act.

\*\*\*\* According to Moon (1987), the programmes of study are likely to be set out in terms of "content, knowledge, skills and processes pupils must be taught".

\*\*\*\*\* Assessment must be carried out at the end of each of the four key stages (i.e. at 7, 11, 14 and 16).

The National Curriculum document points out that teaching does not have to take place within subject boundaries (4.3) and it also stresses the need for cross-curricular co-operation (3.8 and 3.9).

Broad details of the system of differentiated education introduced in South Africa after 1971 have already been discussed. Focusing on the senior secondary phase where full differentiation comes into effect, one notes the following characteristics in the curriculum:

1. Differentiated syllabuses. These are offered at three levels: higher grade, standard grade and lower grade (introduced after 1983).
2. Core syllabuses which form the basis of the syllabuses at the different grades and in the different education departments.
3. Syllabus content at the different grades and in the different standards forming a continuous unit.
4. Allowance in the structuring of the syllabuses for movement between grades.

Each pupil at this level offers a set of subjects which can be considered as a common core (his home language and the other official language as examination subjects and religious education, physical education and guidance as formative subjects), as well as a further four examination subjects. The choice of these subjects is limited by three factors. Firstly, half the subjects (i.e. two) must be recognised subjects in a particular study direction.\* Secondly, there are requirements laid down for entrance to tertiary education and by the various employment sectors. Perhaps the single

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\* The eight recognised study directions are: technical, economic science, agricultural, natural sciences, humanities, the arts (music, drama, ballet, fine arts), home economics and general.

most important factor influencing the curriculum at the senior secondary phase, however, is (thirdly) the requirements of the Joint Matriculation Board which will be discussed shortly.

While one notes that with the introduction of the National Curriculum there seems to be a growing similarity between the curriculums of the two countries, it is important to stress that some major differences exist. Both curriculums begin by specifying a number of subjects that must be studied, but the approach to the subjects differs widely. Nowhere in the South African curriculum are broad "attainment targets" or "objectives for learning" set out. While both curriculums demand that subject syllabuses be drawn up, the way in which this is done in each country differs. In South Africa, the focus is almost exclusively on content, while in England the focus is much broader. Perhaps the most important difference of all is in the approach to assessment; South Africa following a norm-referenced system and England being criterion-based.

\* \* \* \* \*

The broad aim behind the GCSE examination was to create a single school-leaving examination at 16+ capable of assessing what pupils can do in various subjects and also serving as a basis for further education or entry onto the job market. The general philosophy and aims behind the differentiated system at present in use in South Africa have already been discussed.

A feature of the GCSE when compared with the GCE and CSE

systems, is the considerable administrative streamlining that has taken place. The new examination is administered by four groups of examining boards in England and one in Wales. Initially, the non-statutory Secondary Examinations Council (SEC) was to perform a co-ordinating role by monitoring syllabuses, assessment arrangements and grading. It also had to oversee the maintenance of standards, keep the system under review and advise the Secretary of State. At the end of 1988 the SEC was replaced by the statutory School Examinations and Assessment Council created in terms of the Education Act of 1988. The South African system is administered by nine authorities\* all operating under the supervision of the Joint Matriculation Board (soon to be replaced by the South African Certification Council which was created by an Act of parliament in 1986).

Differentiation is the central issue in both systems under review. They cater in a particular way for as broad a spectrum as possible of secondary school pupils. The GCSE General Criteria\*\* demanded differentiated examination papers or differentiated questions within a paper from each subject. Certain subjects have decided to practise differentiation by

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- \* a. The four provincial authorities for the Whites.  
 b. The House of Delegates for the Indians.  
 c. The House of Representatives for the Coloureds.  
 d. The Department of Education and Training for the Blacks.  
 e. The National Senior Certificate (used by Technical Institutions)  
 f. The Joint Matriculation Board itself.

- \*\* The "General Criteria" of the GCSE lay down the broad framework for the whole GCSE system. This framework makes provision for subject specific criteria. The criteria for each subject would be very roughly equivalent to the core syllabuses in South Africa.

offering two syllabuses; the core syllabus and an extended syllabus.\* In South Africa most senior secondary subjects are offered at three levels: Higher, Standard and Lower Grade, with differentiated syllabuses and examinations in operation at these levels.

The GCSE examination is a single subject examination thus continuing the approach of the GCE and CSE systems, but this seems threatened by the commitment of the new National Curriculum to a "broad and balanced curriculum" which threatens to turn a de facto situation (many pupils offer a "package" of subjects when they sit their GCSE examination) into de jure reality. The South African examination is still of the "package" type with the "fields of study" and the matriculation exemption requirements set out by the JMB playing the major roles in determining the "contents of each package". At present the subjects offered at the senior secondary level are organized into six groups\*\* and pupils wishing to achieve Matriculation Exemption must offer at

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\* The core syllabus is designed to be appropriate for pupils expected to achieve grades D to G. The extended syllabus is created by adding a supplement consisting of extra topics or in-depth studies of existing topics to the core syllabus and is designed for pupils expected to achieve grades A to C. This is similar to the grade system in South Africa.

\*\* Group A: The official languages  
 Group B: Mathematics  
 Group C: The Sciences  
 Group D: Other languages  
 Group E: Humanities/Social Sciences/The Arts  
 Group F: Miscellaneous (An assortment of over 30 subjects)

least six subjects from at least four groups. They are required to achieve a higher grade pass (i.e. 40%) in at least three subjects from three different groups and achieve an aggregate of 45%. For a school leaving certificate, the pass mark for individual subjects is 33.1/3% and the aggregate mark required is just less than 40%.

An important issue that had to be faced when creating a single examination at 16+ out of two existing systems in England, was the question of grading. It was decided to award grades on a seven point scale with grades A to C equivalent to the "O" level grades A to C, and grades D to G equivalent to CSE grades 2-5. An interesting development is that the grades will be criteria-referenced rather than norm-referenced\* but before this system of grading can come into operation, a great deal of developmental work has to be done in all subjects. South Africa follows the statistically-based norm-referencing system.

The GCSE general criteria lays down the basic requirements for the compilation of syllabuses stating that, amongst other things, there must be a statement of general aims, a set of assessment objectives with proportions of marks to be allocated to each and details concerning the scheme of

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\* Norm-referenced grades are related to a percentage of candidates obtaining specific marks rather than the absolute performance of each candidate while criteria-referenced grades refer to a "specific set of recognisable performance characteristics" in each subject." (Leech, A, 1985, p.238).

assessment.\* The second of the requirements is totally absent in South Africa, the implications of which will determine the assessment of History at this level.

Finally, it should be noted that the present English system allows for far more teacher participation in the school leaving examination than is the case in South Africa. Schools are still able to offer examinations in any of the "four" modes available with all the implications that this holds for teacher participation. Further, the GCSE places particular stress on practical and creative skills and processes, many of which cannot be assessed in the conventional examination with the result that much emphasis is placed on course work and continuous assessment where the teachers are obviously heavily involved even at the mode one level. In South Africa, participation is limited to the select few who act as examiners and sub-examiners each year.

Having briefly compared the curriculum and school leaving examinations in England and South Africa, it is now possible to show how history functions within these systems.

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\* The way in which these requirements have become operational will be discussed in more detail in the following two chapters using syllabuses of the Southern Examining Group as examples.

## CHAPTER 6

HISTORY SYLLABUSES : FOCUSED FLEXIBILITY VERSUS A RIGID  
CONTENT-BASED APPROACH

It was considered that enough information was available on the new National Curriculum that has been introduced in England to enable the drawing of some comparisons between it and the curriculum currently operating in South Africa. While the broad details of the National Curriculum have already been published, specific syllabuses are still under review. Syllabuses for history are only due to begin operating in 1991. For this reason senior secondary syllabuses in South Africa will be analysed and compared with GCSE syllabuses.\*

In both countries under review there exists a strong unifying/standardising factor in senior secondary syllabuses.

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\* The following syllabuses have been analysed and will form the basis for any comparisons:

South Africa:	Core	
	Joint Matriculation Board	
	Cape Education Department	)
	Natal Education Department	) (WHITES)
	O.F.S. Education Department	)
	Transvaal Education Department	)
	Department of Education and Training	(BLACKS)
	Department of Education and Culture: House of Delegates	(INDIANS)
	Department of Education and Culture: House of Representatives	(COLOUREDS)
England and Wales	GCSE National Criteria: History	
	Southern Examining Group: History Syllabuses 1-6. (See Appendix 5 for details concerning these syllabuses of the SEG).	
	Southern Examining Group: Schools History Project 13-16.	

This comes in the form of the core syllabus in South Africa and of the National Criteria for History in England. Both prescribe to educational/examination authorities, the standards to be achieved in senior secondary courses. The manner of this prescription is, however, quite different.

If one glances at the layout of the core syllabuses and of the National Criteria, one perceives some similarity in that both have an introduction, which in effect explains the rationale for a study of history at school, followed by a set of aims for such a study, and comments on both content and evaluation. However, when one notices that the National Criteria have, in addition, sections on assessment objectives and grade descriptions, one begins to realize that the syllabuses are, in fact, very different. This realization is strengthened as one studies the details of the respective cores and the various syllabuses that are derived from them.

\* \* \* \* \*

The introductory remarks indicate clearly that the very basis of each core is different. For the National Criteria, "History is primarily concerned with recreating mankind's past", while the South African core syllabus states that "History is a systematic study of the past". The National Criteria shows the influence of the "new history" developments by acknowledging "two broad avenues of approach in History teaching"; content-based and skills-based, while the South African core remains firmly rooted in the "traditional", content-based approach. Thus, from the outset, one detects flexibility in England and rigidity in South Africa. Both introductions set about justifying

history's place in the curriculum on the bases of features of the subject: That it is to do with the past, is based on evidence, is a mode of inquiry requiring certain skills (in the South African core only) and that it involves some unique concepts (National Criteria only), but only the National Criteria attempts to do justice to aspects other than "the past", by making them syllabus realities through inclusion in a set of assessment objectives.

\* \* \* \* \*

Although all syllabuses contain a statement of aims, the function that these statements perform is completely different in South Africa and England. In the South African syllabus, aims are expressed in very general terms. One gets the impression that an attempt is being made to capture the possibilities for history as a school subject in its awesome totality. There is also no attempt to link the aims with the content to be studied in any way, the assumption being that if pupils study "this" history, "these" aims will be fulfilled. The statement of aims serves to provide little more than academic or philosophical decoration for a syllabus, performing little, if any, useful function. Teachers, at the most, glance at them, and then get on with the serious task of "covering the ground" (content) of the syllabus. Given the system in which a statement of aims operates, there is no reason at all for a South African teacher to give such a statement more than a cursory glance.

In the GCSE syllabuses the aims, assessment objectives and content are closely linked, giving the syllabus as a whole far greater coherence than is the case in South Africa. For

example, the aim of promoting "an understanding" of certain concepts is directly linked to the assessment objective of being able to "make use of and understand" those concepts and this link will be forged through some aspect of content. An example of this is the "Medicine through time" component of the Schools History Project 13-16 syllabus which among other things is designed to promote an understanding of the concept of "continuity and change." An analysis of the aims set out in the various syllabuses appears in Table 3.

TABLE 3

## ANALYSIS OF AIMS IN SENIOR SECONDARY HISTORY SYLLABUSES

	SEG SHP (13-16)	SEG SYLLABUSES 1-6	GCSE NATIONAL CRITERIA	REPRESENTATIVES	DELEGATES	TRANSVAAL	CAPE	CORE NATAL O.F.S. D.E.T.
1. Acquire knowledge and understanding (content)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2. Understand development of <u>National</u> (Social and Cultural) <u>Values</u>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
3. Understand nature of <u>concepts</u>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
4. Develop study <u>skills</u>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
5. <u>Differentiate</u>	@	@	@	✓	✓	@	✓	✓
6. Understand <u>Contemporary World</u>	✓	✓	✓	@	@	@	✓	@
7. <u>Basis</u> for further study and personal interest	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		
8. Stimulate <u>interest</u> and <u>enthusiasm</u> in study of past	✓	✓	✓			✓		
9. Understand nature and use of <u>evidence</u>	✓	✓	✓					
10. Develop feeling for past ( <u>empathy</u> )	@	✓	@					
11. The furthering of <u>methods</u> *		✓						
12. <u>Citizenship</u>				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
13. Develop <u>attitudes</u> and <u>values</u>				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
14. Understand <u>nature</u> of <u>history</u>				✓	✓		✓	✓
15. Contribute to <u>personal</u> <u>development</u>				✓	✓	✓		✓

\* "The furthering of methods for the discovery, interpretation, and communication of knowledge about the past".

Such an analysis is complicated by the imprecise way in which these aims are expressed in the South African syllabuses and a reader may well detect some overlap between aims. It may even be possible to suggest that an aim found only in a South African syllabus is the same as one found only in a GCSE syllabus. For example, aim 7, "basis for further study and personal interest", which appears in all the English syllabuses, could be considered to be similar to aim 15, "contribute to personal development", which appears in the South African syllabuses only. Because of the different function that the aims perform in the two countries concerned, it would be dangerous to make direct comparisons on the basis of the analysis which serves to illustrate the thinking that lies behind the syllabuses more than anything else. One can detect through the aims though, the fundamental difference in approach towards history between the two countries. The attention given to the process of history in English syllabuses is reflected in aims 9 and 10 and in the different interpretation of aims 3 and 4. In the GCSE syllabuses, concepts (aim 3) are expressed quite clearly as: cause and consequence; continuity and change; similarity and difference (i.e. concepts that are inherent in the nature of history). In the South African syllabus they are not defined, and familiarity with the South African situation leads one to believe that there is more of a stress on the concepts that occur as part of the story of the past (i.e. democracy, revolution, the isms etc.), rather than on those that can be said to be specific components of history.

The GCSE syllabus links skills (aim 4) to the handling of

evidence. In the South African syllabuses where the skills factor is expressed more broadly, there is also talk of developing skills of communication and general intellectual skills.

A final thought with regard to syllabus aims is that there would seem to be a need for a refining of this section in all syllabuses. This comment is based on the fact that there are unwritten aims (5, 6 and 10 on table) in nearly every syllabus which are indicated by the symbol @ in the table. Although not explicitly expressed as an aim, empathy forms an important component of the assessment objectives in both the GCSE National Criteria and the SHP syllabuses. Differentiation is not mentioned as an aim in any of the British (English) syllabuses, or in the Transvaal syllabus, but they all operate in an education system that practises differentiation and thus for these syllabuses this aim is considered to be implicit. Of the South African syllabuses, only the Cape syllabus specifies the understanding of the contemporary world as an aim. It is considered to be an unwritten aim of the others as the content of all senior secondary syllabuses is heavily oriented towards achieving an understanding of the contemporary world.

\* \* \* \* \*

The most outstanding differences between GCSE syllabuses and South African syllabuses, is the prominent role played by assessment objectives in the former and their complete absence in the latter. In fact, the objectives are the key aspects of these syllabuses together. If Table 3 is compared with Table 4, it will be noted that the aims and objectives

are very similar and so it should be.

TABLE 4  
ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES IN GCSE SYLLABUSES

	National Criteria	Southern Examining Group		
		Syllabus 1-5	Syllabus 6	Schools History Project
* Knowledge	✓	✓ #	✓ #	✓ #
Concepts	✓	✓	✓	✓ &
Empathy	✓	✓	✓	✓
Skills with evidence	✓	✓	✓	✓ §
Analysis of Causation Motivation Consequence The role of individuals			✓	✓
Current situation				✓
Historical site				✓

- \* See Appendix 4 for a full description of each of these assessment objectives.
- # In addition to the deployment of knowledge as required by the National Criteria, these syllabuses want to assess the ability of pupils to **analyse** and **synthesize** that knowledge as well.
- & This syllabus will, in addition, assess an understanding of the concepts of development and of "progress" and "regress".
- § In addition to comprehending sources, the SHP 13-16 syllabus also requires a pupil to be able to interpret and evaluate those sources to make inferences from them.

The objectives are simply aims made operational; in this case for the purposes of assessment. In the GCSE syllabuses assessment objectives are also closely linked with content. This is best reflected in the Schools History Project 13-16 syllabus where both the shape and the substance of its content dovetail with the assessment objectives, some of

which Table 7 will show are unique to that particular syllabus. The discontinuous (shape) syllabus has been chosen, among other reasons, because it allows an even finer meshing between objectives and content. For example, the "Modern World" component is designed specifically to meet the objective: "interpret the current situation in the context of past events".

A final point on assessment objectives, well illustrated by Table 7, is that they have many guises and that a particular contribution (the possible combinations are many) will give a particular syllabus a distinctive character. From the point of view of assessment objectives, the Southern Examining Group clearly offers three distinct syllabuses.

\* \* \* \* \*

Vast differences between the syllabuses of South Africa and England are also reflected in their respective approaches to content. The practice in South Africa is that the core syllabus prescribes content in detail, particularly at the standard 10 level, leaving individual education departments hardly any opportunity to innovate or adapt material to suit "local" conditions. The GCSE National Criteria prescribes no content whatever, recognising that history has "varied contexts" and wishing to give the examining groups freedom to explore the possibilities they offer. There are, however, three areas where the National Criteria for History are prescriptive:

1. Each examining group must include at least one syllabus that deals with national (i.e. United Kingdom) history.
2. That all syllabuses satisfy certain criteria.
3. That all syllabuses describe their content in a way which shows how the syllabus criteria work in that particular case (examples are given in the National Criteria).

The most important of the three is the syllabus criteria (point 2) which needs to be discussed in more detail. The National Criteria lays down that each syllabus must:

1. "be of sufficient **length, range and depth**";
2. "deal with **key issues**";
3. "be historically **coherent and balanced**".

Length refers to the period to be studied which must be a significant period of time. By range is meant that the approaches to the content should be varied. For example, the social, political and economic aspects of a period (in a chronological study), should all be considered. In a syllabus that focuses on the process of history (the SHP 13-16 syllabus), range is achieved by touching on a number of the approaches to the study of history such as developmental, contemporary, local, political, social and the like. Depth, means that at some point the focus must be narrowed and some **topic** must be studied in detail. "Key issues" simply mean that a study of history should not focus on trivia from the past. If the issues that are to be studied do not lend themselves to a thematic or topic approach, then it is quite likely that they are trivial. A syllabus will be coherent and balanced if there is some sort of thread running through it. This is achieved by matching the syllabus title and its content carefully. For example, in a hypothetical syllabus "International relations 1945-1970" a theme on the "Growth of the welfare state in Britain" would be quite out of place.

A glance at the seven syllabuses offered at GCSE level by the Southern Examining Group, reveals variety in content and shape which is a direct result of the fact that there is no content prescription in the National Criteria.

## AN ANALYSIS OF 'THE SHAPE AND CONTENT' OF SEVEN SOUTHERN EXAMINING GROUP GCSE SYLLABUSES AND THE SOUTH AFRICAN CORE SYLLABUS

		SOUTHERN EXAMINING GROUP							S.A. CORE SYLLABUS
		BRITISH SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC HISTORY SINCE 1750	WORLD POWERS SINCE 1917	BRITISH HISTORY 1485-1714	BRITISH HISTORY 1815-1983	BRITAIN, EUROPE AND THE WORLD 1848-1980	A HISTORY OF MEDICINE WITH SOCIAL ASPECTS	SCHOOLS HISTORY PROJECT 13-16	
SHAPE	1. Chronological	@	@	@	@	@			@
	2. Line of development	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	@	✓	
	3. Patch	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	4. Discontinuous							@	
CONTENT	1. Political		@	@	@	@	✓	✓	@
	2. Social	@		@	✓		@	✓	✓
	3. Economic	@		@	✓			✓	✓
	4. Pre-modern (any time before 1750)			@			✓	✓	
	5. Modern (1750-1945)	@	✓		@	@	✓	✓	✓
	6. Contemporary (post 1945)	✓	@		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	7. Local							✓	✓
	8. National	@		@	@	✓	✓	✓	✓
	9. International		@			✓	✓	✓	✓

## NOTES

1. Southern Examining Group (See Appendix 5 for details of these syllabuses).
2. The five basic syllabus shapes are explained in Chapter 3. Only four feature in the syllabuses that have been analysed.

Syllabuses one to five are all basically chronological in shape, as indicated by the emphasis symbol @ which indicates the essential shape of a particular syllabus. More than one syllabus shape may feature in a single syllabus. For example, in the SHP syllabus (7) the essential shape is discontinuous but at the same time elements of line of development ("Medicine through time") and patch ("Studies in depth") are present. Yet, they are divided into themes and topics which introduce both line of development and study in depth into this chronological approach. Syllabus six is essentially a line of development study, but even here, variety is added by three "studies in detail." Syllabus seven offers the greatest variety through the discontinuous Schools History Project 13-16 syllabus.

The content aspect of a syllabus refers to the nature of the content which can take on many guises, nine of which are present in the syllabuses analysed. A single syllabus can adopt a number of guises. The symbol @ indicates that these aspects receive more emphasis than the others which may also be present in that syllabus.

The wide content variety of the SEG syllabuses is actually even wider when one realises that there are another four examining groups each offering a number of syllabuses, not to mention the possibilities that mode 2 and 3 approaches offer. It must be stressed here that the mode system has been retained and it is thus possible to have a GCSE examination under mode 3 conditions as long as the syllabus designed meets the National Criteria for History.

In England there is thus a remarkably wide variety of content from which to choose, compared with South Africa where, at the school level, there is no choice at all. Schools are rigidly bound to their education departments (unlike schools in England who may enter the examinations of any examining group) which prescribe the syllabus for each year. Even the individual education departments are restricted by the almost inflexible core syllabus.

A closer look at the SEG syllabuses reveals that the element of choice is taken a step further by the fact that content choice is allowed within each syllabus. In syllabuses 1 to 5, one only has to study a certain number of themes and topics (two out of three themes and two out of six topics in syllabuses 1 and 2), while in syllabus 6, two out of three "studies in detail" must be studied. In the Schools History Project 16-16 syllabus, a choice of content is to be found in the "Studies in depth" and "Study in modern world history" sections. This element of content choice within a syllabus is provided for in each examination which is not the case in South Africa where one is forced to cover the whole syllabus for non-essay question purposes at least.

However, once a school in England has made a choice an inevitable narrowing of perspective results. A glance at the syllabuses on offer from the SEG reveals that some seem to be more narrow than others in terms of the possible varieties of content and some critics may argue that the South African syllabus is better balanced in this respect than most of the SEG syllabuses, and that this, therefore, negates the element

of choice.

Although some departments have omitted some aspects of content, it is possible to talk of there being only one syllabus in South Africa with regard to content: the core.

TABLE 6  
SOUTH AFRICAN SENIOR SECONDARY SYLLABUS ANALYSIS  
GENERAL HISTORY

		REPRESENT.	DELEGATES	D.E.T.	TVL.	O.F.S.	NATAL	CAPE	
	1789	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	STANDARD 8
	Fr. Rev.								
	Napoleon	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
	C/Vienna	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Revolts	×			×	×	×	×	
	Econ. Rev.	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
	1850								
	1800	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	STANDARD 9
	U.Germany								
	Causes WW I	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Versailles	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
+	U.S.A.	✓	○		○	✓	✓	✓	
+	Japan	✓	○		✓	○	○	✓	
+	Russia	✓	○		○	○	○	✓	
	1933								
	1917								STANDARD 10
1	Russia	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
1	U.S.A.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
2	Causes WW II	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
3	U.N.O.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
3*	Cold War Europe	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
3**	Far East	✓	✓	○	✓	○	✓	✓	
3**	Middle East	✓	✓	○	✓	○	✓	✓	
3**	Lat.America	✓	✓	○	✓	○	✓	✓	
3**	Africa	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	1970								

KEY: x = not in core; o = core item omitted; o → x = core item converted into local history option

- 1 = Theme 1: The rise of the superpowers 1917-1939  
 2 = Theme 2: Circumstances which led to the Second World War  
 3 = Theme 3: International relations and events 1945-1970

- \* Compulsory  
 \*\* Optional  
 + Study one only

SOUTH AFRICAN SENIOR SECONDARY SYLLABUS ANALYSIS  
SOUTH AFRICAN HISTORY

	CAPE	NATAL	O.F.S.	TVL.	D.E.T.	DELEGATES	REPRESENT.
1834	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
British & Great Trek							
Transorangia	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Diamond Flds Dispute	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Carnarvon	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Communities south of Limpopo	○	○	✓	○		○	○
1884							
Local History	✗	✗		✗		✗	
1870							
Diamonds & Gold: Soc. & Econ.	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Br. Imperial vs Afr. Rep.	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Reconstr. Unification	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
1910							
1910							
Political Economic & Soc. Develop.							
*1910-1924	✓	✓	✓	1924		✓	✓
1924-1948	✓	✓	✓	1924, 1934, 1948		✓	✓
*1948-1970	✓	✓	○	1948		○	✓
1970							

\* These themes alternate each year.

This syllabus is chronological in shape with a slight hint of a topic approach in the optional elements of theme 3 in the General History section in standard 10. The most striking aspect of this syllabus, though, is the equal division between national and international history. This feature is reinforced by the examination where half the marks are allocated to the General History section and half to the South African History section. Another dominant feature of the content is its political nature. Only in small sections of the South African section of the standard ten syllabus, is there a conscious effort to focus on social and economic issues. One also notes that throughout the senior secondary phase, there is no opportunity to do anything other than modern/contemporary history.

Whatever one may say about the content of the syllabuses that have been analysed, one must always keep in mind the role that the content plays. In South Africa the content is central in that a pupil is expected to demonstrate his ability in history by showing in a written examination, the extent to which he has mastered the prescribed content. In England the aims and assessment objectives of each syllabus are central. The pupil here is assessed according to the level at which he is able to satisfy the objectives. Content is the vehicle through which assessment and also educational objectives are achieved. This fundamental difference makes it difficult, if not impossible, to draw conclusions from, or make recommendations, as a result of any comparison of content.

All the syllabuses analysed handled in some detail the very important matter of assessment. While assessment details are very much a part of any syllabus, it has been decided that, for the purposes of this study, it would be better to deal with assessment as a whole: from syllabus regulations and guidelines to the practical level of examination papers and mark schemes. Assessment is the topic of chapter seven.

## CHAPTER 7

## ASSESSMENT IN HISTORY : TWO APPROACHES TO DIFFERENTIATION

It is proposed to deal with the question of assessment in two parts. The first will deal with the assessment guidelines and instructions laid down in the respective syllabuses. The second will cover assessment in operation through an analysis of examination papers and a brief reference to the contrasting approaches to marking.

If one compares what the National Criteria and the core syllabus have to say about assessment, one finds that in outline they are similar but that in detail they are very different. Both syllabuses deal with the matter of differentiation, techniques of assessment and coursework, the major difference being in the manner in which these matters are handled. The South African approach is much more prescriptive.

The National Criteria is only prescriptive in the matter of differentiation where it lays down that it "will be achieved" in the following ways in history:

1. In a common paper.
2. Using "a combination of differentiated and non-differentiated" questions.
3. Setting differentiated tasks in coursework.

However, this ignores the most telling manner in which differentiation is achieved in GCSE history, and that is by outcome. This simply means that differentiation is achieved at the assessment stage. The pupils are assessed on the basis of their level of response to tasks set in coursework and in formal examinations.

The South African system achieves its differentiation at the outset by offering history at three levels (higher, standard and lower grade). This means three syllabuses and three examinations and, in effect, the pupil is broadly graded before the final examination is even written. As already indicated, one of the arguments used for a common examination at 16+ in England was the difficulty in deciding, in certain cases, whether a pupil should be entered for the GCE "O" level or the CSE examination. Teachers in South Africa are to some extent plagued by the same concern: whether certain pupils should offer a subject at a particular level. Many teachers could find themselves attracted to a system that differentiates by outcome as opposed to one that does so at the outset, arguing that wherever possible, labelling, for this is what the South African system tends to do, should be avoided in the interests of the developing child. However one may argue for or against either system, one should not lose sight of the fact that each may be best suited to the particular approach to History in each country.

To determine whether it would be possible to differentiate by outcome in an approach devoid of assessment objectives and which essentially focuses on content, would require a detailed study that is beyond the scope of this thesis. Nevertheless, based on the way that the "new history" developed, with all its elements closely linked (i.e. objectives, content and assessment), one is inclined to believe that differentiation by outcome is actually a part of the "new history".

With regard to assessment techniques, the GCSE National Criteria is not prescriptive but it does give some form of guidance by recommending that "the following techniques should be included in any scheme of assessment:

- (a) questions requiring responses in a variety of forms to given historical evidence; ...
- (b) objective and/or short answer questions which can be used to test both historical knowledge and understanding;
- (c) questions demanding an answer written in continuous prose; ...

Apart from pointing out that there should be a balance between the three question types, the National Criteria leaves the actual design of the assessment package up to each examining authority with a strong recommendation that a "coursework component, carrying a minimum of 20% of the total marks" should normally be part of such a package.

The South African core syllabus is far more prescriptive with regard to the assessment package. It lays down that there "will" be either one or two papers in the final examination, suggesting that a single paper examination should be three hours in duration and that in an examination where two papers will be written, each "should be" two hours in length, one on the General History part of the syllabus and the other on South African History. It also demands that "the examination paper must be set in such a way that it contains at least one question on each compulsory theme" (Section C, paragraph 4). The type of questions to be used in the formal examination is also prescribed:

"4.1 Questions must consist of:

4.1.1 essay-type questions ...;

4.1.2 non-essay type questions which may include the

following: [here follows a long list of the type of questions that could be used]"

A suggestion is made that essay-type questions should comprise 70% to 80% of the total mark in the formal examination. The one area where the core syllabus is flexible is in the question of a year mark. The examining authorities are allowed to decide whether or not they wish to have a year mark as part of the assessment package. If they opt for a year mark they may also decide how it shall be made up.

\* \* \* \* \*

The way in which these two core syllabuses have been interpreted from an assessment point of view will be illustrated by referring to the History syllabuses of the Southern Examining Group in the case of the GCSE and those of eight examining authorities in the case of the South African senior certificate examination.

The seven syllabuses offered by the SEG have been divided into four assessment patterns. This is shown in Table 7.

TABLE 7

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF FOUR ASSESSMENT PATTERNS USED IN THE HISTORY SYLLABUS OF THE SOUTHERN EXAMINING GROUP

QUESTION TYPE	OBJECTIVES <sup>1</sup>									
	Knowledge	Concepts	Empathy	Skills with evidence	Analysis of causation etc.	Current Situation	Historical site			
Section A: Multi-part questions based on an array of sources and structured or open ended essay Section B: Multi-part questions based on single source	10 <sup>3</sup> -15	20		15-20				Themes (Paper 1) 50% <sup>4</sup>	1	
Stimulus material may be used. Section A: Structured/Multi-part questions Section B: Empathy problems	15-10	5-10	10				Topics (Paper 2) 30%			
Two written assignments (up to 800 words each). One has stress on "empathy", the other on "skills with evidence"			10	10			20% Coursework			
Section A: Multi-part question which includes some extended writing based on array of sources Section B: Structured, multi-part or open-ended questions requiring an empathetic response Section C: Structured/multi-part questions based on single source	5-10	15	10-15	15			Themes (Paper 1) 50%	2		
Sections A and B: Multi-part questions and structured essays Sometimes based on stimulus material	15	15					Topics (Paper 2) 30%			
The same as pattern 1			10	10			20% Coursework			
Section A: Multi-part question based on an array of sources Section B: Structured essay question	5	15			5		Study in Development (Paper 1) 25%	3		
Section C: Structured or open-ended questions sometimes based on stimulus material Section D: Same as above <u>but</u> empathetic response required	5-9		10-8		10-8		Study in Detail (Paper 1) 25%			
Questions based on a variety of sources	5-10	5		20-15			Sources: Study in Development (Paper 2) 30%			
The same as pattern 1			10	10			Coursework 20%			
Structured questions based on variety of sources. Short answer and essay-type responses required.		X	X	X	X		Study in Development (Paper 1) 20%	4		
Structured questions based on variety of sources. One short answer question and one essay question must be answered.			X	X	X		Study in Depth (Paper 1) 10%			
Array of sources (on topic not in syllabus): Variety of questions.				X			Unseen sources (Paper 2) 30%			
Five to eight assignments on syllabus units indicated. Total length 4 500 - 6 500 words (or 900 - 1 300 words per assignment if five are completed).			X	X	X	Emphasis X	Emphasis X Coursework Study in Depth Modern World Local History 40%			

NOTES ON ASSESSMENT PATTERN ANALYSIS

1. See Appendix 4 for a full description of the assessment objectives
2. The assessment patterns cover the syllabuses as follows (see Appendix 5 for details regarding the syllabuses):  
  
    Pattern 1 covers syllabuses 1 and 2.  
    Pattern 2 covers syllabuses 3, 4 and 5.  
    Pattern 3 covers syllabus 6.  
    Pattern 4 covers the Schools History Project 13-16 syllabus.
3. These figures are percentages.
4. Weighting of component in total assessment package.

In all cases, two papers are written but this is the only common factor when it comes to the style of the examination. The patterns tend to divide themselves into two. Patterns one and two which are used to assess syllabuses one to five have a two hour paper covering themes and a one-and-a-quarter hour paper covering the topics' section of the syllabus. The content structure of the syllabus then determines the basic examination structure. Patterns three and four are used to assess syllabus six and the School History Project 13-16 syllabus respectively. In their case, the two hour paper assesses syllabus objectives through syllabus content, while the second paper is one-and-a-half hours in length and its main goal is to assess the "skills with evidence" objective. There is, however, a fundamental difference of approach towards this "sources" paper. The sources in pattern three all relate to the study in development, "Medicine through time" (i.e. course content), while the sources in pattern four are all related to an unseen topic (i.e. one that has no relation whatever to course content). A glance at Table 7 will show that paper two of pattern three also sets out to assess "knowledge" and "concepts" objectives which, of course, is only possible if course content is used. One assumes that the SEG has introduced these two approaches to accommodate the fact that opinion over the use of "seen" or "unseen" sources in an examination is divided (this issue has been touched upon in Chapter 4).

When it comes to coursework and the weighting of the various components in assessment, syllabuses one to six all demand that coursework shall consist of two written assignments

(about 800 words each) which together make up 20% of the total mark; paper one making up 50% and paper two 30% of the final mark. The Schools History Project 13-16 syllabus puts a much heavier emphasis on coursework. Here pupils are required to produce between five and eight assignments (in total adding up to between 4 500 and 6 500 words) which are used to assess a far broader range of assessment objectives than is the case in the other syllabuses. This emphasis is not surprising in the light of the fact that it was the Schools Council researches who pioneered the idea that certain educational objectives were best assessed by coursework. The interesting thing to note is that the idea has spread to the National Criteria for History and thus to all the other SEG syllabuses. The important role that coursework plays in the SHP 13-16 syllabus is indicated by the fact that it is used to assess the broadest range of objectives and 40% of the total mark is derived from coursework, the two written papers receiving equal weighting of 30% each.

The fundamental difference in approach to history between England and South Africa is reflected by the prominent role played (in the sections on assessment) by assessment grids in the former and the complete absence of such a feature in the latter. These grids are used to match the content and the educational objectives (in each syllabus) for the purposes of assessment. Syllabuses and examinations are thus more finely focused than is the case in South Africa where the unstated assessment objective is to assess knowledge and, mainly at the higher grade, skills involved in its manipulation (e.g.

analysis and synthesis).

A glance at Table 7 will reveal just how focused assessment in the SEG syllabuses is. Although all four assessment patterns focus on "concepts", "empathy" and "skills with evidence", the manner in which these objectives is assessed varies from pattern to pattern. It is interesting to note that "knowledge", an important objective in syllabuses one to six, is absent in the SHP 13-16 syllabus. One of the major criticisms of this syllabus arises from this very feature. From the SEG point of view, however, those who feel strongly about this point have another six syllabuses to choose from. Supporters of the SHP approach will be quick to point out that it assesses the broadest range of objectives.

In essence the SEG is reflecting the feeling (in England at least) that history as a school subject is one of almost endless variety in the way that one can combine content variety with various educational objectives that can be achieved through a study of that content, not to mention those that can be achieved by exposing a pupil to the way the historian creates history (the process of history).

Keeping in mind that the South African core syllabus is more prescriptive than the GCSE National Criteria and that the approach to history is content based and therefore fundamentally much narrower than that in England, it will be interesting to see just how much variety there is when one compares the approaches of various examination authorities in South Africa. Table 8 will aid us in this task.

TABLE 8

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE ASSESSMENT ARRANGEMENTS  
IN HIGHER GRADE HISTORY OF VARIOUS EDUCATION DEPARTMENTS  
IN SOUTH AFRICA

ASSESSMENT ARRANGEMENTS

Year Mark	Written Examination			
	Number of papers written	Non-essay section	Essays	
Optional Assignment No mark details given. * SG	2	2 set 2 answered 100 marks (25%) (20%)	10 set 4 answered 300 marks (75%) (80%)	JMB
June exam mark 32% Sept exam mark 48% 80 marks (20%) SG (20%)	1	2 set 2 answered 80 marks (20%) (26.2/3%)	9 set 4 answered 240 marks (60%) (53.1/3%)	CAPE
Assignment 80 marks (20%) SG (20%)	1	2 set 1 answered 80 marks (20%) (20%)	8 set 3 answered 240 marks (60%) (60%)	NATAL
Assignment 70 marks (17,5%) S.G. (20%)	2	10 set 6 answered 90 marks (22,5%) (26.2/3%)	12 set 6 answered 240 marks (60%) (53.1/3%)	OFS
Internal exams, Tests, Assignments, Oral Work and class work 200 marks (33.1/3%) SG (33.1/3%)	2	2 set 2 answered 100 marks (16.2/3%) (20%)	12 set 6 answered 300 marks (50%) (46.2/3%)	T'VAAL
Test marks 20 marks Sept exam mark 80 100 marks (20%) SG (25%)	2	2 set 2 answered 100 marks (20%) (25%)	9 set 4 answered 300 marks (60%) (50%)	DET
Assignment 80 marks (20%) SG (20%)	1	4 set 2 answered 80 marks (20%) (20%)	8 set 3 answered 240 marks (60%) (60%)	HOUSE OF DELEG.
Tests 25 marks June exam 25 marks Sept exam 25 marks 75 marks (19%) SG (33.1/3%)	1	2 set 2 answered 100 marks (25%) (16.2/3%)	9 set 3 answered 225 marks (56%) (50%)	HOUSE OF REP'S

\* SG : Shows the standard grade mark weightings.

At the outset it must be remembered that South African state schools do not have the right to choose their examining authority, as is the case in England. They are compelled to sit the examinations offered by the education department under which they fall. This means that any variety that is illustrated here is purely theoretical from the point of view of individual schools which are unable to take advantage of features they may find attractive in assessment approaches of other education departments.

The fact that half the departments analysed opted for a two-paper approach to the written examination and the other half for a single paper approach, would seem to be significant from only one point of view. The two-paper approach forces a candidate to adhere to the syllabus that splits itself equally between General and South African history. A single paper does, on the other hand, allow an examining authority to take advantage of the option to reduce the proportion of either section to 35% of the total marks for the paper. It is interesting to note that only the House of Delegates has taken advantage of this option. Much more important are the different approaches to the year mark and to the weighting given to the three assessment components (the year mark, non-essay questions and essay questions). Seven departments have a compulsory year mark, with only the Joint Matriculation Board allowing a school to decide whether or not to have a year mark as part of the assessment package. The way in which this year mark is comprised differs widely.

Four departments award these marks to an assignment completed

by the pupil during the year, while the others arrive at a year mark via a statistical manipulation of marks obtained in tests and examinations at a school during the year. The second approach would seem, in terms of all that the "new history" approach teaches us, to be rather sterile as it would tend to assess the same objectives that are assessed in the final examination. The assignment does at least provide an opportunity to broaden one's assessment objectives, even in the South African situation. Whether or not this happens could only be determined by a careful analysis of actual practice in the departments concerned. It is interesting to note the relatively heavy coursework weighting of the Transvaal Education Department. Unfortunately, details concerning the composition of this year mark were not available and thus it is not possible to determine the significance of this weighting. Another interesting feature of the weighting is the way in which it is used by some departments to help achieve differentiation. In five departments there is a reduced emphasis on essay questions, at standard grade level, the implication being that essay questions tend to assess higher order abilities (i.e. analysis, synthesis and evaluation). By contrast, the Joint Matriculation Board puts more emphasis on essay questions at the standard grade level, suggesting an altogether different point of view. There is also an attempt, in three of the departments, to achieve differentiation by increasing the weighting of the year mark at the standard grade level. The implication here is that it is the formal written examination that, it may be suggested, separates the higher grade "men" from the standard grade "boys".

\* \* \* \* \*

Having described and analysed a number of syllabuses from England and from South Africa, the task remains to take a brief look at how the syllabuses operate at the level of a final examination where the focus will be on the major types of questions used and the way in which the responses of the candidates are assessed.

Table 9 is based on an analysis of specimen examination papers put out by SEG in May 1986 and of some of the papers that were used in the first GCSE examination in June 1988. It shows that stimulus material, which plays an important role in assessment in that it forms a basis for many of the questions that are asked, may be divided into two basic categories - the source array and the single source. It also shows that there are essentially two basic types of question - multi-part or structured questions and essay questions, and that coursework plays an important role in final assessment.\* Most important of all, however, is that it shows how each aspect of "methods of assessment" is linked to the assessment objectives of the seven syllabuses offered by the SEG. Emphasis in the table indicates that a particular method is used primarily to assess a particular objective. The most outstanding example is the use of the "source array" on

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\* By far the greater majority of the questions in the examination papers analysed were of the multi-part or structured type. Very few "unstructured" essays were to be found. In fact, it is very difficult to differentiate between multi-part or structured questions and a structured essay. Some parts of the multi-part questions required a response in "continuous prose" which could be classified as a mini-essay (See Appendix 6 for examples of these questions).

which to base questions which assess "skills with evidence". A range of sources, each providing a particular view of a topic, is clearly considered to be the best method to assess the full range of skills that are needed to effectively study and use historical evidence.

TABLE 9

BASIC ASSESSMENT METHODS USED IN  
SEG AND GCSE HISTORY EXAMINATION PAPERS

OBJECTIVES									METHODS OF ASSESSMENT
Know- ledge	Con- cepts	Empathy	Skills with evidence	Analysis of Causation etc.	Current Situation	Historical site			
✓	✓		@	✓			Source Array	STIMULUS MATERIAL	
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			Single Source		
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			Multi-part or structural	QUESTION TYPE	
@	@			✓			Essays		
		@	@	✓	@	@		COURSEWORK	

EXPLANATION OF TERMS USED IN TABLE

1. Source array: The candidate is presented with a number of sources (some-where between four and six) that all relate to a particular topic. It is usual to link a multi-part question to a source array.
2. Single source: These are used in the main as stimulus material and can be linked to any question type.
3. Multi-part questions: A question which is sub-divided into a number of parts. These questions enable the examiner to focus on a number of objectives and require varied responses from candidates ranging from a line or two for the first example, to say, a page of continuous writing for the last. The tendency is for each part to be self-contained in the way that it focuses on a particular objective.

4. Essays: These range from the open-ended to the structured variety with the latter by far the more popular. In the structured essay a framework is provided for the candidate to follow. While this restricts, to an extent, the freedom of the candidate, it does enable the examiner to focus the question more finely in terms of content required and assessment objectives to be realized.

Table 8 shows that there are essentially two question categories in South African external examination papers, essays and "non-essay" sections. Unlike the GCSE examination papers, there is a heavy emphasis on essay questions which also range from open-ended to structured questions. While the structuring of questions in GCSE examinations is used more as a device to focus on particular objectives, in South Africa the tendency is to use it as a tool for differentiation. One finds many more structured essay questions in standard and lower grade papers.

In a sense, the non-essay section can be equated with the multi-part questions of SEG papers in that there are a number of sub-divisions in each non-essay question that require a variety of responses from the candidates. At the moment, there seem to be four basic approaches to the non-essay question section; the most antiquated being that of the O.F.S. which is little different from the pre-differentiation approach. Here, five one-word answers or objective items and a ten mark paragraph are linked to each essay. In effect, there is no non-essay section as such, simply a number of short questions linked to each essay. The short questions one has to answer, therefore, depend upon the essays one chooses to answer. It is also interesting to note that in 1988 papers, no use was made of stimulus material.

By far the most popular approach is that followed by the Cape, Transvaal, Department of Education and Training and the House of Representatives education departments. Their approach is to cover the whole syllabus in two non-essay

sections (one on General History and one on South African history) using a wide variety of questions ranging from objective and single answer questions, through multi-part questions, to questions that require a response in continuous writing (i.e. a paragraph). Stimulus material is much in evidence in these examination papers but it is not always used to good effect: questions can often be answered without reference to the stimulus material.

The approach adopted by the Joint Matriculation Board has clearly been designed to achieve some depth in non-essay questions and possibly also to create the opportunity to test more than mere content. Here a whole theme or major part of a theme is tested in a non-essay section and not the whole syllabus as is the case with the departments mentioned earlier. In the 1988 examination "Circumstances leading to the Outbreak of World War Two" and the period "1924 to 1933" in South African history were chosen for non-essay treatment. Unfortunately, opportunities for innovative testing offered by this approach have not been utilised. The questions and stimulus material used are similar to those of the departments who follow the second approach. All that has really been achieved is that there is a more intense focus on particular content.

A more innovative approach is that adopted by the House of Delegates Education Department and the Natal Education Department. The use of an array of sources forming the basis of a multi-part question is very similar to the method used in GCSE examinations, an approach that has originated out of

the "new history movement". Innovation in the case of these two South African authorities is limited by the fact that the basic focus in this country is on content. While the non-essay questions faced by Indian pupils focuses entirely on content, this is not the case for pupils who sat the examination of the Natal Education Department. Here a clear attempt is made to test "skills with evidence" and "empathy" as the following two questions from the 1988 paper illustrate (these questions were based on an array of four sources: A. A table of parliamentary election results for the 1915 to 1929 elections. B. A quotation from an unnamed source on the position the pact found itself in just before the 1929 election. C. A graph showing the national income between 1920 and 1940. D. A Cape Times cartoon of 11 April 1923 commenting on the Nationalist/Labour Pact):

- A. Skills: Question 10(e): "Comment on the cartoon (Source D) explaining the cartoonist's meaning and indicate whether the picture is accurate or biased". (10)
- B. Empathy: Question 10(g): "Imagine that you are one of the figures shown in Source E. Write a paragraph of about twelve lines describing your living conditions, your home life, your problems and your hopes for the future (10)

Earlier it was mentioned that it was in Natal that the ideas behind the "new history" were most vigorously pursued, and it should not be surprising that these ideas, albeit in a small way, have now filtered their way into the external examination. Interestingly, this approach is not reflected in any way in the current Natal syllabus. Just as interesting, but far more perplexing, is the fact that a Joint Matriculation Board publication of 1987 shows a

distinct leaning towards the "new history"\* and yet there is no evidence at all in the 1988 examination paper of any "new" approach. Could it be that Natal and the Joint Matriculation Board will soon bring their syllabuses and external examinations into line, and in this way take the lead in South Africa by propagating the "new history"?

When it comes to the assessment of pupils' responses in the formal written examination, the approach in England is quite different from that in South Africa. It has already been established that in GCSE history examinations, differentiation is achieved by outcome which, in turn, is achieved through an examination which is open-ended in nature (i.e. there can be no single/fixed answer to any question).

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\* The following extracts quoted from the Joint Matriculation Board publication "Standard ten examination requirements for History higher grade and standard grade" illustrate this point:

The extracts are all quoted from:

**"1. The rationale underlying the Higher Grade and Standard Grade examinations".**

1.2 "... two broad approaches to the teaching of history ... 'content' and 'skills'".

1.3.1 The examination will be concerned to "test the candidate's mastery of the course content".

1.3.2 The examination will be concerned to "test the candidate's mastery of the skills of historical enquiry".

1.4 may be seen as the assessment objectives of the Joint Matriculation Board. It has already been established that these are central to the "new history". Unfortunately, as has already been mentioned, these objectives had no bearing on the 1988 JMB examination paper.

Questions in such an examination will be answered in a simple way by a candidate at the lower end of the ability range and in a complex way by one near the top. The criterion-referenced system with a post-hoc standardisation procedure that grew out of the "new history movement", is the method of assessment that is used in GCSE history examinations. This system has already been described in Chapter 4 and its operation has been illustrated in Appendix 2. Further illustration will be found in Appendix 6 where samples of questions from SEG specimen papers appear along with their mark schemes.

The fact-by-fact marking approach that forms the basis of mark schemes in South Africa has also been described. Unfortunately, mark schemes in this country are not made public and thus it is extremely difficult to establish in detail how each department adapts the fact-by-fact approach for its own use. The only detailed example that could be given was that of the Cape Province which was based on the experiences of the author as a sub-examiner (see Chapter 4).

However, whatever the assessment details in the other education authorities may be, the fact remains that mark schemes in this country are quite different from those in England. This reflects contrasting approaches to history as a school subject and to the way in which differentiation is achieved.

In concluding this comparative analysis of the current situation with regard to history syllabuses and examinations,

it is perhaps appropriate that we should return to the issue that is at the very heart of the GCSE system: the fact that it is criteria-referenced (as opposed to the norm-referenced system of South Africa). As already explained, a pupil will be awarded a grade in a GCSE examination on the basis of how, what he has done in the examination, related to predetermined criteria. The General Criteria lays down that each syllabus includes a set of grade descriptions designed "to give a general indication of the standards of achievement likely to have been shown by candidates awarded particular grades". These grade descriptions form an important part of each syllabus. Closely linked to the particular assessment objectives of each particular syllabus they, together with the objectives and syllabus content, give each syllabus a unique character, and serve as a guide to teachers, examiners and pupils.

## CONCLUSIONS AND SOME THOUGHTS ON THE FUTURE

This section of the thesis will focus on some of the modern trends in the curriculum and on History as a component of the curriculum in England and in South Africa. Some criticisms of these aspects of education in both countries will be noted and finally there is some speculation on future possibilities regarding the curriculum, school leaving examinations and History as a school subject in South Africa.

In the 1960's, the Nuffield Foundation and the Schools Council began work in the area of subject and examination revision, but little consideration was given to the reform of the curriculum as a whole. This led to an explosion of syllabus options and by the mid-1970's some educationists felt that the time had come for some form of national/centralized control over the curriculum in England. This was achieved when the National Curriculum was included in the 1988 Education Act. There are even signs that the extreme freedom (a system that allows "bachelor-living and power volley ball" to enter the curriculum as options in some schools), that characterises the curriculum in the USA is coming under pressure. Doyle (1987) makes a strong appeal for a "national, core curriculum" in the United States and raises the question "What is it we need to know as Americans, both to have a shared sense of community and a shared destiny?" (p.22). Further, he points out "we already have a de facto national curriculum. As the colleges and universities have been the gatekeepers of high school quality (sic), the Education Testing Service, through its achievement examinations and Advanced Placement examinations, is easing

us slowly and painlessly into one" (p.33).

Although South Africa has had a national curriculum since the introduction of differentiated education in the early 1970's (and even earlier than that through the influence of the JMB over the senior secondary curriculum), there are signs that control over the curriculum is becoming even more centralized. The introduction of the tricameral parliamentary system and the demise of the Provincial Councils has seen the Provincial education departments (as well as those of the House of Delegates and the House of Representatives, and the Department of Education and Training) become mere executive bodies implementing a curriculum that is determined in Pretoria.

It is important then, when considering the curriculum, to keep in mind this strong trend towards centralized control.

Another trend, which is associated with that of centralization, is that of placing some sort of limitation on the curriculum that secondary school pupils may follow. The specialized curriculum of the 1950's to the 1980's in England was characterised by considerable freedom of choice and was able to function at the senior secondary school level thanks largely to the single subject GCE, CSE and current GCSE examination systems. The National Curriculum, with its ten foundation subjects upon which a pupil must spend the bulk of his time at school, would seem to have brought to an end what may be termed "the era of curricular freedom" in England. In

a sense a co-ordinated, general curriculum\* has now been introduced in an attempt to provide a better balanced education at schools.

The "package" type school leaving examination that has been enforced throughout South Africa over the years by JMB regulations, has been the major factor militating against South Africa experiencing "an era of curricular freedom". Educationists in this country have always felt strongly about maintaining some sort of balance in education by forcing pupils to follow a co-ordinated, general curriculum. A consequence of South Africa never having experienced a "period of freedom" is that curricular innovation has always tended to come from above (i.e. official/departmental bodies) with minimal "grass roots" or teacher involvement. Quite the opposite was the case in England from the mid-1950's onwards, where practising teachers found themselves at the centre of numerous curriculum development programmes; an excellent example being the Schools Council History 13-16 Project. It will be interesting to see what influence the National Curriculum will have on future curriculum development in England.

Centralized control is also a feature of the school leaving examination systems in both countries. In England this is exerted through the National Criteria of the GCSE and the

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\* A co-ordinated, general curriculum requires that a pupil study a number of subjects ranging across the arts/science divide in an attempt to force such a pupil away from too high a degree of specialization.

recently constituted Schools Examinations and Assessment Council (SEAC), while in South Africa the Joint Matriculation Board (soon to be replaced by the South African Certification Council) presently oversees these examinations.

There are, however, two major differences between the examination systems in the two countries. The first is the central role played by assessment objectives in the GCSE system, which contrasts strongly with the complete absence of such a feature in the South African system. The debate on the role that educational objectives should play in education goes on but, based on the fact that they play a central role in the GCSE system, it is probably fair to say that in principle, they have come to be seen as an essential feature of assessment in England. The continuing debate is likely to result only in the fine tuning of assessment objectives. In South Africa, an honest answer to the question: "What is the objective of this examination?" would have to be: "To assess the candidates' mastery of the syllabus". In the absence of any stated assessment objectives in such a syllabus this would actually mean the content of that syllabus. From the history point of view, this would mean assessing only the knowledge and understanding of the product, an approach which British teachers have, for many teachers, condemned as being narrow in that it does not do justice to the nature of history as a school subject. The second difference arises from the attempt in England to break with a system that is norm-referenced by introducing criterion-referencing. This issue produces, however, some difficulties and controversy which will be discussed later. It would seem fair to say

that criterion-referencing has not yet been fully accepted as one of the bases for an examination system even though the GCSE has committed itself to this approach. The uncertainty that surrounds this issue will, no doubt, be resolved one way or the other, over the next few years of GCSE examinations.

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The comparison of the state of school history (at the "official" syllabus level) in the two countries in the previous chapter, has revealed considerable differences in approach. Broadly speaking, it may be said that South Africa continues to follow a "traditional" approach with the focus firmly on the product of history, while in England, the "new" approach predominates with its focus on the process of history.

The inability of the "new history" to make any significant impact at the "official" level, is a cause for concern regardless of whether or not the "new" approach is "the answer" for history as a school subject. There are three areas of particular concern. Firstly, the fact that this country continues to follow a traditional approach would seem to indicate that developments in the psychological-history partnership, so important to the growth of the "new history", have had little impact here. Secondly, there is the fact that a feature central in the "new history" and (of far greater significance) central to the GCSE examination system, finds no place at all in South African education. The feature is that of assessment objectives. In chapter 3 the possibility was raised that the use of objectives, particularly age-graded objectives (see Table 1) could well

turn history into something of a structural subject. It is of concern that an issue that may well change the very nature of history as a school subject has not received adequate attention at official levels in South Africa. Finally, when one compares the flexibility of the National Criteria for History with the rigidity of the South African core syllabus, one wonders whether the present South African system would be able to develop ways of coping with the variety of history, variety in the product and process of history.

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There are several critical issues about curriculum, school leaving examinations and school history which are currently being discussed in both England and South Africa. It is important to consider some of these issues.

A severe criticism of the National Curriculum is that voiced by both Wilcox (1988) and Samuel (1988) who saw a major weakness of this curriculum in what they believed to be a lack of its clear purpose. Wilcox does not believe that the National Curriculum will survive as it is at odds with the liberal society that it proposes to serve. If this turns out to be the case, then those who have expressed concern about the politicizing of education will be able to rest easy. A Times Educational Supplement editorial (1987) entitled "Enter the grand panjandrum" claimed that:

"What is being introduced is not a national curriculum but a Nationalised Curriculum. From now on every political party will have to have its "policy" for curriculum... The Nationalised Curriculum will, in short order, be the politicised curriculum."

A number of critics focused on the potential that centralized control had for ossifying future curriculum development.

Pandya (1988) claimed that with the National Curriculum "the divorce of curriculum development from teaching would be complete", while Duffy (1987) stated that "you don't help schools to think by turning them into production-line machines, delivering a pre-packed curriculum to statutory quality control" (p.29). In a criticism of the clinical nature of the National Curriculum where little thought seems to have been given to the emotional development of the child, Mann (1987) wrote: "Does this model of a curriculum correspond to what ... we know about the growth of young children and how they come to understand their world?" He was also worried about the implications of a statutory curriculum for future generations: "To have today's vision enshrined in law may prove a heavy burden for our successors" (p.30).

The fact that the National Curriculum is subject-based is the focus of considerable criticism. Holt (1987) wrote:

"The curriculum pupils are to have prescribed for them puts the clock back to the last century. Subjects reign supreme, for subject knowledge will define both the "clear objectives" of schooling and the means of assessment" (p.30).

On the other hand, Lawton (1987) reserved judgement on this aspect of the curriculum when he wrote:

"There is nothing wrong with subjects provided they are treated as means and not ends. Virtually all the enlightened views on curriculum planning are now agreed that subjects should be regarded as important only if they help to reach other objectives which, in turn, have to be justified. Subjects are a useful way of organizing the work of teachers. Teachers are educated and trained within subject disciplines, and it is important not to de-skill in the process of curriculum reform. But they have to learn to apply their knowledge in ways which stretch far beyond single subjects and inevitably cross subject boundaries". (p.31).

He is, however, critical of the "consultation document" on

the National Curriculum in that it makes no attempt to relate subjects to wider objectives.

One of the consequences foreseen for this subject-based curriculum is a general narrowing in that a number of useful subjects will be "squeezed out". Another concern was that the syllabuses may be spelt out in such detail as to be restrictive.

The linking of the National Curriculum to a system of attainment targets for 7, 11, 14 and 16 year-olds, is seen with dismay by some critics. Murphy (1987) comments on the serious "backwash" potential in such a development:

"The danger of the assessment system becoming totally external and divorced from what goes on in the schools, is paralleled by the equally serious danger of teachers coming under pressure to narrow their teaching down to an absurd degree in order to improve their own pupil's benchmark test scores" (p.319).

The cry of "lowered standards" is also raised in the context of these attainment targets.

It is interesting to note that some critics have questioned the need for a National Curriculum on the basis of the point of view that the GCSE is a sort of national curriculum in itself. The National Curriculum is so wide ranging in its implications that it may result in yet another re-examination of final assessment procedures, which could affect the GCSE even though it has been so recently implemented.

One aspect of the GCSE that has been hotly debated is that of criterion-referencing. Committees in each subject

investigating this matter have faced a number of problems and, at the time of writing, there is no indication that a satisfactory arrangement has been reached in any subject - certainly not in History. There are two main difficulties: Firstly, subjects need to be broken down into very small parts in order to arrive at criteria that can be assessed. A number of subject specialists are of the opinion that this fragmentation distorts the very nature of their disciplines. Secondly, expressing the criteria in clear unambiguous terms is no easy task.

Scott (1987) argues that a pure criterion-referenced examination is unlikely to work. He pointed to the fact that the examination boards had reported to the Secondary Examinations Council that "... , as of yet, their attempts to establish grade criteria have proved unworkable" (p.31). He also gives an example of criteria relating to the assessment of empathy in History examinations (p.32) and concludes "... far from being a series of progressive steps from a limited empathetic viewpoint to a more complete one, it is in fact a series of ideas which lack coherence and progression." (p.35).

Both the National Curriculum and the GCSE - if it survives - are posed for what will surely be crucial developments over the next five years. It will be important for South African educators to monitor these carefully as there is no doubt that there will be many lessons that could be learned; some may even be of practical value in the South African context.

When the Schools Council History 13-16 Project was launched in England in the mid-1970's, numerous history teachers in that country remained unconvinced that this "new look" history was indeed the best approach to the subject at school. While there are many critics of this approach, the Schools Council History has not, at any stage, been rejected out of hand. Considerable influence that it has had on the GCSE National Criteria for History, and thereby on all GCSE syllabuses, and also in the fact that it exists in its own right as a GCSE syllabus, has already been shown.

While the Project and the "new history" are not synonymous, a summary of some of the more significant criticisms of the Schools Council History in particular and the "new history" in general, will give some idea of the latent thinking in the "new history". The criticism is perhaps best summed up by the title of an article by Limm (1980) that appeared in *Teaching History*: "History: the search for a balanced rationale." For the purposes of this argument, the stress should be seen to fall on the word "balanced".

Much criticism has been directed at content (which, in the SHP approach, is greatly played down) and also at the nature of the content in the SHP syllabus. A *Times Educational Supplement* editorial (1988) commented, rather scathingly, thus:

"No one outside the narrow ranks of school History teachers really wants History to be hijacked by skills and half-baked notions of empathy. Skidelsky is right: one should know a certain amount of history simply to be a competent citizen." (p.2).

Lang (1986) attacked what he believed to be the esoteric

nature of the SHP content:

"..., we are asking them to make sense of a variety of topics picked at random through time without any background knowledge of their historical context". (p.27).

He believed that in terms of content, school syllabuses should relate, in some degree, to history courses on offer at universities. He also makes an appeal for keeping alive "the most valuable asset history has: its narrative side through time." The syllabus that Lang offers attempts to overcome the "random nature" of SHP content by taking a series of "in depth studies" from the period covered in the "outline study" of the syllabus. The Southern Examining Group's syllabuses 1-5 are examples of this approach.

One of the criticisms of the SHP discontinuous syllabus is that it does not do enough to develop the pupils' understanding of time and chronology. Interestingly, this is the one concept that is absent from the GCSE criteria. No clear reason for his omission could be found other than research in this field (Hallam (1970) and Garvey (1976)) which indicated that sixteen year old pupils of average ability would have difficulty relating time factors to historical argument. Whatever the reason, there is clearly a need for further research in this area.

A number of teachers have expressed concern that a skills-based, criterion-referenced approach may lead to a "balkanization" or fragmentation of history. They claim that the tendency to isolate the skills of historian and the concepts of history creates the danger of losing sight of the fact that they are all inter-related in the process whereby

history is created. Ben Jones (1986) was clearly aware of this danger when he warned that "History ..., is a seamless web and that should be the target of your teaching." (p.4).

Further criticism revolves around the opinion held by some that the Schools Council syllabus developers did not pay enough attention to the important people on the receiving end of their ideas; the teachers and the pupils. The lack of a concerted and long-term programme designed to ingrain the SHP approach among teachers and pupils received attention from Williams (1988) who wrote:

"... perhaps the project approached the task of curriculum development from the wrong end and should have devoted more time to developing teachers than developing teaching materials ... History 13-16 may have successfully sold itself as a well-resourced course, but it has been far less successful at selling its philosophy and thereby producing a 'revolution in history teaching.' They [the pupils] feel insecure without their staple diet of note-taking, rote learning and regurgitation; they have difficulty in relating to a concept of knowledge that is uncertain and open to question; they are confused by the teachers' ambivalent attitude towards knowledge." (p.12).

The main concern of history teachers in the 1980's, then, was to strive to achieve balance and coherence in school history syllabuses: balance between skills and content, between the process and product of history; coherence in the content of a syllabus and an even wider coherence that holds a syllabus as a whole together. Fines (1983) suggested that there was a danger of swopping a "purposeless canter" through the ages with a series of narrowly focused exercises that revolve around skills. He was appealing for a broad coherence in a history syllabus.

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The decade that is drawing to a close has also seen the South

African curriculum come in, at times, for severe criticism. The sources of this criticism range from the De Lange Report (1981) through the People's Education movement to the writings of educationists such as Berkhout (1983). Four issues\* raised in the De Lange Report would seem to be particularly relevant to this study:

1. The lack of a whole curricular perspective.
2. The bureaucratization of the curriculum.
3. The abstract and academic nature of the curriculum.
4. The "backwash effect" of examinations (the external standard ten examinations in particular) on the curriculum.

History as a subject in the South African curriculum has also had to face much criticism in recent years. Van den Berg and Buckland (1983) believed that there was something of a crisis situation facing the subject. They pointed to the declining numbers of white pupils taking history at the senior certificate level; the writings of educationists like Danziger, who called history the "worst thought subject in the curriculum", and the effect that the increasing politicization of education in Black, Coloured and Indian schools was having on the subject. (Witness "The ritual burning of history textbooks in the student uprisings in 1976 and the boycotts in 1980" (p.1)). Nine reasons were offered for the unpopularity of history:

1. The low status in the school curriculum.
2. The nature of the examination with its heavy demands on memory.
3. Repetition in syllabuses.
4. The predominant teaching approach which is teacher-centred and textbook oriented.
5. Overloaded syllabuses.
6. Nature of the material studied (i.e. political, diplomatic, military and biographical and very little African history).

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\* Some of the implications of these issues will become apparent when the imaginative look into the future is taken.

7. The inappropriate "purposes of history".
  - (a) The nature of the subject is distorted (history is seen as a body of knowledge rather than a process of interpretation).
  - (b) The subject has socio-political and ideological overtones (i.e. The Christian National Education view).
8. Under-qualified teachers.
9. Narrow teacher training (pp.2-4).

While a case may be made to support the argument that some of these problems have received attention since 1983, it seems certain that as long as South African history syllabuses remain rooted in a "traditional" approach to the subject, there is little chance that "the crisis" will be resolved.

Based on the evidence in chapter 4, it would seem that history development in South Africa has been relatively slight compared with England. While the British "new history" experience is more than likely not the panacea for South Africa, it will surely form a more than adequate starting point for a "new look at history" in the South African context.

It is important to note the cautions given for uncritical transfer of new curriculum development to other countries with different educational systems. Crossley (1984), for example, wrote of the danger of transferring curriculum development packages from country to country, while Hearnden (1986) expressed himself as follows on this matter: "What is fraught with underestimated difficulties is the attempt to transplant practices without taking adequate account of the assumptions on which they rest." (p.194). It is hoped that the final section of this conclusion will reflect due

caution.

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Having drawn some conclusions with regard to the curriculum, school leaving examination systems and History as a school subject in the two countries with which we are concerned, it would seem appropriate from a South African point of view, to take an imaginative look into the future, based on some of the lessons one can learn from a study such as this.

There are two broad possibilities for curriculum reform in South Africa. The first is reform across the curriculum and this is often linked to broad educational reform. Examples of this kind of reform are the introduction of differentiated education in South Africa in the early 1970's and the reforms introduced in England by the 1988 Education Act. The second is reform in a single aspect or component of the curriculum. Examples here are the introduction of the GCSE examination system and the reforms introduced in History by the Schools Council researchers. While broad reform is, in theory, always preferable to single aspect reform, it is far more difficult to achieve and it thus occurs infrequently. There was a period of as long as 44 years between the two major reorganizations of English education - the 1944 Act and the 1988 legislation which included the National Curriculum requirements.

For major educational reform to take place, factors outside the educational sphere need to be conducive to reform. Pressure for reform on a macro scale from within education will only bear fruit if it receives added impetus from a

society that desires reform and from a political and economic climate that will allow reform. In South Africa at present a large section of the society desires fundamental educational reform. There is no doubt at all about pressure on education from this quarter. There is, however, some doubt about just how far the present government is prepared to go in its commitment to general reform in the country or about the capacity of the economy to carry fundamental educational reform along with reforms in other spheres that the government may have in mind.

Given the fact that the government is committed to achieving equality in education, one can assume, for the sake of argument, that it would be prepared to introduce major curriculum reform as part of a general educational reform package in order to realize this goal. Given this assumption, the certain aspects of the curriculum would seem to require careful attention.

A telling criticism in the De Lange Report was that the bureaucratization of the curriculum stifled innovation and experimentation. Pathways will need to be explored that will allow experimentation to take place, officially, at "grass roots" level. If necessary, mechanisms will have to be established which will encourage experimentation at schools and which will ensure that the results of this innovation will have impact at the official level. In the period after 1970, there would seem to have been much more activity in the field of curriculum development in England than in South Africa. It is suggested that a major reason for this

discrepancy lies in the extensive involvement of serving teachers in England in curriculum experimentation. This experimentation was encouraged by the Schools Council, the CSE examination system and the Mode system of examinations. Clearly, teachers must play a major role in future curriculum development in South Africa.

A further criticism expressed in the De Lange Report was that the South African curriculum is too abstract and academic. Unfortunately, this country would seem to have needed some sort of CSE or Secondary Modern experience, a system designed exclusively for non-academic pupils. England have now merged their tripartite school system into a single Comprehensive School system and their dual GCE/CSE examinations into a single examination at 16+, the GCSE. The question is: does this new situation cater adequately for the full range of abilities from the non-academic through to the academic? On the surface, the GCSE approach to differentiation would seem to be more finely tuned than the differentiation of the South African examination system, the former differentiating through seven grades and the latter through only three. Some sort of fine tuning of the system of differentiation in South Africa may indeed be a way in which to cater for the less academically inclined members of our school population. The successful implementation of the GCSE system in England over the next few years may well prove to be a useful source of ideas for South African curriculum developers.

The De Lange Report also commented upon the negative influence on the curriculum exerted by the "backwash effect"

of examinations. This is a universal problem and it has also received regular attention in literature dealing with the curriculum in England. There is no doubt that the school leaving examination in South Africa has a major impact on curriculum; what is taught (the examination syllabus almost to the exclusion of all else) and how it is taught (preparing the pupils for the examination). The question is: To what extent can one ever get away from this "backwash effect"? How much truth is there in the claim made that if serving teachers are involved in curriculum/syllabus/examination development, there will be a better chance of a healthy relationship existing between syllabus, teaching method and assessment? There is no doubt that all educators would agree that examinations should serve the curriculum, not determine it. The problem is how does one achieve this in practice? Will the flexibility inherent in the GCSE National Criteria reduce this effect in any way and what impact will the National Curriculum have in this regard? Murphy (1987) was clearly concerned about the inclusion of attainment targets in the National Curriculum when he wrote:

"A national curriculum, if it is truly going to improve the quality of education in our schools, needs a **parallel** (present author's emphasis) assessment system that has, as its main purpose, the aim of enhancing, supporting and nurturing the full range of all pupils." (p.320).

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Logic tells one that reform of a single aspect of the curriculum is not ideal. It is always possible that reforms in a particular subject could cause that subject to fall out of step with the curriculum, its philosophy and aims. The very existence of that subject in such a curriculum could thus be endangered by its innovative nature. The De Lange

criticism that South African education lacks a whole curriculum perspective reinforces the desirability for reform across the curriculum. Tunmer (1982) also clearly saw the desirability for reform of the whole curriculum.

"Both curriculum and subject development are concerned with establishing priorities. One has to perform some form of selection. Until you know what you are trying to do at any particular level or type of education, you cannot build a satisfactory curriculum, for it should reflect a coherent statement of aims to which each component must contribute. Until you have established the balance of all the components that make up a curriculum, you cannot set either the aims or the content of any particular component". (pp. 1 and 2).

One can look at the introduction of the GCSE in England to illustrate the kind of situations that can arise with single aspect reform. Concern has been expressed that the introduction of the GCSE has created problems for the GCE 'A' level examination. Dures, Recknell and Daniels (1988) argue that the GCSE has so altered the 16+ approach that the successful completion of "A" levels two years later will be put out of the reach of many pupils. Greetham (1988) expressed a similar fear:

"The key issue with GCSE, therefore, is whether it hinders or helps in the creation of more autonomous students capable of taking on the demands of "A" level work with confidence ... However, many teachers believe that the learning assignments at GCSE have forced students to work lower in the ability range, not higher, ... As a result, they fear that the gap between GCSE and "A" level is now wider than it was between "O" level and "A" level." (p.268).

While the ideal may well be for whole curriculum reform, this certainly does not mean that single aspect (subject) experimentation should cease as it is very often innovation in a narrow area of the curriculum that leads to reform on a broad front. A good example of this is the influence that the "new history" has had on the GCSE. People concerned with History as a subject in South African schools should thus ensure that they are continuously exploring the full

potential offered by the subject. If "official" reform is not possible, unofficial experimentation must continue:

1. To keep the subject alive to the demands and realities of the South Africa of today.
2. So that teachers are prepared when official bodies become interested in reform in order that they may play their rightful role in any reform.

For the foreseeable future, it would seem that subject disciplines will form the basis of any curriculum in South Africa, and it also seems that History will find a place in such a curriculum. This prediction is based on the sort of educational precedent set by the National Curriculum in including History as a foundation subject and in the fact that for all its stress of career-orientated education, the De Lange Report did not forget the importance of formative education, an area where History has an important role to play. However, South African History teachers should not ignore the possibility that the existence of History in the National Curriculum could, to a large extent, be thanks to the "new history" pioneers of the 1970's and 1980's.

It is suggested that, on the basis of the "new history" experience in England, South African history teachers should focus their efforts in three areas:

1. A search for a balance between content (product) and skills (process) in the subject. As has already been indicated, South African teachers are at a disadvantage here as the skills-aspect of history has yet to make its official appearance. It is likely that some form of skills component will form part of future history syllabuses. Teachers should thus begin to weave this aspect into present syllabuses in order to become familiar with the skills component itself and also so that they may explore the problems of balance that are created out of this broadened view of history.
2. A new approach to content both with regard to the shape of the syllabus and the nature of the content itself. South African teachers must surely accept that no

particular body of content is sacred. They need to develop the courage to omit as they explore the possibilities offered by varying the aspects of "length, range and depth" in a syllabus. With regard to the nature of the content in South African syllabuses, it is suggested that there is a need to recognize that we are of Africa through the inclusion of more African history in our curriculum. Since the days of John Vorster, national leaders have been reaching out into Africa; not to mention the covert economic outreach of seemingly considerable proportions. Should we not prepare our children for a future on the continent of Africa by opening up the "dark continent" in the History classroom?

3. A search for ways in which to incorporate educational objectives into South African syllabuses. This development in England would seem to have given history teaching and assessment in history a much clearer sense of direction.

The ideal that all History teachers in South Africa should strive for is a history that is true to the nature of the discipline and not that which serves some or other cause. As difficult as the achieving of such an ideal may be, given the tumultuous times South Africa is passing through, it should be the constant focus of History teachers so that in the words of Giliomee (1986) "... the past properly understood, can be the basis for a better future." (p.35).

## APPENDIX 1

TWO EXAMPLES OF ASSESSMENT EXPERIMENTATION QUOTED IN  
STEELE (1976)

1. Mixed mode "O" level examination in history at the Graham Balfour High School, Stafford (1974).

They wished to examine a range of historical skills such as research techniques, comprehension, analysis, evaluation and synthesis. To achieve this the factual content of the course was considerably reduced and the following system of assessment was devised:

A. Written examination

- (i) Essay paper (each pupil must write three essays). 60% of the marks.
- (ii) Documents paper (to test the ability to assess and correlate several pieces of information from a number of sources). 15% of the marks.

- B. Project. Based on a range of primary sources which are provided. 25% of the marks.

2. CSE mode III based on continuous assessment at Clough Hall Comprehensive School, Kidsgrove (1970).

The content emphasis of the course was on local history and the aim was to develop historical skills. The assessment package was made up as follows:

- A. Special study (project). 25% of the marks.
- B. Objective question paper (testing factual recall). 25% of the marks.
- C. Essay paper (each pupil must write three essays)

OR

Continuous assessment. Here the syllabus was divided into eight sub-sections and the pupils were given an assignment on each. The assignments were equivalent to roughly half a term's work and were assessed as follows: 20 marks for selection of relevant facts, 15 marks for interpretation of facts, 10 marks for general impression, effort and initiative and 5 marks for presentation.

## APPENDIX 2

A "TENTATIVE" HIERARCHY OF CRITERIA FOR AN EXERCISE DESIGNED  
TO ASSESS THE UNDERSTANDING OF THE CONCEPT OF CAUSE.  
(ADAPTED FROM MEDLEY (1988) AND MACINTOSH (1979))

Eleven causes of the Russian Revolution of November 1917 are given:

"Out of the eleven causes listed, write down two or three which you consider to have been more important in leading to the Revolution. Give reasons for your answer."

Criteria:

Level 1 (Baseline answer):

"Certain causes are described as 'important' without any attempt being made to compare their relative importance or weight in leading to the event in question."

Level 2:

"One cause is compared with another by means of describing a single consequence of the absence of a particular causal factor".

Level 3:

"A number of causes are weighted against each other by means of following through, in argument, the consequences of certain causal factors being altered or taken away".

Level 4: .....

Level 5:

"Causes are weighted against each other by reference to an actual historical 'comparison situation'".

The gap at level 4 indicates that there are other levels which might be included.

As a result of working through a sample of scripts, it may be found, for argument sake, that the four tentative levels are adequate but that only 20% of the sample achieve level three and above. As a result of this and taking into consideration the responses to all other questions in the paper, it may be decided to award, say, ten marks to this question, broken

down as follows:

Level 1 : 1 - 2 marks  
Level 2 : 3 - 6 marks  
Level 3 : 7 - 8 marks  
Level 4 : 9 - 10 marks

Sub-criteria at each level would obviously facilitate the awarding of marks. These could be determined on the basis of the responses of the sample scripts.

## APPENDIX 3

A BRIEF CONTENT ANALYSIS OF A SOUTH AFRICAN HISTORY  
TEACHING JOURNAL

"Gister en Vandag, Yesterday and Today" is a journal for history teachers that was first published in 1981. It appeared largely as a result of the efforts of a number of Afrikaans-speaking academics. Articles appear in both Afrikaans and English.

Articles which deal with some aspect of the "new history":

No. 2 September 1981

Editorial, Innovation - Danger or challenge.  
Barnes, J C, History at St John's College (Johannesburg)  
Esterhuizen, S J, Die studie van enkele historiese temas  
versus die ontwikkeling van 'n geheelbeeld.

No. 3 April 1982

Van den Berg, O, and Buckland P, Why History?

No. 4 September 1982

Boyce, A N, Teaching contemporary history in South African schools.  
Trumpelmann, M, Simposium oor kreatiewe onderrig in Geskiedenis.

No. 6 September 1983

Olivier, J, Die nuwe geskiedenis en oorspronklike bronne.

No. 7 April 1984

McIntosh, H G, Assessment in history - some recent developments.

No. 8 September 1984

Verner, J, Towards a methodology of use for evidential material in history teaching.

## APPENDIX 4

## NOTES ON ANALYSIS OF ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES

1. **Knowledge:** To recall, evaluate and select knowledge relevant to the context and to deploy it in a clear and coherent form.
2. **Concepts:** To make use of and understand the concepts of cause and consequence, continuity and change, similarity and difference.
3. **Empathy:** To show an ability to look at events and issues from the perspective of people in the past.
4. **Skills with evidence:** To show the skills necessary to study a wide variety of historical evidence which should include both primary and secondary written sources, statistical and visual material, artefacts, text books and orally transmitted information
  - 4.1 by comprehending and extracting information from it;
  - 4.2 by interpreting and evaluating it - distinguishing between fact, opinion and judgement; pointing to deficiencies in the material as evidence, such as gaps and inconsistencies; detecting bias;
  - 4.3 by comparing various types of historical evidence and reaching conclusions based on this comparison.
5. **Additional assessment objective for Syllabus 6 only**
  - (a) Analyse causation, motivation and consequence;
  - (b) Analyse the role of individuals in relation to their historical content.
6. **Current situation:** Interpret the current situation in the context of past events.
7. **Historical site:** (a) Personally investigate and record a historical site; (b) relate a site to its historical context; (c) relate site evidence to other forms of evidence.

APPENDIX 5  
SOUTHERN EXAMINING GROUP GCSE HISTORY SYLLABUS FOR  
1990 EXAMINATIONS

Syllabus 1: British Social and Economic History since 1750

<u>Paper 1: Themes</u>	<u>Paper 2: Topics</u>	<u>Paper 3: Coursework</u>
1 Agriculture and Industry	1 The Old Poor Law, 1750-1836	Two written assignments produced during the course, one primarily concerned with Assessment Objective 3 and one with Assessment Objective 4. Each assignment must relate to a Theme or Topic within the Syllabus.
2 Communications	2 The Corn Law and its Repeal, 1815-1850	
3 People in Society	3 Chartism, 1832-1860	
	4 Trade Unions, 1866-1914	
	5 The Welfare State 1942-1985	
	6 Britain and Europe, 1945-1985	

Syllabus 2: World Powers since 1917

<u>Paper 1: Themes</u>	<u>Paper 2: Topics</u>	<u>Paper 3: Coursework</u>
1 The Development and Impact of the USA and the USSR as World Super-Powers	1 The Russian Revolution, Lenin and Stalin, 1917-41	Two written assignments produced during the course, one primarily concerned with Assessment Objective 3, and one with Assessment Objective 4. Each assignment must relate to a Theme or Topic within the syllabus.
2 Imperialism, Decolonization, and Post-Imperial Relationships	2 Hitler and the Third Reich, 1922-39	
	3 China, 1925-68	
3 The Effects of Technological and Scientific Change	4 The Military Events of the Second World War, 1939-45	
	5 The Arab-Israeli Conflict, 1947-73	
	6 Internal issues in the USA, 1945-76	

## Syllabus 3: British History, 1485-1714

<u>Paper 1: Themes</u>	<u>Paper 2: Topics</u>	<u>Paper 3: Coursework</u>
1 Parliament, 1485-1714	Section A:	Two written assignments produced during the course, one primarily concerned with Assessment Objective 3 and one with Assessment Objective 4. Each assignment must relate to a Theme or Topic within the Syllabus.
2 *Religious Conflicts	1 The Establishment of the Tudor Monarchy, 1485-1529	
3 England's Relations with Scotland and Ireland	2 The English Reformation, 1529-59	
4 *Economic and Commercial Developments	3 The Poor, 1530-1601	
5 Exploration and Colonization	4 The Tudor Navy	
6 Social Life and Change in England	Section B:	
7 England and Spain	5 The Civil Wars, 1642-8	
8 Education, Thought and Culture in England	6 Commonwealth, Protectorate, and Restoration, 1649-61	
	7 The Great Plague and Fire of London, 1665-6	
	8 Anglo-French Rivalry, 1689-1713	
* Nominated themes		

## Syllabus 4: British History: 1815-1983

<u>Paper 1: Themes</u>	<u>Paper 2: Topics</u>	<u>Paper 3: Coursework</u>
1 Parliament and Political Parties	Section A	Two written assignments produced during the course, one primarily concerned with Assessment Objective 3 and one with Assessment Objective 4. Each assignment must relate to a Theme or Topic within the Syllabus.
2 *Working-class Organization	1 Britain and the Settlement of Europe, 1815-39	
3 Women in Society	2 The Eastern Question, 1821-78	
4 Britain's Changing Position in the International Economy	3 Britain's Relations with European Powers, 1890-1914	
5 Education in England	4 The First World War 1914-1918	
6 *Laissez-faire to the Welfare State	Section B	
7 Ireland	5 Britain's Relations with Europe between the Wars, 1918-39	
8 The British Empire and the Commonwealth	6 The Second World War, 1939-1945	
	7 Britain in Europe since 1945	
	8 Britain and the USA 1812-1983	
* Nominated themes.		

## Syllabus 5: Britain, Europe, and the World, 1848-1980

<u>Paper 1: Themes</u>	<u>Paper 2: Topics</u>	<u>Paper 3: Coursework</u>
1 Germany, 1862-1949	Section A	Two written assignments produced during the course, one primarily concerned with Assessment Objective 3 and one with Assessment Objective 4. Each assignment must relate to a Theme or Topic within the Syllabus.
2 France, 1848-1958	1 Gladstone and Disraeli, 1867-94	
3 Italy, 1848-1946	2 Britain enters the Twentieth Century, 1895-1914	
4 *Russia, 1894-1964	3 Britain between the Wars, 1919-39	
5 Japan and China, 1890-1960	4 Britain after the Second World War, 1945-47	
6 The USA, 1898-1968	Section B	
7 *Palestine and Israel, 1914-73	5 Alliances and the Balance of Power, 1871-1914	
8 British Empire to Commonwealth, 1867-1980	6 The Great War, 1914-18	
	7 The Relationships between the European Powers, 1919-39	
	8 The Second World War 1939-1945	
	9 The United Nations, 1945-79	

\*Nominated themes

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## Syllabus 6: History of Medicine with Social Aspects

Paper 1 Section A-B and Paper 2: Study in Development	Paper 1 Sections C-D: Studies in Detail	Paper 3: Coursework
Medicine Through Time	1 Hospitals and Nursing in Bri- tain from Early Times  2 Urban Conditions in Victorian England, 1837- 1901.  3 Welfare and the State in the United Kingdom, 1906-85	Two written assign- ments produced dur- ing the course, one primarily concerned with Assessment Objective 3 and one with Assessment Objective 4. Each assignment must relate to a theme or topic within the Syllabus.

## Syllabus 7: Schools History Project 13-16 syllabus.

1. Study in Development.  
Candidates should study either 1, Medicine Through Time, or 2, Energy Through Time.
2. Study in Depth.  
The Study in Depth is designed to encourage candidates to develop and enrich their understanding of people and problems in the past through the study of social, economic, and political aspects of a country over a relatively short period of time (approximately 40-50 years).

Candidates study one of the following:

- (a) Elizabethan England
  - (b) Britain 1815-51
  - (c) The American West, 1840-1895
3. Study in Modern World History.  
This part of the course is designed to make evident the connections between past and present by demonstrating that many issues and problems of the contemporary world can only be understood with knowledge of their antecedents (Coursework Objective 5).

Candidates must either:

- (a) Study one current world problem in one of the following:
  - (i) Ireland;
  - (ii) China;
  - (iii) the European Common Market;
  - (iv) the Middle East;

or (v) Japan;

(b) select any other current world problem, provided:

- (i) that their work scheme is in accordance with the criteria laid down above;
- (ii) that their work scheme has been approved by their moderator before the commencement of the study.

In every case the focus of the study should be the problem current at the actual time of study. Historical material from any period which is relevant to that problem may be included.

#### 4. History Around Us.

The Syllabus Content is chosen by the teacher, who may consult the moderator for advice. It must be based on a "site" or "sites" which must be investigated by the candidate during the course. A site may be "historical" for example, an archaeological site, or it may be part of the everyday world which has a suitable historical dimension, for example, a factory. The candidate should:

- (a) investigate the site personally (Coursework Objective 6);
- (b) relate it to other forms of evidence (Coursework Objective 6);
- (c) relate it to its historical context (Coursework Objective 7).

## APPENDIX 6

**EXAMPLES OF QUESTION TYPES USED IN GCSE EXAMINATION PAPERS**  
 These questions have been drawn from specimen papers published by the Southern Examining Group in May 1986.

1. Multi-part question based on a source array  
 Syllabus 5, Paper 1, Question 1.

1. RUSSIA, 1894-1964

Study Sources A-E\* below and then answer all parts of the questions which follow.

Make use of the information in the Sources and also any other relevant information you have.

When referring to Sources in your answers, you should identify them by letter.

**Source A**

The overthrow of the Tsar in March 1917 was a great victory for the people of Russia. In alliance with the army, the working class of Russia fought for and won political freedom. The whole country was covered by a network of Soviets [councils] and of committees of soldiers and peasants. Power in the country was divided, but as early as June the Provisional Government had set up a dictatorship.

Not a single one of the social aims of the revolution had been met. Neither the government of Prince Lvov nor Kerensky's government which followed it gave land to the peasants or set them free from the control of the landowners. Workers in the mills and factories continued to be cruelly exploited, their standard of living declined sharply, their wages were cut, and there was hunger in the towns. A country which had been exhausted by the First World War was now thirsting for peace, yet the Provisional Government's policy was to continue the war.

The Bolshevik Party, led by Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, directed the struggle of the working class towards taking of power, the land question, bringing the war to an end, establishing workers' control over production, and nationalising banks and the more important branches of industry. But this struggle on the part of the workers and peasants came up against bitter resistance from the ruling classes.

(adapted from an historian's comment on the Provisional Government)

**Source B**



**THE KAISER LOOKS ON**

(A British cartoon on Russia's peace negotiations with Germany, 1918)

**Source C**

Map showing the territorial changes agreed by the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk.

**Source D**

The Treaty of Brest-Litovsk was signed on March 3, 1918. It set up effective German control of eastern Poland, the Baltic states and the whole of the Ukraine, and agreed to the independence of Finland. It took from Russia more than a quarter of its population and of its total arable land, three-quarters of its iron and coal and half of its industrial plant. This was a staggering price to pay for peace. Whether or not a revolution occurred in Germany - and there were few who shared Lenin's confidence - it horrified Russian opinion of every shade. The rumour spread once more that Lenin was a German spy.

(from *A Short History of Russia* - RICHARD CHARQUES)

**Source E**

For the Bolsheviks, peace on the Eastern Front, even at the price demanded by Germany, spelt salvation. By a gigantic sacrifice, Lenin had purchased a 'breathing space' during which he could bring his own followers to order and organise Soviet defence against the attack of the Russian Whites. Moreover at the back of his mind Lenin was certain that some day all that had been sacrificed at Brest-Litovsk would be won back.

(adapted from *The Treaty of Brest-Litovsk* - SIR JOHN WHEELER-BENNETT)

- (a) How does Source A provide an explanation of the fall of the Provisional Government?
- (b) Do you think the writer of Source A was a supporter or opponent of the Bolsheviks? Give reasons for your answer.
- (c) (i) What point is the cartoon (Source B) making? Show that it is anti-Bolshevik propaganda.  
(ii) How does Source D suggest a reason for many people in 1918 thinking that there was some truth in the point made by the cartoon?
- (d) How do Sources C and D show that the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk was a very harsh peace settlement?

- (e) Why, according to the Sources, was the Bolshevik Government anxious to make peace with Germany?
- (f) Why, according to the Sources, was it unlikely that the Bolshevik Government would look upon the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk as a permanent settlement?
- (g) From your own knowledge show how Lenin's achievements after Brest-Litovsk
- (i) were designed to put Bolshevik ideas into practice;
  - (ii) moved away from the policies of the Bolsheviks as put forward by them in 1917.

**TOTAL: 50 marks**

### Specimen Marking Guidelines

The following marking guidelines are offered as a guide to teachers. They are not definitive but indicate in broad terms how candidates' responses will be assessed. To achieve this, anticipated levels of response have been devised with some illustrative examples of possible responses. However, in the operational examination the mark scheme will be subject to a post-hoc standardisation procedure under the Chief Examiner using actual examples of candidates' responses.

#### SECTION A

TARGET: Questions 1 and 2 are designed to test Assessment Objectives 1, 2 and 4.

- |         |  |      |
|---------|--|------|
| 1. (a)  | LEVEL 1: Answers extract information regarding the failings of the Provisional Government.   | 1-3  |
|         | LEVEL 2: Answers additionally contrast these failings with hopes and expectations.   | 4-5  |
| (b)     | LEVEL 1: Answers correctly identify the writer as a Bolshevik supporter.   | 1    |
|         | LEVEL 2: Answers identify particular terms and phrases in direct support.  | 2-3  |
|         | LEVEL 3: Answers additionally indicate the questionable nature of some comments and/or the over-emphasis of others.  | 4-5  |
| (c) (i) | LEVEL 1: Answers are largely descriptive.  | 1-2  |
|         | LEVEL 2: Answers interpret the inscriptions and portrayal of the characters to suggest Bolshevik corruption.   | 3-5  |
| (ii)    | LEVEL 1: Answers identify the suggestion that Lenin was a German spy.  | 1    |
|         | LEVEL 2: Answers relate this to the way the cartoon suggests the Bolshevik was 'employed' by Germany.  | 2    |
| (d)     | LEVEL 1: Answers are confined to territorial arrangements.   | 1    |
|         | LEVEL 2: Answers clearly demonstrate the economic and strategic significance of the losses.  | 2-3  |
| (e)     | LEVEL 1: Answers depend upon a single source.  | 1-2  |
|         | LEVEL 2: Answers depend upon a number of sources by for example drawing information from Source A to support direct reasons in Source E.   | 3-4  |
|         | LEVEL 3: Answers demonstrate the suggestion of conflicting motives by reference to Source D.   | 5    |
| (f)     | LEVEL 1: Answers depend upon a single source offering direct reasons.  | 1-2  |
|         | LEVEL 2: Answers depend upon a number of sources, drawing inference to support the direct reasoning offered.   | 3-5  |
| (g) (i) | LEVEL 1: Narrative answers describe Lenin's achievements.  | 1-3  |
|         | LEVEL 2: Answers draw on an awareness of Bolshevik policy, perhaps by reference to Source A and separately deal with Lenin's achievements.   | 4-6  |
|         | LEVEL 3: Answers demonstrate an understanding of Lenin's achievements in relation to the Bolshevik programme and an awareness of the practical limitations faced by the implementation of the programme. | 7-10 |

(ii) LEVEL 1:	Narrative answers list relevant points such as the Cheka, NEP, etc.	1-3
LEVEL 2:	Answers demonstrate some understanding of these points and the way they were contrary to the Bolshevik programme, perhaps by further reference to Source A.	4-6
LEVEL 3:	Answers show an understanding of the nature of Lenin's pragmatism and perceive the need for such an approach in the circumstances facing Russia at the time.	7-10
<b>TOTAL:</b>		<b>50</b>

2. **Multi-part Question based on a single source**  
Syllabus 5, Paper 1, Question 14.

14. *British Empire to Commonwealth, 1867-1980*

Read this extract and then answer questions (a) to (e) which follow:

The discovery of diamonds near Kimberley and gold near Johannesburg led to trouble between the Boers and the British. The first Boer War settled nothing but the second Boer War (1899-1902) ended in British victory and the two Boer states were taken over. In 1910 the Union of South Africa was formed from the Boer states and the two other British territories of Natal and Cape Colony.

Since then the Boers have had the greater influence and have provided all the Prime Ministers. The first of these were moderate men but in 1948 the Afrikaaner Nationalist Party won power. Their racial policies have led to South Africa's increasing isolation from other nations.

- (a) Explain the meaning of the term 'Boers' used in the extract above.
- (b) Why was Britain more successful in the second Boer War than in the first?
- (c) Why since 1910 have the Boers 'had the greater influence and have provided all the Prime Ministers'?
- (d) Why is it unlikely that the party which won power in 1948 would have had many supporters of British descent?
- (e) (i) Explain the ways in which its racial policies have led to South Africa's increasing isolation from other nations.  
(ii) Why did this racial policy become more of an issue after the 1950s than when it was first introduced?

**TOTAL: 25 marks**

14. (a) LEVEL 1:	Answers offer a definition of 'Boers' indicating their status of European settlers of Dutch origin.	1-2
LEVEL 2:	Answers additionally highlight their agricultural economy.	3
(b) LEVEL 1:	Answers generalise about the differing nature of British commitment.	1-2
LEVEL 2:	Answers suggest and discuss separately a number of factors.	3-4
LEVEL 3:	Answers additionally show an awareness of the changing historical context and attitude to imperial adventure.	5-6

(c)	LEVEL 1: Answers recognise the Boer majority vis à vis the British.	1
	LEVEL 2: Answers additionally recognise this majority relative to the degree of enfranchisement in South Africa.	2
(d)	LEVEL 1: Answers identify the Dutch name of the winning party.	1
	LEVEL 2: Answers additionally associate the name with specifically Boer nationalism.	2
(e) (i)	LEVEL 1: Answers generalise about Apartheid and the forms isolation has taken.	1-2
	LEVEL 2: Answers discuss other nations' perception of the offensive nature of Apartheid and, separately show an awareness that isolation takes a number of forms.	3-4
	LEVEL 3: Answers show an understanding of the ways in which 'isolation' is a response to Apartheid, but in extent varies from country to country and is by no means complete.	5-6
(ii)	LEVEL 1: Answers depend on single factors, such as increasing media attention, growing African nationalism, both within and without South Africa.	1-2
	LEVEL 2: Answers discuss several factors, but taking each separately.	3-4
	LEVEL 3: Answers show an awareness of the way differing factors interrelate, while retaining varying degrees of significance, and recognising that the introduction of legal Apartheid formalised an attitude of much longer standing.	5-6
<b>TOTAL:</b>		<b>25</b>

### 3. **Essays**

#### A. Structured: Syllabus 2, paper 1, Question 2

2. This question is about the foreign policy of the United States, 1919-41.
- (a) American foreign policy after the First World War has often been described as isolationist.
- (i) What is meant by an 'isolationist' foreign policy?
  - (ii) Why did many Americans want to follow such a policy?
  - (iii) Was American Foreign policy isolationist in the 1920's? Explain your answer.
- (b) In what ways and why did the United States become more active in international affairs between 1939 and the end of 1941?

**TOTAL: 20 marks**

TARGET: These questions are designed to test Assessment Objectives 1 and 2.

- |    |     |       |  |     |
|----|-----|-------|--|-----|
| 2. | (a) | (i)   | LEVEL 1: Answers generalise about, e.g. America holding aloof.   | 1   |
|    |     |       | LEVEL 2: Answers specifically refer to the post-war period and attitudes to Europe.  | 2   |
|    |     | (ii)  | LEVEL 1: Answers refer to tradition and a return to 'normalcy'.  | 1-2 |
|    |     |       | LEVEL 2: Answers show an understanding of how tradition had been reinforced by the wartime experience.   | 3-4 |
|    |     | (iii) | LEVEL 1: Answers are definite and produce some supportive material.  | 1-2 |
|    |     |       | LEVEL 2: Answers show an awareness that the issue is not clear cut.  | 3-4 |
|    |     |       | LEVEL 3: Answers perceive that the factors involved are not of equal weight and recognise that labels such as 'isolationist' are rarely appropriate.             | 5-6 |
|    | (b) |       | LEVEL 1: Answers include some relevant information referring to such points as 'cash and carry', Lease-Land, support for China.                                  | 1-2 |
|    |     |       | LEVEL 2: Answers recognise a variety of factors and separately offer a number of reasons.  | 3-5 |
|    |     |       | LEVEL 3: Answers demonstrate an awareness of how 'ways' are determined by reasons and relate this awareness to the historical context of the early years of war. | 6-8 |

**TOTAL: 20**

**B. Open-ended: Syllabus 1, paper 1, Question 3**

3. Describe the effects of **either** the First World War (1914-18) or the Second World War (1939-45) on British industry.

**TOTAL: 20 marks**

- |    |          |   |       |
|----|----------|---|-------|
| 3. | LEVEL 1: | Simple statements of consequence. Candidates pick on single consequences, e.g. more planes built.   | 1-6   |
|    | LEVEL 2: | Multiconsequential answers: candidates describe several consequences and begin to consider development of further consequences, e.g. increase in shipbuilding demanded more iron and coal.  | 7-13  |
|    | LEVEL 3: | Complex web of consequence: candidates make links between consequences and see that not all consequences were of equal weight and/or note the effects on attitudes towards industry, e.g. cotton industry suffered yet woollen industry prospered. Mark candidates who consider post-war consequences towards top of mark band. | 14-20 |

**TOTAL: 20**

4. **Empathy problems**  
 (Although these problems are not considered to be a separate question category they are included here to illustrate the unique way in which empathy is assessed).  
 Syllabus 5, paper 1, Question 7.

7. *The U.S.A., 1898-1968*

A black American war veteran of the Second World War is to make a presentation to Martin Luther King in recognition of King's services to the civil rights movement. Prepare a speech for the veteran in which he

- (a) recalls the racial discrimination of the 1930s;
- (b) surveys the progress made by the civil rights movement during the 1950s and 1960s;
- (c) indicates the debt of the movement to Martin Luther King by the mid-1960s.

**TOTAL: 25 marks**

1. Questions 3-8 will all be marked on the same common scheme.
2. The operational mark scheme will consist of a number of examples of answers at each level. These, of course, cannot be supplied without live scripts.
3. These questions have large markbands at each level. The placing of answers within levels accurately will be of vital importance.

Therefore the following rules apply:

- (a) There will be a 'standard' mark in each level. All answers will be given that mark unless they are very weak or very strong.
- (b) Recall and the ability to back up the answers with factual material will be the main way of fixing a mark within each level.
- (c) In Levels 1 and 2 examiners may only work in gradations of two marks.

**TARGET:** the questions in this section have been designed to test Assessment Objective 3.

**LEVEL 1: Everday empathy**

1-9

Standard mark: 5 Acceptable alternatives: 1, 3, 7, 9.

The answers which fall into this level show that the candidate realises that people in the past were human beings who were motivated by recognisable human ideas. The candidate expresses this understanding by ascribing typically modern ideas and motives to people in the past.

**LEVEL 2: Stereotype historical empathy**

10-19

Standard mark: 15 Acceptable alternatives: 11, 13, 17, 19

Candidates' answers show a realisation that people in the past had different ideas about the world from people in the present. The assumption, which may be implicit, is that people in the particular society thought in this way.

**LEVEL 3: Differentiated historical empathy**

20-25

Standard mark: 22

Candidates not only understand that people in the past had different ideas from people in the present, but they understand also that those ideas will not be uniform throughout past societies. They show how views might be affected by an individual's ideas, social and economic position, religious and political beliefs, etc.

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