

A long walk to citizenship: morality, justice and faith in the aftermath of apartheid

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Numerous initiatives, such as the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the Race and Values in Education process of the Department of Education, the government-initiated (but now civic-led) Moral Regeneration Movement and the pervasive indigenous African philosophy of *ubuntu* have, over the past twelve years since South Africa's transition to democracy, contributed materially to reforming and renewing the concepts of citizenship and morality in South Africa. Central to this debate have been issues of socio-economic justice for the vast majority of her historically disadvantaged citizens; a developing conception of the nature of citizenship in a country newly emerging from totalitarianism; a maturing understanding of the possible roles of faith within a democracy; and the struggle to define the relationship between citizenship, moral and religious education. This paper describes and critiques these initiatives and offers an analysis of the lessons each have contributed to the long road to citizenship in post-apartheid South Africa.

We have not taken the final step of our journey, but the first step on a longer and even more difficult road. For to be free is not merely to cast off one's chains, but to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others (Nelson Mandela, 1994, p. 617)

Introduction

Antjie Krog, in her celebrated memoir documenting the proceedings of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), describes the history of South Africa as 'three centuries of fractured morality' (Krog, 1999, p. 68). This theme is further expounded in the first volume of the report of the TRC (1999, Volume 1, p. 25) when it locates apartheid within a framework of ongoing and systemic violence. The report includes the importation of slaves to the Cape in 1652 by Dutch traders, the wars of colonisation and dispossession beginning in 1659, the violent Zulu expansion of the early nineteenth century, the incarceration of Boer women and children by the British during the Anglo-Boer war of 1899–1902 and the systematic

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exclusion of 90% of South African's people from political, civic and social rights during the majority of the twentieth century. When Nelson Mandela, the first democratically elected President of South Africa, refers to the 'long walk to freedom' (1994) – and with it a long road to citizenship – contestations and conflicts over morality, justice and faith over the past three hundred years are all included in the journey.

Vehicles for citizenship

Over the past twelve years since South Africa's transition to democracy, numerous initiatives have contributed materially to reforming and renewing the concepts of both citizenship and morality in South Africa. As the discourses of rebuilding have replaced those of liberation, there has been a growing focus on shared values and renewed morality as a primary means for rebuilding the fractured society that is post-apartheid South Africa. Central to this process have been several areas of debate: the issue of socio-economic justice for the vast majority of her historically disadvantaged citizens; how to develop a concept of the nature of citizenship in a country newly emerged from the tyranny and totalitarianism of apartheid; discovering a new and democratic place for religion, given its ambiguous role under apartheid both as liberating and oppressive; and defining the relationship between citizenship, moral and religious education.

In an attempt to elucidate these multiple facets of citizenship in South Africa and their implications for moral education, I have selected four contemporary processes from South Africa's recent post-apartheid history and will offer a brief description and critique of each. The four processes are the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), the Race and Values in Education (RVE) initiative of the Department of Education (including the role of religion in education), the government initiated (but now civic) Moral Regeneration Movement (MRM), and the resurgence of the indigenous Africa philosophy of *ubuntu*. While these are not the only initiatives contributing to the formulation of citizenship in contemporary South Africa, I believe that they illustrate the unique interactions of morality, justice and faith in South Africa's long journey to securing citizenship for all her people.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission

South Africa's history – of colonisation, slavery, theft of natural resources by minority settlers, violence and apartheid – has been variously described as 'one of the great evils of the modern era' (Crais, 2002, p. 4), a 'statutory evil' (Corder, 2000, p. 99), and 'a crime against humanity' (Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 1999, Volume 1, pp. 94–102). Building a new democracy from the ashes of such a history has been no easy task. The TRC, established by the Promotion of National Unity and Reconciliation Act in 1995 (Republic of South Africa (RSA), Parliament, 1995a) began at once to speak of its mission as moral. The minister of justice, in the legislation which established the TRC, stated that its purpose was to 'ensure that we

put our country on a sound moral basis... and [in order] to humanize our society we had to put across the idea of moral responsibility' (Dullah Omar in Krog, 1999, p. 8).

The TRC's explicit aim was to bring healing to a wounded nation and to 'return to victims their *civil and human rights*; to restore the moral order of the society' (Publisher's note in Krog, 1999, p. ix, emphasis mine). Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu, now State President Thabo Mbeki, Methodist Bishop Peter Storey and special adviser to the State President Frank Chikane all asserted that apartheid had resulted in a loss of humanity, and an abdication of personal standards of moral goodness. Accordingly, what was needed in South Africa was 'a new morality' (Krog, 1999, p. 390). Subsequently Du Toit (2005, p. 438), Lu (2002, p. 19) and Verwoerd (1999) have all spelled out the 'genre' of truth commissions as moral¹ and restorative. They focus primarily on victims, rather than having punitive or retributive aims.

The mandate of the TRC was to break the silence of apartheid, to lay bare the stories of suffering and dehumanisation endured by the vast number of South Africa's 'black' people. By taking two years to listen to 2000 verbal testimonies and read 18,000 written submissions the TRC were at pains to fulfil this mandate, so that the dignity of those who had been victimised by apartheid could begin to be restored. In addition, the TRC reviewed a total of 8000 amnesty applications and granted amnesty if perpetrators demonstrated political motive, proportionality of action in keeping with their political objective and gave a complete disclosure of the action for which they were seeking amnesty. Publicly broadcast, the effect was a growing awareness amongst South Africans of the extent of the atrocities committed and of the role of societal structures in perpetuating them. The TRC also served to highlight the way in which the past will continue to haunt South Africans unless a moral order is restored. In the words of Anglican priest Michael Lapsley, himself a victim of a security force bomb: 'In the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, our country's moral order is beginning to be established' (Lapsley, 1998, p. 747).

One criticism of the TRC which placed it in conflict with the African National Congress (ANC) concerned the fact that people on *both* sides of the struggle were asked to apply for amnesty for perpetrating gross human rights violations. The final report of the TRC states that 'the ANC ... fought a "just war", but [that there is] ... a definite distinction between a "just war" and "unjust means"' (Krog, 1999, p. 433). The Minister of Education succinctly expressed the government's displeasure: 'the Truth Commission will not be able to fulfil its implicit mandate to create a new moral order, if it does not make a distinction between those who fought against Apartheid and those who defended it' (Krog, 1999, p. 87).

The primary and more pervasive criticism however, was the manner in which the TRC was perceived to have sacrificed justice for truth. At the time, the criticism was answered by various people drawing attention to the 'negotiated revolution' (Kader Asmal in RSA, Parliament, 1995b, p. 1382-3) of which the TRC was a part, and that 'a new morality' could bring about greater good than punitive justice (Frank Chikane in Krog, 1999, p. 27). Hindsight confirms how those sentiments were

necessary for beginning the process of transformation and reconciliation in South Africa. However, the current conditions in which the majority of South Africans find themselves indicate that restorative justice without socio-economic justice is an inadequate moral response to the South African experience of apartheid (Bell & Ntsebeza, 2001; Gobodo-Madikizela, 2002). In particular LenkaBula (2005) summarises the argument tersely:

the righting of structural wrong, injustices or oppression and/or reconciliation requires both [sic] restorative, restitutive and redistributive, or socio-economic justice.... the limitations of South African reconciliation... have been their overemphasis on forgiveness, truth and restorative justice, while they downplayed the role of economic (distributive) justice. If socio-economic justice is not taken as one of the core activities ... society will remain polarized according to apartheid hierarchy and designations.... those who are disappointed by the lack of the radical transformation of apartheid would seek revenge because they feel they have not been treated in a just manner. (p. 114)

After the first democratic elections of 1994, the ANC government and its partners, embarked on a limited (and to date still inadequate) programme of redistributive justice in terms of employment equity, Black Economic Empowerment, land redistribution, increased social benefits, capital gains tax and a national payroll skills levy. A mere 22,000 victims of gross human rights violations have been compensated with R30,000 (US\$4300) each. During apartheid there were an estimated three million forced removals. The land claims court has to date processed 869,506 claims and plans to complete its work by March 2008 by processing a further 7500 claims (RSA, Government Communication and Information Services (GCIS), 2005, p. 103). While redistributive practices have created a new 'black' elite and a growing 'black' middle class, 57% of South Africans still live below the poverty line (Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC), 2004), 6% realise 40% of all income earned, the poorest 40% only 4%. Nearly half of all current school leavers will not find employment (Naledi, 2003). So, in spite of constitutional guarantees that rights to freedom of expression, association and belief 'exist side-by-side with socio-economic rights [and that] each person has a right to freedom from poverty, homelessness, poor health and hunger' (RSA, Department of Education (DoE), 2002, p. 8) more than half of South Africans (the vast majority 'black') remain impoverished, while the majority of 'white' South Africans have sunk into collective but economically comfortable amnesia. During the apartheid years 'white' South Africans enjoyed one of the highest standards of living in the world. They still do. South Africa's current Gini coefficient (a measure of income inequality amongst its population) is .77 (HSRC, 2004) and places South Africa amongst the most inequitable nations in the world. In 2000 the average 'white' household earned six times that of the average 'black' household (Naledi, 2003).

Many lay the blame at the government's door² for being slow to redress inequalities, but an enormous contributing factor has been the lack of 'social dynamic' from those who have been beneficiaries of apartheid. There has been an almost deafening silence around the issue of restitution³ in public discourse. And such restitutive justice needs to be seen as an integral part of the long road to citizenship upon which South Africa is currently embarked. So while the TRC report

did assert the importance of ensuring socio-economic justice in post-apartheid South Africa, it also expressed the judgement that only if the 'emerging truth unleashes a social dynamic that includes redressing the suffering of victims will it meet the ideal of restorative justice' (RSA, Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 1999, Volume 1, p. 131). But there has been no such 'social dynamic', much less an ongoing public discussion.

The Moral Regeneration Movement

The second government intervention concerned with morality and citizenship began in July 2000 when the Moral Regeneration Movement (MRM) was launched through a series of workshops, debates and rallies. Initiated by the Deputy Minister of Education and supported by both the Deputy President and Minister of Education, the first report produced by the movement was entitled *Freedom and obligation* (RSA, GCIS, 2000). In it, the movement maintained that its aim was to defend the gains made by the struggle against apartheid by ensuring that South Africa 'does not degenerate into a moral slum' (RSA, GCIS, 2000, Foreword). The proposed method was to educate the public about the social values as contained in the constitution (RSA, Parliament, 1996, Ch. 2).

According to the report, common manifestations of the moral crisis are murder, robbery, violence, abuse, rape, fraud and drug trafficking, while more subtle manifestations include the 'devaluation of people, racism, breakdown of family, the gap between the haves and have-nots, laziness, individualism and selfishness' (RSA, Parliament, 1996, 'Manifestations of the time-bomb'). The report maintained that promoting values that serve the common good rather than narrow 'pietistic values' (RSA, GCIS, 2000, Preamble) was its aim – and therefore abstinence from 'drinking, smoking, premarital sexual relationships and such things' (RSA, GCIS, 2000, Preamble) would not form part of the MRM's focus. It is instructive to note that no mention is made of issues, such as abortion, corporal punishment or the death sentence, which have moral values at their core and are hotly contested in South Africa.

The MRM stated that it would take as its brief the belief that:

the government was seen to be *the overarching custodian of the nation's morality* through the Constitution, legislation and policies... [that] draw parameters for a morally sound nation. The government is morally obliged to ensure that they do not inadvertently promote behaviour that is incompatible with the *agreed upon moral values of society* (RSA, GCIS, 2000, section entitled 'Public and Private Sector') (emphasis mine).

Also prominent in the MRM was a call for a return to pre-colonial values as articulated in the philosophy of *ubuntu* (which will be considered in greater detail later), with a commensurate rejection of Western individualism and materialism.

Initiatives of the MRM have included a government-business partnership in which closed circuit cameras in public spaces are funded by large corporations; the establishment of the South African History Project currently developing a library of primary sources from which it is reconstructing South African history and rewriting

school textbooks; and, more recently, a *Draft charter of positive values* (Moral Regeneration Movement, 2005). This latest document has coincided with the re-launch of the MRM as a civil initiative (although its office bearers remain housed in government offices to indicate government support).

The *Draft charter of positive moral values*, supposedly drawing on the constitution, outlines eight imperatives which it maintains are ‘minimal moral values to which all peaceful South Africans can aspire’ (Moral Regeneration Movement, 2005, last page) and amplifies these. The eight values describe commitments to respecting human dignity and equality; promoting freedom, the rule of law and democracy; improving material well-being and economic justice; enhancing family and community values; upholding loyalty, honesty and integrity; ensuring harmony in culture, belief and conscience; showing respect and concern for all people; and striving for justice, fairness and peaceful co-existence. Each value comes with a comprehensive description. Some of the descriptions include refraining from derogatory language and abusive labels (‘respect’); fighting against child labour, drug trafficking, pornography and prostitution (‘respect for human dignity’); non-discrimination against those living with HIV/AIDS (‘harmony’); transparency in government and representative employment practices (‘economic justice’); and fidelity and fighting against the neglect of family responsibilities (‘enhancing family and community values’). Clearly the moral values proposed by the MRM exceed the brief of the constitution and the public consensus, however much it protests to the contrary.

The response to the MRM has been varied. The media, religious, business and government leaders appear to welcome it, young people in general have not heard of it, and academics criticise it. Criticism of the MRM has been along three lines: that government should not be involved in promoting moral values at all; that morality is the domain of the religious sector; and that the MRM may be an uncritical instrument of nation-building which fails to identify other issues of moral decline (such as a lack of socio-economic justice). Each will be considered in turn.

Should the state be involved in promoting moral values? My answer is a qualified ‘yes’. The TRC, indubitably an instrument of moral regeneration, was initiated by the state, and even critics were agreed that it was necessary for it to be state-initiated. Furthermore, if the state encourages social values upheld by the constitution (the majority of which are moral in nature) then politicians are acting within their brief. If these politicians then exceed their brief, as those involved in the MRM clearly do (commenting, for example, on prostitution and pornography – both legal in South Africa), they contravene a fundamental tenet of a liberal state that ‘the state should not act upon judgements as to the relative worth of the ways of life espoused by its citizens’ (quoting Rawls in Mulhall & Swift, 1996, p. 348).

A brief explanation about terminology is in order before I proceed further. It has become commonplace within the academic (and popular literature) to use various sets of terms to describe the continuum along which moral values are categorised. The most commonly used terms are ‘public’ and ‘private’, ‘thick’ and ‘thin’, ‘morality in the narrow sense’ (and by implication ‘morality in the broad sense’) and finally ‘minimalist’ and ‘maximalist’⁴ (McLaughlin, 1992, 1994; Haydon, 1999a, 2000).

So the MRM has been at pains to distinguish between the thin, public, narrow, minimalist (in its language – the legal and social) values and the thick, private, maximalist or broad (contested, pietistic and prescriptive) descriptions of morality of which critics accuse it. In spite of their failure to always do so, it is at least attempting to articulate a morality about which there already exists a public consensus. Merely to argue that ‘the discourse of morality, then, as we are currently encountering it, is antithetical to democracy, and significantly undermines the development and consolidation of a culture based on human rights’ (Carrim & Tshoane, 2003, p. 805) does not withstand scrutiny. As a government initiative, the MRM was careful not to exceed the public consensus. Now, as the MRM endeavours to broaden the public consensus regarding moral values, it is within its rights as a voluntary civic association – so long as it uses fair means to persuade. (The MRM has used ongoing consultation as a means to establish such a consensus.)

Carrim and Tshoane also accuse the MRM of conflating the role of religion and state in propagating morality. They argue that the propagation of morality is the domain of the religious sector, quoting a Muslim *imam* in support of their argument: ‘from an Islamic perspective there can be no moral regeneration without religion’ (2003, p. 802). But while religious leaders are entitled to this view, moral values are clearly not solely the domain of the religious sector. Moral values may derive from multiple sources besides religion – the law, human rights’ charters and personal and cultural beliefs. Religion, at its best may contribute substantially to the moral formation of people. But moral formation is by no means exclusively the concern of the religious sector, which is silent on many of the moral issues that are not also religious issues, and about which some feel strongly. In addition, there are religious practices which support behaviour that may on other grounds be deemed to be morally wrong, e.g. gender discrimination. The religious sector is far from being an infallible source of moral values. During the apartheid era, whilst some opposed apartheid because of their own Christian beliefs, many religious groups in South Africa in fact supported it (RSA, TRC, 1999, Volume 4, p. 52ff).

The final criticism, that the MRM has the potential to be an instrument of uncritical nation-building that fails to identify other causes of moral decline (such as a lack of socio-economic justice in particular) is a reasonable concern. True, the recent inclusion in the *Draft charter of positive values* (Moral Regeneration Movement, 2005) of a need for improving ‘material well-being and economic justice’ has the potential to challenge this criticism. However, like so many vehicles for encouraging citizenship and morality, depending on where its emphasis is placed, the MRM still retains the potential for deflecting attention from systemic and structural injustices.

Race and values in education

Simultaneous with the launch of the Moral Regeneration Movement in 2000, the Department of Education embarked on a *Values in Education* initiative (subsequently renamed the Race and Values in Education [RVE] initiative). RVE was a

consultative process which resulted in an initial report entitled *Values in education* (RSA, DoE, 2000) and a second revised report *A manifesto on values, education and democracy* (RSA, DoE, 2001). Broadly stated, the aim of RVE was to articulate common values which should be central to the new curriculum in general and to a proposed citizenship education programme for school in support of the aims of the MRM. On the final list of values advocated by the *Manifesto* were those of democracy, social justice and equity, equality, non-racism and non-sexism, *ubuntu* (human dignity), an open society, accountability (responsibility), rule of law, respect and reconciliation. This list reflects a ‘thick’ view of citizenship, one which also includes ‘thin’ or ‘public’ moral values.

In the foreword to the first report the Minister of Education alluded to values that exceed the boundaries of what is understood to be a broad view of citizenship/narrow view of morality when he talked about ‘the regeneration of the ethical fibre of our society’ (RSA, DoE, 2000, p. 3). Although the minister is silent on what is meant by ‘moral values’, other values, such as honesty, integrity, compassion, altruism, justice, kindness and love, are scattered throughout the reports of the RVE initiative, in addition to those values which are clearly democratic values (rule of law, social justice, non-racism etc.).

For justifiable reasons, as also happened with the MRM, many misunderstood the first report to be an attempt by government to impose moral values upon the general populace. This was perhaps most clearly communicated by Carrim and Tshoane (2003) and by both religious and liberal groups (personal communication, Liebowitz, 2003). Many felt that no distinction was being made between personal values (or morals) which were best taught in the home (or in religious institutions) and the democratic values that could be found in the constitution and should be part of citizenship education taught in schools. Table 1 provides a comparative list of the values postulated throughout the RVE process.

The first column lists the six suggested values contained in the initial report *Values in education* (RSA, DoE, 2000). The second column comprises the list of ten values produced in the final report *A manifesto on values, education and democracy* (RSA, DoE, 2001). The third column comprises a list of values positively referred to in both these reports. The final column contains the results of an empirical research study commissioned by the Department of Education to ascertain the most important values that stakeholders (parents, educators and learners) would like to see operating in school (Porteus *et al.*, 2002).

From the table it is clear that values mean different things to different people. While ultimately the list of values recommended in the second report were largely social (or thin) in nature, this final report did not exclude the desirability of a thicker set of moral values being present in schools (such as sexual responsibility, accountability, social responsibility and ethics). Similarly, educators and learners also seemed to want (different) but thicker sets of values to be present in schools.

Simultaneous with the RVE initiative, the Department of Education turned its attention to clarifying the role of religion in public education. Consequently, the *Manifesto on values, education and democracy* made it clear that it advocated *religion*

Table 1. Constructions of values produced during the RVE process (see each column heading for the source of values listed)

| <i>List of values – Report 1 (RSA, DoE, 2000)</i> | <i>List of values – Report 2 (RSA, DoE, 2001)</i> | <i>General values referred to in both Report 1 and 2</i> | <i>Stakeholders’ desired values recorded by Porteus et al., (2002)</i> |
|---|---|--|--|
| 1. Equity | 1. Democracy | 1. Honesty | <i>Learners</i> |
| 2. Tolerance | 2. Social justice and equity | 2. Integrity | 1. Love/kindness |
| 3. Multilingualism | 3. Equality | 3. Tolerance | 2. Respect/communication |
| 4. Openness | 4. Non racism and non-sexism | 4. Diligence | 3. Equity |
| 5. Accountability | 5. Ubuntu (human dignity) | 5. Responsibility | <i>Educators</i> |
| 6. Social honour | 6. An open society | 6. Compassion | 1. Respect/order |
| | 7. Accountability (responsibility) | 7. Altruism | 2. Discipline/obedience |
| | 8. Rule of law | 8. Justice | 3. Honesty/transparency |
| | 9. Respect | 9. Respect | |
| | 10. Reconciliation | 10. Kindness | <i>Parents</i> |
| | | 11. Compassion | 1. Respect/discipline |
| | | 12. Communication | 2. Quality education |
| | | 13. Love | 3. Communication |

education rather than *religious* education, an approach promoting a historical understanding of various religions, and encouraging shared moral values, rather than religious belief. The *Manifesto* states that religion education ought to ‘expose learners to the diversity of religions that impel and inspire society, and the morality and values that underpin them and [showcase religious values that] chart profound ways of being human in relation to other humans’ (RSA, DoE, 2001, p. 31). In other words religion education ought to educate youth about morality. The result has been a policy on religion education that makes religion education and moral education virtually synonymous as ‘an important aspect of the campaign for moral regeneration’ (RSA, GCIS, 2003, p. 217). This conflation is problematic. If religion education is to be used as the vehicle for moral education, and if it is true that religions generally espouse a pietistic and personal morality (a thick view of morality) then it is in conflict with the thin view of morality which a citizenship approach to moral education prefers to take (Beck, 1998; Haydon, 1999b). It is also in conflict with the apparent view of the South African government towards moral education – a thin view of morality within a thick approach to citizenship.

So although the RVE process still contains internal contradictions, it has provided a set of goals for imbuing educational practices and content with democratic and social values. Along the way the process itself contributed materially to the ways in which citizenship, religious/religion and moral education are to be understood and helped to define the national vision of what type of learner is envisaged through the provision of the new national curriculum:

The promotion of values is important ...to ensure that a national South African identity is built on values different from those that underpinned apartheid education. The kind

of learner envisaged is one who will be imbued with the values and act in the interests of a society based on respect for democracy, equality, human dignity, life and social justice...[with the] ability to participate in society as a critical and active citizen. (RSA, DoE, 2002, p. 8)

The African indigenous philosophy of ubuntu

The concept of *ubuntu*, essentially an African philosophy of humanism, shares a tradition with post-colonial Africa.⁵ It aims to provide a unifying vision of community built upon compassionate, respectful, interdependent relationships, a community in which responsibility is collective and in which others are treated as extended family or siblings (Broodryk, 1997). *Ubuntu* serves as a rule of conduct, a social ethic, the moral and spiritual foundation for African societies (Louw, 1998; Prinsloo, 1998; Teffo, 1998). The word *ubuntu* is a Xhosa or Zulu word meaning 'humanity' or 'humanness', although it is often the Zulu idiom '*umntu ngumntu ngabantu*', translated as 'a person is a person through other people' which better summarises the philosophy. With its communitarian flavour (Teffo, 1996, p. 104), it is rich currency in the dialogue around values and moral regeneration in South Africa. It is used in various government reports, such as those emanating from the RVE initiative, the education transformation policy document (RSA, DoE, 1996), the South African constitution and the white paper for social welfare (RSA, Department of Social Development, 1997). It is also liberally employed in various sections of the TRC report (especially regarding reparations and amnesty) and throughout the documents and reports of the MRM.

According to Coertze (2001, pp. 116–17) *ubuntu* is used by government in a range of equally important ways. First, it utilises concepts of sacrifice and reconciliation to promote the same amongst historically disadvantaged South Africans. Secondly, it emphasises traditional values, such as respect for and loyalty to rulers, so as to aid the government in introducing ongoing policies of modernisation e.g. neo-liberal economic policies which necessarily delay the redistribution of economic resources. Thirdly, the values of acceptance and harmony are useful in counteracting tribalism and in celebrating cultural plurality. Finally the communalist ideology of *ubuntu* is a useful antidote to the anomie of increasing urban living.

Of course there are major criticisms of the ways in which *ubuntu* has been employed. Marx highlights its demonisation of Western liberalism and individualism, its nationalist (or Africanist tendencies) in that a glorious pre-colonial fictionalised past or 'reconstructed traditionalism' is created (see also Minogue & Molloy, 1974, p. 4), and its tendency to silence critics in the name of loyalty (Marx, 2002, p. 53, 63). It is this latter criticism that seems to be the most telling in what it exposes. So while *ubuntu* provides a basis for civic virtue, moral renewal and public-spiritedness, like so much else in the aftermath of apartheid, it conceals the need for redistributive justice and silences those who call attention to it – all in the name of public-spiritedness.

In addition, Archbishop Tutu (Battle, 1997; Tutu, 1999) has taken the traditional *ubuntu* philosophy and has articulated a Christian theological basis⁶ for it. This

appeal to the religious sensibilities of 'black' people, emphasis on forgiveness, and encouragement of both 'black' and 'white' people to appeal to a transcendent source of authority (Battle, 1997, p. 5) is a useful tool in facilitating reconciliation. But it could also result in obscuring the need for critical engagement with the issues of justice (also an important part of Christian theology). On the other hand, this 'Christianisation' of *ubuntu* does enlarge upon the traditional conception of *ubuntu*, which as Krog (1999, p. 392, 6) and Coertze (2001, p. 113ff) have pointed out, included only kinsmen and close family members, and those who are 'black' not 'white' – an insufficient basis for a new and reconciliatory order in South Africa. Introducing a Christian perspective into the ethic of *ubuntu* has contributed to turning it from a tribal philosophy which formerly only included kinsmen, to now also including strangers and erstwhile enemies. *Ubuntu* as theology provides further incentive to embrace communalism and reconciliation and to become part of 'the rainbow people of God' – a phrase for which Archbishop Tutu (1994) has become renowned.

The jury is still out on whether *ubuntu* is a legitimate ethic for the future or merely an uncritical nationalistic nation-building project. In the meanwhile, *ubuntu* has become entrenched in the discourse surrounding rebuilding and transition in South Africa. With its lack of 'lust for vengeance, no apocalyptic retribution ... A yearning for justice, yes, and for release from poverty and oppression, but no dream of themselves becoming the persecutors, of turning the tables of apartheid on white South Africans' (Teffo, cited in Louw, 1998, no page numbers), it is not difficult to see why this is so. It has the potential for providing a compelling vision of human thriving if promoted alongside both democratic participation and socio-economic justice.

Lessons learnt from the journey

The four processes that have been described in this paper each offer a number of useful lessons (or at least raise important questions) about the South African understanding of citizenship with related implications for moral education. What are the moral implications of the absence of both justice, and a national conversation about its absence, for the victims and beneficiaries of apartheid? How do socio-economic rights, moral virtues and notions of citizenship interact? Is creative engagement between church and state possible in a modern democracy? Are there ways of speaking about the relationship between citizenship, moral and religious education that are helpful to educators rather than merely fuelling the (often acrimonious) debate between those holding views at opposite ends of the continuum? The remainder of this article will begin to address these questions.

Poverty, justice and citizenship

The most pervasive lesson to be learnt regarding citizenship and morality in the aftermath of apartheid concerns the issue of justice. During the TRC hearings

although there were widespread calls for retributive justice for perpetrators of apartheid's horrors, justice was ultimately sacrificed in favour of honouring the terms of the negotiated settlement and in favour of reconciliation. The TRC therefore acted primarily as a vehicle of restorative justice for those who had been brutalised by apartheid and for those who had done the brutalising. Since there has been very little redistributive justice or restitution in South Africa, these issues of justice remain unfinished business.

If poverty remains the lot of the majority of its citizenry then any attempt by government or civil society to encourage the growth of pro-social moral values will tend to be hamstrung, since poverty has the potential to exacerbate moral decline. At his trial in 1964 Nelson Mandela has this to say of the relationship between poverty and morality:

Poverty and the breakdown of family life have secondary effects. Children wander about the streets of the townships because they have no schools to go to, or no money to enable them to go to school, or no parents at home to see that they go to school ... This leads to a breakdown in moral standards, to an alarming rise in illegitimacy, and to growing violence which erupts not only politically, but everywhere. (Mandela, 1994, p. 437)

The school-based research commissioned by the Department of Education during the RVE process emphasised the relationship between poverty and moral values:

Several parents put forward a critique of the government in respect to the link between access to basic social services, and the facilitation of values in young people. They suggest that if the government were achieving its more basic mandates, with particular reference to the provision of housing, jobs and a quality education for all, then 'values' could be more successfully navigated in the home environment. (Porteus *et al.*, 2002, p. 2)

Besides the relationship between poverty and morality, a tension also exists regarding the place of socio-economic rights within citizenship. Enslin (2003) argues that there are mismatched conceptions of citizenship between government and the masses, with the latter reducing citizenship to attainment of socio-economic rights, and the former seeing citizenship as active participation in democratic institutions. But Enslin's analysis is only partly correct. Currently South Africa citizens are actively protesting about poor work conditions, a group of youth are protesting about the slow response of police to the rape of a fellow student (Hosken, 2006), and there is a strong groundswell of political support for disgraced ex-Deputy President, Jacob Zuma. These examples provide evidence of active and critical citizens, whose concerns are about more than only socio-economic rights, although socio-economic rights receive the lions' share of attention. And while the various processes described in this article indicate a concern for socio-economic justice on the part of government, it lacks the will (or ability) to bring about its realisation. In addition, what Enslin does not highlight is the way in which government may be appealing to a 'new patriotism' (RSA, DoE, 2001) and using 'shared symbols or historical myths' (Kymlicka & Norman, 1994, p. 377) such as *ubuntu* to deflect protest from the lack of social justice. Furthermore, Rawls' understanding of the role of justice in society

maintains that ‘the health and stability of a democracy depends ...on the justice of its basic structure’ (Kymlicka & Norman, 1994, p.352 emphasis mine). This is reflected in the view that social justice underpins ties of ‘civic friendship’ (Rawls, 1980, p. 540) and Marshall’s view that ‘where any of these rights are withheld or violated, people will be marginalised and unable to participate’ (cited in Kymlicka & Norman, 1994, p. 354). These important arguments favour social justice as a *sine qua non* for citizenship. Ongoing denial of socio-economic justice has the potential for reluctant democratic participation, and for scuttling the citizenship project in South Africa.

This is not to say that dealing with poverty will automatically ensure that a society becomes morally good, but the two do seem to be related. The ongoing impoverishment of the majority of South Africa’s populace remains an issue of justice and justice is inherently both a moral issue and an issue of citizenship. The TRC, the MRM, and the RVE have highlighted this relationship, while the philosophy of *ubuntu*, especially in its present resurgent form, has the potential to conceal it.

Conceptions of citizenship and citizenship education

Enslin is correct that South Africa does not have ‘a settled conception of citizenship’ (2003, p. 73). By sifting each of these initiatives under discussion through Heater’s⁷ (2004, pp. 198–9) and Kymlicka and Norman’s (1994, pp. 360–3) descriptions of types of citizenship, multiple conceptions of what it means to be a citizen are instead reflected. The RVE process and ensuing curriculum statements, with an emphasis on ‘constitutional rights and responsibilities’ (RSA, DoE, 2003a, p.19) are characteristic of ‘left or participatory democracy’ (Kymlicka & Norman, 1994, pp. 360–3). At the same time, by emphasising the equally important roles of family, cultural and religious communities, and society as sources of civic virtue (RSA, DoE, 2000, p. 3; 2003a, p. 19) they reflect a communitarian or ‘civil society theorists’ approach to citizenship (Kymlicka & Norman, 1994, p. 363). In promoting a ‘new patriotism’ the Department of Education (RSA, DoE, 2001, executive summary) draws on concepts of civic republicanism (Kymlicka & Norman, 1994, p. 361). Later when they articulate a desire for ‘active critical citizenship’ (Department of Education, 2005a, p. 9) and focus on the centrality of human rights and social justice as the core of learning (2003a, p. 23) they reflect a more liberal conception of citizenship (Kymlicka & Norman, 1994, pp. 359–60).

What these government documents do make clear, however, is that the aim of citizenship education is not only ‘education about citizenship’, although that is present, but also ‘education for citizenship’ (Beck, 1998). The TRC, the MRM, the promotion of the philosophy of *ubuntu*, and the Department of Education’s documents all promote a thick conception of citizenship infused with aims promoting respect for human rights, understanding poverty, working towards societal change with regard to inequality, and ensuring social rights and justice (RSA, DoE, 2003b, p. 4; 2005a, p. 9; 2005b, p. 7). Simultaneously, the Department

states that ‘values and morality give meaning to our individual and social relationships’ (2001, pp. 9–10) and intersperses its documents with references to encouraging moral growth and instilling moral values in keeping with a democratic education (2003d, p. 86; 2005a, p. 15; 2005b, p. 8, 12). Encouraging moral values is therefore central to the South African conception of citizenship – although these government agencies attempt not to exceed their brief of morality in the narrow sense, or thin morality. So, if paying attention to ‘the qualities of attitudes of its citizens’ (Kymlicka & Norman, 1994, p. 352) is clearly amongst the goals of the South African government, how are these citizenship, moral (and religious) goals related?

The role of faith in a democracy

As has been indicated in the preceding discussion, religion has played a significant role both in the apartheid struggle and in the subsequent transition to democracy. During the struggle churches adopted one of three stances:⁸ as oppressor, bystander or reforming activist. At the end of apartheid, Archbishop Tutu led the TRC in an openly Christian manner.⁹ Mandela and Tutu were/are referred to as ‘our President and his Prophet... the two moral giants of our country’ (Krog, 1999, p. 426). Currently, many senior government positions are filled with former clergy.¹⁰ The South African parliament is opened in prayer. Provincial leaders of the MRM comprise a disproportionate number of clergy (four out of ten). The African *philosophy of ubuntu* has been turned into an African *theology of ubuntu*.

And while some may criticise this interaction of religion and state, in South Africa faith is a reality with nearly 80% of the population indicating an allegiance to the Christian faith and a further 5% to other religions (RSA, Statistics South Africa, 2001). In addition, religious South Africans translate piety into practice through active participation in services. In South Africa 56% (Inglehart, 1998) of Christians attend regular church services, compared with 8% of the 72% who profess Christianity in the UK (England & Wales, Office for National Statistics, 2001).

Part of the long road to citizenship in South Africa has, of necessity, included redefining the relationship between church and state, faith and democracy. South Africa is attempting to be both a religious country and a democratic one. So while the constitution guarantees religious freedom, the state has been at pains to emphasise that freedom *of* religion does not constitute freedom *from* religion, especially where religion can be a national asset in shaping public moral values. During the course of the RVE process the Department of Education concluded, on behalf of the state:

We do not have a state religion. But our country is not a secular state where there is a very strict separation between religion and the state. The Policy recognises the rich and diverse religious heritage of our country and adopts a *cooperative* model that accepts our rich heritage and the possibility of creative inter-action between schools and faith whilst, protecting our young people from religious discrimination or coercion. (RSA, DoE, 2003c, p. 2)

So while the potential for abuse remains, there is a growing maturity in understanding the place of faith within a democracy. For South Africa, it is one of creative cooperation. To mutual benefit, government departments regularly include the faith sector as key role players in the provision of education, social services, the fight against HIV/AIDS, and in general reconciliation processes in South Africa. The TRC, the MRM and the RVE processes have all contributed to this maturing understanding. Some uses of *ubuntu* however remain problematic since it has the tendency to replace critical engagement with the rhetoric of (transcendent) loyalty.

The relationship between citizenship, moral and religious education

The RVE initiative displays the way in which it is easy to conflate moral and citizenship education, and to annex religious education in the service of moral education, with little thought as to how the three domains interact. Drawing on McLaughlin’s and Haydon’s concepts of ‘thin’, ‘public’, ‘minimalist’ and ‘narrow’ at one end of the spectrum, and those of ‘thick’, ‘private’, ‘maximalist’ and ‘broad’ at the other, it is possible to suggest a graphic representation (see Figure 1) of how the overlapping relationship between citizenship education, moral education and religious education might be depicted.

Figure 1 depicts a ‘thin-public-minimalist-narrow’ end of the content wedge and a corresponding ‘thick-private-maximalist-broad’ end for each of type of education. The diagram is also able to depict the substantial overlaps between a ‘thick’ view of citizenship education and the ‘thin’ view of moral education, and a lesser overlap between a ‘thin’ view of religious education and the ‘thick’ view of citizenship education. Where exactly along the continuum these overlaps occur is beyond the scope of this paper. Moreover, because the terms constitute a continuum rather than discrete categories it follows that, between the two poles of each wedge, a number of sub-categories may exist. In the case of moral education, at the ‘thin-public-minimal-narrow’ end of the continuum are those moral values which may be

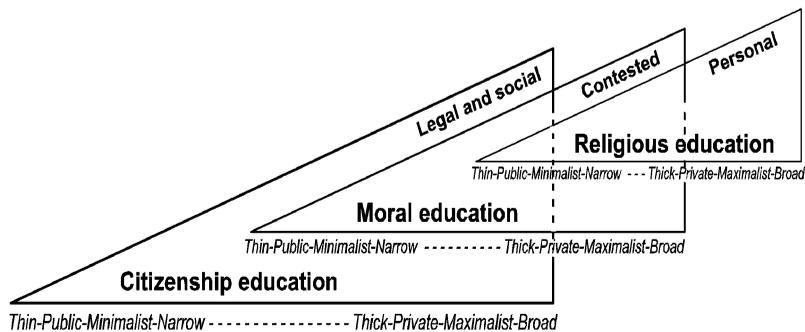


Figure 1. A graphic depiction of the suggested relationship between citizenship, moral and religious education.

described as 'legal', while at the 'thick-private-maximal-broad' end of the spectrum (or even outside it as depicted in the diagram) are those moral values considered to be 'personal' standards left to the conscience of the individual (and which are often narrowly religious or pietistic in nature). In between these two poles are what could be called constitutional or 'social' moral values (such as racism, sexism, discrimination, and exploitation) and 'contested' moral values (such as those, for example, surrounding abortion, animal rights, the death penalty and care for the environment). Consideration of which moral values should be located in each of these categories would be a large and separate undertaking. However, as a framework, the suggested graphic has the potential to provide a basis for discussion for both policy makers and educators.

Conclusion

By considering the various vehicles on the South African road to citizenship, this paper has commented on and made some claims about the intersection between citizenship, faith, morality and justice. Each has important implications for moral and citizenship education.

Justice in all its forms (retributive, restorative, redistributive and restitutive) is morally challenging and has an important role to play in citizenship rightly understood. Citizenship and moral education programmes need to include the discussion of justice as issues both of morality and citizenship. Failure to do so will perpetuate racial hatred and may jeopardise South Africa's future. Although South Africa does not have a settled notion of citizenship, it does seem that both government and civil society are in agreement about a notion of citizenship that includes morality in the narrow sense. Such a democratic conception of morality will contribute to rebuilding a country damaged by centuries of conflict.

From the South African experience of the TRC and ensuing MRM and RVE processes, it does appear that there can be creative cooperation between religion and state in a democracy. Reconstructed traditional narratives such as that of *ubuntu* (including when Christianised) have the potential of uncritical nation-building if misused. While moral education and religious/religion education overlap, they ought not to be conflated. Both moral and religious education contributes to a conception of citizenship education in the maximalist sense. Citizenship education, while a helpful contribution to personal and social moral education, is not sufficient in and of itself to fulfil the need for encouraging a morally intelligent citizenry. The framework suggested in Figure 1 of citizenship education, moral education and religious education, with both thin-public-narrow-minimalist and thick-private-broad-maximalist ends, provides a useful tool for policy makers and educators. Defining the boundaries and overlaps between each has the potential to diffuse the many debates about the place and necessity of all three in a democratic society.

These lessons are of ongoing importance for both emerging and established democracies as the exigencies of moral renewal, poverty, globalisation and religion interact with extant conceptions of citizenship.

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Notes

1. 'The project of moral regeneration following war must seek to effect three aims: vindicate the moral worth of victims, affirm transgressed moral truths, and mend the broken moral bond among victims, perpetrators, and their communities' (Lu, 2002, p. 22).
2. The position of the current ANC government is open to economic challenge on moral grounds. The previous apartheid government left them with an US\$18.7 billion dollar debt. They have adopted a neo-liberal, trickle-down approach to growing the economy, which as yet shows little sign of significantly addressing inequalities.
3. In the law restitution is required when there has been an unjust shift of wealth from one person to another, because it is legally and morally wrong for a person who has committed a wrong to be allowed to keep a benefit, obtained as a result of the commission of the wrong (Alexander Molle, personal communication, 6 September 2005). In such circumstances, the payment of damages becomes legally due.
4. While these latter terms are used primarily to refer to the conceptual richness surrounding citizenship and citizenship education, McLaughlin also uses the terms 'maximal' and 'minimal' to describe the range of civic virtues (or moral values) required of citizens (1992, p. 236).
5. Although not called *ubuntu* by other post-colonial leaders, African humanism has been described by Julius Nyerere (Tanzania), Jomo Kenyatta (Kenya), Kenneth Kaunda (Zambia), Milton Obote (Uganda) and Seretse Khama (Botswana) (Minogue & Molloy, 1974, pp. 101–2, 131, 161, 164–5).
6. Coertze (2001) asserts that many of the qualities found in Galatians Chapter 5 and Colossians Chapter 3 of the Christian bible have found their way into the concept of *ubuntu* as 'the Christian faith became part of the cultural heritage of many African individuals' (p. 115).
7. 'Liberal citizenship presupposes citizens as equal individuals living as members of a political state; civic republicanism presupposes citizens as forming a population patriotically attached to the state; and communitarianism presupposes citizens as being members associated in different groups' (Heater, 2004, p. 198–9).
8. They may have done nothing, and many did, using the separation of church from politics to justify their (lack of) action. Others endorsed and legitimised apartheid (the Dutch Reformed Church especially) by providing a theological justification for it. Yet others aided its demise materially and ideologically by denouncing it as a sin, by providing a place for people to congregate and organise once the state of emergency had been declared and meeting in groups was outlawed (RSA, TRC, 1999, Volume 4, p. 52ff).
9. Prayer peppered the hearings of victims and perpetrators alike, and spiritual retreats (and visits to psychologists) were an integral part of pastoral care for Commissioners who were fatigued and emotionally drained by the hearings. Hearings not only included prayer but hymns like '*Lizalise idinga lakho*' ['The forgiveness of sins makes a person whole'] (Krog, 1999, p. 38).
10. The current Mayor of Tshwane (Pretoria) and the previous Deputy Minister of Education (and originator of the MRM), Smangaliso Mkatchwa is a Catholic priest. Frank Chikane, the advisor to current President, Thabo Mbeki, is an Apostolic Faith Mission minister and previous head of the South Africa Council of Churches. The head of the Independent

Electoral Commission, Brigalia Bam, also served as the head of the South African Council of Churches.

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