Introduction

Throughout its history, psychology in South Africa has been dominated by issues related to intergroup relations. While there is little doubt that the central intergroup problem has been that of “race”, the very term “intergroup relations”, which itself is not unproblematic, suggests that it need not be limited to race-related lines of cleavage. There are many other forms of group relations: between language-based groups; between religious-based groupings; between economic or social classes; between capitalist and worker; between male and female; and between security police and political detainees, as merely some examples. The nature of intergroup cleavages is further complicated by the fact that, in some instances, what appears on the surface to be a “racial” problem might turn out to be in essence a class problem. In other instances the political, economic, social, racial and gender lines of cleavage may all be intertwined. However, in South Africa most lines of intergroup problems return to the issue of racial domination.

This chapter sets out some of the history of psychology and its dealings with intergroup, mainly racial, relations in South Africa. It traces, in a somewhat selective fashion, the various concerns of psychological practice, research, theory and even psychological organisations, since the first departments of psychology were established in South Africa in the 1920s.

In order to see South African developments in a comparative perspective, we set out a brief sketch of the history of social psychology outside of South Africa, since the discipline of social psychology very largely has been a North American, and to a lesser extent, a European enterprise.

There are some doubts about where to locate the beginnings of modern social psychology. Some place it with the writings on crowd psychology by Le Bon and Tarde, in the late nineteenth century, or in Wilhelm Wundt’s work on “Völkerpsychologie” in the first decade of the twentieth century (Graumann,
1988). Others find the beginnings in the first experiment in social psychology conducted by Triplett in the USA in 1898. However, there is agreement that social psychology in its modern form is largely a twentieth century development. The first formal textbooks carrying the title of “social psychology” appeared in 1908, written by E.A. Ross in the USA and William McDougall in England. At the outset the texts represented differing approaches to the topic; Ross took a sociological viewpoint while McDougall represented a more psychological focus. Such differences mark the theoretical difficulties of this field of inquiry – one which attempts to cover the relation between the individual person on the one hand and the social dimension on the other – and such theoretical problems remain alive to the present day. The differing emphases which have flared up periodically throughout this century were well-captured by two texts published in the 1920s. McDougall, in a book titled The Group Mind, took the collectivist stance:

...society has a mental life which is not the mere sum of the mental lives of its units existing as independent units; and a complete knowledge of the units, if and in so far as they could be known as isolated units, would not enable us to deduce the nature of life of the whole. (McDougall, 1920, p. 7)

In contrast, Floyd Allport in a text with the title of Social Psychology argued that:

given the situation of the crowd – that is of a number of persons within stimulating distance of one another – we shall find that the actions of all are nothing more than the sum of the actions of each taken separately. (Allport, 1924, p. 5)

Up to the 1920s the study of social psychological phenomena had largely been a theoretical exercise. With the development in other areas, such as mental testing, the 1920s and 1930s witnessed a considerable turn towards quantification and experimental methods. Measurement of attitudes received particular attention, and classic methods still in use today were developed by Thurstone, Bogardus, Likert and others.

Sufficient accumulated work had been gathered by the mid 1930s for publication of the first Handbook of Social Psychology (Murchison, 1938). At about the same time Muzafer Sherif (1936) published his important experimental work on the social psychology of norm formation. From this period onwards the discipline of social psychology had become very largely dominated by researchers in the USA. Only small pockets of interest in such areas were evidenced in Britain and Europe.

In the 1940s in the USA it was Kurt Lewin, trained in the “Gestalt school” of psychology in Berlin and an exile from Nazi Germany, who became the founder of contemporary experimental social psychology. Although Lewin demonstrated that important questions could be investigated by means of laboratory experiments, thus lending encouragement to this form of study which still predominates, he remained interested in issues of larger-scale intergroup conflict as demonstrated by his 1948 book Resolving Social Conflicts. Although Lewin was highly influential and set in motion a considerable upsurge in the area of group dynamics, the bulk of American social psychologists, including Lewin’s student Leon Festinger, turned inwards in the post-war 1950s. It was a time characterised by heavy anti-communist repression in the USA and in the wake of the war, the 1950s were described in terms of a “silent generation”. Social psychologists in the United States turned to research on small group dynamics and, while still retaining a strong interest in attitude research, emphasis was placed on individualistic mechanisms of the workings of attitudes (McGuire, 1988), rather than attitudes in service of large-scale group-related conflicts. (See also Chapter 5.)

Apart from the significant contribution of Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswik, Levinson and Sanford (1950) regarding “authoritarianism”, Gordon Allport’s (1954) work on the nature of prejudice, Pettigrew (1971) on interracial contact, and Muzafer and Carolyn Sherif (1953) (also Sherif, 1966; Sherif, Harvey, White, Hood & Sherif, 1961) on group co-operation and conflict, the inward and cognitive turn taken by social psychology in the USA meant that not a great deal was offered regarding the social psychology of intergroup relations after the 1950s.

It was left largely to European social psychologists to reopen the investigation into intergroup relations. Disillusioned by the American retreat into the laboratories and by their neglect of important social issues, certain European social psychologists, in particular Henri Tajfel at the University of Bristol and Serge Moscovici in Paris, along with many associates, argued for a more genuinely social emphasis in the study of social psychological phenomena. Utilising in the main fairly traditional methods, such as experiments, these theorists nevertheless managed to fashion ideas to account for macro-social events, such as conflict between groups and influence of minority movements, without abandoning attention to individual psychological processes. In other words, European social psychologists turned once again to the central theoretical dilemma present from the start of the century: the gap between macro (sociological) and micro (individualistic psychological) explanations. There is little need to discuss these contributions in detail, since they are well aired throughout the present volume.

Psychology in South Africa was influenced of necessity by these developments in America and Europe since that is where mainstream social psychology was fashioned. Psychologists in South Africa were, and still are, relatively few in number. Many of the best graduates also left South Africa, partly due to South African racial policies and partly due to the lack of good post-graduate facilities (Louw & Foster, 1986). Furthermore, the small numbers of South African psychologists have been split for many years by the very nature of intergroup relations in South Africa.

Oversimplifying the case, some were advocates of racial segregation or (after 1948) apartheid (or were apologists for such policies), while others were opposed to them. As a result, no distinctive “school” or approach to social psychology has developed in South Africa. Instead, psychologists in South Africa have tended to turn to local problems, very often with tools forged elsewhere.

Since there is no real distinctive social psychological approach in South Africa, this chapter outlines the history of psychology and intergroup relations in South Africa, in contrast to a history of social psychology in South Africa. In other words, some of the work outlined here is not necessarily traditional social
psychology, but rather psychology as applied to social problems – central of which in South Africa is the problem of group distinctiveness and intergroup conflict.

Early history

In the nineteenth century, and in the first fifty years of the twentieth century, "race" was the dominant explanatory concept for the composition of South Africa's population:

The core assumption is that races are the fundamental divisions of humanity and that different races possess inherently different cultural as well as physical qualities. (Thompson, 1985, p. 69)

Even before the turn of the century, shifts in thinking on different strategies to deal with the relations between the races had already occurred. For example, Parry (1983) regarded the Glen Grey Act of 1894 as the turning point from an assimilationist strategy (to "civilise the backward races") to one characterised by segregation. From here on, the notion that the "backward races" could be "civilised" by mingling with the "white races", would be replaced by a discourse which propagated the segregation of the races. In practice, although not yet in law, "lunatics" held in mental institutions in South Africa, then known as asylums, were effectively segregated along racial lines by the 1890s throughout the country (Foster, 1990). For example, a new asylum, Valkenberg, in the Western Cape, opened its doors in 1891 to 35 white-only lunatics. Equally, in the discourse of South African scientists in the twentieth century, race also defined thinking about the reality of intergroup relations in South Africa. In fact, scientists presented segregation as a benign compromise between assimilation (which was discredited) on the one hand and repression (which was unacceptable) on the other. After 1948, this relatively laissez faire policy of segregation would be replaced by a co-ordinated, concerted effort to separate the races.

For an appreciation of the earliest thinking among scientists concerning relations between what were considered to be significant "groups" in this country, we examined the proceedings of the South African Association for the Advancement of Science (SAAAS). This association was formed in 1903, just after the Second Anglo Boer War. It served as an important and only forum for psychologists to present their ideas until 1948, when the first psychological association was formed in South Africa. The SAAAS therefore provides an important source for examining scientific contributions to the social questions of the day, particularly for examining the early attempts of social scientists to deal with South Africa's intergroup relations.

Evans (1916) addressed the problematic relations between the "European and bantu peoples", but indicated three other difficult problems: the relations between Dutch and English speakers, the Asiatic question, and the "coloured" question. These were indeed the intergroup themes addressed by social scientists in this forum. Evans spoke about the positive and negative consequences of mutual contact between blacks and whites, and the increasingly tense relations between them. He saw separate and differentiated development of whites and blacks as conducive to good intergroup relations:

What our aim should be may be stated in terms of a statement: To so act in our relations with the natives, and so guide them that they may have all reasonable opportunity for developing their race life along the best lines, taking account of their physical, mental, and moral improvement; not necessarily following the line of evolution of the white man, but the one their race genius suggests. (Evans, 1916, p. 127)

Further evidence of these themes is provided by Flint (1919), who advanced the notion of "race consciousness" as an area for scientific inquiry. An acute awareness of race differences between black and white was the problem in South Africa. He advocated a policy approach based on scientific insights as an alternative to four others: segregation, a haphazard approach, antagonism, and miscegenation. A fear of miscegenation was characteristic of political as well as scientific discussions of the time; for example, in 1927 the first law was passed which prohibited sexual intercourse between whites and "bantu". In many ways, scientists provided evidence and arguments against racial mixing, and in that way, propagated a policy of benign segregation.

C.T. Loram (1921), a significant figure in liberal circles at the time, was one of the first to point out that there was a lamentable supply of studies on "race psychology" in South Africa. According to Loram, social science, among other things, was needed to clear up popular misconceptions that existed about blacks. Topics he suggested for investigation included the relative mentality of various race groups, utilising tests which did not rely on language, an adaptation of the Binet-Simon intelligence test for Africans, and the impact of black/white contact on blacks in South Africa.

Thus, in the early days of social science and psychology in South Africa, the necessity of scientific studies of the various groups was discussed, but very little by way of actual research was done. Certainly very little, if any, psychological work was being done. One could say that the picture changed by the beginning of the 1920s. It was from the early 1920s that psychology, both as an academic discipline and practice, really began. For example, separate departments for the study of psychology were established at the fledgling universities: at the University of Stellenbosch in 1917, with the appointment of R.W. Wilcocks as Professor of Logic and Psychology; at the University of Cape Town in 1920 where Hugh Reyburn was appointed as Professor of Logic and Psychology; in 1926 at Rhodes University with C.N.M. Ramsay as head of department; at the University of the Witwatersrand where I.D. MacCrone began psychological studies in the mid 1920s; and in 1929 at the University of Pretoria with P.R. Skawran as head of department. In the state sector, the sub-department of mental hygiene, which was concerned with establishing services and facilities for "mentally disordered and defective persons" (following the Mental Disorders Act passed in 1916), the first psychologist was appointed in 1923, followed by a second appointment in
1925. Their central task was psychological assessment, particularly of mental defectives (persons with a mental handicap) but the issue of race and intelligence soon received attention (Fick, 1927; 1929; MacCrone, 1926; 1928).

The 1920s and 1930s: Mental testing and "poor whites"

Mental testing

Loram's emphasis on intergroup comparisons in terms of intelligence reflects the outstanding characteristic of South African psychology during the 1920s. Numerous group and individual tests of intelligence from overseas were adapted for use in South Africa. In Natal, for example, the Yerkes-Bridges scale was adapted; and in Bloemfontein, the Grey Revision of the Binet-Terman Intelligence Tests appeared. Numerous tests were also developed; two of the most important being the Official Mental Hygiene Individual Scale (1926), and the South African Group Test of Intelligence (Wilcocks, 1931). The tests of intellectual ability gave psychologists, for the first time, a uniquely psychological instrument or method to address social problems in South Africa. These investigations could be seen as the first actual psychological research carried out on intergroup relations in South Africa. Not surprisingly, it was also used to determine the "relative mentality" of the races in South Africa.

Even before the 1920s, Loram (1917) had already administered a series of intelligence tests to black, Indian and white schoolchildren, to discover that black children of all ages were much less "efficient" in mental terms than white and Indian children, and were "much slower in their thinking". Loram was not prepared to interpret these differences in terms of an permanent or innate inferiority, but did argue that black children ought to receive an education appropriate to their "mentality". In the 1920s most psychologists appeared to be cautious on the importance of heredity in explaining the inferior performance of black children on intelligence tests. This caution was shared by M.L. Fick (1929), a South African psychologist, trained at Harvard University, and attached to the Mental Hygiene Section of the Department of the Interior, before he joined the National Bureau for Educational and Social Research. Fick found that less than 2% of Zulu children could reach the medians of white children on Army Beta tests, but he could not decide whether this was due to environmental conditions or to "low mentality".

The debate over the causes of this consistent pattern of black underachievement on intelligence tests peaked during the 1930s, and continued into the 1940s. A sizeable group of psychologists were no longer so equivocal about the relative influences of nature and nurture on intelligence test scores. In 1934, at a conference on "Educational Adaptations in a Changing Society", Fick adhered to a strong hereditarian explanation of test results he had obtained since 1929. The results of these individual tests of motor and reasoning abilities, presumably free from the influences of language, demonstrated, according to Fick, that black children were approximately five years behind white children in terms of IQ. Thus the "average Native child" would only be able to reach a mental age of "nine or ten eventually" (Malherbe, 1937, p. 455). These views of Fick were vigorously opposed at the conference by people like Hoënlé and Bronislaw Malinowski. Following this conference, Fick extended his research to corroborate his findings. In 1939, when head of the Bureau for Educational and Social Research, he published what is probably his best known work, The Educability of the South African Native. By now he was even more certain of his case:

Although all the facts regarding the educability of the Native may not be in, the available objective data point to a marked inferiority on the part of the Native in comparison with Europeans. This inferiority, occurring in certain tests in which learning or environmental conditions are equalized for the Native and European groups does not appear to be of a temporary nature. (Fick, 1939, p. 56)

The "educability of the Native" was the most obvious implication of differences in intellectual ability established via intelligence tests. In a study, The Learning Ability of the South African Native, J.A.J. van Rensburg (1938), then head of the Department of Psychology at the University of Stellenbosch, administered four manipulative-type tests to black and white schoolchildren, which he repeated after two weeks to establish their "learning capacity". He found that the whites' performance was superior in the initial trials, and that this difference increased in the subsequent trials, thus reflecting the differential learning ability of the two groups. This differential, however, was less for the sorting and maze tests, which involved simple routine performance. Thus his results confirmed the intellectual inferiority of blacks, and supported the widespread belief among whites that blacks were only suitable to carry out manual, repetitive labour tasks.

These interpretations of intelligence test results were strongly contested by a number of South African social scientists. We already referred to Hoënlé's stand at the 1934 education conference. The liberal Christian monthly, The South African Outlook, addressed this controversy in a number of issues; in an editorial it stated that Van Rensburg was:

... not justified in asserting a disparity in learning capacity between the two groups. The verdict must remain merely 'not proven', but it is likely that the crux of the matter will provide more positive, and to the Europeans, less flattering, judgement. (South African Outlook, 1939, p. 105)

Fick's findings also came under attack from MacCrone, the head of the Department of Psychology at the University of the Witwatersrand (MacCrone, 1936). The most comprehensive criticism of these findings and their interpretations, however, came from Simon Biesheuvel (1943), then head of the Aptitude Tests Section of the South African Air Force, in his book, African Intelligence. In this work Biesheuvel did much more than just address the methodological problems of these controversial studies. He examined the theoretical problem of the concept of intelligence as a whole. His conclusions were the exact opposite of those of Fick and Van Rensburg:
... under present circumstances, and by means of the usual techniques, the difference between the intellectual capacity of Africans and Europeans cannot be scientifically determined. (Biesheuvel, 1943, p. 191)

Group differences in performance on intelligence tests were not examined in terms of race only. In the section on controversies below, we discuss the heated debate regarding the differential performance of Afrikaners and English-speaking children on these tests.

It is clear that during the 1920s, social scientists were responding for the first time to the calls for more research on the pressing social problems of the day by actually carrying out such research. As indicated earlier, it was part of a faith in science and scientific knowledge as a factor in the improvement and control of human life. Research institutions were formed to support this social research effort: in 1929 the National Bureau for Educational and Social Research was established to provide government departments with research facilities; and also in 1929, the South African Institute of Race Relations. The Institute was formed mainly on private initiative to conduct research on black groups since the state structures were perceived to be doing too little in respect of research on black people. One example of such bias was the Carnegie Commission's 1928-1932 investigation into poverty, which concentrated its efforts on poor whites only.

The early 1930s witnessed one of the most significant pieces of research into the relations between various groups in South Africa: the Carnegie Commission's Investigation into the Poor White Problem.

The *poor whites*

The increasing impoverishment of large numbers of whites from about 1890, the so-called "poor white problem", was of great concern to politicians and churchpeople in particular. The issue of poor whiteism was obviously integrally related to "the native question". At a national conference on the poor white problem, the Volkskongres of 1934, such a link was explicitly forged (see Malherbe, 1981, p. 198; and the comment on Verwoerd further on in the chapter). During the 1920s, social scientists initiated attempts to study this phenomenon. The educational psychologist E.G. Malherbe, of the Bureau for Educational and Social Research, was one of the first to plead for a "systematic, scientific" study of the problem, and he subsequently played a major part in the investigation. Many of the tests referred to earlier in this chapter were employed by psychologists during this time to study issues related to poor whiteism.

In 1927 the Carnegie Corporation of New York made a large grant available to study the phenomenon of white poverty in South Africa. The investigation started in 1928, and most of the work was completed during 1929 and 1930. In 1932 its Report was published in five volumes, addressing economic, psychological, educational, health and sociological aspects of the problem. Two names are significant for present purposes: Wilcocks, of the University of Stellenbosch, who was responsible for the psychological report, and Malherbe, who was responsible for the educational report. These two reports will now be discussed briefly.

The intergroup nature of this problem was recognised remarkably well by the Commission:

The term 'Poor White' could only originate in a country where a white- and a dark-skinned people live together in relatively close intercourse, and

... English-speaking town-dwellers who viewed the influx of impoverished and untaught persons from the farms sometimes with scorn and often with annoyance, but unfortunately a certain portion of the better educated and more favourably situated Dutch-speaking population are also beginning to feel ashamed of this group of their people... (Grosskopf, 1932, p. 17)

Wilcocks (1932) and Malherbe (1932) employed a number of methods to collect the "systematic and scientific" data for their investigation. Firstly, more than 300 interviews were conducted: with poor white men and women, with local ministers of religion, teachers, shopkeepers, school inspectors, and many others. They were what we today would call semi-structured interviews: broad themes were mapped out, but with enough flexibility to explore unexpected information. Some of the themes which Wilcocks probed in his interviews were: the nature and origin of a "trek spirit" among the poor whites; attachment to farm life; psychological causes of backward farming; the influence of isolation; motives for migrating to towns; and the process of adaptation in the cities.

Secondly, questionnaires were administered to schoolchildren in order to obtain information regarding aspects such as the employment and means of livelihood of fathers and sons; how long ago the family left the farm for town; and the school standard passed by sons and daughters who had left school. Further sets of questionnaires were sent to selected representative schools, enquiring about retardation at school, failure of standards, class position of pupils, size of the family, etc. All in all, nine sets of questionnaires were sent out.

Psychological testing was one of the most important techniques utilised to gather data about the poor whites. Intelligence was an important concern of the researchers. The Commission did not simply accept the ordinary observation that the poor white child lacked intelligence; systematic research had to be carried out. The South African Group Test of Intelligence was administered to 3 073 poor white children, and the American Army Beta Test to 208 of them. Results showed that some 39% of poor white children were on or above the average intelligence quotient of white children in South African schools, while the rest fell below the average. The average IQ of the poor white children was 96.7, compared to the normal average of 100. Standardised scholastic tests were furthermore administered to ascertain poor white children's educability: how they responded to education in comparison with average children. Tests which particularly measured the results of education, according to Malherbe, were used: an Arithmetical Ability Test, an Afrikaans Vocabulary Test and an English Vocabulary Test. In terms of age, a poor white child was found to be on average .75 of a year behind the normal child in educational growth.
The Commission referred to various aspects of white attitudes to blacks, as well as a consideration of social factors in the formation of attitudes. Whites had a colour consciousness that inhibited free social interaction, they argued: even the majority of the poor whites were still imbued with a feeling of superiority over blacks. Whites had such a strong feeling of superiority that miscegenation between black and white would be prevented, even where some whites might have been at the same economic level as blacks. Whites often felt that they were being "degraded" if they worked on the same tasks as blacks; normally unskilled, manual types of work (for women, it was domestic service). As a result, stated Wilcoks, white workers often requested government protection because they felt that their economic position was threatened by the employment of blacks. Wilcoks (1932, p. 63) felt that "This measure should, however, be limited to a period of transition during which the poor white would have an opportunity of adapting himself to altered conditions".

The various aspects of the Carnegie Commission's Report referred to above, reflect a very interesting way of thinking about psychological factors operating within social trends. The psychological characteristics of individuals, such as a prejudice against doing certain types of work, or intellectual ability, had implications for the structuring and regulation of social interaction in different spheres of life. This intriguing mixing of personality factors and social structure enabled the Commission to pronounce on matters such as a legal colour bar in certain jobs and residential segregation. It is evident that behind it all, the Commission was guided by a notion of free enterprise and competition in the economic sphere, but state regulation and intervention with regard to black/white relations in South Africa.

The Carnegie Commission was not the only intervention into the poor white problem. The primary motivation for the government-appointed Inter-Departmental Committee on Mental Deficiency (Union of South Africa, 1928-30; hereafter referred to as the Van Schalkwyk Committee) was the problem of juvenile unemployment on the Witwatersrand - a problem directly related to poor whiteism. A full chapter of the lengthy Van Schalkwyk Committee report was devoted to the "problem of subnormality from the economic aspect". It is quite apparent from this report that the problems of psychology, in particular that of mental deficiency, were regarded as closely intertwined with politics - the race issue - and economic matters, particularly white poverty. This is illustrated by the following quotes from the Van Schalkwyk Committee report (Union of South Africa, 1928-30):

The problem in the economic sphere is in South Africa merely a portion of the larger problem of the conflict between a civilized and an uncivilized race. (p. 193)

...the position of the mentally inferior white person in the Union is indeed a precarious one...since certain work is seen as "kafir work" they are inclined to despise and reject the only work they are capable of doing. (p. 32)

A contributory source of poor whiteism is the inability of this class of European to maintain a civilized standard of living in the face of competition with non-Europeans in semi-skilled and unskilled occupations. (p. 193)

Solutions to this problem as recommended by the Van Schalkwyk Committee included provision of special education, and for a government-set minimum wage "based on the European standard of living" (p. 197). The deep fear of the time was that poor blacks and whites would align along common class lines. It should be sufficiently clear from these examples that apparently pure psychological problems such as mental handicap were in fact closely interwoven with wider problems of an intergroup relations nature.

Another psychologist who entered the terrain of the poor white problem was Dr H.F. Verwoerd. Verwoerd was one of the very first South African trained psychologists: he obtained an MA in 1922 and a PhD in 1924, both in psychology, at the University of Stellenbosch. In December 1927 he was appointed to the first Chair in Applied Psychology at the University of Stellenbosch. Verwoerd was always concerned about the plight of poor whites, and in 1929 he was instrumental in starting a course for training social workers. In 1932 he was appointed to a new chair in Sociology, also at Stellenbosch University (Kenney, 1980). At the 1934 Volkongres on the poor white, Verwoerd delivered a paper in which he argued that poor whiteism existed because blacks had taken the jobs of whites in the cities. Blacks should be returned to the land; in this case the "homelands". It was better, he argued, that blacks rather than whites should be unemployed.

By 1936 Verwoerd was again active in another problem of intergroup relations: the "Jewish question". Jewish refugees from Nazi Germany began arriving in South Africa. Afrikaner Nationalists staged various protests, and Verwoerd led a deputation to government to protest about the Jewish inflow. As Kenney (1980) put it, for Verwoerd, emotional commitment to Afrikaners came above all else. By now it is of course well known that Verwoerd's later contribution to the problems of intergroup relations in South Africa was the policy of apartheid.

1950s to 1960s: I.D. MacCrone and race attitudes

The concept of "attitude" has been a very important one for social psychology throughout its twentieth century history. The study of attitudes has in fact been widely regarded as the central concept, or cornerstone, around which social psychology has been constructed (McGuire, 1986). Given the central role of race as an organising principle of South African society, it is hardly surprising that the study of "race attitudes" should feature prominently in the history of South African psychology. It is surprising perhaps that, relatively speaking, it was given so little attention by psychologists in South Africa, and that for many years it was only the lone voice of I.D. MacCrone that was heard in this regard. This was in part due to the limited number of psychologists in South Africa at the time - a point easy to overlook. It was also in part due to the fact that many white people regarded South Africa's intergroup problems in terms of "the native problem", which made questions about white attitudes redundant. In other words, race attitudes only constituted a problem for those people with a particular type of political outlook - a liberal orientation.
There can be no doubt that MacCrone was one of the most significant figures in South African psychology. His writings span a period from 1926 to 1970. He was for many years, from the 1930s to the early 1960s, head of the Department of Psychology at the University of the Witwatersrand. In 1963 he became Principal and Vice-Chancellor of the same university. MacCrone was an active and prominent member of the South African Institute of Race Relations from its inception in 1929, and served as President of the Institute in 1970. He was a founder member of the South African Psychological Association in 1948, and was its Vice-President for a decade. MacCrone's work on race attitudes was pioneering and in many respects still serves as a model of sustained research linked with thorough and innovative theorising. A good deal of his work in the 1930s was drawn together in a book titled *Race Attitudes in South Africa: Historical, Experimental and Psychological Studies*, published by Oxford University Press in 1937. This was a major contribution and still makes for valuable reading.

In his first study on race attitudes, MacCrone (1930) simply asked 25 senior students to describe their own attitudes to black people (then called "natives") and to give their reasons for such attitudes. In this same paper he drew an important distinction between direct or largely conscious factors underlying race attitudes, and other unconscious factors which were not directly accessible. As a result he developed a strong interest in psychoanalytic interpretations of the genesis of race attitudes, but unlike some writers who have used psychoanalytic approaches, in MacCrone's work this was coupled with empirical research as well. (See Chapter 5.) In his empirical work MacCrone used a range of methods, including:

- attitude scaling,
- social distance measures,
- assessment of stereotypes,
- interpretation of essays and
d factor analysis of personality measures.

During the early 1930s his central focus was the construction of an attitude scale, based on Thurstone's method of equal-appearing intervals, for the assessment of attitudes of whites towards "the native". The initial scale of 45 items was subsequently modified to a 30-item scale (MacCrone, 1932; 1933; 1937). In its final form it was used to assess white students' attitudes at two-yearly intervals from 1934 through to 1944 (MacCrone, 1949b). Comparisons on this scale were made between English-speaking, Afrikaans-speaking and Jewish white students. Results using this measure and a social distance scale were quite clear. Afrikaans speakers were the most prejudiced towards blacks, and were also lower in variability than other samples. Afrikaans-speaking students showed no change over the decade of measures. Both English-speaking and Jewish samples were less prejudiced and both showed evidence of reduced prejudice from 1934 to 1944. The Jewish students were the least prejudiced of the three samples and also showed the greatest shifts over this time period.

Most of MacCrone's research was on white attitudes towards blacks, since he clearly regarded this as the primary source of problems in South Africa. However, he did conduct some research with small samples of "coloured" and Indian people (MacCrone, 1938) and with professional blacks (MacCrone, 1947). Results revealed relatively positive views regarding English-speaking whites but negative attitudes and expressed hostility towards Afrikaans-speaking whites. In the 1947 qualitative study, in which MacCrone analysed material from written essays and group discussions, he found indications that this common hostility towards Afrikaans speakers defused tribal distinctions among blacks, and this laid the foundations for a national or "black consciousness". Such findings make greater sense now with hindsight than perhaps they did at that time.

Unlike many psychologists who would be content merely to describe patterns of attitudes, MacCrone made considerable efforts to explain the origins. In particular he turned to historical analysis, and is now well known for his "frontier hypothesis" of the origins of prejudicial attitudes. In summary, this view suggested that the 18th century eastern Cape frontier conditions, which consisted of "not merely a place or a population but a process" (MacCrone, 1961, p. 21), led to a transformation of attitudes, culminating in a narrow group-based ethnocentrism particularly as evidenced in the empirical findings regarding Afrikaans-speaking whites.

According to the frontier hypothesis, early white attitudes towards blacks at the original Cape settlement station were primarily shaped by religious views rather than racial attitudes. If blacks were baptised, thus became Christian rather than heathen, they could be accepted into the common society. Religion in short provided a means of social mobility. With the slow spread of the white population into the interior the frontier process unfolded. The isolation – physical, political and social – and the hardships of the frontier conditions gradually transformed the social institutions and the consciousness of people. Racial attitudes became the pivotal framework on which the frontier society rested. Development of this racial attitude was bound up with characteristics of group unity, cohesion and self-consciousness and provided the powers of resistance and persistence required to overcome the severe difficulties of frontier existence. Although all forms of attitudes – racial, social, political, religious – developed in mutually supplementary ways it was, according to MacCrone, the racial and religious attitudes that became most closely intertwined. Religion justified the right to dominate the heathen blacks. Skin colour became the chief criterion of group exclusivity, which slowly assumed caste-like qualities. This group-based racial outlook, substantially developed by the turn of the 19th century, was dispersed through the country by the Great Trek of the 1830s and 1840s. With the Voortrekker movement and its sequelae there developed a kind of belief which MacCrone (1961, p. 28) described as "a charismatic mystique of a people with a special mission or destiny". MacCrone claimed that this kind of belief played a significant part in ethnocentric ideology with its characteristic rigidity in ingroup-outgroup distinctions, negative stereotyping and attitudinal hostility towards outgroups.

This historical analysis provided the foundation for MacCrone's view, developed in the late 1940s and early 1950s, of the "puritanical-Calvinist personality". On the basis of a number of factor-analytic studies (see MacCrone, 1949a; 1953), a personality type or structure was identified and shown to be linked to
ethnocentric outlook and negative attitudes towards black people in particular. This notion is of course remarkably similar to the well known theory of the “authoritarian personality”, first published in 1950 (see the chapter by Duckitt in this volume). It is significant to note that MacCrone was clearly working along these lines before the publication of The Authoritarian Personality, and the basis for this, including the use of psychoanalytic concepts, was quite apparent as early as his 1937 book. Regrettably, MacCrone did not report this research in fully completed form. It was written in the form of fairly brief research notes in the Proceedings of the South African Psychological Association (1953), and as a result did not become widely known nor did it lead to further research along these lines. In retrospect, however, particularly in the light of recent South African research by Duckitt (see Chapter 6), MacCrone’s work should be regarded as innovative and important, if somewhat untested.

This is not the place for a thorough assessment of MacCrone’s contribution. As one example of sustained, wide-ranging and persistent social psychological research on an important topic, his work stands as a model. By contemporary standards, his theorising and his attempts to relate psychological aspects to historical origins must indeed be regarded as sophisticated. In addition, MacCrone was not merely a theorist or researcher. His practical work in the university, the South African Association for the Advancement of Science and the South African Institute of Race Relations was substantially concerned with combatting racial prejudice. His values, in remaining concerned about a better society free of racial domination must be held to be admirable. MacCrone was certainly a pioneer, and if some of his work, for example the frontier hypothesis, has come under attack (see Legassick, 1980), other parts of his research, particularly the empirical work on race attitudes, remain important and also served to encourage further work on similar themes in subsequent years.

**War years and aftermath: 1940s and 1950s**

During the Second World War, two services were created in the armed forces that produced work which we should note here: the Army Information Service, headed by E.G. Malherbe, and the Air Force’s Aptitude Tests Section, headed by Simon Biesheuvel.

The idea behind the formation of the Army Information Service was to inform the troops on the “political, social and economic reasons” for fighting the war. In Malherbe’s words:

> soldiers were mainly to be made aware of their country’s cultural, political and economic assets, for the preservation of which they were prepared to sacrifice their lives. (1981, p. 215)

Lectures, discussion groups and film shows were the main methods of information transfer used by these information officers. Books were also made available to the soldiers. Many prominent South Africans lectured to the officers who were

to carry out these duties: Dr Danie Craven on sport and recreation; Professor R.F.A. Hoernlé on the ideological issues of war; Dr Simon Biesheuvel and Professor I.D. MacCrone on human relations; and Dr Z.K. Matthews, and Dr J.D. Rheinallt-Jones on race relations.

This unit produced numerous booklets such as: South Africa’s resources, Population problems, When we all get home, and What the soldier thinks (Malherbe, 1981). For present purposes, the study on “What the soldier thinks” is rather informative. It was the result of a survey in May 1944 on what the armed forces thought about South Africa’s economic, political, racial and social problems. The sample consisted of about 7000 members (whites only) of the Union Defence Force and was selected from officers and ranks, men and women, army and air force (Malherbe, 1946b, p. 11), with members selected from each of these groups being proportionate to their numbers in the whole force.

Refer to Table 3.1 for results regarding relations between English and Afrikaans-speaking groups.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>% agreement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. We ought to aim at making South Africa mainly Afrikaans-speaking and dominated by Afrikaans traditions.</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. We ought to aim at making South Africa mainly English-speaking and dominated by British traditions.</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. English and Afrikaans-speaking groups ought to have equality and keep their traditions separate and distinct.</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. English and Afrikaans-speaking groups ought to be joined into one South African nation, so that neither group will remain separate and distinct.</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Don’t know or no answer.</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 3.1 English-Afrikaans relationships (Malherbe, 1946b)**

Furthermore a strong majority were in favour of joint schooling for English and Afrikaans language groups: 93% supported a question worded: “We shall have national unity if English and Afrikaans children go to the same schools”.

See Table 3.2 for survey results regarding white attitudes towards political rights for “natives”.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>% agreement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. There is no reason why natives should not have a say in the government of the country.</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. It is fair that natives should be represented in parliament, but I think that what they have now is quite enough.</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Natives should be given more political rights than they have now, but only slowly, as they become more civilised.</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Natives should have exactly the same political rights as white men.</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Don’t know or no answer.</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 3.2 Political rights for “natives” (Malherbe, 1946b)**
Other findings showed that white attitudes were strongly related to educational levels. Attitudes towards educational opportunities and political rights for "natives", in terms of different educational levels, are given in Table 3.3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>% agreement by educational level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Favoured more educational opportunities for natives.</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Favoured more political rights for natives.</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.3 Education and white attitudes (Malherbe, 1946b)

In certain respects this war-time work could be regarded as a continuation of MacCrone's work. Although Malherbe regarded the task as "a long and hard one" (1946b, p. 29), he held an optimistic view that "human nature is enormously plastic" (p. 28). The findings reported in Table 3.3 especially gave him hope that extended education could improve racial prejudices:

...the fact remains that the better educated a person is, the more he is capable of seeing the whole picture. Seeing a partial picture only is the root cause of many of our racial and other prejudices (Malherbe, 1946b, p. 25)

These results of defence force members' attitudes suggested a certain measure of liberalising of attitudes, between English and Afrikaans-speaking groups in particular, but also regarding blacks during the war years. Many blacks who had participated in the war effort and this contact had apparently led to some improvements regarding race relations. (See also the quote further on in this chapter from Biesheuvel, 1957).

The second war-time section: the Aptitude Tests Section of the South African Air Force, was formed to assist in the selection and classification of pilots, which later was expanded to include other Air Force personnel as well. As such, it did not produce work directly relevant to the purposes of this chapter. However, its significance for our purposes lies in its aftermath, in that it was in many ways the forerunner of the National Institute for Personnel Research (NIPR). The NIPR made substantial contributions to intergroup research in the industrial sphere.

One could expect the post-war social problems to be different from pre-war ones. For example: white poverty, so prominent before the War, disappeared after the War, and hence also as a research priority. After the War, the importance of human factors in the continued growth of South African industry was recognised, and the NIPR was formed in 1946 to supply industry with information and research regarding labour utilisation. Biesheuvel was appointed as its first director.

The earlier work of the NIPR was dominated by personnel selection, utilising mostly tests and test batteries. They recognised at least one new dimension in this process, namely adaptability. Initially the requests from industry for assistance with labour matters involved black workers, particularly African miners in the gold mines. The NIPR researchers argued that industry was dealing mostly with African workers not previously exposed to industrial work, and adaptability to such conditions would be a major factor in productivity. Thus it was considered absolutely crucial to have an understanding of "African psychology", referring to aspects such as manipulative, perceptual, reasoning and learning skills, work motivation and expectations, as well as how workers responded to mining and working conditions, supervision, training and the compound environment. One practical outcome of their work was the General Adaptability Battery, introduced on the South African gold mines for the selection and classification of black miners.

The emphasis on adaptability and the "psychology of Africans" soon led to a considerable diversification of the Institute's activities. The importance of what was referred to as industrial relations was acknowledged at an early stage:

...By industrial relations we mean the complex interpersonal, psycho-social, economic relations which obtain between all participants in the employment situation. They include the attitudes of employees to employers and vice versa, one category of employees to another, of the European to the Non-European worker. (Biesheuvel, 1949, p. 7)

The examination of attitudes therefore formed a considerable part of the NIPR's activities. One example is the measurement of attitudes to the selection tests, because it was thought that those attitudes might influence performance on the test itself. For example: Basutos scored low on the performance tests, and an attitude survey revealed that they themselves ascribed their low performance to their independent manner, in that they were generally less subservient to whites (Biesheuvel, 1949). Biesheuvel himself was involved in developing techniques to measure the attitudes of blacks, referring to the methods such as the directed interview, group discussion, the TAT, incomplete sentences, and an attitude inventory (see Biesheuvel, 1958). It may be fruitful to quote at some length the conclusion to one attitude study involving educated black respondents:

There is nevertheless no tendency amongst those who completed the inventories to permit group antagonisms to invade the domain of individual human relations, to assume discrimination where there is no evidence that any exists, or to adopt retaliatory attitudes toward everyone white. . . . The African still thought of himself as a citizen of the state and of its government as the logical upward extension of his own local rulers. Analysis of the more recently collected opinions will indicate whether the "apartheid" legislation of the last few years has changed this attitude. (Biesheuvel, 1957, p. 314)

This work was clearly influenced by the human relations approach to industrial behaviour. Psychologists turned their attention to matters such as managerial attitudes, interpersonal relationships, attitudes of employees, attitudes of white workers to black workers, and "cultural attitudes and values" (Fullagar, 1983, p. 15).
Other research themes: 1950s and beyond

From the mid 1950s onwards research in the more classical social psychological manner appeared. In part this appeared to be stimulated by an extended visit by the well-known American social psychologists Gordon Allport and Thomas Pettigrew to the Institute for Social Research at the University of Natal, Durban. At a conference in 1954 on research needs and priorities in South Africa, Pettigrew spoke on "Conformity and personality in race attitudes" and Allport summarised the proceedings. This was the start of a lengthy focus in South Africa on authoritarianism and its relation to race attitudes.

In addition, other research continued in the wake of MacCrone with a central focus on white attitudes. However, some research began to look at the "marginality" thesis in respect of "coloured" people, the mid 1960s saw the first studies on black children's attitudes and an early start was made in studying contact between black and white. Since some of this research is reported elsewhere in this volume, only a brief sketch of it will be given here.

Authoritarian personality and white prejudice

In many respects MacCrone should be given credit for introducing this theme into South Africa. As we have seen above, MacCrone, in a set of research notes between 1949 and 1955 (in Proceedings of the South African Psychological Association) developed the notion of the "puritanical-Calvinist personality". He found empirical support for the notion that a cluster of personality traits was linked to both certain religious ideas and a high degree of prejudice, particularly towards blacks; a finding remarkably similar to that of the famous study by Adorno et al (1950) in the USA. However, MacCrone's work was not taken further, whereas the empirical tools of Adorno's "authoritarian personality" were employed in numerous South African studies which continue up to the present time (see Chapter 6).

It was Pettigrew, in a set of influential studies (1958; 1959), who introduced research on authoritarianism in South Africa. Using a version of the F-scale from Adorno, along with measures of conformity and "anti-African" prejudice, Pettigrew found positive correlations between authoritarianism and prejudice (ranging between 0.46 and 0.56), but also found equally strong positive correlations between conformity and prejudice. Furthermore, he found that sociocultural factors such as political party preference and ethnic group (English or Afrikaans speaking) were strongly associated with prejudice. National Party members and Afrikaans speakers were more prejudiced even when authoritarianism was controlled. Finally he found that both white South Africans and American southerners were higher in prejudice, but not in authoritarianism than other samples. Pettigrew's conclusion referred to these sociocultural factors:

In areas with historically imbedded traditions of racial intolerance, externalizing personality factors underlying prejudice remain important, but socio-cultural factors are unusually crucial and account for the height of hostility. (Pettigrew, 1958, p. 40)

In another study (Pettigrew, Allport & Barnett, 1958), pairs of graphs were presented stereotypically to respondents of different racial backgrounds. Their results indicated that "race" recognition was affected by their own "race". Afrikaans-speaking whites tended to sort out their judgements by categories: white and black. They seemed to exhibit perceptual vigilance of a race category and excessive number of "threatening" races was perceived. They hypothesised that Afrikaans speakers felt more threatened, and this led to regard all "non-whites" as "blacks" (i.e. Africans).

Although some studies (Nieuwoudt & Nel, 1975; Mynhardt, 1979) have concluded that Afrikaans-speaking students to be higher on both authoritarian and prejudice scales than English speakers, as well as finding positive correlations between the two factors, the main thrust of Pettigrew's findings have been dominant view over subsequent years of research (see Louw-Peltzer, 1990c; see also Chapter 6 for a discussion of this research.)

Race attitude research

Continuing in the tradition of MacCrone, a number of investigators have conducted research on racial attitudes and values were conducted from the mid 1950s on de Crespigny & Spence, 1961; Danziger, 1958; Hudson, Jacobs, 1966; Mann, 1962; 1971; Morsbach & Morsbach, 1967; Pettigrew, 1962). This line of work on racial attitudes was continued by Henry Lever, at the University of the Witwatersrand, in numerous studies through the 1960s and early 1970s. Examples of these can be found in Lever, 1972; 1976), and a summary of this work appeared in his 1978 book Toward a Diverse Society. Along a slightly different tack, Kurt Danziger at the University of the Witwatersrand obtained students' views of the future of South Africa and differences between various groups' orientations towards the future (Danziger, 1963a; 1963b). This work of Danziger re-surfaced in a series of studies on the relationship between judgements of the desirability of an event, and the social position of people and judgements (Du Preez, Bhana, Broekmann, Louw & Nel, 1981; Collins, 1985). (See also Chapter 5.)

While the bulk of research on attitudes was on whites, some research on black attitudes and viewpoints by Biesheuvel (1955; 1956), Crijns (1963) and Edelstein (1972; 1974). A useful summary of research on attitudes is provided by Lever (1978). It is noteworthy that the first contribution was made by South African psychologist, Chabani Manganyi (1973; 1977), only a few years after the publication of MacCrone's work.
Children and race attitudes

Directly following MacCrone's influence, Rakoff (1949), in a little known but quite extensive study, produced the first research on children's racial attitudes in South Africa. For this Master's thesis at the University of Cape Town, Rakoff used MacCrone's social distance scale to test over 500, mainly “coloured”, adolescents. Apart from their own group these “coloured” children showed considerable tolerance towards English-speaking whites, but not towards fellow blacks (i.e. Indians and Africans).

The mid 1960s saw an increase of research on children's racial attitudes. Following in the American tradition established by the Clark's in the 1940s, Meij (1966) and Gregor and McPherson (1966) used the Clark's' doll test to assess racial awareness, preference and identification. Both studies replicated earlier American findings that young black children, aged between three and seven years, tended to show outgroup preference and identification. Melamed (1968; 1970) also did research on this topic, showing that basic features of racial differentiation and stereotypes were established by the age of six years. Strong ingroup preference was shown by young white children.

At about the same time, in the late 1960s, Beryl Geber conducted a large study on nearly a thousand 16 - 18-year old black adolescents in Soweto, but this work was only published in 1980 (Geber & Newman, 1980). Research in this area has continued in a rather sporadic fashion up to the present time. Foster (1986) has provided a review of research on this topic.

Marginality and “coloured” people

Influenced by earlier American work, the idea gained currency in the 1950s in South Africa that “coloured” people found themselves in a marginal position, which would have certain social psychological consequences. The notion was that people caught in particular forms of group relations would manifest a “marginal personality”, characterised by insecurity feelings, self-pity and exaggerated sensitivity. Professor Jack Mann, who later succeeded MacCrone as head of the Department of Psychology at the University of the Witwatersrand, completed his doctoral thesis (under Gordon Allport's supervision) at the University of Natal in 1957 on this topic (Mann, 1957; 1958). The “coloured” people caught between a privileged white group and a less privileged black group were thought to constitute a classic test of marginality theory. This type of research may be viewed as in part a response to the new 1950s legislation such as the Population Registration Act and Group Areas Act, which increased boundaries between various South African “population groups”.

In an empirical study Mann compared 25 matched pairs of “coloured” people from Durban, rated as either “high or low passability”, i.e. in terms of ability to pass as white, on a range of measures, including measures of:

- marginal personality,
- orientation to whites and
- social distance.

He also compared two groups of white and “coloured” schoolchildren, in effect his results found virtually no differences between groups. Where some minor significant results were found, they were highly dependent on the complexity of factors in marginality. For example: rejection of other members of their group, comprising one such factor which could lead to exit from the group. Overall, Mann (1958) concluded that “coloured” people were more likely to show peculiar signs of psychological upset (p. 87) than whites, and they remained to be demonstrated that a distinct personality type was characteristic of particular group relations. Mann wondered whether this type of marginal personality at all” (1958, p. 90).

In a further study Mann (1963) found little evidence that in Durban in 1970 students in Durban were defeatist in contrast to whites. What was marginality was not much researched after the mid 1960s (Diallo, 1971). “Coloured” people as a distinct “group” were subject to further research. For example Watson (1970) wrote on the issue of “passing for white” in Cape Town community while Morse and Peele (1975) compared attitudes of “coloured” and white in Cape Town. Further quite extensive research was formed part of the government appointed Commission of Inquiry into the Coloured Population Group (Republic Commission, 1976; Theron Commission). The sample in this Commission consisted of 1 200 identified leaders and 1 948 interviews with unidentifiable people. Measurement included social distance scales, and a number of interviews directed at establishing whether “coloured” people were still considered white – a political problem for whites, of course, but also a problem of marginality thesis.

Interracial contact

Following Gordon Allport's (1954) influential text which popularised the concept of the “contact hypothesis”, along with the impact of group areas, the first studies on this topic were conducted in South Africa in the 1950s. Baumann, an African township outside Durban. He found a third of 193 respondents favoured any type of contact with Indian, “coloured” or white. Least-favoured contact was with blacks. Along the lines of the contact hypothesis, Mann found a positive correlation of about 0.13, which was not particularly convincing. This study gave results of attitudes separately towards Indians, whites. He concluded:

The people of Baumannville are hostile towards racial outgroups, only a moderate amount of contact with other races and desire no
A diminution of tolerance, then, is not to be expected until more intense inter-racial contacts take place. (Mann, 1955, p. 195)

In a more extensive study, Russell (1961) studied an interracial neighbourhood in Durban prior to the formal imposition of the Group Areas Act. She found that residential proximity was associated with increased contact between white, Indian and "coloured" people, and that contact was linked with friendly relationships. Despite the lack of conflict and generally amicable relations, the wider dominance pattern of South Africa nevertheless was revealed in this neighbourhood. Blacks were wary of whites, and stated attitudes (by interview rather than attitude scale) of whites towards blacks were not particularly positive. Overall, however, results of Russell's study were surprisingly positive.

Although subsequent research on this theme was not systematic, further work related to the contact hypothesis did appear from time to time over more recent years. Foster and Finchilescu (1986) and Mynhardt (this volume) provide more details of such work. (See Chapter 9.)

To conclude: the research themes discussed above reveal that the 1950s experienced an upsurge in South African research of a more typical social psychological flavour, although the questions were related to specific South African intergroup problems. Many of these research themes opened up in the 1950s have remained as topics of research through to the present and are dealt with in separate chapters in the present book.

Controversies and intergroup research

It is a matter of general knowledge that intergroup relations in South Africa are characterised by intergroup conflict. As a result, intergroup research was almost always dogged by controversy. The previous discussion gave an overall illustration of this point, but it might be more instructive to give specific examples of how this intergroup conflict also manifested itself in intergroup studies. Three examples are given: one involving a PhD thesis on attitudes in the civil service; another involving performance of Afrikaans and English-speaking (white) children on intelligence tests; and a third example refers to the suppression of certain HSRC research reports. Additionally, we will show how conflict also led to a schism in the national psychology association in South Africa.

The African civil servant

In the early 1950s Rae Sherwood conducted a research project on African civil servants, financed by the National Council for Social Research. She established that these clerks were in a classic marginal position; caught between the demands of being administrators within the ideological framework of apartheid and the expectations of the public they were serving. She also examined personality aspects of the clerks themselves and of white clerks and supervisors. It would appear that she referred to the latter group's attitudes as rooted in Afrikaner outlook, since most of the white clerks belonged to group. This raised the ire of the director of the Bureau for Educational Research, who thought that the Afrikaner's character was being

When she wanted to submit the work for a PhD, the government (Word of mouth from reliable sources indicated that Prime Min read through the thesis himself and that he objected to its sub unclear exactly why objections were raised, but it could be spec study involved confidential, sensitive information about the civil government did not want to make public. The reasons for this of course more interesting: were the conclusions simply too ungovernment or did they object to the disparagement of Afrikaans? difficult to know, since the thesis has been placed under em submission (see Sherwood, 1958, for a discussion of some of the it was only handed in fifteen years after it was completed, since for a long time refused its publication even in thesis form government finally agreed to its publication, the condition was number of copies would be printed, and that it would be placed in Recent enquiries at the library of the University of the Witwaters that such an embargo is still in place on the thesis - in fact, the un does not even have a copy.

Afrikaans and English IQ

The second research controversy relates to the differential 1 Afrikaans and English-speaking children on intelligence tests bilingualism forms the background to this controversy. The Prime Minister D.F. Malan and later of Verwoerd favoured separ Afrikaans and English-speaking children, in which the second used only as a taught subject. One of the main protagonists of bil where both Afrikaans and English would be used, was E.G. Malh conducted a wide-ranging study of bilingualism in schools in So established that children who attended bilingual schools gener better than their counterparts who attended unilingual schools (M. Furthermore, children who attended bilingual schools showed li against the other language group than children from unilingual less "intercultural antagonism". Consistent differences were established between the performance and English-speaking white children on intelligence tests. As MacCrone reported that Afrikaans-speaking children were scoring their English-speaking counterparts in scores on an "Intellig Witwatersrand University Group Test of Mental Ability). In 10 (1952) reported a study conducted by Morkel, in which Afri groups of children performed significantly worse than English-spe on the Mental Alertness Test. In 1959, Biesheuvel and Lidd
standardisation of the Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale to reaffirm this situation: English speakers did better than Afrikaans speakers on the test. Biesheuvel used these findings to illustrate the absurdity of the view that intelligence tests measured innate differences, and concluded that the differences could be ascribed to the fact that the Afrikaans-speaking population was decidedly more rural than their English counterparts, and that they had less intellectual stimulation from their parents.

Biesheuvel & Liddicoat's (1959) work, and the results of the standardisation of the New South African Group Test of Intelligence (NSAGTI), brought the issue into the public eye. In 1951 it was decided to develop a new South African group test of intelligence to replace the old one. By 1954 the test was ready, but again differences in performance of Afrikaans and English-speaking children emerged. Different norms for Afrikaans and English-speaking children were then drawn up, so that the same raw score for an Afrikaans-speaking child, would give a higher IQ than it would for an English-speaking child. This led to a lively debate not only in psychological and educational circles, but also in the newspapers. The Pretoria News for example ran a number of letters which protested that the scaling up of the Afrikaans-speaking children's scores disadvantaged the English-speaking child. Statements were issued by the Transvaal Director of Education, and by the South African Psychological Association. A committee of the South African Psychological Association was formed to investigate this phenomenon, and a member was even sent overseas to study the situation in America. In 1958 the committee reported that the NSAGTI was a perfectly valid test of intelligence, but that the norms for the two language groups were not equivalent. The test could therefore be used within each language group, but it recommended further research to establish composite norms for Afrikaans and English speakers.

HSRC controversy

In the early 1980s, it came to light that the HSRC had conducted a large number of studies, the findings of which were kept confidential. When asked why certain research findings were kept confidential, the president of the HSRC replied that “in the end, an important consideration is whether publication of the research findings could seriously harm intergroup relations. That would be important” (Sunday Times, 12 April 1981, p. 3).

An inspection of the list of such studies published by the same newspaper (and which did not include military research), reveals the extent to which they referred to intergroup relations. These are some of the titles of the reports in question:

- White attitudes in the Eastern Cape to Ciskei consolidation.
- The inclination of the black man in white areas to his homeland – an opinion poll (1976).

- The attitude of well-qualified Tswana men to job acceptance in Mmabatho.
- The measure of motivation among the inhabitants of Lebowa to economic constitutional development, judged by opinion poll (1976).
- The ties of black men in white areas to black states: basic data (1980).
- The knowledge of, and attitude towards, the new constitutional proposals of colour male voters in the Western Cape – a reconnaissance (1977).
- Coloured attitudes to the South African police.
- Some political orientations of “coloured” people (1980).

The then Minister of Cooperation and Development, Dr Piet Koornhof, denied that his department tried to suppress the findings of the study dealing with “homelands” ties of urban Africans. When the Sunday Times investigated matter further, the minutes of a meeting between senior officials of Koornhof's department and HSRC researchers revealed an expressly stated recommendation that the report, as well as further research, would be treated as confidential, should not be generally released. It appeared that this study revealed that urban Africans had very few ties with their “homelands” – in direct contradiction to government policy. This seemed to be the real reason why all of these research findings were suppressed. This interpretation was supported by the fact that Department of Cooperation and Development called for an urgent follow-up study on how to encourage closer ties between urban Africans and the homelands they belonged to (Rand Daily Mail, 13 April 1981).

Despite his earlier explanation that the results were kept confidential because they could harm intergroup relations, the president of the HSRC later admitted that most of the secret surveys could have been published. This affair did no good to the HSRC’s image and the president again admitted that it placed Council under a cloud of suspicion.

Psychological organisations

Finally, the nature of intergroup conflict in South Africa also affected psychology's organisational life. In June 1962, a substantial number of (mainly Afrikaans-speaking) psychologists broke away from the South African Psychological Association to form the Psychological Institute of the Republic of South Africa. The major issue which led to the division in the ranks of psychologists was whether blacks could become members of the Association. The members of the Institute felt that, in line with government policy, separate psychological associations ought to be formed for the different race groups. When they were defeated at the Association's 1961 conference in Stellenbosch, the formed the Institute which allowed only whites to become members. This situation existed until 1971 when the two amalgamated to form the Psychological Association of South Africa, which has no "race" restrictive clause in its constitution (see Louw, 1981, for a full description of these events).
Some recent research: HSRC investigation into intergroup relations

In a survey conducted in 1980, it emerged that intergroup relations were identified by researchers as the most important research area in South Africa. As a result, the HSRC launched its Investigation into Intergroup Relations (hereafter referred to as the Investigation) in 1981. It was managed by a main committee and thirteen work committees: one for the fields of historical aspects; juridical aspects; social structures; religion; administrative aspects; communication; geographic and demographic aspects; social psychological aspects; economics and labour; constitution and politics; race, ethnicity and culture; theory and methodology; and bibliography and databank. Approximately 350 researchers and research teams from 15 universities participated in the Investigation.

The Main Committee (1985) reported that the reality of South African society was its complexity and deep segmentation, which meant that interaction between groups was the central factor in the quality of life people enjoyed. Four specific relational problems were identified as being at the root of intergroup conflict in South Africa. These were summarised as follows:

These issues concern the elevation and institutionalization of ethnicity and related characteristics to the extent that the individual is compelled to order his life within prescribed group contexts, while there are obvious inequalities involved in such group allocation and people eventually become isolated and insulated from one another. (p. 157)

The Main Committee made mention of the population categories legally entrenched in South Africa, and stated that:

Although there is a large measure of convergence between these categories and the ethnic and/or cultural divisions between groups, the juridical groupings do not necessarily correspond fully with reality or with the manner in which people group themselves. (p. 6)

The Main Committee gave ethnicity as a group organising principle in South Africa a central place in their report. It regarded ethnicity as embodying the following combination of components: a common culture, including common values and norms; a common language; an awareness of group solidarity; an awareness of historical destiny; endogamy; concentration of the group in a specific geographical area; and a common race-semantic norm-image. It acknowledged that the categories used in the classification of people in South Africa could not be regarded as social “groups” in the above sense, and blamed the differentiation of interest groups in terms of forced ethnicity as the major source of conflict in this country. Ethnicity was found to be an “almost unmanageable” category for determining group boundaries:

The policy of unilaterally assigning ethnic and related differences as determinants for institutionalized separation and segregation had the effect of hamstringing the potentially positive and creative power inherent in ethnicity. (p. 149)

However, it could not move away from considering the reality of South society as “multicultural and multi-ethnic”. It described South Africa as multi-ethnic country in which ethnicity under the Afrikaans-speaking who is accommodated by the policy of formal group institutions, but that other groups do not wish to be accommodated on this basis at present. (p. 14)

It stated that:

... the Africans are still not a homogeneous category - ethnicity (group interests) still plays an important role in relations between the different African groups. (pp. 19-20)

As far as the social-psychological sections of the Main Committee report concerned, it included many aspects of the work we discussed in the brief overview above. For example: how intergroup relations were perceived in Africa; social distance and attitudes; stereotypes and contact between members of different population categories; and the relationship between attitude and behaviour. Its conclusion?

South Africans of different backgrounds experience group relations differently. Although ethnicity is an important factor, many people refuse to identify with ethnic groups because of its statutory institutionalization. Analyses of factors such as attitudes, stereotypes, communications and the ambivalent role of religion, historiography and the mass media in these show that South Africa is a divided and polarised society. (Main Committee, 1984, pp. 97-98)

Finally, one can say that a reformist tone shines through the Report. For example:

It is obvious from this research that political and economic stability and social order are prerequisites for viable reform. ... Several indicators of political, social and economic forces were found to indicate a moderately favourable climate for the development of constructive relations. (p. 143)

Some of it may sound very much like 1989 reformist rhetoric:

More important though is the finding that attitudes have changed; that there are signs of a greater willingness among people of different groups to join forces and face the challenges together, and that the future belongs to those who genuinely wish to make a contribution that will serve everyone’s best interests. (p. 156)

It furthermore stressed individual as well as group rights:

The basic problem in a plural society therefore revolves around the accommodation of everyone’s rights, privileges and security at an individual as well as group level. ... the recognition of individual interests does not mean the denial of group interests. (p. 160)
Conclusion

According to Manicas (1987), the practices of and disciplinary divisions in the human and social sciences were constituted in the twenty or thirty years which span the turn of the century. The origins of South African psychology, and other social science disciplines, fit in quite neatly with this periodisation: we have argued that psychology was established as a separate discipline in this country only after World War I.

From the very beginnings of their discipline, psychologists displayed a serious concern with the social issues of their day. It is therefore not at all surprising that we have been able in this chapter to demonstrate that the collection of psychological data and practices of psychologists were closely tied to issues which were of concern to at least some sectors of society. In particular, we have argued that most lines of intergroup problems in South Africa return to the issue of racial domination, and that this manifested itself in South African social science. By addressing the outstanding intergroup research themes in a broadly defined chronology in the chapter, we aimed to highlight this inter-relationship between concerns of psychologists and social issues.

One example of how racial domination manifested itself in the social sciences, was the almost total absence of black psychologists in South Africa. We indicated that the work of Chabani Manganyi, published from the 1970s, was the first to emerge from a black psychologist, but it was not until the 1980s that blacks began to qualify as psychologists in significant numbers. Obviously, psychology was not unique in this regard among the natural and social sciences in South Africa. Although exact numbers are not available, there are still many more white than black psychologists at present.

Psychologists’ responses to questions of social concern were also influenced by the state of knowledge in the discipline. At different times, different methods and techniques were available or popular, and were used to address intergroup-related matters. Thus in the 1920s, the impoverishment of large numbers of mainly Afrikaans-speaking whites was investigated largely by means of psychological tests of intelligence, vocational ability, scholastic achievement, etc. The work of MacCrone during the 1930s and 1940s was aimed at answering different research questions, located within a particular political orientation. MacCrone shifted away from a study of intelligence to a study of attitudes, on the assumption that race attitudes constituted the core problem regarding South Africa’s racial relations. In so doing, he was clearly located within a particular political position - a liberal persuasion. At the same time, many psychologists took a more conservative political stance, and produced work of a quite different nature. The names of Verwoerd, who later would play such an important role in the formulation of apartheid policies, Fick and Van Rensburg come to mind in this regard. This political division eventually led to the 1961 split in the ranks of the South African Psychological Association. The difficulty of separating psychological from political stances - particularly in a deeply divided society such as South Africa - has been a constant sub-theme throughout this chapter.

In almost all countries which participated in the Second World War, human sciences were placed in the service of “the war effort”. The discussion in this chapter showed that South Africa was no exception, and that even in war, intergroup relations received attention. Furthermore, the NIPR, as an industrial spin-off effect of the war, carried traditional intergroup into the industrial sectors of South African society via various research mentioned in the chapter.

Intergroup studies conducted by psychologists during the years following the Second World War, were discussed in terms of significant themes and controversial issues. More often than not, these research and practical interests utilised techniques and methods developed overseas, and “imported” to this country. In many cases, it went hand in hand with visits of eminent psychologists to this country, such as Pettigrew and Allport. Again, this follows a general trend in psychology, namely the domination of an American and European influence in other countries.

The studies done since the 1950s and the controversies we refer to place against the background of intensifying social conflict in South Africa. Policies of apartheid were on the one hand expanded and on the other resisted on an ever-increasing scale. After the Second World War, ideas about race began to diverge from the way the rest of the world was thinking about race. As the outside world began to move away from suppositions, and began to abandon racial discrimination, a racial thinking became entrenched in South Africa. However, South African sensitiveness to these shifts in thinking, Thompson (1985) argued that the discourse was supplanted, at least for the next thirty years, by “cultural differences” and “ethnicity”. Sharp (1988) pointed out that it avoided the opprobrium associated with “race” in the international context immediately after the Second World War. Furthermore, “ethnicity” was evidently true in South Africa, and reinforced the common-sense perception that the South African population consisted of a number of disparate groups.

The last major piece of intergroup research we reviewed in this chapter, the “Investigation into Intergroup Relations”, it became clear that ethnicity was a crucial guiding concept in the formulation of its findings and conclusions is just another demonstration of how political and social scientific discourses run parallel to each other. At the end, one could therefore say that “psychology like other sciences, are creatures of their political and cultural times” (Woodward, 1985, p. 305).

References


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