



Tomasz Gmerek. *Polityka apartheidu w szkolnictwie RPA. Geneza, rozwój i konsekwencje*. Poznań 2017: Adam Mickiewicz University Press. Pp. 291.

The characteristic of the Republic of South Africa's school system during the apartheid period has not been dealt with in depth for a long time. Previous works, especially in Poland are limited to history, linguistics, geography and political science aspects. Racial issues and the role of gender and power which are the key in this publication were often poorly presented in the past. The latest publication by Tomasz Gmerek published in Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu im. Adama Mickiewicza will give a reader a complex picture of the utterly repressive apartheid state in this part of the world.

Tomasz Gmerek is among the most well-known scientist in comparative education and sociology of education field. He is a Professor at Adam Mickiewicz University (Faculty of Educational Studies) in Poznań. His main research focuses on the selective and stratification function of education in various locations around the world. As a member of Multicultural Education and Social Inequality Research Department at Adam Mickiewicz University he made himself know for the following publications: *Education and social inequality. Comparative case study of England, Spain and Russia* (2011), *Education and ethnic identity of minorities living in the polar regions: a socio-educational study* (2013). There are also numerous published articles outlining the past-present history of different school systems and their sociological aspects. The newest book is undoubtedly based on long term research dedicated to the South Africa factual data.

The aim of author's work which is clearly presented in the widespread introduction is to call a question about political influence on education during the apartheid times. In the introduction author presents general ideas of the book which can be situated between the sociology of education and comparative pedagogy. This part specifically describes previous research and publications which can be treated as a base of the present book. With this in mind author explains problems and hopes discovered while writing. There are four elaborated chapters in this book. Language of the introduction is very personal and clearly inviting with smooth connection to the following chapters.

Chapter One according to the author "takes up the issue of the link between racial segregation and processes of social differentiation leading to the emergence of a specific form of stratification in which race plays the crucial role" (Gmerek, 2017, p. 288). Throughout this part writer refers to several theories of social closure, concepts and theoretical categories which are helpful with understanding the problem. In the literature author often tends to refer to general

words such as: racism, racial segregation and apartheid which are clearly explained in section one. Gmerek draws our attention to the relation between social segregation phenomenon and social diversity process which leads to the situation where race plays the crucial role. The first part gives fully useful and justified data which helps with understanding the following chapters.

The second section is focused on the systematic analysis of the origins of the apartheid policy in South Africa schooling. The development and consequences of this process were raised also in chapter three and four. The author focused on historical contexts of the policy of racial segregation as well as the future shape of educational institutes until 1948. The reader will also find other highlighted analysis of the religious, economic, political and social conditions which have influenced on the formation of societal differences. The four issues were selected in order to draw on them special scientific attention: "trends in the development of schooling, against the backdrop of historical events in the systematically colonised areas of South Africa; the language situation; the process of shaping the teaching profession; and the development of higher education" (Gmerek, 2017, p. 288). This chapter represents valuable and innovative approach in this particular publication.

The next chapter looks at the question of how the education system functioned under apartheid times in the context of mentioned previously aspects such as: social, economic, political, demographic and social processes. The six new issues are discussed by the author in this section. This raises many questions regarding selected contexts in terms of South African education system and the process of indoctrinating younger generations in a racist ideology. Another issues are selective function of this particular education system, teacher training whilst apartheid times and function of political language in terms of racially segregated schooling. The final matter in question shows in what way higher education as a subject to segregation along racial lines functions and changes.

The final chapter which also summarises the publication is the fourth one. The evidence from this part points towards the idea of possible ways in which the education system worked during the process of political transformation to a democracy. In general, this section also refers to six principal issues listed by the author: "the way South Africa's current education system was reformed and now operates; changes in the goals of education system in terms of its socialisation function and changes in the sphere of the social values promoted in the system at present; changes in selection function of the reformed education system; the current situation of languages in South Africa's educational system; changes in the education of teachers and the problems experienced by this profession in South Africa; current changes in the higher education system" (Gmerek, 2017, p. 290). An incredibly clearly and logically narrative construction of this chapter is very diversified by its language and content.

This work has led me to the conclusion that education department documents and statistical analyses made by South African Institute of Race Relations are significant part of the analysis in presented title. In this paper we have plenty of statistical information and data referring to the situation of individuals

from several race categories before and during the apartheid times. The author of this book managed to present the differences in access to education among people with various racial background and their achievements. Taken together, these findings highlight a remarkable role for getting to know better undersides of the apartheid policy in education in the Republic of South Africa. What is more important, the book shows many aspects of apartheid policy in terms of teachers education, gender inequality and social stratification.

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Renee Engeln, *Beauty Sick. How the Cultural Obsession with Appearance Hurts Girls and Women*. Warszawa 2018: Buchmann. Pp. 416.

Sometimes think I could take on the world but first... Oh my God, my eyebrows need plucking, and, oh my God, my legs need shaving; and my pores need cleansing and my skin needs toning; and my boobs need padding and my hair needs combing. These words are the lyrics of Siwan Clark, who expresses in this way how oppressive and restrictive our culture is. It concerns especially girls and women, who are often assessed for their appearance and not achievements. The cited lyrics open the book, titled *Beauty Sick: How the Cultural Obsession with Appearance Hurts Girls and Women*, written by Renee Engeln.

Renee Engeln is a professor of psychology at Northwestern University. Her articles have appeared in many academic journals, such as “Journal of Health Psychology”, “Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology” or “Psychology of Women Quarterly” (Northwestern, 2019). She directs The Body and Media Lab, which focuses on issues surrounding women’s body images, such as negative body talk and media images of women. The impulse to write the book were her students, who put their looks above other obligations such as work or studies. On the basis of scientific findings and interviews with many women Engeln has evaluated the role of beauty in our life and in her book gives advice on how to resist the beauty obsession.

The publication consists of an introduction, five chapters, a separate part with notes, index, acknowledgments and a note about the author. Each chapter is divided into smaller sections. Every chapter presents a woman’s story, centered around her attitude toward her own body. The author emphasizes that interlocutresses do not constitute a representative sample of all women. She has interviewed predominantly white Americans, but also non-white ones including