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Siyakholwa: A Study in Religion, Education and Media in South Africa

by

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SCHLEE003

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COMPULSORY DECLARATION

This work has not been previously submitted in whole, or in part, for the award of any degree. It is my own work. Each significant contribution to, and quotation in, this dissertation from the work, or works, of other people has been attributed, and has been cited and referenced.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

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Abstract

This thesis analyses the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) television production, *Siyakholwa - We Believe*. This series is the first and remains the only children's multi-faith educational television programme produced for South African viewers. Theory about religion education in South Africa provides insight into the multiple relationships among religion, constitution, education and media in the post-apartheid context. This thesis discusses how the constitutional ideal of religious pluralism is mediated through public service television. The relationships among the state, religion, public education and public service broadcasting in the light of post-apartheid policy are examined. The complexities that colour these relationships have material implications for the ways in which constitutional principles of freedom of religion are articulated both in the classroom and on public service television. By analysing national policy for religion in education and public service broadcasting along with theory about religion education, this thesis argues for the pedagogical viability of television for teaching about religion in South Africa. By analysing the scripts of *Siyakholwa* and evaluating their content in relation to national policy and educational theory about religion, this thesis demonstrates how educational programming on public service television can provide a pedagogical space for achieving the aims of South Africa's national policy for religion in education.

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Chapter 1

Television, Religion and Education in South Africa

On Saturday the 4th of August 2007, the first episode of the children's television programme, *Siyakholwa-We Believe* was screened by the South African public service broadcaster, the SABC. At half past six in the morning television screens (if they were indeed switched on) across the country were treated to a visual and aural spectacle. The opening melody sung by a children's choir set a promising and upbeat tone. In the opening sequence, children who look to be between the ages of five to nine years old hop up and down trying to catch various symbols of faith that falling from what can be assumed to be the sky. Rainbows skip across the screen. Two puppets who appear to be modelled on the characters of the famous *The Muppets*© can be seen on the screen. A fluorescent pink young girl with long ears and a neon green old man with white hair beckon the audience to join them. The music ends and on screen the puppets disappear. The scene cuts to a brightly lit set with a colourful background made up of large one-dimensional cut outs of a church, a temple and a mosque. There are colourful tables and chairs. In a corner there is the *Siyakholwa* library. The green puppet is sleeping on the library desk and the pink puppet walks in and watches him for a moment. The following interaction takes place:

DUDU: (LOUDLY IN HIS EAR) Wakey, wakey!

MUSA: (STARTLED) Ah...

DUDU: (LAUGHS) Ha ha ha! Hi, my name is Dudu.

MUSA: Dudu, that's a nice name; but giving an old man a fright like that wasn't very nice!

DUDU: I'm sorry.

MUSA: *That's okay. My name is Musa. I run Siyakholwa Library where all the kids are welcome to learn.*

DUDU: *Nice name; Siyakholwa.*

MUSA: *Yes, Siyakholwa, We Believe.*

(THANDI ENTERS WEARING A BIG ROSARY)

THANDI: *Hi Musa. Wow, and who is this lovely princess?*

MUSA: *She is... eh... (GONE BLANK)*

DUDU: *My name is Dudu.*

THANDI: *Is this your first time here at Siyakholwa?*

DUDU: *Yes, and I'm already having fun with Musa. (SHE CHEERFULLY LEANS HERSELF AGAINST MUSA.)*

MUSA: *(LAUGHS) Ho ho ho, there's more! THANDI, please tell ... eh... (FORGETS DUDU'S NAME AGAIN)*

DUDU: *Dudu.*

MUSA: *Of course, I knew that. THANDI, please tell her she hasn't seen nothing. (TO DUDU) Wait until you meet and listen to what other friends have to say today.*

DUDU: *Cool! (SHE NOTICES THANDI'S ROSARY) Hey, I've seen that before.*

THANDI: *Where did you see it?*

DUDU: *On my way coming here, I saw a lady wearing exactly like yours.*

MUSA: *Do you know what it is Dudu?*

DUDU: *(EXCITEDLY) Yes, it's a good luck charm for mothers.*

MUSA: *Not exactly, it's called a rosary.*

DUDU: *A what?*

THANDI: *That is our lesson for today. We are going to learn about symbols of faith.*

MUSA: *Dudu, you said you saw a lady wearing a rosary?*

DUDU: Yes, at the bus stop. She was wearing black clothes and a rosary around her neck.

THANDI: The rosary has a cross as a symbol. If you see a person wearing one you must know they are Christians.

DUDU: Please tell me more.

MUSA: People are different Dudu, some believe in the moon and stars, others place their faith in the sun and some believe in the Creator of heaven and earth.

THANDI: And every belief or religion has its symbol. People of that belief see each other by those symbols.

MUSA: The beauty of it is that we all believe.

DUDU: So that cross is a symbol of your belief?

THANDI: Yes, the woman that you saw is a Christian as well.

MUSA: Let's have a look at other symbols of faith.

DUDU: There's more?

THANDI: Plenty more, let's have a look. Shavuot (Siyakholwa Season 1: Symbols of Faith, 2007)

Siyakholwa is the first children's multi-faith programme series to be screened on television in South Africa. Anecdotal evidence suggests that it is the only programme of its kind in the world. In early 2007, X CON Films, a Cape Town based production company, was commissioned by the SABC to create a 24-minute children's multi-faith show that reflected the broadcaster's religion and education policy commitments. The result was a programme that simultaneously resonated with the national policy on religion in education and the values of religious pluralism enshrined in the 1996 South African Constitution. Rooted in the concept of "ubuntu", an African phrase which encompasses the ideal of a shared and

common humanity, X CON Films developed the television series *Siyakholwa*. By embracing the potential of television to be a “powerful educational and entertainment medium,” *Siyakholwa* is a model for “edutainment” and a method of augmenting the existing religion education policy (Parker, 2007). The intended audience for the series are children between the ages of 5-10 years old and their parents. In its production brief the SABC indicated that both children and their parents are targeted as viewers with the hope that the programme would act as a catalyst for open conversation about religion in the home. *Siyakholwa* has specific curriculum-related aims that include developing religious literacy, nation-building, tolerance and understanding of diversity.

Siyakholwa is the case-study for this discussion about the mediation of religion education on public television in South Africa. By exploring the national policies about broadcasting and education I will argue that television is an additional pedagogical space for teaching about religion in post-apartheid South Africa.

Religion and Public Service Broadcasting

Although a registered private company, the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) is owned by the South African state. While the SABC has a commercial arm, it is the public broadcaster of the Republic and consequently is mandated to operate within the confines of the Constitution and convey constitutional values in its programming and operations management. In terms of the guidelines of the 1999 Broadcasting Act, the SABC is monitored by the broadcasting authority, the Independent Communications Authority of South Africa (ICASA). As a constitutional Chapter 9 institution, ICASA is considered to be a “state institution supporting constitutional democracy”. Established in the year 2000, the broadcasting authority was established in order to “regulate broadcasting in the public

interest, and to ensure fairness and a diversity of views broadly representing South African society” (Constitution of South Africa 1996, 9: 132).

South African media expert and head of media studies at the Centre for Media Studies at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Keyan Tomaselli (2001: 139) states that “the Trinity of the public service mandate is to educate, entertain and inform” the South African public. Tomaselli is referring to the SABC’s legislative directive that is imposed and enforced by the 1999 Broadcasting Act through ICASA to create educational, informative and entertaining programming. The 1999 Broadcasting Act requires that the diversity of South African cultural and linguistic communities is articulated through broadcast media. It also states that the broadcaster should “include significant amounts of educational programming, both curriculum based and informal educative topics from a wide range of social, political and economic issues, including, but not limited to, human rights, health, early childhood development, agriculture, culture, justice and commerce and contributing to a shared South African consciousness and identity” (Broadcasting Act, 1999: 4:10e). Broadcasting in post-apartheid South Africa is intended by policy to have purpose and to serve a nation-building agenda.

During the apartheid era, public service broadcasting was profoundly influenced by the racially biased policies of the state. The SABC was widely referred to as the “mouthpiece” of the state, indicating its alignment with apartheid policies. In the same way that the policies of the apartheid government affected most areas of South African private and public life it also influenced the way that the SABC operated and how religion was articulated through the broadcaster. Russell Baker, in one of the few published studies about the Religious

Broadcasting in public service television in South Africa explains that “ traditionally, a public service broadcaster aims to broadcast religions to address a diversity of religious needs and also to facilitate the process of religious and cultural tolerance and understanding and thereby its goal of nation-building” (2000: 223). These ideas are best reflected in the SABC Religion Broadcasting editorial policy where the corporation clearly states the context which informs the broadcast principles of this particular genre.

The document clearly states its reparative agenda by referring to the organisation’s commitment to correcting, “gender, racial, religious and resources imbalances associated with religious broadcasting in the past” (SABC Editorial Policy, 46). The constitutional aspirations of a unified South African identity where all South Africans have equal access to rights and the freedom to express their diverse opinions, cultures and religions are expressed clearly in the values that underpin the SABC’s approach to religious broadcasting. The editorial policy for religious broadcasting also highlights a commitment to managing religious diversity on public service television in a way that is both completely different to the methods of the SABC under apartheid and at the same time constitutionally sound.

Tomaselli points out that in the milieu of the new socio-political landscape, many areas of South African public life were “reformed and revolutionised” (2001: 123). The plethora of social and political transformations that took place in post 1994 South Africa did not only affect the way in which public service broadcasting was managed, it also affected the content of the schools curriculum. After 1994, the government was tasked with addressing and rectifying the inequities of the former dispensation. Many national projects were developed in order to do so. Projects like the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of 1996, along with

changes in legislation and public policy, reflected the state's desire to construct a new South Africa where citizens were regarded as equal on all fronts.

Tomaselli (2001) offers a useful conceptual framework for understanding the role that public media plays in the transformational state. Drawing on an Althusserian philosophy of "ideological state apparatuses," he argues that the media has had two distinctive roles in post-apartheid South Africa (Althusser, 1971). According to Tomaselli, "newspapers, magazines, television and radio are both the sites and instruments of transformation" (2001: 123). Identifying the media as a site of transformation Tomaselli discusses the structural transformation of the media in light of national policy changes which were instigated by the new constitution and formed a part of the national transformation projects of the mid-1990s. In their capacity as instruments of transformation Tomaselli argues, "Media provide essential platforms for debate, information and education around issues shaping the kind of society we are, and the kind of society we wish to become" (Tomaselli, 2001: 124). Throughout this thesis the idea of the media as sites and instruments of transformation will be discussed in detail.

An SABC production brief which, forms a part of a larger request for proposals publication is a concise page-long document highlighting the requirements that the channel needs met from a programme in order to meet its mandate. In 2007 the SABC called for a children's multi-faith series that while addressing religion also focussed on issues of morality. The production brief from the SABC was characteristically vague, but the core target audience of five to nine years old along with the SABC and national policies on religion and education created the guidelines for producers to work in.

Siyakholwa offers an introduction to the religions of South Africa, their institutions, myths, festivals and observances. Drawing on the background of religion, *Siyakholwa* also creates a platform where the various social institutions that affect children are discussed. These include but are not limited to family, community and school. Issues regarding health, nutrition and hygiene are addressed, as well as skills of reasoning, observation and imagination taught. Through ecology, respect for the environment is taught and practical values like reusing and recycling. Based on the format of the programme these skills and issues are taught and addressed through the social interactions that are set up among the programme's main characters who display friendship, cooperation, respect for diversity, conflict resolution and mutual respect for each other and the viewer.

Although television has long been considered the antithesis of education, it is definitely considered a teaching medium by the national broadcaster. Additionally, studies done in the area of education and television are increasingly pointing to the potential of television as a teaching tool. The most popular example of television successfully being used for teaching can be seen in the long-standing children's show *Sesame Street*©. After more than 40 years on the screen this show, which aims to teach children reading, numeracy and social skills, is the educational programme of choice for parents in the United States. As a public broadcaster, the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) of the United States like the SABC has an educational mandate that *Sesame Street*© fulfils. I am in no way suggesting that television can replace teachers. Instead, I will argue that given the time constraints of the traditional classroom setting, television provides an additional pedagogical space for teaching about religion.

The idea of public teaching is further developed by exploring the concept of “public pedagogy”. Cultural critic and one of the founding fathers of critical pedagogy in the United States, Henry Giroux uses this term to move beyond the limitations of the conventional classroom and to consider the educational possibilities of a “public pedagogy”. Public pedagogy refers to a method of teaching that takes place outside of the traditional classroom. Giroux asserts that public pedagogical sites are positioned outside of the boundaries of the classroom and serve as sites of knowledge production and teaching. Giroux states that education, both the process of teaching and learning takes place “within a wide variety of social institutions and formats including sports and entertainment media, cable television networks, churches, and channels of elite and popular culture, such as advertising” (2004: 498). Without undermining “institutionalized education” Giroux shows that education can be found within multiple media and suggests that we need “a critical understanding of how the work of education takes place . . . in a range of other spheres such as advertising, television, film” (2004: 498). This idea reflects national projects in South Africa that have been produced to drive particular national-building agendas of the government and provides theoretical grounding for my proposal of using television as a pedagogical tool for teaching about religion.

In “Unity in Diversity Religion Education and Public Pedagogy in South Africa”, Chidester (2008) explores the concept of public pedagogy in the South African context. He illustrates the similarities in values and outcomes between policy about religion in education and various other state and social institutions such as museums and heritage sites. Chidester makes a series of interesting suggestions for what he calls “the expanding classroom” of the South Africa and promotes the idea of a public pedagogy for Religion Education (2008: 277).

He points out that situated in the broader context of nation-building, the South African school, along with other state and some commercial enterprises share in the same agenda and should therefore be seen as complementary. Chidester asserts that the expanding classroom of the democratic South Africa, which includes museums, monuments, memorials and other heritage sites, promotes the state's national motto and pedagogy of "unity within diversity" as stated in the Coat of Arms. Although the Religion Education policy is a subject of much contestation and debate, Chidester notes that the South Africa schools "curriculum actually allowed very little space for this educational activity" (2008: 275). Between theory and practice, Religion Education is the underdog of the schooling system accounting for about 0.05% of the national curriculum. It is incongruous that an educational programme as closely aligned with the state agenda of nation-building in a post-apartheid context, as Religion Education would be so poorly prioritised. Drawing on Chidester's discussion of the inherent value of exploring and utilizing the expanding the classroom and Giroux's suggestion that teaching and learning whether deliberately or inadvertently, occurs in public spaces, I will argue that the concepts of the public pedagogy and the expanding classroom can be applied to public service television in South Africa particularly in relation to religion education.

This leads to the three key questions which will determine the trajectory of this study. The first is: What were the constitutional mandates that the SABC was fulfilling when it called for the creation of a children's multi-faith programme? The second is: How does a public broadcaster create a pedagogically sound religion education programme? Finally: What function does a religion education television programme serve in post-apartheid South Africa? In this thesis I investigate the many factors that influence the production and transmission of religion education programmes by the SABC.

I will explore the means of transmission that make the production of knowledge about religious pluralism in South African possible on public broadcast television by employing a mediological method of analysis. The term “mediology” was first coined in French as “*mediologie*” by cultural theorist Régis Debray in 1979 but, only received acceptance by the general academic community in the mid 2000s. Unlike theories of media that restrict the use of the term media to apply to the study of mediums of communication or transmission related to mass media such as television, print news or film, mediology widens the scope of study by investigating all the structures, technologies and practices that make representation possible. In terms of mediology, representation is considered in the widest possible terms. Representation can refer to the use of written words, the use of both static and moving images and symbols among other semiotic practices. According to Debray (1992: 7), “Our interest, then, does not concern an object or area of the real but the relationship between these objects or these areas.” Debray’s theory is focussed on understanding and evaluating the underlying historical and production aspects which make the representation of ideas possible through a particular medium. In mediology it is neither the medium nor the message that is the primary area of investigation. For the mediologist it is the relationship between the medium and the message in light of the “technical bases of a social or cultural development” that forms the area of exploration.

Religion in Education

In a newspaper article about the usefulness of a degree on Religious Studies, published in early 2011, Religious Studies scholar David Chidester wrote the following: “If you can learn about religion, you can learn about anything”. This statement reflects the spirit and thrust of

the argument presented in this thesis; that teaching about religion is vital to the “new” South African contemporary context.

The need for a new kind of religious education for a post-apartheid South Africa was born from the previous dispensation’s theocratic stance on religion and the new state’s approach to freedom of religion. The apartheid regime’s approach to religious education was a faith based, confessional, single tradition model which only allowed for the state-approved version of Christianity to be taught in public schools (see Kallaway, 2002). The religious convictions of other South Africans were virtually ignored and relegated to the private sphere. As a result of this nefarious political policy, it was clear that the new government would need to find a space for religion in education that aligned with the values of the constitutional democracy and reflected the religious diversity of the new South Africa (see Amor, 2001; Chidester, 2002; Nolan, 2001; Stonier, 1998).

In the 1990s the National Education Policy Investigation (NEPI) was launched and between 1993 and 1994 (a critical period of political transition in South Africa) the National Education and Training Forum was formed. These bodies were developed in order to research new pedagogies and curriculum content for a “new” South Africa. Religion in education was one area of the curriculum in which research was conducted. By 1999 a Ministerial Committee on Religious Education was formed and a Standing Advisory Committee on Religion and Education was developed in 2002 in order to build up the relationship between religion and education in the new democratic South Africa. In 2003 the national policy about Religion in Education was formally launched and adopted by the Department of Education (DoE). The policy was one part of many new cultural initiatives undertaken by the new

government to promote “cultural rebirth (the African Renaissance), moral regeneration and the promotion of values in our schools” (DoE, 2003: 5).

The 2003 policy about Religion in Education is “situated in the larger context of building a new nation out of the legacy of damage and dehumanisation suffered by the majority of South Africans under apartheid” (Chidester, 2008: 277). As a result it became a theoretical and practical framework within which to address and correct some of the former social imbalances created by the apartheid government. The policy acknowledges the role that religion can play in building a South Africa that is in touch with its heritage and able to engage with the challenges of a changing world. The 2003 Religion in Education policy reflects the values of the Constitution and reinforces the significance of religious diversity and shared values in South Africa. It is therefore a reflection of the constitutional and cultural goals of the South African state. It does not favour any one religion and is explicit in its multi-faith approach to teaching religions in schools.

The multi-faith approach to religious education as stipulated in the 2003 policy has educational goals that are based on the social and educational advantages of “teaching and learning about religions”. The multi-faith approach as opposed to the single-tradition approach “would teach students about religion rather than engaging in the teaching . . . of religion” (Chidester et al, 1994: 23). The educational outcomes mentioned earlier indicates a drastic move away from the former model, the single-tradition approach which had a theologically based outcome for Christian learners while isolating, non-Christian learners. Through its goal of “teaching and learning *about* religions” (emphasis added) the 2003 Religion Education policy “provides a context in which learners can increase their

understanding of themselves and others, deepen their capacity for empathy, and ,eventually develop powers of critical reflection in thinking through problems of religious or moral concern” (Chidester, 1994: 23). The purpose of teaching about religions in South African schools is therefore not confessional; it is educational.

The policy’s commitment to a multi-faith approach to religion in education that is based on the educational and social outcomes of the subject makes religion education the most viable pedagogy for teaching about religion in a post apartheid South Africa. The idea of religion education was brought to South Africa by anti-apartheid activist Basil Moore. When Moore was exiled from South Africa for his activist work, he studied in Britain and later became Professor of Curriculum Development at the University of South Australia. It was at this institution that he developed guidelines for teaching religious education in a democratic, multi-racial, multi-religious society. He brought his ideas to South African educators during a visit in the early nineties (Moore & Habel, 1982).

According to Chidester the term “religion education” (as opposed to *religious education*) in relation to the work of Moore makes a “principled distinction between the religious interests of religious education and the educational objectives of religion education” (2003: 262). It is the distinction between the religious and the educational that differentiates religion education from other forms of religious instruction, such as those offered by the previous dispensation and that offered by religious communities and institutions. Religion education is also the term used in the National Policy on Religion in Education to describe the pedagogy that it is promoting.

Robert Jackson, Director of the Warwick Religion and Education Research Unit (WRERU), is considered one of the world's foremost scholars in the field of religious/religion education. Jackson is the former editor of the *British Journal of Religious Education* and has published numerous works on religion education. His 1997 book *Religious Education: An Interpretive Approach*, which introduces his ethnographic-interpretive approach, has revolutionized pedagogy relating to religion education. His work is particularly important to this thesis as the ethnographic-interpretive approach reflects a method of teaching religion which corresponds to the South African constitutional, social and educational context with regards to religion education and provides guidelines for developing pedagogical methods and materials. It also lays the foundation for thinking about how television can be effectively utilized as pedagogical tool for religion education in the South African context. Jackson's ethnographic-interpretive approach moves away from traditional theories of phenomenology, which homogenise religious experience and culture, and recognises the nuances of the religious experiences of individuals and societies and in this way embraces the diversity of human experience.

In 1994 the Warwick Religious Education project was established. Through conducting ethnographic research into the religious lives of children living in a multi-faith city, the project started developing teaching materials for religious education that were a reflection of the diversity of religion and religious experience. Through his work Jackson and his colleagues discovered the major gaps that existed between the academic accounts of a religion, for example, Hinduism, and "the varieties of religious life among Hindus in Britain" (1997: 3). The discrepancy between what was supposed to be the reality of the community as

seen by academics and also perpetuated by religious scripts and the lived reality of individuals practicing their faith prompted important questions regarding the study of religious education. This led to the development of what Jackson (1994) refers to as an interpretive approach to religious studies.

According to Jackson (2004) the interpretive approach was born from three interrelated strands of work at the University of Warwick. The first was related to ethnographic studies of individuals from various religious groups in Britain, which directed attention to the processes that enabled the transmission of religious culture. The second addressed issues of method related to practice and theory in studies in the field and studies in the classroom. Thirdly, the questions regarding the portrayal of religion and conventional interpretations in the history of religion and religious education which emerged from fieldwork led to “a synthesis of experience based on ethnographic studies and theory from a number of disciplines and fields in the social sciences” (2004: 2). Jackson’s theory therefore moves away from conventional methods of understanding religion, such as phenomenology, which requires of learners to suspend or bracket their own beliefs in order to objectively understand the “other”. Instead this approach embraces the lived reality and experience of every learner and recognises their insider knowledge as a positive attribute.

Using ethnographic models and methods, the Warwick project included developing an increased knowledge and understanding of how religion cultures is transmitted to children and young people within families who adhered to four different religious tradition in Britain. The project sought to use the ethnographic material gathered in order to produce educational material by drawing on the project’s theoretical work in religious education.

Jackson (2011) describes how the interpretive approach can be used a research and analytical tool outside of the kind of project for which it was initially developed for. In his article “The Interpretive Approach as a Research Tool: Inside the REDCo Project,” Jackson described how this is a European-based project that conducted ethnographic research into how religion in education in public schools can contribute to dialogue or be a factor of conflict in the context of transforming European countries (REDCo website). Jackson explains how this method was used “to provide theoretical stimulus for research and pedagogical development” within the REDCo project by the project’s application of the three categories of the interpretive approach to their research and allowing it to develop their question checklist (2011: 193). As I have not conducted ethnographic field-research for this project and instead have worked with text, I have adapted the interpretive approach to suit my research model. Therefore, using the three criteria of the interpretive method I have selected content from the scripts of the first four seasons of *Siyakholwa* which show how these criteria are implicitly enacted in the text. I then also use examples from the scripts which show how the script fails to fulfil basic religion education aims and pedagogical methods.

The interpretive approach is critical of theories that homogenise and as a result, “essentialise and stereotype” religions. It therefore develops tools for exploring the relationship individuals and groups have with each other and with the larger religious tradition. In what can be considered a simple pyramid structure, the interpretive approach uses three levels of groupings in order to account for and explain the existence of diversity within religious traditions.

The interpretive approach takes into account the diversity which exists within religious traditions. In doing so it allows for “the interaction of religion and culture, for change over time and for different views as to what a religion is” (Jackson, 2011: 190). It uses a three tiered approach. At the bottom is the religious tradition, this category holds within it the diversity of whatever tradition it represents. The next level of representation which then appears is that of the “group”. Now this section would represent various denominations or sects within and constitutive of the larger group. A third level is that of the individual. At this juncture the uniqueness of each person is considered and their personal experience and interpretations given serious consideration.

As this study is partially located in the study of media as well, the principles of representation, identity and relationships as set out in the critical discourse analysis theory of Professor of Linguistics Norman Fairclough, I will evaluate how the relationships which exist among the constitution, religion, education and public service broadcasting are articulated through *Siyakholwa*.

Anchored in the context of post-apartheid South African politics this thesis will provide a discussion about how the constitutional ideal of religious pluralism is mediated through public service television. It will consider primarily the medium of television and work exclusively within the framework of the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC). As a descriptive, discursive and analytical study, this thesis will map the presence of religion and media in the areas of public service television and public education. Consequently, I will argue that an additional pedagogical space for teaching about religion can be found in public service television. By making use of a case study in the form of a SABC religion production,

Siyakholwa - We Believe, I will evaluate how television programming can promote constitutional and educational policy about religion.

The underlying assumption of this thesis is that South Africa is a religiously plural country. The religious freedom of all South Africans is protected by the Bill of Rights where it states, “Everyone has the freedom of conscience, religion, thought, belief and opinion.” The right of every South African to practice a religion of their choice, as long as they do not contravene any other constitutional provisions or breach the laws made by an appropriate public authority, is guaranteed and protected by the Constitution, which is the supreme law of the country. The Constitution informs and regulates every law and act of parliament. Its chief directive is to ensure that every state organization reflects the values of non-racialism, non-sexism, non-discrimination, human dignity and equality that are highlighted as the core provisions of the document.

Formally regarded as an Act of Parliament, the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa is deemed the absolute law of the country. The product of a “negotiated revolution”, the Constitution has been heralded as the most liberal and inclusive constitution in the world (Chidester & Settler, 2010: 215). This near-sacred text was developed as a symbol of new order for an egalitarian South African state, based on the system of rule of law as opposed to the rule of parliament as was the case with the previous government. As both a legal text and “living document”, the South African Constitution addresses the past, present and future of a nation in transition (Zuma, 2012). It pledges to continually redress a past of a multitude of injustices and at the same time attend to the social, political and economic needs of a new democracy.

The principles of human rights, dignity and rule of law are enshrined within this document and as a result of its supreme legal status these principles are theoretically intended to permeate every Act of Parliament and as a result, every law of the Republic, ensuring the fair treatment of all citizens. The Constitution provides the complete legal and ideological foundation upon which democratic Republic of South Africa is built. After years of negotiations, heated debate, threats of civil warfare and the loss of innumerable lives, this document was adopted by the Constitutional Assembly and signed by the state's first democratically elected president, Nelson Mandela, in 1996.

Established to protect and maintain the new democratic identity of the Republic, the 1996 Constitution is iron clad, requiring a two-thirds majority vote in Parliament for any amendments to be passed. Whereas the previous dispensation was based on a system of the separate (and unequal) development of races, the 1996 Constitution has a dual mandate which calls for the recognition of a common humanity among South Africans of all races, cultures and religions as well as an appreciation for the diversity between different groups.

The Constitution of the apartheid dispensation explicitly defined South Africa as a Christian country. In the opening paragraph of the 1983 constitution it states that South Africa “upholds Christian values and civilised norms, with recognition and protection of freedom of faith and worship” (Constitution of South Africa, 1983: 110). During the apartheid years, Christianity was a state tool used for the justification of racism and law-based social inequalities. Religion was drawn upon to reinforce segregation on the basis of “racial, ethnic,

cultural, linguistic and religious signs of difference” (Chidester, 2006: 65). During the constitutional negotiations of the early 1990s this previously privileged position of Christianity and the relationship between the state and religion of the apartheid government was highlighted as an area for reform. It was clear that a state religion, in a democratic, religiously plural society, would achieve no redress for the many apartheid injustices that had coloured the religious and cultural landscapes between 1948 and 1990. Any religion officially or (unofficially) endorsed by the state would directly contradict the constitutional values of freedom of religion and freedom of conscience that the new dispensation had hoped to implement in South African public life. As a result, a new arrangement between the state and religion was sought. Therefore, although the 1996 Constitution directly invokes God in the preamble and the Bill of Rights, it ensures the individual and collective right to freedom of religion of all citizens of the Republic. Consequently, despite statistics that portray South Africa as a Christian country on the basis that over 70% of South Africans claim allegiance to some form of Christianity, constitutionally speaking South Africa is a secular state that has adopted a co-operative approach to religion.

In the South African model of co-operative governance, “both the principle of legal separation and possibility of creative interaction” between the state and religion are asserted (Department of Education, 2003: 2). Through this arrangement, religion’s role in the South African democracy is both clarified and clearly distinguished from its previous position. This particular labelling of the new relationship between the state and religion was adopted as a direct amendment to the apartheid constitutional policies about religion, which were controlled by the state in a “theocratic” arrangement. Simply put, a theocratic arrangement between the state and religion is when the state adopts and aligns itself with one religion.

Given the religious diversity of South Africa, along with its constitutional values, this model would have been entirely inappropriate in a democratic context.

The 1996 Constitution separates religion and the state but not in the traditional fashion associated with most secular states. The adoption and implementation of the co-operative model allows for interaction between the two and at the same time ensures that religious groups are protected from state interference (DoE, 2003). As a result of the co-operative model of governance, religion is not relegated to the private sphere and interaction between the state and religion is a part of public life. In 2003, then President, Thabo Mbeki remarked, "Given our divided history, religious organisations have an important role to play in the reconstruction and development of our country, especially in the welfare and civil society sectors" (Anonymous, 2003).

As the legislative authority of South Africa, Parliament reserves the right to make laws in the national sphere of government. The Constitution is an Act of Parliament and subsequently provides the framework wherein the two main bodies of operation under discussion in this thesis, the Department of Education and the public service broadcaster, the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC), function. The Constitution informs and regulates, through a number of auxiliary bodies the content of the curriculum taught in schools as well as the content of television programmes broadcast on public service television. This information points to a complex configuration of arrangements which exist between religion, education and public media in South Africa. This study focuses on the intersection of three elements: religion, education and media in the form of public service television.

The concept of the democratic nation state has been debated at length. Unfortunately, the scope of this thesis does not allow for a full discussion about the collection of conversations surrounding this topic. I will now introduce the three scholars whose work on the relationships between religions, media and the state have provided my work with much insight.

While German Sociologist Max Weber claimed that the State is a domain of violence because of it exclusively has the right to use violence, French philosopher Louis Althusser develops his theory of the relationship between state, religion and media by drawing on a proud Marxist tradition where the state is considered as the “creation of order” (Weber, 1970). As a result Althusser (1971) understands the relationship between the state and religion in a distinctly Marxist fashion which is based on the idea that the state has only one primary function, to seize and maintain State Power. He refers to the state as a “machine of repression” which works only in the interest of the ruling class. Furthermore, Althusser describes the state as a body whose interests are inherently antithetical to that of the majority population. This understanding of the relationship between the state and the general population reflects the apartheid state. From the 1948 until 1990 South Africa was ruled by the National Party (an Ideological State Apparatus) that instituted the system of apartheid in public life. In theory, apartheid was a method of government administration that relied on a structure of separate development of races in order to maintain the supremacy and privilege of the white South African minority and ensure the political, social and economic subservience of Black South Africans. In practice, the principles of racial separate development resulted in the discrimination and dehumanization of South Africa’s majority

population by the minority ruling government. Although the apartheid system did not introduce racism to South Africa, it officially institutionalised and authorised its practice in public and private.

Althusser recognises the capacity of media to operate as an ideological state apparatus. According to Althusser ideology refers to “the system of the ideas which dominate the mind of a man in a social group” (1971: 149). The term ideological state apparatus refers to “specialized institutions” that drive forward the dominant state ideology. These institutions are the churches, schools, family, political and communications. They are a collection of social structures which operate within what Althusser refers to as the “private domain” (1971: 137).

Benedict Anderson (1991: 6) famously refers to the nation as an “imagined political community and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign.” The nation is imagined on the basis of both concrete and theoretical grounds. The nation is imagined because all members of any nation regardless of size or location will never have any real interaction with every other member of the same nation. For Anderson, the nation is imagined because although members “will never know most of their fellow members, meet them or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion (1991: 6). The nation is limited for practical reasons, such a geographical boundaries, but it is also sovereign because of its authoritarian essence. Anderson contends that the nation is imagined as a community because despite inequities and exploitation of resources there exists a “deep horizontal comradeship” which may not inspire loyalty toward each other but nonetheless loyalty toward the nation (1991: 7). Anderson’s work finds a place in this discussion because he

attributes this existence of the imagined community to the rise and dissemination of media. Although with the increase in popularity of technologies like computers and the internet it is arguable that print-media has been sidelined in favour of other means of communication, I propose that Anderson's theory of the imagined nation is still valid.

Religion and media scholar Birgit Meyer (2009) uses the theory of imagined communities as set out by Anderson in order to develop her own theory of "aesthetic formations". She considers this idea to be a more accurate analysis of the role of media in nation-making. In her discussion about community making Meyer attempts to find what the "ties that bind" are in contemporary mass-mediated society. She proposes the idea of aesthetic formations in order to "overcome" the supposed "limitations of the imagined community" (2009: 6). Meyer's understanding of the term "aesthetic" originates from the *aesthesis* of Aristotle which refers to the humankind's physical ability to comprehend texts in the world through the use of all of our five senses. Essentially, aesthetics refers to the making real of what is imagined (2009: 6). Her theory is concerned with how the content of imagination is articulated in society. Meyer then defends her using of the term formations as opposed to community by pointing to the fluid nature of communities as social groups which form and are formed and transformed by their various contexts. Meyer's idea of the nation as a physical and psychological performative experience points to media as one such space that facilitates the transformation of communities.

In the 2006 article "Religion Education and the Transformational State in South Africa," David Chidester refers to the example of religion in public education to distinguish between the three kinds of ideologies of state which inform the public space in which religion is

positioned. South Africa's policy for religious diversity in public service broadcasting is located at what Chidester refers to as the "intersection of human rights principles and human rights culture".

Accordingly, Chidester suggests that "this tension between the commitment to a human rights culture and the commitment to promote and protect cultural rights, which is implicit in the Constitution, has required the South African state to be both a constitutional and cultural state" (2006: 63). Under the heading, "The Constitutional State", Chidester explores how religion has been used by the new South African government to address imbalances in education inherited from the apartheid dispensation. In the second section of his argument he explores the relationship between these constitutional changes and South African cultural life. In the third section "The Transformational State", Chidester identifies these constitutional changes and their subsequent cultural engagement as part of a national transformation project that relies on all agents of the state in order to bring its goals to fruition.

In light of De Vries' (2001) comments about how the relationship between religion and media gives insight into the way in which "cultural identity and difference" are created and how they relate to the socio-political context in which they exist, I explore the way in which these multiple relationships are articulated through South African constitutional policy about religion, education and the media.

Chapter Outline

The introduction and first chapter has outlined the historical and theoretical contexts that have informed this study. I have outlined how the change in government in 1994 and the

subsequent modifications to the social and political ideology of the South African republic as recorded in the 1996 Constitution has led to a number of changes in public spaces such as public schools and public service broadcasting. Furthermore this chapter has clearly outlined the breadth and limitations of this project and positioned its contribution within the global academic study of religion and the media and the more localised context of complex, multiple relationships between religion, the constitution and the media in a nation-state in transition. In this chapter I have introduced my case study and shown how it is aligned with national policy and theory. I have also positioned public service as an additional space for teaching about religion in South Africa.

In the second chapter I will document and explore in detail the historical processes that have lead to the current relationships between the constitutional and the cultural state. I will position this discussion within the framework of recent South African history by specifically looking at the changes in policy relating to the areas of human rights and human culture in the post-apartheid constitutional state. I will propose that although the cultural and constitutional state occupy different domains these two areas of South African life are mutually dependent. This section will show how the cultural and constitutional state share a common agenda for nation building and I will argue that as a site and instrument of transformation the 1996 Constitution requires the assistance of cultural actors in order for the ideology of the State to be enabled and lived in the concrete reality. I propose that public service television is one such space where government ideology can be made concrete. Additionally I will propose that the constitutional and cultural states are both projects of a larger body, the transformational state.

In the third chapter I provide a discussion of the constitutional and cultural considerations that shape and influence the procurement and production of religion education programming on the SABC.

The fourth chapter is concerned with production of knowledge about religion and argues that the interpretive approach to religious education as developed by Robert Jackson is best suited to developing a public pedagogy about religion in South Africa. This chapter also analyses the case-study *Siyakholwa* in light of national policy about religion in education and uses the interpretive method to demonstrate how this public service television series enacts both constitutional and educational policy about religion. Here I will also propose that a meaningful collaboration between the SABC and the Department of Education could result in religious programming that fulfils the policy goals of both these organizations and at the same time contributes to nation-building in South Africa. I will argue that the system of “parity of esteem” used by the SABC for equitable distribution of airtime to different religious traditions is not suitable for an educational programme as it is not conducive to the learning outcomes of a religion education teaching programme.

The fifth chapter will provide concluding remarks about the analysis of the case-study in light of national policies about religion, education and broadcasting in South Africa. This thesis will argue that through meaningful collaboration between educational, cultural, policy and media actors a new system for managing knowledge about religion that seriously takes into the account the educational outcomes of religious education as articulated in the 2003 Religion Education policy can be developed to better serve the human-rights and human-culture needs of a democratic South Africa.

Chapter 2

Constitution, Culture and Transformation

Throughout the *Siyakholwa* series, issues relating to the Constitution, South African culture and state aspirations for transformation are addressed by the programme's main characters. Dudu, Musa and Thandi discuss topics about South Africa public life in the context of the *Siyakholwa* world where learning about ones religion, culture and country are regarded as paramount. In an episode entitled "Children's Rights", when Dudu tries to force Musa to dance with her while he wants to read instead, she learns that although children have a constitutional right to have fun, she also has the responsibility to respect Bab Musa's freedom of choice (*Siyakholwa* Season 1: Children's Rights, 2007). Through this interaction Dudu learns two important lessons from Musa. Firstly, that it is important for children to know their rights and secondly, that a violation in rights should be reported to the relevant authorities. In the same episode Thandi explains some of the others rights that children have. In this episode a constitutional topic is very clearly addressed.

The diversity of South African cultures is discussed in the episode, "Who am I?" (*Siyakholwa* Season 4: Who am I? 2010). In this episode Dudu claims to be suffering from an "identical" crisis because she does not know how to reconcile the multiple identities that she holds. Musa then explains to her that it is both possible and necessary for a person to have many different social identities. Later in the episode Thandi talks about the idea of unity with diversity when she says, "We need to proud of who we are as individuals but also as South Africans. We may all come from different places and believe in different things. Big cities or dusty dorpies,

our lives may be very different but we have at least one thing in common we all live and love this wonderful country!” (*Siyakholwa* Season 4: Who am I? 2010).

Additionally, the state’s aspiration for social transformation through education is invoked in the *Siyakholwa* series. In an episode entitled “Compassion” viewers are taught the crucial importance of showing kindness, respect and generosity toward to their fellow human beings. The script creatively breaks down the word compassion into an acronym which explains its meaning. Thandi explains, “C” stands for caring, “O” stands for openness, because to be compassionate you need to be open to help others who are less fortunate than you. “M” stands for many, because there are so many things you can do to be compassionate. “P” stands for people, by helping the people around you, you are showing compassion. “A” stands for affection. Affection means love, and being compassionate is all about showing love and kindness to those around you. “S” stands for selflessness, “S” stands for sandwiches, because one easy way to show compassion is to take an extra sandwich to school to give to someone who might not be able to afford lunch. “I” stands for idea because all it takes to be more compassionate is an idea of how you are going to do this. “O” stands for original, some of the most compassionate acts are the ones you think of yourself. “N” stands for nice; you can be more compassionate just by being nicer and friendlier to your friends” (*Siyakholwa* Season 4; Compassion, 2010).

In this chapter I index a discussion about the mediation of religious pluralism and religion education through public service television in relation to three characteristics of the South African state developed by David Chidester (2006). According to Chidester, the South African democracy can be regarded as a constitutional, cultural and transformational state.

Thandabantu Nhlapo (2000) proposes that the function of the government is defined in terms of change and suggests that the Constitution provides the formal authority for the transformational activities that have taken place in South Africa public life since the first democratic elections. Ebrahim Moosa (2000: 135) argues that the South African Constitution, as the chief legislative authority of the republic, lacks “an indigenous moral foundation and a rootedness in local culture”. He proposes that the South African Constitution was not designed with the South African religious and cultural reality in mind and as a result, despite their centrality to South African public and private life, religion and culture are considered “junior partners” of the state, a power arrangement that Moosa finds problematic.

The constitutional, cultural and transformational states are theoretical constructs developed by Chidester that can be used to categorize domains of the state and areas of South African public life. As the supreme governing body of the country the 1996 Constitution creates the foundation for how religion, education and public service television are considered in the public sphere. The Constitution, both implicitly and explicitly, dictates the relationships that these three areas of inquiry have with each other. Additionally, the Constitution consistently establishes its sovereignty in relation to these areas of South African public life along with others. The ways in which the religion in education policy and public service television operate in practice is mandated by the Constitution. As a result, the way that constitutional policy about religious freedom and diversity is managed in the areas of public education and public service television are ultimately constructed by the Constitution.

South Africa’s policy for religious diversity in public service broadcasting and education is located at what Chidester refers to as the “intersection of human rights principles and human

rights culture” (2006: 62). Accordingly, Chidester suggests that, “This tension between the commitment to a human rights culture and the commitment to promote and protect cultural rights, which is implicit in the Constitution, has required the South African state to be both a constitutional and cultural state” (2006: 63).

For the purposes of clarity I will begin by providing brief working definitions of the constitutional, cultural and transformational states. Following Marxist tradition, Althusser argues that the state is a “machine of repression which enables the ruling classes to ensure their domination over the working class” (1971: 131). According to Althusser (1971), the state is able to maintain its power through the assistance of repressive state apparatuses which function mainly by violence and ideological state apparatuses that function mainly by ideology. Ideology, according to Althusser refers to “the system of ideas and representations which dominate the mind of a man or social group” (1971: 149). Together, the repressive and ideological state apparatuses have the dual responsibility of ensuring that the state ideology is both communicated to and followed by the citizenship and that state power is maintained.

Both RSAs and ISAs operate to ensure that the ideologies of the underclasses are in line with that of the ruling classes. Ideological State Apparatuses are “a certain number of realities which present themselves to the immediate observer in the form of distinct and specialized institutions” (Althusser, 1971: 136). Here Althusser is referring to institutions that put forward state ideology. These organizations can be state-funded or independent. They include but are not limited to the structures that create and govern communications, family, legal, political, educational, cultural and religious organizations. ISAs are therefore social structures which by virtue of their collective nature govern how society functions.

Althusser's theory of state finds a place in this explanation of the constitutional state because of the nature of the power-relations between the state and the population that are clearly articulated in his theory. As a liberal democracy the South African government is an ISA that is tasked with ensuring that state power is upheld. The Constitutional state is therefore the expression of the power relationship between the State, as mandated by the 1996 Constitution and the South African population. The Constitution as a document and an ideology constructs the South African state. In turn the South African state constructs and monitors the identity and behaviour of its citizens. The constitutional state is that part of the state which informs the laws that govern almost every aspect of South Africa public and arguably private life as well.

According to Raymond Williams, culture is one the most difficult words in the English language to define. Robert Boccock, in his discussion of "The Cultural Formations of Modern Society," suggests that culture can be considered in 5 different realms; the agricultural sense, the intellectual sense, the social sense, as a centre of shared values and meanings, and as signifying practices. Boccock's discussion of the term culture clearly illustrates the many ways in which this word has been appropriated in different contexts. According to anthropologist Robert Thornton, "culture is the information which humans are not born with but which they need in order to interact with each other in social life. It must be learned during the long process of growing up, education and socialization. Like other kinds of resources culture can be and is controlled by the environment which places limits on what can and cannot be done" (1988: 20). Thornton defines culture as an open set of resources which enable people to participate in their worlds. Culture is not one particular thing that can be neatly described and categorised but rather an on-going process of meaningful

engagement. Chidester et al. (1994: 40) suggest that one way that culture can be regarded is as the “outer expression of religion”.

In this thesis religion is considered as a crucial part of human culture. The cultural state therefore refers to the way in which the state manages and engages with the cultural and religious beliefs and practices of South African citizens. The 1996 Constitution is committed to a two-fold mandate that substantially complicates the relationship between the constitutional state and the cultural state. Chidester (2006: 20) astutely points out the problem with the constitutional state’s relationship with culture, “the new South Africa constitutional order was born out of the compromise, or contradiction, implicit in advancing a democratic culture of human rights while promising the promotion and protection of a diversity of cultural rights.”

In post-apartheid discourse, the term transformation is loaded with meaning. This word “embraces diverse meanings in discourses of social change” (Reddy, 2008: 209). In the South African context this word has come to epitomise the function of the constitutional state. It denotes the change of governing systems from apartheid to democracy. It describes the policy changes that have been instituted and depicts the ideologies of the new state. Transformation is both a condition of the state as well as an active aim of the state. The “transformational state” is therefore the aspect of the South African state which strives to make the ideologies of the constitution material. I argue that both the constitutional state and the cultural state are in fact only part of the transformational state which is both the state which the Constitution aspires to create and the state of being that is a result of constitutional and cultural transformative projects.

In this chapter I will discuss the relationship between the constitutional, cultural and transformational states in the South African context by exploring the relationships between religion, education and public service television. I will emphasize the importance of religion education as a constitutional and cultural project which has been implemented in order to support the transformational state which is aspired to in the Constitution. Additionally, I will explore how education about religion is managed along constitutional and cultural policy lines in the public school system. As a result, I will argue that public service television provides an additional pedagogical space for mediating constitutional policy about religion education. Furthermore, I will argue that in providing an additional pedagogical space for teaching about religion, public service television acts as both a site and instrument of transformation, solidifying and mediating the constitutional ideal of religious freedom and pluralism and ultimately providing a platform for national building in post-apartheid South Africa.

Religion and the Constitutional State

The national motto of South African is loosely translated from Khoisan into English as “Unity in Diversity” and articulates the constitutional commitment to both human rights and human cultures. The Constitution allocates comprehensive rights to the individuals and at the same time grants constitutional protection for religious and cultural groups (Chidester, 2006). The right of South Africans to retain their cultural, religious or linguistic identity is provided for in Section 30 of the Bill of Rights. Therefore, although the Constitution is primarily concerned with creating an overarching unified national identity as a response to the divisiveness of the apartheid era, by granting the right to culture, religion and language the Constitution tasks itself with protecting cultural, religious and linguistic diversity in the South

African republic (Nhlapo, 2000). Consequently the material expression of the right to retain cultural, religious and linguistic identity can be found in different areas of South African life. Nation building projects including heritage sites, monuments and other public pedagogical sites show the government's commitment to the constitutional mandate to promote and protect culture, religion and language in post-1994 South Africa (Chidester, 2008). Chidester argues that through the creation of these memorial sites the South African cultural state together with its constitutional ideologies is affirmed.

However, although cultural, religious and linguistic diversity is affirmed in theory, the practice of this diversity is subjected to the statutes of the Constitution. Therefore, the spaces that these categories fulfil in different areas of South African public life are broadly mediated by the Constitution. Public education and public service broadcasting are two areas where the constitutional state has had to deal with managing "difficult questions of linguistic, cultural and religious diversity" (Chidester, 2006: 71).

Religion is not defined in the 1996 Constitution. When freedom of religion has been disputed in the South African Constitutional Court the decisions have been left in the hands of justices of the court. For the purposes of this thesis, I argue that a universal definition of religion would not be helpful and that it is necessary to construct a contextual definition of religion for the purpose of this work.

It is a widely held view that religion is shaped by its society. The idea that religion shapes its society has also been argued by some anthropologists of religion. In his definition of religion

Clifford Geertz (1973) illustrates this idea. According to Geertz, a religion is “(1) a system of symbols which acts to (2) establish powerful, pervasive, and long lasting moods and motivations in men by (3) formulating conceptions of a general order of existence and (4) clothing these conceptions with such an aura of factuality that (5) the moods and motivations seem uniquely realistic.”

Although Geertz offers a comprehensive definition of religion which includes both the substantive and functional aspects of religion, Talal Asad (1983) problematises this definition of religion by asserting that the idea held in this definition suggests a “distanced-spectator role” as opposed to an active participatory role on the part of the person. He argues that Geertz’s definitions of culture and religion remove culture and religion from the “social practices and discourses”, the “material conditions and social activities” that are a part of any social environment. In Geertz’s work, the material environment in which religion and culture are articulated and the role that the environment plays in forming and transforming religion and culture are neglected. Therefore, religion and culture are conceived as levels of conscience with very little attention paid to the relationships between religion and power in a particular society.

If we are to fully explore the position and role of religion of in public service broadcasting in contemporary South Africa it is necessary to consider the political and social structures that construct the democratic South African state. Scholar of Religion and Media Birgit Meyer (2006: 4) notes that “religion refers to the ways in which people link up with, or feel touched by, a meta-empirical sphere that may be glossed as supernatural, sacred, divine or transcendental”. Drawing on Meyer, I avoid discussing religion from a theological

perspective and instead concentrate this discussion around how religion as a part of individual and collective identities is mediated through the different modes of the South African state.

The merits and the shortcomings of phenomenological, comparative, essential and substantive definitions of religion have been discussed at length by a number of scholars. In light of Asad's view of the importance of the social and political environment that religion is found in, I suggest that a contextual definition of religion would provide a more relevant reference point for discussing religion in the post-apartheid South African context. A contextual definition of religion requires that we consider the relationship between religion and the cultural context in which it exists. By using a contextual definition of religion we are able to engage with the lived reality of people in a way that is sensitive to the unique circumstances of each individual and their communities. Chidester et al., in defining religion for religion education, proposes that "a contextual definition, therefore begins by identifying the basic component phenomena of religion, but it also recognizes that those beliefs, practices and experiences are necessarily related to specific cultural practices within differing social economic and political contexts" (1994: 40). In this thesis I define religion in relation to the social, economic and political context of post-apartheid South Africa and suggest that religion is system of meaningful beliefs and practices informed by a sacred history that is formed and transformed by the cultural, social and political context in which it found.

Religion finds a space in what can be considered essentially a 'western' liberal constitution in an African society as a result of the role that it played in achieving a democratic South Africa. Moosa (2000) explains that the anti-apartheid struggle was widely supported by religious

organizations. Religious leaders from a variety of traditions could be relied on to mobilize communities for marches and strike actions aimed at crippling the racist regime's governance. In the same way that the apartheid government used religion to justify its policies and practices, an interfaith coalition that formed in the 1980s turned to their religious traditions in order to find religious sanction for a free and equal South Africa (Moosa, 2000: 123). While religious organizations were obviously not primarily responsible for the fall of the apartheid state, their role was notable enough for Moosa to suggest that "Religion has no reason to fear its marginalization in the new South Africa" (2000: 123).

In 1992 the South African constituency of the World Conference on Religion and Peace (WCRP) met over a three day period in the first inter-faith conference of its kind to discuss the role of religion in the new South African state. As an organization dedicated to "clarifying and stressing the role of religion in secular concerns", the meeting was held in order to establish the position of religion in a new South Africa (WCRP website). In anticipation of the new Bill of Rights, delegates of this conference developed a Declaration of Religious Rights and Responsibilities that they intended to use to inform the constitutional approach to religion in the new South Africa. The declaration that was developed intended to grant religious communities the right to "criticize and challenge all social and political structures and policies in terms of the teachings of their religion." The 1996 Constitution granted religion much less authority than the declaration proposed. The debate about the position of religion in South African public life continues. In recent years, a charter of Religious Rights and Freedom has been developed and accepted by a number of academics, religious leaders and law experts. The charter although not yet accepted into South African constitutional law is meant to "flesh out the right to freedom of religion in the Constitution" (Malherbe, 2009: 10). Upon examination, it is clear that some of the provisions of the charter can be considered

problematic in light of general constitutional policy. Although the charter recognizes its subordination to the state, it does attempt to elevate religion to a level that is inconsistent with present constitutional policy.

Religion in the Constitution

Chapter one of the 1996 Constitution, the “Founding Provisions,” is arguably the most important chapter. It declares the Republic of South Africa “one sovereign democratic state founded” on the values of:

- a) Human dignity, the achievement of equality and the advancement of human rights and freedoms.
- b) Non-racialism and non-sexism.
- c) Supremacy of the constitution and the rule of law.
- d) Universal adult suffrage, a national common voter’s roll, regular elections and a multi-party system of democratic government, to ensure accountability, responsiveness and openness. (Constitution 1996, 1:3)

Furthermore, the Founding Provisions declares the supremacy of the Constitution and establishes that all “law or conduct inconsistent with it is invalid, and the obligations imposed by it must be fulfilled” (Constitution, 1996: 1:3). This first chapter declares a common South African citizenship and affirms that all citizens are entitled to equal “rights, privileges and benefits of citizenship”. It subjects all citizens to the “duties and responsibilities of citizenship”. Additionally, chapter one declares the symbolic symbols of nationhood by adopting both a national anthem and a national flag. Lastly it acknowledges, promotes and proclaims its protection of the linguistic diversity of the state by promising to “promote and

ensure” respect for all languages used in South Africa including languages used for religious purposes.

It is clear that the first chapter of the Constitution serves the dual purpose of repudiating the previous dispensation’s rule along with the divisive political, linguistic, religious and social policies that were employed during the apartheid era. At the same time, it affirms the new democratic status and values of the post-apartheid state. The Constitution clearly puts forth the state’s political, economic, social and administrative ideologies as superior to all other forms of law and governance. Additionally, the first chapter establishes the state as more than a political and economic production but also as a constitutional-law based and cultural structure.

The Bill of Rights is the second chapter of the Constitution. Often called the cornerstone of the democracy, this section stipulates the rights all of South Africans. Included in the Bill of Rights is every South Africans right to equality, dignity, life, security, education and access to the courts among others. Additionally, the Bill of Rights clarifies the limitations of all the rights it allows for. Every right, with the exception of the right to human dignity and life, are limited to some degree (Constitution, 1996: 2:37:5).

Religion as a part of human life and culture is strategically positioned in the Constitution. The state’s relationship with religion is indicated in six keys points in the 1996 Constitution. In the Preamble to the Constitution, God is invoked to protect and bless the people of Africa in general and South Africa in particular. This reference to God has been widely problematised

by scholars. Many have argued that this reference to faith in God has Christian overtones that have the ability to exclude constituents of other religions as well as people who profess to have no religion (Moosa, 2000; Kumar, 2006). Chidester (2006: 65) considers the context of the God reference in the preamble. He suggests that the inclusion of God is, “in large part thanks to the fact that the ANC’s anthem was the hymn Nkosi Sikel’ iAfrika” (God Bless Africa)”.

Religion is referred to three times in the second chapter of the Constitution, the Bill of Rights. In this chapter the relationship between the state and religion is clearly established. Moosa (2000: 122) proposes that “the Bill of Rights attempts to create. . . a flow or umbilical cord between state and religion”. This is of course in opposition to a distinct separation between the state and religion. Religion is first mentioned in the Equality Clause of the Bill of Rights which affirms the equal status of all South Africans before the law of the Republic. In this clause it is clearly stated that unfair discrimination against a person on the basis of a number of human conditions including race, sex, social origin and religion is not allowed (2:9:3). Religion is again mentioned in section 15 of the Bill of Rights under the freedom of religion, belief and opinion clause. In this section the rights of citizens to believe and observe their religions are protected and regulated by the state (2:15:1-3). Freedom of Expression is extended and limited in Section 16 (2: c) where it states that freedom of expression does not extend to “advocacy of hatred that is based on race, ethnicity, gender or religion, and that constitutes incitement to cause harm.” Section 31 (1: a-b) grants cultural, religious and linguistic communities the right “to enjoy their culture, practise their religion and use their language”. It also guarantees the right to “form, join and maintain cultural, religious and linguistic associations and other organs of civil society”.

In Chapter 9 of the Constitution, “State Institutions Supporting Constitutional Democracy”, the functions of a number of state institutions that have been established on the basis of strengthening constitutional democracy within the Republic are highlighted. Although these institutions are legitimised by the Constitution and considered to be assets of the state, in principle they are duty bound to be impartial relying on constitutional guidelines in order to fulfil their objectives. These state institutions include the Public Protector that has the duty of investigating conduct in state affairs or public administration. The Human Rights Commission was established to promote the protection, respect and observances of human rights. The Commission for Gender Equality acts in a similar capacity to the aforementioned state organizations obviously within its sphere of influence, gender. The Auditor General and Electoral Commission function to manage the finances and the elections process respectively. The Commission for the promotion and Protection of Rights of Cultural, Religious and Linguistic communities functions to promote and protect the rights of all cultural, religious and linguistic communities as well as “promote and develop peace, friendship, humanity, tolerance and national unity among cultural, religious and linguistic communities, on the basis of equality, on discrimination and free association.” Finally, the Broadcasting Authority was established in order to “regulate broadcasting in the public interest, and to ensure fairness and a diversity of views broadly representing South African society.”

Chapters 10 through 14 of the 1996 Constitution map out the value of public administration, the purpose and function of security services, the roles and position of traditional leadership in relation to the state, the management of state funds and other general provisions.

According to Cornel Du Toit, “There was a strong alliance between politics, law, Western religion and Afrikaner religion in pre-1994 South Africa” (2006: 677). For example, during

the apartheid era, religion was a core component of public policy, the then ruling power, adopted the doctrine of the Dutch Reformed Church (Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk—NGK) as the official religion of the state. The Dutch Reformed Church supported apartheid and as result the State supported the Church which provided a scriptural sanction for apartheid. These teachings aided the government in justifying their policies of the separate development of races, which was based on the belief that white Afrikaners were the chosen people of God and that it was their sacred duty to protect themselves from the savagery and inferiority of other races. The link between the state and the Christian God of the Afrikaner Reformed Churches was explicit and this political theology of race was not only present in the church; it further extended to other state-owned and state-controlled institutions. Du Toit (2006) notes the Christian bias of many of the regime's laws. The National Education Act of 1967 called for a "Christian orientation in education" (Du Toit, 2006: 679). The white minority of South Africa was clearly favoured in terms of cultural and religious expression.

The 1996 Constitution ensured that all South African were granted equal rights. The discrimination of the previous dispensation is dealt with explicitly and, the freedoms granted to all South Africans on the basis of a common humanity are a striking contrast to the laws of the old government. Although freedom of religion is well-considered in the 1996 Constitution and the relationship between the state and religion is constructed in a co-operative manner; in order for religion to enjoy the freedoms afforded by the Constitution it is subjected to "conditions and limitations" (Moosa, 2000: 129). When viewed in this light, it becomes clear that religion and the state are not equal partners. In the South African Constitutional democracy, religion is subordinate to the state.

In the Equality Clause the protection from discrimination given to religion is subject to the state's interpretation of religion (2:9:5). In Section 15 of the Bill of Rights religion is understood in a dualistic manner, as belief and as practice. While belief is not policed, the practice of that belief is subject to compliance with state-bodies of authority. The freedom to practice one's religion is limited. Moosa (2000: 133) points out that this arrangement is problematic in that it actually allows state interference with religion and it venerates the state, as the chief proponent of the Constitution, and makes religion in South Africa "without a doubt more vulnerable to legislative and judicial interference than religion in the United States, where the proverbial wall of separation exists between religion and the state".

Furthermore, the relationship between religion and culture in the Constitution has been debated at length. Jewel Amoah and Tom Bennett (2008) argue that the relationships between religion and culture, particularly in the context of African religions, are not dealt with satisfactorily in the Constitution. They propose that African religions are particularly subjected to state involvement as "indigenous African belief systems are constantly being treated as incidents of African culture." Given the hierarchical relationship between religion and culture, Amoah and Bennett argue that the 1996 Constitution only protects religions to the extent that they "mirror the religious characterises of non-African Religions."

The South African Constitution has often been touted as one of the most liberal documents of its kind. In this secular-liberal constitution, religion is established as subordinate to the state and as a result is subjected to state regulations. Religion, as part of cultural and linguistic communities, is mediated through the Constitution. As a language of human rights is used to discuss a crucial part of human culture, religion, we find that the waters begin increasingly

more complex to navigate when discussing the mediation of religious pluralism on public service television through a constitutionally-sensitive lens.

In the *Siyakholwa* series issues relating to the Constitution and to religion are dealt with in detail. Human rights and religion as a crucial part of human culture are topics that are navigated by the characters on a weekly basis. Constitutional policy about “Unity in Diversity” is implicitly invoked through the treatment of the content. Constitutional rights are highlighted and cultural and religious values that correspond with Constitutional values are emphasized. When Dudu explains to Musa that there are people outside singing and holding up posters, he explains to her what protesting is. Dudu then questions the lawfulness of their actions and Musa replies, “Yes, Dudu. It is in our constitution. The freedom to demonstrate and gather in a peaceful manner, with the aim to get a message across”. Dudu is impressed by this constitutional arrangement and Musa continues, “Did you know Dudu, that it was not long ago that our very own country did not have these kinds of freedoms. Many people were forced to live and walk only where they were told too. They were not allowed to protest against things they didn’t like” (*Siyakholwa* Season 2: Freedom Day, 2008). In another episode when Thandi explains the religious make-up of South Africa she clearly expresses the constitutional ideas of freedom of religion and respect for religious and cultural differences (*Siyakholwa* Season 4: What is Religion? 2010). The *Siyakholwa* series is a product of the broadcasting brief from the SABC requesting a children’s multi-faith educational programme. A combination of editorial policies from two broadcasting genres, religion and education, the brief for *Siyakholwa* reflected the curriculum’s aims found in the national policy on religion and education.

Religion and Education

The apartheid regime was undoubtedly considered a human-rights atrocity both at home and abroad. Although apartheid had officially ended by 1994, the legacy which it left was a fractured national identity which the new constitutional state was tasked with rebuilding. The Truth and Reconciliation (TRC), which commenced in 1996 and concluded in 2002, was the first of a number of national projects which were embarked on by the state in order to promote national unity and reconciliation. The aim of the Commission was to create a new morality for a new South Africa (for more of the TRC see Krog, 1999 and Du Toit, 2005). The word morality became an important term in national discourse about the building of a new South Africa. In the year 2000, two important moral projects were launched. The first was the Moral Regeneration Movement (MRM) which was established to assist with the moral renewal of South Africa. A project in public education, the MRM sought to educate South Africans about the “social values contained in the Constitution (Swartz, 2009: 22). On the MRM website the organisation states that its mission is “To initiate, facilitate and coordinate societal networks and programmes to regenerate and preserve our nation’s moral fibre (MRM Website).” The second initiative undertaken by the Department of Education was the Race and Values in Education (RVE) initiative. The aim of the project was to express the common values that the new schools curriculum would be designed around. It was in the context of a national call for a new moral order in general and the RVE initiative in particular that the role of religion in public education was reviewed.

The Religion Education policy of 2003 states that “South Africa is a multi-religious country” (Department of Education, 2003: 2). Using the official statistics from the 1996 population census the policy goes on to state that while over 60% of the population adheres to Christianity, South Africa is home to a wide variety of diverse religious traditions. Additionally, the policy recognises indigenous religions and also acknowledges that religions

are not the only sources of “ethical principles and human values”. The policy displays an understanding of religious diversity not only in the sense that there are different religions but also that there are differences in interpretation, understanding and practices within each religion. In the policy, South Africa’s diversity, which includes its status as a multi-religious state, is viewed not only as a “fact of our national life” but more interestingly as a “wonderful national asset” (DoE, 2003: 6). South Africa’s religious plurality is undeniable. Religious diversity is a South African reality that is protected by the Constitution. The Constitution, reinforced by the religious make-up of the South African population, constructs the South African state as religiously plural in both theory and practice. How this South African reality is managed in education and public service television is the chief concern of this thesis.

After the 1994 election the role which religion played in education during the apartheid years was considered by the new government. In the spirit of reparation and reconciliation, the role that religion in education could play in the building of the new constitutional state was analysed and debated at length. The Religion Education Policy was established in 2003. As stated by then Minister of Education Kader Asmal, “The policy recognises the rich and diverse religious heritage of our country and adopts a co-operative model that accepts our rich heritage and the possibility of creative interaction between schools and faith whilst, protecting young people from religious discrimination or coercion” (Department of Education, 2003: 2). (For more about the introduction of this subject into the curriculum see DoE 2001, 2002). This statement gives insight into both the past and the present of religious education in South Africa while encompassing the rationale for a policy of this nature. The need for a new kind of religious education emerged from a past marred by the apartheid era when religious education was Christian National Education, a subject which permeated throughout the curriculum into various other subjects. It employed a system of religious

education that legitimized the superiority of the white minority over the black majority as a certain kind of Christianity was the only religion taught in public schools. In a country of great religious diversity, apartheid religious education systematically marginalized and dehumanized adherents of other faiths as this approach alienated the majority of South Africans from different religious and cultural groups (Roux, 2006).

This method of teaching religion in public schools was characterised by the fact that one religious tradition was the focus of study. This method of instruction assumes that all learners are from the same religious tradition and is concerned with the personal faith development of the learner. The Christian Bible-based form of religious education that was propagated by the apartheid government is characteristic of a single-tradition approach. This kind of approach would rely on a theocratic manner of governance. The theocratic model of governance refers to the situation where the state identifies with one religion. In this case, the state and religion become one and are indistinguishable from each other. As established earlier, during apartheid one tradition of Christianity was considered the state religion.

Prior to 1994, Christian National Education was the only form of religious instruction taught in schools and was based on the National Education Policy Act of 1967. It was therefore a part of apartheid legislation which ignored the religious and cultural diversity of South Africa. This approach would be unsuitable for the kind of democracy that is propagated in the 1996 Constitution. Proponents of the single-tradition approach would argue that this approach can work in the South African context based on the fact that over 60% of the population claim to be Christian. This statement is only superficially accurate. While more than 60% of the population claims allegiance to some form of Christianity, South Africa is not a Christian

country. Chidester et al. (1994) explains the fallacious nature of this statement. He suggests that there is no one kind of Christianity. Calling South Africa a Christian country would be unconstitutional as it completely undermines the principle of freedom of religion which is inscribed in the constitution of the country. Given that South Africa has always been a religiously plural society and since 1994 a democracy, this argument supports the idea put forward by Chidester et al. (1994), that freedom of religion be considered in context. For South Africans, freedom of religion should mean “freedom from the establishment of one religion, from the establishment of one variety of one religion, and from establishment or promotion of religion in general in state institutions supported by public funds” (Chidester et al., 1994: 17). This definition of religious freedom would directly render a single-tradition approach such as the Christian National Education method of the old South African state unconstitutional and therefore inappropriate in the new South African constitutional state.

In determining a new pedagogy for religious education in democratic South Africa, the multiple single-tradition approach was also proposed. This method of teaching about religion in public education is characterised by “parallel” or separate programmes in Christian, Jewish, Muslim and Hindu religious education in public schools (Chidester, 1994: 20). This would mean that each learner would receive religious instruction in their own faith, separated from learners of other faiths. Although it can be argued that this is the most direct way to compensate for the privilege that CNE was given in schools, this pedagogy has a number of flaws. Firstly, it has no regard for diversity within religious traditions, which cannot be fairly dealt with practically within this method because only a few privileged voices from each tradition would be heard which could result in religious discrimination against those who are from the same tradition but hold different views. Secondly, parallel programmes of religious instruction can be seen as a kind of “religious apartheid” which is not aligned with the

national goals of mutual understanding, increased tolerance, and reduced prejudice that are put forth in the Constitution (Chidester et al., 1994: 21).

At this point we can begin to question the role of religion in public education. Does the state have a duty to teach children their religion and help nurture them to be good Christians, Muslims or Jews? The primary function of a school is to educate. The scope of this education will be discussed later on. The Constitution rejects any law or behaviour which promotes values that are inconsistent with it and because it sets out the law of South Africa in theory, it is expected to be carried out in practice by South Africans, state-owned institutions and private enterprises. Nowhere in the Constitution does the state take responsibility for nurturing the religious lives of South African citizens. Although the state promises the protection of religious observances, which include the practice of religious beliefs and rituals in the public and the private spheres, it does not make provision for any form of religious education that is devotional in nature.

This thesis rejects the notion of a single-faith and the multiple single-tradition pedagogies in post-apartheid South Africa on the basis of both being unconstitutional. Although the multiple-single tradition approach is not the method of religious education taught in South African schools, there has always been and remains strong support for this approach from both minority and majority religious traditions

The topic of religious education has always been widely debated across the board by academics, policy makers, teachers and parents and remains a subject of much contestation.

Campaigns run predominantly by Christian opposition groups cited a number of reasons for their dissatisfaction with the new approach to religion in education (see African Christian Democratic Party, 2001; De Villiers, 2001; Christian Centre, 2001). Federico Settler (2010) refers to the South African Charter of Religions Rights and Freedoms, drafted in 2008 by representatives from twenty-one Christian denominations, African Independent Churches, representatives from Islam and Judaism and also the Tamil federation of South Africa as an example of support for separate but equal religious education. This document is in direct opposition to the constitutionally sound form of religion education legislated by Parliament today.

This is just one example of how religion and education continues to be a widely discussed topic that South Africans feel immensely passionate about (Chidester & Settler, 2010). While the Constitution through the National Religion in Education Policy of 2003 has designated a constitutionally suitable place for religion in public education, there is a trend of opposition from religious communities who oppose a policy of religious education which is not confessional.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the idea of religion education was brought to South Africa by anti-apartheid veteran and Professor of Education Basil Moore during the early 1990s. The term religion education itself indicates the core differences between this approach to teaching religion and the aforementioned pedagogies. Religion education by contrast to religious education emphasises the educational as opposed to confessional value of religion in education.

In his work, Moore (1991) suggests that there are five core educational goals which religion education as a learning subject can achieve. They are namely: 1) Education to correct/prevent prevailing social ills, 2) Education to transmit culture, 3) Education to serve the needs of the disadvantaged, 4) Education to develop intellectual capacities, and 5) Education to promote personal growth in learners. Later, the five educational goals of Religion Education as proposed by Moore (1991) will be examined in relation to the 2003 Religion Education Policy. This examination will show how religion education as an educational subject reinforces national policy on the place of religion in education.

The 2003 Religion Education policy reflects the values of the constitution and reinforces the religious diversity and shared values of South Africa. It does not favour any one religion and is explicit in its multi-faith approach. As the new democratic government sought to correct the past injustices with relation to religious education and freedom during the apartheid era, the policy also pays homage to the shared history of struggle for recognition of citizenship for previously disadvantaged people and communities (Department of Education, 2003).

Conceptually, the 2003 policy adopted a programme of multi-faith education. The multi-faith approach has clear educational goals that point to the educational benefits of “teaching and learning about religions”. The multi-faith approach by contrast to of the single-tradition approach “would teach students about religion rather than engaging in the teaching . . . of religion” (Chidester, 1994: 23). The educational outcomes mentioned earlier allowed for a dramatic move away from the former system of the single-tradition approach which had a theologically based outcome for Christian learners while alienating non-Christian learners.

The policy for religion education does not demonize the apartheid version of Christianity or any other version thereof. Instead, it “provides a context in which learners can increase their understanding of themselves and others, deepen their capacity for empathy, and eventually develop powers of critical reflection in thinking through problems of religious or moral concern” (Chidester, 1994: 23). It is apparent that education is the overarching concern of the policy. It then becomes clear how the South African Religion Education policy directly reflects the educational outcomes that Moore (1991) identifies. According to Moore, education about religion can be considered as a corrective or preventative measure, as well as a transmitter of culture that harnesses the social value that education can provide. His idea is particularly significant in the South African context as religion education according to the policy is about:

Knowledge, understanding, and appreciation of the full extent of our rich and textured religious diversity should be reflected in the learning programmes of our schools. Religion in our education system could serve to promote particular interests, based on the still common conviction that the problems of our society stem from a loss of religious belief, which can only be corrected through one particular interpretation of spirituality. By contrast, we could reject any place for religion in education, by arguing that the mutual acceptance of our common humanity is the only solution for societal harmony. We believe we will do much better as a country if our pupils are exposed to a variety of religious and secular belief systems, in a well—informed manner, which gives rise to a genuine respect for the adherents and practices of all of these, without diminishing in any way the preferred choice of the pupil. (Department of Education, 2003:12)

Implicit in the above statement is the goal of redressing apartheid inequities, the emphasis on unity and diversity and tolerance and appreciation of humanity. It directly points to a distinct

change in national policy and mirrors the constitutional values of the country. In the case of the South African example, one of the goals of religion education is to provide what Moore called a “social corrective mechanism” (1991: 75).

Moore asserts that another goal of education is to transmit culture. He elaborates: “There are still many who see education’s primary goal as enabling transmission of culture from one generation to the next” (1991: 75). This thesis accepts Moore’s explanation and applies it to the South African context by evaluating the history of South Africa in terms of its constitutional values. For religion education, the transmission of culture transcends that of generational imparting of knowledge. In the case of South African education, cultural transmission means that education would serve as a means of transmitting culture based on the new South African values of non-racialism, unity within diversity and equality.

Thirdly, Moore points out education’s potential to serve the needs of the disadvantaged; this concept finds a home within the imbalanced social and economic composition of South Africa, which is indicative of the effects of the former apartheid laws which ensured the political, social, economic and religious repression of the majority black population. The religion education policy reflects the constitutional goal of repairing apartheid wrongs through teaching about religion:

As apartheid barriers dissolve, the classroom will increasingly become a space of linguistic, cultural, and religious diversity. Schools must create an overall environment — a social, intellectual, emotional, behavioural, organisational, and structural environment — that engenders a sense of acceptance, security, and respect

for pupils with differing values, cultural backgrounds, and religious traditions.
(Department of Education, 2003: 13)

Moore maintains that the role of education is also to develop intellectual capacities. This reflects what is considered to be the basic goal of education, to teach and enhance the learner's understanding of the school curriculum. Moore stresses education's responsibilities to educate on matters of science and technology, as society needs what these skills can address, but also on the development of social and cultural growth. According to Moore, "our cultural growth depends also on developing historical, philosophical, moral aesthetic and religious understandings and sensitivities" (1991: 78). In agreement with many religious studies scholars, Moore is arguing that religion is an important subject to learn about. This opinion is reflected in the Religion Education policy:

Religion Education creates a context in which pupils can increase their understanding of themselves and others, deepen their capacity for empathy, and, eventually, develop powers of critical reflection in thinking through problems of religious or moral concern. Like basic educational skills such as reading comprehension or writing ability, these styles of thinking are transferable skills that are potentially relevant to any occupation or role in life. They represent purely educational grounds for developing a programme in Religion Education. (Department of Education, 2003: 11)

Finally, according to Moore (1991: 78), there is a strand of educational opinion which believes that the ultimate goal of education is to help students "develop a strong, mature and enabling sense of their own worth wisdom and power". This refers to both the personal and social identity of the student and indicates a model of teaching and learning which stems from the social but is deeply embedded in the personal, teaching students to come to terms with their identity and those of the people who surround them. On this topic, the policy says,

Learning about religion, religions, and religious diversity serves important educational outcomes. The National Qualifications Framework has articulated a vision for education in South Africa in support of a "prosperous, truly united, democratic, and internationally competitive country with literate, creative, and critical citizens leading productive, self—fulfilled lives in a country free of violence, discrimination, and prejudice". This statement about the educational purpose of teaching about religions calls for the empowerment of pupils through literacy, creativity, and critical reflection. (Department of Education, 2003: 17)

As illustrated above, the South African Religion Education policy reflects ideas about the educational value of teaching about religion articulated in Moore's (1991) work. It is focussed chiefly on the educational outcomes of teaching about religion. Given the historical and social context of post-apartheid South Africa, this focus on education is vital.

The 2003 Religion Education policy is an example of how national policy is articulated through the public school curriculum and can be used as both a nation-building and educatory tool. For South Africa, the 2003 policy indicates an important move away from religious education with its explicit religious outcomes to religion education which is "dedicated to the educational goal of teaching students about religion and religions" (Chidester, 1994: 12). Religion Education is imperative in articulating these aims, as Steyn (1999: 131) suggests: "If the racial, cultural and religious antagonism is not to be perpetuated we need to raise our children differently than in the past."

The 1996 South African Schools Act clearly identifies the school as site for "redressing past injustices in educational provision". The school is therefore not just a school but a *post-apartheid school*. It exists in contrast to its apartheid counterpart. As a result, it is a place for

“the development of all (our) peoples talent and capabilities, advance the democratic transformation of society. . . combat racism and sexism and all other forms of unfair discrimination and intolerance” (Schools Act 1996, 1). From the above quote it is clear that the school is also expected to facilitate and disseminate the ideals of the new democracy. The South African public school can therefore be considered a core site and instrument of the transformational state (Chidester, 2006; Tomaselli, 2004).

Public Pedagogy

Despite the clear educational outcomes and the constitutional and social values of the 2003 Religion Education policy, as Chidester (2008: 275) notes, the South African school curriculum “allowed very little space for this educational activity”. Between theory and practice, Religion Education is the underdog of the schooling system accounting for about 0.05% of the annual national curriculum. This amounts to approximately 45 minutes of teaching time per annum. That an educational programme as closely aligned with the state agenda of nation-building, especially in the post-apartheid context, receives so little space in the national school curriculum is indicative of two situations. Firstly, the prioritization of so-called proper learning subjects over Religion Education and secondly an overfull school’s curriculum. As a result, Religion Education is taught as a part of a Life Orientation programme where topics such as sexual health, hygiene and social etiquette are usually given preference.

The conventional classroom is constrained in many ways. There are physical constraints in terms of access to resources as well as rules and regulations which govern the school-day

and after-school activities. Cultural critic and one of the founding fathers of critical pedagogy in the United States, Henry Giroux, recognises the limitations of the conventional classroom and the educational possibilities of what he refers to as “public pedagogy”. Public pedagogy refers to a method of teaching that takes place outside of the traditional classroom. Giroux (2004) asserts that public pedagogical sites are positioned outside of the boundaries of the classroom and serve as sites of knowledge production and teaching. Giroux states that education, both the process of teaching and learning, takes place “within a wide variety of social institutions and formats which include sports and entertainment media, cable television networks, churches, channels of elite and popular culture, such as advertising” (2004: 498). Without undermining “institutionalized education”, Giroux shows that opportunities for education can be found within these new mediums and suggests that we need “a critical understanding of how the work of education takes place. . . in a range of other spheres such as advertising, television, film”. This idea reflects national projects in South Africa that have been produced to push particular national agendas.

In his article entitled “Religious Education and Public Pedagogy in South Africa,” Chidester illustrates the similarities in values and outcomes between the 2003 Religion Education Policy and various other state and social institutions such museums and heritage sites. Chidester makes a series of interesting suggestions for what he calls “the expanding classroom” of South Africa and proposes the idea of a public pedagogy for religion education (2008: 277). He points out that situated in the broader context of nation building, the South African school along with other state and some commercial enterprises share in the same agenda and should therefore be seen as complementary enterprises. Chidester asserts that the expanding classroom of the democratic South Africa includes museums, monuments, memorials and other heritage sites that promote the national motto and pedagogy of “Unity in Diversity” as stated in the Coat of Arms. This is an ideal which is shared with the Religion in

Education policy. Its states: “The policy for the role of religion in education is driven by the dual mandate of celebrating diversity and building national unity” (Department of Education, 2003: 6).

Drawing on Chidester’s discussion of the necessity and inherent value of exploring and utilizing the expanding the public classroom and Giroux’s suggestion that teaching and learning whether deliberately or inadvertently occur in public spaces, I propose that the ideas of the expanding classroom and public pedagogy be applied to public service television in South Africa. In order for this proposal to be considered feasible, it is necessary for us to be able to understand the “socio-logistics of the transmission of culture” in this historical moment (Debray 1996: 14).

Mediation

Mediation studies provides scholars of religion and media a valuable lens for determining how cultural ideologies are transmitted and made material in a particular set of technological, social, political and environmental factors. The central question of mediation studies is, “What are the material and institutional conditions of the symbolic transmissions of culture and the reproduction of society” (Debray, 1996: 13).

I argue that if we can begin to answer this question we can more fully understand how policy about religion in education can be mediated through television in order to satisfy the ideology of religious pluralism and freedom put forward by the constitutional and cultural states.

“Radical activist, presidential adviser, social scientist, political philosopher, art critique, novelist, poet, writer,” former comrade of Che Guevara and all-round French Intellectual, Régis Debray, developed the idea of “mediology” as a way of analysing the transmission of cultural meaning in society (Vandenberge, 2007: 24). Debray (1996) defines mediology as “the discipline that treats of the higher social function in their relations with the technical structures of transmission”. In Debray’s work, the “higher social function” refers to the ideologies of a particular society, the ideas which motivate and inspire communities. The “technical structures of transmission” refer to the resources available in that society that provide a platform for the articulation or, more fittingly, the mediation of the “higher social function”. The symbolic activities of the human group refer to aspects of religion, education, ideology, art and literature. The technical structures of transmission that Debray refers to in the definition of mediology are the “mediums”. A medium is simply a “device or system of representation”. Mediums include books, television, newspapers and artworks amongst others. The relationship between the symbolic activities and the technologies of memory is developed and understood through mediation. Mediation, according to Debray, is the action which accompanies the medium. Mediation is the reading of the text, the looking at the art, the watching of the television screen. Mediation is also concerned with the diversity of ways in which one can read and look. For Debray, the “medio” prefix of mediology is not about media or mediums but rather about the process of mediation that takes place. He calls it “the dynamic combination of intermediary procedures and bodies that interpose themselves between a producing of signs and a producing of events” (1996: 17).

Accordingly, this thesis argues that television programming has the ability to educate audiences on the outcomes of national policy about the role of religion in the public sphere. As a result, I argue that given the restrictions on the school curriculum television can be employed as an aid for teaching about religion as mandated by the 2003 Religion Education Policy. Finally, this thesis argues that if television is used to make government ideology about religion in the public sphere material, it forms an important instrument part of the transformational state.

I propose that through a meaningful collaboration with the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC), an additional public pedagogy for religion education can be created by using television to reach the educational outcomes of the Religion in Education policy and at the same time address the ubiquitous constitutional aims of reconciliation, restorative justice and nation building which form the foundation the “new” South Africa. In the section that follows, I map the theoretical possibilities that could make the proposed collaboration a successful endeavour of the constitutional, cultural and transformational state.

According to King (2000), the educational possibilities of television have been recognised since its creation and the refining of that pedagogy continues to the present day. As the public service broadcaster, the SABC channels do not have the luxury of screening only for commercial purposes; they are mandated by law to act as sites of education and learning. The SABC is required by the 1996 Broadcasting Act to produce educational programming for both adult and children audiences (SABC Education, 2011).

Given the fact that the 2003 Religion Education Policy is a core component of this thesis, programming developed for school-going children will primarily be examined. Additionally, as noted before, the 1996 Broadcasting Act makes special provision for the broadcasting of religious programming and for children's programming and therefore sufficient content is available for analysis.

Based on the idea of television is a site for both knowledge production and the development of the transformational state, I will argue that 2003 Religion Education Policy could act as the official guideline for developing multi-faith religious broadcasting on the SABC. Furthermore, I argue that if a new public pedagogy for religion is found through the production of multi-faith children's programming, then it is imperative to utilize a pedagogical approach that will best accentuate the nation-building goals that a project of this nature seeks to achieve. In the section that follows I introduce SABC public service television production.

In comparison to the rest of the world and Africa, television arrived belatedly in South Africa in 1976. This late introduction to an already commonplace technology was vehemently opposed by the country's white-minority ruling government. Then Prime Minister and well-known architect of apartheid, Hendrik Verwoerd, stated, "They are modern things, but that does not mean they are desirable. The government has to watch for any dangers to the people, both spiritual and physical". Underlying his concern for the spiritual and physical well-being of South Africans were the political and ideological concerns of the ruling minority National

Party. Television and its contents posed a genuine threat to the government. According to Tomaselli (1989), certain right-wing sectors of the ruling party felt that television would undermine the Afrikaner language and culture.

In 1969 the Commission of Inquiry into Matters Relating to Television, which later became known as the Meyer Commission, was set up to make “recommendations on the desirability and nature of television services for South Africa” (Baker, 1996). The Meyer Commission was in favour of television, but had a number of implied and stated reservations:

In a world rapidly approaching a stage where the direct reception of television transmission from overseas sources via satellites will become a reality, South Africa must have its own television service in order to nurture and strengthen its own spiritual roots, to foster respect and love for its own spiritual heritage and protect and project the South African way of life as it has developed here in its historical context. (P. Meyer, 1971, para. 144)

Taken out of its original historical contexts, the concerns expressed by the Meyer Commission seem commendable. However, given the context of apartheid South Africa, it is clear that in order for television to be found acceptable it would have to fall in line with the government’s political agenda. During apartheid, the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC), like the Dutch Reformed Church, was considered a mouthpiece of the state. Controlled by the National Party government, only programming which reflected then government policy was allowed. As a result, both religious and secular programming depicted the divisive nature of South African society at the time. According to Tomaselli, during the apartheid era the SABC openly supported racist government ideology and “played

an important role both constructing and supporting the apartheid structures of pre-1991 South Africa” (2001: 124).

In 1996, as a result of massive national policy changes, the SABC underwent a complete overhaul of policy and restructuring of programming. Since then, the organisation has made strides in working towards redressing the inequities in broadcasting. This is an agenda that is shared with many other government institutions and is best reflected when engaging with SABC policy. Although presently the subject of controversy for a variety of reasons, such as internal squabbles about the misuse of funds and a political bias leaning towards the side of the ruling party, the new policies reflect the spirit of the new South African Constitution and that of a democratic country. Informed by the Broadcasting Act of 1999, the SABC now subscribes to the following mandate which is underpinned by constitutional policy. It states that the SABC must reflect a wide range of programming which:

- Reflects South African attitudes, opinions, ideas, values and artistic creativity.
- Displays South African talent in education and entertainment programmes.
- Advances the national and public interest.
- Offers a plurality of views and a variety of news, information and analysis from a South African point of view

As a public service broadcaster, the SABC is obliged by Broadcasting Act of 1999 to provide religious programming. The SABC editorial policy on religion expressively indicates the role of religion in a post-apartheid South African context. It recognises the religious plurality inherent to the South African population and indicates its obligation to “to provide religious

programmes and to broadcast religious material in a manner that is unbiased and representative of South Africa's religious plurality” (SABC Policy Document Religion, 45).

In doing so, the organization is consistently working towards creating programming that reflects the religious diversity of South Africa. In its religious programming, “the SABC seeks to correct gender, racial, religious and resource imbalances associated with religious broadcasting in the past” (SABC Policy Document Religion, 45). The SABC’s policy on religious programming acknowledges South Africa as a “multi-cultural and multiple faith” society that is bound together by common history and a shared humanity. It also explicitly states that it seeks to correct past imbalances with regards to religious broadcasting in South Africa. According to the Policy document, religious broadcasting should be undertaken in accordance with values that include:

- Sensitivity to the diverse nature of South African society and the need for justice, healing and reconciliation
- Compassion and concern for human dignity and for all life, including the earth
- A common South Africanness
- Integrity, transparency and trust in all relationships
- Commitment to the independence and autonomy of the SABC, within the parameters of its
- Accountability to the South African public
- A spirit of co-operation between the SABC and the religious community.(South Africa, SABC Religious Broadcasting)

In order to monitor the compliancy of the SABC and its religious programming to the Broadcasting Act and its own policy on religion, the organization appointed a Religious Broadcast Panel (RBP) consists of 2 members of the 5 major religions in South Africa, who are nominated by religious communities, representative of other smaller religious groups and also includes professional advisors. These individuals are nominated by the community and appointed by the SABC board (SABC Policy Document Religion, 47). The RPB assists the SABC by creating and maintaining an open communication process between various religious groups and the broadcaster, offering advice on how the broadcaster can respectfully address issues surrounding religion.

I am not suggesting that television replace the classroom teaching of Religion Education. Rather, I am proposing that given the limited space afforded to this important subject in the schools' curriculum, television be considered as an additional pedagogical space for teaching about religion in South Africa. In post-apartheid South Africa, public service television as a medium for the constitutional principle of religious pluralism can play an important role in constructing the constitutional state and offers a tool for managing religious diversity in the public sphere. Based on the ideals of a unified South African identity, the SABC plays an important role in producing media content that depicts the South African religious and cultural landscape.

The *Siyakholwa* series as a religion education project of the SABC provides rich data for analysing the potential for television to act as an additional pedagogy for teaching about religion. In this thesis I will evaluate the way in which *Siyakholwa* manages and articulates the constitutional value of religious diversity in its content.

In this section it is has been clearly established that there exists a constitutional grounding and a practical platform for teaching about religion on public service television. The importance of religion education as part of broader nation building project has also been established. In the section which follows I provide an in-depth discussion about the teaching methodology that could be employed to ensure that religion education on public service television is taught in such a way that constitutional policy about freedom of religion and the cultural reality of religious diversity are articulated.

The Interpretive Approach

In the area of religion and education there is much debate about curriculum development and pedagogy. Any discussion about pedagogies for multi-faith religious education in the traditional classroom setting or through media as shown in this study presents many questions concerning methodology. These include questions about the definition and representation of various religious groups. It also points to questions about the experience and interpretation of individuals within each group (Jackson, 1991). In order to ensure that the teaching of Religion Education on public service television fulfils both its constitutional and educational expectations, it is necessary to develop pedagogy that suits the South African context.

I argue that the interpretive approach to religious education developed by Professor Jackson of Warwick University offers an approach to teaching about religion that meets both the educational and constitutional goals of the South African government and Department of

Education, respectively, as well providing the SABC with a pedagogical tool to use when creating religious programming.

According to Jackson, this interpretive approach to religious education “aims to increase knowledge and understanding and it sets out neither to promote nor to undermine religious belief.” This statement directly reflects the aims of the 2003 Religion Education analysed earlier in this work. The crux of this theory is expressed through three modes of analysis which are representation, interpretation and reflexivity.

Representation

This approach to religious education finds its roots in the interpretive anthropology of Clifford Geertz. The interpretive approach is to a large degree critical of pedagogies and theories that homogenise and as a result, “essentialise and stereotype” religions. It therefore develops tools for exploring the relationship individuals and groups have with each other and with the larger religious tradition.

In what can be considered a simple pyramid structure, the interpretive approach uses three levels of groupings in order to account for and explain the existence of diversity and diverse views within religious traditions. The interpretive approach takes into account the diversity which exists within religious traditions. In doing so, it allows for “the interaction of religion and culture, for change over time and for different views as to what a religion is”. It uses a three tiered approach. At the bottom is the religious tradition, a category that holds within it the diversity of whatever tradition it represents. The next level of representation is that of the

“group”. Now this section would represent various denominations or sects within and constitutive of the larger tradition. On this level, particularly within the classroom set-up as well as in broadcast programming, the geo-spatial context of a religion should also be considered. As a result, the national reality of a religious tradition would be included in the group level.

I propose this pedagogical method because as religious traditions are influenced and influence the political, socio and cultural environment in which it is based. In South Africa there are many minority religions and cultures that have a small but thriving presence. The set of rituals and myths that they ascribe to may be more representative of their national identity than their religious or cultural heritage. The third level is that of the individual. At this juncture, the uniqueness of each person is considered and their personal experience and interpretations given serious consideration. Jackson (2011: 193) warmly calls this level the best face of religion. At the same time, it could also be considered the most problematic tier of representation. The ideologies of an individual who identifies with a tradition can be problematic for the tradition if the said individual presents exceedingly negative perceptions of the group to the general public. The most notable example would be the way in which the international community responded to Muslims after a small group of terrorists committed extreme violence in the name of Islam, while the majority was insistent about the inherently peaceful nature of the religious tradition. Whether the individual acts positively or negatively, the reality is that their interpretation of the religious tradition allows them to find space in the world. This is a worthwhile idea to explore with regard to religion education and the media. From this explanation it is clear that in order to fully represent the entirety and uniqueness of each religious tradition it is necessary to address these three categories.

The South African textbook for Religion Education students (teaching students who take this subject), *The Human Search for Meaning*, suggests that there are “two rules” for studying religion and teaching about religion. They are the following:

Rule No. 1 is therefore: Take the uniqueness of each religion seriously. (Kruger, Lubbe & Steyn, 2009: 12)

Having said that, Rule No.2 must be stated with equal force: Take the relationships between religions seriously. (Kruger, Lubbe & Steyn, 2009: 12)

These two rules, although useful, do not explore the idea of diversity within religion. This is an idea which that is generally under-theorised in this textbook. Once again the pyramid of representation provided by Jackson proves useful and in line with constitutional policy as it asks for the educator or producer of religion education material, in this case the SABC, to consider the shared values of religious traditions and the uniqueness of each but also to identify and explore the diversity of experience which exists within. The interpretive approach is adamant in its recognition of diversity within religious traditions and in the interpretation of individuals.

Interpretation

One of the main criticisms of using a phenomenological approach to religious education is the idea of bracketing. Phenomenological methods require the researcher or learner to set aside their presumptions about religions. The critique of this method is that while the

presuppositions are set aside they are not dealt with. This method would not be suitable for teaching RE if the constitutional, social and educational aims of the subject are to be achieved (Jackson, 1997).

Unlike phenomenological approaches to studying religion that require the practice of bracketing from both teachers and learners, the interpretive method expects the learner to investigate, examine, compare and contrast what they learn about other religious traditions with what they know about their own religious traditions. The experience of the learner is central to this pedagogical method. This approach seeks to create “genuine empathy” in the learner by building a real understanding for the religious concepts, symbols and experiences of others as well as their own (Jackson, 2011). Jackson states “the approach is very concerned with understanding religious language and discourse and therefore with religious literacy, including issues of translation” (2011: 192).

Reflexivity

Closely related to interpretation is the third main component in the interpretive method, reflexivity. The interpretive approach is not only about increasing knowledge. Jackson (1997) explains that this pedagogical tool is also about increasing understanding. In order to reach this outcome, active learner involvement in the form of “reflexivity” is promoted. According to Jackson (2011: 192), “Reflexivity is understood as the relationship between the experience of researchers/students and the experience of those whose way of life they are trying to interpret.” Reflexivity asks learners to consider the effect that their new learning has had on their worldview. It also asks the learner to re-assess their own understanding of their

worldview. This process is called edification. Edification is concerned with the transformative aspects of education. It encourages learners to consider the differences and similarities between their own traditions and the traditions they study and to consider their experience of learning as an overall enriching experience (Jackson 2011).

Overall, the interpretive approach to religious education is the most suited to the South African context as it embodies the constitutional ideals of religious pluralism and offers a pedagogy that is able to manage the concerns of the cultural state in constitutionally sound manner. Furthermore, this approach acknowledges the social and educational outcomes that can be reached through teaching about religion and is in agreement with the outcomes of Religion Education policy. By using the interpretive approach the role that religion plays in the transformational aspects of the state can be monitored to ensure that policy about religion in education and policy about religion in public service broadcasting are mediated in a constitutionally-centred manner.

In this chapter I have defined, discussed and mapped the relationship between the constitutional, cultural and transformational states. By exploring the position of religion in the South African Constitution and provisions made about religion in education and public service broadcasting through the Religion Education policy of 2003 and the Broadcasting Act of 1999 I have presented the argument that an additional public pedagogical space for teaching about religion in South Africa can be found in public service television. Additionally in this chapter I have provided a theoretical foundation for considering how religion should be taught on public service television.

Chapter 3

Content, Procurement and Production

As previously stated, cultural theorist Régis Debray asks a pertinent question, “What are the material and institutional conditions of the symbolic transmissions of culture and the reproduction of society?” (1996: 25). In this chapter, I engage with Debray’s work in more detail in relation to the “material and institutional conditions” that mediate the production of religious broadcasting in South Africa. Essentially, I plan to explore the institutional, political and technical structures that play a role in constructing the process through which religion is presented on public service television in South Africa. The technical structures of media that religion has been subjected to have often been neglected by scholars of religion and media in favour of exploring other elements of interest which relate more to the finished product and the social and political aspects of its production. Therefore, in this chapter I follow Debray and ultimately a deeply Marxist tradition by exploring the institutional, material and consequently the technical structures that define how an idea becomes a material force. In order to do so, I document and explain the production and management of multi-faith programming on public service broadcasting in South Africa. I investigate the various elements of content procurement, television production and content management that go into the children’s multi-faith programme, *Siyakholwa*.

Through this analysis, I will provide insight into how knowledge about religion is produced on public service television and provide the necessary foundation for critiquing this arrangement in terms of the constitutional, cultural and transformational states. This chapter

will also serve to strengthen my argument for television as an additional pedagogical space for teaching about religion in South Africa by referring to the case-study, *Siyakholwa*.

Debray (1999: 32) suggests that his theory of mediology occupies the space, which he calls the “mediasphere”, between “the production of signs and the production of events”. It is this space between the production of a television programme and its intended outcomes that will be examined in this chapter. Debray refers to the “procedures and intermediaries” that occupy the mediasphere and claims that they are social, cultural and technological in nature. His focus is not so much on the message but on the medium itself, ultimately prompting us to ask the question, how is religious broadcasting made in its particular political, cultural, social and technical context? In this thesis, the technical structure of transmission under examination is television. Television is the medium that I argue mediates the higher social functions of the South African Constitution in an attempt have its ideologies made material in South African lived reality. Therefore, it is necessary for us to have a clear understanding of the processes that result in religious broadcasting content.

Principles Underlying Content Procurement

The national broadcaster is mandated by the Broadcasting Act of 1999 to procure content in a fair and open manner. The underlying values of content procurement are revealed in the SABC’s charter which is derived from the Broadcasting Act and clearly articulates the constitutional ideal of a unified democratic culture in its programming. The Charter clearly indicates the SABC’s commitment to upholding the Constitution through seven core editorial values. The editorial values are:

1) Equality

During the apartheid era, television programming was only provided in Afrikaans and English. This value is dedicated to creating programming that appeals to all South Africans regardless of their language. This particular value is significant in the post-apartheid context because it is a direct contrast to the old order of broadcasting that was based on the separatist policies of the apartheid state.

2) Editorial Independence

This value is important due to the fact that the South African state is a 100% shareholder of the SABC. The relationship between the state and the broadcaster has often come under fire over the years in the form of allegations of SABC favour towards the ruling party (Anonymous, 2011). With this value the SABC asserts its constitutional right to freedom of expression. Through this value the SABC asserts its position as an independent state body in control of its own content as opposed to being the mouthpiece of the state that it was during the apartheid years.

3) Nation-building

With this value the SABC expresses its commitment to playing a role in providing South African citizens with the information that they need in order to participate in building the democracy. The SABC's nation-building agenda is made explicit. This value is also about the SABC committing to assisting the post-apartheid government with the building of a unified national identity among South Africans by producing content that is aligned with this idea.

4) Diversity

During the apartheid years SABC programming reflected the social and political policies of the governing political party. Programming mirrored the racist reality of South African public life in a way that was supportive of divisive apartheid policies. Through the value of

diversity, the SABC shows its commitment to reflecting the diverse languages and cultures of the South African people.

5) Human Dignity

This value indicates the SABC's promise to protect the dignity of all South Africans by not using "language or images that convey stereotypical or prejudiced notions of South Africa's races, cultures and sexes" (SABC Editorial Policy: 3).

6) Accountability

Through this value the chain of command at the SABC is established. All SABC staff and management are accountable to the SABC Board. At the moment, the SABC board is comprised of 14 South Africans from different professional backgrounds who are selected to ensure that the values of the organization are upheld in its operations.

7) Transparency

With this value, the SABC commits to a policy of openness and honesty in its relationships with "shareholders, stakeholders, suppliers and the public" (SABC Editorial Policy: 3).

Founded in 1922, the British Broadcasting Corporation has widely been considered as the model for public service broadcasting. To a large degree, the SABC follows the British model, particularly through its operational principles. Central to the purpose of a public broadcaster, regardless of its context, is to assist in nation building. Given the history of the country, in post-apartheid South Africa the responsibility of the SABC to actively encourage nation building in its programming is even more salient than in other contexts. Locally produced and locally focussed content plays an important role in articulating this important constitutional value through television.

The 1999 Broadcasting Act demands that a large percentage of locally produced television content is expected from the public service broadcaster. Subsequently, the SABC's editorial

policy reflects this mandate and is intended to act as a guideline for the production of content. In the SABC's editorial policy is clear that the broadcaster is committed to producing local content which reflects the South African context. The SABC pledges to:

- 1) Tell South African stories and contextualize for "South Africans their lives as global citizens". During the apartheid era, as a result of the separatist policies of the government South Africans were essentially, socially and economically isolated from the rest of the world.
- 2) Develop programmes that are identifiably South African and to contribute to the goal of nation-building.
- 3) "Showcase all South Africa's provinces and peoples and provide a programme mix that suits a variety of tastes and reflects the diverse make-up of South Africa. This extends to languages, cultures and geographical regions". (SABC Editorial Policy: 32)

It is necessary to understand that while the South African national broadcaster is not primarily responsible for creating the content that is screened on public service television, it is responsible for facilitating the production by providing guidelines and funding for the projects. According to Debray, in order for us to make sense of how television or any other medium can convey ideas or messages in way that people will respond, it is necessary for us to understand the nature of the medium. For Debray, "the medium is not a thing, but a dynamic, dialectical praxis and process that interrelates and integrates objects, peoples and texts" (1999: 32). Debray asserts that the mediologist deals with three core components. The first is the symbolic corpus, the second a form of collective organisation and the third a technical system of communication. These are the components that construct the medium and ultimately the message. Therefore, in light of Debray, it can be understood that the South

African Constitution along with the Broadcasting Act and SABC editorial policy is the symbolic corpus that informs and monitors religious broadcasting content which forms the collective organisation which in turn determines the role and function of the technical system of communication which in the case of this thesis is television.

Procuring Content

The previous chapter clearly documented the relationship between the 1996 Constitution and public service television in South Africa. The SABC, as the public broadcaster, is subordinate to the state and is subjected through constitutional policy to create programming which promotes a unified national identity as well as provide space for the expression of cultural diversity.

While the broadcaster does produce the daily news broadcasts, almost all other SABC programming is procured from outside sources. In order to procure new content, every year the South African Broadcasting Corporation issues a Request for Proposals (RFP) booklet. Through the publication and distribution of this booklet, the SABC communicates to independent television and film producers the kind of content that the broadcaster requires for the forthcoming year.

The 2011 RFP booklet states: “The guiding principles for all programmes commissioned by SABC TV are shaped by the SABC’S various Broadcasting Policies and SABC Board policy, goals and objectives as well as the respective positioning of the Channels” (SABC RFP Booklet, 2011: 3). As previously established, the broadcast and editorial policy of the SABC

are informed and mandated by the 1996 Constitution through the 1999 Broadcasting Act. The relationship between constitutional policy and SABC policy is asserted in the RFP booklet.

The assessment criteria for the proposals submitted by independent producers are clearly articulated in the RFP booklet and these are determined by channel manifestos which are developed in line with governing policy. As Tomaselli reminds us, “The SABC played an important role in both constructing and supporting the apartheid structures of pre-1991 South Africa” (2001: 124). During the apartheid era, the SABC was considered the voice of the government. However, with the new state this arrangement was no longer acceptable and as a result from 1991 onwards the SABC underwent a total restructuring process (Tomaselli, 2001). This was done in order to ensure that the public broadcaster would fall in line with the ideals the new constitutional state. Although the state is a 100% shareholder of the SABC, the corporation is a limited company and as such is governed by the Companies Act and as a result its public service department is ultimately subordinate to the Constitution and not corporate, profit-driven outcomes.

Beginning in 1996, when the broadcaster was officially relaunched, the SABC became a “vanguard of visible change” in South Africa (Tomaselli, 2001: 125). The change from state broadcaster to public broadcaster was facilitated through the implementation of new policies and the reconfiguration of programming approaches. In the new mandate of the SABC, it aspired to goals such as extended airtime for all languages, an increase in local content and equitable and universal access to religious programming (Tomaselli, 2001).

Today, public service television in South Africa consists of three channels. They are SABC 1, SABC 2 and SABC 3. Each channel has its own strategy and positioning determined by the

SABC and the content each airs is supposed to reflect the unique personality of the channel and its viewers. For instance, in the case of SABC 1 the editorial line describes the channel as “Celebrating and shaping a youthful South African Identity”. The essence of the SABC 1 brand is to tell South African stories by giving voice to South Africans. On SABC 1, South Africa is often referred to as “Mzansi”, a term used to describe a post-apartheid South Africa. The channel is described as empowering and uplifting as well as informative and entertaining. *Siyakholwa* is an SABC 1 production. Each genre that is provided for in the RFP booklet is given evaluation criteria to fulfil in order for production companies to be commissioned to produce the content. In the 2011 RFP booklet, there were five requests for proposals for religious programming on SABC 1.

When pitching for this programming, production companies must adhere to the specified assessment categories. They are the following “Editorial assessment, competence and capacity, editorial focus, empowerment profile and general industry development, budget and revenue potential” (RFP Booklet, 2011). The editorial assessment refers to the ability of the production company to ensure that editorial policy regarding a genre is met through content. The editorial policy on religious programming is a three page document that lays out the SABC’s mandate on religion. It states the approach that the SABC takes in religious programming and sets the standard to which production companies must prepare their content. However, as one can see, the assessment criteria is mainly focussed on ensuring that production companies have the technical ability to create the programming that they pitch for. Besides the ability to meet editorial policy requirements, company profiles and budget are significant concerns for the SABC.

In 2007 the SABC put out a production brief for a children's multi-faith series. In terms of the broadcasters Religious Broadcasting editorial policy, multi-faith programming is a sub-genre of Religion. The religious programming editorial policy document states that multi-faith programming should facilitate "religious dialogue, respect and understanding among all the religious groupings in South Africa". Baker supports this idea when he explains that although religious communities may want airtime in order to address the needs of their communities and to fulfil "proselytising" functions, a public service broadcaster engages with religion in order to fulfil political commitments to goals such as nation-building by facilitating "the process of religious and cultural tolerance" (2000: 225).

Although the major faith groups are given airtime to "celebrate their life of faith and understanding of the Divine fully and without censure," it can be understood in light of SABC editorial policy that multi-faith programming serves an educational purpose. Therefore, the particular brief, although commissioned under the heading religion, was also subject to the editorial policy of the genre education. Among the education editorial policy's key principles is the commitment to addressing "imbalance in the historical provision of education especially but not exclusively those based on race, gender and disability" (SABC Editorial Policy: 48). Although the previous imbalance in religious education is not explicitly mentioned in the policy, given the historical background of Christian National Education under apartheid it is justifiable to assume that the SABC considers religion as one area that is in need of redress. The commissioning for children's multi-faith series further supports this idea.

The production brief for the children's multi-faith series requested that the programme should "aim to educate and influence [children] to follow a wholesome moral path." Although the

brief was situated in the religious programming section of the RFP booklet, the term religion is hardly mentioned in the brief, except when referring to the genre. Instead, the term “moral” is used. It can therefore be argued that religion is considered as a lens through which broader human issues can be discussed. The brief requires that the level of the content be pitched at five to nine year old children. The brief states that the format of the programme should be interactive and that the show should also be directed at the parents of the viewers in order to inspire conversation in the home environment about the topics addressed.

Following the criteria set by the SABC in 2007, X CON Films, a Cape Town-based production company, won the pitch to create a 24-minute children’s multi-faith show that reflected the broadcasters ‘religion and education policies’ commitments while at the same time resonating with the Religion Education policy and the values with respect to religion enshrined in the South Africa Constitution. The proposal document submitted by X CON Films clearly stated the educational goals of the series and cited examples of other successful children’s education programmes, such as *Takalani Sesame*, a South African version of the popular children’s show, *Sesame Street*.

At this point it must not be made clear that in the development of *Siyakholwa* the executive producer did not refer to national policy about Religion Education nor did he seek the expertise of religion education specialists. Munier Parker (2007) primarily used SABC editorial policy about religious broadcasting and education, respectively, in order to formulate a response to the request for proposals.

According to the proposal document, *Siyakholwa* has specific curriculum related aims. These aims are very clearly aligned with the goals of the 2003 Religion Education policy.

- 1) Teaching about different religions
- 2) Focus on religious diversity and appreciation for this
- 3) Multi-religion rights
- 4) Building positive religious and national pride
- 5) Creating an attitude of tolerance and understanding between children of different religious backgrounds
- 6) Facilitating communication between children and peers, parents and friends regarding topics related to religion.

According to *Siyakholwa* executive producer Munier Parker, the first step in developing the content for *Siyakholwa* is consulting with the sacred calendar of South Africa. He first directs his team to locate the most important religious holidays for the five major religions as stated by the SABC. These are Christianity, African Religion, Judaism, Islam and Hinduism. The researchers are then instructed to locate the important national days of South Africa. Each of these days is then placed onto a production schedule as episodes that need to be researched and addressed. With the remainder of the episodes, he allocates a certain amount to multi-faith episodes and faith-specific episodes. The rest are developed around general child-friendly themes. Research for the episodes is then conducted through internet-based searches and occasionally interviews with members of religious communities. The raw material is then sent to a scriptwriter who is tasked with condensing the information into 24 minutes of children's edutainment. The scriptwriters are briefed to remain accurate with the content but to reproduce it in a child-friendly manner. Policy and theory about Religion Education are not consulted in the development of the scripts. Parker has attributed this situation to time limitations from the SABC, a general lack of funding and the nature of researcher training.

Siyakholwa offers an introduction into the religions of South Africa, their institutions, myths, festivals and observances and practices. Drawing on the background of religion, *Siyakholwa* also creates a platform where the various social institutions that affect children are discussed. These include but are not limited to families and homes, community and school. In addition, issues regarding health, nutrition and hygiene are addressed, as well as skills of reasoning, observation, and imagination.

Siyakholwa is a studio and live action based show which consists of four segments that together address a different topic every week. This means that the series is filmed both inside a studio environment and outside of the studio in various public places. Each episode consists of three studio based segments which include interaction between the presenter Thandi and a group of children in studio, a puppet skit where two puppets engage in a discussion about a topic based on religion or a related theme, and story time. The show is anchored by one female presenter, Thandi, and two puppets, Musa and Dudu. Thandi is a young woman who although a church-going Christian has many friends from different religions and is always interested in learning more about her friends' faiths on *Siyakholwa*. Musa is a librarian and a wise old sage who has a wealth of knowledge on world religions and culture. Dudu is a seven year old girl who spends a great deal of time in the library that Musa runs. She is scripted as having an exceptionally enquiring mind. Below is an excerpt from a studio segment between the children and the main presenter, Thandi.

THANDI: Goeie more, good morning, molweni and welcome to Siyakholwa, We Believe. Thank you for waking up early and always being a part of our experience as we discover each other's faiths. We've just come from a very interesting interfaith service and I thought we could spend some time talking about "Who is your God." Allah, Yaweh, God, Vishnu, Nkulunkulu. These are all names to describe the One

most high. Every religion calls God by their own name but in essence the meaning and significance is the same. Our religions also teach us stories of God that will instill a sense of morality and discipline in us. We fear God's wrath but know that there is nothing better than God's love too.

Let's hear what our friends have to say about God.

(*Siyakholwa* Season 2, Who is you God? 2008)

In the last line Thandi is referring to the *Let's Talk* segment. This segment is filmed off-set, at various schools around South Africa where a film crew visits and asks children questions relating to an episode-specific topic and they then answer. Their opinions are dissected through discussion in studio between the presenter and the characters. Some of the comments from children in this episode include,

"God is a man with a long beard and he lives in the sky."

"God is Allah"

"Jesus is my God."

"God loves everybody"

The show also includes a *live action* segment, where according to the week's theme a day in the life of a South African child is filmed. For example, if the discussion in a particular week relates to symbols of faith, the camera crew would follow a Jewish boy around his home, school and synagogue, where he would then point out, talk about and relate the symbols of his faith to that of his friends. In order to ensure a balance in the depictions of various religions on the programme, the studio-based segments would then consider the symbols of

faith of other traditions. The live action is perhaps one of the main drawcards of the show; it takes the viewers out of the mystical land of *Siyakholwa* and into the real world, where the children are introduced to the lives of their peers. Below is the voiceover narration from a live action segment about the Jewish Festival of Shavuot:

Voice Over 1

Hello friends! My name is Daniel and I am X years old. You are just in time to come and explore the Zettler strawberry farm with me! Look at this big strawberry – it looks so fresh and delicious. Just wait until we see the real thing!

Voice Over 2

Today we are in Stellenbosch which is a bustling beautiful town surrounded by spectacular mountains and famous vineyards and farmlands. Today some friends and I are going to be exploring the Zettler strawberry farm which is very exciting – especially since mommy always tells me to eat fresh fruit and vegetables to keep healthy, and I just love strawberries!

Voice Over 3

Here we are friends at the Zettler strawberry farm. Wow this farm is so big! I've never seen so many strawberries in one place before! Each strawberry plant has been planted with such care and love. You've heard the saying "you will reap what you sow". Well, this just shows the rewards one gets when putting time, effort and love into something you care about and that you can share with other people. Just like these strawberries have been carefully planted and looked after and now there are lots of strawberries for everyone to share and enjoy!

Voice Over 4

Look at these scarecrows, don't that look amazing dressed up for the FIFA 2010 World Cup? These scarecrows are here to scare off any birds that may want to come and feast on these delicious strawberries. These scarecrows remind me of my mommy who is always there to protect me from things that may be harmful to my growth and wellbeing. These scarecrows are famous all over the world and many people travel here from all over just to see them and take pictures of them.

Voice Over 5

Isn't nature so beautiful and special? The air here is so fresh and clean. I feel so free here and am grateful to be able to share this with my friends. Isn't it just amazing what can bloom from tiny seeds with a little water and care? It just shows how much potential everything has to be beautiful!

Voice Over 6

Some strawberries are grown in these tunnels to protect them from the winter weather so that strawberries can be grown during those winter months. Even though the strawberries also need to drink water to grow, the rain is just too much for them to handle. These tunnels allow strawberries to then be sold earlier in the year before the season they usually grow and then are sold in. I've learnt that these strawberries as top quality fresh produce are sold to the local market, major shopping chains, and even the overseas markets.

So there are different ways and places for strawberries to grow, but they are nurtured in the same way and once they ripen and equally ready to be eaten. This is just like us friends – just as we all grow up differently in different cultures, religions and homes, we are all equally special and good.

Voice Over 7

My friends and I have been given these baskets to pick these delicious looking strawberries. We take our time to choose the best looking ones and can't wait to taste them together!

Voice Over 8

These strawberries are so sweet and delicious. There's nothing like fresh produce directly from the source. But friends, for me, the greatest thing about eating these strawberries is sharing them with my friends. Also it is so wonderful that we picked them ourselves. I've realised how much hard work not only goes into growing strawberries but just as much hard work goes into picking and harvesting them. Both growing and harvesting these strawberries requires patience, hard work, passion and care. Good thing eating them is no hard work at all! What a treat!

Voice Over 9

Being here has got me thinking about the Jewish harvest festival of Shavuot. Shavuot is a time of renewal – renewal in nature and the renewal of a strengthened and beautiful relationship with God. I'd like to thank God for the beauty before me and for this wonderful day with my friends.

Voice Over 10

What a fun day friends! What I've learnt today is that if you sow your seeds which is doing the best you can with patience, love, care, respect and hard work, you shall reap what you sow. Which means that you will be rewarded in beautiful ways from your efforts. I've also learnt about being kind to the environment so that it may in return be kind to us and bear its fruits for us to eat.

We have been invited back to come pick strawberries whenever we like because we had so much fun. But for now it's time to go home. Thank you for coming to explore with me friends. I hope you had just as much fun as I did and see you next time. Remember that what you put in, you will get out! (Siyakholwa Season 4; Shavuot, 2010).

Through the live-action segment children are given the opportunity to describe, explain and analyse their religious traditions in terms of the own experience and understanding. The viewers at home, who are assumed to be children about the same age as the children featured on *Siyakholwa*, are being taught that their knowledge about their religions is also meaningful. The interpretive approach provides guidelines for ensuring that the voices of the learners are heard and acknowledged. A discussion of the interpretive method and *Siyakholwa* will be provided in the next chapter.

The two puppets Dudu and Musa also engage with each other for approximately two minutes at a time.

MUSA IS IN THE LIBRARY. ENTER DUDU.

MUSA: Hi, Dudu. I'm glad that you've come! I found the book you were looking for. You may borrow it with your library card.

DUDU: Thank you, Bab' uMusa. Waze wanomusa! [You are so kind!]

MUSA: Ngafuza igama lami phela. [I'm living up to what my name means.]

DUDU: Oh, yes! Your name means kindness. Bab Musa, do you know that my name, Dudu is short for Duduzile?

MUSA: Oh really? And do you know what your name means?

DUDU: My mom did tell me, but I've forgotten.

MUSA: Let me remind you. Duduzile means the one who brought comfort.

DUDU: Does that mean I bring comfort to you Bab Musa?

MUSA: Actually, you do! It may also mean that you brought comfort to your parents.

DUDU: So some parents name their children after how the child makes them feel?

MUSA: Yes, many do. Most names have special and important meanings.

DUDU: But how did your parents know that you'd be kind Bab Musa?

MUSA: They didn't, but they must've hoped that I would be kind.

DUDU: So sometimes parents give their child a name because they want the child to become something?

MUSA: Exactly, Dudu.

DUDU: Okay, let me see. My younger sister's name is Ntombifuthi. What does it mean?

MUSA: Ntombifuthi means "It's a girl again." A girl child is given this name when she is born after another girl.

DUDU: When a girl is born again, for the third time, do they name her Ntombifuthifuthi?

MUSA: (Laughing) No, Dudu. Usually they name her Zanele.

DUDU: Zanele?

MUSA: Yes. Zanele is short for Zanele Izintombi, which means girls are enough.

DUDU: Why is it so important to name children like this, Bab' uMusa?

MUSA: In the African tradition naming a child can be a way to communicate with ancestors.

DUDU: So, when the parents say Zanele Izintombi it's like they are telling the ancestors that they have enough girls?

MUSA: Exactly Duduzile!

DUDU: Wena, Bab' uMusa, how did you name your children?

MUSA: Mina I took names from the Bible to name my children.

DUDU: From the Bible? Why?

MUSA: I want my children to be like the people in the Bible. My first born is Moses.

DUDU: What does Moses mean, Bab' uMusa?

MUSA: Moses comes from Hebrew. It means pulled from water.

DUDU: Oh I remember, the princess of Egypt found Moses in the water. Was your son also found in the water, Bab' uMusa?

MUSA: No. I named him Moses because I want him to be like Moses. A good leader and man of God.

DUDU: Bab' uMusa, I'm having so much fun! Can we look for more facts about names in your books?

MUSA: Maybe later Dudu.

DUDU: Bab' uMusa, now you are not living up to your name.

MUSA: Okay, Dudu. But I need to tidy the library too.

DUDU: Don't worry. I will live up to my name and comfort you.

MUSA: You know what kind of comfort I need? Your new name is Msizi.

DUDU: Msizi!

MUSA: Yes. Msizi means helper. I want you to help me tidy the library. Come, Msizi. (Siyakholwa Season 2; Names, 2008)

In terms of actual production, *Siyakholwa* is usually filmed over a period of two weeks and due to time constraints *Live Action* and *Let's Talk* segments are shot after the studio inserts are filmed. Therefore, the presenter is unable to comment meaningfully on what has been said in the *Let's Talk* segment or the *Live Action*. These segments are added into the final edit.

THANDI WEARING RED AND SOME GOLD, CHILDREN AROUND TABLE JUST DRAWING.

THANDI: Molweni friends, come join us today while we find out about art and make some beautiful artworks.

What's your favourite colour?

Mine is definitely red, and I also really like gold (points to what she's wearing).

Colour is the most important part of art. You can see colour, even if it's just black and white, in almost all artworks, and different colours mean different things.

For example, red can mean a whole range of things, it can stand for love, passion, and happiness but it can also stand for danger or act as a warning – like when you see red on a stop sign or when a robot changes red it has warned you that you need to stop. Something else that's interesting about red is that it's the first colour you see on a rainbow!

My other favourite colour, gold, stands for power and wealth. In art it is often used when people of all faiths want to represent their religion. You can see how gold has been used in lots of Christian and Islamic buildings. Gold is also often used to decorate statues of Buddha.

So now let's hear what our friends think about colour! (Siyakholwa Season 4; Art and Religion, 2010)

Siyakholwa deals with themes that are pertinent to the sacred calendar of the various religious groups and the national sacred days of South Africa. As a previously divided country the new dispensation created days which are set aside as public holidays to commemorate significant events in the struggle for freedom and also for celebrating the new democracy of South Africa. Using the example of the episode entitled "Heritage", the show employs food as a launch pad from which to discuss the rich cultural, ethnic, linguistic and religious heritage of South Africa:

(THANDI IS LAYING A TABLE WITH FOOD FROM DIFFERENT CULTURES. ON IT WE SEE, KOEKSUSTERS AND KOESIESTERS, ROTI AND CURRY, KITKE BREAD, UMNGQUSHO, CHAKALAKA, PAP AND VLEIS, INDIAN SWEETMEATS AND BILTONG.)

THANDI: Molweni Sanibonani and welcome to Siyakholwa: We believe. I am laying the table for today's show because we are going to be looking at ways to celebrate our heritage. Heritage means what is passed down to us. It can be your traditions, your culture, or places special to your people. Heritage day is a fairly new holiday in our country, but a very important one.

DUDU: I like that we don't have to go to school on that day, but why did they decide to make a Heritage Day? Does every country have a Heritage Day?

MUSA: No, not every country. After the first democratic elections, our new government decided that Heritage Day would be a good way to remember and celebrate all the different cultures that make up South Africa. (Siyakholwa Season 2; Heritage Day, 2009)

In this segment Thandi is preparing the audience for a discussion about an important South African national day that was set aside by the state to encourage national unity and nation building. The 24th of September was originally called Shaka Day in commemoration of the legendary King Shaka of the Zulu people. The 24th of September was celebrated as a symbol of the cohesion of the Zulu nation under Shaka's leadership. Eventually, the 24th of September was included into the South African public holiday calendar and set aside as a day for celebrating the national motto of "Unity in Diversity". Endorsed by former Arch-bishop Desmond Tutu, Heritage Day was unofficially renamed Braai Day. Established by the Braai heritage initiative, Braai Day takes place on Heritage Day and was developed as a project to unite South Africa through the common theme of barbequing meat. The website reads "Across race, language, region and religion, we all share one common heritage. It is called many things: Chisa Nyama, Braai and Ukosa to name few. Although the ingredients may differ, the one thing that never changes is that when we have something to celebrate we light fires, and prepare great feasts" (www.braai.com). As it can be seen from the excerpt above, this episode of *Siyakholwa* is therefore an important educational episode which deals with issues of the constitutional, cultural and transformational state by exploring an essentially social public holiday.

Content Management

Once *Siyakholwa* had been commissioned to X CON films, the management of the content became the responsibility of the production house. The producers of *Siyakholwa* use both the religious and secular South African calendar in order to determine the content and transmission date of each episode. In order to categorise each episode according to theme which will be important for analysis in the following chapter, I have developed three categories for organisational purposes.

The categories are the following: multi-faith, faith-specific and life orientation episodes. Multi-faith episodes are categorised as episodes which deal with more than one religious tradition. In faith-specific episodes, one religious tradition is explored in detail. However, it is important to emphasize that even in the faith-specific episodes the content is presented in an educational manner and does not serve a proselytising function.

According to the National Department of Education (2002), life orientation is a learning area that is central to the holistic development of learners. Life orientation is “concerned with the social, personal, intellectual, emotional and physical growth of learners” (DOE, 2002: 5). According to educational policy, Life orientation as a part of the school’s curriculum is expected to teach learners how to engage with the world and take appropriate action regarding five core learning outcomes

- 1) Health promotion
- 2) Social development
- 3) Personal development
- 4) Physical development and movement
- 5) Orientation to the world of work

The outcomes of these learning areas are designed in reference to the grade-level of learners. Health promotion is an important part of the curriculum. Learners are taught how to protect their health through nutrition, diet and hygiene. The category of social development deals with placing the personal needs of learners in a social context; in this learning area, civic education is delivered as well as awareness about values of non-racism, non-sexism and universal human rights as cited in the Constitution.

Religion is specifically mentioned under the heading “social development”. In this document the civic as opposed to the religious function of religion is emphasised. It states, “In the context of the South African Constitution, religion education contributes to the wider framework of education by developing in every learner the knowledge, values, attitudes and skills necessary for diverse religions to co-exist in a multi-religious society” (2002: 6). The learning outcome, personal development, is aimed at helping the learner develop a positive self-concept and to recognise and engage with emotions. However, because the personal tends to be significantly linked to the social, the outcomes of personal and social development are often interlinked. The fourth category, “physical development and movement,” focuses on “perpetual motor development, games and sport, physical growth and development, and recreation and play” in order to encourage the development of a well-rounded individual. The final learning outcome is “orientation to the world of work.” According to educational policy, this outcome is only addressed at a high school level where students are expected to make choices which can have an effect on their futures careers. As a result of these learning outcomes, the episodes of *Siyakholwa* which fall under the term Life Orientation will be further categorised according to the five learning outcomes presented above.

Between 2007 and 2011 there have been five seasons of *Siyakholwa*; the sixth season is currently in pre-production and will not be included in this discussion. Pre-production refers to the research and development phase of the project. Therefore, season 1 ran for a total of 52 weeks; due to budgetary constraints on the part of the SABC season 2 was reduced to 35 episodes; season 3 was a collection of episodes from Season 1 and 2 and offered no new content. Again, because of budgetary constraints, the SABC only commissioned 26 episodes of *Siyakholwa* for seasons 4 and 5. To date 139 new episodes of *Siyakholwa* have been produced and flighted on television.

Below is a table of each season of *Siyakholwa* categorised according to the content:

Season One: 2007

Episode 1 Symbols of Faith Multi-faith	Episode 2 The Rainmakers Faith-specific African Religion	Episode 3 Holy Books Multi-Faith	Episode 4 Siblings Multi-faith	Episode 5 Story of Creation Multi-faith
Episode 6 Rosh Hashanah Faith-specific Judaism	Episode 7 Fasting Faith-specific Islam	Episode 8 Yom Kippur Faith-specific Judaism	Episode 9 Diversity Life Orientation Social Development	Episode 11 Eid Faith-specific: Islam

Episode 12 My body Life Orientation Physical Development	Episode 13 Dress Codes Multi-faith	Episode 14 Diwali Faith-specific Hinduism	Episode 15 Children’s Rights Life Orientation Social Development	Episode 15 Rites of Passage Faith-specific African Religion
Episode 16 Places of Worship Multi-Faith	Episode 17 World Aids Day Life Orientation Health Promotion	Episode 18 Safety Life Orientation Physical Development	Episode 19 Forgiveness Multi-faith	Episode 20 Xmas Special Faith-specific Christian
Episode 21 New Year’s Eve Life Orientation Social Development	Episode 22 Pets Life Orientation Social Development	Episode 23 Morals Life Orientation Social Development	Episode 24 Religious Leaders Multi-faith	Episode 25 Love Multi-faith
Episode 26 Nirvana Day Faith- specific	Episode 27 Water & Religion	Episode 28 Empathy Life	Episode 29 Disability Life	Episode 30 Gandhi –Peace Life

Buddhism	Multi-faith	Orientation Personal Development	Orientation Social Development	Orientation Social Development
Episode 31 Courage Life Orientation Personal Development	Episode 32 Celebrating New Life Multi-faith	Episode 33 Human Rights Day Life Orientation Social Development	Episode 34 Religious Education Multi-faith	Episode 35 Easter Special Faith Specific Christian
Episode 36 Marvels of Nature Multi-Faith	Episode 37 Passover Faith-Specific Judaism	Episode 38 Freedom Day Life Orientation Social Development	Episode 39 Bahai Faith Faith-specific	Episode 40 Five Pillars Faith-specific Islam
Episode 41 Mother's Day Life Orientation Social Development	Episode 42 Friendship Life Orientation Social Development	Episode 43 Africa Day Life Orientation Social Development	Episode 44 Forms of Praise Multi-faith	Episode 45 Prophets Multi-faith
Episode 46 Father's Day	Episode 47 Youth Day	Episode 48 Justice&Fairness	Episode 49 Food &	Episode 50 Unity

Life Orientation Social Development	Life Orientation Social Development	Life Orientation Personal Development	Religion Multi-faith	Life Orientation Social Development
Episode 51 Greetings Multi-faith	Episode 52 Differences Life Orientation Social Development			

Season 2

Episode 1 Eid-ul-Adha Faith Specific Islam	Episode 2 Health(AIDS Awareness) Life Orientation Health Promotion	Episode 3 Christmas Faith-Specific Christianity	Episode 4 Hanukkah Faith Specific Judaism	Episode 5 African New Year Faith Specific African Religion
Episode 6 Ubuntu Nation-building Social Development	Episode 7 My Senses Life Orientation Health Promotion	Episode 8 Talents Life-Orientation Personal Development	Episode 9 Angels and Miracles Multi-faith	Episode 10 Sounds of Faith Multi-Faith

Episode 11 Marriage Life Orientation Social Development	Episode 12 How I Pray Multi-faith	Episode 13 Religious Values Multi-Faith	Episode 14 Holi Faith-specific Hinduism	Episode 15 All God's creations Multi-faith
Episode 16 Children's Rights Life Orientation Social Development	Episode17 Cooking for Kids Life Orientation Social Development	Episode18 Easter- Palm Sunday Faith Specific Christianity	Episode 19 Global Warming Life Orientation Social Development	Episode20 Family Life Orientation Social Development
Episode 21 Money Life-Orientation Orientation to work	Episode 22 My Feelings Life-Orientation Personal Development	Episode 23 Buddha day Faith Specific Buddhism	Episode 24 Prophets Multi-Faith	Episode 25 Learning is fun Life Orientation Social Development
Episode26: Birthdays Multi-Faith	Episode27: Environment Life Orientation	Episode28: Taking pride in your home Life	Episode29: Bat/Bar Mitzvah Faith	Episode30: Rastafarianism Faith Specific

	Social Development	Orientation Social Development	Specific Judaism	
Episode 31: Names Multi-Faith	Episode 32: We Love Africa Life Orientation Social Development	Episode 33: Role models Life Orientation Social Development	Episode 34: Disabilities Life Orientation Social Development	Episode 35: Women in Religion Multi-faith

Season 4

Episode 1 What is Religion? Multi-faith	Episode 2 Youth Day Life Orientation Social Development	Episode 3 Who am I? Identity Life Orientation Personal Development	Episode 4 Proudly South African Life Orientation Social Development	Episode 5 Shavuot Faith-specific Judaism
Episode 6 African Traditional Religion Faith Specific	Episode 7 Compassion Multi-faith	Episode 8 Mandela Day Life Orientation Social Development	Episode 9 Hinduism Faith-specific	Episode 10 Art and Religion Multi-faith

Episode 11 Women's Day Life Orientation Social Development	Episode 12 Music and Religion Multi-faith	Episode 13 Islam Faith specific	Episode 14 The Krishna Story Faith specific Hinduism	Episode 15 History of Indians in South Africa Life Orientation Social Development
Episode 16 Sacred Spaces Multi-faith	Episode 17 Heritage Day Life Orientation Social Development	Episode 18 Judaism Faith Specific	Episode 19 Teachers Life Orientation Social Development	Episode 20 Charity in Islam Faith specific
Episode 21 Customs and Traditions Faith Specific African Religion	Episode 22 Diwali Faith Specific Hinduism	Episode 23 Saints Faith Specific Christianity	Episode 24 Pilgrimages and Journeys Multi-faith	Episode 25 Christianity Faith specific
Episode 26 Four Seasons Life Orientation Social Development				

Season 5

<p>Episode 1</p> <p>Moulood</p> <p>Faith specific</p> <p>Islam</p>	<p>Episode 2</p> <p>Back to School</p> <p>Life</p> <p>Orientation</p> <p>Social</p> <p>Development</p>	<p>Episode 3</p> <p>Creation</p> <p>Multi-faith</p>	<p>Episode 4</p> <p>Health for Kids</p> <p>Life</p> <p>Orientation</p> <p>Health</p> <p>Promotion</p>	<p>Episode 5</p> <p>Being Positive</p> <p>Life</p> <p>Orientation</p> <p>Personal</p> <p>Development</p>
<p>Episode 6</p> <p>Holi</p> <p>Faith specific</p> <p>Hinduism</p>	<p>Episode 7</p> <p>St Patricks Day</p> <p>Multi-faith</p>	<p>Episode 8</p> <p>World Water</p> <p>Day</p> <p>Life</p> <p>Orientation</p> <p>Social</p> <p>Development</p>	<p>Episode 9</p> <p>Jewish Symbols</p> <p>Faith-specific</p> <p>Judaism</p>	<p>Episode 10</p> <p>Easter</p> <p>Faith Specific</p> <p>Christianity</p>
<p>Episode 11</p> <p>Role of Children</p> <p>in Hinduism</p> <p>Faith specific</p> <p>Hinduism</p>	<p>Episode 12</p> <p>Education in</p> <p>Islam</p> <p>Faith Specific</p> <p>Islam</p>	<p>Episode 13</p> <p>Freedom Day</p> <p>Life</p> <p>Orientation</p> <p>Social</p> <p>Development</p>	<p>Episode 14</p> <p>Importance of</p> <p>Family</p> <p>Multi-faith</p>	<p>Episode 15</p> <p>Mother's Day</p> <p>Life</p> <p>Orientation</p> <p>Social</p> <p>development</p>
<p>Episode 16</p> <p>Catholic Church</p> <p>Faith specific</p> <p>Christianity</p>	<p>Episode 17</p> <p>The Sabbath</p> <p>Faith specific</p> <p>Judaism</p>	<p>Episode 18</p> <p>Trinity Sunday</p> <p>Faith specific</p> <p>Christianity</p>	<p>Episode 19</p> <p>Music in</p> <p>African Religion</p> <p>Faith-specific</p> <p>African Religion</p>	<p>Episode 20</p> <p>Youth Day</p> <p>Life</p> <p>Orientation</p> <p>Social</p> <p>Development</p>

Episode 21 Health and Body Faith Specific Islam	Episode 22 The Pancha Kriya Faith Specific Hinduism	Episode 23 Climate Change Life Orientation Social Development	Episode 24 Community in Judaism Faith Specific Judaism	Episode 25 The Tswana Faith specific African Religion
Episode 26 Universal Values Life Orientation Social Development				

Season 1

In season one of *Siyakholwa* there were a total of 17 Multi-faith episodes. They were *Symbols of Faith, Holy Books, Siblings, Story of Creation, Dress Codes, Places of Worship, Forgiveness, Religious Leaders, Love, Water and Religion, Celebrating New life, Religious Education, Marvels of Nature, Forms of Praise, Prophets and Messengers, Food and Religion Greetings*. There were a total of 13 Faith specific episodes which can be broken down into the following groups: African Religion: *The Rainmaker, Rites of Passage*, Christianity; *Christmas, Easter*, Judaism: *Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Passover*, Islam: *Fasting, Eid, Five Pillars*, Hinduism: *Diwali*, Buddhism: *Nirvana Day*, Baha'i Faith: *An*

Introduction to the Baha'i Faith. The remaining episodes are all categorised under the heading Life Orientation. Below these episodes are categorised under the five learning outcomes of Life Orientation, Personal Development and Social Development: *Diversity, Children's Rights, New Year's Eve, Pets, Morals, Empathy, Disability, Ghandi-Peace, Courage, Human Rights Day, Freedom Day, Africa Day, Mother's Day, Friendship, Freedom Day, Youth Day, Justice and Fairness, Unity, Differences*, and finally Health Promotion and Physical Development: *My Body, World Aids Day, Safety*.

Season 2

In season 2 there were a total of 9 Multi-faith episodes; *Angels and Miracles, Sounds of Faith, How I Pray, Religious Values, All God's Creations, Prophets, Birthdays, Names, Women in Religion*. There were a total of 9 Faith specific episodes: African Religion: *African New Year*, Christianity: *Christmas, Palm Sunday*, Judaism: *Hannukah, Bat/Bar Mitzvah*, Islam: *Eid ul Adha*, Hinduism: *Holi*, Buddhism: *Buddha Day*, Rastafarianism: *Introduction to Rastafarianism*. There were 13 Personal and Social Development: *Ubuntu, Marriage, Children's Rights, Cooking for Kids, Global Warming, Family, My Feelings, Learning is Fun, Taking Pride in Your Home, We Love Africa, Role Models*, and Disability. There were two episodes about Health Promotion and Physical development: *Health (AIDS Awareness) and My Senses*. There was one episode about Orientation to Work: *Money*.

Season 4:

In Season 4 there were a total of 6 Multi-faith episodes; *What is Religion?, Compassion, Art and Religion, Music and Religion, Sacred Spaces, Pilgrimages and Journeys*. There were 11 Faith specific episodes; African Religion: *Customs and Traditions*, Christianity: *Saints*, Judaism: *Shavuot, Introduction to Judaism*, Islam: *Introduction to Islam, Charity in Islam*,

Hinduism: *Introduction to Hinduism, Krishna, Diwali*. There were a total of 9 Personal Development and Social Development episodes in season 4: *Who am I?, Youth Day, Proudly South African, Mandela Day, Women's Day, History of Indians, Heritage Day, Teachers, Four Seasons*.

Season 5:

In season 5 there were 3 Multi-faith episodes of *Siyakholwa: Creations, St Patrick's Day, Importance of Family*. There were a total of 14 Faith-specific episodes: African Religion: *The Catholic Church, The Tswana, Music in African Religion*, Christianity: *Trinity Sunday, Easter*, Judaism: *Jewish Symbols, Community in Judaism, The Sabbath in Judaism*, Islam: *Moulood, Education in Islam, Health and Body in Islam*, Hinduism: *Holi, Role of Children in Hinduism, The Pancha Kriya*. There were 9 Personal and Social Development episodes: *Back to School, Being Positive, World Water Day, Freedom Day, Mother's Day, Youth day, Climate Change, Universal Values*. There was one episode about Health Promotion and Physical Development: *Health for Kids*.

In season one of *Siyakholwa* just under 33% of the season's episodes dealt with faith-specific content. In season two 26%, season four 44% and in season five over half of the total number of episodes were faith-specific. In total the 139 episodes which composed the 4 seasons analysed 33% were faith-specific. These episodes dealt with content ranging from a basic introduction to specific religious traditions to focussing on significant days and rituals within these religious traditions. Each of the major religious traditions of South Africa as stipulated by the SABC, along with religions with smaller constituencies such as Baha'i Faith, Buddhism and Rastafarianism, were given introductory episodes. In season four it is clear through observing the dialogue in the episodes on Hinduism, that by exploring the historical

roots, religious beliefs and cultural practices *Siyakholwa* represents the religion in an educational manner. In the first segment, which opens with a non-specific but apparently traditional Indian dance, Thandi offers an overview of the geographical origin of the Hinduism:

Molweni, and Friends! Today we're learning about Hinduism, and we thought the best way to start on this adventure would be to do some traditional Indian dancing. So now that we're energized after our dancing, let's learn more about the Hindu religion and culture. Hinduism is the world's third most popular religion with around 750 million followers worldwide. This huge number includes the large amount of Hindu people that we have in our very own South Africa. In India, 80% of the population practice Hinduism. Hinduism originated in India, near the River Indus, about 4000 years ago and is the world's oldest existing religion. (Siyakholwa Season 4; Hinduism, 2010)

Thandi's lines offer basically sound factual information that clearly holds educational value. However, this line—*"This huge number includes the large amount of Hindu people that we have in our very own South Africa"*—is problematic as it creates a subtle binary between Hindus and South Africans. This line of dialogue implicitly suggests that Hindus living in South Africa are not in fact South Africans but are instead visitors that the country is hosting. This line could perhaps be better scripted in the following way, *"This huge number includes the large amount of South African Hindu people that are an important part of the Rainbow Nation"*.

In the second segment the children in studio are getting *Mehendi* designs done on their hands while Thandi explains the significance of the ritual. In this segment she also explains the

significance of the River Ganges and shows the viewers' pictures of a Hindu temple. She briefly mentions that the Hindu sacred texts are called the Vedas or the Upanishads but fails to mention that most South African Hindus use the Bhagavad Gita as their holy book, a point that would emphasize the South African Hindu experience. At this point, Jackson's (1997) interpretive method would provide a useful tool for unpacking the complex relationship that Hindus have with their sacred texts.

In the next segment Musa and Dudu have a discussion about the gods and goddesses of Hinduism. Musa dispels the commonly held belief that Hindus are polytheistic.

Well Dudu, even though in Hinduism there are many gods and goddesses, Hindu people actually only believe in one creator. This God's name is Brahman, and all the other Gods and Goddesses in Hinduism only represent different forms of Brahman. These other Gods and Goddesses exist to help people find their way to the one, eternal God – Brahman.

The rest of the dialogue discusses the roles of the key Hindu gods and goddesses and by the end of the segment Dudu's response, "*Wow! Now I see why it makes sense to have so many Gods, because they all have such important roles and all help Hindus to find Brahman*", is an indication of the deliberate attempt to dispel an inaccurate stereotype about Hinduism. Further along in the episode Thandi explains the idea of reincarnation and the philosophy of *karma* and Dudu and Musa continue their discussion about the gods and goddesses by exploring the Hindu sacred calendar. Thandi's discussion about Hindu dress has already been discussed.

Another faith-specific episode from the fourth season, “Judaism”, discusses the religion in a similar manner. The first segment discusses Jewish symbols of faith and explains the significance of the *shema*, the Jewish declaration of faith. In this episode Thandi’s introduction of the religion is more inclusive and makes it clear that Judaism is a part of the South African religious landscape.

THANDI: Hello friends. We are lucky to live in a country like South Africa, where there are many different cultures and religion. Each one of you is different but you are all special and here at Siyakholwa we learn all about the religion of our friends and neighbours. Today we are going to be learning about Judaism which is the religion of the Jewish people. (Siyakholwa Season Four; Judaism, 2010)

In the second segment the Jewish Holy books and the idea of commandments and mitzvot are introduced. In this segment interpretation as a pedagogical tool can be seen. The children and Thandi are compiling a list of *mitzvot* for living a good life and is explicitly point out the similarities between the mitzvot and other religious or moral values.

The 613 mitzvot and the Ten Commandments teach Jewish people how to live their daily lives but they are not only for Jewish people, there are things that we can all learn from. Values like honesty, kindness and justice are universal messages that we all know if hearts are the rights things to do. Judaism is a religion which encourages all people to do the right thing. The mitzvot and the commandments help us on our way. (Siyakholwa Season Four; Judaism, 2010)

Later when the list that the children in the studio have made is revealed, the following mitzvot have been stated,

Our list of rules to live by is getting longer and longer and even though we are writing it down these are all things we know in our hearts. Let's read a few. Be kind to people and animals, always tell the truth, don't be a bully, do not steal, listen to your mommy and daddy, pray every day, try to always do nice things. Judaism, like life is not just about thinking or believing in things, we need to DO things to show our values, morals and faith. In this way we can bring good into the world (Siyakholwa Season Four; Judaism, 2010).

What is particularly striking about this episode is the implicit approval of Jewish beliefs that is articulated through the dialogue. The same could not be noted in the episode about Hinduism. In terms of representivity, Judaism is clearly treated as a religion which holds real moral value for the viewers at home while comparison Hinduism is handled in an almost clinically educational manner. In the puppet segments Dudu and Musa discuss the history of Judaism by exploring the meaning of the word covenant.

From the analysis of the faith-specific episodes in general, and the episodes, Hinduism and Judaism. in particular, I have found that there is no set structure for dealing with the content. However, I have found that in terms of content representation there are recurring themes such as a focus on history, sacred symbols, sacred calendar, ritual practices and cultural expression that are present in the faith-specific episodes. The content is presented in an educational manner with a strong focus on religious literacy. Additionally, I have found that in general the faith-specific episodes lay emphasis on the moral value of religious ideals and encourage

viewers to contemplate the commonalities that their belief system has with the religion under discussion. In the following excerpt, Thandi explains that the values that are a large part of Christianity are not exclusive to the religion.

THANDI: “Remember that Jesus is the heart of Christianity and it is his teachings that Christians follow in order to live holy lives that please God. All religions are special and today we’ve learnt about one that many South Africans follow. Remember friends it doesn’t matter what you believe as long as you respect your religion and that of other people. Like Christianity all religions teach values of honesty, kindness and love for God and people. We may pray and worship differently but we can all live together in harmony.” (Siyakholwa Season Four; Christianity, 2010)

Indeed, religion is presented as the centre of human life and meaning in the faith-specific episodes. However, these episodes are in no way confessional in nature and remain true to the educational focus of religion education.

Just fewer than 30% of the total number of *Siyakholwa* episodes fall under the category multi-faith. In the multi-faith episodes more than one religion is addressed in the form of a theme. Multi-faith episodes have dealt with themes such as dress codes, symbols of faith and places of worship. In these episodes religion is once again approached from an educational point of view and the focus is on building religious literacy. This can be seen in the multi-faith episode Holy Books. In the episode the topic of Holy Books is discussed from both a conceptual and practical perspective. The idea of a sacred text is discussed in relation to Judaism, Christianity, Islam and Hinduism. The focus is not on what differentiates these

books from each other but rather on the common characteristics of their teachings. This is illustrated in the following excerpt:

My friends and I have been talking about how they have been practicing what they learn in their Holy Books. What have you learned from your holy books?

THE KIDS EACH HAVE A CARD SHOWING ONE OF THE LESSONS BELOW -

KIDS:

1. *Respect*
2. *Love*
3. *Tolerance*
4. *Acceptance*
5. *Honour*
6. *Charity*
7. *Sharing*
8. *etc...*

THANDI TO THE CHILDREN AND THE CAMERA

THANDI: Yes! You children are so smart!

Respect for each other is very important.

Love in the world, makes us all smile.

Tolerances of each other's difference make us all get along.

Accepting the way the world works ensures harmony

Honouring our parents and all the elders helps us learn so much.

Charity in our hearts make us better people

Sharing ensures that we can appreciate all the beauty of this world. (Siyakholwa

Season 1; Holy Books, 2007)

Over 40% of the episodes in the *Siyakholwa* series have been characterized under the heading “life orientation”. These episodes deal with content about national holidays in South Africa, social identity and issues relating to general morals and values. The life orientation episodes fulfil the national building agenda of the SABC and address sources of meaning and morality outside of religion. In an episode from Season 1, “*Taking pride in your home*”, Thandi explains her love for South Africa through reciting a poem about her love for South Africa. Discussions about religion are not completely excluded from the life-orientation episodes. However, the focus is primarily on exploring alternative sites of morality. Nonetheless, in these episodes a religion education approach to teaching about morality and constitutional values is employed. The 2003 Policy clearly indicates that national education and moral education are considered as a part of a religion education programme. In *Siyakholwa* moral education is directly related to constitutional ideals and as a result reflects the values of the 2003 Policy. In the season 2 episode Women’s Day, the history of this national holiday is explained to Dudu in detail by Musa. In another segment in the same episode gender equality and non-sexism are explained when Dudu complains that the boys at her school will not allow her to play games with them

MUSA: Boys and girls your age, Dudu, will never see eye to eye, but it’s funny you should talk about that now, when we are talking about Women’s Day.

DUDU: Why is that?

MUSA: Have you ever heard of Equal Rights for women?

DUDU: No. What is that?

MUSA: It is when men and women are treated the same, as equals.

DUDU: Are they not?

MUSA: Many years ago women were seen in a very different light to how they are now. They weren't allowed to vote. They weren't even allowed to work the same jobs as men.

DUDU: Why not?

MUSA: Women were just seen as different and it took some very strong women to change that. (Siyakholwa Season Two; Women's Day, 2008)

Through examining the content of the faith-specific, multi-faith and life-orientation episodes I have found that the content in these episodes are in line with Religion in Education policy as well as constitutional policy about religion.

In this chapter I have described and analysed the technical nature of religious broadcasting on public service television in South Africa. I have shown how the SABC through the RFP booklet and stringent editorial policies attempts to solicit constitutionally sound content from independent producers. Additionally, this chapter has described the pre-production phase of development of the children's multi-faith series, *Siyakholwa*, and shown the relationship between the technical and content-based aspects of the production of this series. I have broken down an episode of *Siyakholwa* and described each segment that makes up the 24-minute episode. Finally, I have provided a breakdown of every episode of the four seasons of *Siyakholwa*, by labelling each episode according to its theme. I have provided the data needed to proceed with an in-depth analysis of the content.

From the data provided above I have developed a number of core research questions which will be analysed in the following chapter. Firstly, I will explore pedagogies employed in the faith-specific and the multi-faith episodes of *Siyakholwa*. I will evaluate the content of

Siyakholwa in light of national policy about religion education and the religious education theory and guidelines of Robert Jackson, David Chidester and Gordon Mitchell. In doing, so I will firstly explore whether the episodes reflected in the grids above offer a fair and equitable introduction to the religions of South Africa in terms of religious representations. *Siyakholwa* will be assessed in terms of the ideals of religious pluralism articulated by the constitutional state and the ideal of fair and equitable representation of the cultural state.

With the teaching of religion education, whether in the classroom or on television, there are sensitive issues that need to be addressed through the curriculum. How these sensitivities are dealt with is ultimately a reflection of how successful this subject can be in mediating the goals of the constitutional, cultural and transformational states. Chidester et al. (1994) developed three questions based on potential issues that should be addressed when designing a Religion Education teaching curriculum:

- 1) How does a religion education programme actually deal with religious diversity?
- 2) What is the relation between religion education and moral education?
- 3) Can the curriculum be designed to redress forms of social injustice such as racism and sexism, in education? (Chidester et al, 1994: 94)

These questions were set in 1994 just as policy negotiations for multi- faith, multi-tradition religious education for a democratic South Africa were started. It is evident that the Religion in Education policy has addressed these questions and provided policy provisions such as the five learning outcomes of Life Orientation in order for the curriculum to address these questions. In assessing how *Siyakholwa* reflects religion education principles, once again the shared educational and nation-building interests of the Department of Education and the SABC become clear. In this thesis I have purposely chosen not to engage with Religion

Education curriculum in public schools as I have found that it is not the material which is problematic but rather the lack of space in the school curriculum for teaching Religion Education. Therefore, in proposing television as an additional pedagogical space for teaching Religion Education and suggesting *Siyakholwa* as a model for teaching this subject using television as a tool I have chosen to use the three questions stated above as guidelines for assessing the pedagogical suitability of *Siyakholwa*. Therefore, in the following chapter I will select a small sample using the categories, multi-faith, faith-specific and life orientation from the four season's scripts of *Siyakholwa* and evaluate the content in reference to the 2003 Religion Education policy and Religion Education theory. By doing a close reading of the selected sample of scripts, I will argue for the pedagogical suitability of television as an additional space for teaching about religion in South Africa.

Chapter 4

Producing Knowledge

This chapter explores the production of knowledge about religion on public service television in South Africa. In the context of this chapter the term “production of knowledge” refers to the actual making of the television programme from a conceptual and technical perspective. In this chapter, a critical analysis of *Siyakholwa* in light of South African national policy about religion in education and pedagogical theory about religion education will be conducted. Through carrying out this analysis, I will determine the pedagogical value of *Siyakholwa* as a religion education teaching and learning medium and argue that television can be an important pedagogical tool for teaching about religious pluralism in post-apartheid South Africa.

The analysis of my case study has been constructed around the evaluation of a selection of scripts from the five seasons of *Siyakholwa* in light of constitutional and national education policy as well as religion education theory. It could be argued that analysing the response of viewers to episodes of the case study would have provided more insight into the outcomes of multi-faith programming on children’s ideas about religion and the effectiveness of using television as a teaching tool. However, I have found that as the field of religion and media in general and religion education and public service broadcasting in particular have been relatively unexplored in the South African context. It is necessary to first lay a solid historical and theoretical framework for understanding the multiple relationships that exist between

these fields of investigation. As noted, this thesis is a response to this crucial gap in the research.

I conducted research into the case-study by reading, watching and analysing every episode of five seasons of *Siyakholwa* and reading the scripts of each episode. I found that the differences between the scripts and the on-screen action are insignificant and as a result I have relied primarily on the scripts for the information used in this analysis. The details of this analysis are divided into two main sections which will be covered in this chapter. The first section evaluates the pedagogical potential of *Siyakholwa* in light of the multi-religion education theory of Robert Jackson and David Chidester. The second section does a qualitative content analysis on the five seasons of *Siyakholwa*. The details of the content analysis will be discussed in the chapter that follows.

The research question that created the framework for the discussion in this chapter was “How are broadcast and religion education policy values articulated in SABC programming?” As stated earlier, I chose to use the case-study of *Siyakholwa* because it is the broadcaster’s first multi-faith children’s programme. After examining broadcast policy on religious and educational programming, I found that the SABC editorial and constitutional policy about these genres of programming corresponded to the values and aims of the 2003 Religion Education Policy.

At this juncture I would like to clarify that while I am strictly speaking conducting a content analysis of *Siyakholwa*, in this section the methodology I have adopted does not correspond precisely with traditional methods as discussed by theorists Krippendorf (2004), Weber

(1990) and Holsti (1969). These theorists are experts of the content analysis methodology and have established content analysis to be a quantitative research method “that uses a set of procedures to make valid inferences from text” (Weber, 1990: 9). Content analysis uses methods of counting various aspects of a text in order to evaluate the meaning of a text. Most often the methods of analysis rely on counting the appearance of certain words in a particular text in order to analyse the meaning of the number found. For the purposes of this section, I found the quantitative method of content analysis limiting and have developed my own qualitative content analysis based on South African national policy and religion education theory.

Scholars of media would refer to this method of analysis as a “discourse analysis”. Discourse analysis primarily refers to analysis of the use of written or spoken words. Media theorists have in some instances extended the use of this term to include the critical analysis of visual other forms of non-verbal communication (Fairclough, 1995). Numerous in-depth discussions about discourse analysis have been undertaken by many scholars of media. Due to the scope of this thesis, a full discussion about the history and evolution of this methodology cannot be undertaken (for more on discourse analysis, see Phelan and Dahlberg (2011); O’Sullivan et al. (1997) and Fulton et al. (2005)).

One of the founding fathers of critical discourse analysis, Norman Fairclough, developed a method of textually oriented discourse analysis which can be used to explore how power is exercised through language. Through applying this theory, Fairclough (1995) suggests that by exploring the power relations present in discourse one is able to gain insight into how social practices are discursively shaped. Fairclough suggests that the first step in critically analysing

any text is to ask three core questions which will form the foundation of the analysis. I have used Fairclough's questions and adjusted them to suit my case-study and field of inquiry.

Fairclough's first question is: How is the world (events or relationships) represented?

As established throughout this work, the Constitution forms the foundation of South African public life. The South African state is constructed by the Constitution as a multi-faith, religiously plural, non-racist, non-sexist, and human-rights based democracy. Given the production brief for an educational children's programme, *Siyakholwa*, is mandated by SABC policy to portray this image of the "world" in its content. This leads us to the first question asked by Chidester in the previous chapter, "How does a religion education programme actually deal with religious diversity?" Religion Education, as a pedagogical method, addresses religion in education in a multi-faith, multi-tradition manner. Religion education is sensitive to religious diversity and encourages an "open, imaginative, empathetic, and critical inquiry into religious diversity" (Chidester et al., 1994: 94). As an opposed to a theological or faith-based approach to religion in education, the educational goals of religion education could ensure that religious diversity is dealt with in a fair and equitable manner. Chidester et al. (1994) warn that both a theology of pluralism and a theology of dialogue are problematic forms of pedagogy to use in a religiously plural classroom. A theology of pluralism holds three options for teaching. An exclusivist position claims that only one religion is true and all others are false. The inclusivist approach claims that one religion is true but that other religions may have certain truths. A pluralist approach claims that all religions are true and different paths to "genuine salvation". A theology of dialogue proposes that insights can be gained through conversation about "questions of religious truth among people of different faiths" (Chidester et al., 1994: 95). These approaches have a number of flaws that make them inappropriate as teaching methods in the religion education classroom. Arguably, the biggest weakness of the theology of pluralism and a theology of dialogue is their concern for finding

the truth-value of religion. Through these approaches, religious diversity is only dealt with insofar as it can fit in with the dominant beliefs that prevail in the classroom. Therefore the short answer to the question posed by Chidester about how religious diversity can be dealt with in a religion education programme is by ensuring that religion in education is based on a program of education. If approached in this manner, religious diversity can be handled in the fair and equitable manner envisioned in the 2003 Policy and the 1996 Constitution.

The second question that Fairclough poses is: What identities are set up for those involved in the programming or story? Who are the characters and how are they depicted?

The role of the teacher is crucial in terms of both the religion education policy in particular as well as religion education theory in general. According to the 2003 Policy, only qualified teachers registered with the South African Council of Educators can teach religion education. Teachers are required by the policy to teach religion education in the prescribed manner regardless of their own views and the onus is on the school administration to decide which teachers are suitable candidates for teaching religion education. The national norms and standards for educators document states that all teachers have a responsibility to “practice and promote a critical, committed, and ethical attitude towards developing a sense of respect and responsibility towards others” (DoE, 2003:15). The 2003 Policy considers religion education as one area of learning where the practice of this responsibility is crucial. According to scholar of religion in education Gordon Mitchell, the religion education teacher is concerned with both what is being taught and how it is being taught. Mitchell et al. claim that the teacher acts as a “role model by providing fair and unprejudiced information” (1993: 13). The 2003 policy pledges to address serious backlogs in teacher training about religion education by providing text-books, workshops and other resources for preparing teachers for the challenges of teaching religion education. Therefore, in thinking about identities in terms of discourse analysis about religion education on *Siyakholwa*, it is pertinent to note the teaching

style of the character that is scripted as the educator, since according to both policy and theory the teacher is burdened with a number of responsibilities.

MUSA: Oh hello Dudu. Is something the matter?

DUDU: Molweni Bab Musa. Yes, I've got an important project I have to do for school my teacher gave me a special task to do.

MUSA: Tell me about this special task Dudu

DUDU: You know that the Jewish school in Bonneville?

MUSA: Yes...

DUDU: Well the grade 4 class from the Jewish school and the grade 4 class from my school are doing presentations on each other's religion.

MUSA: So what do you need to do?

DUDU: I need to learn all about Judaism and then make a beautiful chart with all that information for my new friends at the Jewish school...

MUSA: What a lovely project, Dudu now you and your Jewish friends will learn about each other's culture and religion.

DUDU: There is so much information...what am I going to do?

MUSA: Dudu you can't know everything about Judaism in just a few days there are many learned men and women of the religion that are still learning new things every day.

DUDU: So this is a hopeless task Bab Musa. I should just give up!

MUSA: No Dudu, you can't give up! I always say the best place to start is at the beginning.

DUDU: Can you help me start at the beginning Bab Musa?

MUSA: Of course Dudu, let me see... The Jewish people believe themselves to be the descendants of Abraham.

DUDU: Like Father Abraham in the song?

DUDU: (SINGS A BIT FROM THE SONG) Father Abraham has many sons and many sons had father Abraham....

MUSA: Hehehehe. Yes Dudu the same Abraham that the Christians and the Muslims believe in. Now the Jews believe that Abraham and God made a special agreement, a covenant.

DUDU: Ai Bab Musa a covenant is where nuns live. I think you are confused.

MUSA: No Dudu, nuns like Sister Monica from Stellenbosch live in a convent. A covenant is a special promise between God and the people. Abraham promised God that he would obey him and teach his people the right way and God promised Abraham and his people that he would reward them for their obedience to him.....

MUSA: Absentmindedly: Perhaps I should say Hashem.

DUDU: Who is Hashem?

MUSA: Hashem is one of the names that Jews call God...

DUDU: One of the names? How many are there Bab Musa.

MUSA: There a five names Dudu and the fifth one is so holy that Jews do not even say it the way it is written. In everyday conversation they refer to God as Hashem.

DUDU: So Bab Musa, Judaism, let me see if I have it right...Judaism started when God chose Father Abraham and made a special promise called a covenant with him.

MUSA: You've got it Dudu. I think you are ready to start your project.

DUDU: I think so too Bab Musa. (Siyakholwa Season 4: Judaism, 2010)

In this scene Musa takes on the role of the educator. Dudu acts as the willing learner in this interaction. The educator and the learner in this scene are performing for the benefit of the invisible audience (another identity that is hailed) at home. Although Musa is scripted as an authority figure he is indicating there are limitations to what one can learn about another's religions tradition. Abraham the patriarch and Jewish people are scripted as off-screen characters. By mentioning Abraham's position in Islam and Christianity, members of these communities are also integrated into the scene and thus play a role although inactive. The role of the teacher in religion education cannot be over-emphasized. As the curriculum content changes, it is imperative that teachers are developed in a way that ensures that they have a broad-based, in-depth understanding of the subject matter, particularly when dealing with religion. Teaching materials for religion education suggest that in order for teachers to embody constitutional and educational policy about diversity in the classroom, teachers need to learn as much about the social, political, economic, cultural and religious backgrounds of each student in their class. Although in every episode Musa's interaction is primarily with Dudu, his secondary audience is the viewers at home. While it is not possible for Musa as the teacher to know the background of every viewer, it is clear from the above interaction that SABC editorial policy about religion and education has informed the way in which Musa has been scripted as the teacher. In the excerpt above, he is attentive to Dudu's needs and addresses her anxieties in a direct yet empathetic way. Musa has guided Dudu through her dilemma by using the interpretive approach to the subject under discussion. He offers a broad introduction to Judaism and the historical Jewish people. Although his dialogue does not deal with the diversity of experience, this limitation can be overlooked because this interaction has been scripted as a basic introduction. Musa also leads Dudu through the process of interpretation by allowing her to draw on her own experiences with some terms that he uses. Reflexivity is briefly touched on later in the same episode when Dudu, now full of

confidence, discusses her presentation with Musa. Once again we see how television can provide an additional pedagogical tool for teaching an important school subject for which there is limited space in the school curriculum.

The third question that Fairclough sets is: What are the relationships set up between those involved?

Fairclough indicates that relationships are basically determined by power relations and suggests that by examining the power relations between the characters of a particular text one is able to gain insight into the semiotic processes at play. Chidester et al. (1994) claim that whether or not religion education will succeed largely depends on the quality of the interactions between teachers and students. In *Siyakholwa* the relationships among the on-screen characters are fluid. The on-screen characters are scripted as authority figures and knowledge seekers interchangeably and at times even the audience is hailed as sites of knowledge. The theme of exploration runs throughout the programme. The authority of the series' primary characters, Thandi, Musa and Dudu, is limited through the way that they are scripted.

INT SET - DAY

*(THANDI AND THE CHILDREN ARE ALL ON THEIR HANDS AND KNEES
IN THE STUDIO MAKING FOOTPRINTS AND HANDPRINTS WITH PAINT
ON A LARGE PIECE OF WHITE PAPER)*

*THANDI: Molweni Sanibonani and welcome to Siyakholwa: We believe.
Today we are going to be talking about the beginnings of mankind. Have you
ever heard of a man called Darwin? He had theory that all of us are*

descended from monkeys. Yes, monkeys. Some religions don't agree with this and say God created us. Either way we are going to be talking about those first people and what their lives must have been like.

(CHILDREN CHEER YES. THANDI TURNS TO CAMERA)

THANDI: We are going to be having a lot of fun today. You are welcome to join us. (Siyakholwa Season Two: The First People, 2008)

By having Thandi restate the idea of evolution from primates, she is acknowledging that some of the viewers may find this concept difficult to comprehend. Additionally, it can be interpreted as her own struggle to understand this theory of evolution, which given the religious make-up of South Africa could reflect the state of understanding of the viewers. By allowing the presenter to present the views of others and not necessarily stating her own, she is not portrayed as an expert in the field and therefore maintains the role of presenter of ideas as opposed to authority on all subjects. Mitchell et al. explain that a descriptive as opposed to a doctrinal approach should be the teaching approach for religion education. According to Mitchell et al. (1993), more controversial topics can be discussed using this approach without undermining the beliefs of learners who hold conflicting views about certain topics. Using the example of the practice of infant baptism, they explain that a descriptive approach to this topic would avoid evaluating the truth value and instead focus on exploring the reasons behind the differences in practice. In the same episode, "The First People," Dudu and Musa discuss evolution:

DUDU: Hello, Musa.

MUSA: Hello Dudu.

DUDU: Is it true that we are from monkeys?

MUSA: Some people believe that, but others believe God created us when he created the rest of the world.

DUDU: Where do you think that was, Musa?

MUSA: Well, the birth place of mankind is supposed to be right here in Africa.

DUDU: Really? This is where the first people came from?

MUSA: That's right.

DUDU: How do you know?

MUSA: There are people who spend their lives looking for pieces of the past.

DUDU: Where?

MUSA: All around us. In the ground. They are filled with passion about the past.

DUDU: What are these people called?

MUSA: They are called archaeologists.

DUDU: It sounds like a very interesting job.

MUSA: It is also a lot of hard work.

DUDU: How do I become an archaeologist?

MUSA: You have to work very hard and go to University.

DUDU: So I better do my best at school.

MUSA: That's right, but archaeology is a very important job. Our history helps us understand we have come from. Some finds are even put in museums for the rest of the world to look at.

DUDU: That sounds very exciting.

MUSA: You can read more about archaeology in a library book. I'll find one for you. (Siyakholwa Season Two: The First People, 2008)

From this dialogue we can once again see that although Musa obviously has some idea of what evolution is about, by referring to the field of archaeology he is suggesting that there are others who are better equipped to deal with the science of this topic. Dudu's interest in becoming an archaeologist also reinforces the idea that children can produce their own knowledge. While Dudu is traditionally scripted as the young enquiring mind, she also shows a capacity for independent reasoning and understanding

In this analysis I have merged methodology from media studies and religious studies in order to conduct a critical discourse analysis of the content of *Siyakholwa*. As Fairclough suggests, I will be referring to representations, identities and relations as categories of evaluation as well using the values of religion in education and broadcasting found in policy documents to evaluate the pedagogical suitability of *Siyakholwa* for religion education. Additionally, the three main categories of Jackson's (1996) interpretive approach—representation, interpretation and reflexivity—will be referred to. In this regard, I am applying an interdisciplinary approach that other authors have often noted is lacking in the field of religion and the media. My analysis considers the socio-political as well as the technical aspects of television production that influence the ways in which religion is presented on public service television.

In the 2003 Religion Education policy it is stated that the practice of religion education in public institutions must stem directly from the constitutional values of "citizenship, human

rights, equality, freedom from discrimination and freedom of conscience religion, thought, belief and opinion". The policy also states that public institutions in general have a responsibility to reflect an appreciation for "the spiritual and non-material aspects of life" in a way that is different to religious instruction. Here the crucial distinction between the teaching of religion and teaching about religion is clear in national policy. In the introduction to the policy, Minister of Education Kader Asmal clearly articulates the highly valued position of religion in the "new" South African democracy by making reference to the co-operative relationship between the state and religion. He claims that the main purpose of the 2003 policy is to "extend the concept of equity to the relationship between religion and education, in a way that recognizes the rich religious diversity of our land". The 2003 Policy provided a completely new way of thinking about and engaging with religion in education in a post-apartheid context and in many ways expands on the meaning and role of religion in South Africa that is established in the 1996 Constitution. The policy provides a blueprint for engaging with religion for not only South African schools but also for all public institutions in the democracy.

The policy identifies six core national priorities with which the policy for religion in education must be consistent. It states that the practice of religion education in public schools will be tested against these values. In this chapter, I will evaluate *Siyakholwa* against these values. Below is a summary of these values:

1) Equity

In terms of the policy, equity refers to two ideas. The first is reparation for the unequal access to resources and knowledge as a result of the policy of separate development of the previous dispensation. Secondly, equity in education refers to the dual task of building a unified national democratic culture that respects and appreciates the diversity of culture, religion and language. Under this caption, religion in education is expected to fulfil the national motto of “Diverse people unite”.

2) Tolerance

The policy states that religion in education must contribute to creating and maintaining religious toleration between different religious groups. Amenable interfaith and multi-religious relationships are therefore considered a national priority that the policy is tasked with addressing.

3) Diversity

Diversity is also mentioned as a value of religion in education. This aspect of religion education refers to a curriculum that teaches multi-religious knowledge by teaching learners about the many different religions of South Africa and the world. The educational purpose of religion education is once again emphasized and this value stresses the importance of a multi-faith approach in the curriculum.

4) Openness

The value of openness reinforces the educational purposes of religion in public education. Through this value, the idea of “overt” or “covert” religious indoctrination through religion education is completely rejected and renounced as unconstitutional.

5) Accountability

“As systems of human accountability, religions cultivate moral values and ethical commitments that can be recognized as resources for learning and as vital contributions to nation building.”

6) Social Honour

This value, in line with constitutional policy, pledges to honour religious, cultural and linguistic diversity of learners and to not allow the “covert . . . or overt denigration of any religion of secular world-view.”

The 1996 Schools Act makes clear the role that the South African public school plays in upholding the values of the Constitution. By the same token, the 1999 Broadcasting Act articulates the role that the public broadcasters must play in upholding the values the

constitutional democracy. As public institutions, both schools and public service television have a mandate to teach about religion in the multi-faith, educationally-focused manner articulated in the 2003 Religion Education policy, the constitution and editorial policy regarding broadcasting.

By using the six national priorities and values in education stated in the policy for Religion Education, I will evaluate the content of *Siyakholwa*. In order to do so, I will work with the grids provided in the previous chapter and also samples of script dialogue from a number of episodes.

Equity

The RE policy clearly states that religion education must cover the spectrum of religions in South Africa. The policy is explicit in its use of a multi-faith approach to religion in education. According to the SABC editorial policy on religion broadcasting, faith-specific programming is given to the major religions of South Africa in order to afford these groups a space for self-expression and celebration of their religions. The amount of airtime that each major religion is afforded is primarily determined by a system of “parity of esteem”. According to the SABC, the major religions of South Africa, based on census figures, are Christianity, African Religion, Islam, Judaism, and Hinduism. According to Chidester, “all religious communities were in principle granted equal respect but differential allocation of time based on calculations, subject to adjustment, of the country’s religious demography (2006: 71).” Therefore, although all religions are considered equal and are protected by SABC editorial policy from being discriminated against in the faith-specific programming of

another religious group, that equity is not translated into equal broadcasting time on public service television. The SABC justifies its position by explaining that there is very little airtime available. Additionally, the organization is committed to providing religion with meaningful broadcasting times “that are not confined to Sundays or the fringes of programme schedules but [are] placed at times when audiences are available and . . . broadcast on days that are appropriate to individual religions” (SABC Policy, 42).

The guidelines for multi-faith programming are relatively straight-forward. The SABC stipulates that multi-faith programming should promote religious dialogue and positive interfaith relationships based on respect and understanding. This thesis argues that the 2003 Religion Education policy provides the necessary tools for achieving what the SABC sets out to do through its religious broadcasting editorial policy.

In the first season of *Siyakholwa* there were a total of 17 episodes that had a multi-faith theme. The five major religions were each represented with between 1 and 3 episodes. Although not considered one of the major religions, both Buddhism and the Baha’i Faith were represented in a faith-specific episode. The rest of the season included 22 life-orientation episodes. On *Siyakholwa*, in line with a multi-faith approach, the major religions of South Africa as determined by the SABC, along with minority religious groups, are represented over the course of the series. Although each of the religious traditions is not given the same number of faith-specific episodes, it can be seen that the disparity in the numbers of episodes was a direct result of the coinciding of the sacred calendar of the religious tradition with the broadcasting of the series. For instance, Islam was given three

episodes because both the beginning of Ramadan and the celebration of Eid-ul Fitr, two significant events for Muslims, fell within the broadcast run of the first season of the series.

I argue that a system of “parity of esteem” is not useful for determining the content of a religion education programme such as *Siyakholwa*. Religious literacy can be taught by prioritizing a multi-religious model of teaching which is focussed on the common themes that religions may share as opposed to isolated accounts of one religious tradition. Gordon Mitchell et al. (1993) suggest that religion education for a non-racial South Africa use the following framework as a guideline for preparing teaching content:

1. Doctrines
2. Sacred Stories
3. Religious Ethics
4. Ritual
5. Religious Experience
6. Religious Institutions
7. Sacred Space
8. Sacred Time
9. Sacred Objects
10. Sacred Persons
11. Material Culture

As Mitchell et al. (1993: 12) suggest, “Any one particular aspects of a religion or religious tradition may be compared with something similar to be found in another religious tradition. For example creation stories or festivals, or scared places of different religions may be

compared”. The multi-faith episodes are based on a theme that is common across two or more religious traditions. I will refer to the episode, “Religious Leaders”, from the first season of *Siyakholwa* in order to evaluate how the multi-faith approach is used.

In the first segment, Thandi describes the functions of a religious leader to the audiences and asks the audiences to guess who it is that she is describing.

“I want you to tell me who the people I am talking about are. I am going to tell you all the things they do, and you should guess who they are. Are you ready to guess? Okay, let me tell you what these people do.

They are there for us from when we are born until we get old. When a child is born, they are there to pray for the child’s health. They teach people about God and about life. They baptize people. They go to ceremonies of growing up. They perform marriages. In time of trouble they offer comfort. They go to hospitals, to nursing homes and to prisons to give people hope. They even come to funerals to give people decent burials.”

(TO STUDIO KIDS) Who are they?

“They are religious leaders. I am talking about Bishops, preachers, pastors, deacons, priests, Rabbis, Imams, and all the religious leaders you know” (Siyakholwa Season 1; Religious Leaders, 2007).

Although Thandi claims that the figure she is describing is “all the religious leaders you know”, she only specifically mentions religious leaders from three religious traditions, Christianity, Judaism and Islam. In the live action segment the question is posed: “What are

a Rabbi, Priest, and Imam?” Once again we can see that the focus is specifically on religious leaders from the Abrahamic religious traditions. The rest of the episode generally discusses the role that religious leaders play in their communities. However, the Abrahamic overtones are clear throughout. In the Puppet skits, Bab Musa is preparing to lead the sermon for a priest friend who is ill. The fact that other religions besides Judaism, Christianity and Islam also have religious leaders is not made clear as is illustrated in the final segment of the episode:

THANDI: “Did you hear what Musa said about Moruti Mqwathi. That’s what a religious leader should be. He or she should have deep love and respect for the people. That is what religious leaders have? When we lose hope in life we turn to religious leaders for help. They comfort us. They are the ones who make sure that churches, temples or mosques go well” (Siyakholwa Season 1: Religious Leaders, 2007).

Although the episode can be considered multi-faith in that more than one religious tradition is discussed, the representation of religious leaders in this episode is problematic as it does not include references to religious leaders who function outside of the Abrahamic paradigm. In an episode from season 4 entitled Sacred Spaces, the diversity of religious experience is dealt with in a more nuanced manner.

The episode does, however, meet the requirements of SABC religious broadcasting editorial policy and national policy on religion in education as well as pedagogical practice for religion education. The episode is educational in character, a goal of both the SABC and the national government as articulated by the Department of Education. The episodes cover topics such as social responsibility, the human search for meaning and also offers insights that can play a significant role in increasing “religious literacy”. Additionally the episodes cover the themes of religious ethics, religious experiences, religious institutions, sacred persons and material

culture as suggested by Mitchell et al. (1993). Therefore, equity in religion education is not only about the curriculum space or broadcasting time allocated to different religious traditions but also about how knowledge about religion is represented.

Similar to the way that discourse analysis is concerned with how the world is represented in a text, the interpretive approach to religion education puts emphasis on the way that religions are represented through pedagogy. Both broadcast and religion education policy indicate the importance of representing the diversity of religion and religious experiences. Jackson (2011) emphasizes the importance of avoiding essentialising or stereotyping religion and portraying overly simplistic representations of religion and culture.

THANDI: Did you enjoy learning that sacred place? Do you remember when we visited the Buddhist Temple in Bronkhorstspuit? Buddhists go there to learn and pray but many have shrines in their homes. These shrines are sometimes very fancy but can be as simple as one bowl with incense and a candle and some flowers and also a small food offering for Buddha.

THANDI: (Looks over to the children and then back)

You must wonder what we're doing. We are all working together to build a kraal which is a very important part of African religion.

Africans believe that their ancestors were farming people and that they kept their cattle in kraals, cattle are a very important part of African culture as they are used for food and also as sacrifice to the ancestors to thank them for looking after the community. Sacrifice of the animals take place in the kraal and it is a very special

and well-planned ritual. Some people go to the kraal to speak to the ancestors and ask their advice.

In the past people used to be buried in the kraal today the dead are buried in a graveyard but when a child is born the senior man of the family will go to the kraal and thank the ancestors and also with the help of some people in the community perform a ritual which introduces the new child to the ancestors.

That's a lot of information but its important to remember that like all people all Africans do not practice their culture or religion same way. (Siyakholwa Season Four: Sacred Places, 2010)

By analysing the above text it is evident that an effort is made to ensure that the religious group discussed in the example is not homogenised. The presenter has been scripted to use nuanced language that allows for differences in religious practice and belief. However, in the third paragraph when Thandi begins her line with “Africans” the impression is created that all Africans believe what she is saying. However, this point is qualified in the last paragraph.

The representation of religion has proven to be problematic in the following faith-specific episodes.

THANDI: Today, friends, I'm wearing a sari. A sari is a piece of fabric, which is usually about 4 or 5 meters long, and worn by Hindu women around the world. The most popular way of wearing a sari is to have it wrapped around your waist and

draped over one shoulder – like I'm wearing it today. Saris come in a whole bunch of colours, and sometimes certain colours need to be worn on special occasions.

I'm also wearing a bindi (POINTS TO IT). A bindi is a red dot worn by Indian women to show that they are married, similar to a wedding ring.

Let's go see what our friends have to say about the Bindi as well as their own cultures. (Siyakholwa Season Four: Hinduism, 2010).

The language used creates and then reinforces the idea that saris are the everyday dress of Hindu woman. While this may in fact be the norm in India, the South African context reflects a different reality. While the presenter alludes to the fact that different colour saris are worn for different occasions, the conscious employment of the interpretive method would have mentioned the sari as Indian national-traditional dress and then reflected on the contextual reality in South Africa. The rest of the episode discusses Hindu iconography and history in a generic fashion and does not address diversity within the tradition. It does not reference specifically South African Hindu examples and as a result fails to focus this religious tradition in the context that the viewers are most likely to experience it. In his discussion of representation, Jackson (2011) provides a series of test questions for researchers and developers of pedagogies to refer to when analysing data. These questions relate to the portrayal of religious traditions, paying attention particularly to stereotyping and homogenising. The research questions ask the developer of pedagogy to pay attention to diversity, additional spiritual or ethical influences, and the ability of individuals to combine traditional elements of religion with more “post-modern” ideas. The questions also ensure that they have an understanding of individual experience of knowledge of the religious

tradition dealt with and pay attention to the effects that the socio-political environment can have on the representation of groups and individuals.

Representation is therefore not only about how a group is perceived through pedagogical tools, whether in the classroom or on television. Representation is also concerned with how a particular group is presented in its unique set of social and political circumstance and considers how these conditions can affect the ways in which the group is perceived from inside and outside.

Tolerance

The policy states that building a unified national democratic culture is also part of the value underpinning the religion education policy. In the entire run of the series to date a total of almost 16% of *Siyakholwa* episodes have directly addressed South African national holidays and constitutional values of human-rights, equality and freedom of expression.

The educational and nation-building purposes of Religion Education are consistently emphasized in the 2003 Policy. In the national policy document Minister Asmal accentuates the relationship between the policy and the constitution which forms its foundation. In light of South Africa's apartheid history, the policy highlights tolerance as an essential part of nation-building and religion education. The policy states:

Religion Education is education about diversity for a diverse society. As apartheid barriers dissolve, the classroom will increasingly become a space of linguistic,

cultural, and religious diversity. Schools must create an overall environment - a social, intellectual, emotional, behavioural, organisational, and structural environment - that engenders a sense of acceptance, security, and respect for pupils with differing values, cultural backgrounds, and religious traditions. Schools should also show an awareness and acceptance of the fact that values do not necessarily stem from religion, and that not all religious values are consistent with our Constitution. By teaching about religious and secular values in an open educational environment, schools must ensure that all pupils, irrespective of race, creed, sexual orientation, disability, language, gender, or class, feel welcome, emotionally secure, and appreciated. (DoE 2003: 13).

The importance of religion as a nation-building tool in post-apartheid South Africa cannot be over-emphasized. Additionally, tolerance is highlighted as an important outcome of multi-faith and faith-specific programming according to religious broadcasting policy. In both policies, tolerance is not considered in a superficial manner. Rather, tolerance is seen as a state of acceptance based on the understanding and appreciation of the differences of other people. South Africans are not asked to be tolerant because the constitution mandates it but because they have come to understand and appreciate religions, values and cultures of the “others”. In this regard, the government has undertaken a number of nation-building projects of which religion in education is only one.

Closely related to interpretation is the third component in the interpretive method, reflexivity. The interpretive approach is not only about increasing knowledge but as Jackson (2011) explains this pedagogical tool is also about increasing understanding. In order to reach this

outcome, active learner involvement in the form of “reflexivity” is promoted. According to Jackson (2011: 193), “Reflexivity is understood as the relationship between the experience of researchers/students and the experience of those whose way of life they are trying to interpret.” Reflexivity asks learners to consider the affect that their new learning has had on their world-view. It also asks the learner to re-assess their own understanding of their world view based on what they have learnt. This process is called edification. Jackson notes that edification cannot be guaranteed by the pedagogue but suggests that opportunities for reflection can be orchestrated in the class room. Reflexivity goes beyond the goal of religious literacy. Jackson (2011) suggests that by learning to recognize the other learners are prepared to carry over what have learned into their societies in a positive way. As Jackson explains, “The approach helps learners to engage with difference. Whatever differences there might appear to be between the students’ world view and the way of life being studied, there may also be points of contact and overlap as well as common elements. What might appear to be entirely different on first acquaintance can end up linking with the learners own experience in ways that challenge unquestioned assumptions” (2011: 5). Bearing in mind that Jackson’s theory about religious education, the interpretive approach, was developed for a religiously pluralistic society, it can provide important insight into how to religion education should be taught both in the classroom and on television.

The desired outcomes of reflexivity as a pedagogical tool reflects the goals of the religion in education policy as well as those set out in SABC editorial policy for religious broadcasting. Additionally, reflexivity can be seen as an important part of the nation-building project of the South African government in that both individual diversity and collective unity are prioritized as learning outcomes.

Openness, Accountability and Social Honour

The reflexive process can also be used as an instrument to for managing the religion education values of openness, accountability and social honour. The Religion Education policy consistently emphasizes the educational purpose of teaching and learning about religion in public schools, but has however faced opposition since the initial stages of its development. Chidester has written extensively about opposition from many different areas against the implementation of a multi-faith, educationally-focused religion education in schools. Opponents of the policy rejected Minister Asmal's the constitutionally-based policy for religion in education by arguing that he had misinterpreted the Constitution and that the governing bodies of schools in conjunction with teaching staff and administrators should have the freedom to determine the religious ethos of their school (2006: 69). In these reactions, we can see a pattern of opposition between the South African citizens and the Constitution. In their qualitative analysis of data gathered by the PEW Forum on Tolerance and Tension between Muslim and Christian groups in Sub-Saharan Africa, Chidester and Settler (2010) found evidence that supports the above claim. They found that only 54% of South Africans support democracy, 66% of Christians would like the Bible to replace the law of the land and that while 79% of Christians claim to not know much about Islam, 63% of those interviewed concluded that Christianity and Islam are "very different". This tension between constitutional ideals and public opinion is indicative of the role that religion education can play in building crucial understanding both about religion and between religious groups.

Some worried that removing Christian instruction in schools would endanger the souls of young children by removing the supposed divine protection that Christianity affords. Accidental demon possession as a by-product of learning about indigenous religions was also put forward as a Christian concern. Mitchell et al. clearly state that the role of the teacher in religion education is “descriptive rather than evangelical” (1993: 13). The teacher of religion education must act as a role model for providing “fair and un-prejudiced information”. Through these guidelines, concerns about the indoctrination of children can be allayed. In *Siyakholwa* the characters are scripted to portray information in an unbiased manner. While Thandi is acting as an educator, her personal belief system can make a valuable contribution to the way in which learners receive the subject. Mitchell et al. warn that if the teacher is too detached learners may not grasp the social value of the subject and regard it as academic and perhaps irrelevant. In the same episode, Thandi’s own faith is articulated in a subtle manner.

INT. STUDIO. DAY

(THANDI IS SITTING WITH THE CHILDREN HOLDING A ROSARY.)

THANDI: Have a look at this boys and girls. It is called a rosary.

(THANDI HANDS IT TO THE CHILDREN WHO PASS IT AROUND)

THANDI: The Catholics use it in their prayers, also called devotions, to God. Each one of those beads is a prayer. The word beads come from the Old Saxon word ‘bede’ which means prayer. You hold the beads in your hands and when you have finished one prayer you move your finger to the next bead and start again, like this.

(THANDI DEMONSTRATES)

THANDI: A Rosary is a very common symbol of the Catholic Church.

THANDI: Did you recognize that song? If you go to Sunday school I am sure you did. It talks about how God holds all of us in his hands. Isn't that a nice thought? It makes me feel safe to think that I am cradled in God's hands and he cares for each and every one of us. Today is a very special day for me. My best friend is christening her child today and I am going to be her Godmother. That is a very special honour. You usually buy gifts made of silver for a child's christening and this is what I have bought my Godchild. A silver moneybox. Christening or baptism is a part of being a member of the Catholic Church which we will be discussing today. (Siyakholwa Season 4: The Catholic Church: 2010).

The 2003 Religion Education policy directly addresses the concerns that opponents of religion education may have about the supposed religious implications of the subject through the values of openness, accountability and social honour that underpin the policy. Under the values of openness and social honour it is clearly stated that the indoctrination of children in any form is impermissible. Additionally, it is also stated that the disparagement of any religious groups will not be permitted. The process of reflexivity offers tools for dealing with clashes in opinions and negative stereotyping that are often a result of misinformation or socialization. By constantly inviting the student to find common features in the religious lives of others and to make a conscious effort to try and understand and appreciate differences, religion education uses religion as a valuable resource for learning about the lives of fellow citizens.

Moore (1991) indicated the ability of education to address social injustices. Chidester et al. (1994) posed the question, “Can the curriculum for religion education be designed to redress forms of social injustice, such as racism and sexism, in education?” According to the 2003 Policy, religion education is a part of the school curriculum because it contributes to the practice of values such as social justice and nation-building that are held in high esteem by the Constitution. The policy also clearly states that religion education’s feature as “education about diversity for a diverse society” is about creating an awareness of diversity in all its forms. As the policy states, “By teaching about religious and secular values in an open educational environment, schools must ensure that all pupils, irrespective of race, creed, sexual orientation, disability, language, gender, or class, feel welcome, emotionally secure, and appreciated” (DoE 2003:13). The policy recognises that some religious values may be inconsistent with the values of the Constitution and that religion can be used as a basis for discrimination. Furthermore, the policy clearly recognises that values such as equality, social justice and fairness do not only come from religions, “At the same time, many South Africans draw their understanding of the world, ethical principles, and human values from sources independent of religious institutions. The policy positions religion as one among many value systems that embody moral values” (DoE, 2003: 7). Chidester posed the question, “What is the relation between religion education and moral education?” According to the 2003 Policy, moral education is part and parcel of religion education.

Siyakholwa addresses the broader goals of social justice and nation-building articulated in the 2003 policy in its life orientation episodes. In the first season 19 out of 52 episodes dealt with morals and values from a so-called secular perspective. Topics like human rights and children’s rights were addressed from a historical and constitutional perspective. Other topics

included Youth Day and Freedom Day, which were approached as nation-building projects. In Season 2 just under half of the total episodes had a life-orientation theme. Seasons 4 and 5 each had a total of 9 life orientation episodes out of 25. *Siyakholwa* has clearly embraced the teaching of moral values as advised by the 2003 Policy.

The interpretive method expects the learner to investigate, examine, compare and contrast what they learn about other religious traditions with what they know about their own religious traditions. This approach therefore seeks to create empathy in the learner by building a real understanding for the religious concepts, symbols and experiences of others. As Jackson (2011: 192) observes, “the approach is very concerned with understanding religious language and discourse and therefore with religious literacy, including issues of translation.” Accordingly, a learner is prepared, by this approach, for the event where they cannot find a familiar equivalent of another’s in their own tradition. This method is also useful for assisting in dispelling negative stereotypes that learners may have assumed about other religious traditions. This interpretation method uses methods of “comparison and contrast” between what the learner knows about their own religion and what the insider explains about theirs. As Jackson (2011: 190) explains, “The other aspect of this hermeneutical approach lies in applying the model of representation—moving to and fro between individuals in the context of their groups and the wider religious tradition.”

The puppet Dudu is scripted into an ideal situation to show the practice of interpretation. As she prepares to find information on a topic that she knows very little about, she indicates how overwhelmed she is. Musa (who in this particular scene takes on the role of the educator) first encourages her to pursue the project and not to expect to know everything about the given

topic. As the educator to Dudu and the invisible audience at home, he is indicating there are limitations to what one can learn about another's religious tradition. Bearing in mind the target audience age of between 5-10 years old, his response is brief enough for the viewership to understand. He then encourages Dudu to move from a place of knowledge (the concept of Abraham the patriarch) to the unknown (the use of the word *Hashem* for God). Throughout this interaction, the viewers at home are addressed by mentioning Abraham's position in Judaism, Islam and Christianity and cross-referencing the concepts of covenants and promises.

While the aim of the *Siyakholwa* is to teach about religion and increase the viewer's knowledge and understanding of the material presented in each episode, I find that *Siyakholwa* falls short in encouraging the reflexive process. Given the one-sided nature the medium, television does not allow for a productive dialogue in this regard, since there is no space for spontaneous or retrospective engagement with the material.

Although the material does encourage reflection through the presenter asking questions of the viewers and suggesting they engage in more research, unlike in the traditional classroom setting constructive criticism, questions and enquiry cannot be raised and addressed. Reflexivity aims to create "a conversational form of learning" through a dialogue between the "material provided by the teacher and the knowledge and experience of the participants" (Jackson, 2011: 192). While *Siyakholwa* does attempt to create conversational learning by anticipating questions that viewers might have, the participation of learners in studio and through the *Let's Talk* segment is limited. Practical production concerns relating to the budget of the production do not allow for active engagement with viewers. This is one area that I

find particularly problematic. The pre-recorded nature of the production leaves no room for a dialogue between the characters in *Siyakholwa* land and the viewers at home. Therefore, while *Siyakholwa* endeavours to teach religion education, it does not allow for an engaged interaction among the viewers and the characters. If *Siyakholwa*'s structural format remains the same, little can be done to develop the reflexive process. However, if the format of the show becomes more interactive, this could be changed.

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Chapter 5

Conclusion

Chidester (2006) has argued that the 2003 Religion in Education policy is a part of the nation-building project of the constitutional state. The constitutional state, as a part of the South African democracy, is concerned with the promulgation of the constitutional values of non-racism, non-sexism, equality and freedom of expression. In light of the previous dispensation's unequal approach to religion in education, the 2003 policy provides the framework to ensure that South African schools extend these values into the curriculum through a religion education programme. In this study, I have found that through its content *Siyakholwa* embodies the core values of the constitutional state. The curriculum that *Siyakholwa* provides situates the study of religion within the human-rights framework provided by the Constitution. Through adopting a religion education approach, *Siyakholwa* offers a multi-faith religious education that is focuses on educational and social outcomes that essentially contribute to the nation-building aims advanced by the Constitution. The educational focus of *Siyakholwa* directly reflects the pedagogy of religion education that is expressed in the 2003 Religion Education policy and in the work of leading scholars of religion and education. Through an examination of the content it has been found that *Siyakholwa* generally remains consistent with its constitutional framework when dealing with multi-faith, faith-specific and life orientation topics. To some degree, the constitutional idea of parity of esteem, particularly in the practice of providing faith-specific episodes for the five major religions, has been honoured. However, the educational approaches to these episodes are still in line with theory and method in religion education and result in a well-rounded curriculum that is a reflection of the South African lived reality. In terms of media representation, the discourse analysis provided in the previous chapter supports my claim that

Siyakholwa advocates the values of constitutional state by presenting a world that is informed by the values of human rights, religious pluralism and equality.

In light of the previous government's marginalisation of non-white people and their cultures, the 1996 Constitution pledges to protect and promote the right to cultural, linguistic and religious diversity of all South Africans. It has been shown in this thesis that this constitutional right to cultural diversity has led to various organisations having to find ways in which to manage cultural diversity in a fair and equitable manner. In this regard, as stated before, the SABC adopted a system of parity of esteem in order to manage cultural and religious diversity in public service broadcasting. I have already stated that *Siyakholwa* does not necessarily conform to this practice and in my opinion as primarily an educational project is not compelled to. I propose that the content of *Siyakholwa* and its management of religious diversity should be informed by religion education theory and practice which has been proven to provide constitutionally and educationally sound methods of engaging with content. Chidester (2006: 72) supports this idea: "In public education...on educational grounds, adherents of the majority religion might need greater exposure to the beliefs and practices of other religions in order to develop understanding and respect for religious diversity". As discussed, the interpretive approach provides useful suggestions for developing a pedagogical method that is sensitive to nuances in beliefs and practices. Additionally, instead of adopting a system of parity of esteem in order to manage religious diversity, curriculum suggestions based on learning outcomes can be used for dealing with content regarding religious diversity. The assessment standards for evaluating religion education in schools can be used to assist with addressing the cultural state's concern with managing religious diversity.

Grade R -Identifies and names symbols linked to own religion.

Grade 1 -Matches symbols associated with a range of religions in South Africa.

Grade 2 -Describes important days from diverse religions.

Grade 3 -Discusses diet, clothing and decorations in a variety of religions.

Grade 4 -Discusses significant places and buildings in a variety of religions.

Grade 5 -Discusses festivals and customs from a variety of religions.

Grade 6 -Discusses the dignity of the person in a variety of religions.

Grade 7 -Explains the role of oral traditions and scriptures in a range of the world's religions.

Grade 8 -Discusses the contributions of organisations from various religions to social development.

Grade 9 -Reflects on and discusses the contributions of various religions in promoting peace. (DoE 2003: 20)

I have pointed out that there have been instances in episodes when religious diversity has not been dealt with adequately and religious groups have been carelessly homogenised and ideas left open to unsubstantiated interpretation. It is my contention that these inadequacies in dealing with the nuances of religious diversity are a direct result of a general lack of engagement between the SABC and the Department of Education about *Siyakholwa*. Although the SABC and the DoE have collaborated on a number of educational productions, the same arrangement was not made for *Siyakholwa*. When evaluated against religion education policy and theory, *Siyakholwa* handles religious diversity adequately. However, if the themes it addresses in the series are consciously adopted from the content guidelines suggested by the Department of Education, the producers of *Siyakholwa* will be better equipped to navigate and present religious diversity in its content and the SABC will truly be fulfilling a quality pedagogical purpose.

After 1994, both the education system and the SABC underwent a total transformation. The racially-motivated, separatist policies of the previous government were a far cry from the values of democracy, unity and equality that the Constitution propagated and the new government adopted. The dramatic overhaul of policies about education and policies about broadcasting can largely be attributed to the implementation of the 1996 Constitution, which through its values compelled radical change in many areas of South African public life. Religion and education represent two areas of public life that were severely affected by the apartheid regimes. The changes in policy as a result of the change governance resulted in the approaches to religion in education and religion in broadcasting that have been adopted by the DoE and the SABC respectively. In this thesis, I have argued that the transformational state represents that part of the state where the constitutional values of a unified democracy along with the constitutional right to freedom of religion, culture and language are articulated in a manner that consistently articulates and reinforces the ideals of the “new” South Africa. In this thesis, I have argued that public service television as an additional pedagogical space for teaching religion education is both a site and instrument of the transformational state. Accordingly, I propose that through educational programming about religion in general and *Siyakholwa* in particular ideas of the constitutional state and the cultural state can be expressed and in this way the goal of a transformational state can be propagated. *Siyakholwa* can be seen as a site of the transformational state due to it being a part of the new policies for religious broadcasting. *Siyakholwa* is one programme that exists to ensure that this policy is fulfilled. *Siyakholwa* can be regarded as an instrument of the transformational state as a result of the content that it contains. I have argued that the content and pedagogy of *Siyakholwa* is in line with constitutional policy for religious pluralism and educational policy for religion in education. I have also shown that through a programme such as *Siyakholwa* the SABC in fact

identifies itself as a complementary educational resource for assisting with the national project of transforming education.

I have already noted that there are a number of potential limitations to using television as a pedagogical tool. However, given the common agendas of the SABC and DoE in regard to their constitutional, cultural and transformational commitments, I propose that through the establishment of a meaningful relationship between the DoE and the SABC issues relating to pedagogy and content can be resolved in an educationally sound manner that will reflect the DoE's commitment to religion education and the SABC's mandate to inform, educate and entertain.

This discussion about religious pluralism on public service television in South Africa has been positioned in relation to the apartheid past, the constitutional present, and a transformed future. Firstly it has been shown that in order to have a discussion about religion and the media in post-apartheid South Africa it is necessary to understand the ways in which the relationship between religion and the state during the apartheid era affected the relationships that religion had with various forms of media, including public service television. In this thesis, I have explained the relationship between the apartheid state and religion and have shown how this relationship ultimately led to an arrangement in which both religion and public service television were used as sites and instruments for reinforcing the state's racist social and political policies. The relationships among the state, religion and the public service broadcaster during the National Party's rule were but one area of public life where the ubiquitous nature of the apartheid ideology prevailed. In 1990, President F. W. de Klerk abolished the discriminatory laws that had officially shaped the landscape of South African

society. He also lifted the thirty-year ban on anti-apartheid groups, most notably the African National Congress. From then onward the complete dismantlement of apartheid through a series of negotiations with leading anti-apartheid groups commenced, climaxing with the first democratic elections on the 27th of April, 1994. This hints at my second point, that a study of religious pluralism on public service television in South Africa must be positioned within the constitutional present.

In the second chapter it was explained how freedom of religion is considered in the 1996 Constitution. I showed how the Constitution, as a response to the divisive policies of apartheid, was established to create a unified national identity based on the principle of universal human rights. I then highlighted how as a result of apartheid policies that privileged the cultural and religious lives of white South Africans over that of black South Africans the 1996 Constitution also pledged to protect and promote the right of all South Africans to practice a culture, religion and language of their choosing. Given the fact that South Africa is home to members of nearly all the world's religion, the constitutional protection granted to all religious groups solidified the state's commitment to celebrating the religious diversity of the nation. Religion, public service broadcasting and education were three areas of reform highlighted by the government. Through the development of new policies that were directly informed and mandated by the Constitution, the government began to reform these areas of public life. Although subject to certain constitutional limitations, the right to freedom of religion as stated in the Constitution is a reflection of the new South Africa's recognition of the religious diversity of its citizens, a fact that was largely neglected by the apartheid government. With the 1996 overhaul of the SABC policy and broadcasting practice, the adoption of the 1999 Broadcasting Act, and the transformation of education, the government

made a concerted effort to ensure that policy in line with the Constitution was implemented in practice.

The arrangement that exists among religion, state and the public service broadcaster today is directly related to the change in governance that was officially adopted in 1994. Additionally, the present-day relationships among these three areas of public life have been constructed with their past arrangement in mind and as such the new relationship between these areas has been constructed by the Constitution in light of the previous relationships. Through the adoption of a co-operative model of governance, the state and religion operate in separate domains yet through a constitutionally sanctioned relationship are granted permission to engage. Although a direct response to the repealing of the 1983 Constitution, the 1996 Constitution is a document concerned with remembering the past, managing the present and ensuring its survival in the future.

In terms of the future of South Africa, a discussion about religious pluralism on public service television begs the question of what meaning such a discussion holds for the transformational state. In this thesis, I have argued that public service television provides a pedagogical space for teaching about the constitutional value of religion pluralism. I have shown that the 1999 Broadcasting Act, which aligns itself with the democratic values of the Constitution, compels the South African Broadcasting Corporation to provide “a balance of information, education and entertainment meeting the broadcasting needs of the entire South African population in terms of age, race, gender, interests and backgrounds”. Generally, the SABC’s chief mandate in sum is to inform, educate and entertain. The SABC has interpreted that mandate as set out in the Broadcasting Act through their editorial policies and has

created a code of conduct for the organisation. The editorial policies lay out the organisation's approach to programming, news, language policy, and the SABC's dedication to ensuring universal access to its programming and its commitment to providing quality local content. Besides news and current affairs, religious broadcasting and education are the only genres of programming that are included in the editorial policies.

A reading of these policies clearly depicts the importance of these two areas to the SABC. The editorial policy on religious broadcasting states that in contrast to the SABC's approach to religion during the apartheid era, the SABC of the "new" South Africa commits to providing fair and equitable religious programming in order to correct the imbalances created as a result of apartheid. Additionally, the policy maintains that on the SABC "Religious programming should play a meaningful part in the moral regeneration of South Africa" (SABC Policy, 45). Similarly, the editorial policy about education highlights the role the SABC believes that broadcasting can play in rectifying the social and educational imbalances created by apartheid. In this part of the policy, the SABC recognises the lasting legacy of apartheid education. The organisation proposes that it is the duty of "all educational authorities, institutions and individuals" to play a role in contributing to the upliftment of the education system in South Africa and highlights the role that broadcasting can play in this regard. According to the SABC, "Complementary to what is offered by schools, colleges, higher education institutions and work place training, radio and television can make the most significant contribution to learning". Combined with its policy about religious broadcasting, through this statement the SABC has positioned public service television as an additional pedagogical space for teaching about religious pluralism in South Africa (SABC Policy, 48-50).

As a key component of the SABC, public service television articulates the values of the constitutional State through its relationship with the 1999 Broadcasting Act. Furthermore, the SABC addresses the concerns of the cultural state through its editorial policies through which the organisation deals with the management and representation of cultural diversity in programming. Finally, the SABC establishes itself as a crucial component of the transformational state by identifying the role that broadcasting can play in supporting national projects that are aimed at reinforcing the constitutional value of equality. The evidence provided has shown that religious broadcasting and education have been highlighted by the SABC as areas of transformation.

In this thesis I have shown that the SABC and the Department of Education as auxiliary bodies of the state share a number of constitutional, cultural and transformational responsibilities. Informed by the Constitution, the 1996 Schools Act defines South African public schools in the light of the apartheid past. The preamble to the Schools Act confirms the purpose of the act in reference to the inequalities in education as a result of the apartheid government's policies and commits to providing all South African children with a quality education. The Act clearly defines the South African School as a both a site and instrument for transformation. According to the Act, schools must "advance the democratic transformation of society, combat racism and sexism and all other forms of unfair discrimination and intolerance, contribute to the eradication of poverty and the economic well-being of society protect and advance our diverse cultures and languages, uphold the rights of all learners, parents and educators" (Schools Act, 1996). It is apparent that the school is also expected to advance the values of the constitutional state and the cultural state by advancing the values of a democracy while respecting, protecting and advancing the diversity of culture, language and religion in the school environment.

In the same way that the SABC recognized religion as an area of reform, so did the Department of Education in developing the Religion in Education Policy as a way to include religion in the school curriculum in a constitutionally-centred manner. The policy is primarily concerned with implementing a multi-faith, multi-tradition religion education programme in South African schools in order to promote the positive educational and social outcomes of such a programme. In the introduction of the Religion in Education Policy, the Department of Education referred to the role of religion during apartheid and positions the policy as a way of transforming that legacy. In committing to advancing the constitutional values of democracy and promoting the protection and appreciation of cultural diversity, the 2003 Policy aligns itself with the constitutional, cultural and transformational states.

At this point it is clear that the SABC and the DoE have a number of common values and goals. By examining their policies, it is evident that both these organisations are aligned with constitutional, cultural and transformational values of the state and that religion and education have been highlighted as key locations where these values can be articulated. In this thesis, I have consistently emphasized the importance of religion in education in the South African context. I have laid out the educational outcomes of this subject and motivated for the role that religion education can play in advancing nation-building. It has been clearly established that religion education is an educational, constitutional, cultural and transformational project of the South African state. Against this background, I have advanced my argument for using television as an additional public pedagogy for teaching and learning about religion, religions, and religious diversity.

In this thesis I have used the example of what I have found to be a religion education based SABC religious broadcasting production, *Siyakholwa*, to provide evidence of how my proposal can be evaluated in practice. Through describing the content of *Siyakholwa* and referring to religion education policy and theory, I have been able to conclude that *Siyakholwa* delivers content about religion in a manner that is aligned with national policy about religion in education. Additionally, I have found that *Siyakholwa* reflects the values of the constitutional, cultural and transformational states.

South African modern history can be distinguished into two main categories, apartheid South Africa and post-apartheid South Africa. While the apartheid era was defined by its discriminatory racial policies that were designed to ensure the separate and unequal development of the different race groups, the new democratic government defined itself as a constitutional democracy dedicated to the principles of human rights, equality, dignity and freedom. The apartheid government had left a legacy of social inequalities that has persisted in many areas of South African public life. It was obvious to the government that before the nation could be truly free from the past it would be necessary to take steps to rectify the injustices of the previous dispensation in order to construct a strong national identity that reflected the ideology of the “New South Africa”. Driven by constitutional values and compelled by a past of injustices, the new dispensation embarked on a number of national projects which were aimed at rebuilding the nation by reforming areas of public life which had previously been utilized as sites of oppression and discrimination. In this thesis, I have shown that religion education as a school subject and pedagogy offers a constitutionally sound method for teaching about religion in a multi-religious, multi-cultural country. In South Africa, where there is limited space in the curriculum to teach this subject, public service television provides an additional, complementary pedagogical space for teaching

about religion and ultimately contributing to building a South Africa where religious diversity is not just tolerated as a constitutionally protected right but also understood as an important and celebrated part of national life.

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