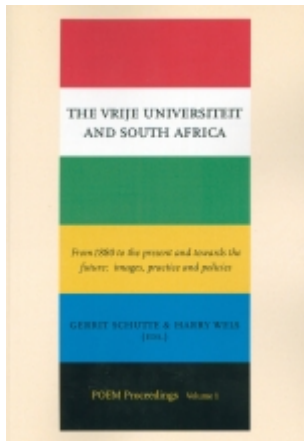# The Vrije Universiteit And South Africa ~ The Meaning Of Traditions For Future VU-Policy In South Africa?

Introduction

The organisers of the Conference proposed that this paper[i] should reflect on future relations between the Vrije Universiteit (VU) and South Africa (SA), 'with an eye for and knowledge of the traditions in which we stand and operate'.**[ii]** Amongst some others, I will address three aspects to uncover the importance of relations for the future South Africa-Vrije Universiteit involvement. As will be indicated, such relations are intimately linked to the traditions in which we stand, but they are also in need of redirection. For this, I will develop a few case studies, deliberately using relations between the Vrije Universiteit and South Africa as examples. This will inevitably bring relations with Afrikaners specifically into focus, but the lessons learnt should be applicable with regard to future relations with all South Africans and all institutions in South Africa in general. This is important because it is premised that the SAVUSA (South Africa-Vrije Universiteit-Strategic Alliances) programme interprets future relations with South Africa in the widest possible sense. The following aspects were accordingly selected for reflection:

Context

The first aspect relates to the context that is defined for the new initiative at the Vrije Universiteit, and is expressed by the last part (-SA) of the SAVUSA acronym, namely 'Strategic Alliances'. Although this aspect was not included by the organisers in the title proposed for this paper, I will address it in the first section as it is of importance in evaluating past traditions, as well as for planning of future relations.

Traditions

The second aspect deals with the role of traditions. The key issue is whether

traditions have any meaning, positive or negative, when consideration is given on the formation of strategic alliances. The long history of interactions between the Vrije Universiteit and South Africa, specifically with regard to the recent past, opens up ample opportunity to reflect on the role of traditions.

Relationships

The title implies that the Vrije Universiteit wishes to deepen its relationship with South Africa. Relationships are influenced by traditions, but encompass a broader dimension. The context mentioned above implies a thorough-going reconsideration of existing relations, with SAVUSA as the instrument. Once again, an understanding of relations in the context of strategic alliances will need to be reflected upon.

Context – Strategic alliances

The last two letters of the acronym 'SAVUSA' indicates that the founders of this programme have created a new context for their future relations with South Africa, namely that of strategic alliances. Strategic alliances are widely practised in the field of business management and industry. This category of practice is built on very close relationships, as indicated by a description in a recent scholarly book on strategic management (Thompson, Gamble and Strickland 2004: 130):

During the past decade, companies in all types of industries and in all parts of the world have elected to form strategic alliances and partnerships to complement their own strategic initiatives and strengthen their competitiveness in domestic and international markets. This is an about-face from times past, when the vast majority of companies were content to go it alone, confident that they already had or could independently develop whatever resources and know-how were needed to be successful in their markets. ... Strategic alliances are cooperative agreements between firms that go beyond normal company-to-company dealings but fall short of merger or joint venture partnerships with formal ownership ties.

Strategic alliances are partnerships that often exist for a defined period during which partners contribute their skills and expertise to a co-operative project. An ultimate aim of these partnerships, is frequently to learn from one another with the intention of developing company-specific expertise to replace the partner, when the contractual agreement achieves its aim or reaches its termination date. Such relations are complex. On the one hand the outcome is increased competitiveness for each of the partners, but on the other hand an outcome is

expertise gained from a partner who might become a competitor after termination of the alliance. Accordingly, some key issues have to be understood, each raising many important questions that are essential in learning the intentions of prospective partners before they engage in a strategic alliance (Pearce and Robinson 2005: 219).

In industry, core competencies are seminal in identifying partners for an alliance. New competitive expertise has to develop from these competencies. Some key issues are, therefore, to assess and value the partner's knowledge, to determine knowledge accessibility and evaluate knowledge tacitness and ease of transfer. These objectives raise questions like 'What are the strategic objectives in forming an alliance?' 'Which partner controls key managerial responsibilities?' and 'Do we understand what we are trying to learn and how we can use the knowledge?' (Pearce and Robinson 2005: 219). These authors also indicate the importance of key issues and questions linked to relations, like 'What is the level of trust between parent and alliance managers?' 'Are we realistic about our partner's learning objectives?' and 'Is the alliance viewed as a threat or an asset by parent**[iii]** managers?'

Thompson and his colleague's underline that many alliances are unstable, break apart and fail. The commitment of the partners to work together and their willingness to respond and adapt to changing internal and external conditions are prime requirements for stable alliances.

A successful alliance requires real in-the-trenches collaboration, not merely an arm's-length exchange of ideas. Unless the partners place a high value on the skills, resources, and contributions each brings to the alliance and the cooperative arrangement results in valuable win-win outcomes, it is doomed (Thompson, Gamble and Strickland 2004: 130).

Do these industry and company experiences have any validity in considering the formation of strategic alliances within higher education? The rest of the paper will focus on this question. However, a point of departure is firstly to reflect on an emerging new context in higher education itself, triggered by new modes of knowledge production and transfer.

Higher education transformation
It is generally recognized that universities are among the most stable and change-

resistant social institutions in the Western society, seeing that their roots go back to medieval times. Amongst leaders in higher education consensus exists that the core functions of higher education – to educate (knowledge transfer), to do research (knowledge production) and to provide in community service (outreach, emanating from the knowledge base) – must be preserved, reinforced and expanded. However, there is also general agreement that higher education relevance is, and will progressively be, defined by the changing requirements of the global era of the twenty first century. Universities are, for example, no longer the sole custodians of their core functions. In addressing this reality, some universities systematically transformed to a new mode, which is already well researched and well documented (Clark 1990; Gibbons, Limoges, Nowotney, Schwartzman, Scott and Trow 1994). In his lecture on *Higher Education Relevance in the 21st Century*, delivered at the UNESCO World Conference on Higher Education in Paris, 1998, Michael Gibbons, then Secretary General of the Association of Commonwealth Universities, opened his presentation with a bold statement, summarizing the transformation that occurred in higher education over the past two decades (Gibbons 1998: 1).

During the past twenty years, a new paradigm of the function of higher education in society has gradually emerged. Gone, it seems, is the high-mindedness of a von Humboldt or a Newman with its pursuit of knowledge for its own sake. In their places has been put a view of higher education in which universities are meant to serve society, primarily by supporting the economy and promoting the quality of life of its citizens. ... The new paradigm is bringing in its train a new culture of accountability as is evident by the spread of managerialism and an ethos of value for money throughout higher education systems internationally.

What Gibbons alluded to is the transformation in identity from the classic Humboldtian university of the nineteenth century towards emancipated contemporary institutions, forged by the transformation in their functions. According to Gibbons, research progressively underwent a change in context from curiosity-driven disciplinary knowledge (Humboldtian mode), through a phase where applied research complemented the traditional approach (called Mode 1), to the contemporary phase of knowledge production in application (designated as Mode 2). To illustration these transformations, I developed the model as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Model to illustrate the development of a Mode 1 and Mode 2 context from a Von Humboldt origin
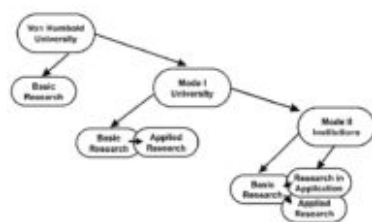
Legend: The main emphasis of knowledge generation at the traditional Von Humboldt university resulted in research publications, mostly of a basic nature. The outcomes of the research had to be of high quality, something of distinction and of high class. As a consequence of this view of the supremacy of basic research, a division manifested during the nineteenth century between the professoriate and those academics involved in research of a more applied nature. This scenario changed during the twentieth century when the importance of applied research became more generally accepted. This transformation is designated as Mode 1. Towards the end of the twentieth century, society became more and more knowledge-based. Interesting and imported research problems were generated in the

extra-university environment, but opened up new opportunities for academics to participate in research defined in application . This new approach still stimulates basic as well as applied research (Jorion 2004: xii), but the nature and culture of the new approach is distinctly different, designated as Mode 2 (Gibbons et al. 1994)

A detailed analysis of the contemporary meaning of Mode 2 will not be presented here, as it is well covered elsewhere (Nowotney, Scott and Gibbons 2001). There are, however, several indicators which show where Mode 2 is flourishing.

Firstly, Mode 2 mostly implies a distinct degree of cross-institutional connectivity. When a knowledge problem requires participation of expertise from different types of institutions, the technique of 'network management' appears to be the method of choice. This implies a new management culture, as it differs from industrial production management directed predominantly towards profit, as well as the traditional academic management with its overt bureaucratic and collegial culture.

Secondly, Mode 2 is also reflected by the analyses of the 'home bases' of the academic outputs, like publications, books or patents. In a genuine Mode 2 research activity, for example, one would expect to find outputs that reflect not only multiple authorship, but also co-authors from different institutions – for example, from a public or private laboratory, a hospital or another university. Moreover, new scholarly journals have progressively been established during the past decade or two where research findings, emanating from Mode 2 knowledge production, are published.

Thirdly, Mode 2 can sometimes be identified by reviewing the types of financial supports or grants which an individual or group holds. More often than not, Mode 2 activity can be characterized by evidence of a concerted and systematic attempt to raise funding either from multiple sources or from funding agencies that have explicitly placed cross-disciplinary, cross-institutional or cross-national collaborations on their agendas. In South Africa, the THRIP programme**[iv]** of the National Research Foundation is a prime example of this.

How does this transformation of higher education relate to the aims of the SAVUSA programme? The present institutional view of the Vrije Universiteit will give direction to this question. In his address at the UNESCO Conference Gibbons (Gibbons 1998: 1) clearly indicates that universities that wish to accept the new paradigm will need adaptation and transformation. These changes might affect institutional goals, the university's relations to the surrounding society and even its core values. It is therefore of interest to note that the organisers of the expert meeting described the Vrije Universiteit as 'a truly Humboldtian university with clearly discernable emancipatory qualities' in the first circular for the meeting. If the 'Humboldtian' culture is perceived to be dominant at the Vrije Universiteit, institutional goals are clearly directed towards traditional elitist academic ideals. These ideas are commendable, but do not hold very promising features for the formation of the kind of strategic alliances which might be of importance for future relations with South Africa. However, if the 'discernable emancipatory qualities' are also taken seriously, a future in the context of strategic alliances seems much more promising. Examples which will address these two alternatives will be addressed in the third part of this paper. However, it is essential that the meaning of traditions should firstly be addressed.

Traditions
Orientation
In strategic alliances, inter-institutional relations are of prime importance. Within the framework of this Symposium, the 'meaning of traditions' clearly relates to such relations. Traditions are therefore interpreted as the customs and practices that prevailed in the past, and which are handed down from generation to generation. The Christian character is the most prominent historical feature of the Vrije Universiteit, and also of South African traditions. Reflection on this will require a paper in its own right. The issue of our Christian traditions will therefore not be addressed here. In fact, it was also not explicitly included in the title which the organisers proposed for this paper.

Within the context of the SAVUSA programme, the traditions between the Vrije Universiteit and the former *Potchefstroomse Universiteit vir Christelike Hoër Onderwys* (hereinafter referred as the 'Potchefstroom University') are particularly illuminating. As an orientation on the meaning of traditions, it therefore offers an interesting case study. Our traditional interaction, of course, which took an about-turn in the 1970s, was well addressed by Dr. Harry Brinkman (Brinkman 2004)

and therefore needs not be addressed again. Less attention was given to our traditions during the period since the renewed relations after 1990. It is timely, therefore, to elaborate on this aspect at this moment in time, as it is of significance where SAVUSA considers strengthening future ties with South Africa.

For this reflection, I therefore chose the date of departure as 21 May 1990. The occasion was an informal meeting between myself as Principal of the Potchefstroom University, Prof. Cees Datema, the Rector, and Dr. Harry Brinkman, the Chairman of the *College van Bestuur***[v]** of the Vrije Universiteit. The meeting was granted at my request to meet with the management of the Vrije Universiteit. The venue chosen for our meeting was a small provincial restaurant in Woerden. I raised the only point on the agenda: 'May we discuss the possibility to restore the broken relationship between the Vrije Universiteit and the Potchefstroom University'. The body language at the meeting was cordial but reserved. Although Pres. F.W. de Klerk had announced the abolition of institutionalized apartheid on 2 February 1990 and Mr. Nelson Mandela had already been released shortly thereafter, three months later students and staff from Potchefstroom, up to the level of the Principal, were still *persona non grata* at the Vrije Universiteit. We had to meet in Woerden. The meeting lasted for over two hours. Without going into the details of the discussion, it is sufficient to say that it was open, frank and direct. At the end, Brinkman's conclusion was that they regarded Potchefstroom as a closed book, but from what was conveyed it seemed that a reopening of the VU-PU book might be a real possibility. Somewhat more than a year later, at the beginning of July 1991, Brinkman paid an official visit to Potchefstroom and substantiated the conclusions which he reached at Woerden the previous year.

The findings of Brinkman were made known at the Vrije Universiteit, and on 24 September 1991, I once again met with the *College van Bestuur* – this time at De Boelelaan. The afternoon I gave a public address in Afrikaans in the Aula at the Vrije Universiteit, officially announced as '*Hoger Onderwijs voor het nieuwe Zuid-Afrika'*.**[vi]**

Immediate speculations, especially by *Ad Valvas*,**[vii]** on the possibility of the formation of a new contract between the two universities were denied by both institutions, then as well as on later occasions. Regular contacts between the Vrije Universiteit and the Potchefstroom University did, however, progressively develop

over the next few years. By 1996 it was proposed by Dr. Jan Donner, member of the *College van Bestuur* of the Vrije Universiteit, that a contract for co-operation should be formed between the two universities in view of their expanding co-operation.

Brinkman proposed a first draft for such an agreement, which was subsequently further developed by both institutions. On 21 April 1997 the Vrije Universiteit proposed a few final adjustments to the draft agreement, and the *College van Bestuur* informed the Potchefstroom University: '*Met deze opmerkingen heeft het College van Bestuur overigens goedkeuring aan de formele totstandkoming van de samenwerking door middel van het sluiten van een overeenkomst gehecht*'.**[viii]** Dr. Wim Noomen and myself signed the final document rather unceremonially on 15 December 1997 during an informal dinner in a restaurant in the Van Baerlestraat in Amsterdam, attended also by Dr. Jan Donner. It is unknown whether *Ad Valvas* was informed of this development.

This historical orientation may seem to be anecdotal, but the content of the contractual agreement, as well as its implementation, is significant in evaluating the meaning of traditions, especially with regard to future relations envisaged for SAVUSA. The first section of the agreement reads as follows:

Basis and purpose of co-operation

The agreement defines a relationship of co-operation between the VU and the PU vir CHO, with the following basis:

1. Recognition of the importance of an orientation towards the society within which each university functions;
2. Support of the development at both institutions in order to contribute to the continuous modernization of each of the institutions in response to the universal requirements of the age and the unique environment within which each functions;
3. Strengthening of both universities' own responsibility for innovation and the continuity of their institutions;
4. Promotion of capacity-building and quality in the higher education sector in South Africa by means of various forms of institutional co-operation with other institutions in South Africa, where relevant and practicable;
5. In response to the Christian tradition of both institutions.

The contract laid a foundation for extensive deliberations and co-operation between the two universities on the managerial level, probably by far in the interest of Potchefstroom. Contributions by Dr. Harry Brinkman and Dr. Jan

Donner at numerous strategic planning meetings of Potchefstroom sensitised the University to the importance of the society within which a university functions – nationally and internationally (Purpose 1). The financial management system, aspects of human resource management and the quality promotion system at Potchefstroom was directly developed by inputs from expertise proposed and defined by the management of the Vrije Universiteit (Purpose 2). Important academic innovations at Potchefstroom were creatively suggested and supported by the Vrije Universiteit (Purpose 3), as will be elaborated on in the last part of this paper. And fourthly, the constructive involvement of the Vrije Universiteit with various institutions in need of capacity-building (Purpose 4), for example at the University of the North West in Mafikeng, significantly contributed to the development, and in this case, to the success of the initial negotiations that eventually led to the merger which resulted in the formation of the new Northwest University.

The main conclusion to be drawn from this aspect of the case study, is that a formal agreement for co-operation between institutions is a key element to success, if taken seriously by those involved in the agreement. However, as a general guideline for future South African relations this is not enough. It should be reminded that the initiatives described above were taken in the first decade after the formal abolition of apartheid in 1990. Much has changed since then, and is progressively changing in South Africa. This also has to be taken into account in rethinking future relations between the Vrije Universiteit and South Africa. In view of its practicality, further reflections on the above mentioned case study will now be used to underline the importance of traditions in partnerships directed towards cooperation.

Emotive behaviour
In the distant past, relations of the Vrije Universiteit with South Africa mainly concerned Afrikaners and their institutions. Moreover, these relations initially had a strong emotional character, as the Dutch people generally regarded the Afrikaners as their *Broedervolk*.**[ix]** At the end of his well-known *Evolutie-rede***[x]** of 20 October 1899, Dr. Abraham Kuyper even referred to the Afrikaners as 'de helden van Transvaal, geen Calvinisten enkel in het woord, maar Calvinisten van karakter en vrome Calvinisten van de *daad***[xi]** (Kuyper 1899: 55). Although some individual Afrikaners might have shared that emotional tie, we never had that passionate feeling for the *stamland*.**[xii]** The uniqueness of our common heritage

was generally recognized among Afrikaners, in a somewhat subtle way. This was probably best expressed by Prof. J.D. du Toit in the metaphor *'verborge-een'*,**[xiii]** coming from his poem with that title (Totius 1977: 340).

The decline in this affectionate relationship, and the consequent broadening of the relations of the Vrije Universiteit with other South Africans and their institutions, was well covered at the SAVUSA Expert Meeting (Schutte 2004; Brinkman 2004). Nevertheless, the title proposed for this paper implies that traditions should act as a kind of pivot on which the door to the future might revolve. A key question, especially with regard to the context of strategic alliances, is whether the attitudinal traditions of the Vrije Universiteit towards Afrikaners will be of any meaning for their anticipated future relations with South Africa.

To address the 'meaning of traditions', I firstly refer to the occasion when Harry Brinkman received an honorary doctorate from the Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education. In his address after the graduation ceremony, he gave in a nutshell a concise description of his experience over many decades of the *broedervolk* – and specifically of that of his brethren at Potchefstroom. He used the metaphor of a *Januskop*[xiv] as his concise description of the *broedervolk.* Given the dignity of the ceremony where he used this metaphor, as well as the fact that metaphors typically used by Brinkman are mostly well-founded, a reflection on the significance of the metaphor *Januskop* is needed. With regard to the aims of the SAVUSA programme, it may even illuminate obscured areas that might be of deep significance with regard to the future relations of the Vrije Universiteit with South Africa.

In Roman cult, Janus is the animistic spirit of doorways (*ianuae*) and archways (*iani*). His symbol is a double-faced head, which is the way he is seen represented in practice and in art. The *Grote Nederlandse Larousse Encyclopedie* designates a Janus as an '*onoprecht, onbetrouwbaar persoon; huichelaar*'**[xv]**, and a Januskop as a '*hoofd met twee aangezichten; huichelaar*' – definitely not the kind of character one would consider as a partner in strategic alliances. However, Brinkman did elaborate somewhat on the Janus metaphor in his ceremonial address. According to him, from the very beginning of his encounters with members of his broedervolk, he distinguished two broad categories of personalities: some more enlightened and others more fundamentalist, linking the Janus characterization to attitudes amongst Afrikaners to prevailing socio-political

realities in South Africa during the second half of the twentieth century. This observation is also elaborated on in *Verkennings in Oorgang*, a supplementary edition of *Koers,* and compiling viewpoints expressed in 1994, 125 years after the founding of the Potchefstroom University (Coetzee 1998: 273). Had members of the broedervolk indeed been hypocrites and pretenders, the chirality of their profile would certainly not have been observable. Another interpretation of the Januskop seems, therefore, to be needed. One such an alternative is offered in Arthur Koestler's elaborate account of the Janus phenomenon (Koestler 1979), although other interpretations of a Januskop exist, I preferred to use Koestler's view to develop a working hypothesis for reflection on the meaning of traditions.

Koestler's book is actually a summary of his work of over twenty-five years and it addresses the emotive behaviour in man and its society which played such havoc in the history of mankind. In his book, he designates the scale of entities, ranging from organisms, through man to society, as 'holons':
No man is an island; he is a 'holon'. Like Janus, the two-faced Roman god, holons have a dual tendency to behave as quasi-independent wholes, asserting their individualities, but at the same time as integrated parts of larger wholes in the multi-levelled hierarchies of existence (Koestler 1979: i).

To develop his viewpoint of man and society, Koestler introduces a *Janus principle* as the basis of his thesis. The Janus principle is the assumption that each holon, (organism, man, society, etc.) is a self-regulating entity which manifests both the independent properties of wholes and the dependent properties of parts. In social hierarchies the Janus principle is evident: every social holon – individual, family, tribe or nation – is a coherent whole relative to its constituent parts. Yet, at the same time it is part of the larger social entity. 'This implies that every holon is possessed of two opposite entities or potentials: an *integrative tendency* to function as part of the larger whole, and a *self-assertive tendency* to preserve its individual autonomy' (Koestler 1979: 57).

According to Koestler, *self-assertiveness* manifests as 'rugged individualism', typical of the reformer, the artist, the thinker. Without their inputs in society, there can be no social or cultural progress. The integrative tendency is more complex. It manifests as subordination to a larger whole than that of the individual itself, and is therefore on a higher level in the social hierarchy. In a well-balanced society both tendencies play a constructive part in maintaining equilibrium. In this sense, the Januskop is an intrinsic constituent of every society.

Order as well as progress in society is ensured by the self-regulation of these two properties. It should be noted that the societal equilibrium is not a static phenomenon, but dynamic in a progressive sense. Such a phenomenon is common in other fields as well, for example the well-described concept of a steady state or dynamic equilibrium observed in metabolism and enzymology in biochemistry, commonly known as Michaelis-Menten kinetics.

Koestler argues that derangement of balance in a holon, manifesting as a noticeably disturbed equilibrium. He names a few factors that may disturb the equilibrium. One factor is unqualified identification with a social group. Emotive identification with 'the nation' or *'the* political movement' may easily become the driving force for overemphasis of the integrative tendency. By identifying themselves with the group, individuals may adopt a code of behaviour quite different from their personal code. According to Koestler, the Janus principle is intrinsic to all, and no society is prone to a disturbed equilibrium. Rather than mere hypocrisy, as interpreted by the Dutch encyclopaedia, Koestler's interpretation of the Januskop, as 'quasi-independent wholes' appears to be a more fruitful model for understanding Brinkman's observation of the broedervolk, and offers also a model to reflect on our traditions. To evaluate this model, the following working hypothesis is formulated: The Janus principle might be operative in both the Afrikaner and the Dutch societies, and would manifest during periods of complex societal conditions, like in the 1970s-1990s.

Even a superficial overview of the profile of the Afrikaners during the period 1970-1990 is sufficient to support the hypothesis that the Janus principle is operative in the Afrikaner society. The acerbity of Brinkman's observation of the Afrikaners as a Januskop is probably most clearly expressed in a brief paragraph from the report on the 1976 discussions between the Vrije Universiteit and the Potchefstroom University vir Christelike Hoër Onderwys (Verslag 1976: 23):
De PU en haar docentencorps kan bepaald niet als een monoliet gezien worden. ... Het is duidelik dat een aantal docenten van de PU in woord en geschrift de eigen bevolkingsgroep, de eigen achterban, trachten te overtuigen van de noodzaak van fundamentele veranderingen op korte termijn.[= 'the self-assertive tendency'] Gezien de gespannen situatie opereren zij in een dikwijls moeilijk grensgebied van enerzijds nog aanvaarbaar zijn voor de eigen groep en anderzijds nog steeds niet aanvaarbaar zijn voor de niet-blanken. Voor ander docenten is de identificatie met de eigen groep primair [= the integrative tendency] en gaat deze

*uit boven de mogelijke identificatie met Christenen van een andere cultuur en/of ras.***[xvi]**

This report served as the catalyst to sever all ties between Potchefstroom and the Vrije Universiteit. It was followed by a period of progressive international censure against South Africa, to the extent that it became the polecat of the world. During the 1970s no Afrikaner in his right mind was unaware of the distortions of apartheid, although the vast majority remained supporters of the National Party. Nevertheless, the severity of the reaction of the Dutch against us was unexpected. In fact, the reaction from the 1970s to the early 1990s of the stamland towards the broedervolk was unparalleled by any other Western nation. It appears that at least two factors contributed to this severe reaction:

*One generally accepted explanation is that the reaction was not against South Africa, but specifically against apartheid, the despicable form of institutionalized racial discrimination. Moreover, as this practice was instigated precisely by the broedervolk, fundamentally deepened the reaction of the stamland. This was commonly articulated as 'sympathie over Zuid-Afrika en onbegrip t.a.v. apartheid'.***[xvii]**

A second factor was the emergence of a sincere commitment of the Dutch against any form of racial discrimination and the identification with those who sufferer under such discrimination. This is well illustrated in the recent obituary on the death of Rev. C.F. Beyers Naudé (1915-2004), drafted by a number of Dutch and related international societies (Obituary 2004). They acknowledged his unique role during the era of apartheid and referred to:

*…zijn voorbeeld waaraan wij Nederlanders ons konden spiegelen en wij, pas laat, ons meer bewust werden van de eenzijdigheid van onze band met blank Zuid-Afrika en van de blinde vlek in het opmerken van de eeuwenlange onderdrukking van de zwarte bevolking.***[xviii]**

One has to agree that this Dutch response against Afrikaners was fully justified and fair. Nevertheless, in the case of the Afrikaners in South Africa, the progressive absolute political power of Afrikaner nationalists and their associated achterban**[xix]** became the dominant force within the broedervolk. Almost all critical voices from within – Koestler's self-assertiveness – was stigmatised as verraad.**[xx]** The reaction against Rev. Beyers Naudé is a prime example of this. Koestler's disturbed equilibrium amongst the Afrikaners eventually became the dominant profile of the broedervolk in the painful years of the 1970s–1980s. In

fact, the Janus principle, required for the prevalence of a balanced society, became dysfunctional, rendering the Afrikaner society in a disturbed equilibrium, predominated by apartism.**[xxi]**

From this overview, it is clear that the Januskop-metaphor, as used by Brinkman, was much too narrow a characterization of Afrikaners. The Januskop was not just a case of an enlightened few opposed to a few fundamentalists. A disturbed equilibrium dominated within the Afrikanerdom. For Afrikaners, verification of the above-mentioned working hypothesis therefore seems to be possible.

For further verification of the working hypothesis, the attention should now shift to the Netherlands. The critical stance of the Dutch towards Afrikaners progressively intensified during the 1970s–1980s. Formal contacts and brotherly communication were replaced by severe professional and personal excommunication. *Die Wende***[xxii]** in Europe, and the advent of a new South Africa, however, also triggered in the Netherlands some recapitulation on their relationship with South Africa – of which the SAVUSA Expert Meeting is also an example.

Derk-Jan Eppink, Editor of the in the *NRC-Handelsblad*, wrote an editorial in May 1990 (Eppink 1990) under the title *Schuld en Boete*,**[xxiii]** which is an illuminating example of the recapitulation on Dutch-South Africa relations at the beginning of the last decade of the twentieth century. The Editorial was a response to the visits of Pres. F.W. de Klerk to Europe. All countries welcomed him. Only the Netherlands refused to allow him in. Epping systematically analyses the anti-apartheid culture amongst the Dutch during the previous two decades. This culture eventually became inculcated within the Dutch as a form of penance for the guilt of the biased association with the Afrikaner broedervolk, with overtones of the role of the Dutch in the racial context of World War II. Epping reflects on the emotive eruptions against all that even remotely appeared South African: warehouses of Makro being burned down, benzene hoses of Shell being cut through and the books of the Afrikaans section of a library being thrown into the Amsterdam canals.

De banden moesten worden verbroken, het verleden ontkend. Nederland was vóór de derde Wereld, vóór ontspanning met het Oostblok: Nederland zag zich als gidsland. Maar Nederland was ook stamland van Zuid-Afrika, van Afrikaners en van dominee Verwoerd uit Amsterdam, grondlegger van apartheid. Dat kwam

*slecht uit. Als Nederland wilde doorgaan voor gidsland in de Wereld, dan moest het snel af van de predikaat 'stamland van Zuid-Afrika'. ... Het 'thema' Zuid-Afrika had in de jaren tachtig niets meer te maken met Zuid-Afrika zelf, maar alles met de Nederlandse binnenlandse politieke verhoudingen.***[xxiv]**

The key concept here is the tension between the Dutch ideals of stamland and gidsland.**[xxv]** Epping's description of the gidsland of the 1970s-1990s closely relates to Koestler's model where a new social holon emerges, governed by a new set of codes which define its corporate identity and its social profile. The advent of a new social holon, Epping's *'na-oorlogse protestgeneratie'*,**[xxvi]** generated a new achterban. The new group created tension. But when tensions arise, the social holon tends to become over-stimulated. It imposes itself upon its rivals, or takes over the role of the whole. It is accompanied by an *urge* in society Reflecting the profile of the Dutch society of the 1970s-1980s, a disturbed equilibrium manifested in the Netherlands during the period of complex societal conditions of the 1970s-1990s. It seems justified to state that the Janus principle is not exclusive to Afrikaners, and supports the working hypothesis that the Janus principle is operative in both the Afrikaner and the Dutch societies.

Reconciliation

Although, as already mentioned, there was a growing discontent amongst Afrikaners concerning apartheid, and the realization that a fundamental change had to come, the impact of 2 February 1990 on South Africa, our own Wende, triggered a deep sense of introspection within ourselves. In fact, the speech of Pres. F.W. de Klerk is a prime example of the outcome of such an introspection (De Klerk 1990: 1):

The aim is a totally new and just constitutional dispensation in which every inhabitant will enjoy equal rights, treatment and opportunity in every sphere of endeavour – constitutional, social, economic. ... This is where we stand: deeply under the impression of our responsibility. Humble in the face of the tremendous challenges ahead. Determined to move forward in faith and with conviction. I pray that the Almighty Lord will guide and sustain us on our course through uncharted waters.

The South African culture of racial discrimination transformed to a culture of reconciliation, often referred to as a miracle. It became visible through a wide variety of public manifestations. There was reconciliation between Rev. Beyers Naudé and his congregation in Johannesburg. By the promulgation of an act by

Parliament, a Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) was established with the objective that the Commission had to promote national reconciliation in a spirit of understanding which transcended conflicts and divisions. *The Potchefstroomse Universiteit vir Christelike Hoër Onderwys* did not officially make a presentation at the hearings of the TRC. However, on its campus a process of reflection on the participation of the University in apartheid unfolded (Reinecke 1998: 181). It resulted in official declarations by the Senate and Council of the University. The declaration by the Senate of 4 May 1994 contained a confirmation of injustices and discrimination practised by the University against its fellow South Africans, culminating in a confession of guilt and deep remorse. The declaration by the Council of the University on 23 June 1994 endorsed the declaration of the Senate and added a commitment of the University towards the new South Africa:

– that the University enters the new political era in a spirit of commitment and enthusiasm and as a Christian University wishes to be involved in the community within which it functions in such a way that it fulfils its calling, although deeply aware of the complexities and challenges of the new era. It is the intention of the University as an educational institution to serve the country and its people in accordance with the requirements of this era;

– that for co-operation with the government, as with any other articulations of the community, constructive involvement is the point of departure of the University, but it should also guard against ever in this process becoming being uncritically subservient;

– that the Christian foundation of the University, as expressed in the motto 'In Thy Light' will continue to serve as a conscience, and as an inspiration to take seriously the ideals of the University, while above all recognizing the dependence on God Almighty for the fulfilment of the task of the University.

At the beginning of the 20th century the Broedervolk became the victim of British Imperialism, leaving a deep scar in the fabric of the Afrikaner nation, as expressed by Totius in one of his poems (Totius 1977: 22). Self-reflection at the end of the 20th century brought Afrikaners to the revelation of another scar: this time the self-inflicted scar in their fabric due to their ideological commitment to apartism.

What meaning can we now derive from our traditions as they functioned during the complex societal period in the second half of the twentieth century? The self-

inflicted scar of apartism will be an indisputable part of the identity of Afrikaners, now and in the future. Afrikaners will have to make peace with this identity and learn to live with this reality in ages to come. In the case of the Dutch, an apparent emancipated attitude developed from their sincere attempts during the 1970s-1990s to eradicate their historical bond with Afrikaners. However, ever since Jan van Riebeeck set foot in the Cape, it is a profound historical reality that the Dutch are the stamland of the broedervolk. This historic reality is an indisputable part of the identity of the Dutch. It will always surface from time to time when Dutch–South African relations come under the spotlight, and they will have to make peace with it, and learn to live with this reality. This is of importance for our mutual future relations, but also in our relations with other South Africans and other South African institutions. The mere fact that the SAVUSA Expert Meeting devoted considerable time to reflecting on the history of the Netherlands and the Vrije Universiteit in South Africa presents an opportunity to address ways and means to handle our historical realities in a spirit of conciliation. If we succeed, the future of the SAVUSA ideal will be promising.

Relationships
The fruits of reconciliation
The date of 27 April 1994 marks the beginning of the new South Africa. By the first truly democratic election the Afrikaners practically terminated their superior political position in South Africa and symbolically and in reality handed over the future to the majority of South African citizens. It was not the outcome of a fatalistic mindset, but rather the result of a well-founded realisation in the minds and indeed the hearts of Afrikaners. However, it was President Nelson Mandela who, with dignity and confidence, became a national symbol of reconciliation for the building of a new nation, ripped apart by apartism. His inaugural address as the first president of the new South Africa is a prime example of his visionary expectations for the future (Mandela 1994: 1):
*I have no hesitation in saying that each of us is as intimately attached to the soil of this beautiful country as the famous jacaranda trees***[xxvii]** *in Pretoria and the mimosa trees [xxviii]of the bushveld. ... We enter into a covenant that we shall build a society in which all South Africans, both black and white, will be able to walk tall, without any fear in our hearts, assured of their inalienable right to human dignity – a rainbow nation at peace with itself and the world.*

Many Afrikaners found the new dispensation difficult. Some left for some new

global destination. Many more stayed in South Africa and progressively became new South Africans. Shortly after his inauguration, President Mandela referred to this general spirit of commitment in his Presidential Address in the National Assembly (Mandela 1994: 271):

... as we sat here over these last days listening to the debate in this, our first democratically elected and fully representative Parliament, one could not help again and again coming deeply under the impression of the remarkable transition our country has experience – a transition from being one of the most deeply divided societies in the world to one so inspiringly united around the commitment to a common future. ...

*There were indeed some really moving moments in this debate as speakers responded to the exciting, inspirational and liberating possibilities and realities of our newly founded South Africanism. We heard some of our Afrikaner compatriots in this House hailing the dawn of the new democratic South Africa as an event of liberation for themselves rather than as an experience of loss, we heard the honourable leader of the FF**[xxix]***publicly acknowledging and paying tribute to the demonstrated desire of the majority party to create an inclusive nation in which there is a place for all.*

These were some of the moments which captured the new spirit abroad in our country. Those responses demonstrated an encouraging generosity of spirit, reciprocating the generosity so abundantly displayed by the oppressed and suffering people who had mandated their leaders and representatives to negotiate politically a future of peace and forgiveness and inclusivity.

This transition is evident in many fields. A comparison of the poems of Heilna du Plooy in her first (Du Plooy 1993) and in her second (Du Plooy 2003) volumes of poetry, can serve as such an example. Dutch visitors to South Africa noticed the change and wrote on it in the Dutch press (Ester 2004) The association of the Afrikaners with the new South Africa, and an increased dissociation from their origins, became conspicuous. Nevertheless, Ester argues that Afrikaners still remain important partners in the considering of South Africa-Dutch relations.

The new higher education policy, promulgated in 1997, urged the higher education institutions to cultivate institutional cultures of respect and tolerance. Moreover, it was also expected that the institutions should increase a broader responsiveness to societal interests and needs. It required institutions to deliver

the requisite research, highly trained graduates and knowledge to address the needs of an increasingly technologically oriented economy. These things had to equip South Africa with expertise to respond to national needs as well as to participate in a rapidly changing and highly competitive global context. The new socio-political national dispensation, as well as new policy developments, confronted the higher education institutions with local and global environments, never encountered by them before. The different ways in which the institutions responded or adapted to the new environment became well researched and documented (Cloete, Fehnel, Maassen, Moja, Perold and Gibbon 2002). It appeared that higher education transformation did not neatly follow the centrally planned policy route. The organisational responses to reform indicate three broad tendencies within the higher education sector (Cloete and Maassen 2002: 447).

The tendency among the historically white Afrikaans-medium universities was to embark on a variety of enterprising strategies. They were 'remarkably successful in increasing their student numbers, enlarging their product range, securing research and consultancy money and introducing strict cost cutting measures'. This ensured that these universities were doing at least as well as before. It appeared that they were 'undoubtedly the most responsive to the transformation initiatives of the new government. ... It could be said that they "expanded" their domain'. These observations indicate that, superimposed on the national needs for transformation, the historically white Afrikaans-medium universities in general progressively incorporated various aspects of mode 2 characteristics in their institutional missions and culture.

'The historically white English-medium universities vigorously participated in policy development processes'. Traditionally they had strong international ties, which they were able to maintain even during the period of the academic boycotts. Within the new environment they systematically changed 'the complexion of their student body and leadership', but bolstered their academic excellence by relying on 'their traditional academic staff, dominated by well-qualified white males'. Although they apparently made compromises within the framework of new policies, they largely continued to do what they did before. 'They thus 'consolidated' rather than expanded their domain, implying that they were more inwardly oriented than their Afrikaans-medium counterparts'.

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The third tendency was that the transition to the new South Africa precipitated severe crises amongst the historically black universities due to a set of complex factors. The 'interaction between historical disadvantage, geographical location, and accentuated inequalities driven by academic and management weakness in a competitive market environment' virtually paralysed some of these institutions. They furthermore became disillusioned by the unresponsiveness of the new government in providing them with widely advocated redress funds. Many could not respond to the threats of the new environment and had virtually no resources to avoid crises.

The National Plan for Higher Education aimed to address the crises in some parts of the sector, but was also an overt ideological initiative to eradicate the 'geo-political imagination of the apartheid planners' and the realignment of the institutional landscape according to the 'imperatives of the new democratic order' (Asmal 2001). The National Plan provided a framework and mechanisms for restructuring of the higher education system. Central planning, regulation and control became dominant imperatives, diminishing traditional virtues of academic freedom and autonomy, and counteracting institutional transformation associated with the Mode 2 culture.

Ten years after the advent of the new democratic dispensation in South Africa, the South African scene indeed underwent fundamental changes. The fruits of reconciliation are a commitment to *!KE E: /XARRA //KE*,**[xxx]** the new formulation of the traditional South African quest for unity in diversity. One-party political domination, however, also spurs on policy initiatives that once again trigger new challenges for what are again new directions in uncharted waters. In such a scenario, partnerships of expertise and relations based on commitment progressively become desperately needed in South Africa. From the intentions of the custodians of the SAVUSA initiative, it does seem that this initiative is timely and well suited to address the need for partnerships in South Africa.

Partnerships

As indicated above, the formal agreement between the Vrije Universiteit and the Potchefstroom University fostered a culture of close collaboration on the managerial level between these universities. Item 3 of the PU-VU contract emphasized that innovation is primarily a university's own responsibility, but a responsibility that can be mutually strengthened by co-operation. Mode 2 is one approach for innovation that might contribute to the continuity and long-term viability of the primary functions of a university. The formation of a Centre for Business Mathematics and Informatics (BMI) at Potchefstroom serves as a further case study to illustrate this point.

The Centre was a unique model for innovation at the Potchefstroom University, and its implementation was based on a suggestion from Dr. Jan Donner during one of the formal meetings on the managerial level. It was a proposal to foster innovation in the field of mathematics. Moreover, the initial participation of the Vrije Universiteit was seminal in the implementation of the innovation. This model is shown schematically in Figure 2. The Centre for Business Mathematics and Informatics was established in 1998 at the Potchefstroom University. After seven years, it is a shining example of a unique innovation that rendered the University the undisputed leader in the field of risk management in South Africa. Moreover, it is a prime example of a successful strategic alliance between the University and the private sector, through ABSA Bank.

Figure 2 – The Model used for Teaching and Research in a Centre

for Business Mathematics and Informatics
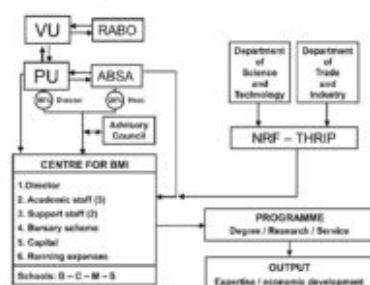
Legend: The Centre for BMI was established by a strategic alliance between the Potchefstroom University (PU) and a major national bank (ABSA). The Centre is funded on a 50:50 basis by the alliance partners. The funding is utilized for staff remuneration (six persons), a bursary scheme for students, and for capital and running expenses. Additional funding for research is generated through the THRIP programme of the National Research Foundation (NRF). The programme of the centre retains the traditional core functions of a university: education (undergraduate and postgraduate), research and service, mostly through consultancy of the staff. The Centre therefore functions in close association with the School of Business Economics and the School of Computer Science, Mathematics and Statistics (Schools: B-C-M-S in the figure) in the Faculties of Economics and Natural Sciences respectively. The Centre is managed by a Director who spends 80 per cent of his time in functions of the Centre and 20 per cent in activities at the headquarters of the bank, with a focus on problems of financial risk management. He is assisted by a Head of the Centre, whose functions are the mirror

image of those of the Director. The ultimate aim for the Centre is that it should be recognised nationally and internationally as a centre of expertise in the field if financial risk management, in the interest of economic development in South Africa. As the related Faculty of Mathematics at the Vrije Universiteit has close ties with the Rabobank in the Netherlands, the participation between the Centre at Potchefstroom and the Faculty at the Vrije Universiteit was ideally suited to forming part of the strategic alliance

The success of the Centre is reflected in a more than six fold increase in student numbers, 25 per cent of which are at an advanced level. All South African banks and financial institutions, as well as banks and financial institutions internationally, employ graduates of the Centre. Research in financial risk management within the Centre has been on the increase and is included in a recent book, compiled from twenty one seminal research published in *The Journal of Risk*. The remarks by Philippe Jorion, Editor-in-Chief of *The Journal of Risk*, (Jorion 2004: xxi) clearly indicates that the new field of risk management is a prime example of a Mode 2 enterprise:

The field of risk management ... has developed an expanding body of knowledge in qualitative methods to measure the financial risks of complex portfolios. The ability to provide a comprehensive measure of financial risk has truly transformed the industry. ... On the academic side, these developments have spurred fundamental research that complements industry research. In response to the demand for knowledgeable graduates in this field, leading-edge universities are now offering specialized courses in risk management.

There can be no doubt that within the Mode 2 context, there exists real possibilities, and a real need, among some sections of South African universities to form strategic alliances with relevant sections of Dutch universities. The Vrije Universiteit is well equipped for this role. The high quality of its research

endeavours is reflected by its Von Humboldt identity and its openness to co-operation, through reference to its emancipatory character. The SAVUSA programme may be the ideal vehicle to stimulate such initiatives. A word of caution is necessary, however. Again, the Centre for BMI may be used to illustrate this point. The presence of the Vrije Universiteit in the Centre has diminished and has been replaced by co-operation with the Technical University (ETH) at Zurich in Switzerland. The Rabobank as a matter of fact was never really involved in the Centre, but a real strategic alliance on aspects of the activities at the Centre was formed after the establishment of the Centre with SAS, the international computer software firm. Consideration of the characteristics required for successful strategic alliances (Pearce and Robinson 2005: 219) can assist in understanding these developments at the Centre.

A new beginning

It will be for SAVUSA to design their strategy for their new initiative in South Africa. The commitments of the custodians of the programme indicate a will for success. In conclusion, three aspects are suggested to be on the agenda in planning the activities for the SAVUSA programme.

Equal partners

The time has come for co-operation between the Netherlands and South Africa to be one of equal partners. For the South Africans that will be quite a challenge. The demands of functioning as academics in a country with tremendous societal and developmental challenges are formidable. In at least the traditional Afrikaans universities, the backlog of a generation of suffering under an academic boycott are still very real, something which often still makes them academically weak partners. Given their short history as academic institutions, as well as the complexities discussed above, makes this an even greater reality at the historically black universities. For the Dutch, equal partners will mean resistance to any attempt of overemphasizing the gidsland attitude, with an open mind which reflects their commitment to equal partnerships, as Hans Ester (Ester 2004) clearly articulated:

De beste reactie uit Nederland is belangstelling, begrip en een weloverwogen weerwoord ... Wij zijn terug bij het begin ... De Nederlanders worden in een gesprek betrokken dat hen dwingt om ook over zichzelf na te denken en het eigen Europese licht niet onder de korenmaat te zetten. Dat is een eerlijke basis voor de verbondenheid van Nederland en Zuid-Afrika.

An alliance approache

Their context of a strategic alliance should be taken very seriously by SAVUSA. The three key issues here are (1) a focus on the quality of the inputs to come from those who participate in an alliance. This will require the need to focus, and to make clear, and often difficult, choices. (2) Complementarities of the expertise of the participants in a strategic alliance will simultaneously strengthen the individual and the collective expertise and competitiveness in their own academic and societal environments. (3) A commitment to the range of success factors that define strategic alliances (Pearce and Robinson 2005: 219). Innovation and long-term viability will be the ultimate benefits emanating from this approach.

The meaning of traditions

One final encounter with Janus, but now in its most ancient form, provides an inspirational conclusion to the reflection on the meaning of traditions. Janus is probably the oldest of the Roman gods. It was the god of new beginnings. Its normal place was at an entrance or at a doorway. Its one face looked to the past, so as to ensure that the lessons learnt and wisdom gained should not be forgotten, and that traditions cultivated should be cherished. The other face was directed to the future. It symbolizes an attitude of accepting the challenges that lie ahead and of fostering a sense of commitment and perseverance to ensure success. In times of peace and in times of battle Janus changed positions. Sometimes it was visible at the doorway, sometimes it was elsewhere. This means that traditions requires periodic reflection on their meaning, and should never deteriorate into an attitude that we have reached our final destiny. Every year begins once again with January; or, like the seasons, new beginnings always brings a new vitality as one of the Dutch poets (Gorter 1921) so eloquently said:

Een nieuwe lente en een nieuw geluid: ...

Naar buiten: ... Hoort, er gaat een nieuw geluid ... **[xxxi]**

NOTES

i. The title for this paper as proposed by the organisers of the SAVUSA Expert Meeting.
From the letter of invitation from Prof. Dr. Gerrit Schutte as a guideline for the preparation of this paper.

ii. The title for this paper as proposed by the organisers of the SAVUSA Expert Meeting. From the letter of invitation from Prof. Dr. Gerrit Schutte as a guideline for the preparation of this paper.

iii. In the initiative for the development of A new 'lexicography' by experts from the University of Stellenbosch and the Vrije Universiteit, the universities are regarded as the 'parent' institutions and the experts as the alliance partners. A functionary to oversee the alliance would be referred to as the 'alliance manager', in this particular instance having been Dr. Harry Brinkman.

iv. The Technology and Human Resources for Industry Programme (THRIP) of the National Research Foundation, which resides under the Depertment of Science and Technology, is a partnership programme funded by the South African Department of Trade and Industry, managed by the National Research Foundation. It is guided by a board comprising representatives from industry, government, higher education, labour and science councils. Its mission is to improve the competitiveness of South African industry by supporting research and technology development activities and enhancing the quality and quantity of appropriately skilled people. THRIP also encourages and supports the development and mobility of research staff and students among participating organisations.

v. Management Committee.

vi. Higher Education for the new South Africa.

vii. In-house news journal of the Vrije Universiteit.

viii. With these comments the Management Committee approved the formal establishment of co-operation by concluding a contract.

ix. A nation of brotherhood.

x. Lecture on evolution.

xi. The heroes of the Transvaal, not merely Calvinists in their words, but Calvinists of character, and devoted Calvinists in their deeds.

xii. Country of origin and heritage.

xiii. Mysteriously related.

xiv. Head of Janus, the Roman god.

xv. Janus or a Januskop thus personifies a two-faced and unreliable person (= onbetrouwbaar persoon) and a hypocrite (= huichelaar). A hypocrite is also described as a pretender, a person guilty of hypocrisy. Hypocrisy, in its turn, is a simulation of virtue; a pretended goodness.

xvi. The PU and her lecturer corps should not be seen as monolithic. It is clear that a number of lecturers of the PU through discussion and writing try to convince their own cultural group, their own brotherhood, of the need for fundamental changes in the short run. Given the tense situation they often operate in a complex border area of still being acceptable to their own group, yet

simultaneously not being acceptable to non-whites. For other lecturers the identification with the own group is of primary importance and supersedes any possible identification with Christians of another culture and/or race.

xvii. Sympathy regarding South Africa but incomprehension of apartheid.

xviii. His example on which we as Dutch people could reflect and from which we, quite late, became aware of our biased bondage towards white South Africa and the blind spot in seeing the oppression of the black community over centuries.

xix. Brotherhood.

xx. Betrayal.

xxi. The ideological manifestation of bondage to the apartheid paradigm.

xxii. The turn-of-the-tide.

xxiii. Guilt and penance.

xxiv. The ties had to be broken, the past denied. The Netherlands was in favour of the Third World, in favour of relaxation towards the Eastern Block. The Netherlands saw itself as a guiding nation. However, The Netherlands was also the country from which South Africa originated, of the Afrikaners and of Rev. Verwoerd from Amsterdam, founder of apartheid. That was bad. If the Netherlands wanted to be the guiding nation in the world, it had to quickly abandon the identity as 'country of origin of South Africa'. ... By the 1980s the 'theme' South Africa no longer concerned South Africa itself, but rather concerned internal political relations within the Netherlands.

xxv. Guiding country.

xxvi. Post-World War II protest generation.

xxvii. Exotic tree of South American origin.

xxviii. Indigenous South African acacia trees.

xxix. FF: Freedom Front, a white opposition party.

xxx. The Koi-San version of the South African motto on the national coat of arms.

xxxi. 'A new spring and a new sound: ... Let's go outside: ... Listen, a new sound is heard ...'

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The Vrije Universiteit And South Africa ~ Some Trends In South African Academic History: Changing Contexts And Challenges
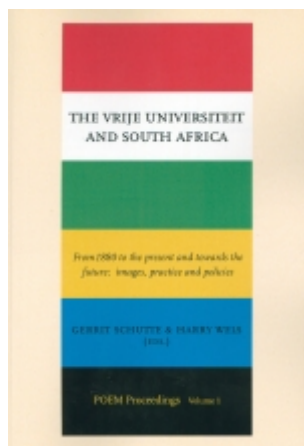
Seismographic social and political shifts introduced the 1990s: the end of the Cold War, the demise of communism abroad, and in South Africa the official end of apartheid and the subsequent instalment of a new democratic government. Given these developments it is reasonable to expect that historians, who construct their versions of the past in the present, and are at least to some degree influenced by that present, should, in the light of wider contextual changes, re-evaluate their approaches and revise their interpretations. The relationship between societal change and historical production is, however, not a simple one-to-one function.

It is against this background that this paper seeks to identify and briefly explore selective developments pertaining to the dynamics of the historical profession in South Africa and the intellectual correlates that help to define the current nature of the enterprise . The chapter focuses only on certain aspects and makes no claim to have covered the vast and treacherous area exhaustively.

Academic historians and the question of growth
The 1990s were not the most auspicious of times for the profession. Instead of bewailing this fact, it may be more profitable to apply historical insights to the phenomenon and to ask what are the conditions that are particularly conducive for the expansion of the historical enterprise as practiced professionally? This necessitates a brief look at the contextual forces that helped to shape the profession in South Africa.

The profession reached its high point during the 1980s. It was a period when the History Department at the University of South Africa could boast with a staff of 35 historians; today it is halved. The University of Stellenbosch had a staff of eight; today it is almost half that number. Staffing figures at some other universities in the country would tell very much the same story.

To explain the growth up to the 1980s, one has to bear in mind that structurally job opportunities were limited for black people and given the lack of options many gravitated towards teaching (Crankshaw 1997: 23). This helped to swell the number of teachers and of those who included history as a subject in their courses. Moreover, since the 1960s the educational system rewarded teachers who obtained degrees financially and also those who sought to improve their qualifications. This served as a powerful incentive to engage with the discipline. Of course the system was skewed as it was largely whites (because of their higher participation rate in tertiary education) that benefited most, but black people were not excluded. Many teachers used the opportunities to gain higher degree qualifications in a teaching subject such as history. To oversimplify matters slightly – interest in history could be bought. But there were always those individuals who may have enrolled initially for pecuniary reasons, but for whom it also turned out to be an occasion to engage meaningfully with material that otherwise might have remained outside their ken.

The system almost inadvertently provided the opportunity for what can be called 'creative misuse', in that educators who were on top of their subject could

introduce critical material that ran against the apartheid grain. In this way a mustard seed of doubt could be disseminated far and wide, undermining the spurious historical legitimacy for apartheid. The Minister of Education, Kader Asmal, has recently singled out for acknowledgement 'the role of many courageous historians, educators and practitioners who refused to abide by the official line at the time ...' (The South African History Project Progress Report 2001-2003: 20).

Ideologically circumstances in SA since 1948 favoured the development of the historical profession as so much of what happened in the country since 1948 laid claims to a justificatory and legitimising historical base. Of course, in the process historians discovered much more than apartheid related matters and also cast their findings in a form which did not necessarily dovetail neatly with narrow political programmes of particular groupings. But by and large the politics and conditions in the country acted as a powerful dynamo for historical research. Peter Kallaway has highlighted the centrality of history from the late 1970s onwards: 'In the struggle for liberation from apartheid, history was an extremely important tool for critical debate. It was a tool that empowered those who ruled and those who resisted. As a young teacher, history provided me with a fascinating and dynamic set of tools for engaging young people with the awful dilemmas of our nation' (Kallaway 2002: 28). It was a period which saw the academic eclipse of the Afrikaner nationalist school, and in its wake followed debates between liberal and radical historians as to what constituted the main driving forces in South African history. The intellectual fermentation was marked by the expansion of several history departments.

In the 1990s, at a time when a significant number of black scholars could have been expected to enter the fold, a complex set of pressures impacted on the profession to undercut potential growth. One set was the immediate and institutional forces that bore directly on the circumstances and practices of historians and their discipline, and another was the pressure exerted on by historians by events and processes originating in their society but 'outside' their workplace.**[i]**

These two categories can be briefly explicated. South African universities were late but zealous converts to the creed of affordability, efficiency and rational resource allocation. These were often market driven and history departments had to restructure and downsize as they could not offer any immediate market-related

product. In addition school curriculum design in the 1990s did not favour history which had a knock-on effect on the supply of history teachers and hence also history lecturers at university. Right up until 2001 there was sufficient reason to be concerned about the impact of outcomes based education on history teaching as the subject ran the real risk of being marginalized (Grundlingh 2001: 315). There was also a growing gap between what the academy had to offer and what the state required. The discourses of the market and macro-economic policy did not dovetail with the language of historians and the general thrust of their work.

However, as far as policy is concerned, wiser counsels prevailed in the corridors of power and the curriculum was adjusted to allow sufficient room for history and new history syllabuses were drafted accordingly. Through the South African History Project, initiated by Asmal, a concerted effort has also been made since 2002 to re-invigorate the study of history in South African schools.**[ii]**

At societal level the profession was affected by developments in the public/ political realm. Anti-apartheid white academic historians found that with the dissolution of apartheid they were stranded in some ways, bereft of a persuasive political purpose and oppositional cachet they had previously enjoyed. Historians who were neutral about apartheid or pro-apartheid in their political outlook could hardly in a new context flaunt their earlier disquisitions with any manner of conviction, so they retreated into safe and rather pedestrian topics outside the mainstream of historical debate. In addition, in wider society with the rapid rise of a black middle class there was, with a greater variety as well as better remunerated employment opportunities available than ever before, a greater emphasis on material consumption. Without wishing to imply that this class has become a-political, overt politics and the past have now come to matter somewhat less. One scholar has observed that

… the black South African subject of the 1990s bears very little resemblance to the feted 'revolutionary worker of the struggle' as she/he hurries home fitted out by Sales House, in an entrepreneurial taxi, to watch The bold and beautiful on television (Bertelson 1998: 240).

Their children joined the 'Nike generation' and share the obsession with fashion and culture common to young people. The world view of some members of a new generation of post-apartheid young black people does not appear to be infused and directed by an acute sense of past grievances.**[iii]**

Having outlined and contrasted the contextual factors that impacted on the profession, we are faced with the question whether these will continue to have an adverse effect or whether it will be possible to allow for the emergence of a new generation of historians who will be predominantly black.

A return to the 1980s is of course neither possible nor desirable. The growth during this period can be seen as quite artificial as so much depended on apartheid; structurally in terms of lack of open-ended career opportunities for black people and ideologically as an issue that by force of circumstance informed much of academic debate and historical writing. In a new context it will perhaps be possible to discern a less spectacular but more steady growth based on more realistic premises than the unsound fundamentals which buttressed the spectacular growth in the 1980s. In addition, while the country moves further into a post-apartheid future and the current present becomes the past, South African history may incrementally acquire a semblance of normality as it edges towards more inclusive narrative of events which despite possible different emphases will at least pertain to all groups as fully fledged South African citizens.

To accommodate and ensure that such a scenario can develop, it is, however, necessary for the foundations to be laid in the present. In terms of tertiary education it implies that institutions should be alive to the impact of market related measures on the humanities and the attenuating effects it can have on subjects such as history. For the discipline to renew itself and to create the space for the nurturing of new talent, a measure of institutional financial support is essential.

Currently approximately 27 per cent of university staff members involved with the study of history are black (other than white) (South African History Project 2003).**[iv]** Given this percentage much is made in the report of the South African History Project of the necessity for a 'strong study of history in school' as the 'essential bedrock for producing new generations of black and female historians to supplant the current white and largely male domination of the South African historical profession' (The South African History Project Progress Report 2001-2003: 40). Those classified along these lines and earmarked for extinction may perhaps take umbrage at such a summary dismissal, but it should be read as a policy comment and not necessarily as an indictment of their intellectual contribution. Given the state's equity policy and the aging profile of the predominantly white academic community as a whole (Mouton 2002: 7; *Mail and*

Guardian 31 July 2003), it would be make little sense to predict anything else.

Within the next five to ten years a whole range of historians at South African universities will have reached retirement age and in terms of equity policy their replacements will then have to come mainly from the designated groups. The professional outlook for young white male historians is exceptionally bleak in the short term, though it may perhaps improve in the medium to long term. Given these policy determinants and the structural position of white male historians who lived through a period of extraordinary growth in the profession, it is probably, if not superfluous, certainly less than fruitful on their part to agonize about their own historicity.**[v]** Structurally in terms of policy the prospects for black graduates will remain favourable.

This is not to imply that there is a phalanx of young potential historians eagerly waiting in the wings. There are valid reasons to be concerned about the number of black potential academics who prefer the boardroom to the lecture room as it creates a situation that militates against a new and intellectually vibrant cohort making their mark (Grundlingh 2001: 314-5; *Mail and Guardian* 2 July 1999; Saunders 1999: 50). In the highest government circles there is also a measure of concern about what students expect to gain from a university education (Ryklief 2002: 116-7; see also *Daily News* 16 April 1999). As far the history field is concerned, there are currently 86 doctoral students registered for history and history education (The South African History Project Progress Report 2001-2003: 11). The total falls broadly within the band for other social science subjects, but the number of black students remains relatively small. If not addressed, a disjuncture between policy aims and actual implementation is likely to arise in the not too distant future.

The postmodernist and post-colonial challenge
Apart from staff developments within the profession, at the level of underlying and embedded change South African history as a scholarly pursuit also had to face the charges of post-modernism. Of particular importance here is the textual turn: evidence, truth, and the nature of historical enquiry itself came in the firing line.

There are those scholars though who, slightly mockingly, invoke the postmodernist and post-colonial debates of the 1990s in the tones of a circus ringmaster: 'Welcome to postmodernism: world of the media spectacle, the

disappearance of reality, the death of Marxism, and a host of other millenarian claims' (Stabile 1995: 90).

In a broad sense postmodernism with no readily discernable centre can be seen as a cultural response to late 20th century capitalism a post-industrial West. In the South African context with its different historical trajectory, it would be more appropriate to employ the notion of post-coloniality. Whereas post-modernism in the West can vacillate from left to right, but mostly right, depending on the slippages underfoot, post-coloniality has a more firmly embedded political agenda in that it pays sustained attention to the imperial process in colonial and neo-colonial societies and is intent on subverting the actual material and discursive effects of that process (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffen 1995: 117-8). The thrust of post-coloniality is of particular concern to the historian as not only is the 'normal' methodological procedures of textual criticism of his material called into question, but the whole system of academic knowledge of which historical writing is a part, is regarded in itself as a western and colonial edifice outside of which no western scholar can stand (Vaughan 2002: 2-3).

Of considerable importance here is the issue of language, and the freight of often unsubstantiated assumptions that is 'inscribed' in language. Leon de Kock, writing on missionaries and African converts in the 19th century eastern Cape, has emphasized the pervasive impact of English:

The 'English' of economic empowerment, or of social mobility and political influence within the revised hierarchies of power, also carried in its very substance new narratives of personhood, of the proper presentation of the body, of the best moral choices, of the most suitable organisation of the land and the dwellings thereon, of a new cosmological scheme, of the very clothes one should wear, the thoughts one may think and the manner in which work – and rest – should be performed (De Kock 1986: 189).

Post-colonial theorists regard language as integral to social reality, if not in a deterministic way then at least in a constitutive manner. Historians have not been oblivious to language as a social agent, but post-colonialists go further in alerting us to the inescapable encodedness of language, the irreversible contamination of a language like English, which itself is rooted and embedded in the whole colonial process. Post-colonialism does not preclude some purchase on 'historical reality' through the conventional historical interrogation of sources – a difficult enough process at the best of times – but it complicates access to that which historians

regard as discernable fragments of the past. Although historians have long been aware of the instability of their sources and the contingent nature of the facts they uncover, they are now confronted with the additional and daunting prospect that their very medium of communication, instead of explaining things, has itself become an object that needs to be elucidated and indeed justified.

What is an appropriate response to this? Although there are no easy or definitive answers, historians are not helpless in defence. It can be pointed out that the critiques emanate primarily from the field of literary and cultural studies or anthropology and speak in the first place to practitioners in those fields, and only then to historians. Erecting disciplinary boundaries to ward off the challenges of post-coloniality may be seen as an evasive strategy, but it has to be recognized that historians themselves have not been inactive in subjecting their discipline to much the same criticisms. Within their own ranks historians have readily admitted that their practice is a discursive one, that truth-telling about the past is a variable which is dependent on a changing context and to some extent on the language employed, and that the notion of 'objective-scientific' history is often part of the seamless web of wider political projects.**[vi]** These are conditions and imperfections historians have come to live with.

There are, however, those analysts who would argue that post-coloniality also calls into question the relationship between historical writing and power. Power in this sense does not only imply simple domination or repression, but refers to a set of relationships or processes that produces and/or controls certain broadly determined outcomes. The production and acceptance of academic history as 'approved' knowledge are seen to be largely governed by specific conventions and rules. These criteria, such as standards of inclusion and exclusion, measures of importance and ways of evaluation, are not regarded as value-free but as bearing the stamp of a particular political environment with its own dimensions of power.**[vii]** While such linkages can be readily acknowledged, the question can also be raised as to whether these are so limiting that there is no space for loosening the hold of the thought-context mode without implying that it can be completely severed.

Moreover, the over-emphasis of intellectuals as agents of power, is also problematical for another reason. Although such an analysis may at first appear radical, it can easily turn out to be self-serving. By elevating and emphasizing the position of the intellectual to the extent that it does, can be seen as potentially

damaging to those who are not intellectuals. The supposed power of intellectuals as a conceptual tool per se is accentuated, and not that of class or other categories. In this sense then, the self-critique of historians and intellectuals can actually be regarded as 'a critique of intellectuals which has been transmogrified into a tool to confirm the centrality of intellectuals' (Scalmer 1996: 161).

Apart from the emphasis on the author, post-modernist thinking also tends to highlight 'difference' and 'differences'. It is an area in which neo-Marxian social history had somewhat of a blind spot as culture was underplayed in the more rigid class versions of this mode of analysis. At times tribesmen lost their cultural identity too readily to become peasants and Van der Merwe lost his red neck, Calvinist blinkers and holy covenants too easily to become a fully-fledged proletarian with little sense of culture. While this shortcoming has to be admitted and in some revisionist writing of the 1990s it has also been avoided (see for example Van Onselen 1996), one equally has to be aware of the negative side of an overemphasis on ethnic culture and cultivating 'difference', particularly in South Africa. As Norman Etherington has explained:

Liberals and Marxists in their own peculiar ways purported to see through difference to a common human condition which anyone might articulate or understand. Some post-modern poses replace this with an opacity of otherness, whose corollary is that only the other may speak for herself/himself. When this opacity extends to ethnicity and culture the intellectual ghost of apartheid walks again (Etherington 1996: 41).

These are intricate issues which cannot be fully explored within the confines of this paper. However, one can tentatively suggest that working with an either/or dichotomy is probably counterproductive. A re-configuration and extension of the boundaries of the ways in which we think about the past can be the first stepping stone in trying to incorporate 'difference' without allowing it to dictate. Indian subaltern studies, though not without its own internal contradictions, have attempted to encapsulate such a broader sense of history.**[viii]** Widening the historical lens, conceptually and methodologically, can create the opportunity to 'defamiliarise the familiar and to unfold the unfamiliar' (Amin 2002: 38)**[ix]** – a process through which 'difference' may be problematised.

Heritage contexts
During the 1990s most South African university history departments developed courses which in one way or the other engaged with heritage matters. In part it

picked up on an increasingly salient global trend, but it was more pertinently a pragmatic attempt to arrest falling student numbers, in that heritage, particularly if linked to tourism, appeared to have a marketable commercial edge to it.**[x]**

This development also correlates with wider trends. In the post-apartheid context the earlier radical social history perspective (developed mainly though not exclusively at former predominantly white universities) with its emphasis on the fault-lines in society and class in particular, appeared increasingly inappropriate as the new South Africa slipped into nation-building gear. The disaggregating imperatives of social history and the conforming impulses that guide nation-building make for a very grating gearshift, if at all.**[xi]** What the marginalized in society – for example the black underclasses and 'poor whites' which loomed large in social history analyses – represents, is too jarring or too ideological dissonant to be accommodated within the homogenizing fold of a new nation eager to display neat and tidy modernising African unity as opposed to ugly unravelling strands of a society frayed at more than just the capitalist edges. The time for a 'socially responsible past' has arrived and heritage is very much part of it.**[xii]**

The broader cultural purchase of new legacy and other heritage projects, however, cannot be automatically assumed and its hold on an audience at large appears to be uneven. While the appeal of the great and good will certainly have a certain resonance, such heritage can also be limiting. This is clear from experiences of a former history lecturer, Neil Roos, at the University of the North West (UNW) in Mafikeng:

*My teaching experience at UNW, where most of the students are from rural areas and country towns, has alerted me to the pitfalls of 'national' history, and suggests a need to move beyond the iconographic level, with its predictable focus on 'big' national events and figures … I teach a course in heritage studies, and my students have frequently expressed frustration at the tenuous connections between their own lives and the way in which the emerging national narrative (e.g. the Sharpeville massacre, the symbolism of Robben Island; Mandela-ism) is commemorated … I have tried … to [encourage them] to recall their own family and local stories of poverty, oppression and resistance … experienced mainly in the Bophuthatswana homeland.***[xiii]**

Heritage is, moreover, important for economic reasons in being the object of what has been called 'the ultimate commodification of the tourist dollar' (Cobley 2001:

618). Indeed, 'a heritage worth millions', read the headlines in a recent South African newspaper (*Mail and Guardian* 31 January-6 February 2003: 4). It was not an exaggeration. André Odendaal, a former director of the Robben Island Museum, has provided valuable information on the financial scope of some of the undertakings of the heritage industry: Robben Island Museum (R200m), Freedom Park (R350m), the Gauteng 'Blue IQ' projects (R750m) and the Apartheid Museum (R90m). These developments according to Odendaal will have important implications and he draws the conclusion that

[A]lmost as if by stealth, while complaints about the decline of history abound, a whole new billion rand heritage infrastructure is being out in place which will fundamentally reshape the heritage and public heritage environment in future, and create more opportunities for historians, educators and heritage practitioners (Odendaal 2002: 9-10).

Coupled with this assertion is the belief that heritage will almost be a panacea, galvanising the study of history in general:

Heritage with its relatively accessible public, oral and 'living' history dimensions, political relevance and greater level of black leadership and involvement will play an important role in this. The growth of the heritage sector is a visible indication of the broadening of historical studies in general over the past decade (ibid.: 33).

There is almost a kind of crusading edge to this emphasis as 'history' and 'heritage' are conflated seamlessly:

The claim of heritage to be 'history' can no longer be denied. In a real sense 'heritage' is the advance guard of post-colonial history in South Africa and developments there presage the changes to come in the professional history sphere at the universities (ibid.).

Without wishing to deny the importance of the work that has been done in this area, such an assumption can do an injustice to both 'history' and 'heritage'. In his influential book on the heritage industry, David Lowenthal has drawn a nuanced distinction:

The historian, however blinkered and presentist and self-deceived, seeks to convey a past consensually known, open to inspection and proof, continually revised and eroded as time and hindsight outdate its truths. The heritage fashioner, however historically scrupulous, seeks to design a past that will fix the identity and enhance the well-being of some chosen individual or folk. History cannot be wholly dispassionate, or it will not be felt worth learning or conveying;

heritage cannot totally disregard history, or it will seem too incredible to command fealty. But the aims that animate these two enterprises, and their modes of persuasion, are contrary to each other. To avoid confusion and unwarranted censure, it is vital to bear that opposition in mind (Lowenthal 1998: xi).

In short, memory is not the same as history and memorialisation is not the same as historical writing. It is not necessarily a completely watertight division though. A particular framing of pastness can draw from a variety of historical dimensions; for example, from writing, visual imagery, oral traditions, memory and political perceptions of the past (or usually an amalgam of these) which in turn, if deemed worthy of memorialisation, can in a truncated form feed into and reinforce a more general historical consciousness.

It is furthermore conceptually important to distinguish between the terms 'heritage and/or the production of heritage' on the one hand and the 'study of the making of heritage' on the other. The terms cannot be used interchangeably as they deal with divergent activities. 'Heritage' and the construction thereof can be viewed as the product while the 'study of the making of heritage' is the disaggregation of that which is produced. This is of course not to imply that the production of heritage proceeds without substantial historical verification, but its ultimate aim differs from those who seek to interrogate the making of heritage from a variety of angles.

Nor, in an attempt to clear the conceptual undergrowth, is it the intention to convey the impression of a hierarchy of knowledge and that the writing of history is any way a superior zone to the unpacking of heritage. On the contrary, at times the latter can be analytical more challenging as several layers of understanding over time have to be unravelled. Writing on the dynamics of dealing analytical with 'commemorative history', Peter Carrier has emphasised the kind of interpretative problems that arise as 'meaning derives from elements of both the original event and the new context within which the commemorative "event" takes place' (Carrier 1996: 435). In South Africa a considerable amount of work of this kind has already been done most notably by some historians from the University of the Western Cape. By focusing on public pasts and the complex and often contradictory processes that impinge on the making of heritage, they have opened up a fruitful and multi-dimensional area of enquiry.**[xiv]**

A critical study of heritage may also allow some of the more intriguing counter ideas, relating to ways of remembering and/or non-remembering, to emerge. The questions asked by Shahid Amin in the context of India, can be equally relevant in South Africa: 'Can we at all remember without commemorating? Can we recollect without celebrating; recall without avenging? Why are national histories invariably encrusted in a lapidary mode?' (Amin 2002: 36).

The contexts of an 'African voice'
It is well known that Afrikanerdom used and shaped history to further its own political agendas. In general Afrikaner historical works, though often reflecting a great deal of archival research, were conceptually and interpretatively limited. Early and influential works by white English speakers displayed similar shortcomings and showed marked Eurocentric biases. Paul Maylam has made the salutary point that too often Afrikaner historians have become the only target:
This tendency to associate Eurocentric historical writing exclusively with Afrikaner nationalism is part and parcel of a larger tendency – to blame the apartheid system on Afrikaner nationalism. It has often been convenient for English speakers, conservative and liberal, to scapegoat Afrikaner nationalism. In the English quest for self-absolution, Englishness is separated from the harshness of the racial order: the blame for apartheid is cast on to others, while the fruits of the system are enjoyed (Maylam 1993: 4).

Particularly during the 1970s and 1980s, substantial work has of course been done predominantly by a later generation of white English speaking historians of either the liberal or radical persuasion to correct this situation and to uncover large swathes of hidden black histories. The historical landscape has been altered well before major political shifts occurred. But it is true that even well into a decade of epoch making change in South Africa since 1994, a general and authoritative history of South Africa with a distinctly Africanist point of view is yet to appear. Given the myriad of ways Africans have been excluded in the past from being accepted as full South African citizens, it is understandable that some academics have raised their concerns about the perceived absence of what can be termed an essentialist national 'African voice'.**[xv]**

It is common for new governments to recast history in terms which they regard as in keeping with their self-image and political programs. For example, with the introduction of communism in Eastern Europe after the Second World War intellectuals were implicitly or explicitly expected to help with the consolidation

of a new order. The effect of this was that:

While intellectuals were once distinguished by their ability to think independently, in the new philosophy, intellectuals were to be part of the stream of history, moved by its own dialectical laws, which were in turn supported by a new state machinery that guaranteed the success, or failure, of an intellectual career (Kennedy 1991: 98).

Closer to home, the passing of the colonial era in Africa paved the way for triumphalist nationalist forms of historical writing. Looking back on this, C. Neale has remarked:

To some [historians] it now seems regrettable, both from a political point of view in that it [nationalist history] served the interest of new regimes which in hindsight were not what historians hoped they would be, and from an intellectual point of view, in that historians concentrated on narrowly political themes at the expense of social and economic ones (Neale 1986: 120-1).

And even closer to home, the notion of committed history happily resided in the home of Afrikaner nationalists. Here the 'main aim' in the 1940s was, as H.B. Thom, a foremost Afrikaner historian pointed out, 'to search for the truth in an honest way, and to keep that aim pure, but at the same time we had to do that in the midst of the volk' (Grundlingh 1990: 7).

Of course, by drawing these comparisons one does not imply that Afrikaner nationalism was qualitatively the same as current black nationalist impulses in South Africa, nor that the way in which such developments in South Africa may play themselves out will necessarily have the same results as in the rest of Africa. But there remains a fine line between a history of nationalism and a nationalist history.

The notion of an authentic 'African voice' may also turn out to be simply misleading. As the well-known historian, Eugene Genovese proclaimed at the height of a similar debate in the United States of America:

'There is no such thing as a black theology, or a black point of view. Rather there are various black-nationalist biases, from leftwing versions such as that of the Panthers to rightwing — 'cultural nationalists'. There are also authentic sections of the black community that retain conservative, liberal, or radical integrationist and antinationalist positions. Both integrationist and separatist tendencies can be militant or moderate, radical or conservative. All these elements have a right to

participate in the exploration of black historical and cultural themes.**[xvi]**

Whether such a layered approach will prevail which will allow a multiplicity of 'African voices' to speak, remains to be seen.

In essentialising the notion of an 'African voice' in nationalist terms, a further possibility is that voices on the periphery may well be drowned out by the cacophony of such an overarching discourse. The importance of submerged voices has recently been illustrated by the micro-history of the trials and tribulations of Nontetha Nkwenkwe, a prophetess from the Eastern Cape during the 1920s and 1930s, and the way in which her religious visions and memories of her after she had been confined to a mental hospital in Pretoria, inspired rural followers for a considerable period of time (Edgar and Sapire 2000). Although some of the issues that she and her followers raised overlapped with those of nationalists, their movement was not cast in overtly political terms. Her story is one that shuns elite consciousness and she is unlikely to appear in the pantheon of nationalist heroes, but is not for that reason of lesser import.

What may turn out to be more challenging than grappling with a nationalist 'African voice' in future, is the issue of dealing with South Africa's history in the context of Africa. The question of South Africa's 'exceptionalism' on the continent has the potential to draw historians into a wider frame. It was Mahmood Mamdani who threw down the gauntlet to South African academics when he stated in 1996: *Part of my argument is that apartheid, usually considered the exceptional feature in the South African experience, is actually its one aspect that is uniquely African. As a form of state, apartheid is neither self-evidently objectionable nor self-evidently identifiable. Usually understood as institutionalised racial domination, apartheid was actually an attempt to soften racial antagonism by mediating and thereby refracting the impact of racial domination through a range of Native Authorities. Not surprisingly, the discourse of apartheid – in both General Smuts, who anticipated it, and the Broederbond, which engineered it – idealized the practice of indirect rule in British colonies to the north* (Mamdani 1996: 27).

Although such an exposition of apartheid as a form of rule might also have appealed to the architects of grand apartheid in the sixties, Mamdani's position is of course very different in that he tries to move away from South Africa's 'exceptionalism' and correlates aspects of South African history as reflecting developments elsewhere on the continent. While Mamdani's ideas fuelled

considerable debate in the mid-nineties, particularly at the University of Cape Town, the issues have not been resurrected since then. There may be good reasons for this, but the question of the South African past in relation to the rest of Africa remains. This is in contrast to some analyses of African literatures where 'hidden discursive and historical links between African contexts' have been found (Kanneh 1998: 91). Admittedly in dealing with historical experiences such links may be harder to find, but conceptual exploration and comparative studies as well as a greater engagement with African historiographies may perhaps produce new insights.

Furthermore, for a critical historical culture to be maintained in a radical South African democracy, there is a case to be made for an emphasis on histories of relatively new constituencies. This will include for example gendered histories and re-assessments of ethnic minorities, historical analyses of emerging 'soft' industries such as leisure and tourism as well as ecological, gay and anti-institutional movements. To bring these constituencies into the main historical frame may yield few grand celebrations, but academic life may benefit from the ensuing antagonisms, contradictions and complexities.**[xvii]**

Such exhortations, however, may be regarded as gratuitous and prescriptive as a new generation of historians will set their own agendas. But then again historical writing will always be a contested terrain. South African historiography has never suffered from blandness and it is unlikely to do so when a fresh cohort of academics with different backgrounds and agendas start flexing their academic muscles.

Conclusion
This chapter has tried to outline some emergent trends and dynamics in the South African historical profession. While the number of black historians currently involved in the tertiary profession is roughly in the region of 27 per cent, contingent upon some contextual factors the outlook is that this number will increase over the next five to ten years. Intellectual trends such as post-modernism and the flowering of heritage have caused historians to look anew at their basic assumptions and to interrogate and reflect upon the nature of pastness. In much the same mode the vexed question of the implications of what an 'African voice' may constitute, and in a wider sense the conceptual leap to move beyond South Africa's 'exceptionalism' on the continent can be seen as future challenges.

NOTES

i. This analysis is indebted to Bundy (2002). See also Marks (2000: 225).

ii. Details are to be found in The South African History Project Progress Report (2001-2003).

iii. Cape Town 12 August 2002: 'Apartheid's legacy of apathy may not be a bad thing'

iv. I have made these rough calculations myself from a database which is by its own admission less than exhaustive.

v. For example H-South@H-Net.msu.edu, 'What is history doing?' (June 2001).

vi. See for example Appleby, Hunt and Jacob (1994); Novick (1988); Maylam (2000: 134).

vii. Compare Scott (1989: 680-1). For charges of this nature in the South African context see Maloka (1996), and Leroke (1996: 13-17).

viii. For an extensive and critical review see Bahl (n.d.).

ix. I am indebted to S. Jeppie for this reference.

x. See for example Carruthers (1998).

xi. Some of these tensions are touched upon by Kros (2003: 326-36.)

xii. Compare Cobley (2001: 618).

xiii. Quoted in Comoroff (2003: 21).

xiv. See for example Rassool (2000); Rassol and Witz (1993); Witz, Rassool and Minkley (2001); Witz (1998-1999). The history department at the University of Western Cape has also embarked on a large scale project on South Africa's public pasts. In addition, issues of heritage have also relatively early in the nineties found institutional niches at the University of Cape Town and the University of the Witwatersrand. See Hamilton (1993).

xv. See for example Magubane (2002: 31, 36); Odendaal (2002: 30, 33).

xvi. Quoted in Meier and Rudwick (1986: 297).

xvii. Compare Cross (1999: 220).

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The Vrije Universiteit And South Africa ~ Political Studies In South

Africa. A Personal Perspective
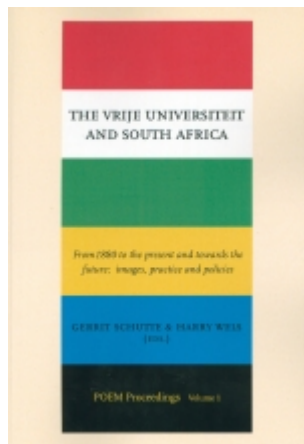
First, let us consider the discipline's demography in South Africa. Over the last ten years political studies or political science has been taught in each of the country's 21 universities. Aspects of the discipline were also taught in public administration courses at polytechnics; several of these institutions are now being amalgamated with universities. Historically, as with other areas of social science, politics as an academic community was sharply divided, socially and intellectually between the English language universities and the Afrikaans medium institutions. Within Afrikaner departments, traditionally, the discipline was influenced quite heavily by American behaviouralist and quantitative social science models and methods and researchers tended to focus their work within the confines of the formal political system (including the structures of ethnic homeland government). At the segregated black universities, departments were often led and staffed by graduates from Afrikaans institutions as well as from UNISA. In English speaking departments, by the 1980s, Marxist approaches had supplanted traditionally liberal ideas about politics and leading researchers concentrated their attention on popular political movements, emphasising those dimensions of their activities and ideas that corresponded most closely with expressions of class consciousness. In this context, the study of the discipline had a strong historical dimension: indeed at institutions such as Wits and Cape Town the boundaries between a 'revisionist' history grounded in Marxist conceptions of political economy and the discipline of politics became very blurred indeed. Today, though legacies of these differences between Afrikaans and 'English' institutions remain, the distinctions between Afrikaans-speakers and English language practitioners of the discipline in South African are less important, particularly since the introduction of English language courses at Afrikaans universities.

South African politics departments are small – between five and ten full time staff is normal, though Wits with its separate establishments for political studies and international relations employs more than twenty political scientists. Overall at the universities there are around 200 or so politics lecturers teaching about 10,000 students enrolled in undergraduate courses. This has been an expanding

student population: in the aftermath of the ANC's accession to government politics classes grew swiftly, contracted slightly in the late 1990s and once again grew, a reflection of trends in secondary school matriculation as well as optimistic perceptions among students about the subject's vocational utility. Most first year politics classes (including those at former elite institutions such as Wits and Pretoria) are now recruited mainly from working class districts in African townships, though Cape Town and Stellenbosch represent exceptions to this generalization.

Traditionally, South African universities undertook very little post graduate teaching in political studies – more in Afrikaans than in English – but essentially politics departments directed their teaching at undergraduates. At Wits, for example, between the Department's establishment in 1955 and 1990, four students completed PhDs, though a rather larger number undertook the traditional entirely research based Masters degree. This has changed: all universities offer coursework masters programmes in politics and related fields and several have succeeded in registering substantial PhD-enrolments, drawing significant numbers of their post-graduates from SADC countries and elsewhere in Africa. A growing proportion of the post-graduates are black South Africans but in most institutions this is quite a recent trend: the first black South African to obtain a doctorate in politics at Wits graduated in 2000. At the former homeland universities (which remain more or less exclusively black in their intake) their own graduates today predominate among staff in politics departments though their leadership was augmented in the 1990s by senior appointments from universities in other African countries.

Research in politics remains concentrated in the historically white universities. A rough tracery of its intellectual preoccupations and of the distribution between institutions of the most active researchers can be obtained through looking at the contents pages of *Politikon*, the biannual journal of the South African Political Science Association.

Between 1994 and 2004, and including the first issue this year, 100 articles appeared in *Politikon*. Not surprisingly, South African politics predominates within the content of these articles. The work on South Africa has three major focuses. Nineteen of the articles concern democratisation and South African progress in the consolidation or deepening of democratic institutions. A second area that has attracted vigorous research is elections: 14 articles explore various

recent South African elections and the behaviour of voters, parties and officials during them. Finally, ten articles address different dimensions of foreign policy; these divide equally between those premised on conventional theoretical presumptions in international relations and advocates of 'critical theory' who seek a paradigmatic shift away from state centred notions of bilateral or multilateral relations in favour of more emancipatory notions of international citizenship. We will consider briefly, in a moment, some of the key debates in these three areas, democratisation, electoral behaviour, and foreign policy.

We can note, now, though, certain key omissions from the topics addressed by *Politikon*'s authors. Not a single article addresses protest politics nor a specific instance of insurgent collective action, though one theoretically oriented discussion of social movement theory by a Swedish PhD-student appeared in 2000. We know from the longitudinal survey and press data bases compiled by the Wits/HSRC/Vrije Universiteit that popular propensities to participate in peaceful kinds of 'direct action' (strikes, demonstrations, land invasions, etc.) did not decline significantly, at least during the Mandela administration, though the geographic distribution of such activity became more dispersed, a consequence of the new sites of political power that were established after 1994. The Durban Centre for Civil Society has emerged as the main centre for serious research on so called new social movements, but its findings have yet to make a major impact in the discipline. Another striking silence in the *Politikon* research concerns the state and the social relationships surrounding it.

Instrumentalist notions of the state as an agency of various combinations of class interest were a major theme in English language South African political studies through the late 1970s and 1980s though approaches that emphasised the state's degree of social autonomy and the political predispositions of different bureaucratic factions within it (including the army) were beginning to shape political analysis by 1990: even so the completeness of the apparent abandonment by South African political science of class analysis is somewhat startling. In fact, here *Politikon*'s titles pages misrepresent rather the overall state of the discipline; South African critics of the government's 'neo-liberal' economic policies who assign to the Mbeki administration a comprador role as agents primarily of international capital prefer to publish in *Review of African Political Economy*, *Monthly Review*, and, locally, in *Dissent*. Even in this work though, the local sociology of political power and wealth remains surprisingly under-explored.

Scanning ten years of *Politikon* suggests that research is quite unevenly distributed among universities. Twenty-one of the articles are from the University of Stellenbosch and Wits staff or students contribute another 18. Cape Town and Western Cape political scientists are also quite frequent contributors. During the period under review the journal published only one article from one of the former homeland universities, by the Nigerian head of politics at Transkei. Only three contributions are from black (African) South Africans, each of them Wits post graduates. Of course *Politikon* is not an altogether reliable base from which to make generalizations: several other locally edited journals attract a slightly different range of contributors and both the (Pretoria) Africa Institute and the Harare-based *African Political Science Review* make a point of publishing work by black South African political scientists, much of directed at understanding and promoting African regionalism and pan-African institution building. It is also the case that much of the best local scholarship is published in European and North American journals However, even if this wider range of publication was also to be taken into consideration, the trends in the discipline's development over the last ten years would not look very different from an overview of the content of *Politikon*.

So, what are the key issues for South African political scientists in their evaluations of democratisation, in their analysis of elections, and in their considerations of foreign policy, especially with respect to South Africa's role in Africa?

What claims can be made for South African democracy since 1994? Much of the academic commentary has been negative. UCT's Bob Mattes notes the failure of the economy to expand at the rate needed to create jobs, persistent social inequalities, a constitution that reinforces executive control over the legislature and hence accentuates centralising tendencies in a one party dominant system. Within the ANC itself, Mattes perceives an 'increasing tendency' for 'party bosses' to stifle dissent. Alarming constitutional amendments and the use by ANC leaders of state agencies in investigations directed at their rivals in the party round off a prognosis of early 'institutional decay'. Trends observable in public opinion indicate at best lukewarm support for democracy, especially among the racial minorities and declining trust in political leaders and state institutions. South Africans, pollsters suggest, have highly substantive understandings of democracy, that is they are more likely to view socio-economic benefits as

essential components of democracy rather than civil liberties. Compared to citizens in neighbouring countries, South Africans are least predisposed to active forms of civic participation. Such evidence suggests that of democracy's prospects in South Africa are fragile to the extent that its survival is a function of the popularity of its core values (Mattes 2002).

More in the same vein is widely available and there is no need to relay such arguments in detail here.**[i]** Among the pessimistic assessments of South African democratic performance and likely future trajectories there are different explanations for why the outcomes of political transition have been so disappointing. One line of argument is to locate the reasons for democratic shortcomings in the deficiencies of the constitutional system, and in particular in the electoral system which provides no incentives for representatives to make themselves accountable to citizens. Another quite widely held view is that neither of the two main players during the negotiations, the ANC and the National Party government, were profoundly committed to democracy and, to cite Pierre du Toit, the ANC in particular was negotiating in 'bad faith': assured by their own opinion polls of electoral victory, a temporary embrace by its authoritarian leaders of liberal values was merely a means to the realisation of an ultimately anti liberal transformative project (Du Toit 2001; 2003). In this reading, the 'progressive colonization' by the centre of 'independent checks on executive power' (Butler 2003: 111) offers increasing confirmation of the ruling party's 'hegemonic' aspirations.

Left wing as opposed to liberal commentaries offer equally gloomy diagnosis of the ANC's performance in office. Here the ANC's failings are not so much the consequence of its Leninist heritage but rather the effect of the bad bargain it sealed with multinational capital in the run-up to constitutional negotiations in which leadership supposedly committed itself to accepting the constraints of a globalised market economy and to confining social reforms within the fierce restrictions of a neo-liberal growth strategy. In this view the ANC's centralisation of power in the executive is a defensive reaction to the growing threat posed by the social movements of the very poor whose expanding constituency is responsible for the withering of the ANC's own popular base and the general reluctance of citizens to participate in whatever consultative procedures remain within the formal political framework.**[ii]** From this perspective, the local social group most likely in the future to exercise decisive influence on pubic policy is

composed of the beneficiaries of black economic empowerment, many of them former ANC office-holders.

My own work offers rather more complicated readings of South African democratic performance. In contrast to the evaluations just cited, I find that with respect to social delivery, the government has generally met citizen expectations. In fact the expanded provision of public goods – including grants and pensions, subsidised housing, clean water in the countryside, primary health care facilities, and so on – has been on a scale that makes the characterisation of government strategy as 'neo liberal' fairly implausible. This is an administration that has significantly, since 1994, increased the 'social wage' since 1994 and in so doing has impacted significantly on inequality statistics, for state expenditure has been substantially redirected at especially the rural poor.**[iii]** One reason for this is that in 1994, an already quite substantial base for a welfare state was in place; as Jeremy Seekings has noted, from the 1960s onwards the apartheid state provided an expanding range of entitlements to both citizens and subjects (Seekings 2002). These were racially calibrated to be sure, but on a scale that made South African rather unusual in the developing world and which may help explain the pro-active (to cite Charles Tilly) nature of the political claims that black South Africans began to assert from the mid 1970s onwards. The state has expanded, not shrunk, and successful deficit reduction (from in any case a relatively low degree of indebtedness in 1994) makes it likely that its welfare capacity will maintain itself.

Nor do I find the emphasis in some liberal as well as certain feminist analyses of the South African state as 'patrimonial' especially persuasive. This is despite the increasingly abundant evidence of venality and rent-seeking among officeholders and officials. In fact it is quite difficult to find conclusive signals as to whether corruption in any sphere is waning or expanding though public perceptions suggest the latter. The apartheid state as it became increasingly demoralised was progressively affected by dishonest misappropriations of public goods and certain patterns of behaviour have persisted; after all in many areas the same officials are in place. My own research suggests, though, that much of the corruption is new, and that it flourishes in precisely those areas in which the state is undertaking fresh obligations to citizens, in housing for example, and that it may be the consequence of changed systems of management rather than inherited traditions, patrimonial or otherwise (Lodge 2002b). It does not exist on a scale that is sufficient to seriously negate any claims about the state's expanded capacity to

meet basic needs: this expansion of the state is, I would maintain, one of the most important political developments since 1994. This is not a system in decay.

I think there are strong grounds for proposing a more optimistic scenario for the survival of the procedural aspects of democracy – generalising from the behaviour of parliamentarians, in opposition and otherwise, the record of the judiciary, and the general vigour of the media. My own recent research preoccupation has been with the development of the party system, surely an indispensable component of a healthy and participatory liberal democracy. So far my data collection and analysis has concentrated on the ANC. I have interviewed at length a range of senior officeholders, but more importantly, with a team of student fieldworkers we have questioned nearly 500 rank and file branch members, mainly in the Gauteng. What have been, so far, our most important findings?

This is not a movement in decline. At the time of our research, at the beginning of 2003, membership was booming at around 400,000 – and the trend continued. Our interest was in kinds of commitments that are required of members. A call by leadership for branches to undertake various kinds of community development work evidently elicited a ready response: about three quarters of the people we had interviewed had been involved in such activities as tree planting or hospital visiting, many several times. A large majority attended monthly branch meetings and about a quarter had been involved in fundraising projects. About a third said they read regularly the ANC's newsletter. Such data suggested a relatively activated membership and a movement with quite a vigorous local life. Cross tabulating demographic data with branch positions suggested, moreover, a movement that at this level is quite egalitarian: about a third of the women we interviewed held positions on the executive as did a similar proportions of the members who were unemployed. In their responses to open-ended questions we did collect sentiments that suggest that ANC members may be motivated by a mixture of concerns – self interested as well as idealistic – but generally it does appear that the ANC has remained a mass party, and that its activist support remains enthusiastic, not just dutiful. Meanwhile, secret ballots supply a degree of opportunity for members to exercise leverage over leaders at party conferences despite strongly consensual mechanisms in which the crucial electoral dynamic is the bargaining between provincial nomination leaders and national notables.

Internal conflicts within the organisation over the government's reluctance to provide anti-retroviral medication to HIV-AIDS patients supplies one key instance

in which leadership found itself compelled to defer to pressure from within (as well as outside of) the organisation. My guarded conclusion from the evidence that I collected was that so far the ANC has managed to hold back the symptoms of organisational degeneration that often characterise dominant parties that face no serious electoral challenge. In so far that strong parties can benefit democracies, my work on the ANC represents a positive finding: South Africa's party system includes a least one robust organisation.

Is it likely to develop any more? The more obvious trends from a succession of elections that have resulted in ever increasing majorities for the ANC and persistently fragmented opposition might suggest not, at least not in the predictable future. Popular commentaries often echo the predominant academic evaluation of the 'founding' 1994 poll as a 'racial census' in which, for African voters particularly 'the charismatic factor appeared the be the single most important motivation'. African voters supported the ANC then largely because of emotional considerations rather than 'calculations of interests, benefits and costs' (Johnson and Schlemmer 1996). As Jeremy Seekings has suggested, though, such findings were comparatively uninformed by opinion polling evidence concerning the motivations of individual voter behavior.

Traditionally South African electoral studies tended to assume that voters made their choices largely as a consequence of the collective predispositions of the communities within which they lived with ethnic and (more occasionally) class membership as the principal determinants of electoral decisions. More complicated sentiments that may have prompted voter identification with particular parties were neglected in studies of pre-1994 elections (Seekings 1997). Evaluations of the 1994 poll as a '*uhuru*' election are reinforced by references to the International Electorate Commision (IEC)'s inefficiency as well as territorially possessive behaviour by parties whose exclusion from their home bases of rival activists apparently enjoyed general support from intolerant voters. The persistence of evident 'political intolerance' among citizens as documented in opinion surveys, the ANC's willingness to use the advantages of incumbency when contesting successor My own work on elections tends to confirm these suppositions, despite its intellectual base in the traditional preoccupation of South African electoral analysis with the behaviour of parties during campaigning. Both in 1999 and more recently this year, parties tended to emphasise 'policy and performance rather than identity in their electoral appeals' (Lodge 1999: 208)

with the ANC developing especially sophisticated campaigning strategies with respect to those segments of the electorate perceived to be 'swing' voters, especially within the racial minorities. The ANC's emphasis on door to door canvassing in its traditional base communities also indicate a leadership that did not take loyalty as the guaranteed outcome of ascriptive identities. And with good reason: in my research on the 2000 local elections I used more than 5,000 reports of electoral meetings compiled by a national network of election monitors. Here I found ANC candidates confronted with critical and assertive audiences even in small rural settlements: in the conduct of these meetings there was no indication whatsoever of the deferential style one might expect from the dynamics of patronage 'big man' politics; electoral support was quite obviously seen as contractual and conditional on performance. Indeed in these local elections historically white parties were able to make significant inroads into previous ANC strongholds, provided that is that they already had a local organisational presence (Lodge 2001).

A huge expansion of welfare entitlements during the course of 2003 was one key to ANC gains in poor communities in 2004, especially in the IFP (Inkatha Freedom Party) heartlands of northern KwaZulu Natal. Facilitating apparent shifts in African voting choices in the 2000 local elections and in the general election this year were improvements in electoral administration (especially with respect to voter registration) and expanded electoral monitoring as well as a more relaxed local political climate. This year simultaneous elections, and its success in mobilising almost universal support amongst voters in most African neighbourhoods have helped to maintain convictions that the outcomes of South African elections are largely predetermined by the solidarities and ascriptive identities that arise from historic social conflicts, solidarities that are reinforced by the ruling party's adroit deployment of patronage.

These sorts of assumptions are at odds with the findings that emerge from opinion polling, which suggested, for instance, sharp declines in party identification across a set of intervals between 1994 and 1998 (when identification with the ANC was down to 38 per cent). The gap between the proportions of polling respondents willing to identify themselves with parties and the persistence up to polling day of sizeable shares of the African voting population suggesting to pollsters that they had not made up their mind about who to vote for have suggested to certain analysts that South African voter

behaviour is considerably conditioned by performance and campaigning. 'Discriminate analysis' of a range of responses concerning economic trends and political performance collected in a 1998 poll enabled a correct prediction of party preferences without knowledge of the respondents' races, language or classes. To be sure, South African voters are influenced in their evaluations of party performance to a degree by the communal context in which they live, but this does not predetermine their choices: these are the consequence of judgement and to an increasing extent support for the ruling party is conditional (Mattes, Taylor and Africa 1999).

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This year simultaneous canvassing of African neighbourhood by rival teams of activists, impossible in1994, was both routine and tranquil, accepted apparently by residents as legitimate. The Democratic Alliance, the runner-up in the 2004 poll, nearly doubled its support, largely due to new allegiances among Indian and Coloured voters and probably from a few hundred thousand Africans as well. No longer an overwhelmingly white supported party, it faces a formidable task in consolidating it's very dispersed and socially heterodox electoral base. If we are correct, though, that South African voter behaviour is predicated on judgement and choice, rather than the compulsions of history and communal identity, the DA's mission to become an African party is by no means quixotic. Much will depend, though, on the success of its efforts to establish a living presence in African communities.

As with evaluations of democratic performance, the academic community that focuses on South African foreign policy is sharply divided. Two interpretations reflect conventional approaches in international relations. In one view, South African policy shifted abruptly in 1994, and since then has been prompted generally by idealist efforts to promote new kinds of democratically-oriented institutional architecture in both continental and global governance and to further a collective search for global re-distributive justice. An opposed understanding is to view South Africa's external relations as motivated chiefly by realist concerns arising from acknowledgement among policy makers of the instability of the international order and recognition of South Africa's marginal status within it. From this perspective, South Africa's priorities should be to align herself with powerful industrial countries and exploit her own status as a sub-hegemonic power on the continent.

Advocates of both realist and idealist prescriptions disagree among themselves about the degree to which an ANC governed South Africa has conformed with one other of these policy prescriptions. Generally speaking, though, the trend among analysts working with these concepts is to suggest that South Africa's foreign affairs is governed by quite skilful exploitation of its role as a 'middle power'. Here it joins a group of medium sized regionally dominant states that attempt to enhance their international standing by endorsing 'multilateral solutions to international problems' and adhering to conventions of good international citizenship. In Africa this has meant, during the Mbeki presidency, adopting a fairly self effacing position on the continent, to the despair of President Mbeki's

realist critics. The rewards for sensitivity to continental protocols are now evident in the major role South Africa has played in designing successor institutions to the OAU as well as the progress in brokering political settlements in Congo and elsewhere.**[iv]**

This perspective of South African foreign policy as characterised by essentially benevolent principles conflicts with another set of views that stress continuities rather than ruptures with the apartheid era. This view maintains that policy remains bound up with crudely realist conceptions of national interest. In this vein, Thabo Mbeki's claims to 'put people first' in his conduct of foreign policy are only rhetorical. South African democracy is barely procedural and hence to expect a foreign policy that is either formed in a consultative way or informed by people's needs is naive.**[v]** The most important social influences on policy makers are conservative and historically entrenched. In a critical appraisal of 'South Africa's post apartheid security system', Peter Vale has noted that too often, South Africa's relationships with its African hinterland are still influenced by 'old security habits', and by its predispositions for 'constructing southern Africa as an eschatological threat'. This is especially obvious in South Africa's harsh treatment of African immigrants (Vale 2003). For Vale and other adherents of the 'critical reflexive' school in South African international relations scholarship conceptions of national interest, realist or idealist, remain undemocratic and conservative, constrained as they are by international and domestic hierarchies of power and wealth and wedded as they remain to an oppressive matrix of colonially created states and boundaries.

I am not so sure. I am not an international relations expert and have done relatively little work in this area. I have looked recently in some detail at South Africa's constructive engagement with Zimbabwe and certainly in as much as we can make sensible judgements about its motivations these do seem to accord with a perception of its own role as a middle power that can best exercise leverage on Harare through multilateral continental institutions. However it is also likely that different and conflicting norms or values – informing for example, efforts to promote human rights – may shape policy in ways that make the definition of interests very difficult to fit comfortably into one or other of the dichotomous categories supplied by realist or idealist notions of state behaviour.**[vi]**

My main reservations concerning the new 'critical theory' based approaches to South African foreign policy studies are to do with their grounding assumptions

about the world we live in. As I hope I have shown, South Africa's new democracy can make stronger claims for itself than merely conformity with its procedural formula. To a remarkable extent the South African state has retained its vigour, in defiance of prescriptions that allegedly arise from global capital movements. In general, democracy's critics in South Africa, both conservative and radical, have been too ready to write off the prospects for the liberatory fulfilment of a politics of modernity. Certainly apartheid was a modernising project and it failed but that failure was despite a degree of societal and economic and cultural transformation undergone by very few other countries in the colonial world. We should not be so surprised if the inheritors of the state created to administer such a complex and sophisticated system of coercive modernization can continue to change people's lives – for better and for worse. Nor should we be so eager to dismiss the likelihood that political leaders that command such formidable bureaucratic power can free themselves to an extent from the constraining compulsions of global markets and domestic sectional interest to pursue emancipatory goals.

NOTES

i. For an especially useful review see Butler 2003.

ii. See for a good example of this genre Bond 2000.

iii. See Chapter Three in Lodge 2002a.

iv. For a strongly argued idealist projections of South Africa's role as a middle power see Landsberg (2000).

v. See especially Ian Taylor's contribution to Nel and Van der Westhuizen (2004).

**vi.** See for an intelligent development of this argument Black and Wilson (2004).

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The Vrije Universiteit And South Africa ~ ANNA And A 'New'

Lexicography For South Africa
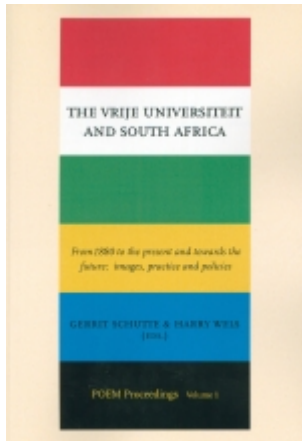
Introduction

In this paper we will try to make clear that the ANNA-project, in its own way, is one of the (possible) examples to show that different/changing situations, needs and target groups (may) require different/new approaches, models and products.

We will do so by taking the following steps:

– First, some basic terminology will be given.

– Secondly, the lexicographical situation in South Africa will be outlined.

– Thirdly, the ANNA-project itself will be presented.

– Next the 'new' features of the ANNA-project will be highlighted.

– To end with, the pros and cons of ANNA in a 'new' South Africa will be discussed.
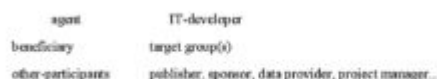
Lexicography

We can define lexicography in at least two ways. The first 'classical' definition could read as follows: 'Lexicography is the description of one or more aspects of one or more vocabularies in function of one or more target groups or users'. For the second, more 'formal', definition the following 'frame'[i] could be used:

Although the latter definition differs *formally* from the former, it does not really do so from the point-of-view of *content*. One can easily paraphrase the above frame-based definition as: 'Lexicology is an activity which leads/should lead to a product made by lexicographers/metalexicographers with the aim to come to a (scientific) description, etc'.

Next to the possibilities that a frame-based definition offers on the levels of

explicitness and consistency, it serves our purpose better than the more traditional one in two ways:

agent	IT-developer
beneficiary	target group(s)
other-participants	publisher, sponsor, data provider, project manager...

– First, it makes clear the fact that lexicography as an activity is no longer to be considered as a solitary act of a lexicographer, but rather as a scene on which next to lexicographers, different players, such as metalexicographers (theoreticians, designers of models/theories upon which to base lexicographical practice), tool developers, project managers, data providers, users, and publishers play a role.
– Secondly, as one can observe, a frame has a stable side (the left hand side, the slots) and a variable side (the right hand side, the fillers). It is to be expected that changes in the fillers over time will entail changes in the character of lexicography itself and so lead to a 'new' lexicography. In particular this is what has happened to the fillers for the 'format', 'means', 'beneficiary', and 'other-participants'-slots during the last decades.

The lexicograpical situation in South Africa**[ii]**

The situation before 1994
This part of the article is mainly based on Van Schalkwyk 2003. In what follows, we will give a brief outline bullet-wise of the most important lexicographical 'facts' of the pre-1994 period:

– Two official languages existed (English and Afrikaans).
– their wake two big government-subsidized lexicographical projects were carried out:
– the Dictionary of SA English on Historical Principles (1968-1996);
– the WAT (= Woordeboek van die Afrikaanse Taal) (1926 – …) (up until 2003, 11 volumes (A-O) have been published).
– For African (black) languages three university projects have been started up: Xhosa (1968 – …) (Greater isiXhosa Dictionary), Zulu (1977 – …) (isiKazamasu Dictionary) and Sesotho sa Leboa (1988 – …) (English – Pedi v.v. Dictionary).
– Furthermore there existed bilingual wordlists between English/Afrikaans and one or more of the African languages mainly meant to give (rapid) access to the

'white' languages for the 'black' language speaker.

The situation after 1994
A new lexicographical policy/regulation takes place from the side of government leading to:

– The establishment of 11 official languages in 1996: the existing ones, English and Afrikaans, were augmented by Xhosa, Zulu, Ndebele, Swati (= members of the Nguni family), Sesotho sa Leboa, Sesotho, Setswana (= members of the Sotho family), Xitsonga, and Tshivenda.
– PANSALB (= Pan South African Language Board) was established in 1996 for the development and stimulation of all official South African languages and, in particular, those which have been marginalized up until now; PANSALB should also promote multilinguality.
– In 1998/99 lexicographical units were established for all South African official languages with the aim to come to monolingual data/databases, serving as a basis for all kinds of lexicographical products.

Van Schalkwyk (2003) reports with regard to the state-of-affairs of the lexicographical units: 'In die tussetyd is reeds personeel aangestel. Op die oomblik is die soektog na hoofdredakteurs aan die gang'. ['In the meantime staff has already been appointed. At the moment the search for editors-in-chief is going on'.] This quotation makes clear that, apart from the specific descriptive problems for African languages, the most outstanding problem of South African lexicography at the moment, is the fact that lexicographers/ metalexicographers with a formal training are scarce, making the process of starting up lexicographical projects for Africa languages an extremely slow one.

The ANNA-project: some facts and figures
ANNA is an acronym for *Afrikaans-Nederlands, Nederlands-Afrikaans*. As a dictionary project it came to the fore in 1999 when a *Feasibility and Definition Study* was undertaken (see Martin, Gouws and Renders 1999) in order to find out whether such as dictionary was needed and if so, which features it should have. In 2000 it was decided to definitely start up the project, expecting it to be finalized in 2006/7. ANNA is mainly subsidized by private money, namely by two Dutch foundations: ZASM (= *Zuid Afrikaanse Spoorweg Maatschappij*, 'South African Railway Company', Amsterdam) as the main sponsor, and the Van den Berch van Heemstede Foundation, The Hague. The Universities of Potchefstroom and

Stellenbosch have also financially contributed. The work is carried out in close co-operation between the universities of Stellenbosch, Port Elisabeth, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, and the Limburg University Centre (Belgium); the Vrije Universiteit acting as a co-ordinator.

The production is also expected to be a co-operative effort between South Africa and the Low Countries, as Pharos (for the electronic version) and Van Dale (for the paper version) are the intended publishers. The main features of the final ANNA-product can be summarized as follows:

ANNA
– aims to be a bilingual dictionary/database;
– not in the traditional sense of the word;
– making use of modern, new technology (tools) and new metalexicographical insights (models);
– which should lead not only to an innovative, contrastive, comparative dictionary/database between Afrikaans and Dutch;
– but also to new models and tools which can be used by other language pairs such as the African languages spoken in South Africa.

This last feature was one of the basic requirements of the partners to participate in the project and one of the main issues that has been investigated in the pilot study. In what follows this 'innovative' feature of ANNA will be dealt with in more detail.

ANNA and the 'new' lexicography
In order to make clear what is new in ANNA, we will start from a very simple but concrete example: the Dutch word *zalm*, with its Afrikaans equivalent *salm* (English: 'salmon') and show what ANNA does and what it does not (does no longer).

What ANNA DOES NOT
A traditional bilingual Dutch-Afrikaans v.v. dictionary (NA/AN) would contain two entries for 'salmon', one in the NA-part zalm salm, and one in the AN-part salm ® zalm. One could imagine these entries to look as follows:

NA-part:
ZALM**[iii]**

1 [kind of fish] *salm*
een plakje zalm 'n *repie salm*; verse zalm *vars salm*; een blikje zalm 'n *blikkie salm*; gerookte zalm *gerookte salm*; <fig.> *het neusje van de zalm die allerbeste.*

AN-part:
SALM
1 [kind of fish]
'n repie salm een *plakje zalm*; vars salm *verse zalm*; 'n blikkie salm een *blikje zalm*; gerookte salm *gerookte zalm.*

As one can observe, closely related languages, such as Dutch and Afrikaans, resemble each other strongly in their 'complementary' parts. They are not each other's mirror image, yet they come very close. The way they are treated above shows a very high degree of redundancy, that is why we will prefer another descriptive model, the amalgamation model, illustrated in what follows.

ANNA does not treat two closely related languages apart, but unifies them, malagamates them into one, single macrostructure. In other words, it treats zalm/salm as if the two entries were the same (or variants of a common entry). This has the advantage that one can both reduce redundancy (see the preceding paragraph) and enhance/optimalise comparability/contrastivity. For instance, in the case of zalm/salm it will become clear at a single glance what is similar/different between them as the entry below (which is an ANNA-entry) shows.

ZALM/SALM
1 [a kind of fish]
<< >> verse zalm *vars salm*; een blikje zalm 'n *blikkie salm*; gerookte zalm *gerookte salm*;
>> << een plakje zalm *'n repie salm*;
<fig.> het neusje van de zalm *die allerbeste.*

The symbols used are to be interpreted as follows:

<< >>: similar, non-contrastive examples/combinations;
>> <<: different, contrastive examples/combinations;
<fig.>: idioms and figurative usage.

If one is only interested in differences between the two languages (from a

combinatorial point-of-view) one could for instance skip the << >>-section. This way the user can define his own 'paths' through the data, depending on his/her interests and needs.

What ANNA CAN DO (for a 'new' lexicography in South Africa)
It will have been clear from the preceeding that it is the ambition of the ANNA-project that some of its material and immaterial infrastructure can be used *beyond* the project itself. This is the case for the amalgamation model (immaterial infrastructure) and for the tool to deal with it (material infrastructure). In what follows we briefly present both possibilities.

The amalgamation model
The amalgamation model has proven its value for the ANNA-project in that it successfully unifies the macrostructures of two closely related languages and optimises their comparability. Its main features are the following:

– The two macrostructures are unified into one, amalgamated structure.
– This is done on the basis of formal and semantic relatedness.**[iv]**
– This amalgamation leads to different lemma-types:

* Combined lemmata (cognates) (A + D) such as:
– absolute cognates (e.g. A *tafel*/D tafel (E *table*));
– absolute cognates with systematic morphological/orthographical differences (e.g. A *ontsnap*/D *ontsnappen* (E escape));
– partial cognates (contrary to absolute cognates, partial cognates do not share all meanings, e.g. *robot* A/D = E automaton, A only = traffic light);

* Non-combined lemmata (non-cognates) which formally differ, such as D *verkeersdrempel*/A *spoedwalletjie* (E speedwall) and false friends which semantically differ, such as:
– D *mus* = A *mossie* (= E sparrow);
– A *mus* = D *muts* (= E cap).
* The model can reduce or leave out non contrastive, redundant examples/combinations.
* The model guarantees optimal and direct comparability between two closely related languages.
* The model has proven to be exportable to other closely related languages such as languages from the Nguni and the Sotho family (see Mashamaite 1995).

ANNA, OMBI and the Hub-and-Spoke Model

In order to come to an efficient language infrastructure, resources which have to function within a multilingual environment should be developed with a view on their *usability* and *linkability* with other resources of that environment. Therefore they should use adequate instruments such as editors with linking and reversing capacity. ANNA makes use of such an editor, viz. OMBI (acronym for 'OMkeertool voor BIlinguale bestanden ('reversing tool for bilingual databases')).**[v]** It would lead us too far to enter into details here; let it suffice to state that OMBI links two words of two different languages at meaning level: Dutch 'paard', for instance, is linked in its ANIMAL meaning to 'horse' (in its ANIMAL meaning) and, in its CHESS meaning, to 'knight' (in its CHESS meaning). Furthermore, OMBI specifies the relationship between these semantic units so that one can use them in a calculus in order to reverse them, block them, derive other values for them etc. In other words, OMBI does as what is illustrated in figure 1:
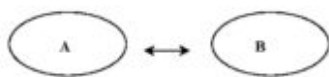

Fig. 1: Linking items from language A with those of language B and vice versa

Figure 1 – Linking items from language A with those of language B and vice versa

The fact that one has explicitly specified the relationships between the items makes that, when adding one language (C) to the data collection (A « B), one can infer the links between B and C by means of derivation rules. See fig. 2:
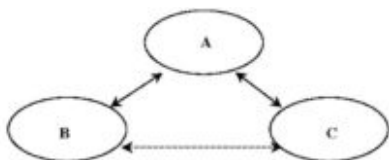

Fig. 2: Linking two languages (B and C) to one common language (A) and deriving the links between B and C

Figure 2 – Linking two languages (B and C) to one common language (A) and deriving the links between B and C

Language A now functions as a common link. It is called the hub-language in analogy with air-traffic organization where often one does not fly directly from a (spoke) airport to another (spoke) airport, but via a hub, a central airport. B and C are the spoke-languages.

The Hub-and-Spoke Model is a model with a large potential. Its strength lies in the fact that it exploits the intra- and interlingual relations in and between languages and does so via a hub (instead of bidirectionally). One can imagine that in a multilingual context such as in South Africa, where there are 11 official languages, the model seems to be very promising. In such a situation (11 languages), 55 different pairs (= 110 bilingual dictionaries; taking both directions into account) could be derived. In a hub-and-spoke configuration one could suffice with ten direct links (10 spokes to 1 hub), the remaining 45 being generated as indirect spin-offs. Actually there is a gain in data-production from the third language onwards (see fig. 3). For more information on the Hub-and-Spoke Model see Martin and Heid (1998).
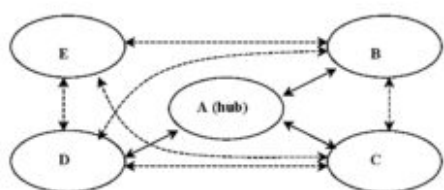

Fig. 3 Situation with five different languages in a HaS-configuration: ten language pairs; four directly linked (indicated by full lines); six indirectly linked (indicated by broken lines).

Figure 3 – Situation with five different languages in a HaS-configuration: ten language pairs; four directly linked (indicated by full lines); six indirectly linked (indicated by broken lines).

Conclusion: *PROS and CONS of the ANNA project*
As a conclusion one may state that there is (at least) one good argument NOT to carry out the ANNA-project and three good reasons to DO SO. We list them one after the other in what follows.

The communicative argument
There is no big communicative gap to bridge between Afrikaans and Dutch

considering the fact that speakers from Afrikaans and Dutch can communicate with each other each speaking his/her own language. Of course, this communication will now and then lead to miscommunication, to misunderstanding, and to linguistic problems, but solving these are not in themselves sufficient conditions to justify the ANNA project.

The functional argument
If one accepts that language is a vehicle not only for basic communication, but also to properly express oneself in, be it in literature, in science or in everyday situations, then a bilingual dictionary is an important instrument to understand the subtleties and nuances of the other language, the other culture. In Afrikaans and Dutch this is the more so as there do not exist fully-fledged dictionaries Afrikaans-Dutch and vice versa at the moment. In this respect ANNA fills a gap both for Dutch and for Afrikaans language users.

The descriptive argument
Afrikaans, until very recently, has been described as a rather homogeneous and 'pure' language. ANNA starts from a Dutch database, the RBN (= *Referentie Bestand Nederlands, 'Reference Database of Dutch'*)**[vi]** which shows a rather varied picture of Dutch. It is the aim to link Dutch to Afrikaans as it is used now, being the mother tongue of more coloured than white people (5,5 million speakers in all, in a proportion 60 per cent coloured, 40 per cent white). This way ANNA can give an impetus to a 'new' view on the lexicographical description of Afrikaans.

The scientific argument
Last but not least, ANNA has developed a model (the amalgamation model together with the appropriate tools to make the model operative, see preceding section) which has a general linguistic value. The model enables closely related languages, no matter whether they are spoken by 'white', 'black', or 'coloured' linguistic communities, to be described in an own contrastive way. In doing so, attention is paid both to similarities and differences. More in particular contrasts which lie on the supralexical level (co-text (combinations) and context (wider pragmatic situation)) and which often pass unnoticed, can now be captured. We hope that this last feature in particular will pave the way to a 'new', useful and co-operative lexicography in South Africa.

NOTES

[i] A frame is a schema to represent knowledge with. It consists of slots (general classes) and fillers (specifications of the slots). Frames and their variants (as graphs, networks etc.) are well-known in Artificial Intelligence literature.
[ii] This part of the article is mainly based on Van Schalkwyk 2003.
[iii] For clarity's sake the metalanguage in the meaning resumés is represented in English here (see: kind of fish).
[iv] Words (from Dutch and Afrikaans) that are combined are declared to be cognates. In order to be considered a cognate, the word pair must share the 'same' form (deviations permitted), and at least one meaning.
[v] For more information on OMBI see Martin and Tamm 1996.
[vi] For more information on the RBN see Van der Vliet 2005 (forthcoming).

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The Vrije Universiteit And South Africa ~ Stimulating Research Future
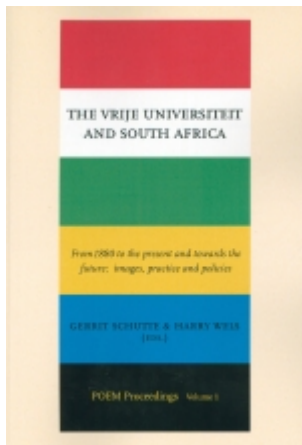
The wealth of Africa

Wealth producing innovation does not occur in a vacuum. Technological breakthroughs do not automatically lead to increased wealth. More wealth does not lead to a better society.

Research for a better life

The benefication of research into wealth requires

– Skilled people;

– And ideas;

– That translate into novel practices;

– Organisations;

– And products

In other words, it takes social innovation to make wealth through research and it takes research to make innovation in the 21st century.

The NRF – A South African national mandate in an African context

Support and promote research

– through funding, human resource development and the provision of the necessary research facilities

To facilitate

– the creation of knowledge, innovation and development in all fields of science
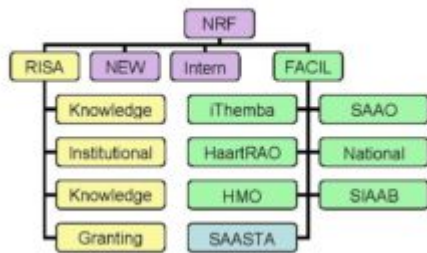
and technology, including indigenous knowledge.

In order
– to contribute to the improvement of the quality of life of all the people of the Republic
Managing and stimulating research across the knowledge spectrum

Managing and stimulating research across the knowledge spectrum

Strategic priorities
– High quality research;
– Equity and redress;
– Internationalisation of research;
– Focus on Africa;
– Positioning the NRF within the NSI;
– Organisational transformation.

PhDs as the driver
Strategy requires multiple interventions at different nodes along the Higher Education and National Innovation system.

The key driver for the NRF is the production of PhDs
– In sufficient quantities;
– Of sufficient quality;
– Across the knowledge spectrum;
– In order to create an innovative and entrepreneurial knowledge society.

The challenge is
– To efficiently feed and create high levels of knowledge resource;
– To offer graduates visible, meaningful career paths;
– To translate the benefits of sustained Higher Education into people able to produce or use new knowledge to meet challenges of democratic development.

Social Science, Law and Humanities = The Significant Other
– Requirement for creating a democratic, culturally informed and innovative society (social);
– Awaken new directions in scholarship (social);
– Create a platform for understanding and building teh interface between and across knowledge systems (systemic);
– Present the need for research in humanities in the NSI (policy).

NRF-driven SSLH initiatives

– Shifting boundaries of knowledge;

– Developing the study of science as a research field;

– Introduction of SSLH into Large Science Platforms – African Coelacanth;

– Stimulation of Science and Society.

Shifting boundaries – first draft themes

– Theories of knowledge;

– Theories and knowledge;

– Social functioning a.k.a. development;

– Globalisation and community;

– Social structure – race, class and gender.

Approach to international partnerships

Purpose is to build

– Research links;

– Individual and institutional capacity;

– Networks and partnerships.

In a way that is enduring and self-sustaining.

Compelling arguments

– Expertise;

– Performance;

– Relevance;

– Intellectual leadership;

– Social accountability;

– Prospective thinking.

Compelling engagement

– Direct institution to institution linkages for SA capacity building;

– System to system dialogue and exchanges;

– Scholarships;

– Research partnerships;

– Access to EU Framework Programmes;

– Active public scholarship.

Note: This contribution is the unadapted text from a Powerpoint presentation.

The Vrije Universiteit And South Africa ~ International R&D Cooperation With South Africa: Selected Policy Perspectives
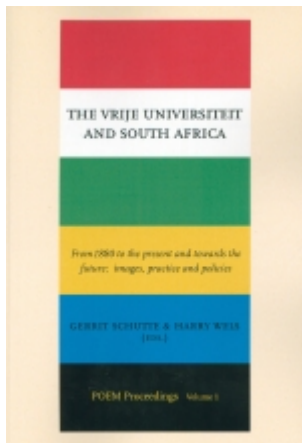
This paper endeavours to offer policy perspectives on international relations between South Africa and other countries in general and South Africa and the Netherlands in particular. More specifically, the paper looks at South African Dutch relationships against the historical background on the one hand and current research priorities for South Africa on the other. The paper, first of all, offers a number of propositions that will guide the remainder of the paper. In the second place, a listing is offered of some notable South African scholars and leaders with Dutch connections. Some of the characteristics of the South African research and development (R&D) system are next offered, followed by main challenges faced by that system. The fifth section deals with its comparative strengths and weaknesses. In the sixth section different sets of priorities are given after which the paper looks at different aspects of international R&D cooperation. The paper concludes with a number of recommendations for the future.

Two background notes may be in order at this point. The analyses in this paper are mainly informed by the author's exposure to international collaboration (for instance, the collaborative study undertaken by the Vrije Universiteit and the

Human Science Research Council on social movements), interpretations of national policy and priorities, and exposure to the business of a national advisory council. Finally it is necessary to say that this paper focuses on science, technology and innovation, more particularly on research and development, with an emphasis on the social sciences and humanities. The following limited set of propositions guided the composition and analyses in this paper.

– Academic exposure to the Dutch Higher Education and Science and Technology systems in the past contributed substantially to both the emergence of a democratic dispensation and also to scientific excellence in South Africa – and it will hopefully in future contribute to both.

– The democratisation of South Africa has brought in its wake the potential for full participation in the global research and development network, including training, collaborative research, international funding for research, access to opportunities – training and research – access to job opportunities, and mobility of research workers. The country still has a long way to go to realise all the potential inherent in these new opportunities.

– South Africa possesses a reasonably strong science and technology system which was inherited from the previous constitutional dispensation.

– There still remains, however, a number of factors that could inhibit optimistic scenarios about the future: The relative geographic isolation of South Africa, Information Communication Technology limitations, asymmetrical needs (for instance the challenge to match the need for excellence with that of capacity development), and the relatively limited financial capacity of the country.

– South Africa is well placed to offer Europe in general and the Netherlands in particular unique opportunities for good quality collaboration in various fields of research and development, especially if certain conditions are accounted for.

Dutch influence on democratisation in South Africa
The Netherlands as 'capacity builder' has manifestly and latently impacted in important ways on developments in South Africa. 'A significant number of dissident of Afrikaner intellectuals [many with post-1960 Dutch connections, HCM] have consistently voiced their critique of Apartheid', according to Mouton and Muller (1995: 182). To contextualise this relatively powerful statement the

following, admittedly arbitrarily chosen, examples could be listed:

– Literature: from Vincent February, through Njabula Ndebele, to N.P. van Wyk Louw;
– Theology: Alan Boesak, Beyers Naudé, Jaap Durand, and Willie Jonker;
– Law: from John Dugard to Bhandra Ranscod;
– Science management: Rob Adam to Johan Garbers;
– Political science: Willie Esterhuize.

Typology of the South African R&D system
The South African R&D system is located in a national context that is characterised by a complex configuration of challenges. These challenges include:

– Competition for resources (ranging from the funding of primary health care, proper housing, proper secondary school education to international competitiveness in high technology).

– An R&D system that is a system-in-transition and is therefore very dynamic, sometimes even turbulent (cf. the mergers in the higher education system, reducing the number of institution from 33 to 22; the reorganisation of the science and technology governance system; and the acute need for research capacity building).

– A system that is largely in Mode 2 of knowledge production (see e.g. Gibbons et al. 1994 or Rip and Marais 1998), which means, amongst other things, that publicly funded R&D is in important respects priorities-guided. The consequences for self-initiated basic research should be clear. The fact that South Africa is in a strategic science mode means that a very high premium is being placed on the notion of collaboration, and that is obviously conducive to international collaboration.

– South Africa has a relatively well-developed research system. Many political spokespersons have since 1994 confirmed this. A few indicators of the strength of the system are offered in a later section.

– The system is subject to serious financial constraints. These constraints are related to the competing priorities mentioned earlier, as well as the emphasis been placed by the country's National Treasury on criteria for the funding of new programmes, namely outcomes and even increasingly on the possible impacts of

such programmes.

Challenges to the South African system
Against the background of the preceding characterisation of the South African Science and Technology system the following are some of the major challenges to that system.

Firstly, South Africa has to create an optimal level of stability in the system. Currently, the mergers in the higher education system generate unproductive turbulence and one cannot expect an increase in the productivity of researchers until that has settled. In this regard it should be noted that the university system accounts for approximately 25 per cent of research output.

Secondly, and of critical importance, is the need for effective research capacity development. All research and development indicators point to the dire need for new or novice black researchers to enter the system and to start contributing to it. The problem currently, it would seem, is not the fact that ageing white male researchers are responsible for the larger proportion of publications in the country (45 per cent in 1998 older than 50 years of age; NACI 2002) but the fact that there is not a sufficient inflow of young black and women researchers.

Thirdly the country is being faced with rapidly ageing equipment and research infrastructure. On the one hand a proportion of equipment is rapidly ageing, but on the other hand there is also the suggestion that coordination, cooperation, and collaboration with regard to existing equipment could be improved.

Fourthly – and as already implied earlier – there is a dire need to improve the conversion rate of research into innovation (that is, technology, problem solutions, etcetera). As has been said, given the relatively restricted resources at the disposal of the research community, more of that research output should find its way towards the solution of the many and varied challenges confronting the country. Attention should be given to a sensitivity to the need to accelerate the conversion from research to some form of implementation.

Fifthly, the climate for research by the business sector must be improved. Currently, the country lags behind other countries with regard to the incentivisation of research and development by the business sector. Examples include the lack of tax incentives, the relatively vulnerable intellectual property rights security, and the relative lack of incentives for university-business

collaboration. The importance of this challenge cannot be sufficiently emphasised, since the business sector is generally seen as the crucible of converting research into innovation – a driver of the growth rate and improvement of the quality of life of all South Africans.

Finally, and cross-cutting the above five challenges, is the need to technologise society. South Africa is essentially, as government often emphasises, a dual economy. The term here refers to the fact that there is a highly developed and industrialised modern economy on the one hand and a developing, even underdeveloped, economy on the other. If the divide between these two cannot be bridged, the science community would be unreasonable to suspect significant increases in R&D investment. Research and development, technology and innovation should be seen to benefit the have-nots, i.e. the deprived members of the second economy, otherwise scepticism about the so-called benefits of investment in research and development could be expected.

Comparative strength and performance of the system
The preceding paragraphs offered a selective qualitative overview of the nature of the science and technology system in South Africa. In this section, some of the qualitative comments are translated into comparative quantitative data – a few 'hard' stepping stones across the qualitative stream, as it were. For this purpose, two comparator countries have been chosen that represent extremes on the international scale, viz. the Netherlands and Senegal, while seven quantitative indicators are summarised in the following table (cf. e.g. DST 2005; UNDP 2002).

Table 1: Comparative S&T capacities

Population & literacy		
SA	46 mill	86%
N'lands	16,2 mill	100%
Senegal	10,4 mill	38%
GERD		
SA	US$ 1.5 bill	0.76% of GDP
N'lands	US$ 9.4 bill	1.89% of GDP
Senegal	na	na
Researchers/1000 employed population and productivity		
SA	1.9	Publications: 0.5%	Citations: 0.31% (29th)
N'lands	2.6	Publications: 2.55%	Citations: 3.46% (9th)
Senegal	0.002	na	na
Human Development & Technology Achievement Indices		
SA	0.666	0.34
N'lands	0.942	0.63
Senegal	0.430	0.15

Table 1: Comparative S&T capacities

The information in the table is rather self-explanatory and shows that South Africa compares rather unfavourably with a developed country, such as the Netherlands, while it compares very favourably with African countries, here exemplified by Senegal. Although one could elaborate on the data, only a few

additional comments should suffice:

– First of all it should be noted that South Africa is far from obtaining the magic 1 per cent of GDP spend on research and development (GERD). Although there is a slow upward trend (from 0.76 in 2001/2002 to 0.81 in 2002/2003) and a target has been set to reach 1 per cent by 2008. In comparison, the GERD of the Netherlands is more then twice that of South Africa.

– Secondly it should be noticed that the productivity of the South African research community is proportionally much lower than that of an industrialised country such as the Netherlands, even when the data are normalised.

– A very significant international indicator of capacity and also of S&T performance is that of the Technology Achievement Index: South Africa is far lower than industrialised Netherlands, but significantly higher than a developing country, such as Senegal. In terms of these indices the Netherlands is ranked eighth, South Africa as 107th and Senegal as 154th .

Put together data such as these show that South Africa has a well developed system for an African country, but still lags far behind industrialised countries.

To keep the implications of these and related figures in perspective requires that we remind ourselves that the literature indicates a strong positive correlation between science and technology on the one hand and economic and social development of a country on the other. In this regard, a reference to what King, the science advisor of the British Prime Minister, recently said: '...sustainable economic development in highly competitive world markets requires a direct engagement in the generation of knowledge', and he went on to show '...the cycle of poverty and dependence [that is in developing countries] will only be broken by capacity building between nations of high and low science intensity often characterised as the North and the South' (2004: 403). The message is very clear, namely to enhance South Africa's economic and social development requires the intensification of its science and research endeavours – in this regard one of the obvious instruments is that of international collaboration. Through cooperation between South African and the Netherlands, South Africa stands a better chance to further accelerate its research and development capacity and thereby raise its economic growth.

Priority themes and areas: an overview

Talking about research priorities might come across as a rather strong form of research steering. However, it is necessary to recall that the South African Research and Development System is currently one that is priorities-directed. The missions of most South African research institutions currently specify explicitly that the research agenda should be aligned with national priorities. Obviously this is a contestable area, yet it is a reality within which South Africa operates.

I would like to start with the national priorities of central government followed by the South African Research and Development Strategy (NRDS) and its priorities, thirdly the priorities that guide NACI currently and, finally, the NEPAD priorities. All of the above, however, in the full realisation that a government' priorities are by definition political in nature and that that such priorities are very broad.

Government priorities
The so-called national imperatives that government promote are driven by the need to link what is called the first and second economies of the country. That literally means to have the underdeveloped – mostly deep rural communities – share in the benefits of the developed economy. More specifically the following imperatives are promoted.

– Eradication of poverty;
– Improvement of quality of life;
– Reconstruction and development of the country;
– Racial and gender equality;
– National unity and intonation;
– Effectiveness and efficiency of the public sector;
– Human Resource Development;
– Appropriate responses to globalisation.

National R&D Strategy
The key document directing publicly funded research and development in South Africa is currently 'The National Research and Development Strategy' (2003). A summary of the priorities covered by the strategy is summarised below.

– Poverty reduction;
– New technology platforms:
* Biotechnology;
* Information and communication technology;

– Advanced manufacturing;
– Leveraging resource-based industries and developing new knowledge-based industries from them.

Given that this book primarily focuses on the human and social sciences it may be useful at this point to refer to the position of the social sciences as summarised in the NRDS:

Our ability to respond [to new areas of technology] is not simply depended on having the technological capacity available. There is a particular need to mobilise the social sciences to develop far more holistic understandings and interventions to improve the rate of innovation in our society. The role of the social sciences is often underestimated, and it is therefore necessary to develop specific capacities in the social sciences to understand and strengthen our system of innovation (2003: 38). Indeed, a tall order for the social sciences but at the same time one which they surely should take up.

NACI priorities
The National Advisory Council on Innovation has identified the following broad set of priorities, some of which are already far advanced and others only in the initial phases of study:

– Necessary best practice in innovation policy and strategy;
– Optimal provision of infrastructure;
– Dynamic modelling of appropriate human resources for the NSI;
– A mapping of regional systems of innovation;
– The position of women in the national system of innovation;
– Social aspects of innovation;
– The state and scope of ethics in the national system of innovation.

NEPAD flagship programmes
Since the establishment of a science and technology secretariat within in the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) structures a number of so-called flagship programmes have been identified and are currently being operationalised.

These programmes are:
– Biodiversity;
– Biotechnology;

– Information and communication technology;

– Energy technologies

– Material sciences;

– Space science and technology;

– Post harvest food technology;

– Water science and technology;

– Indigenous knowledge systems;

– Desertification research;

– Science and technology for manufacturing;

– Major technology.

These priorities or flagship programmes fall, with a few exceptions, clearly in the realm of the hard sciences. Nevertheless, the social sciences and humanities could in partnership with natural scientists and engineers make a meaningful contribution. For instance, in the case of energy technologies the whole question of pollution and human behaviour with regard to energy conservation comes into play. The same would apply to desertification where agricultural practices are a factor in the encroachment by the desert.

Observations on international cooperation
This chapter has so far dealt primarily with the South African situation and has moved towards specific priorities with regard to which there is a national need for R&D. This section of this chapter looks at the pros and cons, respectively the opportunities and the threats to international collaboration. Table 2 summarises some of the opportunities and the threats to such cooperation.

A close study of the self-explanatory table shows that the opportunities are primarily those concerning the broadening of scientific horizons, in either the form of participation in an international context or by cross-validation of such studies. Seen from a different perspective, the challenges focus more on what could be called programme management and human aspects of research.

Table 2: Observations on international collaboration

Positive	Negative
Value-addition	Project management sometimes neglected
Deepening of expertise	Non-optimal outputs
Broadening of horizons	Fact of collaboration > outcomes
Diversification of capacity building spectrum	Individual project orientation > team project orientation
Constructive participation in globalisation	Quality sometimes suspect
Effective vehicle for introducing new money	Function often: Prominence > reputation

Table 2: Observations on

Implications for international cooperation

If there is a message hidden in the previous sections of this chapter, then it is a call for the extension of Dutch involvement in collaboration with South African universities and research institutions. South Africa certainly needs Dutch cooperation, but the chapter implies that Dutch research can also profit and benefit from collaboration with their South African counterparts.

One condition for such cooperation and collaboration is to have such collaboration preferably be centred around South African priority areas. It would be fair to say that the priorities mentioned earlier in this chapter offer a very wide range of topics for which there should be serious interest from Dutch colleagues. This point relates to the argument that such research should at least take account of a Mode 2 design. That, of course, does not imply that the quality of such research should be suspect in any way. To the contrary, an assumption of this chapter has throughout been that international collaboration should entail high quality research.

An important implication of the analyses so far is that a distinction should be made between knowledge generation in its own right and research capacity development, i.e. training of novice researchers. We cannot simply assume that a research project will necessarily contribute to research capacity development. Our experience has so far shown that one has to explicitly manage capacity development as an additional and a unique function attached to research. Indeed, funding agencies should explicitly require a plan to show how a project would contribute to capacity building.

Another guideline that is also emerging from the above analyses is that we should preferably invest in larger and multi institutional programs rather than small individual projects. This is not to say that the latter should be ignored. However, an important project of NACI (2003) has convincingly shown that larger projects have a significantly better chance of getting implemented and utilized than small projects. And that is what strategic science and Mode 2 are all about. And this means that research partners should plan for meaningful outcomes and impacts from the start of collaborative ventures – it should not be a postscript, an afterthought.

All of the above adds up to the need for professional project management skills and approaches. In fact, it would be a truism to say that the larger the project and the more participants in such a project, the more challenging the management challenges become.

Strategic – also ethical – questions
In conclusion I would like to raise a number of strategic, respectively ethical questions. When planning international collaborative ventures we should ask ourselves at least the following questions and obviously also have sound and defendable answers to them.

– What would we leave behind upon completion of the project?
– What and how would we contribute to the development of South Africa in general and the particular field or community in particular?
– How sustainable would our project involvement be? Or will it be a once-off effort and excuse to spend some time in Africa?
– What would we take back in terms of learning experience? Would we be able to transfer the skills to our students back home?
– Is it part of a larger program or incidental personal project-in-a-different-context?
– Would we be prepared for a thorough program evaluation upon its completion? To put it rather starkly, would our study stand the light of thorough program interrogation?

Conclusions
This chapter has tried to address a number of parameters associated with international collaboration in general and between South Africa and the Netherlands in particular. The analyses offered in this chapter, would justify the following conclusions (which are also related to the propositions made in the earlier part of the chapter):

– Both South Africa and the Netherlands can profit from intensified engagement and this is not only for historical reasons but in the spirit of globalisation the nature of Mode 2 of knowledge production and the spirit of this particular workshop.
– South Africa has indeed elevated international collaboration to a priority at national and institutional levels.
– Ideally, projects should be located within an innovation value chain – this is also

a context in which the social scientist can make essential multi-, inter- and trans disciplinary contributions.

– Larger projects and programs are preferable to small and incidental ones.

– It is essential to explicate the expected value addition by the collaborating partners rather than just engaging in a program of which the outcomes are not clear at the start.

– Collaborative research and development programs pose project management challenges that cannot simply be left to chance or default options.

– Collaborative programs should be evaluated on a regular basis.

NOTES

[i] Edward Rakate and Ria Vogel are thanked for their assistance in the preparation of this paper.

[ii] The National Advisory Council on Innovation (NACI) is a South African statutory advisory body, established in 1997 to advise the Minister of Science and Technology and Cabinet on all matters pertaining to innovation, which includes science and technology. Counterparts of NACI include the Dutch Adviesraad voor het Wetenschaps– en Technologiebeleid (AWT).

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