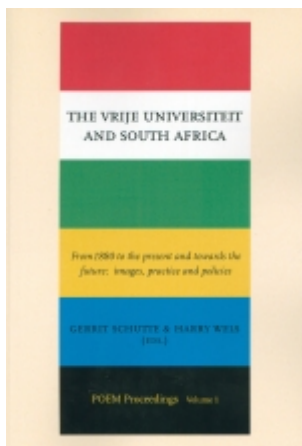


The Vrije Universiteit And South Africa ~ Can 'New' Meet 'Old'? VU-South Africa, 1976-Present: Development Cooperation In Southern Africa



Introduction

In his paper, Brinkman provides an overview of the roots of the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam's (VU) development cooperation activities in southern Africa in the second half of the 1970s. Upon cancelling the cooperation agreement with Potchefstroom University in 1976, the VU decided to develop links with other universities in the Southern African region. The idea was to aim at universities that were playing a clear role in the development of black leadership for the future of the sub-continent. As 'black' universities inside South Africa were also heavily influenced by 'apartheid' policies, the choice was made to look towards universities in surrounding countries. The first cooperation links were established with the universities in Botswana, Swaziland and Lesotho. As Brinkman also indicates, these new links fitted well into the new Dutch national policies for development cooperation, as they emerged during Jan Pronk's first period as Minister for Development Cooperation in the 1970s. Pronk established a new funding channel for cooperation links between Dutch universities and universities in developing countries.

Brinkman identifies some themes in the history of the relationship between the VU and South Africa:

- * The flourishing of development cooperation activities at the VU, particularly, but not exclusively, in southern Africa;
- * The emergence of particular focal areas for development cooperation at the VU based on the needs of partner institutions;
- * The return of the VU to South Africa after the Wende in the early 1990s;
- * 'New' meeting 'old' in South Africa (and vice versa), in terms both of themes

and of partner institutions;

* The challenges posed to universities because of the emergence of the 'knowledge society' and the consequences this may have for a traditional academic organisation.

The purpose of this paper is twofold:

1. To illustrate Brinkman's themes in one particular focal area of development cooperation at the VU, namely basic science education;
2. To raise some fundamental issues regarding development cooperation in Dutch universities, the position of such cooperation at the VU, and its role in South Africa.

In the Netherlands, both the position of universities and the development cooperation policies have undergone fundamental changes over the decades since the 1970s, and particularly in the 1990s. The question raised here is whether 'new' can really still meet 'old', and what would be needed for that to happen.

Basic science education is only one of the focal areas in development cooperation at the VU. Other prominent fields of cooperation are in natural resource management (soil and water conservation, land reform, community based natural resource management, water harvesting, and land husbandry), in university management development, and in the use of ICT in higher education institutions.

In natural resource management, strong links also exist in South Africa, particularly with the Programme for Land and Agrarian Studies (PLAAS) at the University of the Western Cape. In university management development, there are cooperation links in South Africa with the University of the North and with North West University, and with the University of Pretoria (1999-2001). Some work in this field has also been done at the University of the Free State.

The choice of this paper for basic science education is explained by the fact that it has been the largest individual area of work over the decades, and that it most clearly demonstrates a few of the fundamental tensions regarding the relationship between universities and development cooperation.

The problem of basic science education for developing universities

The output of developing universities is often skewed towards the humanities and social sciences, whilst the need for manpower and knowledge products in natural sciences, engineering, medicine, etc. is often much more acute. Apart from the expense and expertise required to develop these exact fields, an underlying

reason for this phenomenon is often also the lack of qualified candidates to take up a study in these fields. As Brinkman indicates in his paper, there is often a 'vicious cycle' in educational systems of underperformance in the exact subjects: not enough students enter higher education institutions due to poor education in schools; this causes particularly that not enough well-qualified secondary school teachers are produced in higher education, which leads to further poor education in schools. Basic science education interventions stem from this problem. Although universities are not directly responsible for secondary education, and the original project plans were also critically received for funding under the university cooperation umbrella, it is clear that universities have a direct interest here, both in the number and in the quality of incoming students, as well as in the number and quality of teachers produced.

Different types of programmes addressing this 'vicious cycle' problem in various ways have been developed over the years in different countries and institutional contexts. The choice of programme has always been dependent on the particular circumstances, wishes and possibilities of partner institutions or governments. The following main types can be distinguished:

- * Foundation programmes for students entering higher education institutions to remedy their knowledge and skill deficiencies and to give them a solid preparation for their further studies in the exact fields;
- * Reform of pre-service teacher qualification programmes, including the development of special programmes for already serving teachers who lack appropriate background and qualifications;
- * In-service support programmes for teachers in schools to assist them in improving their teaching.

In the following paragraph a brief overview of examples of different programmes in the southern African region will be provided.

Some basic science education projects in the southern African region

Programs and countries where the VU has rendered support to the design and implementation of basic science schemes are:

- * Foundation programmes for students entering higher education: Botswana, Lesotho, Mozambique, Swaziland, and Zambia;
- * Reform of pre-service teacher qualification programmes: Malawi, Mozambique, Tanzania, Zimbabwe;
- * In-service support programmes for teachers: Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi,

Namibia, Swaziland.

Within the framework of this brief paper we cannot discuss all these interventions in detail.

VU basic science education activities in South Africa since the early 1990s

Following the request from the European Union in 1990 to develop a basic science education programme in newly independent Namibia, a similar request was received for South Africa in 1992. This took the specific form of developing a foundation programme at a traditionally disadvantaged university, the University of the North, aimed at improving its intake in science programmes. The problem of the lack of properly qualified candidates from disadvantaged communities, particularly in the exact sciences, was and is widespread in South Africa as the quality of secondary education leaves much to be desired in a large majority of schools. The Foundation programme at the University of the North (UNIFY: University of the North Foundation Year) was meant to address this problem in this particular institution, but at the same time to form an exemplary programme that other institutions in South Africa might follow. In his paper, Brinkman describes the success of this programme, in which five VU staff members were involved for a number of years and which has now been fully institutionalised in the University of the North.

Direct replication of the UNIFY programme was not easy to realise. Many South African institutions started to address the problem in their own ways during the 1990s. Also, the continuous uncertainties surrounding the higher education landscape in South Africa and the position of historically different types of institutions made a concerted national approach impossible.

In 2000, the University of Pretoria (UP) approached the VU for assistance in setting up a UNIFY-type programme, now called the UPFY programme (University of Pretoria Foundation Year). Although not a historically disadvantaged institution, the University of Pretoria decided to transform its student intake and admit a much larger percentage of students from disadvantaged communities, and also saw the need to address the specific problems in the sciences through a foundation programme. UP had its own financial resources and contracted the VU directly without an external funding agency being involved.

In 2004, a new national funding channel for foundation-type programmes was opened by the National Department of Education in South Africa, following the

new funding arrangements for universities, which are outcome- and formula-based. In this new formula-based funding framework little room exists for extra activities to address historical inequalities; hence the need for separate subsidies. Universities can submit proposals for a maximum of two programmes per institution for special subsidy. North West University (the recent merger between Potchefstroom University and University of the North West in Mafikeng) submitted proposals and received funding for its Foundation Programme at the Mafikeng campus (both sciences and commerce). Presently [October 2004] discussions are ongoing about establishing a cooperative link with VU (see also below) for the development of this programme.

In science teacher education and in-service support to teachers the volume of VU activities in South Africa has been less pronounced, largely because of difficulties to attract external funding. The reasons for this can be found in the peculiarities of both the South African context and the funding channels, particularly the Dutch ones. The latter are more fully addressed in the next paragraph. With regard to the former, the following parameters are important to note:

- * Until recently, teacher education in South Africa was largely the responsibility of special teacher education colleges, directly administered by the Provinces, and offering Certificate and Diploma level programmes. Although universities also produced some degree-level teachers for the upper end of secondary schools, their contribution was relatively small, particularly in the sciences.

- * The Teacher College sector was of generally poor quality and produced far too many teachers in the 1990s. This sparked the decision taken by the end of 1990s to close all Colleges and/or merge them with the University sector. However, the responsibility for schools and teachers rests with the Provincial Departments of Education, whilst the universities are relatively autonomous and directly governed through the National Department of Education. This created coordination problems between teacher education and the school system.

Even at present, few new teachers are absorbed in the schools, although it can be predicted on the basis of demographic projections that a large shortage of teachers will quickly emerge in the coming years. The situation is particularly serious in the sciences and mathematics field, with many teachers lacking an appropriate background. Labour regulations and cost containment, however, prevent large-scale hiring of new teachers. There is an urgent need for large-scale upgrading of teachers in the system, but an appropriate policy framework is still

under development at national level. Universities do mount programmes for teacher upgrading, but coordination and funding mechanisms with the employer (that is, the Provincial Departments) are not properly developed as of yet.

Some VU cooperation activities in science teacher education in South Africa did take place after 1995, following a large international conference in Windhoek, Namibia in December of that year. That conference brought together for the first time science educators from southern and eastern Africa (all SADC countries) with those from South Africa, to discuss the problems of improving science education in secondary schools. Following the conference, the University of the North asked the VU for support in developing the domain of science teacher education in its Faculties of Science and Education, also on the basis of the good experiences with the UNIFY programme. This gave rise to the UNITE programme (University of the North Initiative in Teacher Education) that is still active with support of the VU Association (the owner and governing body of the university that provides support to some development cooperation activities in South Africa). However, external support to this initiative could not be acquired because funding channels either concentrated on working through government departments and not universities, prioritised primary education above secondary education, or worked with selected institutions only.

One project in science education that was initiated in 2002 is important to note here. It concerns assistance to the Department of Education in North West Province in order to develop an organisational unit and a strategy to strengthen mathematics, science and technology education in the Province. Links with North West University are also being established within this project. The project will be more fully described below when examining the case of North West Province, but before doing so, the changing Dutch policy and funding frameworks for development cooperation will be discussed, particularly where they affect cooperation in South Africa.

Changing policy frameworks for education development cooperation

* Bilateral cooperation through the Dutch Embassy. No structural involvement of Dutch expertise, but particularly funding with contracted South African expertise. Emphasis is laid on basic education.

* Joint Financing Programme for Cooperation in Higher Education (MHO). Succeeded earlier institutional cooperation programmes in 1993. Only one

institution per country was selected to benefit from the programme. In South Africa this was the Technikon Northern Gauteng (on the border of North West Province, mostly drawing students from this province). Mainly supported by Dutch universities for professional education, which offer technikon-type programmes in the Netherlands.

- * The Programme for Cooperation between Dutch Universities of Professional Education and Educational Institutions in Developing Countries for the benefit of Primary Education (HOB). Since the mid-1990s; aimed at support from higher education to teacher education for basic education. Emphasis also on primary education; only Dutch universities for professional education are allowed to participate. In South Africa, cooperation in the COMETDS

- * (Cooperative Model for Educator Training Development and Support) programme in North West Province. The VU involvement in these programmes in South Africa has been minimal, but the VU's merger partner, Windesheim polytechnic, is participating in both. The Technikon Northern Gauteng project and the COMETDS programme have both been externally evaluated by a VU/CIS staff member.

- * CENESA programme for Cooperation in Education between the Netherlands and South Africa. Funding comes from two Dutch ministries: Education and Development Cooperation. CENESA was originally meant to be a more or less symmetrical exchange programme for educational expertise between the two countries (system-to-system exchange, no particular role for universities). However, after initiation at the national level failed to produce results (national level: largely policy-making, provincial level: responsible for implementation), the programme shifted its focus to three provinces with large capacity problems, namely Limpopo, North West and Kwazulu Natal, thereby partly defeating the idea of more symmetrical exchange. The VU project in North West Province is part of this programme, but also other projects in the development of Curriculum 2005 and vocational education have been active in this province. As the CENESA framework is intended as a system-to-system exchange, VU/CIS is implementing this project together with a few Dutch partners that are active in education development both in the Netherlands and internationally, notably the Education Faculty at the University of Twente and the National Centre for School Improvement in Utrecht (APS).

The overall picture shows different channels and different projects without proper coherence and without cooperation between them. At present, all above funding

frameworks are in the process of disappearing, except for the bilateral one.

The new NPT programme for support to post-secondary education and training that started operating early 2003, succeeds and merges the former separate programmes and has a wider sector focus. In South Africa this programme will also become active, although its focus is still unknown. In the Netherlands Programme for Institutional Strengthening of Post-secondary Education and Training Capacity (NPT), the Dutch universities can still be strongly involved, although largely in a consultancy-type role. Some new characteristics of the programme as compared to its predecessor are:

- * The NPT is not exclusively aimed at higher education in the strict sense, but at any type of post-secondary education.
- * The programme does not concentrate on a limited number of institutes in the South but projects are spread out over many institutes.
- * Any Dutch institute, organisation or firm that can offer the required knowledge may participate in projects.
- * Projects are awarded to Dutch participants by way of public tendering.

These new characteristics imply that in fact the idea of cooperative links between institutions has disappeared; tender procedures have replaced earlier modalities of joint project development. The type of projects that are currently being formulated in the new NPT framework usually require the formation of alliances with different partners on the Dutch side in order to mobilise the diversity of expertise that is requested for individual projects.

This trend raises a number of critical questions for the future of development cooperation in higher education and the involvement of Dutch universities:

- * Can the link between development cooperation and academic cooperation be maintained?
- * Will the opportunities for southern universities to get connected to the worldwide academia be reduced?
- * Who 'owns' the project on the Dutch side, if multiple parties are involved?
- * Why would a Dutch university invest time and money to develop and maintain projects and cooperative links in a framework that stimulates rather loose consultancy arrangements and temporary consortia of partners?
- * Why would a Dutch university invest time and money in the expertise development that is required to work effectively in challenging development contexts?

In the 'knowledge society' it is said that working across traditional boundaries of disciplines and types of organisations is the norm. Innovation stems increasingly from problem-oriented research and development in the real world and applied contexts, rather than traditional discipline-oriented modes. Development problems in the developing world, such as problems of educational development in school systems, can be considered as such real world problem contexts, fit for research and development activities across traditional boundaries between disciplines and organisations. This requires, however, that funding for research and development work becomes part and parcel of development cooperation activities. In international circles, such as in the World Bank, this is being realised more and more. VU/CIS, for example, has been involved in recent years in major study assignments on problems and promising practices in Secondary Education in Africa, commissioned by the World Bank. In Dutch education development cooperation programmes, however, this is not yet visible. Rather, demand-driven consultancy in a competitive environment is the norm at this moment.

If the 'new' of problem-oriented development cooperation is to meet the 'old' of academic work and expertise development, new arrangements are necessary, not only at the institutional and inter-institutional level, but also at the national policy level.

The case of North West Province

In more than one way, North West Province in South Africa can be considered as a microcosm of 'new' meeting 'old', particularly for the VU:

- * Dutch bilateral development cooperation has selected North West Province to get special attention and, as explained above, different projects through different funding channels are operating in this province. VU/CIS is directly involved in one of them, namely in mathematics and science education with the provincial Department of Education.

- * The former University of Potchefstroom is located in this new province. As described by Brinkman, the VU re-established contacts with Potchefstroom after 1992.

- * Initial contacts with the University of the North West in Mmabatho (the former University of Bophutatswana, UNIWEST) have also been established in recent years, both with university management and in basic science education. The university initiated a Foundation Programme in 2000 and expressed interest in the VU's experience in this area.

* From 1 January 2004, the University of Potchefstroom and UNIWES have merged to become the new multi-campus North West University (NWU). This merger is part of the national restructuring of the entire higher education sector. The VU, in the person of Brinkman, has been supporting the preparation of the merger. In 2004 the VU has started to support NWU in matters of organisational and management development with financial support by the VU Association.

* Activities in the field of science education are being initiated at present, for the foundation programme as well as for science teacher education.

The situation with regard to basic science education in Potchefstroom and Mafikeng is quite different and provides a telling picture on 'new' and 'old' in the South African context.

* The Foundation Programme in Mafikeng is large in student numbers, but poorly resourced with regard to staff, equipment and facilities. It is not well embedded in the institution and lacks a clear direction and institutional contacts with the main faculties and departments, which it should feed with incoming students. After completing the foundation programme many students leave the institution for other higher education institutions.

* The Potchefstroom campus does not have very many formerly disadvantaged students as of yet. Most of its programmes are still taught in Afrikaans, which means that it is not very attractive for a large majority of students from North West Province who are Tswana-speaking with English as a second language. Students from the Mafikeng foundation programme could study science-based programmes in Potchefstroom, but language forms the main barrier.

* In Potchefstroom a strong group of science educators exists in the Faculty of Science who have offered in-service teacher upgrading programmes over the last ten years, mainly for teachers from North West Province. These programmes are part-time and are offered in English.

* In Mafikeng, the Faculty of Education also offers teacher-upgrading programmes in the sciences and is even involved in an ambitious special project for the delivery of such programmes at a distance, with assistance of ICT-technology. However, in Mafikeng only one science and mathematics educator is present in the Faculty of Education, who is hardly involved in the upgrading programmes and has only some temporary part-time staff to complement his own work.

The case of North West Province and North West University provides a picture of

'new' meeting 'old' in the new South Africa. It is clear that the transformation of systems and institutions is not an overnight affair. The implementation of 'rational' decisions like merging the two universities in the province requires a lengthy process of development before a viable institution emerges for the long term.

The question may be raised which role a foreign partner, in this case the VU, could play in such a process, particularly in terms of development cooperation. Development cooperation is dealing with external assistance in capacity building, in terms of both expertise and funding. However, neither finance nor expertise are particularly lacking in South Africa. And in terms of the criteria for official development assistance (ODA), South Africa does not qualify for development cooperation. In this context, development cooperation with South Africa is to a large degree a political choice, justified by South Africa's position in the sub-region and the continent and by the need for transition to a new social and economic situation in the country. And in the Dutch case, also propelled by the idea of traditional ties between the two countries.

The need for transformation and transition is still all too apparent in South Africa, but the nature of the problems is quickly changing. The historical divisions along racial lines are changing towards deep divisions between a small, middle-class, well-off, and employed minority and a large under-employed and poor majority. Lack of educational opportunities definitely plays a crucial part in the development problems of South Africa, but this does not refer that much to problems in higher education. The participation rate in higher education in South Africa is relatively high (around 20 per cent of age groups) for its development level. Non-absorption of graduates in labour markets is already occurring or will occur soon, even in sciences and engineering. South Africa faces difficult choices in its development strategy, for example between stimulating labour-intensive low-technology markets versus service-oriented high-technology markets. These choices, however, are largely political and it is questionable whether development cooperation has a role to play in them, in other words whether in development cooperation 'old' can still meet 'new'.

By way of conclusion

At this point in time no definitive answer can be given to the question raised here. We have pointed at a number of developments that are ongoing:

* The role of universities within South African development is changing. The

higher education system as a whole is now being geared much more towards the needs of the entire student population, black and white, and also more to the development needs of the large poor sections of the society.

- * The role of Dutch development cooperation, and more specifically cooperation in higher education, is changing in South Africa. This is due to the fact that the country does not meet the formal criteria for development assistance and the fact that human and financial resources for the further development of higher education are not really lacking in the country itself.

- * The new Dutch NPT programme, the main funding source for Dutch universities active in development cooperation in higher education, is changing the role of the Dutch institutes in that kind of cooperation.

- * As a consequence of this last point, the character of the relation between VU/CIS and its partners in South Africa is also changing.

Each one of these developments shows intrinsic tensions. (For instance, two years after the start of its implementation, objections against the set-up of the NPT programme are growing in number, and the need for new adjustments is becoming clearer.) These tensions make the outcome of the developments unpredictable at this moment. One conclusion, however, seems to be obvious: the 'new' Dutch university development cooperation, set in a problem-oriented framework aimed primarily at local capacity building, does not seem to have much of a real reason for being in South Africa. Although barely starting at this moment in time, it may not last very long as the conditions in the country do no longer clearly justify externally financed development support to the higher education sector. (The same in fact holds true for official development aid at large.) And as explained above, this new type of development cooperation in higher education does, unfortunately, not offer clear possibilities for the 'old' twinning of academic with development cooperation. At the same time academic cooperation between staff from different VU faculties and their colleagues from a range of South African universities is flourishing more than even before. It seems rather obvious that this is where the future for the VU cooperation with South Africa lies in the longer term.

The Vrije Universiteit And South Africa ~ A 'New' History For A 'New' South Africa



Historians need not worry about a lack of work in the future. There is always a past in the future. And their duty is to study that past, *sine ira et studio*, as Tacitus put it nearly 2000 years ago. The study of history, as my colleague and eminent historian Van Deursen likes to say, is to do justice to the dead, our fellow men, and at the same time to always be aware of the Biblical warning: you will be judged by the same measure. Historiography is not about blaming the past for our contemporary problems, nor about finding arguments

there to bolster our political or religious policies and philosophies. Nevertheless, everybody agrees that the knowledge of history is useful. A society without history is like an individual with loss of memory, walking like a blind person on unknown territory, doomed to fall step after step. Everybody also accepts that historical knowledge changes; history is a never ending debate, as Pieter Geyl has taught. So we do understand and accept that a 'new' South Africa needs a 'new' history. Is there a place in that new history for the Netherlands, for Dutch historiography, for the historians of the Vrije Universiteit (VU)?

In the old South Africa, there was a place for the Dutch historians, a modest but constructive place. Cape history cannot be studied without the Dutch archives, nor without knowledge and understanding of Dutch history, society and culture; the same holds for important aspects of the history of the Boer Republics and the history of Afrikaner religion and culture (literature etc.). Three generations of Afrikaner academic historians either originated from the Netherlands or had studied there – to start with the first generation: Godee Molsbergen and the Flemish Blommaert, and later Dirk Bax; next, the generation of J.P. van der Merwe, F.J. du Toit and F.A. van Jaarsveld, and then the third generation: Hermann Giliomee, Ben Liebenberg, Piet van der Schyff and Fransjohan Pretorius, to name but a few. All this means, additionally, that in the old South Africa there was a modest place for a small number of Dutch historians, as a promotor, colleague, or critic. And sometimes as a supplier of commemorative

articles, such as VU historians A.A. van Schelven and H. Smitskamp in 1952 – and myself too, recently, publishing an article on the relations between Abraham Kuyper and president Paul Kruger in *Die Kerkblad*.

To be honest, the department of history at the VU, founded in 1917, never made an important contribution to the Dutch-South African cooperation. Van Schelven, professor at the VU between 1917 and 1945, was actively pro-Boer, representing the VU at the board of the Chair for Afrikaans language, literature, history and culture at the University of Amsterdam from 1933 onwards; he even paid a five weeks' visit to South Africa in 1933. His successor H. Smitskamp was also interested in South Africa. He was a member of the NZAV – later on succeeded by the economic historian W.J. Wieringa. One of Smitskamp's books was published in Afrikaans, and he even gave courses on South African history. M.C. Smit, who taught medieval history and above all philosophy of history and *Wijsbegeerte der Wetsidee*, made a lecturing tour through South Africa in the 1960s. All of them had contacts with some South African colleagues – I know a story about Smitskamp, walking through Amsterdam with the Stellenbosch historian P.J. ('Piet Vark') van der Merwe in 1952 – and there was a small number of South African historians in their classes, but most went to Leiden or to the University of Amsterdam.

My own initial contacts with South African history date back 40 years, when I was preparing myself for a stay as a student in Pretoria to do a research year for my MA thesis. An Utrecht-trained historian in colonial history, I was and still am fascinated by South African society and its developments. Since then, I have discovered and also tried to apply the following three contributions to South African historiography:

* Writing contributions on South African history, to place it under a wider horizon. South African historiography tends to be parochial, placing the Cape in the centre of the world. My perhaps most influential study (at least: my most widely *read* study, for it was for a while included in the curriculum of many universities!) is a chapter on social stratification in the 17th and 18th century Dutch Cape, published in Elphick and Giliomee, *The shaping of South African society* (1979). More recent contributions on the same subject include articles 'Between Amsterdam and Batavia' (*Kronos* 1998), 'Ad fontes. Over Samuel Elsevier, zijn vrouwen en zijn slaven' (*Historia* 2000) and 'Neerlands India. De wereld van de VOC: calvinistisch en multicultureel' (*Historia* 2002).

* Writing critical reviews of the Yearbook of South African History and many other studies on South African history. Some of these studies are impressive, many are solid but not very stimulating nor well written, some are evidently disappointing.

* Training a new generation of historians, Dutch as well as South African. I was happy to be given the opportunity to be the promotor of Bart de Graaff; he studied the *Mythe van de stamverwantschap* (1993), and *De Kaap de Goede Hoop. Een Nederlandse Vestigingsnederzetting, [Stellenbosch] 1680-1730* (1999), by Ad Biewenga. Biewenga's research has to be compared with other products of mine out of predilection for the history of the Dutch East Indian Company such as Niemijer, *Calvinisme en koloniale stadscultuur, Batavia*

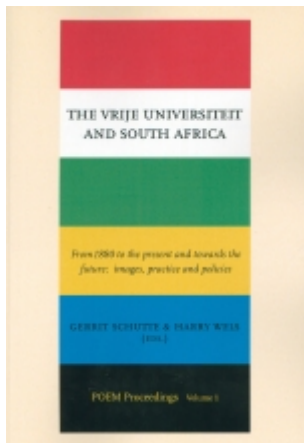
* 1619-1725 (1996), *My Indisch Sion* (2002), and my two source publications on late 18th century Cape history, the *Swellengrebel Correspondence* (1982) and Hendrik Cloete, *Groot Constantia and the VOC* (2003).

I have also stimulated and trained some representatives of the younger and newer generation of South Africa. In 1984, I was extramural promotor to Wayne Hendricks, the first doctor in history at the University of the Western Cape (UWC). Since 1999 I have been a member of the TANAP committee, the Leiden University/National Archives VOC project, funded by the Dutch government, UNESCO, etc. My specific task is to serve as a handy boy for the archival cooperation research and publication project, and - an even more specific part of the project- to find and train a new generation of South African scholars, specialists in the history of the VOC period. I will not bother you with the problems I have encountered within that framework. I am proud that out of the small group of South African participants, one, R.S. Viljoen, a former UWC student and a lecturer at UNISA, last year obtained his doctor's degree at Leiden University, with a thesis about the fascinating story of Jan Paerl, a Swellendam Khoi prophet and rebel who predicted the end of the world, on the 28th of October, 1788.

It is a privilege to be coaching and counselling these young South African historians, as it is a pleasure to organise bilateral congresses for historians from the Netherlands and South Africa, like in 1997, 2000, 2002 and - hopefully - in 2006 again.

Moreover, at the moment academic historians in South Africa are struggling to survive. University careers are scarce and insecure. The traditional contacts with the Netherlands have been seriously hampered due to the intellectual boycott imposed by the Netherlands up to 1990, the competition from the better South African universities and the attractive offers for stipendia etc. from many other countries. Also, some people harbour suspicions about the old colonial Dutch and especially Christian-National Kuyperian Vrije Universiteit. Is there really a place in this South African future for VU historians?

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



Mister Chair, ladies and gentlemen,
Thank you for the invitation to speak at this important conference. I have been asked to tell you something about my own experience of teaching South African literature at Dutch universities, but also to give an indication of what South African literature departments might be expecting from the Vrije Universiteit (VU) and other Dutch universities at this point in time. This I do as someone who is South African born and bred and who taught at a South African university for 16 years. Every year I go back to South Africa at least once and I have many friends who are also colleagues in Afrikaans and Nederlands departments in South Africa. For various reasons they are suffering severe cutbacks. In the Humanities Faculties at Dutch universities a similar pinch is being felt.

What strategies should be developed in beleaguered times? In searching for an answer I would like to draw our attention for a minute to the rich tradition of so-called *extra muros* departments of Dutch all over the world: Barcelona, Budapest, Goa, Helsinki, Jakarta, Johannesburg, Jerusalem, London, Los Angeles, Münster, Oldenburg, Olomouc, Oporto, Oslo, Paris, Stellenbosch, Semarang, Strasburg, St

Petersburg, Vienna – to name but a few cities where Dutch literature is taught. The differentiating terms *intra muros* (which refers to the universities in the 'centre' – the Netherlands and Belgium) and *extra muros* (the term refers to the universities outside the walls of the centre; on the 'margins') are soundly entrenched in the workings of the Society of Netherlandic Studies. The same has recently become true for the teaching of South African literature. English literature by authors such as Coetzee and Fugard has of course been part of English colonial curricula for many years and I will mainly focus on the new post-apartheid status of Afrikaans literature. It is taught *intra muros* at South African universities of course and since 1990 *extra muros* in many different countries all over the world: Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, the USA, Austria, Germany, Russia, Belgium and the Netherlands, to name but a few.

My reference to *muros*, to walls, has inspired my thinking along Trojan horse lines. I believe that we must be innovative in schemes to get inside the walls of learning but once we are there, to look out again, over the wall, to enable us to invite each other in, so that in the end there are no walls any more. Let me now say something about the linguistic and academic relationship between Afrikaans and Dutch.

Afrikaans, as you know, is a maverick, a wayward daughter of 17th century Dutch. In South Africa the mother was held in high esteem during many years. When I was a student and lecturer at Stellenbosch and Wits, and even now still at many of the ten odd Afrikaans and Nederlands departments in South Africa, a fifty-fifty Dutch and Afrikaans literature course is offered. Afrikaans and Nederlands departments often advertise themselves as offering students a *venster op Europa*, a 'room with a view on Europe'. The reverse situation never existed, and was practically unthinkable especially during the 1970s and 1980s. In the Netherlands of those years very few lecturers and even fewer students were interested in Afrikaans literature, or should I say, very few *dared* to be interested because of the cultural boycott against South Africa. There were a few exceptions. In some institutes of Comparative Literature, for example in Nijmegen, Hans Ester did his utmost to include Afrikaans literature in his courses. In Amsterdam a special chair of Afrikaans literature existed at the University of Amsterdam where professor N.P. van Wyk Louw and his successors taught Afrikaans literature. These *doctoraal* lectures were, however, mainly attended by South Africans who came to study at the feet of the guru Louw.

During the early 1980s the Dutch cultural and economic boycott of South Africa finally forced the Afrikaans section to close down.

The close linguistic relationship between Dutch and Afrikaans is of course the major reason why in the past many Afrikaans postgraduates, especially scholars of Afrikaans literature, came to study here in the Netherlands. My position today is that of someone who studied and then continued to live in the Netherlands for ten years before I went to teach Afrikaans literature at Wits. I was especially interested in teaching students more about the world outside by way of Dutch literature. Now that I have been appointed to teach Modern Dutch Literature at the VU I realise that I use all opportunities possible to teach South African literature. I need not sneak it into the curricula but am invited by colleagues to do this. This inside-out position suits me.

So, let me tell you something about the life and times of a Trojan horse. My surname is one of the most common in the Netherlands. This means that no student searching the VU website for Dutch literature courses would for a minute suspect that a lecturer by the name of Jansen who teaches Modern Dutch poetry or a Masters course on the role of Amsterdam in recent Dutch novels will not herself be Dutch. The moment I start lecturing, however, I always notice some bewilderment. Even though I came to Holland for the first time thirty years ago to study in Utrecht and stayed there and here in Amsterdam for ten years before going back to South Africa in 1984, my accent still is a dead giveaway. Students suddenly wonder whether they are or whether I am in the wrong classroom. Instead of having another Dutch lecturer with the most boring name possible, they realize that I am an exotic Jansen from a far and distant world. This has its benefits.

It will cost me too much fancy footwork to maintain the Trojan horse metaphor I started off with. The metaphor was inspired by a complex history of exclusion and inclusion, also by the operative period of ten years of democratic freedom which is celebrated this year [2004]. What I want to say, in short, is that I can nowadays move around freely in two Dutch universities without the necessity of entering in devious Trojan horse style. That means that I have access to the hearts and minds of Dutch students via Afrikaans literature without any problem. At the VU it means that I have the freedom of adding Afrikaans literary texts to Dutch courses. I can for example read poems by Antjie Krog based on Marlene Dumas' paintings in the course on *beeldgedichten* which we offer as a minor in the faculty. In the

series of lectures called *Leestafel* each of the Dutch literature lecturers lecture on a favourite book. My colleagues ask me to choose a novel by an Afrikaans author, someone such as Etienne van Heerden, Jeanne Goossen, Marlene van Niekerk or John Miles – a novel which can be read in Afrikaans or in Dutch translation. In the course on post-colonial literature I present a South African case study.

The chair which Louw held during the 1950s has recently been re-instated in the form of an ‘endowed’ chair. I am honoured to be the first to hold this *bijzondere leerstoel Zuid-Afrikaanse literatuur* in post-apartheid times at the University of Amsterdam. I combine this part-time function with my full-time job at the VU and my main concern is to attract as many Dutch students as possible to my courses which focus on Afrikaans literature. I include some books by English authors as well, because to my mind the ‘natural’ language link between the Netherlands and South Africa should not be used in an exclusive *stamverwantschap* way, but as one of the stepping stones between the two countries.

I have taught three semester courses since I started at the University of Amsterdam (UvA). The interest has grown tremendously. During the first year, that was 2002, I presented a short course on Boer War literature written both in Afrikaans and Dutch, seeing that it was the 100 years’ anniversary of the ending of the War. This lecture series was attended by six students. The next year I did a course which I called *Buitebeentjies* (‘mavericks’) – famous South African novel characters’. Twelve students attended. This past year my course was called *O wye en droewe land. Die belang van landskap in Suid-Afrikaanse letterkunde*. (‘O wide and tragic country. The importance of landscape in South African literature’). Thirty students attended and I had to change the format from a tutorial to lectures. During this coming year the series is called *Totsiens Kaapstad* (‘Goodbye Cape Town’) – the title of a poem which Breyten Breytenbach wrote when he was an exile in Paris. I concentrate on migration stories: everything from the ‘Jim comes to Jo’burg’-stories to work by political exiles, poems by Louw, Eybers and Breytenbach, novels written by modern-day expat South Africans living in cities such as New York, Glasgow, Melbourne.

The interest in my courses at the VU and the UvA as well as the interest in courses offered by Dutch colleagues in Nijmegen or Leiden show a clear pattern: the position of ‘classical’ Dutch literature can most definitely be enhanced by adding Afrikaans and also some English South African literature to the curriculum.

During the 1980s my presence in a classroom at the VU would have been cause for great alarm. The thought that a white Afrikaans-speaking South African from the barbarous margins of faraway apartheid land had entered the monolithic and politically correct safe centre of the faculty of arts of a Dutch university would have inspired legitimate protest. Nowadays Dutch students hardly know what apartheid was. Their parents during the 1970s and 1980s did not dare eat an Outspan orange or look at a protea. Nowadays South Africa has become a popular holiday destination. The students' grandparents might have said 'See Naples and die'. They now say: 'See Cape Town and boogie'. South Africa is cool. Dutch students are very much interested in going there. To travel but also to learn.

This travelling and learning can start in Dutch classrooms. And it can be even more interesting with not only the odd exotic Jansen teaching them, but also with some South African students in the class. In fact I want to make a request on behalf of South African universities: that as much financial opportunity as possible be created to enable South African students to do part of their Masters courses here.

During August I attended the Family Meeting of the International Office at the Stellenbosch University on behalf of the VU. It was a most hospitable and generous invitation. We met many Dutch students loving their time in Stellenbosch. But Stellenbosch urgently requested all representatives from Dutch universities to make it easier for South African students to also attend Dutch universities for a semester. They ask for more generosity with regards to the waiving of not only class fees but a part of accommodation costs. They ask for pressure on the authorities organising student visas. This is urgently needed to enable student exchange and learning processes between South Africa and the Netherlands to be mutual.

To sum up the present situation, here are a few bottom-lines:

1. During the pre-1994 period all literature written by any other white Afrikaans author besides political figures such as Breytenbach and Brink and the grand old lady Elisabeth Eybers (she has lived in Amsterdam since 1961) was a no-go area for Dutch readers and academics.
2. The reason for this was of course South Africa's atrocious apartheid system and the Dutch cultural and academic boycott of South Africa which led to the fear of being ostracised when seen even looking at books by Afrikaans authors besides Brink, Breytenbach and Eybers.

3. Just as abruptly as most white South Africans seem to have forgotten that they ever supported apartheid, Dutch academics have rushed to fraternise with their long lost cousins in South Africa. In the same way as we speak of a New South Africa, a New Holland with regards to South Africa is clearly discernible.

4. The tremendous academic interest in South African literature was made comfortably possible very soon after 1990 thanks to generous funding by the *Nederlandse Taalunie* ('Dutch Language Union'). Officially practitioners of Netherlandic Studies in South Africa are the beneficiaries of this generosity, but in fact everybody interested in both Afrikaans and Dutch literature benefits. Numerous conferences, language courses and workshops have been held during the past ten to twelve years - in South Africa, in the Netherlands and in Belgium. Not a single South African academic in Afrikaans and Nederlands departments can therefore claim not to have had ample opportunity to travel to the Low Countries and to participate in these events. The same applies to Dutch academics who have eagerly been visiting similar events in South Africa. These trips should and have in most cases been more than just *snoepreisjes*.

5. In spite of these conferences and perks Afrikaans and Dutch departments in South Africa have suffered huge losses in student numbers, major cutbacks and staff retrenchments since 1990. I myself remember very well that for many years immediately before and after 1990 there were close to 500 students in our first year course at Wits University. When I left Wits at the end of 2000 there was only one first year student writing the exam. I was the last member of a once famous department to leave.

6. Until very recently Dutch language departments were flourishing. Recently, however, many faculties of arts are struggling to make ends meet. Inevitably this has to do with fewer students which results in cutbacks and retrenchments. If you've ever been a crew member on a sinking ship you detect and recognize treacherous waves long before they actually crash down on you. The situation in the Dutch language departments at Dutch universities is therefore starting to look awesomely familiar to me.

In conclusion

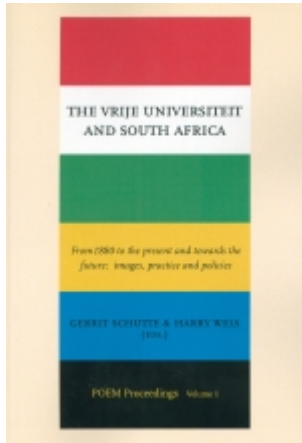
What's to be done? Can Dutch universities help South African universities whilst moving into dire financial straits themselves? I believe they can, that it is warranted for South African universities to ask the VU for strong and beneficial contracts of exchange which will enable South African students to come here. There should be no need for 'Trojan horses' - they must be able to enter coolly by

the front door with enough money and affordable visas. The present mutual goodwill between the two countries should be 'exploited'. We should seriously take note of what the two countries and literatures can learn from each other. Multicultural Netherlands where religious intolerance is becoming a serious 'racial' problem might even learn from post-apartheid South Africa where the heritage of racism is however still a serious class and social-economic problem.

The 'natural' language link between the Netherlands and South Africa should be an important stepping stone between the two countries, but it is not the only one. I believe that one should always be careful of exploiting old *stamverwantschap* ties. The Dutch, realizing that their language is a small one in the context of the European Union, have displayed and created a bigger awareness of and eagerness to enable communication by way of English when they fear that Dutch won't suffice. The greater use of English in Dutch universities will therefore enable all South Africans to come here, not only those who speak Afrikaans and therefore have easy access to Dutch.

My take on what South African literature departments might be asking from the VU is that we create and encourage interest amongst Dutch students for South African literature, that we keep up the funding and that we invite as many South African students here as possible. The mutual BA/MA system should make this even easier than in the past. It is important to make hay while the sun shines. We must remember that literature students become teachers, journalists, publishers, authors and artists. In short, they will become highly vocal people with much public influence. Take good care of them.

The Vrije Universiteit And South Africa ~ A New Size Of Theology For A New South Africa



In Africa, religion is far more influential than in Europe. Although secularisation is increasing in South Africa, most people are still religious, and religion has a great impact on their lives and decisions. Building a new South African society without taking religion into account would be a serious omission.

Theology is not the same as religion. Theology is a critical reflection on religious beliefs and attitudes and on the actions and decisions that result from these convictions. It is because of this critical function that theology has an extremely significant role to play in the new South Africa. Theology was an important part of the old South Africa as well, and because it did not fulfill its critical task then, it will have to play an even greater role now.

I see four main areas in which theology could be developed in South Africa. That does not mean (as will become clear below) that I support them all.

1. *Theology of reassurance*

A dominant aim of many theologians in present-day South Africa is to provide certainty for people that feel uneasy. This kind of theology is dominant within the Dutch Reformed Church (but not restricted to it). It is a theology that sustains people who have been feeling uncertain since the political changes. It is a modern form of the old-fashioned theology of providence: God will care for you. Amidst the tensions of society – crime, unemployment and worry for retirement funds – we find rest in the church. Theology can help to provide concepts of community building for those people who feel uneasy or to divert them from societal problems by focusing on traditional questions of individual faith. Religion can be helpful by keeping people calm – not only the labourers but also people who were usually dominant in the past and who are nowadays anxious. And theology, both in its modern shape of pastoral care and in its conservative form of focusing on a-contextual questions, can be supportive to shield people from shocking questions.

It is this type of theology that church leaders prefer if they want to keep things under control. And they are now in need for such a theology, because things run the risk of careening out of control as a result of differing views about the new

South Africa.

This is an uncritical theology that will not contribute to the future. It has to be rejected, not only because it does not contribute to society building (it might seem to do so by keeping society stable in the short term), but also because it is insufficient. It hides the real problems. If a church leader attempts to conceal problems, at least a professional theologian should unmask this cloaking of the real questions. A striking example of this kind of theology can be found in the declaration about church unity that was accepted by the General Synod of the Dutch Reformed Church two weeks ago [October 2004]. They argue that the way is now open for a quick re-unification with the formerly black and brown churches. The first reason they give is: 'Because we have a common history'. Obviously, there was nobody critical enough to raise the question: 'What is this common history exactly? And should that history not be defined as a history of conflicts, of oppression and of suffering?' So 'in spite of a common history' would be more befitting in this case. Much theological work still needs to be done before unity can be attained – helped by, at any rate, a different type of theology.

2. Societal theology

A more promising type of theology is executed by those theologians who explicitly want to contribute to society. The key word here is 'public theology'. It deals with societal questions and with the question how religious beliefs and religious communities can contribute in overcoming the oppositions that divide people, such as white versus brown and black; dominant versus dependent; poor versus rich. Its aim is to contribute to a just and peaceful society. It can have different faces, such as a focus on discriminatory attitudes in church and society, on the development of outreach programs by churches, and on the empowerment of people from previously (and still!) disadvantaged communities. Their commonality is that they explicitly want to contribute to the development of the new society. In this kind of theology, researchers from all backgrounds work together (although we have to take into account that doing theology on an academic level in itself implies a specific place in society).

This theology is future-directed and deals with concrete issues. It is a theology of hope that fits very well into the atmosphere of hope that many people in South Africa are looking for. It especially accommodates the present administration that is striving for a prosperous South Africa that can function as a guide for the whole of Africa. It can be compared with mainstream protestant theology in the

Netherlands in the fifties and sixties of the last century: after the war a new society had to be developed; a democratic and just society. It is a theology that is very much aware of challenges and obstacles; however, the people implementing it are convinced of their calling and, therefore, of the importance of their work.

3. A theology of reconciliation

Societal theology is so future-focused that it must be complemented by another type of theology: that of reconciliation. Although reconciliation is reached with respect to the future, it is first of all directed towards the past. Reconciliation is an essential part of present South African consciousness, due to the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Committee led by Bishop Desmond Tutu. It seems self-evident that in Christian theology (where reconciliation is also a core concept) this awareness in society would be fully exploited as a service to the nation and as a task for which it is specifically equipped. A tradition of thousands of years of reflection on reconciliation as a key concept might be a powerful contributor to a society that is so much in need of healing the past.

It is remarkable that theology's contribution has been rather limited so far. Reconciliation is part of the debate, but it usually does not go beyond the limits of what is general in South African society. I think this is due to two factors. The first is that South African theology traditionally focused on God's providence and not on reconciliation – and as far as reconciliation was discussed it was about individual reconciliation with God, not about reconciliation of people and even less of communities. So there is a lack in the South African theological tradition.

The second factor is that most people do not want to dwell too long in the past. The past has been there long enough. The past is past and we have to look towards the future. In this perspective, reconciliation is taken for granted too much. Once the mistakes are uttered you should not come back to them. We have to enter the future hand in hand. Reconciliation now consists of old enemies working together, while actually reconciliation can only be possible if we have a shared story (and, thus, story-telling) of the past, in which all events that have shaped our identity are integrated. That is a much longer road to travel.

4. A theology of criticism

In my opinion South Africa is most in need of a critical theology that is, on the one hand, sensitive to developments in society and, on the other hand, keeps a critical distance towards them. That distance should be a basic one, since theology is

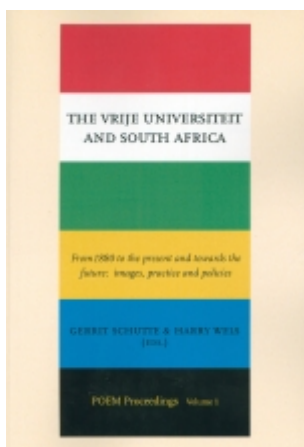
about God. The religious subject of theology should make it clear that God and earthly affairs cannot be confused – or, as we call it in our research program: religion without ulterior motive. True religion can never be instrumental and the core task of theology is to keep religion free from instrumentalisation. The tendency to use religion for other means is always present. The history of South Africa is a sound example of what happens when the two get confused. Apartheid used religion to ground its ideology. The aims of the administration were supported by theologians and they were the strongest ideologists. Similar claims, but with a different focus, were made by those who contested apartheid within the framework of a liberation theology. It is general practice in world history to use religion for political ends to provide one's politics with an ideological base. And no ideology is indeed more powerful than religion.

South Africa is in need of a critical theology that unmask new alliances of politics and religion, because alliances of that kind have been so disastrous in the past (even if they find themselves in a new perspective now.) This new perspective might be a pitfall, not only in South Africa but also all over the world, because it contains common sense.

This critical theology should not be exclusive. It must be closely related to the previous two types. In fact, they need each other. A public theology is in need of a critical, iconoclastic discourse, and a theology of the ultimate is always at risk to become abstract. It needs the concrete challenges of life in order to meet the standards. Both need a theology of reconciliation, because the past cannot be undone or neglected. How shall we deal with the past? This is the core question in any community in a time just after conflicts, suffering and guilt. Public theology is interested in the future as a reconciled reality. Critical theology is needed to avoid easy solutions that are in fact a source for new oppressions that confuse religion and ideology.

The cooperation between the faculty of Theology at the Vrije Universiteit and institutions in South Africa is focused on the interaction of the three latter theological perspectives, especially in the close relation between the Beyers Naudé Centre in Stellenbosch and the International Reformed Theological Institute in Amsterdam.

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

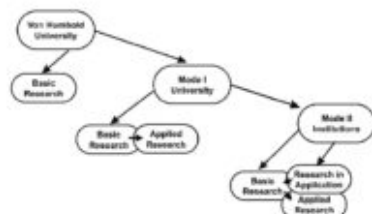
It is generally recognized that universities are among the most stable and change-resistant social institutions in the Western society, seeing that their roots go back to medieval times. Amongst leaders in higher education consensus exists that the core functions of higher education – to educate (knowledge 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 illustrate 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 important research problems were generated in the extra-university environment, but opened up new opportunities for academics to participate in research defined as application. This new approach still stimulates basic as well as applied research (Jurion 2004: xii), but the nature and culture of the new approach is distinctly different, designated as Mode 2 (Gibbons et al. 1994).

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 unceremoniously 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 duidelijk 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 aanvaardbaar zijn voor de eigen groep en anderzijds nog steeds niet aanvaardbaar 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 apartheid 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 apartheid. 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'.

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'.

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 'geopolitical 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.

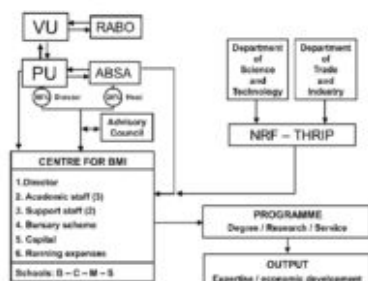
Ten years after the advent of the new democratic dispensation in South Africa, the South African scene indeed underwent fundamental changes. The fruits of reconciliation are a commitment to *!KE E: /XARRA //KE*, [xxx] the new formulation of the traditional South African quest for unity in diversity. 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 (Scheme B-C-M-S in the figure) in the Faculty 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 of 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 clearly suited to forming part of the strategic alliance.

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 of 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 approach

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 Department 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 ...'

References

Brinkman, H. (2005) 'VU-South Africa, 1972-present: political and managerial developments', in G.J. Schutte and H. Wels (Eds), *The Vrije Universiteit and South Africa, from 1880 to the present and towards the future: Images, practice and policies*, SAVUSA POEM Proceedings, Amsterdam: Rozenberg.

Clark, B.R. (1998) *Creating entrepreneurial universities: Organisational pathways*

of transformation, Great Britain: Pergamon.

Cloete, N., Fehnel, R., Maassen, P., Moja, T., Perold, H. and Gibbon, T. (Eds) (2002) *Transformation in higher education – global pressures and local realities in South Africa*, Landsdowne: Juta.

Cloete N., and Maassen, P. (2002) 'The limits of policy', in N. Cloete et al. (Eds), *Transformation in higher education – global pressures and local realities in South Africa*, Landsdowne: Juta.

Coetzee, C.J. (1998) 'Die PU vir CHO en die rasse- en volkereproblematiek', *Koers, Supplement 1*, Potchefstroom: Buro vir Wetenskaplike Tydskrifte.

De Klerk, F.W. (1990) *Opening of Parliament, Debates of Parliament (Hansard) of the second session of the ninth Parliament*, 2 February.

Du Plooy, H. (1993) 'Wintervloek psalm', in H. du Plooy, *Die donker is nooit leeg nie*, Kaapstad: Tafelberg.

Du Plooy, H. (2003) 'Landeskunde', in H. du Plooy, *In die landskap ingelyf*, Pretoria: Protea Boekhuis.

Eppink, D.-J. (1990) 'Schuld en Boete', *NRC Handelsblad*, May.

Ester, H. (2004) 'Band met Zuid-Afrika is dun geworden', *Nederlands Dagblad*, 10 August.

Gibbons, M., Limoges, C., Nowotney, H., Schwartzman, S., Scott, P. and Trow, M. (1994) *The new production of knowledge: Science and research in contemporary societies*, London: Sage.

Gorter, H. (1921) *Mei* (6th edition), Amsterdam: W. Versluys.

Jorion, P. (2004) *Innovations in risk management*, London: Risk Books.

Koestler, A. (1979) *Janus: A summing up*, London: Hutchinson.

Kuyper, A. (1899) *Evolutie*, Amsterdam: Höveker and Wormser.

Mandela, N.R. (1994) *Statement of the President of the African National Congress Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela at his inauguration as President of the Democratic Republic of South Africa*, Union Buildings, Pretoria, 10 May 1994, Pretoria: CTP Book Printers.

Mandela, N.R. (1994) *Presidential Address, Debates of the National Assembly (Hansard) of the first session of the first Parliament*, 27 May 1994, Cape Town: Rustica Press.

Nowotny, H., Scott, P. and Gibbons, M. (2001) *Re-thinking science*, Malden (USA): Blackwell.

NRC Handelsblad (2004), 'Overlijdensbericht – Dr. C.F. Beyers Naudé', 16 September.

Pearce II, J.A. and Robinson, R.B. Jr. (2005) *Formulation, implementation, and*

control of competitive strategy, New York: McGraw-Hill/Irwin.

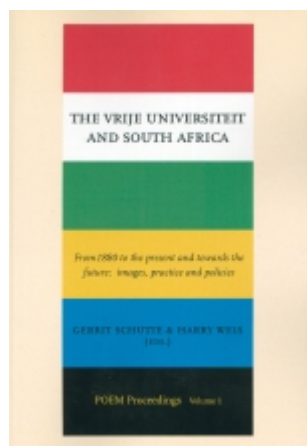
Reinecke, C.J. (1998) 'Die wording van die PU vir CHO as deel van die Suid-Afrikaanse universiteitsisteem', *Koers, Supplement 1*, Potchefstroom: Buro vir Wetenskaplike Tydskrifte.

Schutte, G.J. (2005) 'The VU and South Africa, 1880-1972: 125 years of sentiments and good faith', in G.J. Schutte and H. Wels (Eds), *The Vrije Universiteit and South Africa, from 1880 to the present and towards the future: Images, practice and policies*, SAVUSA POEM Proceedings, Amsterdam: Rozenberg.

Totius (1977) *Versamelde werke* 10, Kaapstad: Tafelberg.

Thompson, A.A., Gamble, J.E. and Strickland III, A.J. (2004) *Strategy - Winning the marketplace*, New York: McGraw-Hill/Irwin. Verslag van een samenspreking tussen delegaties van die Vrije Universiteit en de Potchefstroomse Universiteit vir Christelike Hoër Onderwijs (1976), Amsterdam: Vrije Universiteit.

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 bemoaning 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 Tiffin 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 put 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 Sapiro 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 Copley (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).

References

- Amin, S. (2002) *Alternative histories: A view from India*, Calcutta.
- Appleby, J., Hunt, L. and Jacob, M. (1994) *Telling the truth about history*, New York (etc.): Norton.
- Ashcroft, B., Griffiths, G. and Tiffin, H. (Eds) (1995) *The postcolonial studies*

reader, London: Routledge.

Bahl, V. (n.d.) 'Situating and rethinking subaltern studies for writing working class history', <http://www.svabhinava.org/friends/VinayBahl/subalternstudies.htm>.

Bertelson, E. (1998) 'Ads and amnesia: Black advertising in the new South Africa', in S. Nuttal and C. Coetzee (Eds) *Negotiating the past: The making of memory in South Africa*, Oxford (etc.): Oxford University Press.

Bundy, C. (2002) *New nation, new history? Constructing the past in post-apartheid South Africa*, Unpublished paper, Centre for African Studies, University of Copenhagen.

Carrier, P. (1996) 'Historical traces of the present: the uses of commemorations', *Historical Reflections*, 22(2).

Carruthers, J. (1998) 'Heritage and history', *H-Africa list*, 20 October.

Cobley, A. (2001) 'Does social history have a future? The end of apartheid and recent trends in South African historiography', *Journal of Southern African Studies* 27(3).

Comoroff, J. (2003) *The end of history, again? Pursuing the past in the postcolony*, Unpublished paper Department of History, University of Basel, 23 January.

Crankshaw, O. (1997) *Race, class and the changing division of labour under apartheid*, London, p. 23.

Cross, M. (1999) *Imagery of identity in South African education, 1880-1990*, Durham: Carolina Academic Press.

Daily News (1999) 'Where are the intellectuals?', 16 April.

De Kock, L. (1996) *Civilising barbarians: Missionary narrative and African textual response in nineteenth-century South Africa*, Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press.

Edgar, R.R. and Sapiro, H. (2000) *African apocalypse: The story of Nontetha Nkwenkwe, Athens and Johannesburg*: Witwatersrand University Press.

Etherington, N. (1996) 'Postmodernism and South African history', *New Contree* 41(November).

Grundlingh, A.M. (2001) 'Herhistorisering en herposisionering: perspektiewe op aspekte van geskiedsbeoefening in hedendaagse Suid-Afrika', *Historia* 46(2), November.

Grundlingh, A.M. (1990) 'Politics, principles and problems of a profession: Afrikaner historians and their discipline, c1920-c1965', *Perspectives in Education* 12.

Kallway, P. (2002) 'Introduction', in P. Kallway (Ed.) *The history of education under apartheid, 1948-1994: 'The doors of learning and culture shall be opened'*,

Cape Town.

Kanneh, K. (1998) *African identities: Race, nation and culture in ethnography, pan-Africanism and black literatures*, London: Routledge.

Kennedy, M.D. (1991) 'Eastern Europe's lessons for critical intellectuals', in C.C. Lemert (Ed.) *Intellectuals and politics: Social theory in a changing world*, London: Sage.

Kros, C. (2003) 'Heritage vs history: the end of a noble tradition?', *Historia* 48(1): 326-36.

Leroke, W.S. (1996) *Historiography, or knowledge of the other: the possibility of reflexive history*, Unpublished paper, pp. 13-17.

Lowenthal, D. (1998) *The heritage crusade and the spoils of history*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Magubane, B.M. (2002) *The illusion of liberal and radical historical debates*, Unpublished paper, Centre of African Studies, Copenhagen University.

Mail and Guardian (1999) 'The potential for Thabo's renaissance', 2 July

Mail and Guardian (2003) 'Farewell the hallowed ground', 31 July.

Maloka, T. (1996) *Radical historiography and African historians in South Africa: A preliminary reflection*, Unpublished paper.

Mamdani, M. (1996) *Citizen and subject: Contemporary Africa and the legacy of late colonialism*, Cape Town: David Philip.

Marks, S. (2000) 'The role of the humanities in higher education in South Africa', *Pretexts: Literary and Cultural Studies*, 9(2).

Maylam, P. (1993) *History after apartheid, Inaugural lecture*, Rhodes University, 24 March.

Maylam, P. (2000) "'Post-theory" and the historian's practice', *South African Historical Journal* 42.

Meier, A. and Rudwick, E. (1986) *Black history and the historical profession, 1915-1980 in the United States of America*, Urbana (Ill.): University of Illinois Press.

Mouton, J. (2002) *Hoër onderwys: feite en statistieke*, Unpublished paper, University of Stellenbosch. Neale, C. (1986) 'The idea of progress in the revision of African history, 1960-1970', in B. Jewsiewicki and D. Newbury (Eds), *African historiographies: What history for which Africa?*, London/Beverly Hills: Sage.

Novick, P. (1988) *That noble dream: the 'objectivity' question and the American historical profession*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Odendaal, A. (2002) *Heritage and the arrival of post-colonial history in South Africa*, unpublished paper, African Studies Association Conference, Washington

DC.

Rassool, C. (2000) 'The rise of heritage and the reconstitution of history in South Africa', *Kronos* 26.

Rassool, C. and Witz, L. (1993) 'The 1952 Van Riebeeck tercentenary festival: Constructing and contesting public national history in South Africa', *Journal of African History* 34(3).

Ryklief, S. (2002) 'Does the emperor really have no clothes? Thabo Mbeki and ideology', in S. Jacobs and R. Calland (Eds), *Thabo Mbeki's world*, London: Zed Books.

Saunders, C. (1999) 'History writing and apartheid: Some threads', in K. Kwaa Prah (Ed.) *Knowledge in black and white: The impact of apartheid on the production and reproduction of knowledge*, Cape Town: Centre for Advanced Studies of African Society.

Scalmer, S. (1996) 'Experience and discourse: A map of recent theoretical approaches to labour and social history', *Labour History* 70(May).

Scott, J.W. (1989) 'History in crisis? The others' side of the story', *American Historical Review* 94(June).

South African History Project (2003) National Register Database.

Stabile, C.A. (1995) 'Post-modernism, feminism and Marx: Notes from the abyss', *Monthly Review* July/August.

The South African History Project Progress Report (2001-2003).

Van Onselen, C. (1996) *The seed is mine: The life of Kas Maine, a South African sharecropper, 1894-1985*, Oxford: James Currey.

Vaughan, M. (1994) 'Colonial discourse theory and African history, or has post-modernism passed us by?', *Social Dynamics* 22(2).

Witz, L. (1998-1999) 'From Langa market hall and Rhodes estate to the Grand Parade and the Foreshore: Contesting Van Riebeeck's Cape Town', *Kronos* 25.

Witz, L., Rassool, C. and Minkley, G. (2001) 'Repackaging the past for South African tourism', *Daedalus* 130(1).