

Control, compliance and conformity
at the University of Fort Hare 1916 – 2000:
a Gramscian Approach

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ABSTRACT

Arising from Marxist theory, critical theory investigates the mechanisms that enable continued domination in capitalist society, with a view to revealing the real, but obscured, nature of social relations and enabling these to be challenged by subjugated classes. Within the broad spectrum of Marxist theory, social relations of domination and subordination are assigned according to the relationship of social classes to economic production. However, the neo-Marxist perspective developed by Antonio Gramsci locates relations of power within the broader context of the political economy. In doing so, the role of the State in a capitalist society assumes greater significance than that of maintaining and securing social relations on behalf of the dominant class through coercion and force. Instead, the State embarks on a range of activities in the attempted “exercise of hegemony”, or the cultivation of general acceptance by all social classes of existing social relations and conditions. Gramsci refers to this desired outcome as “consent”, the product of the successful exercise of hegemony, a political function which is thus crucial to the accumulation of capital. When unsuccessful, dissent cannot be contained by the State, and the extent to which contestation constitutes a threat is revealed by recourse to coercion.

The manner in which relations of power are cemented through the exercise of hegemony lies at the core of this thesis. It investigates the relationship between the State and the administrators of an institution within civil society, the University of Fort Hare, as well as the responses to the activities of the State and University Administration within the University itself, over an extended period of time between 1916 and 2000. This period is divided into three specific time frames, according to changes in the expression of the South African State. In general, it is seen that conformity characterises the relationship between the State and the University Administration,

underscoring the success of the State in fostering the role of education in the reproduction of social relations and values and in eliciting conformity.

The nature of conformity is seen to vary according to different expressions of the State and changes in social relations, which are in turn informed by the overarching political economy and events taking place within society and the University of Fort Hare. Manifestations of consent and dissent, as responses to the attempted exercise of hegemony, are presented in the three periods corresponding to different expressions of the State. Four reasons for conformity, as presented by Gramscian scholar Joseph V Femia (1981), are utilised in order to explain and illustrate the nature of control and compliance at the University of Fort Hare between 1916 and 2000.

[435 words]

Date: December 2013

DECLARATION

I declare that 'Control, compliance and conformity at the University of Fort Hare 1916 – 2000: a Gramscian approach' is my own work, that it has not been submitted for any degree or examination in any other university, and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by complete references.

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Date: December 2013

Signed:

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Firstly, the historian Donovan Williams, whose carefully documented account of the period during which he lectured at the University of Fort Hare in the 1950s is contained in his book, *A History of the University College of Fort Hare, South Africa, the 1950s: The Waiting Years*. It not only offers detailed facts, but also insights into the relationships that existed on the campus as well as those between Fort Hare and the surrounding community in the ‘White’ town of Alice.

Secondly, the American journalist Daniel Massey, who studied towards his Masters at the Fort Hare between 1997 and 1999, during which time he interviewed 34 alumni, many of whom had later become members of the post-apartheid State’s political elite. These interviews form an integral part of his Masters, which was later published as a book, *Under Protest – The Rise of Student Resistance at the University of Fort Hare*.

Thirdly, South African historian Jeff Peires, whose research into the history of the Xhosa people in the Eastern Cape area of South Africa is contained in *The House of Phalo – A History of the Xhosa*

People in the Days of their Independence, on which I relied to present part of the historical background and context for the research.

Finally, the Canadian scholar whose Gramscian approach resonates with my own, Les Switzer. His meticulous and exhaustive research into the political history of the area between the Fish and Kei Rivers between 1750 and 1981 forms the substance of *Power and Resistance in an African Society – The Ciskei Xhosa and the Making of South Africa*.

Many references in this research will be seen to originate from these four sources, particularly the first, second and fourth. However, the use of these authors and their work should not be construed as an attempted short-cut or academic idleness on the part of the researcher, whose aim is not primarily to reveal new historical facts or details, but to illustrate the applicability of a particular theoretical perspective. In focusing on the interpretation, rather than the presentation of evidence, the researcher is adding a new dimension to the findings of the above four authors.¹

Furthermore, as one of the aims of the research is to present a critical overview, the gaps or relative silences relating to the personal perspectives of others who have written about the University of Fort Hare should be noted. Williams admits to an ideological bias in favour of the Christian values that characterised the period during which Fort Hare was run by a missionary Administration. His account of the events in the 1950s is interspersed with reflections on the ideological tensions between staff and students, and within each of these bodies, and his first-hand observation offers a dimension to this research that would otherwise be lacking. It also affords further insights into the tensions in the relationship between the South African State and the University of Fort Hare during the 1950s, just after the National Party had gained control of the State and introduced its Apartheid project.

Daniel Massey's stated twofold purpose was "to examine patterns of political development among students at Fort Hare" and to "use the perspective of student experience to illustrate the place of

¹ It is necessary to explain the referencing convention that has been utilised in this research. When an author is first cited, the full name is provided; in subsequent references, only the surname is given.

the University of Fort Hare in South African history”.² Massey focuses on substantiating the self-professed role of Fort Hare as nurturing the African nationalism with which so many alumni were imbued, and, in doing so, embellishes the Fort Hare legacy. His contribution, as a journalist, was to record and document interviews with alumni, and while accounts of their student days by these alumni add colour and detail, there is an over-emphasis on the role of students in challenging racial domination – firstly, in protesting against the paternalism of the missionary Administration, and later in resisting the apartheid Administration. None of the alumni attributed their privileged post-apartheid social status to the university education they had received, and none of them reflected on the access it had given them access to the ranks of the professional and middle class.

On the occasion of his book launch at Fort Hare on 6 May 2010, Massey acknowledged, when questioned about the absence of an ideological framework to his book, that one of its foremost intentions was to document first-hand accounts by those who might not live much longer to tell their tale. Given that many of these alumni were elderly and have since died, this contribution to the historical archives at Fort Hare is indeed valuable. Lacking an analytical framework, Massey’s book serves as a well-researched and entertaining narrative of student protest.

Peires deals with a period that pre-dates the University of Fort Hare, and narrates Xhosa history as recounted by Xhosa people, from the perspective of complex political, social and cultural structures. Notwithstanding the enormously valuable background that this offers, it would be meaningless to attempt to integrate either this perspective or this period into the research, which commences at the turn of the nineteenth century. His work thus serves essentially as a prelude to the colonial encounter that was to give rise to the establishment of the University of Fort Hare.

It is to Switzer that I am most indebted for background information relating to events in the Ciskei throughout the period under consideration. Although in the brief introduction to his book he signals a Gramscian influence, this embedded in his work, rather than being made explicit. His perspective on relations of power is apparent in the nature of the vast collection of data that he

² Daniel Massey, 2010: 18 – 19.

accumulated – all of it impeccably referenced – over the course of 15 years.³ With such a wealth of information relating to the history of the South African State and the Ciskei at my disposal and immediately available, I was able to concentrate on building up my own argument.

Finally, I would like to thank my colleagues in academic and non-academic departments at Fort Hare. Their candid reflections provided beacons and anchors by means of which I navigated my way through the complexity of Fort Hare's recent history. The five years during which I was employed at Fort Hare while carrying out research offered infinitely greater insights that enabled interpretations that I would never have even glimpsed as an 'outsider'. To all those who agreed to share their experiences and opinions openly and unreservedly with me in interviews as well as casual conversations, thereby enriching, illuminating – and often correcting – my impressions and interpretations, *ndiyabulela kakhulu*.

³ Les Switzer, 1993: xv

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Prolegomenon

Placing the self in relation to a theoretical perspective

I was an undergraduate in the mid-1970s, at a time when the fundamental ideological opposition between capitalism and communism coincided with the geopolitical division between ‘the West’, comprising Western Europe and North America, and ‘the Eastern bloc’, comprising China, Eastern Europe, the Soviet Union, as well as smaller, isolated countries such as North Vietnam. Competition for power over non-aligned parts of the world foregrounded the political, economic and ideological differences between the two camps, and the intensity of the ideological battle was possibly partially responsible for the prominence of theorising around the State at the time.

My formal studies did not include a Marxist analysis of capitalism and the State, or the theoretical approaches of Louis Althusser (1918 – 1990) and Nico Poulantzas (1936 – 1979), whose books I accessed through covert study groups. Suffice to say that I was convinced by the macro-level analysis of society constituted by the structural Marxist approach, and I used this framework and its analytical tools to shape my understanding of both historical and contemporary events.

Shortly after completing my undergraduate degree, I left South Africa, and after spending three years in London, I moved to Galicia, a province on the north-west coast of Spain, which had recently emerged from an era of dictatorship under General Franco. Here I taught English for the next eight and a half years until the release in 1990 of Nelson Mandela (1918 – 2013), leader of the African National Congress (ANC), who had been sentenced to life imprisonment by the Apartheid State in 1964. The differences between England and Spain, both nominally capitalist States, were enormous, particularly in provinces like Galicia, where entire villages survived on subsistence agriculture, fishing and smuggling contraband goods originating from the United States. A system of patronage permeated society and I was to experience, without being able to explain, the curious phenomenon of at least one bank in every tiny village, and the co-existence of a subsistence economy alongside vast shopping malls whose anchor tenants were multinational companies. This quasi-feudal sector served to subsidise the cost of labour and production in much the same way as the homelands had served the apartheid

system in South Africa. Many Galicians had worked for decades as migrant labourers in the construction and services in other European countries such as Switzerland and Germany, and it was clear to me that within the 'Western European bloc', there was an economic heterogeneity among nominally independent States that nonetheless had varying degrees of ability to act independently.

With democracy came a demand for English language and computer skills, and, thanks to my fortuitous status as a 'native' English speaker, I was fortunate to be able to earn a living. My sojourn in Spain proved, in hindsight, to have afforded an opportunity to witness the infiltration by hegemonic European and North American capital of a society that had recently emerged from the enforced economic, political and cultural isolation of a fascist State. The penetration was unequal in effort as well as in effect: the industrialised region around Barcelona, nearby the French border on the Mediterranean, was already nominally a part of the European economy; the north-western region around Bilbao, with a strong base around the steel industry and a cultural distinctness, is still the site of a political struggle between dominant capital and Basque separatists. On the remote north-west coast where I stayed, known as Finisterre ('end of the earth'), the Galician villages had remained in a geographic isolation that had largely excluded them from industrialisation and modernisation.

During the first decade subsequent to General Franco's demise in 1975, there was a relaxation of the strict controls that had been in place under the fascist State, as the process of 'democratisation' – a global hegemonic project which at the time I was unable to recognise as such – was rolled out. Implemented by a combination of political forces comprising transnational capital, national capital and key members of the new political elite, the net effect was the successful absorption of American ideals and values into Spanish society within a remarkably short space of time. Consumerism replaced catholic pastimes as malls and banks sprung up, affording new ways of spending time – and money. Yet, in the rural areas of Galicia, subsistence farming was still carried out on tiny plots, and the waterfall that had tumbled directly from a river into the sea at *O Pindo*, a small village, was bottled up to generate hydroelectricity to sell to France, more than a thousand kilometres away, whilst inhabitants of some local villages had no power supply.

These superficial observations point to the differential impact and penetration of capitalism within Spain, though it was almost a decade later before I was able to comprehend how State and citizens alike had become locked into a credit system that bound and subordinated Europe

to the United States. After being coerced into the European Economic Community, Spanish civil society was steered towards a democracy epitomised by consumerism and credit, experiencing the cultural and economic invasion of European and American brands that closed down much of the national manufacturing sector. Shortly afterwards, the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 marked the advent of the same form of Western ‘democracy’ in Eastern Europe – and, within a few years, South Africa was to follow the same trajectory.

The theoretical perspective

As indicated above, I was unable to understand these events from my theoretical position, which was informed by the state-centric analyses of capitalism afforded by the structural Marxists Louis Althusser⁴ (1918 – 1990) and Nico Poulantzas⁵ (1936 – 1979) in the 1970s. Structural Marxism, with its emphasis on the separation of the political, economic and ideological state apparatus as serving to facilitate capital accumulation, could not accommodate the scope and speed of the global transformation that I was later to understand as the homogenising effect of neoliberal hegemony.

My intellectual confusion at the time can be explained by Stephen Gill,⁶ who describes the “ontological shift” that occurred in the latter part of the twentieth century. The ‘world order’ of modernity, hitherto expressed by the ‘rationalism’ of industrial society and embodied in the nation-state that was the product of historical capitalist development – as understood within the context of previous theoretical frameworks alluded to above – ceded to the phenomenon of global financial hegemony exercised by powerful transnational financial institutions and corporations that defied the nation-state’s authority. The power wielded by these non-state entities arose from their ability, enabled by innovation in information communication technology, to shift huge amounts of financial capital around investment destinations in a matter of seconds, bestowing on them enormous influence over national governments.

⁴ Louis Althusser, 1970.

⁵ Nico Poulantzas, 1975.

⁶ Stephen Gill, 1997.

This phenomenon, known as ‘globalisation’, extensively theorised by Manuel Castells,⁷ gave rise to a change in the ‘world order’ that required a new perspective in order to understand its effect on global society, namely:

a redefinition of understandings and experiences that form basic components of our lived reality. This includes our mental framework – for example, the way we think about social institutions and forms of political authority in the brave new world of globalising capitalism that appears triumphant after the collapse of the USSR and other communist-ruled states.⁸

Gill drew on the perspective developed by Robert Cox (1981), a leading critical theorist in International Relations, whose thinking was informed by his practical experience in the field of international trade. Cox explained the emergence of the new ‘world order’, over which transnational financial capital reigned, by incorporating the Gramscian concept of *hegemony*, which is situated at the core of this thesis. Antonio Gramsci’s concept of *hegemony* is more complex than the domination that is associated with hegemony in contemporary International Relations theory, and implies a function that is more persuasive and socially pervasive than forceful. This will be expanded on in Chapter Two.

It was Cox’s hypothesis that made sense of the changes I had observed in the 1980s. Encompassing critical theory, world order and historical change, his approach is informed by the Gramscian explanation of hegemony as the *cultivation of global consent* by the globally dominant source of power. According to Cox’s hypothesis, the hegemon – by then indisputably the United States – projects its influence outwards from its superior position in terms of material resources, and seeks to secure global consent and acceptance of its ideas, already institutionalised in transnational organisations such as the United Nations and its associated structures, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and so forth. Through material power accompanied by institutional preparedness, the ideas and practices of the hegemon become globally accepted, not simply through forceful domination, but through the cultivation of a “consensual [world] order”.⁹

⁷ Manuel Castells, 1996.

⁸ Gill, 1997: 2.

⁹ Andreas Bieler and Adam David Morton, 2003: 2.

The significance of Cox's conceptualisation to this research is his utilisation of the Gramscian concept of hegemony in explaining how changes in the global political economy give rise to an entire social transformation. Shifts in the global nexus of power enable the source of domination to introduce a new set of shared (dominant) beliefs about the world and 'the way things are'. By accepting and subscribing to these, societies become complicit in the new 'world order' of domination and subjugation. According to Cox's conceptualisation of a 'world order',¹⁰ the conglomerate of ideas, institutions and material capabilities that ushered in industrial capitalism found their expression in new social classes based on their relation to ownership of property and capital, institutions (such as the law), and practices (such as a culture of reading). All of these served to promulgate appropriate ideals, which would become adopted by and embedded in the societies over which industrial capitalism extended its grasp during the era of colonial expansion.¹¹

African societies were no exception, and the embracing of the industrially-based modernity project by the first European-educated post-colonial leaders in the 1960s was testimony to the incorporation of the African State in the 'world order'. A detailed exposition of the central elements of Cox's analysis will be provided in Chapter Two, but the salient point he makes is that the nature of domination and subordination comprises more than economic exploitation. By drawing on Gramsci's notion of hegemony and locating it within the context of 'world order' and global relations of power, Cox was able to explain the transition from industrial to financial capitalism that took place mid-twentieth century. By the same token, the transition in African societies during the colonial period from one form of political economy to that of the dominant society can be viewed through multiple lenses of military domination and subordination, as well as the exercise of hegemony.¹²

That the ideas of Italian political theorist Antonio Gramsci (1891 – 1937) had remained in relative isolation after his death in prison was largely due to the fact that it was only in 1971 that his works were extensively and rigorously translated from Italian to English.¹³ Since

¹⁰ Cox, 1981.

¹¹ Gill, 1997: 2.

¹² Cox, 1981.

¹³ This widely acclaimed compilation, translation and editing of Gramsci's notebooks was undertaken by Quinton Hoare and Gregory Nowell Smith (Hoare and Nowell Smith, 1971; Hoare, 1978).

then, his complex analysis of the nature and activities of the State, together with the concept of the exercise of hegemony, have enabled new insights into the mechanisms by means of which social relations of domination and subordination are achieved, both within civil society and within the scope of international relations. I do not wish to overelaborate on the concept of hegemony, which will be unpacked in greater detail in the following chapters, as it is situated in the theoretical and methodological frameworks that inform the direction and intentions of this research. Suffice to say that my reading of Gramsci and of neo-Gramscians like Cox, Gill and numerous others, offered new insights that formed the ideological foundations underpinning this research.

Chapter One: Introduction

Social theory and theoretical approaches

The prolegomenon has offered a background to the theoretical framework within which this research has been carried out. It points to the significance of the political economy, which gives rise to social relations of power, as the locus of social theory. While the political economy offers an overarching framework, it is critical theory that provides the methodological tools by means of which analysis can take place, and this approach will be expanded on shortly. At this stage I will take a step back and provide an overview of social theory, offering a rationale for the selection of critical theory that serves simultaneously to critique other approaches.

Broadly speaking, there are three fundamental Western approaches to social theory, viz, positivism, relativism and critical theory.¹⁴ A very simplified description of the positivist approach, which belongs to the empiricist tradition, is that scientific knowledge is objective in nature and is derived from observation and experiment, on the basis of which general propositions can be formulated. Positivism thus rejects ‘reason’, or thinking and speculation, as a means of generating knowledge. Relativism, by way of contrast, rejects claims of objectivity and universalism, linking knowledge that is generated in this way to relations of power. Instead, relativism foregrounds the exclusivity of particular subjects, settings, circumstances and methodologies. The distinguishing feature is thus that in the first, generalisations can be made, but not in the second.

In the third approach, critical theory, the issue of whether generalisations can be made or not is of little relevance. As a form of rationalism, critical theory argues that knowledge is generated by reasoning, putting forward rational propositions and statements, not simply by experiment or observation. However, critical theory differs from rationalism in that it casts doubt on the inevitability that reasoning will lead to ‘pure reason’, or ‘truth’. In other words, the ‘truth claims’ made in rational propositions may not actually be ‘true’. Instead, critical theory recognises that the process of reasoning is dialectical; that is, driven forward by contradictions, and that the presence of elements of power can preclude the progress to an

¹⁴ William Lawrence Neuman, 2000: 63 – 88.

ideal state of ‘truth’. For this reason, critical theory is associated with the critique of rationalism developed by members of the Frankfurt School for Social Research, renowned for its pessimistic outlook. The Frankfurt School asserted that rationalism produces a purposeful tendency towards the production of ‘instrumental reason’, which seeks to exploit by ‘getting the better’ of a situation or of people, rather than ‘pure reason’, which seeks truth.¹⁵

By incorporating the notion of social conflict and relations of power, critical theory provides a particular perspective that is lacking in other approaches, permitting the use of conceptual tools that encompass an antagonistic dynamic. For this reason, and others to be discussed in the course of this chapter, critical theory provides the appropriate setting for this research, which deals with the consequence of an encounter between societies which differed from each other in every social aspect, from political to economic organisation.

Theory, theoretical choices and ontology

Unless the scholar’s theoretical position is stated at the outset – which is my particular intention – it will emerge from within the research paradigm, become identifiable in the choice of methodology and research tools, and be located in the research findings themselves, in so doing supporting a particular set of beliefs. Derived from an ideological position and implicit in the methodology, concepts, hypotheses and conclusions of the researcher, theory provides structure and direction and is therefore able to signal possible conclusions at the outset, whether intentionally or not. The student researcher learns that the theoretical framework provides an organising and ordering mechanism, accommodating a coherent plan that connects concepts, structures events, and enables ordering of facts and observations. Concepts serve as building blocks for an analysis of the research question or problem at hand, and assumptions provide the ‘cement’ that binds arguments. Technical rigour and conceptual precision are essential in order to provide a solid hypothesis. In undertaking this research, these principles serve as fundamental guidelines.

However, a researcher, as the architect of her research, consciously develops a research plan, usually incorporating an inkling, or ‘hunch’, of anticipated findings. Is she not thereby aiming

¹⁵ For a discussion on the dialectical process that is supposed to lead to ‘truth’, see the *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, written by founders of the Frankfurt School, Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer.

in the direction of a final result of which she is already aware? The ‘hunch’ that is nurtured at the outset provides direction and calls into question the purpose of research as a quest for ‘original knowledge’ or ‘truth’. Is the purpose of social theory the single-minded pursuit of ‘truth’, or is there the possibility for the existence of doubt? It is accepted that research conclusions should point to opportunities for further research, but conclusions should not be so vague as to be ambiguous. On the one hand, what is the point of research, if a theoretical paradigm is teleological in the sense that it is intended to generate a set of results predicated within the paradigm itself? On the other, does the research not present a weak argument if the researcher is unable to make a convincing and relatively definitive case? Perhaps the most conclusive statement that can be made is that where research results accommodate the scope for doubt or varying interpretations, these remain nonetheless within the fundamental realms of understanding and ideological disposition of a particular ontology.¹⁶

Here I must distinguish between the ‘ontology’ referred to above, which relates to a disciplinary body of knowledge, and my own usage, which is borrowed from Gill’s, as a “shared understanding of the universe, the cosmic order and its origins, of time and space, of the interaction of social forces and nature”.¹⁷ This is of necessity linked to patterns of culture and civilisation, and implies a widely shared acceptance of a frame of reference for understanding. When dealing with a set of disciplinary-related ideological premises, I refer to a theoretical perspective, which equates to what Antonio Gramsci terms a ‘conception of the world’, as follows:

In acquiring one’s conception of the world one always belongs to a particular grouping which is that of all the social elements which share the same mode of thinking and acting. We are all conformists of some conformism or another, always man-in-the-mass or collective man. The question is this: of what historical type is the conformism ...?¹⁸

Writing within the context of International Relations, Cox claims that theory serves two purposes and can be viewed in terms of two broad perspectives, either problem-solving or

¹⁶ In this context, ontology is understood as indicating what exists for parts of the whole, such as an ontology for sociology, which encompasses the institutions, persons, practices, roles, norms and relations within a particular theory (Gordon Marshall, 1998: 465).

¹⁷ Gill, 1997: 2.

¹⁸ Antonio Gramsci. In Hoare and Nowell Smith, 1971: 324.

critique. The former examines what is found without questioning its origins, so that the parameters are set by what exists, whilst the latter “stands outside the prevailing order” and examines both its origins and the possibilities for change.¹⁹ Given that the choice of a particular approach is always linked to wider circumstances, my understanding is that for those locating their research within the framework of critical theory, one of the primary objectives is not so much to provide findings in the form of generalisations, as to offer explanations and critique.

Ideally, critique should take place within the realms of civil society and should contribute to awareness of social justice and the development of strategies to bring about change. Gramsci makes a broad distinction between political and civil society as public and private organisms respectively;²⁰ however, when analysing their roles in the exercise of hegemony or domination, he acknowledges the ambiguity of the roles of individuals and groups, asserting that the State is “civil society + political society” – or that, ultimately, the State is civil society.²¹ Because Gramsci’s use of the concepts of the ‘State’ and ‘civil society’ is contextually informed, they are not assigned an exclusive or definitive meaning.²² In this research, however, civil society is understood as society at large, consisting of individual and groups, rather than in the sense of organisations within society.

Whilst critique should originate from civil society, in practice, it is academics who are most able to access information and to debate issues, so it is these professional intellectuals who should offer the most compelling critique. However, the domain of academics and researchers is the University, a site where the struggles for power within society are replicated, and where views of ‘knowledge’ and ‘truth’ are far from homogenous. Jon Simons points out that although critical theory made inroads into arts and social sciences across British university campuses in the 1970s and 1980s, and was even inserted into unlikely subjects such as Accounting, once it had been accepted as ‘mainstream’ and appropriated by the market, it became “another neoliberal commodity”.²³ He compares the latter accommodation of an

¹⁹ Robert Cox and Timothy Sinclair, 1996: 88 – 89.

²⁰ Gramsci. In Hoare and Nowell Smith, 1971: 12.

²¹ Ibid., 208, 262 – 263.

²² Morton, 2007: 88.

²³ Jon Simons, 2006: 10.

ideological challenge to academic norms and conventions to the backlash against dissenting ideology from traditionalists in the humanities, particularly in the United States, where the grounds for opposition are that theory constitutes politicisation and has no place in the ‘objectivity’ of scientific research. This ‘scientific objectivity’ stems from the Enlightenment principles defining scientific knowledge that came to dominate knowledge production after the eighteenth century, which will be discussed presently. Simons underlines the need for theory to be engaged by moving out of the academe and linking itself to movements within society where direction and intellectual clarity is needed.

In using critical theory, my goal is to counter the prevailing tendencies in higher education towards undertaking quantitative research within a positivist framework. Given the relentless domination of neoliberalism that has transformed the world into a market and the citizen into a consumer, it is hardly surprising that the university student finds herself compelled to study towards a career. The unyielding grasp of financial capitalism produces increasing global inequality that generates a ubiquitous fear, that of not finding a job.²⁴

Thus it is that university campuses throughout the world are characterised by conformity and homogeneity, unwilling to take a stance against the pressure to produce. Academic performance is evaluated on the basis of quantitative evidence, that is, the number of graduates, time taken to complete degrees, the number of PhD graduates, the number of papers published in accredited journals, and so on.²⁵ Speed and volume are crucial to the current quantitatively-obsessed era, and in the social sciences, survey-based studies and quantitative analyses, or replications of previous research, are the fastest route to a Masters or PhD qualification. This practice tends to sideline aspects such as originality and minimises the prospects for critical engagement, allowing little scope for reflection. Finally, the proliferation of micro-level studies that are devoid of an overarching theoretical context is testimony to the hegemony of neoliberal ideology, substantiating the hypothesis posited by its critics that its primary intention is to eliminate all counter-ideology: neoliberalism as an accommodating framework is seldom confronted directly and challenged in research, so that it becomes by

²⁴ Henry Giroux, 2008.

²⁵ This quantitative bias is reflected in the investigation into and findings on PhD studies in South African conducted in 2010 by the Academy of Science of South Africa (2010).

default ‘*la pensée unique*’, a French term meaning ‘the only [way of] thinking’.²⁶ In the African context, it is questioned whether even direct challenges to dominant ideology such as post-colonialism, despite having “liberated the space for contrary thinking”, have not simply “produced a kind of radical conservatism, an anti-hegemonic hegemony which distances Western theory from the fundamental peculiarities of non-Western peoples”.²⁷

It is disturbing, in an era in which globalisation is driving humanity towards homogeneity, that there is not an ongoing engagement with the elements and process by which this is being achieved. With the level of analysis having shifted away from the political economy of global society, research funding is largely directed towards instrumental knowledge that ignores broader contextual issues around the distribution of wealth, power and conflict. Such engagement with the production of strategic knowledge, rather than the creation and perpetuation of normative forms of wisdom, is indicative of a global penchant for science and technology, which professes neutrality and objectivity. ‘Truth’ is put forward in the name of ‘science’ and wisdom is subsumed to the needs of a global system of knowledge.

It is the manner in which critique is avoided or precluded that places at risk the purpose of research as a dialectical quest towards ‘truth’ through reasoning in the form of argument. This is particularly so in post-apartheid South Africa, where, notwithstanding the rigour of research, most academics seem to have capitulated, in the main, to an unspoken pressure to produce research that is not critical of the post-apartheid State. A collection of writings foregrounded the theoretical limbo in which research is carried out, and the danger of complacency in an intellectual ‘cocoon’ in the professedly democratic society of post-apartheid South Africa.²⁸ To challenge the dominant discourses and disclose the mechanisms of power that are a function of the political economy, I am prompted to revive a neo-Marxist theory of the State, in which the Gramscian current plays an important role. The manner in which I will do so is, firstly, by firmly situating the University of Fort Hare, as my research

²⁶ The term is attributed to Spanish academic and journalist Ignacio Ramonet, who, in the January 1995 editorial of *Le Monde Diplomatique*, a monthly left-wing French publication, used the term to describe the domination by neoliberal economism of public forums and its monopolisation of the public crafting of ideology, as well as the role of the media in presenting a homogenous view of the world.

²⁷ Niyi Osundare, 2002: 54. In Peyi Soyinka-Airewele and Rita Kiki Edozie, 2010: 24.

²⁸ Heather Jacklin and Peter Vale, 2009.

subject,²⁹ in the context of the national and global political economy; secondly, by utilising critical theory to examine relations of power at various levels; and thirdly, by examining the exercise of hegemony utilising the concepts of control, conformity, compliance and contestation. An accompanying – although not primary – aim is to offer a critical history of the University of Fort Hare that de-romanticises its popularly conceptualised and publicised role as the home of the liberation struggle in South Africa.

The purpose of theory

Scholarly claims should be prefaced by warning articulated by Michel Foucault (1926 – 1984) to the effect that “knowledge is never innocent”.³⁰ This has been more succinctly re-affirmed by Cox, who underscores the primary function of theory as offering a certain construction of reality with a view to persuading others that it is the truth, stating that “theory is always for someone and for some purpose”.³¹ This is more eloquently stated by Pierre Bourdieu (1930 – 2002), the French sociologist and philosopher, as “to comprehend reality is (thus) conceptually to simplify and to transform it in the light of a cognitive strategy.”³²

What, then, is the purpose of theory in academic writing? If it is to offer an evidence-based perspective within which knowledge can be accumulated, ordered and interpreted according to fundamental beliefs and assumptions about the world that are embedded in the theory itself, then theory is self-serving. It pursues a particular outcome that will reinforce a particular form of knowledge, with the ultimate goal being power over the way that people think – and hence, behave. Knowledge has a purpose that may be explicit or concealed to the researcher or scholar, if she is so immersed in or convinced by a particular world view that its claims to ‘true’ knowledge may not be immediately obvious. Theory is the most significant element of research, providing a methodological framework and conceptual tools, and informing and guiding its direction. This point must be underscored if the theory is – as in this research – aimed at challenging the ‘truth claims’ of popular beliefs.

²⁹ The term ‘research subject’ denotes the position of the subject as independent of the researcher; ‘research object’ implies that what is researched can be manipulated and altered by the researcher, as is the case in research of an experimental nature, when repeated trials are undertaken.

³⁰ Michel Foucault, 1980: 78 - 108.

³¹ Cox, 1981: 128.

³² Pierre Bourdieu. In Fritz Ringer, 1997: 36.

It is the intention of this research to make explicit the relations of domination and subordination in the creation and dissemination of knowledge. This will be done by utilising a theoretical framework that can be considered as a ‘chain’ constituted by different ‘links’. The first ‘link’, critical theory, which examines relations of power in the context of sources and forms of domination, has already been discussed as the overarching approach to this research. The other two ‘links’, comprising the ‘Enlightenment ideals’ and the Gramscian notion of the ‘exercise of hegemony’, serve to connect the levels and methodology of the research, and will be explained shortly in greater detail.

The research will be conducted within a framework consisting of two levels, namely, the State and the University of Fort Hare. The attempted exercise of hegemony will be investigated, firstly, between the State and the University Administration, and secondly, between the University Administration and students and staff. In doing so, the relations of power between these entities will be examined, as will responses to the attempted exercise of hegemony in the form of either conformity or contestation. The intention is to reveal with as much clarity as possible the nature of domination in capitalist society, using this particular context and the ideological framework described above, rather than to offer a nuanced phenomenology that further deifies the role of Fort Hare in the liberation struggle.

We will now proceed to discuss the other ‘links’ in this ‘ideological chain’ – first the Enlightenment, followed by hegemony.

Rationalism, empiricism and the Enlightenment

The perspectives of the Enlightenment philosophers are embedded in this research for three reasons. Firstly, at the level of the narrative, the activities of the Scottish missionaries in the Eastern Cape who founded the South African Native College (SANC), later to become the University of Fort Hare, were motivated by the notion that education was the vehicle for progress towards modernity in the form of Western ‘civilisation’. Secondly, in terms of the theoretical framework for this research, it was the idealism of Georg Hegel (1779 – 1831) that influenced Marxism, as well as Gramsci’s early thinking and the “Frankfurt School of Critical Theory”, all of which are central to the theoretical framework (to be discussed in greater detail in Chapter Two). It is sufficient to outline them briefly at this point: classical Marxist theory is renowned for having challenged the Hegelian proposition that the dialectical relation

between ‘knowledge’ and contesting ideas would lead ultimately to a state of whole ‘truth’, whilst Marxism insisted on the contradiction between an illusory ‘truth’ and reality as being the driving force of history; Gramsci is the philosopher and theorist whose ideas are central to this thesis; and intellectuals in the so-called Frankfurt School, founded in 1923 as the Institute for Social Research, developed the pessimistic form of rationalism by means of which social domination is entrenched from the ‘instrumental reason’ proposed by Max Weber (1864 – 1920). Finally, the recognition by German philosopher Immanuel Kant (1724 – 1804) that rationalism could not account for the unknown, and his acknowledgement of the inherent irrationalism in the existence of moral and ethical views grounded on precisely this (the unknown), is an integral part of Gramsci’s notion of ‘common sense’. In turn, ‘common sense’, that which underpins all human thought and action, is a crucial element of conformity, which occupies a central place in the research and will be explored in Chapter Two.

Having summarised the theoretical and ideological elements that are central to this research, we will proceed to examine the Enlightenment in greater detail. As observed earlier, the founders of the University of Fort Hare – which first bore the name of the South African Native College – were informed and inspired by Enlightenment ideals that found their substance in the modernity project of industrialisation that occurred in the nineteenth century. The Enlightenment era corresponds to the phase of post-mercantilist society which ushered in a new set of institutions, social relations, practices and ideas, referred to earlier as the ‘world order’ conceptualised by Cox. A materialist view of the world replaced the spiritual, derived from a new-found emphasis on ‘property’, as opposed to the simple concept of ‘land’.

Scottish philosopher David Hume (1711 – 1776) laid the foundations of empiricism in his claims that knowledge consists only of what can be confirmed by empirical observation, associating claims of ‘truth’ with ‘knowledge’ derived from observation and experiment. This form of knowledge, called ‘science’, based on a materialist view of society, was given substance as Newtonian physics were applied to bring order to nature. This in turn gave rise to the belief in knowledge as based on experience, or empiricism. A separation was made between human thought and human experience and the logical progression of this separation was that reality was considered as an objective state of existence that could be validated, as opposed to the ‘pure reason’ of philosophers and theologians. Nonetheless, knowledge based on ‘reason’ – or argument – transcended the domination of ‘myth-based’ knowledge, that is, religion, and it is to this period that the origins of theory and formal research can be traced.

It was Immanuel Kant who combined the premises of the empiricist and rationalist views to argue that explanations could be made within the realms of ‘possibility’ without observable experience having occurred. This hypothesis was predicated on the belief that man [sic] is able to free his mind from tutelage, that is, a state of intellectual imprisonment in which decisions cannot be made independently. However, at the same time, he took sides with empiricists in relation to ‘things-in-themselves’ (the original German word is “*Dingen-in-sich*”), denoting what is beyond the realms of possible human experience. In this respect, Kant argued against theological claims to knowledge, denying that relations of causality or possibility could exist, and supporting empirical requirements for ‘knowledge’ instead (a very crude and basic example of this would be a rejection of the theological claim “if you are good, you will go to heaven”).

While the debate as to whether knowledge was derived from empiricism or reason was to continue, it was the definitive triumph of ‘science’ over ‘superstition’ that characterised the Enlightenment. In distinguishing ‘reality’ and ‘truth’ from perception, ‘science’ abolished the ambiguity, nuance and irrationality of faith-based understanding. This cleared the way for logic, rationalism and, ultimately, profit for the new bourgeois class, whose power was being consolidated as that of the Church was being eroded.

Accompanying the decline in the spiritual power of the Church was the new emphasis on materialism, reflected in the idea of society as the individual in relation to property and the market. The Scottish founder of free market theory, Adam Smith (1723 – 1790), proposed the formal definition of citizens according to their relation to capital and land, generating categories of land-owners, capitalists and labourers. With capital hailed as a progressive force, the mystique of the supernatural gave way to a belief in new scientific knowledge, henceforth known as modernity. It was accompanied by an optimism that education on the basis of ‘science’ would lead to progress, a conviction that remains entrenched today.

Early European conquests resulting in the domination of Africa, Asia and the Americas subordinated indigenous societies to the needs of colonial powers and industrial capitalism. Over time, the demands for raw materials and labour were replaced by the imperial requirement for political control, necessitating the presence of administrators. Ironically, however, it was through the ‘myths’ of religion, and not the rationalism of science, that the

colonial presence was justified – wittingly or unwittingly – by European missionaries to the inhabitants of invaded and occupied land. Whilst the prioritisation of ‘progress’ through modernisation displaced previous beliefs, ethics and practices, a utilitarian approach to society was introduced by the missionaries, along with a new morality based on bourgeois principles of discipline, subordination and asceticism.³³

The changing needs of capitalism that accompanied its world-wide expansion required legitimising discourses that would be accepted as the ‘intellectual and moral leadership’ to people living in diverse social formations.³⁴ In order for this to be effective, a unifying ideology was required: one that was sufficiently overarching to accommodate many cultures and societies, whilst consolidating a single vision of life and ‘truth’. The positivist approach emerged dominant, claiming ‘objectivity’ in the name of scientific discovery, and offered as beneficial to all societies. Under the guise of ‘neutral science’, positivism bore the values inherent to a capitalist mode of production, foregrounding ‘quantity’ and making judgments on what it observed. ‘Science’ became synonymous with industrialisation, which was perceived as the end point of a linear trajectory towards which all civilisations progressed. Industrialism was associated with an improved standard of living and modernisation was taken to its extreme towards the end of the last century, when the now globally dominant values of neoliberalism transformed the early liberal identity of the individual as a citizen, to the neoliberal role of consumer.³⁵

The transition described above is relevant to this research in that it signals the nature of change that was to set in after colonial conquest and occupation disrupted the ‘way of life’ of Xhosa society in the Eastern Cape. Widespread resistance to colonial rule eventually gave way to partial collaboration as some elements within Xhosa society became persuaded of the prospects for a better quality of life, as proffered by the missionaries. One of the themes to be explored in the first chapter dealing with the University of Fort Hare is the ceding of the traditional way of life to that of the dominant society, illustrating the exercise of cultural hegemony. However, the partial acceptance of dominant values and norms was accompanied by an undercurrent of resistance to colonial domination that remained a feature of the student

³³ Marshall, 1998: 195.

³⁴ Stanley Aronowitz, 1990.

³⁵ Luke Goode, 2005: 54.

‘way of life’ at the University. This will be seen to erupt with increasing frequency as the exercise of hegemony proved unsuccessful in the face of increasing State repression in the 1950s and thereafter. The research will examine both the attempted exercise of hegemony – as an alternative to violent domination – and the responses to this in the form of conformity as well as contestation.

Idealism and dialectical reason

We shall return briefly to the Enlightenment by way of introduction to the next ‘link’ in the ‘ideological chain’, namely, hegemony. At the same time that European empiricism was eroding the influence of religious beliefs, Georg Hegel (1779 – 1831), the German idealist philosopher, argued to the contrary that ideas are the driving force in history. Hegel presented knowledge as a reflection of our surroundings and practices through which new, conscious conceptions of reality negate and then reconstruct knowledge in a relation of subject to object. This ongoing process of acquiring, rejecting and reconstructing knowledge propels history from the domination of myth-based ideas towards a holistic ‘truth’, epitomised in the ‘scientific’ reason of the Enlightenment. His hypothesis, later a central element of Marxist thought, was based on a dialectical process through which an ideological proposition (“thesis”) produces a counter-proposition (“antithesis”), generating a combination of the rational content of each (“synthesis”).

The relevance to this research of the contribution by Karl Marx (1818 – 1883) is indirect. Marx rejected the Hegelian explanation of history as the dialectical progress of ideas and reason towards ‘truth’, while retaining the fundamental notion of “thesis” and “antithesis”. He claimed that all thinking is a product of material conditions and social relations and gave this notion substance by depicting history as the manifestation of a struggle between two classes, capital and labour. The primary contradiction in the capitalist ‘mode of production’ drives the struggle forward towards the ‘perfect society’ – a classless one. This contradiction exists in the fact that labourers own nothing and are forced to sell their labour to capitalists to earn

money, while capitalists own the means of production (land and machinery), but need labour in order to produce goods, thereafter selling them to make a profit.³⁶.

Marx's explanation of politics in terms of a class struggle between capital and labour have given rise to further arguments and critique by those who believed that he assigned too much emphasis to the "economic base". The insistence on Marxism as a science – and not an ideology – led to breakaway strands, while elements of other theories have been fused with Marxism to form new approaches. Neo-Marxism refers broadly to those approaches – one of them being Antonio Gramsci's theorisation of how domination is achieved – that are not rigidly deterministic in the sense that causality is assigned to the economic base.

Gramsci's significant contribution to Marxism is his recognition of the significance to the State of ideology – in the broad sense of ideas and values – in maintaining control over society, rather than recourse to force. His investigation of non-material elements of domination also led to the notion of 'common sense', in explaining why members of society do – or do not – accept domination. As stated earlier, 'common sense' plays a role in eliciting conformity, but it is also at the core of the exercise of hegemony.

It is appropriate to recall at this point the 'links' in the 'chain' that hold together the framework for this research. We have spent some time exploring the Enlightenment ideas, and we will now move forward to discuss the Gramscian exercise of hegemony. I will outline this briefly before returning to the subject in Chapter Two.

Gramsci, domination and the exercise of hegemony

Gramsci explained the phenomenon of social domination and subordination in terms of the State's attempted exercise of hegemony, using his own particular perspective on both the nature of hegemony and what constitutes the State. Instead of a system of control, hegemony is presented as the cultivation of consent, and the State is conceptualised and characterised, not by its bureaucratic structure, but as a set of activities of institutions and of individuals and groups located in both political and civil (read 'private') society. This dual nature of the State,

³⁶ Karl Marx's views are epitomised in his voluminous writings, among which *Wage Labour and Capital* (1847), *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* and *Capital (Volume 1)* (1867) deal with the theory of surplus value and exploitation.

as both the bureaucracy pursuing a political project and simultaneously as citizens assuming various roles and positions within civil society, enables a far-reaching set of activities to be pursued.³⁷ All of these have the effect of cultivating a broad consensus amongst citizens concerning the ideal ‘way of life’ and ‘the way things should be’. The elements of hegemony are numerous and so varied that it would be pointless to attempt to delineate them. However, the values, beliefs, norms and practices of the dominant class(es) are selectively presented so as to form a “body of values and expectations”³⁸ towards which all members of society aspire. As a result, dissent is prevented and contestation is avoided or contained. By eliciting the support of the masses, society becomes complicit in its own subordination. Once accepted and assimilated into the ‘way of life’, a set of practices, habits, beliefs, prejudices and opinions become part of the ‘common sense’ and serve as a self-perpetuating mechanism of the exercise of hegemony.³⁹ Ubiquitous, pervasive, but difficult to pinpoint, hegemony is exercised by the incorporation of every member of society in subscribing to the dominant values, and it is crucial to maintaining an existing social order.

As conceptualised by Gramsci, ‘common sense’ bears no relation to the connotations of practicality that are implied by the use of this term in English culture. Here, ‘common sense’ refers to a practice that is logical, self-evident and requires little or no thinking. Gramsci’s ‘common sense’ is an accumulated layer of ideological elements of the dominant culture that exists in the minds of citizens and informs their various thoughts and actions.⁴⁰ Though originating within the dominant class, an often contradictory and inconsistent ‘bundle’ (including values, norms, beliefs, hopes, ideals, symbols and behaviour) is transferred to the ‘common sense’ of civilians. This disguises the real nature of domination and fosters the exercise of hegemony. So, as African scholar Makau Mutua observes, we are “products of the legacies and heritages that have forged our identity and philosophical outlooks”.⁴¹

³⁷ As already noted, the concept of “civil society” is not used in an exclusive sense by Gramsci. In this research, unless otherwise stated, “civil society” refers to society at large.

³⁸ Raymond Williams, 1980: 38.

³⁹ See for example T.J. Jackson Lears, 1985, 2002; Premesh Lalu, 2009.

⁴⁰ Gramsci. In Hoare and Nowell Smith, 1971: 333. The full text is reproduced in Chapter 2.

⁴¹ Makau Mutua, 2010: 334.

Whilst I will return to this notion in Chapter Two, it is worth noting that one of the most significant characteristics of Gramscian hegemony is the recognition of the contradictory and irrational nature of human behaviour in society. This is because it presents us with an opposite view to rationalism, in contrast to the positivist assumption that logic produces scientific and objective ‘facts’ that lead inexorably to the production of ‘truth’. As noted, during the nineteenth century the idea of linear progress and universality that dominated in the new ‘science’ was transferred to the social sciences. These began to emulate methods based on repetitive studies of the object within clearly defined parameters, with the aim of ‘correcting’ and ‘ordering’ the chaos that characterises human society by deriving universally valid ‘laws’ or causal explanations.⁴²

A further aspect to be considered is the diversity of contexts within which a Gramscian perspective can be applied. The purpose of this thesis is primarily to demonstrate the validity of a Gramscian approach to an historical investigation into the State’s exercise of hegemony in relation to the University of Fort Hare. Of course, this is very different to the site and the subject of Gramsci’s writings, which are mainly on the Italian State and European social history. The aim of Gramsci’s work was to galvanise the working class against the Italian fascist State and to resist the monolithic Marxism of the Comintern and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) in the late 1920s and 1930s. Since Gramsci’s works have been translated from the original Italian, various neo-Marxist interpretations have developed, and they are a testimony to the strength of the Gramscian approach which has been adopted and applied in many contexts in different parts of the world – for example, China, Thailand and the Philippines, Africa and Latin America.⁴³ Interest in and inclusion of the writings of Frantz

⁴² The idea of creating order and seizing control over the research object extended to the introduction of the ‘controlled environment’ and ‘control groups’, now the norm in research in the social sciences.

⁴³ One particular organisation that encourages regional collaboration amongst Latin American, African and Caribbean societies is CLACSO, *Consejo Latino Americano de Ciencias Sociales* (Latin American Council of Social Sciences). Based in Buenos Aires, its publications include many contributions with a critical approach that locates the State at the centre of social analysis. Sader (2001), for example, acknowledges the significance of Gramsci’s contribution in terms of political power, hegemony, and the organisation of domination, in which the ideological dimension has the capacity to produce different dominant ‘modalities’ and convert specific class interests to general populist notions. For further Marxist and Neo-Marxist views, see Atilio Boron, Julio Gambina and Naum Minsburg (eds), 2001; Emir Sader (ed.), 2001. Other

Fanon, who also drew on Gramsci's thinking, is scarcely evident in the work of South African academics.⁴⁴ Instead, many seem generally disinclined to confront relations of power using the concepts of social class, preferring instead the sweeping statements generated by surveys or the self-absorption of phenomenism. Combating this overbearing intellectual passivity requires, to borrow from Gramsci, "pessimism of the intellect, optimism of the will".⁴⁵

Research: investigation, or the reinforcement of domination?

The preceding section has served as a statement of intent in relation to what follows. As is the standard practice in research, the overarching theoretical framework (critical theory) informs the research methodology, in which the key concept (Gramscian exercise of hegemony) is embedded. However, it was also noted that the research is located within the broader context of the political economy of the State, which serves as the starting point for the investigation and analysis of the exercise of hegemony throughout. The reasons for this are explicitly political and are linked to countering the globally dominant neoliberal framework within which higher education is currently situated, and to which research agendas are overwhelmingly subsumed.

In the face of Henry Giroux's cogently presented claims of the globally homogenising effect of the internationalisation of higher education,⁴⁶ Simon Marginson and Marcela Mollis⁴⁷ call for a critical analysis within the field that takes into account the relations between knowledge and power. These relations are perpetuated by the existence of theoretical, methodological and political elements that constitute the "hegemonic strand".⁴⁸ Distinguishing between two

contributors in the same vein include Francisco López Segrera and Daniel Filmus (eds), 2000; Emilio Taddei and José Seoane (eds), 2001.

⁴⁴ A notable exception is Richard Pithouse, author and lecturer at Rhodes University, Eastern Cape.

⁴⁵ In fact, Gramsci borrowed this phrase from the French novelist Romain Rolland, whom he also acknowledged as its source, and used it as the slogan for the newspaper he edited after the First World War, *L'Ordine Nuovo*. In the face of general passivity on the part of the Italian Socialist Party, the prospects for gains by the working class were poor, but the struggle had to continue.

⁴⁶ Henry Giroux, 2008.

⁴⁷ Simon Marginson and Marcela Mollis, 2001.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 4 – 5.

broad approaches to the study of higher education, namely, organisational analysis and socio-historic analyses, Argentinian scholar Mollis⁴⁹ identifies the major differences as being in their orientation and scope. Pointing to the dominance of the former in the United States, exemplified in the work of Burton R. Clark,⁵⁰ whose analysis of higher education institutions is based on organisational systems and structures, Mollis draws attention to the artificial nature of an internally oriented analysis within isolated institutions. The fundamental flaw in this approach is that it does not take into account the social and political environment of higher education and draws conclusions that are lacking in contextual validity. However, the socio-historic approach that is more prominent in Latin America embraces the social, political and economic context, investigating systems of power and public policy over longer periods or stages of transformation. This is instructive, because it illustrates the existence of a Gramscian approach to social theory in Latin America that is lacking in South Africa.

By discounting the overarching context of the political economy, the most fundamental element of any subsequent explanation or hypothesis concerning society or the behaviour and actions of entities and individuals within society is lacking. I have elected to use the political economy as the point of departure for the research, because it permits a periodisation of the State yielding both a typology of the State within different historical contexts, and, through an examination of policy formulation and implementation, its relationship to the University.

Though the framework within which this research is conducted deals with the development of a global system that has subjugated African social systems, it must be acknowledged that the origin of the neo-Marxist theory of the State and the exercise of hegemony are European ideas. Writing within the context of comparative higher education, Marginson and Mollis point to the way in which research paradigms enable the transmission of particular interests and values to national landscapes, cautioning against the instrumentalism of hegemonic knowledge frameworks.⁵¹ Ideology is embedded in an approach to research that consistently utilises quantitative methodology and survey techniques, as formats and questions tend towards a universality and homogeneity. When applying ideas and criteria from Western paradigms in comparative studies, for example, the subaltern society, that is, the one

⁴⁹ Mollis, 2003.

⁵⁰ Burton R. Clark, 1978.

⁵¹ Marginson and Mollis, 2001: 13 – 17.

subjugated by the norms and practices of the dominant society, tends to be suppressed and sidelined. Consequently, the trends in research are towards reducing or eliminating difference through benchmarking to the dominant model, and subaltern societies are rendered susceptible to the prescripts of the dominant culture. Michael Burawoy concurs that because alternative knowledge is evaluated according to the dominant framework (paradigms, methods, techniques discourses, etc.), it is unable to compete for claims to validity or ‘truth’ on these grounds, and disappears.⁵²

My choice of a Gramscian perspective, though originating within a European frame of reference, attempts to critically engage with dominant discourses around the ‘modernising’ role of the University in a dominated society. The University as a historical subject has an ambiguous status, traditionally enjoying autonomy and exemption from the exertion of public influence emanating from the State, whilst simultaneously receiving financial sponsorship.⁵³ However, in dependent capitalist societies such as South Africa, the role of the University has been more explicitly linked to modernisation, increasingly so in the era of neoliberalism, where the emphasis on public accountability has legitimised the right of the State to require enumeration of performance. The role of the University will be examined in greater depth when we return to examine the theoretical underpinnings of this research in Chapter Two, but at this stage we will shift our attention to focus on the research plan to consider the mundane, but essential, details that will guide the reader through this work.

The research subject: an overview of the conceptual approach

A preliminary caveat must be expressed concerning the length of this research. Two years after having defined the scope and aims of the research, it became apparent that I had been over-ambitious in my undertaking. Unable to deviate from my research framework in the face of an increasing volume of data, I was reluctant to alter course for fear of compromising the aims. As a result, each chapter contains an enormous amount of data in support of the hypothesis (as stated in the title of this thesis). A request for clemency is thus in order, and an appeal for patience in the face of the four hundred pages that this research has become.

⁵² Michael Burawoy, 2008.

⁵³ Mollis, 1997.

As noted earlier, this research is located within critical theory of the State, with two primary elements at two different levels within society, namely, the State and the University, providing the foci for research. The expression of the State is theorised at several levels: in relation to the political economy, in forms and forces of production; and in respect of social relations, according to the Gramscian notion of hegemony. The latter will be considered both as an activity that is carried out, as well as a connecting mechanism between the State and the University. The manner in which this takes place is not formulaic, as the relations of power between different expressions of the dependent capitalist State⁵⁴ (colonial, post-colonial, apartheid and post-apartheid) and what are referred to as subaltern classes, gave rise to different forms of tension, conflict and resistance. Within the context of a subjugated and disrupted society, responses are manifest in a number of ways by different social groups, enabling the theorising of compliance, conformity, contestation or overt resistance. We will return to some of these concepts in the following chapter for a more extensive discussion of their significance to the research.

The thesis covers an extended period – close to a century – in a specific setting, that of the University of Fort Hare, in an area in the Eastern Cape known as the Ciskei.⁵⁵ The relationship between the State and the University of Fort Hare is illustrated as one of ‘consonance of purpose’, in which values and aims coincide. Such consonance underpins the understanding of the fundamental role of education as the reproduction of social relations and values. As such, a significant element in this research is that of the controlling function performed by the University Administration in its attempts to foster certain values, whilst eliminating dissident ideas. This follows a theme illustrated by the British Gramscian scholar, Anne Showstack Sassoon, who describes the way that an administration functions to reinforce relations of power as the “organic dominance of the bureaucratic system”.⁵⁶

⁵⁴ Note that the term ‘expression of the State’ is used when referring to the nature of the State in each of the phases of development of the dependent capitalist State in South Africa.

⁵⁵ While the use of the name ‘Ciskei’ may affront readers who are familiar with its use in the context of the so-called ‘homelands’ project of the Apartheid State, its colonial origins are less offensive.

These will be explained in detail in Chapter Three.

⁵⁶ Anne Showstack Sassoon, 1982: 87.

The research aims are closely linked to the conceptual tools embedded in the research methodology, which is executed at two political levels, namely the politics of the State and the politics of the University. For this reason, the conceptual tools are similarly applied at two levels, with the overarching concepts being the political economy of the State and the exercise of hegemony. Within this context, the activities of the State and the University are examined in relation to either the cultivation of consent or the exercise of control, utilising conceptual tools which will be unpacked in the following chapter.

As an accommodating framework, this research illustrates the shifting relations of power in the global and the national political economy that found expression in three expressions of the post-colonial South African State. Within this framework, it examines the constant character of the University Administration, in terms of its conformist orientation, during the periods in which it was accountable to three different expressions of the State (post-colonial dependent, apartheid and post-apartheid). Whilst the accommodating narrative draws on neo-Marxist theory of the State in assigning fundamental power to the class – or alliances of classes – that holds economic power, it also illustrates the exercise of hegemony by the main actors. As noted several times, the principal research subjects are the State and the University, but the research also investigates the activities of actors within these entities, namely, those holding senior positions in civil society (in the University Administration) and political society (State bureaucrats) as part of the exercise of hegemony.

In this way, the conceptual framework is extended to accommodate the heterogeneity of historical contexts, allowing for various possibilities relating to the expression of the State and the dynamics between social classes and cultures according to particular historical conjunctures. The shift in focus that occurs in transferring the analysis from the level of the State to the University enables a transition from the economic and political to the ideological domain. This corresponds to a transition from an examination of the role of State in relation to the economic struggle between classes, to its ideological role in providing intellectual leadership, whilst absorbing elements of subaltern classes to contain contestation.

Selection of the research subject

An historical study of the University of Fort Hare enables us to see the exercise of cultural hegemony. Established as a college that could offer higher education to ‘Natives’ (read ‘Blacks’), the University of Fort Hare was originally intended as a part of the colonial State’s

project of domination. As part of the education system, it was intended to reproduce members of a petty bourgeois class of teachers, court interpreters, agriculturalists and administrators. Employed as civil servants, this class would adopt and represent colonial values and practices and participate in maintaining order within civil society (in the traditional sense of the word). The Enlightenment-inspired project of the first University Administration from 1916 to 1959, aligned to a composite set of religious and liberal ideals, was replaced by the apartheid-aligned Administration, which ran from 1960 until 1991. This in turn gave way to the post-apartheid Administration, which, in the absence of a clear direction from the State, presented Fort Hare as symbolic of the liberation struggle in South Africa.⁵⁷

Each University Administration was characterised by its relationship to the South African State, and its actions are illustrative of varying forms of conformity and direct collaboration. Whilst the response to State domination on the part of Black society is generally perceived to have been rejection and resistance, this research points to differentiated responses that illustrate the effects of cultural hegemony, which will be discussed in Chapter Two.

The researcher's position: disinterested party or active participant?

The form that this research assumes is neither one of action research nor participant observation. However, it must be disclosed that I worked in the University of Fort Hare from throughout the course of this research, and, as an insider, I was privy to information obtained via informal networks from colleagues. For ethical reasons, where information obtained in the course of my duties or through friendships with colleagues could implicate them or jeopardise their positions in the University, it cannot be used. This is one of the main reasons for electing to research the period that ended in 2000 with the installation of a Vice-Chancellor imbued with neoliberal values who has subsequently left Fort Hare.

Research aims

Although the purpose of research at doctoral level is generally accepted as the uncovering or production of 'new knowledge' and understanding, it has already been clarified that this is not the intention of this research. Although it is exploratory, the main intention is illustrative, as the research aims to demonstrate the applicability of a particular theory. This is done through an investigation of the changing relationship between the State and the University, within the

⁵⁷ Zolani Ngwane, 2001: 70 – 71.

framework of the political economy, over the course of the twentieth century. The central theme is the exercise of hegemony, in a Gramscian sense, which is tackled through an examination of the University's role in the transmission of values and culture. This role is crucial to the social process of incorporation on which domination depends.⁵⁸

In examining this relationship, the applicability of neo-Marxist theory relating to the State and the Gramscian conceptualisation of hegemony is demonstrated. The broad aims of the research are: firstly, to establish the correlation between the political economy of the State and the manner in which hegemony was exercised in successive time periods, characterised by different expressions of the State; secondly, to illustrate the attempted exercise of hegemony as well as control, and the responses to this in the form of either conformity or contestation.

A further significant aim is to foster critical thinking in order to counter the ideological mission of neoliberalism in eliminating oppositional theory. It is hoped that this research will contribute to the body of work undertaken within a critical framework in the social sciences. At a secondary level, it aims to critique the efforts by the dominant political party, the African National Congress (ANC), to cultivate a 'historical consciousness'⁵⁹ regarding the historical role of Fort Hare, by claiming the University as central to the ANC's struggle for political freedom. The dissent and resistance for which students at the University of Fort Hare were renowned is broadly acknowledged as an important part of the Black nationalist struggle for political freedom. However, the extent to which the attempted ideological incorporation by previous expressions of the State was successful, as manifest in compliance and conformity on the part of students at Fort Hare, must be explored.

The aims can therefore be considered as descriptive, explanatory, illustrative and intellectual: descriptive, in the sense that research is based on sources of evidence, which, assembled chronologically or otherwise, constitute a narrative that yields various research results. These serve as much as a confirmation of theoretical constructs as historical evidence of the

⁵⁸ Recognising the fundamental role of education in the reproduction of social relations and values, Williams observes that educational institutions are the main agencies of the transmission of the dominant culture, and their role is thus critical to the ability of the State to exercise power (Williams, 1980: 39).

⁵⁹ Ngwane, 2001: 70

activities, beliefs and values of the University Administration over an extended period. The explanatory purpose is achieved in presenting the reasons for conformity, compliance and contestation. Finally, as emphasised, it is hoped that an illustration of the applicability of a Gramscian analysis of the exercise of hegemony, within the broader context of the political economy, will foster the resuscitation of this theoretical approach.

Methodology

There are two stages, or levels, in the development of this research, and although they are intricately related, they comprise separate intellectual exercises. One is the construction of the theoretical framework for the thesis, as well as for each chapter, and the other is the collection of empirical data that provides the narrative into which the theoretical element is woven.

Historical-comparative research

Comprising a historical contextualisation of the relationship between various expressions of the State and the University over a period of almost a century, the research method chosen corresponds to the “single nation, across time, qualitative data” type within the genre of historical-comparative research.⁶⁰ Although the development of comparisons is not the aim of this research, an investigation into the changing expressions of the capitalist State in South Africa and the corresponding relationship between the State and the University signals the relevance of a methodology that is utilised for comparisons over time. Another advantage of historical-comparative research is that because of the researcher’s awareness of the “bigger picture”, that is, situations and events surrounding the actual research, there is a “greater sense of coherence” and reduced likelihood of distortion.⁶¹

A further reason for choosing this method of research is that it can be used for studies at different levels of society – in this research, at the level of the State and the University respectively. Within the University, at another level, that of civil society, in the sense of broader society, the research evaluates the varying nature of conformity displayed by different social groups and classes vis-à-vis the University and the State.

⁶⁰ Neuman, 2000: 386.

⁶¹ Ibid., 390.

Importantly, a historical-comparative approach is not restricted to one discipline, and by locating the research within a broad socio-historical context it offers a “powerful method” for addressing big questions and issues.⁶² It covers an extended period and transcends disciplinary boundaries, encompassing elements of Philosophy, Political Science and the Sociology of Higher Education. By doing so, it allows for a broadening of perspectives and innovative conceptualisation, through the discovery and inclusion in the research of various elements that emerge by virtue of the expanded scale of the research.⁶³

Finally, this method accommodates a diversity of data and permits the researcher to arrange it according to concepts that emerge as the investigation proceeds. As it is the researcher’s prerogative to select a particular theoretical perspective, she has control over the way in which data is collected, selected, arranged and interpreted.⁶⁴ Once having identified the purpose of the research and means by which data is to be evaluated, the researcher is afforded the privilege of making decisions around every aspect of the research. In this research, this has permitted the development of a theoretical framework that includes concepts drawn from different bodies of theory, and the utilisation of conceptual tools selected entirely by the researcher. This flexibility has allowed the researcher to explore a wide variety of data, without being subjected to disciplinary parameters, theoretical constraints, or the conundrum of the non-availability of crucial data from a particular source.

Data selection and collection

As frequently noted, the research aim is not historical: rather, its intention is illustrative. As such, the quest for rigorous interpretation and application of theory necessitates a broad and deep investigation in order to uncover all possible sources of information. At the same time, the data collection incorporates historical contexts and events over an extended period, whilst focusing on a single research subject (the University of Fort Hare). Given that the period under consideration is almost a century, with the research covering various levels of society, the volume of data generated is, predictably, enormous.

⁶² Neuman, 2000: 383.

⁶³ Ibid., 382 – 384.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 388 – 399.

Although the data collection techniques to be outlined shortly indicate a reliance on written sources, the volume collected necessitated meticulous sorting according to the theoretical framework and using the conceptual tools described earlier. Data collection techniques varied according to the two primary research categories, namely, the South African State and the University of Fort Hare. The data gathered on the State is drawn entirely from secondary sources in the form of published research and literature, while that relating to the University context is based on secondary and primary sources, the latter consisting of a variety of archival as well as un-archived University of Fort Hare records.

Secondary data collection

With reference to secondary sources, it should be noted that certain texts have been heavily utilised to provide the historical setting. These are the extensively researched political history of the Eastern Cape region of South Africa known as the Ciskei by Les Switzer,⁶⁵ the pre-twentieth century account of the Xhosa people by Jeff Peires,⁶⁶ and the detailed personal account of events at the University of Fort Hare during the 1950s by Donovan Williams.⁶⁷ Without wishing to represent an over-reliance on these sources, the mere fact that they offered such extensive and comprehensive information relating to their various themes meant that the necessity for my searching for the same data in other sources was precluded.

Primary data collection

The empirical component of the research proved to be straightforward, in one sense, given the voluminous records, including confidential files, of both catalogued and uncatalogued University records and personal documents. The Cory Library at Rhodes University, chronicling the period 1916 – 1960, offers impeccably catalogued formal records, such as the minutes of Senate and Student Representative Council (SRC) meetings, as well as letters, reports and other documentation. These records were archived at Rhodes University when Fort Hare was affiliated to Rhodes as a university college after having been denied independent status in 1951. The fact that the Fort Hare records remain there, more than 50

⁶⁵ Switzer, 1993.

⁶⁶ Peires, 1981.

⁶⁷ Williams, 2001.

years after the University of Fort Hare was given independent status, points to the perpetuation of a form of colonial custodianship in the academic environment.

In 1959, under the Apartheid State, Fort Hare was disaffiliated from Rhodes University and placed under the Department of Bantu Education, and from this point onwards all official records were kept on the Fort Hare campus. While they are not as easily accessible as the records at Rhodes University, not having been archived, they can be located in various parts of the University of Fort Hare. Official records of Senate and Council meetings are stored under the stairway in the basement of the Administration building, while student records are under the custody of the Postal Services Department.⁶⁸ Staff files have been relegated to the same status as the Senate and Council records, under the stairwell.

The Howard Pim collection in the basement of the Fort Hare library is undoubtedly the richest and most interesting source of information. It contains a large variety of archived and non-archived books, papers, documents, notes, newspaper articles and diaries. These range from a collection of all the University calendars since its establishment, to the book in which students had to sign an academic oath when registering, in the period of missionary Administration.

The undoubted advantage of the records at Fort Hare over those at Rhodes University is that they comprise both formally minuted versions of decisions and events, as well as the far richer data constituted by the confidential files of the Rectors appointed by the Apartheid State, as these reveal the layers of secrecy and intrigue that are concealed by carefully worded minutes of formal committee meetings.⁶⁹

⁶⁸ It is nonetheless disappointing to note that not all student records are available. For example, the file of Fort Hare's most famous alumnus, Nelson Mandela, has disappeared.

⁶⁹ An example of this is that there is no mention in the formal University records of the events of 1963 involving the sabotage of power lines outside Alice by a staff member and some students. However, the Rectors' files in the Howard Pim library basement contain details of who was involved and what transpired, including the involvement of the security police in the arrest of the lecturer concerned, which took place on campus in the early hours of the morning. Details of this incident will be provided in Chapter 5, dealing with the Apartheid State and the University of Fort Hare 1960 – 1990.

For the purposes of this research, the most valuable source of information consisted of fifteen large cardboard boxes of the personal files that had belonged to the Rectors during the period of apartheid Administration from 1960 to 1990. The last apartheid era Rector made an abrupt exit in 1990 that afforded no time for removing documents he may have wished to, but, fortunately for researchers, the University Librarian, Yoli Soul, insisted on all their files being retained.⁷⁰ Thanks to her foresight, instead of being discarded by the incoming Administration, the files were instead packed – obviously hurriedly and without any form of labelling or cataloguing – and removed to the basement adjoining the Howard Pim library that houses special collections, where they remain.

At the suggestion of the librarian in the Howard Pim library from 2010 – 2011, Phillip Clarke, I began my research by looking at the unsorted files in the Rectors' boxes in the basement adjoining the library. They contained an unexpected volume of data, which revealed the controlling nature of the University's most senior administrators between 1960 and 1990. Files belonging to the first apartheid era Rector, Johannes Jurgens Ross (J.J. Ross), could not be located, though according to the list of sources by Daniel Massey for his research in 1997 to 1998, they were available at that time. However, some fifteen boxes crammed with correspondence, staff files, newspaper and magazine articles, confidential letters and all the documentation relevant to the almost annual expulsion of protesting students, are testimony to what amounts to an obsession with record-keeping as a form of control by the apartheid era Rectors Johannes Marthinus de Wet (J.M. de Wet) and John Lamprecht. Prodigious collectors of evidence, their currently unsorted and uncatalogued legacy comprises thousands of formal and informal documents originating from Rectors of other universities, themselves, staff, students, parents, senior officials of State departments and low-level functionaries, civic organisations, church groups, societies and various individuals, all offering particular angles and interpretations of particular contexts.

Many of the apartheid era Rectors' files are labelled "confidential", which is unsurprising, given their practice of collecting evidence about students and staff for the purpose of

⁷⁰ According to Ms Soul, the general inclination at the time of the exodus of the senior White Administration in 1990 had been to destroy the personal files of the apartheid era Rectors, but she was able to counter this sentiment by insisting that, as archival material, they be treated in the same way as other records. Conversations with Ms Soul, 2010 – 2011.

surveillance and control. Because these records have not been archived, it is impossible to provide references for almost all the primary data utilised in Chapter Five, which deals with the apartheid era.

At this stage it is important to highlight what may be perceived as negligence or sloppiness on the part of the researcher in referencing the information that was obtained from these files in as vague a format as “Ross files”, “De Wet files”, or “Lamprecht files”. Given that there is no indication on the boxes as to their contents – they had previously been used for the transport of other documents, so labels are misleading – the absence of any form of signage presented a dilemma with regard to referencing. While some folders had labels indicating the content, no formal archiving whatsoever has taken place. This prompts an immediate recommendation that a comprehensive archiving exercise be undertaken in order to make these materials more accessible for further research into various aspects of the University of Fort Hare during the apartheid era, including student resistance.⁷¹

Clearly, the challenges in data collection in relation to the period after 1960 were primarily those of sifting through uncatalogued data comprising both formal and non-formal records, which yielded far too much information to be utilised in this research. In general, given the time period covered is almost a century, copious data in the form of thousands of letters, minutes, staff records, speeches, student petitions and posters and letters, control sheets, records of commissions of enquiry⁷² and reports, newspaper clippings and correspondence and so forth, the limitation to this body of research is essentially that the findings cannot be considered exhaustive. However, the volume of data facilitated the execution of research for the stated purpose of illustrating a particular hypothesis regarding the nature of control, compliance and conformity at the University.

⁷¹ Ms Soul has frequently raised this issue, but the library has been denied its request for an archivist. The University has instead assigned copious resources in the form of the large, modern and impeccably maintained National Heritage and Culture Studies (NAHECS) Building, occupied by a director, manager and archivists. NAHECS houses the ‘National Liberation Archives’ that were given to Fort Hare by the ANC, as well as those of the PAC.

⁷² For details of commissions of enquiry and reports relevant to the South African Native College, later to become Fort Hare University, see *Appendix C: Commissions of Enquiry and Acts relevant to the SANC and Fort Hare*.

A serious and lamentable gap is that of the SRC files for the period 1960 to 1990, which appear to have been removed. While these were cited by Daniel Massey for his research in 1997 and 1998, they are no longer available. The absence of these files has nonetheless been countered by the plethora of ‘evidence’ collected from the student body by the apartheid era Rectors in the form of letters, posters, drawings and cartoons. These will be seen to illustrate the nature of student resistance and collaboration and offer insights that would not be detectable in the minutes of SRC meetings.

Finally, the relative skimpiness of the unofficial records of the post-apartheid era Vice-Chancellors at Fort Hare in the period 1990 – 2000 is regrettable. Official records in the form of minutes of Council, Senate and other committee meetings are copious, but the Vice-Chancellors’ files contain relatively little information. This stands in direct contrast to the thousands of pages written by the apartheid era Rectors that offered valuable insights into the nature of control. Without having the Vice-Chancellors’ accounts of events in this period that would have possibly shed a different light on tensions within the University, I was unable to penetrate below the surface to investigate, for example, the cause of rivalries among unions. In conversation with colleagues about this period, it has been emphasised that Mbulelo Mzamane, Vice-Chancellor between 1995 and 1999, was well-liked by academic staff because he promoted their interests. An ardent proponent of the African Renaissance, exemplified through the promotion of African scholarship, he was eager to cultivate a reputation for Fort Hare as a home to leading intellectuals by sponsoring overseas studies for African academic staff and granting generous leave allowances to complete their studies. However, according to colleagues, he was not susceptible to the pressures from the ANC to link Fort Hare more obviously and closely with the State, and it was for this reason that the NEHAWU leadership was encouraged to seek the grounds for unseating him. There are of course no documents to substantiate this, so I have chosen to focus instead on the neoliberal pressures emanating from the State, which were clearly evident, as the immediate cause of his demise. The possibility of political conspiracy remains for possible further investigation, through interviews with academic staff and union members who were working at Fort Hare during the 1990s. The scope of this research could not, regrettably, accommodate this added dimension and complexity without forcing the researcher in another direction, that of the

clandestine collaboration between the State and elements of the tripartite alliance, with a view to achieving a consensus regarding the symbolic role played by the University of Fort Hare.⁷³

Data analysis

The concepts of consent in the form of compliance or conformity – or, alternatively, dissent – served as a sorting mechanism in both the selection and ordering of data. Evidence of consent in the form of conformity exists in the general, unquestioning acceptance of structures, routines, views and decisions, and can be best illustrated by the existence of and records generated by various committee meetings. Compliance exists in the conscious acceptance, willing or reluctant, of structures, practices, values and decisions, and is manifest in the copious correspondence between the apartheid era Rectors and staff, as well as some students. Dissent, comprising contestation, is most strikingly demonstrated in the well documented student protest, as well as in student posters and notices that were removed and stored by the apartheid era Rectors. The exercise of hegemony will be amply illustrated through the application of these concepts in the chapters presenting empirical evidence.

Limitations and challenges

The first immediate limitation of this research lies in the impossibility of reporting comprehensively on the copious data. Samples were selected from the available data to support the research hypothesis, but there are thousands of examples that remain unreported. Secondly, notwithstanding the large amount of data, it represents what was handed by senior administrators to their secretaries for filing. The available ‘facts’ represent what was selected, recorded and filed according to the information requirements of a succession of administrators over the course of nearly 100 years. A filtering of data has already occurred in the collection of information, and evidence of those events, facts and details that were not considered relevant or significant are simply not available in the form of archival records. For example, it is likely that during the apartheid era, highly sensitive information relating to security was taken home, rather than being left in an office where it was accessible to administrative staff. In this way, the data in itself reinforces relations of power in that the records represent the ‘truth claims’ of those holding power. Gaps exist in terms of what was said and done, as

⁷³ This has been partially researched by Ngwane, 2001.

perceived by those over whom control was exercised, and these silences represent what can only be inferred according to representations by dominant groups.

Here it is important to repeat the purpose of this research, which is an *illustration* of the exercise of hegemony or control, as manifest in the consent (conformity or compliance) or dissent (contestation and resistance) manifest at the University of Fort Hare. A thorough and exhaustive examination would amount to thousands of pages.

The impossibility of exploring the entire scope of activities of the University Administration, staff and students over the period necessitated a certain selectivity that was based on the theoretical purpose. Because of the focus on the nature of control in relation to the State, the activities of the senior Administration and administrators – that is, the Rectors (before 1990) and Vice-Chancellors (after 1990) – have been foregrounded. The dominant voice is therefore that of those who attempted the exercise of hegemony or control. The existence of extensive records relating to student dissent and consent are indicative of the varied nature of responses.

Post-apartheid senior administrators, who from 1991 onwards held the title of Vice-Chancellor, were noticeably less concerned with internal controls. During the course of the 1990s, in line with the general tendency towards the “new managerialism” that installed a layer of non-academic senior management in universities throughout the world, responsibilities relating to human resources, public relations and finance were delegated to separate administrative departments. The mere fact that these functions were by now assumed by departments rather than individuals is testimony to the burgeoning of administrative functions and the emphasis on reports and record-keeping as evidence of activities performed. This shift in emphasis, together with the disappearance of the need for surveillance on the part of the Rectors, is evident in two ways. Firstly, the Vice-Chancellors were no longer responsible for the direct transmission of the State’s hegemonic project through the University to civil society. Secondly, the need for control over staff and students through a centralised system that was geared towards surveillance, and based on collecting “evidence”, no longer existed. The Vice-Chancellors’ diaries contain details of overseas travel itineraries, appointments with representatives of foreign funders and potential academic partners, meetings with ANC politicians and ceremonies attended by the new national political elite. The sense of mission and duty, along with an intensely personal commitment to the State’s Apartheid project that is so evident in the Rectors’ files seemed to have evaporated. In its

place, there is a sporadic and inconsistent chronicling of meetings attended by the Vice-Chancellors, some of them pointing to overtures from foreign institutions wishing to enter into partnerships with Fort Hare, and others to the development of close links with the new political elite, who were intent on securing Fort Hare as a symbol of the liberation struggle.

Finally, the use of language in creating formal records bears mentioning. Fort Hare had been founded as an English institution, in all senses of the word. During the apartheid era, committee meetings were held in Afrikaans and the minutes of meetings as well as the content of the apartheid era Rectors' personal files were by and large recorded in Afrikaans. However, the minutes of Senate and Council meetings were recorded in English, in adherence to the principle of Fort Hare being an English-medium University.⁷⁴ Although the first two apartheid era Rectors were Afrikaans-speaking, their English was impeccable and their bilingualism is evident in personal notes and correspondence. The third apartheid era Rector was also fully bilingual and his personal files contain records, notes and memoranda in both languages. The fact that a large volume of data is in Afrikaans may explain why the records remain unresearched, although, as indicated earlier, the primary reason is more likely to be that few people are aware of their existence.

Challenges of possible distortion and bias

During the course of this research, I have been made acutely aware of the scope for difference in the interpretation of historical events on the basis of the selection and presentation of data. The researcher's presence is evident in the choices made in any research undertaken: it is present in the researcher's ontology (where ontology is used at the micro-level, with reference to the 'truth claims' of a certain theoretical framework), the selection and ordering of concepts, choice of research subject, content and scope of the research, thesis design and architecture, selected excerpts from texts and references, and so on. The role of the narrative, linking theoretical concepts to actual historical events and cementing sections to support the hypothesis, is to present a particular explanation according to the researcher's standpoint. A

⁷⁴ However, during the early 1970s, the possibility of teaching some classes at Fort Hare in Afrikaans had been raised and discussed by the Rector and senior academic staff members (Undated letters, De Wet files). This prospect was dropped, presumably as a result of the 1976 Soweto uprisings, in which the use of Afrikaans as a medium of instruction in Black schools was resoundingly rejected by Black school pupils and Black civil society in general.

thesis is ultimately a conscious attempt to persuade its audience to accept the researcher's argument, and all evidence that is presented is done so with a view to reinforcing that argument. A theory is fortified through the presentation of data; and it is all too easy to omit that which does not 'fit'.

However, it is silences and gaps that weaken any argument – and no less so in one based on research over an extended period. The ethical quest of the researcher should, then, be one of exploring possible gaps, deliberately seeking what is not readily forthcoming or available, with a view to covering as much ground as possible, so that the final thesis presents both a thesis and prospects for its antithesis.

In this research, the original illustrative aim was extended to explore the reasons for conformity, because the nature of conformity emerged as a complex and highly visible component of the findings. Ignoring conformity and adhering only to the illustration of the relationship between State and University would have presented a deterministic and inaccurate portrayal of the nature of hegemony.

A further limitation on the validity of any research is cultural bias, when the researcher's background differs from that of the research subjects or groups. In this research, various cultures and classes are present, including staff, students, administrators and bureaucrats of Xhosa, Afrikaner and British origin. Within these groups are further divisions according to cultural and socio-economic divisions and the different identities that were formed or assumed at various stages over almost a century.⁷⁵ As a White South African researcher, I have tried to avoid cultural bias by retaining the distance that is afforded by critical analysis throughout the duration of the research. I also attempted to develop an understanding of long-standing cultural values through engaging with colleagues and students around these.⁷⁶ Most

⁷⁵ For example, Black students at the South African Native College in the early decades of its existence accepted the identity assigned to them in the name of the College, but with the advent of the apartheid era in 1960, ethnic and tribal identities as 'Xhosa', 'Fingo' or 'Thembu' were rejected in favour of a self-proclaimed universal Black identity, as will be seen in Chapter Five.

⁷⁶ The importance of faith is a case in point. Religious rituals play a significant role in everyday routines and to argue for a separation of State and religion and the removal of rituals such as prayer

importantly, bias has been countered through the selection of conceptual tools, which, although selected by the researcher, act against the possible tendency of the researcher towards partiality. Finally, by presenting the historical setting within which the activities and behaviour of the State, University administration, staff and students can be examined, the opportunity is provided for an analysis based on context and contingency, rather than judgment and evaluation.

Design and Architecture

Whilst not usually associated with research methodology, the design and architecture for this research departs slightly from the norm, and is informed by the methodology. A word of explanation is in order before examining the structural layout of the research. The standard format consists of an introduction, which includes an exposition of the theoretical framework, followed by a review of the literature, presentation and analysis of the empirical evidence, and then the conclusion. However, approaching the end of the introductory chapter, in which the attention of the reader has been drawn to various theoretical aspects of this research, it is necessary to state that “we are not yet done” with theory. The reason for this is that because of the illustrative purpose of this research, the theoretical framework and the literature review are inseparably linked, and both will be discussed in the next chapter.

In this chapter, the reader has merely been introduced to the overarching ideological perspective that is embedded in the theoretical approach and the methodology. Chapter Two will present a discussion of the broad sweep of three bodies of theory that are utilised in this research. Critical theory questions broad assumptions and knowledge claims, urging the researcher to engage constantly, rather than proceed on the basis of assuming as valid. One such claim is the self-professed role of the University as an autonomous institution, but according to Gramsci’s conceptualisation of the exercise of hegemony, the distinction between members of political and civil society is not clear-cut.⁷⁷ Furthermore, the context does not accommodate only the relationship of political and social domination, and the concept of cultural hegemony is brought into play through an examination of the process of

during University ceremonies indicates a cultural bias of which I would have been guilty, had I not spent several years at the University of Fort Hare.

⁷⁷ Femia, 1979: 472 – 83.

colonial conquest and the activities of the missionaries. Critical theory of the state provides the context that enables an examination of the particular expression of the State that existed in each of the various historical periods under consideration, and serves to provide the setting for each of the remaining chapters.

The presentation and analysis of the empirical evidence is undertaken in Chapters Three to Six. Each chapter will be presented according to the same format, beginning by ‘setting the scene’ and presenting the historical background and the expression of the State that existed at the time. The presentation of the State is followed by a description of events and activities at the University of Fort Hare during the same period, presented within the context of the attempted exercise of hegemony and the responses it elicited.

Chapter Three sets the scene for the establishment of the University by providing an overview of Eastern Cape society and recent history at the turn of the nineteenth century. It also introduces the main research subject and presents the framework in which it will be investigated throughout the research.

Chapter Four examines the relationship between the post-colonial Union of South Africa and the South African Native College (SANC), within the context of the changing relationship between the missionary Administration and the State. Dominated initially by an imperial pro-British element, towards the end of this phase the rise of Afrikaner nationalism brought the Apartheid State to power. Within the SANC, contestation will be seen to emanate from various sources in political society and civil society, concomitant with the development of strong nationalist and Pan-Africanist ideas, particularly among students at Fort Hare.

The relationship between the State and the University of Fort Hare between 1960 and 1990 is the focus of Chapter Five. During this period, contestation between the State and Black civil society was continuous, with Fort Hare University serving to illustrate the nature and extent of dissidence that prevailed throughout Black civil society. The exercise of coercion – or force – by the State in order to control civil society serves as a counterpoint to the attempted exercise of hegemony by the State during the previous period.

Chapter Six analyses the nature of transformation of the State within the global context of the exercise of neoliberal hegemony. The transition of Fort Hare from an institution that formed part of the apartheid hegemonic project to a University in post-apartheid society is examined in the context of the intellectual gap into which neoliberal principles were inserted. The attempts by the post-apartheid State to position the University of Fort Hare as symbolic of the liberation struggle and the *alma mater* of leading intellectuals within Black resistance movements are presented as part of the State's recourse to symbolic gestures in nation-building, in the absence of a defined hegemonic project.

The final chapter re-states and consolidates the argument presented during the preceding chapters relating to the relationship between the State and the University, and between the University Administration and the University community, in terms of the exercise of hegemony. The nature of conformity and compliance that was most prevalent during each of the three eras under examination points to, *inter alia*, the continued willingness of the University of Fort Hare to maintain the relationship of patronage that existed during the apartheid era. This relationship of compliance in the face of a globally manifest tightening of control by the State over Higher Education points to further research possibilities which will be outlined.

We will now proceed to Chapter Two, which presents in greater detail the theoretical framework for this research, as well as an overview of the literature that has informed the structure, presentation and analysis of the research data. A final reminder in closing this chapter relates to the illustrative purpose of this research in proving the relevance of a theoretical perspective, in the expectation of revealing a new dimension relating to the exercise of hegemony. This highlights the varied responses of subaltern groups to domination, whether of a consensual, non-committal or contesting nature, of which the University of Fort Hare provides a compelling illustration.

Chapter Two: Theoretical Framework

This thesis has as its primary aim the illustration of a particular theoretical framework. The reasons for foregrounding theory have been discussed in the previous chapter, which pointed to the overwhelming and subordinating effect of neoliberalism on society. This is manifest at every level, not least in the University, which, traditionally, has the role of offering a constant critique in order to demystify the exercise of power and to seek ‘truth’. The importance of critical theory in relation to contemporary society has already been argued, but this chapter seeks to underscore the necessity for examining the relationship between the State and the University through the lens of critical theory.

While Chapter One served as a broad introduction to the research, Chapter Two will elaborate on the theoretical framework according to which all chapters are structured, as these accommodate concepts as well as conceptual relationships. Each of the empirical chapters is structured according to the theoretical exposition of the relation between the State and the University in the exercise of hegemony. To understand the presentation of the data, it is thus necessary to present a comprehensive exposition of the theoretical perspectives that shape the research, and the concepts around which data has been collected, as these provide ‘points of reference’ in the analytical framework. To this effect, this chapter begins with a discussion of critical theory of the State, which offers the primary theoretical perspective, followed by an analysis of the exercise of hegemony, as illustrated within that particular period by the relationship between the State and the University Administration.

Critical theory identifies State power as the central goal of social conflict, and so, before examining the critical theory perspective, a brief tour of the State is required.

The State

The State, in terms of institutions and the nature of government in Western societies, has been theorised for centuries from diverse philosophical positions. The earliest recorded Western philosophy of the State and government was provided by the Greek philosopher Plato (424/423BC – 348/347BC), whose Socratic dialogues encompassed forms of government and the State. However, with the *polis*, an urban entity, as the principle social entity, the State was considered in terms of the nature of its governments (aristocracy, democracy, oligarchy,

monarchy). Plato's views of the constitution and institutions of government influenced subsequent thinking, even though he doubted the capacity of citizens to co-exist within a democratic form of society. Plato considered it the duty of the State to provide moral leadership to citizens, an aspect that has become incorporated in modern theory of the State and which is crucial to Gramsci's depiction of the exercise of hegemony.

Centuries later, during the Middle Ages, the Italian political theorist Niccolo Machiavelli (1469 – 1527) proposed a strong government that would call to order a society consisting of self-interested individuals. A similar view was held by the Englishman Thomas Hobbes (1588 – 1679), whose conception of the State was Absolutist in nature. To Hobbes, the State's task was to regulate a society of individuals whose primary interest was self-preservation, in order to achieve some form of stability.

The emergence of the notion of the 'free' individual after the decline of the feudal system and the end of monarchy gave rise to greater confidence in humankind's ability to allow reason to prevail over survival instinct or devout obedience. Protagonists of Enlightenment ideals such as David Hume (1711 – 1776), John Locke (1632 – 1702), John Stuart Mill (1806 – 1873) and Adam Smith (1723 – 1790) introduced liberal ideals that opposed Absolutism, foregrounding individual rights vis-a-vis the power of the State. These liberal ideas culminated in the theory of social contract, in terms of which the individual hypothetically sacrifices her selfish needs to do as she pleases, to be ruled by the State. In return, the State puts in place laws and structures (the first state-appointed bureaucrats) to safeguard her right to individual freedoms such as freedom of speech, freedom of belief, and freedom of choice. The optimism of the liberal philosophers concerning the nature of the individual was manifest in early capitalist relations that foregrounded the spirit of individualism, while proclaiming the principle of reward for individual effort.

We will return to the manifestation of the Enlightenment in a new set of beliefs and practices based on 'scientific discovery' and imbued with the spirit of individual initiative: suffice to say at this point that the fusion of these ideals with the Christian faith formed the basis of the aims of the United Free Church of Scotland, which was to be represented by the missionaries who founded the first institution of higher learning for 'Natives' in Southern Africa.

To bring us back to critical theory, a short overview of the conceptualisation of the State in capitalist society by Karl Marx (1818 – 1883) is necessary. Marx's radical approach challenged the liberal notion of the State as proxy for the will of citizens, who accepted its rule in exchange for protection of their individual rights. He also rejected the liberal perspective of capitalism as a system that rewards the risk-taker. Instead, Marx considered capitalism as the most recent outcome of a historical process of change that is driven by the material conditions of social production: in other words, how production takes place – the technology it uses, and the relationship of each participant to the production process. Marx portrayed history as being driven forward by material contradictions within society, an approach he called historical materialism, which challenged the Hegelian notion that history is driven forward by ideas. According to historical materialism, society does not consist of individuals defined in relation to the State, but by social classes that are defined by their relationship to what is needed to produce, or “the means of production”.

In the case of capitalism, the way in which things are produced – the “mode of production” – is characterised by one primary contradiction, as follows. In industrialised Europe, those lacking access to the means of production – or capital, in the form of factories and machines – were the peasants who had been forced from the land and had no way of surviving or reproducing. They were forced to sell their labour to the owners of the means of production, the capitalists, and Marx called them the “working class”. The capitalists – called the “bourgeoisie” by Marx – were in turn forced to employ people as labourers, because without labour, their machines could not produce goods. This antagonistic relationship between the bourgeoisie and the working class is at the core of what Marx called the “class struggle” in an industrial society.

How does this relate to the State? According to Marx, the role of the State is to serve the interests of the dominant class. In industrial society, the State passes laws and executes actions that protect the interests and the capital of the bourgeoisie.

While this is a somewhat crude overview of Marx's views, it nonetheless points to his contribution to political philosophy in separating the economic, political and ideological functions of the State, and assigning the determinant of social relations to the economic. The modern capitalist State is presented as serving the interests of the dominant class by articulating their interests through a political system that is designed to maintain the relations between social classes, with the ultimate aim of facilitating capital accumulation and the

extraction of profit. What is important to note is that critical theory would challenge Marx's emphasis on the economic as the determinant of social relations, and his presentation of the State as the expression of the interests of the dominant class.

We will now examine the background to the emergence of critical theory and the origins of its emphasis on the State's activities in relation to its ideological function – as opposed to the use of force – in order to maintain power.

Critical theory and the State

Emerging in 1923 in response to what was perceived as an excessive economic determinism, the Frankfurt School of Social Theory developed a variance on Marxist theory under the leadership of Max Horkheimer (1895 – 1973) after 1931. Horkheimer's dialectical approach was founded on the basis of rational thought and influenced by the Hegelian view of the State. However, Horkheimer argued that the dialectical process presented by Hegel could not be conclusive and would not reach an 'ideal' state of perfect 'truth', because the ongoing contradiction between knowledge and reality would continue to reproduce itself. 'Truth' is presented as an illusory depiction of reality, epitomised in the way in which capitalism gives rise to bourgeois ideals of liberty and equality, whilst creating the conditions for relations of domination and subordination between classes. According to Marx, the political and economic contradictions inherent within the capitalist system, which alienates workers from their product, therein subjugating them as a class, would lead to its demise: the Frankfurt School, however, was less convinced of such inevitability.⁷⁸

Together with Theodor Adorno (1903 – 1969) and Herbert Marcuse (1898 – 1979), Horkheimer led the Frankfurt School in confronting the prevailing currents of positivism and existentialism, aspiring to a supra-disciplinary approach to research in the social sciences.⁷⁹ Its primary contribution was the investigation into the role of human subjectivity and its fallibility in the face of hegemonic representations of 'truth' or reality, which was responsible

⁷⁸ David Held, 1980: 180 – 184.

⁷⁹ Alan How, 2003: 16 – 17.

for its ultimately pessimistic outlook in relation to the prospects for a society of free thinkers as the product of dialectical rational processes.

The Frankfurt School retained the conflictual nature of the class struggle at the centre of its analysis, with the exercise of hegemony considered as an ideological function. In these terms, the legitimacy of the State is confirmed through widespread acceptance of its leadership. In this way, it gains legitimacy as a governing structure with the authority and capacity to rule. This authority allows it to define, through its constitution, the scope and parameters within which contestation may occur and within which political conflict over policy and access to resources takes place.⁸⁰

Nonetheless, the tendency of the capitalist State is towards domination, as theorised by Horkheimer in his essay “The Authoritarian State”.⁸¹ To control society, it has recourse to the coercive mechanisms at its disposal, in the form of the legal system, the police and the army. These entities are charged with the implementation of State policies and laws in which the primary values and ideals of the dominant class are crystallised – and their ultimate aim is to maintain existing social relations. In a situation in which it cannot gain the consent of citizens, the State utilises its bureaucratic structures to define the parameters within which challenges to its leadership may be accommodated, and beyond which it exercises force to maintain power.⁸²

However, the State is neither unified nor homogenous, and comprises a conglomerate of conflicting interests represented by agents of social classes and interests whose boundaries are difficult to define and are continually changing. As a result, there is a constant shifting in the

⁸⁰ A useful discussion and contextualisation of the origins and thinking of the founders of the Frankfurt School of critical theory is available in Andrew Arato and Eike Gehardt (1978), whilst the perspectives of various contemporary intellectuals within the school can be found in Simons (2006). The Frankfurt School was able to develop great insights into political sociology and theory of culture by foregrounding elements such as consciousness and culture, rather than relying exclusively on the orthodox materialist base of Marxist analyses that existed at the time (Arato and Gehardt, 1978: 6).

⁸¹ How, 2003: 28 – 29.

⁸² For a broad spectrum of debates and discussions around Gramscian approaches to the State and hegemony, the four volumes of contributions from a wide field of intellectuals, edited by James Martin (2002), have been consulted.

loci of the struggle for power. The State strives to rule (in the sense of making laws) and to govern (in the sense of administering and interpreting the enforcement of laws) within a problematic cross-class, cross-cultural collective. This compounds the complexity of an already contested political arena. Within this arena, the ability of a class – or sector of a class – to pursue its interests is linked to its own strength *vis-a-vis* other classes or class fractions, as well as to the extent to which it is challenged by subaltern classes. A significant element of the exercise of hegemony thus consists of activities that are conducted to ‘manufacture’ consent among subaltern classes, so as to secure their allegiance. In the context of the ongoing contestation of power that is produced by antagonistic relations between social classes, the State is compelled to ceaselessly direct its activities towards its ideological function.

This points to the exercise of hegemony as being constituted by a ‘busy’ set of activities that must constantly respond to challenges in order to contain them, whilst disseminating the ‘ideal’ values that correspond to those of the dominant class. Faced with the ideological function of the State, the purpose of critical theory is to offer critique, with a view to emancipating society from the various manifestations of subordination and exploitation of a capitalist society. It highlights the importance of the ideological activities of the State that are carried out with a view to securing the acceptance of civil society – understood as society at large – through what we have learned is the exercise of hegemony.

The crafting of ideas and beliefs according to a framework of values that incorporates all social classes – thereby excluding alternatives – is a central theme in Gramsci’s writing. His notion of the exercise of hegemony will be discussed in greater detail; suffice to say at this point that the approach of the Frankfurt School resonated with that of Gramsci, already imprisoned by the Italian fascist regime in the late 1920s. At this point we will examine key themes that emerged from both the Frankfurt School and Gramsci’s thinking, as the theoretical resonance enables the construction of the framework for this research.

The similarity is that both question the human mind’s ability to reason freely, without interference in some form by another force. The Frankfurt School theorised the obstruction of thinking processes in the existence of the ‘instrumental reason’ that prevents humans from being able to reach their full potential through free thinking. Gramsci referred to the intellectual clutter – of which humans are not aware – that is the product of customs and experiences, and which affects behaviour and beliefs. As we saw in the previous chapter, this

he refers to as ‘common sense’. Both ‘instrumental reason’ and ‘common sense’ prevent human reasoning – thinking and arguing – from taking place in such a way that humans are able to ‘see clearly’ and have perfect understanding and knowledge. This enables social domination and injustice to occur – in other words, members of society can be ‘duped’, without being able to comprehend the real source of their subjugation.

We will first turn to the explanation offered by the Frankfurt School for this phenomenon.

The Enlightenment and scientific discovery: a new ‘mythology’?

The Frankfurt School became synonymous with critical theory after the Second World War, and, as stated earlier, it was represented by its leading members Adorno, Horkheimer and Marcuse, who had escaped persecution in Nazi Germany by fleeing to the United States. Their aim was to assess the prospects for “critical and emancipatory potential”⁸³ in a society in which the human mind is freed from the myths that interfere with ‘true’ perceptions of reality.

Adorno and Horkheimer⁸⁴ considered the problem of rational ‘enlightenment’, as expounded on by Kant. Whilst the Enlightenment project had its origins in the aim of freeing thought from religion (mythology) and its associated mysterious powers, Adorno and Horkheimer assert that the growth of cognitive techniques that were supposed to enhance understanding, had the opposite effect. Instead, they produced ‘science’, which, as part of the bourgeois hegemonic project, became the dominant world view, so that:

Thought becomes a matter of developing closed systems, natural laws, which work just like myths ... Cognition is restricted to what is given and the performance of calculations upon these givens: the old role of reason to critically negate what is given immediately to experience is made redundant ... In accepting these limits, science has become no better than myth, with no interest to do anything other than reproduce the given.⁸⁵

By progressing towards the so-called neutrality and rationalism of science, one particular mythology (religion) is exchanged for another (science), in that:

⁸³ Richard Devetak, 2009: 160.

⁸⁴ Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer, 1979.

⁸⁵ Ibid., 2.

What once characterised God, now characterises men. What once belonged to myth, now features as a theme of science. No opposition to this mode of thought is possible – it is simply that the terms now belong to different themes, as it were. All values have been banished. Nature has become a matter of mere objectivity, an object for control ... objects found in nature are seen as mere examples or specimens, which have significance only if human subjects bestow it on them.⁸⁶

The Enlightenment presented power over nature as the aim of progress, civilisation as a society in which man dominates nature, and science and technology as devoid of values. By presenting selected ‘facts’ as ‘neutral’ and universally valid, ‘scientific knowledge’ in the form of empiricism and positivism establishes itself as superior to the reasoning process, creating a social predisposition towards its acceptance. Adorno and Horkheimer point out that in capitulating to ‘scientific knowledge’ as the ‘truth’, humankind sacrifices rationality, as the *capacity* for reasoning. Thinking takes place as a mechanical instrumental activity (instrumental reason), according to conventions such as formal logic, deduction and induction, and it leads to inevitable conclusions in the form of a ‘residual knowledge’ that is paraded as ‘factual’ reality.⁸⁷

It is on the issue of rationality that the influence on the Frankfurt School of Max Weber is apparent. Weber depicted the development of Western rationality as not only derived from the intention to control nature and ‘reality’, but also as giving rise to value-rational and instrumental-rational behaviour that tend to control social relations. Rationality, in its quest for order and control, destroys spontaneity and contributes to order and productivity. Weber described behaviour and activities carried out in relation to the achievement of goals as ‘instrumental’, leading to the term ‘instrumental reason’, which was further developed by Adorno. To Weber, the rational character of the modern State is evident in its legal-rational legitimacy, which assigns it the right to exercise power over its citizens. This could have positive outcomes, such as the development of a legal system that safeguards justice through both constraining and behaviour in such a way as to instigate particular patterns of behaviour.⁸⁸ However, whilst the State engages in activities such as policy-making, it is the bureaucracy, the organ responsible for organising collective activities within society, which

⁸⁶ Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer, 1979: 10.

⁸⁷ Dave Harris, no date: 2-3.

⁸⁸ Gianfranco Poggi, 2006: 54 – 56, 79 – 80.

exercises control. Supposedly impartial in policy implementation, bureaucrats are nonetheless able to accumulate power through their ability to influence policy implementation. It is on this point that the Frankfurt School diverges from Weber: whilst the latter perceives the positive possibilities of the existence of a bureaucracy, Adorno and Horkheimer see within the bureaucracy the manifestation of the oppressive nature of instrumental reason.⁸⁹

In contrast to empiricist and positivist studies, which profess to be value-free, Adorno and Horkheimer acknowledged that the realities of social domination by one class over another could be obscured at all levels of society. Their purpose was consequently to reveal the deception and disguise that prevented exploitative relations between classes from being recognised for what they are. Their investigation into the role of the State led them to conclude that, in pursuing its bureaucratic functions, it could thwart the possibilities for the emancipatory form of rationalism that could liberate the human intellect. The tendency of the State towards bureaucratisation produced ‘instrumental rationalism’, which, combined with the ‘distraction’ of mass popular culture, would prevent a state of ‘enlightenment’.⁹⁰ For this reason, the Frankfurt School became known for its pessimistic outlook concerning the prospects for human potential being fully realised.

Placing the need for a self-reflective approach to theory at the core, critical theory is explicit in its recognition of the political nature of knowledge. In doing so, Adorno and Horkheimer foregrounded a lasting doubt around the potential for reason. Procedures associated with ‘logic’ effectively blinker members of society, preventing them from considering social life from an alternative perspective. So, the mechanism of ‘logic’ used in capitalist society makes it impossible to conduct rational thinking or to attain a ‘true’ depiction of reality.

This obfuscation of reality by blocking alternative world views is a phenomenon referred to by the Frankfurt School as the ‘psychology of domination’. It is this which, according to Adrian N. Carr and Lisa A. Zanetti,⁹¹ links the Frankfurt School to Gramsci’s early thinking – though Gramsci rejected the notion that the ethical State is driven into existence by the idea. Influenced by Hegelian idealism, Gramsci’s emphasis on the element of human consciousness

⁸⁹ Gianfranco Poggi, 2006: 100 – 121.

⁹⁰ Simons, 2006: 2 – 3.

⁹¹ Adrian Carr and Lisa Zanetti, 2001.

corresponds to the Frankfurt School's belief that human thinking is based on experience and mediated by consciousness, and that rational thought serves to construe social reality in a particular manner. However, whereas Gramsci considered all human beings as intellectuals in the sense that they exercise their intellects, the Frankfurt School perceived all human beings as merely having the potential to exercise rational thinking, a potential that is sabotaged by 'instrumental reason'.

The 'instrumental reason' of the Frankfurt School performs the same function as Gramsci's conceptualisation of 'common sense', which is the historical product of the absorption of 'knowledge' over time by successive social formations. Gramsci's 'common sense' is the exact opposite of what is understood by this term in English culture, that is, logical thinking. Rather than being constituted by what the English term construes as 'good sense', the Gramscian notion of 'common sense' instead causes irrational behavior on the part of dominated classes. Similarly, whilst performing the function of preventing sound judgment, instrumental reason simultaneously fosters an internalisation of their subjugation by subaltern classes. This leads them to believe that they are responsible for their own condition, so that they feel compelled to strive towards the status of dominant classes. In this way, according to Gramscian historian T.J. Jackson Lears, they become "complicit" in their own subjugation.⁹²

The fundamental similarities regarding what influences human thought and behaviour in the approaches of Gramsci and the Frankfurt School is used in this research to thread the Gramscian exercise of hegemony into the 'weave' of critical theory. This in turn explains the way that the consent – or conformity – of civil society is achieved.

The complicity of subaltern classes in the cultivation of consent

Whilst Gramsci does not refer specifically to the 'psychology of domination', he outlines the mechanisms and processes by means of which subaltern classes foster their own subordination. Commenting on the manner in which subordinate groups accept and maintain certain sets of values and symbols that may legitimise their domination, Jackson Lears asserts that they "share a kind of half-conscious complicity in their own victimisation".⁹³ This occurs when the

⁹² T.J. Jackson Lears, 1985: 573.

⁹³ Ibid.

new social order is accepted by elements of subaltern society who are able to perceive partial benefits. Nonetheless, the ‘victimisation’ referred to is not uniformly experienced and internalised by the subaltern group, nor is the duality of beliefs and behaviour limited to members of subaltern groups. Instead, the contradictions and tensions generated by the ongoing contestation of power, whether explicit or contained, are concretised in the ambiguity of behavior and views displayed by members of all social classes.

In the chapters that follow, the perennial ambiguity in the behavior of subaltern as well as dominant groups will be illustrated by an examination of the emergent Black petty bourgeoisie in the Eastern Cape. The historian Alan Cobley⁹⁴ refers to the wavering tendencies of the petty bourgeoisie in a racist society, where this class is susceptible to certain elements of the dominant ideology that it nonetheless contests, due to its own repression as a class within a racist capitalist system. Switzer,⁹⁵ who researched extensively the development of social classes in the Ciskei after their encounter with the European colonisers, describes the vacillation between hope and frustration of segments of the Black petty bourgeoisie. They nurtured expectations of achieving the same stature as their Victorian counterparts, and accepted the imposition of the British colonial administration in the hope that it would protect their political rights in the face of antagonism from White settler society. The process of the systematic frustration of these prospects by the colonial and post-Union of South Africa government will be discussed in the following chapters.

What is significant to this research, however, is the point that a Gramscian approach is able to offer a means for understanding how power is exercised through cooption. It demonstrates how activities of collaboration and conformity on the part of sections of classes and subaltern groups, whether performed wittingly or unwittingly, function so as to bolster the interests of the dominant class. The incorporation of non-dominant segments of society into what Gramsci called a ‘historic bloc’,⁹⁶ that is, an alliance of class forces, is a departure from the rigid Marxist conceptualisation of class-based domination and collaboration. According to orthodox Marxism, false consciousness is demonstrated when a class – or elements of a class – is deceived by the nature of capitalism into incorrectly perceiving its relationship as a social class

⁹⁴ Alan Cobley, 1990: 2.

⁹⁵ Les Switzer, 1993: 79 – 181.

⁹⁶ Gramsci. In Hoare and Nowell Smith, 1971: 61 – 62.

to production. However, Gramsci's conceptualisation of the exercise of hegemony as accommodating the contradictions of various forms of consciousness in a 'historic bloc' affords an explanation for the apparent paradox whereby members of dominated groups accept and adopt the ideology of dominant groups.

The acceptance of dominant ideology by the dominated (subaltern groups or societies) has been cogently argued by Frantz Fanon (1925 – 1961), who explored the manifestation of the 'psychology of domination' in his examination of the African psyche in his seminal work, *Black Skin, White Masks*.⁹⁷ In this, his first work, published in 1952, Fanon pointed to the lingering effects of colonial domination in terms of which obeisance and acceptance of a subordinate status are perpetuated within – in Gramscian terms – the common sense of the colonised. Fanon pointed to the enduring characteristics located in the attitudes and behaviour of Black people that can be seen to have had their origin in the social relations of domination and subordination in colonial societies. In the foreword to the 2008 edition of *Black Skin, White Masks*, Ziauddin Sardar observes that Fanon was the first intellectual to examine the psychological effects of colonial domination and to explore the contradictions engendered in the minds of the dominated in colonial societies.⁹⁸ Analysing their insecurity, he illustrated the way in which the colonised, particularly those aspiring to upward social mobility, accepted and adapted to the culture of the coloniser, albeit whilst rejecting the colonial system and elements of its repressive mechanisms, as a result of which "an inferiority complex is inculcated, and ... through the mechanism of racism, Black people end up emulating their oppressors".⁹⁹

A Fanonian approach offers new dimensions for an examination of the control exercised by the Administration at the University of Fort Hare, but I have not engaged with the psychological aspect of the exercise of hegemony. Instead, I have preferred to utilise the Gramscian Joseph V. Femia's reasons for conformity, which implies the way groups behave, without examining the underlying causes for this.¹⁰⁰ These reasons will be expanded on shortly; however, at this point it is necessary to extrapolate on Gramsci's conceptualisation of the State and its role in

⁹⁷ Frantz Fanon, 2008.

⁹⁸ Ibid., x.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Joseph V. Femia 1981: 38 – 43.

the exercise of hegemony. This assigns greater weight to the political activities of the State, rather than the internalisation of domination within the psyche of the dominated.

Gramsci, the State and the exercise of hegemony

Writing whilst imprisoned by the Fascist government in Italy between 1926 and 1935, Gramsci's ideas preceded those outlined above. Chronologically, then, the sequence of first discussing the Frankfurt School of Critical Theory may appear strange. However, it must be borne in mind that the most intense debates around Gramsci's position on the State, intellectuals, the exercise of hegemony, global events and international relations took place in the 1970s and 1980s, after his works were translated from Italian. Though his thinking was distinctly located within a particular context, there has been substantial subsequent debate about the interpretation and applicability of his ideas to contemporary contexts. Though Gramscian approaches to social relations of domination and subordination previously formed a central aspect of social analyses, the prevailing neoliberal hegemony has served to dilute Gramscian perspectives. In the following discussion, a range of views by Gramscian scholars will be considered insofar as they relate to the State and the exercise of hegemony.

Like the early members of the Frankfurt School, Gramsci had been similarly concerned to prevent the Italian Communist party from assuming a position of uncritical allegiance to the International Communist Party. This he did, not by negating the economic as the primary determining factor of social relations, but by focusing on the role of ideology in securing domination.¹⁰¹ Without separating ideology as a distinctive structure of the State, Gramsci instead sees two major superstructural levels, namely, 'civil society', which is an ensemble of private organisms, and 'political society'.¹⁰² There is no consistency in Gramsci's conceptualisation of the State and civil society, and he uses the terms in different ways, depending on the context. However, in the context of the ideological function, he assigns the exercise of hegemony by the dominant class, who develop and disseminate values and norms to civil society. Owing to the status and prestige enjoyed by the dominant class, the masses

¹⁰¹ Peter Thomas, 2009.

¹⁰² Gramsci. In Hoare and Nowell Smith, 1971: 12.

respond by offering their “spontaneous consent” to the “general direction imposed on life”.¹⁰³ Political society exists in the form of the juridical government that can enforce consent through “direct domination” through the means at its disposal.¹⁰⁴

The structural aspect illustrated above is not to be foregrounded at the expense of Gramsci’s conceptualisation of the State’s exercise of hegemony through its activities, as opposed to its structures, namely, the police, law and the army. These are the institutionalised forms of the exercise of power that are visible in “direct domination”. Although this research will include the latter, particularly in the investigation of the Apartheid State, the primary focus is on the activities of the State in the exercise of hegemony, rather than direct domination.

This emphasis on activities contrasts with the approach of Max Weber, who used ideal types as models and compares these with reality, seeking causal relations to interpret and explain differences.¹⁰⁵ Weber’s typology¹⁰⁶ of ‘legitimate authority’ yields three prototypes that function in different ways according to their specific characteristics, which are derived from rational, traditional and charismatic grounds. As such, a Weberian analysis has an ordering function that seeks to classify. Gramsci, on the other hand, assumes a Marxist position and considers it necessary to investigate the type of State in terms of the economic organisation of production that gives rise to social relations, which in turn prompt activities aimed at securing the class or classes that benefit from these relations. Thereafter, it is necessary to examine the activities of individuals as members of social classes, in terms of the attempted exercise of hegemony. These activities are in turn examined within the dynamic of the contestation between social groups and classes in the quest for political power. This emphasis on activities of the State, as opposed to structures, is aptly encapsulated by Stuart Hall as follows:

The role of the modern state is ‘formative’ in the sense that it cannot rely exclusively on legal and administrative structures to secure conformity, or resort to coercion when these fail, but also has to *produce the conditions*

¹⁰³ Gramsci. In Hoare and Nowell Smith, 1971: 12.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ Ringer, 1997: 46 – 47.

¹⁰⁶ Max Weber. In T. Parsons, 1947: 324 – 333.

[italics added] for conformity that generate active consent to the ethics and morals that are put forward as the norm or ideal.¹⁰⁷

The reliance on the State to produce the conditions it requires for the exercise of hegemony is a dimension emphasised by a Gramscian approach, though excluded by structural Marxism. This allows civil society to exist as a realm where voluntary actions can take place, by way of contrast with the structuralist notion that human actions are a function of structures. Christopher Murphy¹⁰⁸ points out that by incorporating civic bodies, churches, schools, and the media amongst those organisations that are responsible for the creation and dissemination of values and ideals, Gramsci's allocation of agency debunks the monolithic notion on Marxist-Leninism that an omnipotent - though elusive – State is responsible for the creation and dissemination of ideology.

The traditional Marxist-Leninist view regards ideology as the representation of an undisguised world view in the form of statements and discourses that are linked to political beliefs and goals. The exercise of hegemony, on the other hand, is constituted by a representation of every aspect of social life in such a way that it permeates institutions within civil society and the minds of citizens, presenting social inequality and its manifestations as the natural order of things. It lures, rather than directs, society towards spontaneous acceptance of the State and of the status quo as the natural order of things.¹⁰⁹

In summarizing the above, it can be seen that Gramsci refers to the sovereignty of the State in terms of its attempts to exercise hegemony, utilising a variety of structures and mechanisms in the realm of civil society, which, through the agency of individuals and organisations, interfaces with political society. Ideology – in the broader sense of beliefs, values, morals, norms, behaviour and so on – is disseminated by bureaucrats within the course of their engagement and activities in civil society. Ideology is not presented and disseminated as a distinct and separate function that is consciously undertaken. Because coercion – that is, recourse to the law, police and the army to maintain State power – detracts from the

¹⁰⁷ Stuart Hall, 2002: 298.

¹⁰⁸ Christopher Murphy, 2002.

¹⁰⁹ Gramsci. In Hoare and Nowell Smith, 1971: 196 – 200.

semblance of democracy, the exercise of hegemony is aimed at creating the illusion of a democracy within which the interests of all citizens are served.

‘Common sense’ in the exercise of hegemony

Ideology is a coherent philosophy that purports to explain the world. However, to be effective in the exercise of hegemony, it needs to be assimilated into the ‘common sense’ of society at large. As a ‘store’ of accumulated beliefs and values derived from tradition and history, as well as everyday lived experience, the Gramscian notion of ‘common sense’¹¹⁰ is crucial to the exercise of hegemony. This is because it enables not only an understanding of how domination is accepted by subaltern classes, but also why certain cultural aspects of domination linger in the common sense long after the historical phase during which they were engendered.

While we have considered Gramsci’s notion of ‘common sense’ relative the exercise of hegemony, it is also responsible for the ‘irrational’ and contradictory aspects of human behaviour. Gramsci explains the illogical ideas and contrariness of human behavior, as well as human passivity in the face of domination, as a result of the contradiction between beliefs derived from lived experience and those inherited during the course of socialisation. The effect of these contradictions he describes as follows:

His theoretical consciousness can indeed be historically in opposition to his activity. One might almost say he has two theoretical consciousnesses (or one contradictory consciousness): one which is implicit in his activity and which in reality unites him with his fellow-workers in the practical transformation of the real world: and one, superficially explicit or verbal, which he has inherited from the past and uncritically absorbed. But this verbal conception is not without its consequences. It holds together a specific social group, it influences moral conduct and the direction of the will, with varying efficacy, but often powerfully enough to produce a situation in which the contradictory state of consciousness does not permit of any action, any decision or any choice, and produces a condition of moral passivity.¹¹¹

The notion of “common sense”, implying the presence of the sub-conscious in human behaviour, thus forms the link between that element of behaviour determined by the individual

¹¹⁰ Gramsci. In Hoare and Nowell Smith, 1971: 326 – 333.

¹¹¹ Ibid., 333.

and that which is prompted by social background. Burawoy¹¹² notes that Gramsci opposed the binary between voluntarism and determinism, exploring instead the duality of human consciousness derived from the contradictory nature of ideas and beliefs that have been accepted through actual experience, on the one hand, and those that have been absorbed without having been consciously perceived, on the other.¹¹³ The success of hegemony is seen to rest on an unconscious foundation, in contrast with domination, where there is a methodical application of coercion to enforce consent. This distinction resonates with Femia's reasons for conformity,¹¹⁴ which are used to analyse the exercise of hegemony on which this research is centred. It is thus appropriate at this stage to offer an overview of these conceptual tools.

Consent, control, compliance and conformity

Hegemony as conceptualised by Gramsci is referred to as the “spontaneous consent given by the greater masses of the population to the general direction imposed on social life by the dominant fundamental group”.¹¹⁵ In other words, civil society at large accepts the norms and values of the dominant group that are embedded in everyday practices, by conforming. Gramsci distinguishes between ‘hegemony’ and ‘domination’, with the latter referring to the coercive activities carried out by the State when it cannot successfully exercise hegemony. These constitute ‘control’. In this case, the State uses “direct domination”, organised by the juridical government to “enforce discipline”.¹¹⁶ Within the spectrum of the State's activities in exercising ‘hegemony’ or ‘control’, there is a corresponding range of responses on the part of civil society – understood as society at large. As explained above, at the one extreme lies consent, and at the other, dissent. The latter embraces all forms of contestation expressed against the State, and serves as a catalyst for the State's exercise of ‘direct domination’, those activities aimed at controlling civil society.

¹¹² Burawoy, 2008.

¹¹³ Ibid., 2.

¹¹⁴ Femia, 1981: 38 – 43.

¹¹⁵ Gramsci. In Hoare and Nowell Smith, 1971: 12.

¹¹⁶ In the translation of Gramsci's prison notes, Hoare and Nowell Smith refer to the need for a distinction between ‘*dirigere*’, the Italian for ‘directing’, in the sense of leading, and ‘*dominare*’, meaning coercive dominance (Gramsci. In Hoare and Nowell Smith, 1971: 55).

Femia's reasons for conformity

In this research, Femia's "reasons for conformity"¹¹⁷ have been extensively used, as they offer a further conceptual level within the broader notion of consent. Premised on Gramsci's hypothesis of the exercise of hegemony and the cultivation of consent, Femia's four "reasons for conformity" cover a broad spectrum of behaviour of a conscious and unconscious nature, accommodating the heterogeneity of responses by subaltern and dominant groups within society.

Femia's four motives for conformity are:

- firstly, fear of the repercussions of non-conformity, or 'acquiescence under duress';
- secondly, habit, that is, subconscious acts of conformity occurring without the subject being cognisant thereof, or 'unreflecting participation';
- thirdly, active and conscious agreement with basic principles; and
- fourthly, expectations of reciprocity from other members of society, or "pragmatic acceptance".¹¹⁸

It is important to note that, although these reasons have been used throughout, there has been one important modification, arising from the researcher's desire to distinguish between spontaneous and considered responses to the exercise of hegemony and control. As outlined above, the Gramscian notion of 'consent' constitutes "spontaneous" assent,¹¹⁹ but of Femia's four reasons for conformity, only one – the second – corresponds to this notion of consent. This research therefore elects to refer to spontaneous consent as 'conformity', and to the consent that arises from a conscious reasoning process as 'compliance'. The four grounds will nonetheless be referred to as presented by Femia, namely, as reasons, explanations or motives for 'conformity'.

In relation to the first reason posited above, namely, fear of the repercussions of non-conformity, Femia questions the existence of an antithetical relation between social conflict and the broad social consensus that constitutes consent. Cautioning against deducing that

¹¹⁷ Femia, 1981: 38 – 43.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ Gramsci. In Hoare and Nowell Smith, 1971: 12.

conformity by subaltern classes is triggered only by fear of the consequences of dissent, his account of research into working class attitudes supports the Gramscian notion of ‘contradictory consciousness’. This foregrounds the inconstancy in beliefs and inconsistencies in behaviour of members of subaltern classes, enabling subaltern classes to subscribe consciously to the norms of the dominant class.¹²⁰ Femia emphasises that it is also confusion, not exclusively coercion, which can result in subaltern groups being unable to coherently explain their realities in such a way as to resist hegemony. This confusion leads to a passivity that is construed by the dominant class as consent.¹²¹

This research accepts the explanation of the existence of a certain form of ‘confused consensus’, but this is not evident in the behaviour of the Black staff and students who constitute an element of the subaltern in this research. This absence is understandable, given that staff and students constituted an elite group in Black society whose intellectual activities enabled them to comprehend their experience and to transcend confusion. The more literal interpretation of Femia’s fear of repercussions of non-conformity is nonetheless present and will be illustrated. Because conformity is consciously undertaken in this instance, it is construed as ‘compliance’.

The second of Femia’s motives for conformity, ‘unreflecting consensus’, describes the behaviour of those who fail to engage with the ideological and material repercussions of their participation in the system.¹²² This enables the exercise of hegemony by the State. Because of the absence of a conscious commitment to dominant values, the concept of *conformity* is used in this research to describe this particular motive.

The third of Femia’s reasons, that is, active and conscious agreement with basic social principles,¹²³ takes the form of behaving in accordance with norms and expectations that bestow legitimacy on underlying social principles, even when these principles are not explicitly stated. This behaviour will be shown to be particularly evident in the resolution displayed by the State-appointed administrators of the University of Fort Hare during the

¹²⁰ Gramsci. In Hoare and Nowell Smith, 1971: 220 – 223.

¹²¹ Femia, 1981: 38 – 39.

¹²² Ibid.

¹²³ Ibid.

apartheid era, which will be investigated in Chapter Five. It also applies to members of the University community, notably White academic staff, who supported apartheid ideology during the same period. It will be seen that it not, however, exclusive to this period, and the missionary Administration in the first two decades of the existence of the South African Native College (later to become Fort Hare) was highly supportive of the State.

It must be emphasised that whilst consent assigns legitimacy to the dominant class and to the State, conscious agreement is not the only manner through which legitimacy is achieved. According to Gramsci's conceptualisation of 'spontaneous consent', the implicit common acceptance that leaders have the right to provide direction enables the State to execute its activities without active or conscious support of 'the masses'.

Femia's fourth reason, the expectation of reciprocity from other members of society, or pragmatic acceptance,¹²⁴ once again constitutes a conscious act based on anticipation of the accrual of benefits or favourable consideration. This is also deemed to constitute compliance. It can be detected in relationships based on patronage throughout this research, initially within the emergent Black petty bourgeoisie aspiring to a higher social status, and thereafter within Black civil society – in the form of staff and students – who hoped to gain some advantage within the overarching subjugation they experienced.

Throughout this research, when referring to Femia's reasons for conformity, the researcher's distinction between 'conformity' and 'compliance' should be borne in mind. The concepts of compliance and conformity are utilised to evaluate the role and activities of the University Administration in relation to the State's execution of its function of governance. Here I make use of the concept of governance construed as "the manner in which the apparatus of the state is constituted, how it executes its mandate and its relationship to society, in general".¹²⁵ Insofar as civil society – in the broader sense of the word – is concerned, the study uses the concepts to investigate the nature of the responses by staff and students to the attempted exercise of hegemony. The ambiguous character of the Students' Representative Council in relation to its status as an intermediary between university authorities and students is also examined by using

¹²⁴ Femia, 1981: 38 – 39.

¹²⁵ Guy Mhone and Omano Edigheji, 2003: 3.

these concepts. An interrogation of the nature of the activities and behaviour of different individuals and groups (in response to the attempted exercise of hegemony) through the lens of conformity and compliance thus has a constant presence in this research.

Notwithstanding the researcher's decision to use the above concepts, a detour should be taken at this point to acknowledge how hegemony is infused with the notion of cultural domination and subordination.

Cultural hegemony

The constructs of instrumental reason, psychology of domination and common sense were developed to explain conformity and collusion on the part of subaltern classes in Western industrialised societies. However, they did not include the situation in which entire societies were dominated through the colonial project. Here, the concept of 'cultural hegemony' is relevant, particularly for the purpose of this research, as it explains the establishment of multi-layered relationships of domination and subordination that took place over the course of centuries. This historical process was to result in the permeation and institutionalization of the dominant values, norms and practices, and was to facilitate the development of what is now the globally dominant 'world order' of neoliberalism.

In understanding the exercise of cultural hegemony, it is important to distinguish between hegemony and domination. Gramsci is careful to point out the difference between the functions of domination and leading, particularly when there is a transfer of State power from one class to another.¹²⁶ In this situation, positions held by members of the dominant class are usurped by members from another class, whose activities correspond to the positions in the State that they have occupied, without transforming the social structures. The relations of domination embodied in the formal institutions of the State and its activities are assumed by the new political elite, who cannot perform a leadership role or execute a new hegemonic project. This will be shown as particularly evident in Chapter Six, which deals with the post-apartheid State.

¹²⁶ Gramsci. In Hoare and Nowell Smith, 1971: 105.

The cultural aspect of hegemony have been portrayed as “saturating the consciousness of a society”,¹²⁷ constituting the totality of the reality of social experience and becoming imbued in the common sense of all members of society, dominant and dominated classes alike. Hegemony thus engulfs society, signifying:

an order in which a certain way of life and thought is dominant, in which one concept of reality is diffused throughout society in all its institutional and private manifestations, informing with its spirit all taste, morality, customs, religious and political principles, and all social relations, particularly in their intellectual and moral connotations¹²⁸

Cultural hegemony is achieved by means of a legitimisation of relationships of power and becomes manifest within components of the dominant culture such as values, norms, beliefs, hopes, ideals and prejudices that are universally adopted, preventing a clear understanding of the relationship of power on the part of subaltern classes and preempting resistance to the exercise of power by the dominant group. The key to the exercise of hegemony or successful domination is incorporation, that is, the accommodation of all social groups within the parameters of the dominant culture. Rather than obliterating alternative beliefs, a liberal democracy accommodates oppositional practices to the extent that dissidence can be incorporated, whereas a bureaucratic State dependent on coercive measures to secure consent suppresses dissent.¹²⁹ The main agencies of transmission of the dominant culture are educational institutions, which utilise specific values and practices representing the dominant culture. This “selective tradition”¹³⁰ is illustrated in a particularly striking manner in Chapter Four, which examines the grooming of Black students at the South African Native College – later to become Fort Hare – by the first church-based Administration. This was performed according to the liberal tradition, along with religious values that emphasised discipline, sacrifice and industriousness.

The construct of ‘cultural hegemony’ includes cultural aspects of domination alongside those of class, enabling deeper questions as to how and why certain aspects of cultural domination

¹²⁷ Williams, 1980: 37.

¹²⁸ Gwyn A. Williams, 1960: 587.

¹²⁹ Williams, 1980: 37 – 43.

¹³⁰ Ibid., 39.

become part of the ‘common sense’ of a society. As observed by Stuart Hall,¹³¹ to have an effect on common sense, an ongoing cultural and ideological effort is required. This necessitates innovations in the way in which ‘reality’ is presented, absorbing challenges and oppositional perspectives, with the epistemological goal of being accepted throughout society as ‘true’. The significance of cultural factors such as customs, traditions and beliefs that contribute to the collective wisdom, or ‘popular consciousness’ of a particular society, is that they become embedded in common sense. Hall sees common sense as a site for constructing hegemony, providing a platform for the reception, interpretation and assimilation of ideology. This conceptualisation of how, in a practical form, the dominant world view becomes integrated into common sense, is able to explain the phenomenon explored in Chapter Three of the partial uptake of the particular blend of Enlightenment and Christian ideology by certain segments of the Xhosa people.¹³²

Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe¹³³ assert that Gramsci’s conceptualisation of hegemony transcends the notion of legitimisation of the power of a dominant class over subaltern classes, constituting instead an “articulating principle”. This serves to link existing sets of social relations and practices that are not necessarily organised into classes to the “hegemonic principle” of the dominant class, enabling the continued existence of different social configurations and accompanying beliefs and practices. In this research, the situation just described is illustrated by the effect of the impact of colonisers on traditional Xhosa society, which retained its traditional roots, despite the formation of new classes and the adoption of Christianity and various practices associated with colonialism.¹³⁴ It should be emphasised that instead of seeking to uncover class identities, this research aims at examining manifestations of the exercise of hegemony in a social conglomerate initially comprising elements of a disrupted colonised society, an agrarian settler society and an emerging Black petty bourgeoisie. The incorporation of pre-capitalist groups in Xhosa society into colonial social structures and the ‘linking’ of certain elements to the “articulating principle” to form the Black petty bourgeoisie will be illustrated in Chapter Three.

¹³¹ Hall, 2002.

¹³² The Xhosa people inhabited the land in the Eastern Cape where this research is located and they are the protagonists in the larger part of the narrative.

¹³³ Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe, 1982.

¹³⁴ Martin Legassick, 2010: 110.

In reality, the exercise of hegemony is never straightforward, and a further usefulness of a Gramscian conception of hegemony is that it is able to explain the contradictory and ambiguous behavior of dominated, or subaltern groups, in relation to those exercising power. Jackson Lears¹³⁵ considers the insights of Gramsci to have provided an approach to the analysis of the exercise of power that is able to explain the “messiness” of the contradictory and ambiguous behavior of subaltern groups in relation to those exercising power. This is accomplished by the accommodation within ‘common sense’ of a certain amount of ambiguity and dissent, producing the ‘contradictory consciousness’ of the “average man-in-the-mass”.¹³⁶

In analysing the exercise of hegemony, Jackson Lears foregrounds the cultural element, asserting that ideology is a composite of spontaneous philosophy imparted by language, common sense (conventional wisdom), and good sense (knowledge from experience), as well as popular religion, beliefs and folklore. This mix does not remain constant, but is continuously re-fashioned as various groups seek to exert their influence on social values. Once the interests of a particular group – as manifest in the values and beliefs imparted – gain widespread support, and a particular world view is successfully crafted and accepted, what Gramsci terms a ‘historic bloc’ is formed. This consists of the group whose values and norms have achieved prominence, as well as fractions of other social classes. A historic bloc implies a cultural solidarity that may exist independently of a common economic status, not necessarily a ‘class in itself’, conscious of its own class interests. Instead, it comprises “social relations that cut across categories of ownership and that are bound by religious or other ideological ties”.¹³⁷ A historic bloc may be able to develop a hegemonic project that appeals to subaltern groups, enabling a selective accommodation of the diverse interests of subordinate groups and class fractions, without whose support hegemony cannot be achieved.

This is particularly relevant to the development of Afrikaner nationalism and the manner in which broad-based support was obtained, to be discussed in Chapter Four. Afrikaner intellectuals were able to develop a racist ideology predicated on the notion of cultural diversity that appealed broadly to the ‘common sense’ of White Afrikaners. Half a century

¹³⁵ Jackson Lears, 2002.

¹³⁶ Gramsci. In Hoare and Nowell Smith, 1971: 333.

¹³⁷ Ibid.

later, the political party that was the outcome of this historic bloc gained control of the State. However, contradictions and inconsistencies are bound together within the hegemonic project, emerging when the differences among supporting groups become apparent. These are then displayed in disagreements and clashes, creating tensions that place a strain on the exercise of hegemony, as will be illustrated in Chapter Five by the decline of the Apartheid State.

A further illustration is offered in Chapter Five, with reference to the existence of ‘homelands’ leaders of the so-called ‘*Bantustan*’ States, which were the cornerstone of apartheid ideology. It will also be demonstrated in an illustration of the behaviour of some student leaders and members of the student body, as well as some Black staff members at the University of Fort Hare. As part of the dynamic of the cultivation (or manufacture) of consent, resistance in certain situations will be shown to have been countered through fostering a counter-oppositional culture that was rewarded through an apparent, although restricted, incorporation into the ‘way of being’ of the dominant (White) group.

Jackson Lears considers that cultural hegemony is crucial to avert the fundamental tendency towards conflict between classes, so a hegemonic project must be able to conceal the nature of subjugation. He concludes that history is not a narrative of confrontations between classes, but of how these are avoided by the dominant group and how the potential for social disruption engineered by subaltern groups is defused. Consent and complicity, as well as resistance, are an intrinsic part of the behavior of subaltern groups and – depending on the circumstances and the issue at stake – accommodation and acquiescence are compatible with contestation. Subaltern groups are able, to a degree, to withstand and resist the power of the dominant group, and they do so in what is not always a consciously counter-hegemonic struggle, through smaller acts of resistance. At the same time, the partial identification by subaltern groups with the dominant culture – even as they seek to challenge it – undermines attempted resistance.¹³⁸

This ambiguity is important in relation to this research, and is particularly clearly illustrated in the period in which the University of Fort Hare was under missionary administration. During this time, in addition to obligatory church attendance, students actively participated in social and recreational clubs that could be found on British university campuses, such as debating

¹³⁸ Jackson Lears, 2002: 332.

and ballroom dancing, played cricket and rugby, and were fond of attending the 'bioscope'.¹³⁹ Although Black students eagerly adopted practices that were typical of European bourgeois culture, rebellion against racial domination took the form of frequent protests against food, as will be shown in Chapter Four.

An added dimension to the selective nature of conformity, in terms of which subaltern groups adopt specific values and practices of the dominant culture, whilst rejecting others, is provided by the example of the adoption of Christianity. Drawing on the notion of 'common sense', Guy Williams suggests that 'residual' experiences and meanings from previous social formations can be carried forward, along with new meanings in an emergent social formation.¹⁴⁰ The accommodation of residual culture enables the establishment of an emergent formation constituted by cultural hybrids and contradictory beliefs and practices.¹⁴¹ A fusion of the hypotheses of 'selective adaptation' and 'residual culture' is able to explain the adoption of Christian beliefs and their accommodation within a traditional belief system that foregrounds the role of the ancestors. The fact that existing belief systems did not have to be relinquished facilitated the widespread assimilation of Christian beliefs within Black society in South Africa in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and will be discussed in Chapter Three.

Within the context of the cultural hegemony of religion, Robert Bocock¹⁴² makes the connection between the organisational base of religion and its unifying ideology. With relation to the encounter between traditional pre-capitalist beliefs and Christianity, he maintains that a degree of ideological resonance facilitated the acceptance and absorption of Christianity into the 'common sense' of indigenous groups in pre-capitalist society. It enabled the insertion of new forms of authority that partially substituted the hierarchy of traditional tribal structures which had been disrupted by colonial conquests. This in turn allowed the development of a new class – the Black petty bourgeoisie – and new relations of power that undermined traditional forms of authority. Because colonisation was accompanied by the proselytizing influence of missionaries, Christianity also served as a means of rationalising the world according to the morals of bourgeois society. Pre-capitalist indigenous societies became

¹³⁹ 'Bioscope' is the term used in South Africa for 'cinema'.

¹⁴⁰ Guy Williams, 1960.

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

¹⁴² Robert Bocock, 1986: 95 – 97.

literate by means of instruction from the Bible, creating an association between language and an entire set of practices and norms. In the area in which this research is located, the Eastern Cape region of South Africa, it was the Black petty bourgeoisie who were to adopt these norms to their advantage and constitute a significant political challenge to the hegemony of the White settlers, as will be shown in Chapter Three.

A final observation on the exercise of cultural hegemony by the colonial State is offered by Kate Crehan.¹⁴³ She distinguishes the colonial from the metropolitan State in that hegemony in the dominant centre can be achieved by the organisation of consent through legitimisation, whereas the colonial State relied primarily on coercion to secure compliance, resulting in dominance without hegemony. New social relations of domination and subordination within both the colonial and the subjugated societies engendered new social classes, and the aspirations of an emergent Black petty bourgeoisie class facilitated the exercise of cultural hegemony. Indigenous belief systems were infiltrated by Christian beliefs through the education offered by missionaries, which served as a means of achieving status in the new social order. However, as Crehan observes, although the morality associated with an imposed set of religious beliefs has a cohesive effect, it simultaneously produces a passivity within the subaltern classes of colonial society, which in turn leads to an enduring conformity.¹⁴⁴ This effect is extensively illustrated in this research.

Gramscian interpretations of the State

Returning to the subject of the State, we must be reminded that in the copious notes and letters he wrote whilst imprisoned, Gramsci referred to the State in various ways, depending on the context and the issue at hand, which has triggered extensive debate among contemporary scholars. Because much of his writing was related to problems around the Italian working class in relation to the Italian State, there is disagreement as to whether or not Gramsci's theorisation can be used in other contexts.

¹⁴³ Kate Crehan, 2002: 120 – 124.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

What I would call the ‘purist’ perspective is exemplified by Randall D. Germain and Michael Kenny,¹⁴⁵ who deny the transferability of Gramscian concepts to different contexts, accusing those who do so of incomplete or ahistoricist conceptualisation. Calling for engagement with the historical context relating to the philosophical meaning of Gramsci’s writing, they question the interpretation and appropriation of concepts and contexts within their own discipline, International Relations. Notwithstanding their criticism that greater caution should be paid to interpretation of Gramsci, they nonetheless recognise the theoretical attractiveness of a Gramscian approach in that it provides an epistemological and ontological base for an explanation of change that is essentially structural, without being deterministic. The difference perhaps lies in the limited ontological scope within which they consider transferability, namely, at the level of the discipline. By way of contrast, the school of Gramscian thinking best represented by Robert Cox¹⁴⁶ and Stephen Gill¹⁴⁷ applies a Gramscian perspective to theorisation of the far broader and overarching context of the development of global hegemony, using ‘ontology’ to describe universal understanding of ‘the way things are’. The most salient observation – in relation to this research – is made by Adam Morton,¹⁴⁸ who refers to the point made that the objective of reading Gramsci is not to look for direct solutions that can be transferred from historical contexts to present problems, but to “think in a Gramscian way”.¹⁴⁹ We are reminded, in other words, that whilst circumstances and events are transient, theoretical frameworks and concepts are not, and their usefulness is not restricted to the situation or period in which they originated.

As observed above, Gramsci offered a wide range of conceptualisations of the State, according to various contexts. In relation to political struggle and the role of the military, and with specific reference to the Western European State, within which well-developed civic institutions existed, he describes the State as “only an outer ditch, beyond which there stands a powerful system of fortresses and earthworks”.¹⁵⁰ Here he refers to the mass participation in political activities on the part of civic organisations that enables it to resist and withstand

¹⁴⁵ Randall D. Germain and Michael Kenny, 1998.

¹⁴⁶ Cox, 1987.

¹⁴⁷ Gill, 1997.

¹⁴⁸ Adam Morton, 2007: 15 – 18.

¹⁴⁹ Stuart Hall, 1988. In Morton, 2007: 18.

¹⁵⁰ Gramsci. In Hoare and Nowell Smith, 1971: 238.

coercive elements of the State. However, in other contexts, the State can be seen to embrace institutions in both political and civil society, and Gramsci acknowledges: “In reality, a multitude of other so-called private initiatives and activities tend to the same end – initiatives and activities which form the apparatus of the political and cultural hegemony of the ruling classes.”¹⁵¹

In relation to the cultivation of norms and values, the functions of the ‘ethical’ State, Gramsci refers to its most important responsibility as “to raise the great mass of the population to a particular cultural and moral level, a level (or type) which corresponds to the needs of the productive forces for development, and hence to the interests of the ruling classes.”¹⁵² Here, the school (part of civil society) has “a positive educative function”, whilst the courts (part of political society) perform “a repressive and negative educative function”.¹⁵³ Gramsci anticipates the presence of dissent within civil society as acting against the exercise of hegemony, and acknowledges that “in reality, only the social group that poses the end of the State and its own end as the target to be achieved can create an ethical State – i.e., one which tends to put an end to the internal divisions of the ruled, etc., and to create a technically and morally unitary social organism”.¹⁵⁴ This observation is particularly relevant to the situation described in Chapter Five, illustrating the unsuccessful attempts by the Apartheid State, through the mechanism of institutions in civil society, to overcome dissent and to present its ideals as universal.

However, with reference to the artificial distinction between government and the State, it is his depiction of the State as “hegemony protected by the armour of coercion”¹⁵⁵ that underpins this research. Femia argues that Gramsci’s separation of civil society from political society should not be treated as an absolute and mutually exclusive distinction, because it serves as an

¹⁵¹ Gramsci. In Hoare and Nowell Smith, 1971: 238.

¹⁵² Ibid., 258.

¹⁵³ Ibid.

¹⁵⁴ Gramsci. In Hoare and Nowell Smith, 1971: 258. It should be observed that the word ‘end’ has two meanings in this extract: in the first three the significance is ‘goal’ or ‘aim’, while in the last, ‘to put an end’, it means to ‘terminate’.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid., 263.

analytical device to assist in understanding the two concepts. In reality, the margins are blurred and there is increased intervention in civil society by political society.¹⁵⁶

The term ‘government’ denotes political organisms that are the product of electoral systems, and appears to assign power on the basis of the results of a political process. However, private organisms operating within civil society are extremely influential in causing particular social outcomes. For this reason, the State must thus be considered as comprising “not only the apparatus of government, but also the “private” apparatus of “hegemony” or civil society”.¹⁵⁷ This gives rise to the much-quoted equation that “the general notion of the State includes elements which need to be referred back to the notion of civil society (in the sense that one might say that State = political society + civil society, in other words hegemony protected by the armour of coercion)”.¹⁵⁸

Insofar as the notion of the State as constituted by activities is concerned, Gramsci proceeds from the assumption that “if political science means science of the State”, the State is “the entire complex of the practical and theoretical activities with which the ruling class not only justifies and maintains its domination, but manages to win the active consent of those over whom it rules”.¹⁵⁹ This illustrates the originality of his interpretation as the State as comprising activities, as opposed to institutions, with the purpose of hegemony being that of achieving the consent of subaltern groups. It is this particular understanding of the State and its exercise of hegemony that is foregrounded in this research.

The ‘integral State’: civil society as part of the State

Instead of separating the ideological activities associated with political domination from civil society, Gramsci’s conceptualisation of the State inserts it into their midst, assigning the activities related to the exercise of hegemony to organisations and groups. The need to distinguish between political and civil society becomes redundant when the role of civil society is examined in the context of the exercise of hegemony and the often inseparable links between the two.

¹⁵⁶ Femia, 1981: 26.

¹⁵⁷ Gramsci. In Hoare and Nowell Smith, 1971: 261.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid., 263.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid., 244.

The exercise of hegemony in contemporary times has been described as comprising a “dense” relationship between State and civil society, which consists of the mass media, political parties, trade unions, schools and civic organisations. As a result of the close and intertwined linkages between these, State institutions cannot be separated from civil society in terms of their ideological effect.¹⁶⁰ The organisation of consent is achieved by the leadership role assumed in civil society by individuals who are both civil servants and intellectuals, and whose function is to reproduce domination by expounding the beliefs and values in which they are steeped. Products of the State’s reproductive system (teachers, lawyers, doctors, social workers) are leaders in their communities who in turn influence leaders at a grass-roots level, and so on, *ad infinitum*. The key aim of the exercise of hegemony, then, is tantamount to the cultivation of consenting citizens in layers of endorsed and re-endorsed ideas and values.

Gramsci provides a perspective that enables an understanding of the passivity of civil society in the face of its own subjugation, affording a dimension for an analysis of culture and society that is absent from the structuralist approach, encapsulated by Gramscian scholar Giuseppe Vacca¹⁶¹ as follows: “Because Gramsci studies the actual forms, institutions, customs, conventions of real states, of concrete political systems, he sees the state not only as the instrument of a class, as Marx, Engels and Lenin had maintained, but as a complex web of *relationships* [italics added].”¹⁶²

As observed earlier, what is considered the most significant contribution of the Gramscian approach is its departure from the rigid separation of the economic, political and ideological, as well as the determinism of the economic base. The Gramscian scholar Peter Thomas presents the “integral State” as the ongoing activities that have the effect of an interpenetration and reinforcement of civil society and political society. The integral State reflects the simultaneous unfolding of the class struggle that ultimately leads to the domination of a social class – or fraction thereof – in political society, and the acquisition of leadership of institutions within civil society.¹⁶³ By making a methodological distinction between the two – as has been done in

¹⁶⁰ Michael Burawoy, 2008.

¹⁶¹ Giuseppe Vacca, 1982.

¹⁶² Ibid., 37.

¹⁶³ Peter Thomas, 2009.

this research – an investigation into relationships between the State bureaucracy and organisations and individuals within civil society can take place.

Thomas emphasises the role of the activities carried out by the State, consciously or not, in the interests of the dominant class. In the exercise of hegemony, the nature of the moral and ideological leadership is constituted by activities carried out within civil society, and is inseparable from the nature of those activities aimed at regulating society that are encapsulated within the formal institutions of political society. Indeed, the boundaries between the two will be seen to shift and become blurred according to the nature of the political economy and the dominant expression of the State, with the role of members of political society coinciding with their role in civil society. At the same time, an examination of events and activities, as opposed to structures, affords a flexibility that accommodates the variance of outcomes that characterise real historical events.¹⁶⁴

Morton agrees that the notion of the integral State is essential to understanding the process through which active consent is developed through leadership within civil society,¹⁶⁵ as well as the manner in which contestation is accommodated. Consent is an essentially contradictory concept, given that subaltern groups accept hegemonic values and beliefs primarily because of the absence or obfuscation of alternatives, and with a greater or lesser degree of commitment. Furthermore, the extent to which civil society is ‘saturated’ in manifestations of dominant ideology by virtue of the activities of the State – as members of political and civil society – enhances or detracts from the prospects of the successful exercise of hegemony.

These two aspects, viz, the notion of contradictory consensus and the conceptualisation of the State as comprising a range of activities that defies a definitive separation, may seem to constitute a ‘disorderly’ framework within which to conduct research. However, a fundamental premise of this research is that the unruliness and irrationality of human nature and behaviour must be recognised, in defiance of the Enlightenment argument that human beings are guided by reason. Furthermore, it is not the purpose of this research to categorise the activities embarked on by the State in the exercise of hegemony. These challenges defy a replication of

¹⁶⁴ Thomas, 2009.

¹⁶⁵ Morton, 2007: 90 – 91.

the clinical precision of the natural sciences, which identify, isolate and classify, whilst dismissing discordant findings. The inconsistencies inherent in the actions, behaviour and discourse of members of political and civil society – in its broader as well as its narrower Gramscian sense – reinforce the fundamental premise that the attempted exercise of hegemony is, as observed by Jackson Lears and noted earlier, messy and contradictory.

Gramsci's depiction of the 'integral State' as "dictatorship + hegemony"¹⁶⁶ recognises the need for domination, or coercion, where hegemony does not elicit sufficient consent and dissent cannot be accommodated. The activities of the integral State can be considered as successful if the world-view espoused by civil and political society has a common philosophical and moral out-look. However, notwithstanding the general tendency towards the reinforcement of the exercise of hegemony, there is not necessarily a consonance of values and beliefs between political and civil society, and subaltern groups. A range of activities comprising legitimising activities aimed at consent are carried out within civil society, and coercive activities related to domination are performed by political society. These form a contrast between domination through the use of force and intellectual and moral leadership.¹⁶⁷ In sum, social relations are maintained and consolidated through the dialectical interaction between coercion and consent that takes place through the activities of the integral State.

An observation is necessary at this point: we have seen that consent is elicited through the activities of individuals and institutions in civil society, whilst coercion is ordinarily applied through institutions in political society, namely, the legal system and police. However, the role of civil society in contributing to domination has not been examined. This is illustrated in Chapter Five through the activities of senior members of the apartheid Administration at Fort Hare in collaborating with the security police to eliminate dissent among students.

In closing, the notion of the integral State is embedded in the examination of the relationships between the University Administration and key government departments, which form the central theme of the exercise of hegemony. The inter-connectedness of political and civil society in the exercise of cultural hegemony is presented in three phases: firstly, the establishment of an institution of higher learning based on a British model; secondly, its

¹⁶⁶ Gramsci. In Hoare and Nowell Smith, 1971: 239.

¹⁶⁷ Bocock, 1986: 85.

adaptation and subordination to the Apartheid project; and finally, the transformation of Fort Hare to a symbol of the struggle by Black South Africans for political freedom.

Having discussed the exercise of cultural hegemony, we now turn our attention to the most significant mechanism through which it is exercised, education.

The role of education in the exercise of hegemony

Insofar as education is concerned, the initial premise of a critical approach is that the State acts to facilitate the reproduction of classes and social relations between classes through a range of instruments, ideological and material. The effectiveness of these instruments is evident in the relationship between society and knowledge that is manifest in the education system.¹⁶⁸

An added dimension to the reproduction of class relations is gained through the contribution of Pierre Bourdieu (1930 – 2002), who investigated the cultural and symbolic elements that enable domination. Without departing from the economic foundation of class relations, his conceptualisation of ‘social’, ‘symbolic’ and ‘cultural’ capital introduced a new element that examined class identity and its role in fortifying class barriers through its ability to construct ‘truth’ within its presentation of ‘reality’ and its exclusion of members of other classes. Utilising the concept of ‘habitus’, which refers to the way an individual becomes and behaves as a result of being born into a certain social class and its specific conditions, Bourdieu pointed to the significance of education in reinforcing perceptions of members of different classes about themselves in relation to those in different social classes. Similarly, as members of social classes, people act out their daily routines and lives in ‘fields’, spaces of actual practice that are guided by unwritten norms and conventions relating to groups and organisations. In doing so, social relations are replicated, guided by the ‘habitus’ that assigns identity, giving rise to the reinforcement – or challenging – of relations of domination and subordination. Again, education is an integral element of fields, giving rise to the norms and expectations of how life is lived.¹⁶⁹ This depiction of the role of education resonates with Gramsci’s presentation of the exercise of hegemony through the absorption of norms and values into the common sense, though Bourdieu foregrounds the hegemonic role of education.

¹⁶⁸ Martin Carnoy, 1998: 17 – 24.

¹⁶⁹ Pierre Bourdieu, 1991.

A corollary of the role of the reproductive function in relation to ideology is that of the creation and dissemination of the skills and knowledge that are appropriate and necessary to the needs of capital. So, while education allocates members of civil society to classes and roles, it simultaneously inculcates values and norms that support the continued exercise of power by the dominant class. Education thus performs a critical function in legitimising, articulating and propagating certain values appropriate to the existing social structure and to the dynamics of capital accumulation, which, broadly speaking, aim at maintaining existing social relations and containing conflict. However, education systems also reproduce social contradictions, which permits the contestation of values in the form of resistance ideology that aims to demystify the ‘false ideology’ that is used to secure domination.

As civil society – in its wider sense – is the terrain in which the exercise of hegemony takes place and where the legitimisation of power occurs, it provides the litmus test as to how effective hegemony is. Whether the ‘knowledge’ and ‘truth’ that is disseminated within civil society is accepted does not depend entirely on how it is presented, but also on whether there are any perceived alternatives. For this reason, the role of education in the fabrication of knowledge is one of simultaneously selecting those elements that are to constitute knowledge and excluding those that counter it, in a discrete process of selection and silencing.

The University – a neutral site of knowledge production?

In terms of its relationship to society, the University contains and reflects many of the tensions encountered in the broader realms of civil society, and is subject to the same contradictions, exhibiting class and group interests, as well as private ambitions.¹⁷⁰ In serving to train and reproduce professional classes and civil servants, the University reinforces social relations and values, but it simultaneously provides the conditions for an intellectual leadership that is able to offer critique. Mollis, observes that due to the diverse expectations on the part of the State of what its role should be, vis-à-vis its independent activities of knowledge production, the University is trapped in the tension between its own agency and the role assigned to it by the State.¹⁷¹

¹⁷⁰ Mollis, 1997: 219 – 223.

¹⁷¹ Ibid.

However, by retaining its own particular relationships of domination and subordination, which prevent the erosion of long-standing practices and convention, the University as an institution has defied change over the centuries. A hierarchical structure embodies internal power relations, whilst accentuating divisions that tend to foster disciplinary allegiances and prevent academics from consulting one another where general issues are concerned. The robust nature of academic work belies the weakness of the academic in the workplace, where, despite the structures intended to ensure democratic processes, the fundamental unit is an individual. She tends to work in isolation, either within a disciplinary-based project, or in partnership with an associated organisation extraneous to the University.

In its administration and administrative structures, by way of contrast, some of the duties are inevitably those of coordinating and implementing the instructions emanating from an institution of the State, such as a Ministry of Education. Particularly where the University is subjected directly to the State through laws relating to higher education, the bureaucratic functions of the University Administration reinforce the State's exercise of hegemony or control. In his analysis of types of academic power, Burton R. Clark¹⁷² describes one particular form, bureaucratic authority, as characterised by a formal hierarchy that permits delegation of authority from the State to the University. A further aspect is the conditioning of members of the bureaucracy by the national culture, which is expressed in a particular style of politics and administration that distinguishes the nature of control exercised.

Broadly speaking, the South African higher education system displays the same characteristics as universities in other societies. Its role can be located within the reproductive functions of the State by virtue of both the training of professionals and those who will occupy the ranks of the civil service, and the values that are imparted in the course of a University education. Insofar as its internal administrative structures and functions are concerned, the case of the University of Fort Hare from 1960 onwards will be seen to correspond to the form of academic power described above by Clark as 'bureaucratic authority', with strong linkages to State bureaucrats.

In Chapter Four, the style of the church-based Administration of the University of Fort Hare will be seen to have replicated the tradition of British universities, characterised by disciplinary

¹⁷² Burton R. Clark, 1978: 170.

independence and internal discipline as the basis for administration. The apartheid era Administration, described in Chapter Five, was defined by strong links to the State and submission to directives from State departments. Finally, Chapter Six investigates the layered nature of control and the transmission of values and aims from various sources, including the State bureaucracy. It is to the subject of the State bureaucracy and its role in the exercise of hegemony that we now turn our attention.

The role of the bureaucracy

A Gramscian view of the role of the bureaucracy portrays its technical and technocratic functions as being performed to structure and stabilise the relationship between subaltern groups with the State.¹⁷³ The organic intellectuals within the bureaucracy of the bourgeois State act so as to ‘normalise’ relations of power and subordination through electoral processes and a parliamentary system. In the case of the bureaucratic authoritarian State, which fails to elicit consent on the part of the masses, the inherently coercive nature of the bureaucracy is magnified and assumes relatively greater significance alongside its technocratic element. The bureaucracy becomes a transmission mechanism for the exercise of direct control (of the State over society) in the sense that it functions to implement technocratic directives whilst preventing counter-hegemonic activities.

The failure of bureaucrats within the post-apartheid State to assume the role of organic intellectuals in developing and delivering a hegemonic project can be viewed, firstly, within the context of the global hegemony of neoliberalism that engulfed South Africa during the period of its transition to democracy. However, in addition, the continuity between the apartheid and post-apartheid State and the absence of a rupture in the transition period can be explained by the relative autonomy of the outgoing bureaucracy. In this respect, L.R. Migliaro and P. Misuraca point to the historically specific role of the bureaucracy, which cannot be considered in an abstract form.¹⁷⁴ Unless members of the bureaucracy are entirely replaced when a new political elite assumes power, there are always vestiges of the previous social order present, so that it functions – according to Gramsci – as a ‘caste’, with the ability to act in a manner that is not necessarily always in accordance with the values of the new political

¹⁷³ L.R. Migliaro and P. Misuraca, 1982.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid.

elite. Technocratic elements of the outgoing bureaucracy of the Apartheid State were able to 'normalise' relations between the State and the masses through the organisation of democratic elections, thereby achieving what has been widely acclaimed as South Africa's peaceful transition to democracy.

In the chapters to follow, the distinction between the activities of the bureaucracy as technocratic and repressive respectively is illustrated along with the role of the organic intellectuals of the apartheid bureaucracy in developing and implementing the hegemonic project. This contrasts with the ideological void that existed within the post-apartheid State, notwithstanding the presence of dissident intellectuals who had opposed the Apartheid State.

Similarly, at the University of Fort Hare, the relative inactivity on the part of academic staff to act as organic intellectuals can be considered as an intellectual inertia that presented itself within the overarching context of cultural hegemony and subordination to dominant norms.

The role of intellectuals

If it is to organic intellectuals that society looks for leadership, an investigation into their role in the exercise of hegemony is called for. Gramsci contended that everybody is an intellectual in the sense that everyone uses their intellect to reflect on situations and on their activities, and, as such, every intellectual has class origins.¹⁷⁵

To Gramsci, the difference between 'traditional' and 'organic' intellectuals is significant. Traditional intellectuals are 'residual' remnants from previous social formations (such as priests), or those who cannot be attached to the immediate interests of the dominant capitalist class (such as philosophers and artists).¹⁷⁶ Organic intellectuals fulfil an instrumental role in the exercise of hegemony by either representing the predominant values and beliefs, or performing a transitional role in developing a counter-hegemony that can lead to the formation of a new political party – one that will lead the struggle for State power.¹⁷⁷ Leadership can be provided by the intellectuals of a new class that is in the process of defining itself, creating a unifying ideology that is intended to become hegemonic.

¹⁷⁵ Gramsci. In Hoare and Nowell Smith, 1971: 9.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid., 14.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid: 6, 10, 12.

Gramsci's conceptualisation of the intellectual's role in society corresponds to his analytical separation between political and civil society. Intellectuals are presented as 'functionaries' with varying degrees of connectedness to the dominant social group and different responsibilities in political or and civil society.¹⁷⁸ However, if the 'integral State' is considered as a composite of political and civil society, we are reminded that a precise separation between these two concepts is not required. Instead, intellectuals can be considered within the context of the more significant context of the 'integral State', performing a 'mediating' function in the exercise of hegemony.¹⁷⁹ Their activities in organising hegemony – or, alternatively, domination – as the organic intellectuals of a class encompasses the scope of their roles as functionaries of the State, that is, as civil servants (including teachers, judges, and so forth), as professionals, technocrats, managers, lawyers, journalists, and others involved in social activities of leading and organising: in short, providing leadership of the intellect.

Whether or not the University provides intellectual leadership of an organic nature is a moot point: it was argued earlier that the University contains and reflects the interests of and conflict between the classes and groups in broader society. In his seminal work on the development of higher education systems in Latin America, Argentinian historian Gregorio Weinberg¹⁸⁰ has observed that even during periods of 'contested' culture, when there is ideological resistance to the discourse of the hegemonic class, the University, as a historical actor, has not been at the forefront of change. At best, through its awareness of national needs and its own unique position, disassociated from the actual struggle between classes, it has been able to combine awareness of social reality with an intellectual advantage in formulating and proposing alternative strategies aimed at social justice. Thus it has identified itself with issues alongside other classes, without substantial material change occurring as a result, so that the fundamental conditions remain in society, as well as encapsulated within the University itself.

The argument put forward is that the case of the University of Fort Hare points on the whole to the existence of traditional and organic Black intellectuals whose activities were motivated by a form of nationalism aligned to liberal values and aspirations. Whilst the University of Fort

¹⁷⁸ Gramsci. In Hoare and Nowell Smith, 1971, 9 – 13.

¹⁷⁹ Morton, 2007: 91 – 92.

¹⁸⁰ Gregorio Weinberg, 2001: 298.

Hare educated many African leaders during the period of the missionary Administration prior to 1960, it did so within the context of conformity to the dominant political and cultural ideals of a capitalist society. The liberal ideology that accompanied the unfolding of the modernity project in South Africa was the corollary of capitalist development, and this ideology was adopted by those aspiring to join the privileged classes associated with the modernity project.

In closing this chapter, it is appropriate to outline Cox's theorisation¹⁸¹ of the organisation of the exercise of global hegemony, manifest in neoliberal domination, because it encapsulates the theoretical strands relevant to this research, namely, the political economy, critical theory, and the Gramscian exercise of hegemony.

Recent theory of the State

Cox explained the decline in the power of the nation-State in the face of a transnational capitalist class as the most recent phase of the trajectory of the development and expansion of global capitalism. The resultant global exercise of neoliberal hegemony¹⁸² constitutes a totality that in turn has produced a shift in "global ontology", as referred to in the prolegomenon.¹⁸³

Cox presents three spheres of activity which act in a historical structure, namely, social relations of production, the form of State and their institutionalization in world order.¹⁸⁴ Social relations of production are seen to include the morals, ideas, knowledge and institutions that precede the actual production process and which provide the context and setting for the subsequent development of relations of power. An investigation of the exercise of hegemony extends to the socio-cultural interaction between hegemonic and subaltern groups and includes

¹⁸¹ Cox, 1981.

¹⁸² Cox's explanation of the rise of financial capitalism, the demise of what was traditionally considered as the 'nation-state' and the organisation of a 'new world order' is presented by locating the nexus of power in powerful transnational classes, whose means of domination is ownership of and access to vast amounts of financial capital that can be moved around the globe almost instantaneously through information communication systems. This forms the basis of Manuel Castell's theorisation of the "networked society" (Manuel Castells, 1996).

¹⁸³ Gill, 1997.

¹⁸⁴ Cox, 1981.

changes in social relations leading to the emergence of historic blocs. It also includes a study of the manner in which the hegemonic project is shaped through the inclusion or incorporation of ideas originating from subaltern groups.

The second sphere of activity is located within the form of State, which is the outcome of social relations. These are constituted by a configuration of forces, integrating both alliances and differences between social classes and groups. As the purpose of hegemony is to establish relations of power and subordination, contesting forces cannot be excluded from the attempts to organise consensus, and Cox's conceptualisation resonates with that of Thomas.¹⁸⁵ In this, the State exists as the activities aimed at securing power over a particular social configuration of oppositional interests, more than as a set of institutions in which power is concretised. The point argued by both Thomas and Cox is that the exercise of hegemony can be considered as an analytical tool to identify the form of State through an investigation of the nature of its activities. The nature of these activities, ranging from the soliciting of consensus to the imposition of control, will be seen to typify a particular expression of the capitalist State that will be identified in each chapter.

The third sphere of activity is constituted by world order, the institutionalisation of dominant class interests that result from the emergence of a historic bloc. In the setting of a transnational configuration of social forces occupied by hegemonic mechanisms in the form of international non-government organisations, a 'new world order' of global hegemony emerged. World hegemony is seen as the result of an outward expansion of an extraordinarily powerful national class whose influence at the level of the State leads to the extension of its economic domain to other societies. This extension is accompanied by the corresponding technology, ideology, political formations and culture of the hegemonic bloc, all of which are presented as the 'ideal' to dominated societies.¹⁸⁶

¹⁸⁵ Thomas, 2009.

¹⁸⁶ These function to co-opt elites and organic intellectuals in dominated societies to develop policy, reproduce the bureaucratic structures and personnel of the dominant bloc and disseminate hegemonic ideology among other elites and society in general. Alternative and counter-hegemonic ideas are excluded, or, where these do not present a substantive ideological threat, assimilated as 'advocacy'.

However, because the political model (liberal democracy) of the dominant bloc is inadequate relative to social structures in dominated societies, the exercise of hegemony by the State is unsuccessful and “hegemony is ... laden with contradictions of the periphery”.¹⁸⁷ These contradictions are a consequence of the impossibility of constructing a stable social order on an unstable economic base. The State is unable to reconcile fundamentally conflicting interests through the structures and mechanisms of civil society, leading to a ‘crisis of legitimacy’ in the form of protest and dissent, with two possible outcomes. One is political intervention through the use of force, leading to the establishment of an authoritarian State which assumes a “military-bureaucratic” form¹⁸⁸ that presides over society. The alternative is the negotiation of strategic administrative relationships so as to reach agreements with specific social groups that have influence in critical areas. This gives rise to a corporatist State that exerts control through policy and administrative structures and practices.

In the following chapters, taking us from the colonial period to the apartheid era, the activities of the State will illustrate the applicability of the above conceptualisations. In relation to the post-apartheid era, Cox’s presentation of Gramsci’s conceptualisation of “passive revolution” applies.¹⁸⁹ The imposition of a new order alongside or upon the old creates the need to form alliances in order to achieve political power, leading to the phenomenon of *transformism*. In this situation, leaders of subaltern groups are co-opted by those who wielded power in the old order. They attempt to defuse dissent and maintain existing state structures to retain a form of coherence in activities related to the exercise of power. The activities of the weak State in this situation are aimed at bolstering its position, and tensions between rival factions are evident in strategic alliances between groups in political and civil society, all lobbying for power.

Having presented the theoretical scope of the research in the form of both a theoretical exposition and a literature review, we are now in a position to examine the data collected so as to observe the illustration of the theoretical model proposed.

¹⁸⁷ Cox, 2002: 368.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid., 367.

Chapter Three: Aims of the colonial State, missionaries and Black petty bourgeoisie in the origins of the South African Native College

From a chronological perspective, the phases of development of the dependent capitalist State in South Africa in the period under consideration corresponded to the changes in the South African political economy. These in turn took place in relation to the dominant and overarching political economy of, firstly, Europe, and later, the United States. Each phase has been characterised by distinctive features relating to the specific nature of capital accumulation and the accompanying technology, social relations inherent to capital accumulation and the political structures and systems in which these were institutionalised.¹⁹⁰ Importantly, the ideology representing social relations in a capitalist society was also embedded within the political structures and systems established in South Africa, which replicated those of Britain.

The global expansion of the capitalist system introduced the element of a spatial arrangement of the production process, which extended beyond the national domain of dominant capital. During the colonial era, the sites where raw materials were extracted and those where they were processed into final products were physically separated according to a geo-political configuration. The colonies served to provide the raw materials that fuelled industrial growth in Europe, where the value of raw materials was augmented in the production process, leading to capital accumulation by the dominant class.

The functions of the colonial State in relation to capital accumulation were, firstly, to regulate the sources of raw materials; secondly, to ensure that infrastructural requirements were in place for the extraction and transportation of these materials from the colonial site to the ports from which they would be shipped to Europe; and thirdly, to establish an administrative framework that would enable the organisation of the first phase of the production process, the end result of which would be the generation of profits.

Nonetheless, the position of subaltern societies cannot be considered simply as the outcome of strategies executed by the dominant power, and, as observed in Chapter Two, the role of

¹⁹⁰ As presented in Chapter Two (Cox, 1981).

resistance and complicity on the part of groups within subjugated societies needs to be examined. In this chapter it will be shown that a significant number of Black people responded positively to the overtures of European missionaries in offering schooling in the latter part of the nineteenth century. During this process, they acquired not only literacy and numeracy skills, but, through the medium of curriculum and the language of teaching – English – they underwent a process of acculturation. The education they received offered prospects of material and social advancement within the realms of the dominant society, as teachers or lower-level civil servants in the colonial administration, leading to the development of a Black petty bourgeois class.

In the Eastern Cape, the large number of primary schools run by missionaries enabled thousands of Black people to access not only the means for social advancement, but also to qualify for the franchise, which was based on fundamental literacy and property requirements. However, there was little secondary schooling and no higher education. This chapter traces the events that led to the establishment of a college of higher education for Black people – the South African Native College (SANC), later to be known as the University of Fort Hare – within the context of contestation for cultural hegemony. It will be argued that it was anticipated opportunities, rather than conscious agreement with the fundamental basis of prevailing principles and values – which were often against the general interests of Black society – that prompted conformity on the part of the emergent Black petty bourgeoisie at the turn of the century.

The main body of this chapter is divided into two sections dealing, firstly, with the State and society, and thereafter, with the origins of the SANC. This element of the research is based on information derived from secondary sources, which provide the context for an illustration of the attempted exercise of hegemony in the fluid and unstable society that existed in the Eastern Cape at the turn of the twentieth century. An investigation into the State and society covers the period from the late nineteenth century to the middle of the second decade of the twentieth century, with a particular emphasis on the activities of the late nineteenth century colonial State in a defined area known as the Ciskei.¹⁹¹ In dealing with society, the complex layers of

¹⁹¹ While the Ciskei became synonymous with the notorious apartheid regime after the establishment of the Republic of the Ciskei, a so-called ‘Xhosa homeland’ for Xhosa people, in 1972, the name Ciskei in fact dates back to the 1840s. At this time, it was used by the colonial administration with

domination and subordination that were produced by intra- and inter-class struggle will be explored in the context of collaboration and contestation.

The origins of the SANC will be located in an examination of ideological contestation within civil society, understood in the broad sense as comprising civilians and individuals as well as groups. This caused the State (as political society) to offer a form of support to the notion of a 'Native College' that was more symbolic than substantive. Sufficient material backing from the State was not to be forthcoming, despite the rhetoric in support of a college of higher learning for 'Natives'. As a result, the SANC was established on the basis of collaboration between unexpected allies with different motivations, namely, the Black petty bourgeoisie, British missionaries, philanthropists and a sprinkling of settler businessmen and politicians whose interests lay in expansion of the Black middle class.

Geophysical location

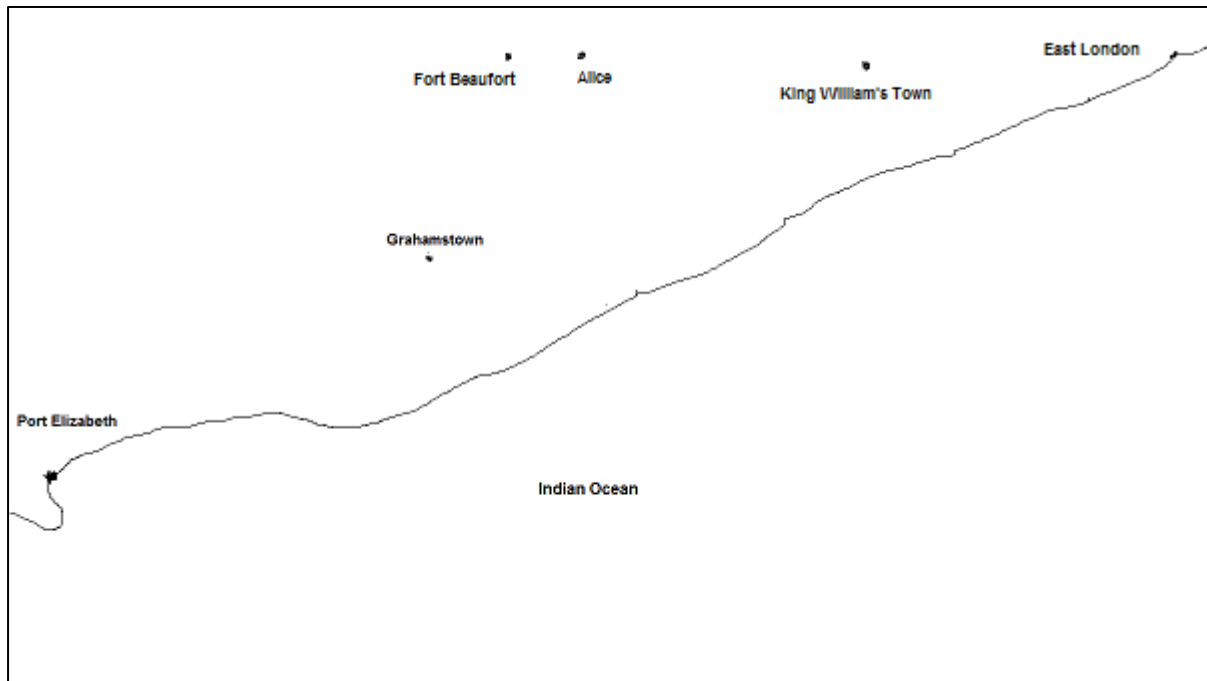
The setting for this research lies within a circumscribed area of the Eastern Cape, between the Fish River to the west and the Kei River to the east, extending northwards from the Indian Ocean coast for about 100 kilometres, encompassing the Amathole mountain range. At the turn of the nineteenth century, a few small urban settlements had been established by settlers, with the most prominent towns being King Williams Town, in the interior, and the coastal port of East London at the mouth of the Buffalo River. The small settlement of Alice, where the South African Native College was to be established, lies in the foothills of the Amathole mountain range, 60 kilometres west of King Williams Town. Grahamstown, an English settler town established in 1935, lies 100 kilometres south-west of Alice, slightly to the west of the Fish River.¹⁹² Alice is about 1,000 km from Cape Town (to the west) and Johannesburg

reference to the area 'this side' (that is, the Cape side) of the Kei River, inhabited by the Xhosa people (Switzer, 1993: 1); while the Transkei referred to the land on the 'other side' of the Kei River. After a historic process of war and expropriation, the actual delineation of the Ciskei was constituted by the 1913 Land Act, which assigned specific areas of land to Whites and Blacks, giving full effect to the principle of racial segregation. Notwithstanding resistance to the Ciskei Republic during the apartheid era, the long-standing denotation of this area as the Ciskei has led to its acceptance, an illustration of the unreflecting nature of conformity that is associated with the exercise of hegemony.

¹⁹² The geographical isolation of Alice is evident in Map 1.

(to the north), and about 800 km from Durban (to the east). Notwithstanding the passage of time, Alice is still relatively remote, compared to other university towns.

Map 1: Setting of Alice in the Eastern Cape



The exercise of cultural hegemony

The first section describes the process by means of which British culture infiltrated indigenous societies – in particular, Xhosa society. It portrays the exercise of cultural hegemony as the ongoing interaction between dominant and dominated societies, illustrating the contested nature of the exercise of hegemony. Before proceeding, a word of explanation in relation to the primary sources is necessary, as substantial data in the construction of this chapter was sourced from newspaper archives. Explicit acknowledgement must be made of the role of the press in terms of the exercise of cultural hegemony, particularly at a time when the printing press represented the most advanced technology relating to culture. Newspapers represented the culture of the dominant colonial society, and communicated and disseminated its beliefs and

values to members of subaltern society, those who had acquired literacy skills, fostering the acculturation process.¹⁹³

Literacy skills were largely imparted by the missionaries, who, as will be shown, had established a substantial number of schools in the Eastern Cape by the 1880s. A number of missionary stations also had printing presses, so that, in addition to the commercial press that produced newspapers for urban settler populations, the missionary press disseminated religious values in its ecclesiastic news.

The proliferation of newspapers at the turn of the nineteenth century in the Eastern Cape illustrates Bocock's assertion, outlined earlier in this Chapter, that in the context of cultural hegemony in colonial societies, new forms of authority derived from religion provided both an organisational base and unifying ideology, enabling a transfer of social and cultural allegiances.¹⁹⁴ Once established, members of the emergent Black petty bourgeoisie claimed, firstly, the use of the language of the dominant class, and secondly, its technology, the printing press, to disseminate their ideals and popularise their aspirations to political equality. Excerpts from newspapers printed by both the dominant White settler class and the Black petty bourgeoisie emerging from the subjugated society will reveal the commonalities as well as the contestation between classes. Using the technology of the printing press and the popular media, these two classes jostled for ideological leadership, as will be shown.

Details of competitors, their political and religious affiliations and the newspapers through which their views were disseminated will be provided later, but at this point a summary is useful. Within the Black petty bourgeoisie, the King Williams Town-based *Imvo Zabantsundu* (African Opinion) was the mouthpiece of John Tengo (J.T.) Jabavu's newspaper, while *Izwi Labantu* (The World of the People) was that of his political rival, Walter Rubusana. The Grahamstown-based *Journal* reflected the views of the settler population that had been granted land by the State after defeating the Xhosa during the century of so-called 'Frontier Wars'

¹⁹³ In relation to culture, the role of the State – including political and civil society – is “to raise the great mass of the population to a particular cultural and moral level”. Gramsci. In Hoare and Nowell Smith, 1971: 258.

¹⁹⁴ Bocock, 1986.

from 1779 until 1878.¹⁹⁵ Finally, the *Christian Express*, printed at Lovedale in Alice, revealed the values and intentions of Presbyterian missionaries. In terms of both representing and influencing the sentiments and beliefs of the broader civil society, Eastern Cape newspapers offer first-hand evidence of the political struggle on the part of the Black petty bourgeoisie to secure and expand a class base, and to retain their precarious class position in the face of the determination of the colonial State to exclude them from political participation.

The dependent colonial State and capitalist expansion

Pre-capitalist society in the Eastern Cape until 1850

Until the nineteenth century, the inconsistently pursued colonial quest of the British and Dutch in Southern Africa was characterised by a relatively small military and trading presence and sporadic battles with indigenous occupants like the Khoi and the Xhosa, who were encountered during the process of eastward expansion by European colonists. Despite the presence of the British garrison throughout the nineteenth century at various posts on the ‘frontier’ of the Eastern Cape, they were unable to gain control of an area inhabited by the Xhosa and, in far smaller numbers, Afrikaner *trekboers* (literally, the ‘pulling away farmers’). These were cattle farmers, mainly descendants of the Dutch, who were migrating eastwards trying to evade the administrative taxes and controls that had been imposed by the succession of Dutch and British governments since the Dutch had staked the first official colonial claim to the Cape in 1652. The Xhosa were also cattle farmers, moving westwards as expanding populations and the rise of new chiefs put pressure on land, and sporadic encounters between the Xhosa and the *trekboers* had been the cause of ongoing clashes during the eighteenth century.¹⁹⁶

A group which will be seen to be significant in this study is the Mfengu,¹⁹⁷ who had fled southwards subsequent to upheavals within the Zulu kingdom in the early nineteenth century.

¹⁹⁵ The name given to the series of battles describes the ongoing struggle to gain control of land, as eastward-bound Dutch farmers and British settlers in the Eastern Cape met up with westward- and southward-bound Xhosa, Khoi, and other indigenous groups.

¹⁹⁶ Switzer, 1993: 43 – 49.

¹⁹⁷ Mfengu is a name given by more recent African historians to the ‘Fingo’ people. The term ‘Fingo’ was coined by British missionaries, and used in earlier historical references.

Although accommodated by the Xhosa, they did not form a permanent class¹⁹⁸ and many had subsequently settled around a mission station from where they were taken to Peddie, south-west of King Williams Town, and Tyhume, north-east of Alice, in 1835. From the Frontier War of 1834 – 1835, many Mfengu supported the British colonial army against the Xhosa in return for land, therein aligning themselves to the colonial project and earning the status of collaborators.¹⁹⁹ This was to be emphasised later by both the colonial and the Apartheid State in order to underscore divisions within subaltern society on the basis of ethnicity. It also served in the cultivation of an affiliation by members of the subaltern to the dominant group, fostering the exercise of cultural hegemony. The denotation of a particular ethnic identity to those settling around missionary stations was also to result in the phenomenon of mass conversion by the Mfengu to Christianity during the latter part of the nineteenth century, as will be seen shortly.

During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the colonial State's presence in the area was defined by its chaotic sequence of fruitless attempts by various Cape Governors to stabilise the region and prevent clashes between the Xhosa and descendants of the British and Dutch, the English and Afrikaner settlers respectively. Although the Frontier Wars had begun in 1779, it was only after British Governor Charles Somerset forced Xhosa Chief Ngqika to cede the land between the Fish and Keiskamma rivers to the British in 1820, intending to leave the area vacant as neutral territory between the Xhosa and the settlers, that the land shortage became acute.²⁰⁰ The settler population swelled with the arrival of about 5,000 British subjects in 1820 in the area west of the Fish River, increasing the competition for the fertile land in the area and exacerbating the conflict.

The colonial administration had an essentially controlling function that was reinforced through the presence of the British garrison, which established a number of forts and military posts in the area. One of these was Fort Hare, on the Tyhume River, which was to lend its name to the University around which this research is centred. The purpose of the garrison was to regulate society in the land expropriated by the British and to facilitate the trade that served as the basis of capital accumulation. In the Eastern Cape, its mandate was to contain the ever-present tensions between English settler farmers, *trekboers* and the Xhosa people. In the nineteenth

¹⁹⁸ Jeff Peires, 1981: 103.

¹⁹⁹ Switzer, 1993: 59 – 60.

²⁰⁰ Peires, 1981: 79, 145.

century, this was carried out by a succession of Governors, who applied decisions concerning land allocation, then reversed and revised these, in order to try to achieve stability whilst favouring British settlers attempting to farm.

The final result was that large farming areas had been allocated to the settlers, smaller portions to Mfengu allies of the British (in return for their military support) and the defeated Xhosa had been forced to re-locate to smaller 're-settlement' areas of communal land. In 1848 Governor Harry Smith added the 'neutral' ceded territory forcibly ceded to Britain between the Fish and Keiskamma rivers to the Cape Colony, justifying this decision on the basis that settlers had shown interest in paying for it. This area was called the Victoria district and part of the land was given to the Mfengu who had collaborated with the colonial State in the Frontier Wars, whilst the rest was sold to settlers.²⁰¹ The area from the east of the Keiskamma until the Kei River was known as British Kaffraria and was occupied by the Xhosa and directly administered by British-appointed administrators.²⁰²

Establishing a communication network of roads and railways was a colonial priority and taxes were needed to finance administrative and infrastructural costs. As a result, a primary function of the colonial administration was to collect taxes, which required a stable society and administrative base. During most of the 100-year Frontier Wars, tax collection from the Xhosa people in territory that was recognised as belonging to the British was unfeasible. However, after 1848, hut taxes were levied on the inhabitants of villages in the re-settlement areas in the area between the Keiskamma and Fish Rivers inhabited by the Mfengu. After the calamitous 1856 – 1858 cattle-killing, the form taken by the Xhosa as a last stand against the White settlers, the absence of an economic base and ensuing starvation had destroyed the power of the Xhosa.²⁰³ Unable to offer further resistance, they were compelled to submit to resettlement plans and were forced into cultivation rather than stock-keeping. In order to pay hut taxes and to buy the means of subsistence that they could not produce in the restricted re-settlement areas, they were also forced into a system of wage labour.²⁰⁴

²⁰¹ Peires, 1981: 166.

²⁰² Ibid., 167.

²⁰³ Switzer, 1993: 66 – 72.

²⁰⁴ Ibid., 89 – 93.

The number of Xhosa people in British Kaffraria who had survived the cattle-killing was just under 26,000 in 1858, about a quarter of what it had been two years previously. In the interim, the Cape governor at the time, Sir George Grey, had moved White settlers into the area, so that in the same period their numbers increased more than five-fold from 948 to 5,388. In 1866 British Kaffraria was annexed, placing the entire area between the Fish and the Kei rivers – which became known as the Ciskei – under the direct control of the Cape Colony.²⁰⁵

Colonial conquest and the transition to capitalism

As part of the British Empire's colonial project, the Southern area of Africa had strategic significance due to being positioned midway on the shipping route to India, Britain's most important colony and trading partner. Whilst the coastal provinces of the Cape and Natal absorbed the attention and resources of the British military and the colonial administration, the interior held no allure. It was controlled by the *trekboers* who had moved inland both in search of agricultural land and to escape British control, and who had established the Afrikaner Boer republics of the Orange Free State and the Transvaal after defeating in a series of battles the indigenous inhabitants they encountered as they migrated northwards.

However, the discovery of diamonds in 1867 in the interior in an area today known as the Northern Cape, followed by the discovery of gold two decades later on the Witwatersrand – now known as Gauteng – precipitated the rapid transformation of the interior of Southern Africa from a predominantly agricultural base – a mixture of subsistence and commercial farming – to a capitalist economy based on mining. The discovery of minerals was the catalyst for industrialisation and accelerated the transformation from pre-capitalism to capitalism as the colonial State embarked on a quest to gain control of these apparently vast mineral resources.

The attempts by the British to obtain control of minerals culminated in the South African War (1899 – 1902), also known as the Anglo-Boer War, between the British and the two Afrikaner Boer Republics. The British were the infamous victors of a battle won through the application of the same 'scorched earth' tactics – the destruction of crops and livestock – that had been instrumental in destroying the economic base of the Xhosa in the Frontier Wars 50 years

²⁰⁵ Switzer, 1993: 72 – 74.

previously.²⁰⁶ In the case of the Xhosa, women and children encountered in villages were massacred and huts razed, so that there was no means of sustenance or shelter for those who managed to flee. The ensuing social disruption and starvation had by 1850 forced the displaced Xhosa into wage labour on public infrastructural projects like roads and railways or on the farms of colonial settlers.²⁰⁷ In the South African War, the same ‘scorched earth’ strategy was accompanied by the incarceration of Afrikaner women and children in concentration camps – where thousands subsequently died – to eliminate possible social resistance through collaboration and provision of material support.²⁰⁸ Defeated Afrikaner Boers and *bywoners* (tenant farmers) were forced off the land into urban areas such as the ports and the mines to look for work, leading to the development of the ‘poor White’ class that was to become part of the hegemonic project of Afrikaner nationalism, as will be shown.

In the aftermath of the South African War, a modernisation project in the form of a process of socio-economic reconstruction was undertaken. The aims were, firstly, to establish a sound foundation for commercial and mining activities on the part of British capital, and secondly, to unify the White inhabitants for the former separate British colonies and Boer Republics respectively. The provision of social services and expansion of cultural facilities such as higher education – which will be discussed shortly – aimed at bridging the divide within English and Afrikaner civil society (in the broad sense of the word). Commercial development was undertaken through the development of an infrastructure (roads and railways that created links between cities and connected mining centres to ports) and the expansion of White commercial agriculture. A Customs Union between the four – now British – colonies promoted the amalgamation of the former Afrikaner Boer republics with the Cape and Natal. This was the forerunner to the discussions and conferences that led to the proclamation of the Union of South Africa as an independent State within the British Empire in 1910. The Union was in effect an administrative arrangement that did little to reduce the political and cultural divisions or the simmering hostility on the part of the Afrikaners. This resentment was to facilitate the development of Afrikaner nationalism shortly after the formation of the Union, as will be discussed in Chapter Five.

²⁰⁶ Peires, 1981: 153 – 154.

²⁰⁷ Ibid., 163.

²⁰⁸ Ibid., 155.

Competition within the national bourgeoisie

Economic divisions within the national bourgeoisie were evident in the split between mining capital in the Northern Cape and on the Witwatersrand and agricultural capital in the Cape, corresponding broadly to British and Afrikaner ownership respectively. In the process of the transition of the economic base from agriculture to mining, the transformation of the economic base was accompanied by a struggle for hegemony within the national bourgeoisie. This was divided into nationalist and imperialist factions that corresponded to Afrikaner and English cultural allegiances respectively.²⁰⁹

Within the Afrikaner camp, the primarily agricultural base of Afrikaner capital among wealthy Cape Afrikaner farmers was the source of political power in the Cape, with the Afrikaner faction remaining powerful from 1880 until 1920.²¹⁰ The Cape Afrikaner faction was able to unite Afrikaners across the Union in its resistance to industrial capital, widely perceived as a British imperialist force that did not have the interests of South Africa as its primary intention. However, it was the tension between the agrarian and the industrial bourgeoisie throughout the first decades of the twentieth century that prevented the development of a unifying ideology that could contribute to nation-building. As a result of this inherent weakness, exacerbated by internecine strife, the early capitalist State in South Africa was unable to exercise hegemony and was frequently challenged by subaltern groups in the form of the working class on the mines and in the ports. It will be shown that the attempts to counter opposition were to lead to strategic and sometimes fickle alliances of capitalist, petty bourgeois, quasi-feudal and working class elements that extended across racial divisions, as the circumstances required.

The colonial State, characterised by centralised legal and administrative machinery backed by the military, existed in a strongly defined mould of control and coercion. The post-colonial State of 1910 inherited the structures, mechanisms and characteristics of the colonial State, but was charged with achieving political unity and stability between the antagonistic fractions of the national bourgeoisie. Another mandate was to control society and to ensure a supply of labour to meet the needs of both factions within the national bourgeoisie. In terms of political challenges, the potential threat of a large Black electorate assuming control of the State was eliminated by

²⁰⁹ Arthur Keppel-Jones, 1975.

²¹⁰ Switzer, 1993: 166 – 157.

systematically excluding Blacks from political processes. The extension of the franchise to Black voters and their inclusion on the Cape Voters' Roll that had taken place in the late nineteenth century was reversed.²¹¹ In executing its economic function, the State enacted legislation that forced Blacks into wage labour and controlled their movements by restricting land ownership and the right to inhabit urban areas, as will be seen in this and subsequent Chapters.

Responses to colonialism: resistance and co-option

Various accounts describe the determination of the Xhosa not to become socially subservient in the aftermath of the Frontier Wars.²¹² Despite their military defeat and subjugation, young men resisted entering into contracts to work on settler farms insofar as was possible, as there was virtually no prospect of accumulating the money that would enable them to purchase land or livestock and move off the farms again. Instead, they tried to take up employment as wage-labourers in the urban areas so as to acquire the funds to buy land and stock, becoming peasant farmers. Those who had received an education aspired to become salaried administrative officials such as clerks, interpreters, policemen and legal assistants, forming the base of the new Black petty bourgeois class.

As an emergent class, the colonially defined features of the emergent Black petty bourgeoisie²¹³ in the area between the Fish and the Kei rivers were that they were primarily from Mfengu society and were the product of a missionary education. Subsequent to the emancipation of slaves in the Cape in 1824 following pressure from British philanthropists, missionaries had established stations where they gathered a following of those who wished to obtain shelter or schooling, or both. As indicated earlier, many Mfengu had converged around mission stations as an alternative to being accommodated within Xhosa society and conversion of the Mfengu to Christianity on a large scale began to take place after about 1835.²¹⁴

²¹¹ All males over the age of 21 who owned property to the value of £25, or who received a salary of at least £50 per year, were eligible to vote (Ibid., 141).

²¹² Mcebisi Ndletyana, 2008; Les Switzer, 1993; Allan Cobley, 1990; Clifton Crais, 1992.

²¹³ Note that I have chosen to designate as 'Black' the groups, classes and social formations that were formed as a consequence of the impact of colonialism on traditional society, whereas I have used 'African' to denote traditional and pre-colonial African society.

²¹⁴ Peires, 1981: 75 – 76, 88 – 89.

The first converts to Christianity were known by their countrymen as ‘*amaqoboka*’, or ‘people with a hole’ – in a spiritual and cultural sense, that is, they existed in an incomplete form.²¹⁵ By way of contrast, those Xhosa who resisted cultural hegemony, striving to retain their indigenous culture during and after the cattle-killing of 1856 – 1858, became known as the ‘*namaqaba*’, or ‘red blanket’ people.²¹⁶ Significantly, this initial act of conformity by the colonised to the way of life, values and beliefs of the coloniser in the form of the missionary, was to be rewarded by security, social status and material gain, indicative of Femia’s fourth motivation for conformity, that of expectations of reciprocity, rather than the third motive, conscious and considered agreement with principles.²¹⁷ As observed previously, the anticipation of gain will be seen to be a recurring motivation for conformity in this research. At this early stage, the very appellation by their countrymen as those with a ‘spiritual hole’ points to the realisation on the part of the non-conformists that conversion to Christianity was an act of ideological and spiritual capitulation to the dominant, in the hope of benefiting.

Those who had received a missionary education and accepted the colonial administration and values were ideally qualified to serve as intermediaries between the indigenous population and the colonial administrators. Many were appointed as headmen, acquiring an ambiguous status that was both resented and coveted. From 1854 onwards, under a so-called ‘civilising’ policy introduced by the colonial administration of Sir George Grey, mission stations involved in the provision of education received a subsidy. Although this was largely at elementary level, it was perceived – mainly by the Mfengu and the Thembu – as a means of improving the prospects for a better future and one of the consequences was that by 1886 there were a substantial number of functionally literate adults.²¹⁸ At Lovedale College, one of the largest and certainly one of the most prestigious boarding schools established by the Presbyterian missionaries, over 2,000 pupils had been educated by 1887.²¹⁹ However, the resources provided by the colonial government in the form of grants towards the education of Black teachers diminished from the

²¹⁵ I am grateful to Dr Vuyisile Nkonki, a colleague at the University of Fort Hare and Manager of the Teaching Advancement Unit, for this insight.

²¹⁶ Switzer, 1993: 67 – 72.

²¹⁷ Femia, 1981: 38 – 43.

²¹⁸ In 1886 there were 7,653 African students in state-aided schools, but nine years later this figure had risen to 20,873 and by 1900 there were 37,442 students (Switzer, 1993: 133).

²¹⁹ Ndletyana, 2008: 2 – 5.

1880s onwards as a result of settler opposition to the rise of the Black petty bourgeoisie, as will be soon be seen. As a result, by the 1890s there were fewer certified teachers and young Black men and women wishing to pursue their education beyond school level were unable to do so in the colonies of South Africa.²²⁰

Early political leadership among the Black petty bourgeoisie

One of the consequences of the 1866 inclusion of British Kaffraria in the Cape Colony was that a large number of Black men were able to register on the non-racial Cape Voters' Roll, on the basis of literacy and property ownership. Twenty years later, African voters constituted just over half the number of registered voters in Fort Beaufort and Victoria East, the magisterial district in which Lovedale College was situated. Nine constituencies in the Eastern Cape – five of which were in the Ciskei – represented 70% of the total African vote, an indication of its significance. Other urban centres in the Ciskei with a large Black share of registered voters were Queenstown (45.1%), Wodehouse (48.9%) and King Williams Town (39.4%), an urban nucleus to the east of the Victoria East district, in which Alice lay.²²¹ It was politically inevitable that White businessmen and Black and White politicians alike should court influential Black leaders to secure the Black vote.

Businessmen such as James Weir, James Rose-Innes, his brother Richard and former member of the Cape Legislative Assembly T.J. Irvine funded the establishment of the newspaper *Imvo Zabantsundu* (African Opinion). It was edited by the influential J.T. Jabavu, a mission-educated businessman, with funding provided by Rose-Innes and other pro-British businessmen who were aware of the power of the Black vote at the time. Jabavu used his editorial licence to support “friends of the Natives” like James Rose-Innes and secure him a seat in the legislative assembly as the Victoria East representative in 1884.²²² The reliance on English-speaking politicians on the part of the emergent Black petty bourgeoisie constituted a fundamental weakness and their failure to organise collectively on the basis of class interests will be demonstrated in the discussion to follow.

²²⁰ Switzer, 1993: 131 – 134.

²²¹ Ibid., 143 – 146.

²²² Ibid., 149.

In the last two decades of the nineteenth century, the Black petty bourgeoisie formed groups according to their activities in civil society, based on occupational (in particular, teachers' associations) and cultural interests (debating societies, "mutual improvement" associations, and church organisations).²²³ The Native Educational Association was launched in 1880, initially representing teachers educated at missionary colleges of Lovedale in Alice, Healdtown near Fort Beaufort, and St Matthews, east of Alice. Its membership expanded to include members of the emergent Black petty bourgeoisie such as ministers, clerks, artisans, peasant farmers, traders and headmen and under Jabavu's influence its interests extended beyond the field of African education to include political issues, although its membership remained small.²²⁴ The *Imbumba Yama Nyama*, or South African Aborigines Association, was launched in 1882 in the industrial town of Port Elizabeth in response to moves by the Afrikaner Bond, representing White Afrikaners, to remove Blacks from the Voters' Roll.²²⁵

Anxiety among White settlers in the Cape concerning the growing numbers of Black voters and their potential influence resulted in Parliament making amendments to the franchise criteria in the 1887 Registration of Voters Act and the 1892 Franchise and Ballot Act. The former disqualified those who owned land communally; the latter raised the property qualification and introduced a basic literacy test. These amendments eliminated voters in British demarcated re-settlement areas, causing a reduction by one third in the number of Eastern Cape Black voters on the Cape Voters' Roll between 1885 and 1900.²²⁶ Significantly, the terms of the 1892 Act were supported by a coalition government of the Afrikaner Bond and English liberal parties that included the so-called "friends of the Natives", James Rose-Innes and John X. Merriman.²²⁷

²²³ Switzer, 1993: 146.

²²⁴ Ibid., 144. Membership in 1885 was 110 and attendance at meetings held in Fort Beaufort, King Williams Town and mission stations seldom exceeded 70.

²²⁵ The Afrikaner Bond was the largest single influence in the Cape Parliament in the 1880s, constituting 40% of its members, allying itself with smaller English political parties (Ibid., 137).

²²⁶ Ibid., 151 – 152. In the Eastern Cape one third of Black voters were de-registered in 1887.

²²⁷ Ironically, the liberal principle of equality was absent from the relationship between the liberals and their Native 'friends'.

Imvo was also the mouthpiece for *Imbumba Eliliso Lomzi Yabantsundu* (Union of Native Vigilance Associations), the first overtly political organisation in the Eastern Cape, formed in 1887 to contest the restrictions on Black voters of the 1887 Registration Act. Jabavu was the head of its Executive Committee, but his failure to mobilise supporters and his obvious allegiance to English politicians at the time led to the establishment, four years later, of the South African Native Congress, with the intention of acting in the interests of Africans and independently of the desires of White settler society.²²⁸

The politics of patronage...

The symbiotic relationship between Jabavu and English politicians was mirrored in the expediency of his actions and the transfer of his political allegiance as the situation required. He had during the early 1890s staunchly supported his allies – such as Rose-Innes – in the English-speaking liberal parties under the leadership of British imperialist Cecil John Rhodes between 1890 and 1895. His support was forthcoming even after the coalition government of English-speaking parties and the Afrikaner Bond had in 1892 voted to raise the franchise requirement, as we saw earlier. However, this was to change.

Rhodes' ambitious plan was to facilitate the establishment of the British Empire from the Cape in the south to Cairo in the north of Africa. To this end, in 1896 he orchestrated a failed conspiracy, the Jameson Raid, aimed at taking control of the Transvaal Republic and the gold-mines from the Afrikaners. Subsequent to this failed imperial initiative, many English-speaking politicians in the Eastern Cape deserted Rhodes, joining forces with the Afrikaner Bond. Others, such as Jabavu's ally, Rose-Innes, supported the Progressive Party formed by Rhodes in 1897, whilst the Afrikaner Bond and English-speaking allies led by Merriman formed the South African Party in 1898. Jabavu transferred his political allegiance and continued to support the South African Party, even subsequent to the defeat of the Afrikaners in the South African War, after which they were prohibited from participating in the post-war 1904 Cape elections. Although taking the side of the defeated party rather than the victors appeared to be politically unwise, Jabavu's tactic appeared to be vindicated in 1908 when the South African Party won the elections by a huge margin, and Merriman, an old "friend of the

²²⁸ Switzer, 1993: 151 - 153.

Natives”, became prime minister.²²⁹ Jabavu had nurtured hope that Merriman would ensure that the existing political rights of Blacks who were on the Cape Voters’ Roll would be safeguarded in the formation of a Union of the four provinces. However, his faith in British liberalism and justice was misplaced, as the British government was more concerned with the reconciliation of English and Afrikaner Whites in the wake of the South African War than defending the rights of Black people on the Cape Voters’ Roll.²³⁰

Ironically, in an attempt to counter Jabavu’s antagonistic stance, Rhodes had funded another Eastern Cape newspaper, *Izwi Labantu*, the ‘World of the People’, which became the mouthpiece of the South African Native Congress. It was later to assume a prominent role in protesting against the Union of South Africa, as will be illustrated. Nonetheless, the editors of both newspapers hoped for a certain measure of support from White liberals in the Cape, even though during the period under consideration they supported opposing settler political factions.²³¹ Their misplaced faith in receiving support for their political aspirations was to be revealed by the commission established to investigate the future of Black people in South Africa after the defeat of the two Afrikaner republics in the South African War. Owing to the fact that Black people in the former Boer republics had no political rights, this commission was to decide on the future of Black people in relation to political rights and land ownership.

... and betrayal

Set up in 1903, the South African Native Affairs Commission (SANAC) conducted interviews with individuals and organisations in both Black and White civil society over two years. The final SANAC recommendations in favour of land segregation and the prevention of purchases by Blacks in areas already occupied by Whites had made it clear that, in relation to the land issue, the interests of Black people would be detrimentally affected. The question of the franchise was unclear, because while the Cape liberals stood by the non-racial qualified franchise, the SANAC recommendations were that Blacks and Whites should have separate voters’ rolls and that Blacks should be represented in parliament by a limited number of Whites. The only political participation by Black people would be in local government in the

²²⁹ Switzer, 1993: 155 – 159.

²³⁰ T.R.H. Davenport, 1991: 226 – 228.

²³¹ Switzer, 1993: 151 – 156.

settlement areas, through councils that had the right to make decisions over public works, schools and infrastructure.²³²

These recommendations were to form the basic principles on which the future Union of South Africa was to be established, and although the SANAC recommendations were criticised by various individuals and groups, there was no consolidated protest until the end of 1907. At this stage, Rubusana and the South African Native Congress organised the first formally organised protest in Queenstown, the outcome of which was the drafting of a five-point manifesto advocating a federal system of government instead of a future Union, the retention of imperial protection and the extension of the non-racial franchise to other colonies.

Jabavu and the Imbumba did not join this movement, and instead continued to support the South African Party, of which Jabavu's long-time friend Merriman was a member, canvassing against the conditions on which the Union was to be based by means of petitions that were submitted to colonial authorities. Support for Jabavu had by this stage deteriorated, and his refusal to participate in the broad-based South African Native Convention, initiated in 1909 against the pending Union by his rival Rubusana, contributed to the loss of some of his support in other provinces.²³³ Ironically, the closing of *Izwi labantu* in 1909, a month after the first South African Native Convention, contributed to the subsequent loss of support for Rubusana and the South African Native Congress. Jabavu and Rubusana did, however, form part of the anti-Union delegation that went to London in 1909 to protest – futilely, as it transpired – against the racially discriminatory basis of the draft Union Act that had been released in February 1909.²³⁴ This was to be the only occasion on which they shared the same space, and on their return, Jabavu continued to remain aloof from broader-based politics, retaining his base in the area around King Williams Town.

Meanwhile, the South African Native Convention had drawn the focus of protest away from the rural Eastern Cape towards the centre of South Africa, where it was to remain, with the

²³² Switzer, 1993: 166 – 167.

²³³ Ibid., 172 – 173.

²³⁴ Ibid., 167 – 173.

establishment of the South African Native National Congress in January 1912 marking the definitive shift of the hub of Black politics away from the Eastern Cape.²³⁵

It has been observed that the ambivalent identity of the petty bourgeoisie can be attributed to the insecurity of its material base. Lacking a cohesive element that affords it an economic, political or ideological identity and solidarity, the petty bourgeoisie takes its cue from the dominant class, and “different members can, with equal facility, occupy positions right across the ideological and political spectrum”.²³⁶ The emergent Black petty bourgeoisie in early twentieth century South Africa typified this ambivalence and was by no means united, as has been shown. One of the manifestations of political rivalry took the form of support for two different proposals for higher education for Blacks, with the two main political organisations, the *Imbumba* and the South African Native Congress, under the leadership of J.T. Jabavu and Walter Rubusana respectively, backing the opposing proposals.

However, dependency on White settler politicians to represent their interests meant that the support of the Black petty bourgeoisie vacillated between the competing factions of the national bourgeoisie, according to which faction was perceived to be best able to influence the Cape Parliament in distant Cape Town in favour of their interests. This political dependence is crucial to understanding the limited extent of contestation on the part of the Black petty bourgeoisie and their tendency towards conformity in the first decades of the twentieth century. The subsequent thwarting of their political ambitions, particularly after having been removed from the Cape Voters’ Roll by the Representation of Natives Act in 1936, can be considered as triggering the challenges to the State that occurred thereafter.

In summary, during the period around the turn of the nineteenth century, the national settler bourgeoisie had been characterised by division. The industrial and agrarian bourgeoisie refused to join forces and its class base remained fragile in terms of both size and significance vis-à-vis the many social classes and groups in a racially distinct composite of capitalist, pre-capitalist and quasi-feudal social formations in South Africa. Due to both this heterogeneity and the weakness of the national bourgeoisie as a disunited class, the State was unable to organise

²³⁵ Switzer, 1993: 175.

²³⁶ Cobby, 1990: 3.

hegemony through nation-building activities. As a result, political and administrative challenges assumed a disproportionate significance relative to the means at its disposal. The intra-class struggle between the agrarian and industrial factions prevented the collaboration that would enable capital accumulation on a national basis and the development of a hegemonic project: instead, its efforts were expended on internecine battles and the discharging of wide-ranging administrative duties aimed at social control.

It is within this context of political tensions at the level of the State that the South African Native College was established. Its shaky foundation can be attributed to lack of political will on the part of the State in providing higher education for Blacks, as will be shown.

The origins of the SANC

Before examining the process leading to the establishment of the South African Native College, a further comment relating to periodisation must be made – this time, regarding the development of culture in relation to changes in the expression of the capitalist State.

Argentinian historian Gregorio Weinberg identifies three stages in the development of culture and education in Argentina, commencing with the imposition of an alien culture by the conqueror, proceeding to acceptance of the culture originating from the colonial power in the immediate post-colonial phase, and culminating in the critique and contestation of colonial culture in the third.²³⁷

Applied to the South African context, the periodisation reflects a similar trajectory, with the first stage of ‘imposed culture’ corresponding to the period of subordination by Dutch and British colonial powers from the seventeenth to the end of the nineteenth centuries. Institutions and practices were transplanted by the colonial power and the function of education was either instrumental, serving to legitimise colonial structures, promote bourgeois values and train administrative staff and professionals to serve the dominant colonial class; or preparatory, providing the base that would enable the children of the elite to further their studies abroad.

²³⁷ Weinberg, 2001: 19 – 22.

The second stage of 'accepted' culture coincides with the replication of the modernising influences of the former colonial power in post-colonial society. This is illustrated very clearly in South Africa in the early twentieth century by the mushrooming of University Colleges offering courses towards degrees, thereby enabling the children of the elite to study at higher education level in various centres. This phenomenon will be examined in the discussion of the apparent anomaly of the South African Native College, which was established to offer higher education to the elite within subaltern Black civil society.

Accepted culture: the adoption of the British University model

The model of an imposed culture corresponding to the needs of the early capitalist State was evident in the establishment in Cape Town in 1829 of the South African College, which prepared the children of the colonial elite for furthering their education in Europe. In 1865 the Victoria College was established a short distance away in Stellenbosch, in the heart of the agricultural oligopoly of wealthy Dutch farmers, with the same purpose. Shortly afterwards, in 1873, the South African College became the University of the Cape of Good Hope College, serving as examining agency for the examinations set by Oxford and Cambridge Universities in England.²³⁸ The replication of a British University model set the tone for the future development of higher education, but, more importantly, it served to disseminate dominant culture, and was an essential mechanism in the exercise of hegemony.

In the nineteenth century, South African colleges had focused on high school training and preparation for further studies in Europe, but the defeat of the Afrikaner Boer republics by the British in 1902 and the pending unification of the four provinces signalled a definitive triumph for the British higher education model. This triggered the introduction of university degrees at existing colleges and the establishment of a number of small colleges, all offering tuition in English and affiliated to the examining institution, the University of the Cape of Good Hope College.

In Bloemfontein, capital of the former Afrikaner Boer republic, the Orange Free State, there had been a sufficiently large number of English-speaking inhabitants to establish Grey College in the 1850s, providing education for boys. Post-school education was offered for the first time

²³⁸ Thiven Reddy, 2004: 9.

in 1904, when a group of six students registered for a Bachelor of Arts degree course, and in 1910 Grey College became the Grey University College.²³⁹

In the Eastern Cape area at the turn of the century there were two colleges affiliated to schools, St Andrews in Grahamstown and Gill in Somerset East, both preparing students for the University of the Cape of Good Hope examinations. The editor of the *Grahamstown Journal*, Josiah Slater, was also the Member of Parliament for the Albany district within which Grahamstown lay. He canvassed actively for support for the establishment of a University College in the town, garnering enormous support. An influential resident persuaded one of the trustees of the Rhodes Fund – bequeathed by mining magnate and former governor of the Cape, Cecil John Rhodes – to give preference shares in the mining company De Beers to the value of £50,000 to the Rhodes University College. On the strength of this donation, the College was established in 1904.²⁴⁰ Both the year of its founding and the amount provided will be shown to be significant: in subsequent discussions on the establishment of a ‘Native College’, which began in 1905, the same amount of £50,000 was specified as a prerequisite.

On the Witwatersrand, in the capital of the former Afrikaner Boer republic of the Transvaal about 50 kilometres north of the mines, the Pretoria Centre of the Transvaal University College opened in 1908. It offered tuition in Modern Languages, Dutch, English Language and Literature, the Classics, and Natural Sciences, all of which were taught in the language of English.²⁴¹

Of the colleges founded in the nineteenth century that later became University Colleges – and finally, in the 1930s, universities – only one was established on a foundation of religious principles. The Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education was founded in 1869, having developed from the Theological School of the Reformed Churches in South Africa. It had as its aim the provision of a formative education without any particular career in mind. However, shortly afterwards, in 1877, a literary department was added, with the aim of offering teacher training. In 1905 it joined the ranks of the University Colleges affiliated to the University of South Africa.²⁴²

²³⁹ http://www.sarua.org/?q=uni_University%20of%20the%20Free%20State

²⁴⁰ <http://www.ru.ac.za/rhodes/introducingrhodes/historyofrhodes>

²⁴¹ <http://web.up.ac.za/default.asp?ipkCategoryID=2>

²⁴² <http://www.nwu.ac.za/content/history-potchefstroom-campus-potchefstroom-campus-nwu>

Prior to the South African War and as a result of the development of the mining industry, the need for more instrumental knowledge had prompted the establishment of the South African School of Mines in Kimberley in the Northern Cape in 1896. Due to the rapid urban expansion on the Witwatersrand in the Transvaal following the discovery of gold, the School was transferred to Johannesburg as the Transvaal Technical Institute in 1904, after the war. It became the Transvaal University College in 1906, but was renamed the South African School of Mines and Technology in 1910, reverting to university status in 1922 when it became the University of the Witwatersrand.²⁴³

The notion of a Native College

The racially determined class relations in South Africa led to Whites being members of the colonial elite and dominant classes, with Blacks excluded from the educational processes responsible for the production and reproduction of social classes. Nonetheless, the educational quest of the missionaries managed to subvert – to a limited extent – the overarching colonial project whose aim was to restrict the social mobility of the colonised. The move to establish a ‘Native College’ within the same mould as the British system was not the inevitable result of the direct needs of the State for a professional and administrative class: those needs were satisfied by recruiting from White civil society. Indeed, in 1904, shortly after the South African War, higher education was considered as essential to the nation-building that was supposed to unite English and Afrikaans members of society, and this aim facilitated the establishment of a number of University Colleges. Instead, the origin of the SANC can be attributed to a combination of two different forces, which will be explained below.

The primary force was the relentless determination of the Presbyterian Church to exclude the influence of the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) and Ethiopian Churches in the area. To counter the prospect of an African College, run by Africans, under the auspices of Afro-Americans, the Presbyterian Church committed to the establishment of a college that would offer higher education and training. In this way, they hoped to consolidate their stake as both a spiritual and cultural influence in the Eastern Cape. The second indomitable force was constituted by the ambition of a particular faction of the Black petty bourgeoisie, led by J.T.

²⁴³ http://www.wits.ac.za/aboutwits/introducingwits/3162/short_history_of_the_university.html

Jabavu. His quest for political leadership within the Black community in the Eastern Cape was fortified by his determination to outdo his rival, Walter Rubusana, and the competition between these parties centred on the provision of higher education to Blacks.

Contesting ideologies

Despite the ideological disarray within political society, there had been a spectrum of independent ideological representations in civil society in the nineteenth century. This spectrum embraced the hostile settler attitudes towards the perceived threat of Black peasant farmers and owners of small businesses, and the Enlightenment-inspired ideals of the British missionaries whose activities in providing basic education had spawned the literate Black petty bourgeois class. To these was added the anti-colonialism of the Ethiopian Movement, founded in 1892 when a Wesleyan Methodist minister, Mangena Maake Mokone, established the independent Ethiopian Church. The aim was to build an African church under African leaders and the Ethiopian Church established ties with the United States-based African Methodist Episcopal Church, expanding its congregation rapidly between 1896 and 1898 to about 10,800 throughout South Africa.²⁴⁴

One of the ideals of the Ethiopian Church was the establishment of a college run by Africans for Africans, and despite its relatively transient existence – its membership had declined to less than 1,500 by 1903²⁴⁵ – its existence had given rise to what Switzer termed the “settler hysteria”²⁴⁶ of the early twentieth century. At this particular conjuncture, the South African Native Congress openly supported the proposal of the AME and the Ethiopian Movement to establish an independent college in Queenstown, to the north of King Williams Town.²⁴⁷

Concerned about the influence of Ethiopianism in what was considered to be ‘their’ terrain in the area around Lovedale, the Presbyterian Church responded with alacrity to the SANAC recommendations two years later, in 1905, that a college of higher education for Blacks be established. Their struggle to retain cultural hegemony forms the substance of the discussion to follow presently, and points to their painstaking efforts to depict a symmetry of ideas between

²⁴⁴ Switzer, 1993: 183.

²⁴⁵ Ibid., 185.

²⁴⁶ Ibid., 1993: 188.

²⁴⁷ Ibid., 156 – 158.

State and Church. This tactic concealed the duality of their aims, which represented the desire to prevent the dissemination of Afro-American-based nationalist ideals, on the one hand, and, on the other, to control the development and influence of a particular Christian denomination.

Enlightenment ideals versus settler prejudice

In the following discussion, I argue that the support of the colonial State for the missionaries' planned college of higher education was not based on an ideological resonance within political and civil society. Instead, it constituted a recognition by the State that the South African Native Congress and the Ethiopian Movement constituted a potential political threat, and that their influence should be countered. In the absence of any prescriptions on the part of the State concerning the activities carried out by a college administered by the missionaries, the Presbyterian Church founders of the South African Native College were afforded a certain leeway in deciding on the curriculum. However, they were at the same time curtailed by the lack of material support from the State, as the funding that was granted to the SANC was far inferior to that provided to colleges for 'Europeans' (Whites).²⁴⁸

As discussed in Chapter Two, the Enlightenment had given rise to an ontology that professed to be based on scientific rationalism and objectivity. Its aim was to demonstrate the validity of universality and linear progress, through transposing the exactness of natural sciences to social sciences and attempting to establish 'laws' that could be applied across nations and societies. Logic was considered as supreme and it was an unquestioned assumption that the scientific methodology utilised by the natural sciences would produce a universal 'truth' that would drive progress throughout the world. Influenced by rationalism and ideals of intellectual progress, the rationale of the United Free Church – and also of the Methodists and Anglicans who were actively proselytizing on the Eastern frontier of the Cape Colony – was that this form of education would bring 'civilisation' to all societies.

²⁴⁸ A summary of the efforts by the SANC between 1916 and 1959 to obtain funding from the Union government that would enable them to have the same facilities and funding as other 'European' colleges is provided in the chronicle of the existence of the SANC until the takeover by the apartheid State by H.R. Burrows, Principal 1958 – 1959, and Z.K. Matthews, the College's first graduate and an internationally renowned liberal scholar. They published their account in 1961 with the aim of disseminating information about the SANC as well as garnering support for the liberal cause.

Spurred on by their belief in a progression towards a universal modernity, the overarching aim of the missionaries was, as articulated by Govan Mbeki, who studied there from 1931 to 1937, to produce “Black Englishmen”.²⁴⁹ The missionaries, however, were oblivious to the inherent arrogance in the execution of their perceived duty of providing tutelage, namely, bestowing knowledge on the ignorant. This Enlightenment conviction is evident in the content of articles and reports of the *Christian Express*, mouthpiece of the Lovedale missionaries, which advocated education and opportunities for advancement for ‘Natives’ – within, of course, the parameters of the colonial and missionary framework. In the discussion on the events leading to the establishment of the South African Native College, selected excerpts from the *Christian Express*, published by the Lovedale missionaries, will illustrate the intentions of the missionaries *a propos* the unwitting recipients of their Enlightenment attempts.

The values and beliefs held by the missionaries in this area ran counter to the beliefs prevalent in settler society, particularly in the area around Grahamstown, from which the Xhosa had been expelled after being defeated in the Frontier Wars. Settler sentiment was that Africans should serve to meet their labour requirements rather than aspire to development along the same trajectory as Europeans. As reflected in the editorial opinion of the Grahamstown-based settler newspaper, the *Journal*, most settlers believed that education was wasted on ‘Natives’, as will be illustrated.

An example of the prevailing beliefs among Europeans concerning the intellectual capabilities of Africans is provided in the memoirs of the first Principal of the SANC between 1915 and 1948, Alexander Kerr.²⁵⁰ Interviewed for the post in London, he had never been to South Africa and relied on information gleaned from secondary sources to form an impression of the place and its peoples. Having read about the subject of the ‘African intellect’ in a book titled *Black and White in South-East Africa* by one Maurice Evans, who claimed that “South African Natives experienced ... an arrested development” on reaching puberty, one of the causes being “the premature closure of the sutures of the skull”,²⁵¹ Kerr was worried that Black students would be unable to successfully exercise their intellect at higher education level. However, his fears were allayed by William P. Schreiner, a former liberal Member of Parliament who was

²⁴⁹ Daniel Massey, 2010: 33.

²⁵⁰ Alexander Kerr, 1968.

²⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 10.

then High Commissioner for the Union of South Africa in London, who reassured Kerr that he “did not believe a word of it”.²⁵² Kerr’s initial doubt concerning the intellectual abilities of Africans points to the widespread conviction within colonial society of the superiority of the European race – a conviction that was rooted in the common sense of the British settlers who had arrived in the Eastern Cape in 1820 with little education, but an intact set of prejudices lodged within their ‘common sense’.

Missionary ideals and local expectations

Mission stations, in general, played a key role in the pacification of indigenous societies. In an area that had experienced a century of Frontier Wars between the Xhosa and the British settlers, Lovedale College was no exception. Founded originally in 1824 by the Glasgow Missionary Society under Dr John Love in the Ncera River valley, it was initially dedicated purely to evangelistic work, but was destroyed in 1834 during one of the many frontier battles. It was then rebuilt in 1841 near Alice on the Tyhume River, in the vicinity of one of the British forts that had been erected to enforce British occupation and administration, and became the Lovedale Missionary Institute, headed by William Govan, with the aim of providing education to local converts. Its existence was precarious and support for its endeavours was derived mainly from the Mfengu, who, according to Switzer, constituted the largest number of Black Christian converts in the region between the Fish and Kei Rivers in the nineteenth century.²⁵³

During the 1846 War of the Axe, resistance to the presence of the missionaries by the Xhosa led to the building of a fort, called Fort Hare, to protect the area. Lovedale was threatened once again in 1850 and Fort Hare was attacked by those Xhosa who opposed colonial occupation, but by the end of the 1850s, organised resistance on the part of traditional Xhosa society had disintegrated. This was not because of military capitulation, but the result of cumulative factors that included drought, famine and cattle-sickness. Following instructions conveyed through the young prophetess, Nongqawuse, the organised destruction of food, clothing, utensils, and household implements led to a final act of desperation in the form of the mass cattle-killing of 1857. This faith-based cleansing act was supposed to be followed by reprisal, when the Xhosa ancestors would return on a specific day – first predicted in August and December 1856, and

²⁵² Kerr, 1968: 10.

²⁵³ Switzer, 1993: 127 – 129, 141.

later in February and April 1857 – to herald the dawn of a new millennium. Whites would be driven away and prosperity would be restored. When the anticipated resurrection did not transpire, hunger led to mass starvation and death, leaving survivors little recourse but to beg for jobs on settler farms and in the colonial service.²⁵⁴

The cattle-killing and crop-burning is of significance to this research as the ultimate form of dissent, albeit of a self-destructive rather than aggressive nature. It can be considered as the final act of resistance on the part of Xhosa society prior to being forced by starvation to conform for the sake of survival, in this way illustrating in an extreme form Femia's first grounds for conformity, namely, acquiescence under duress.²⁵⁵

Shortly afterwards, in 1867, Reverend James Stewart joined the Lovedale mission, and, in the spirit of a 'controlled enlightenment' by means of which he would guide Blacks towards his envisaged form of modernity, he introduced a practical element in the curriculum. Rather than allowing Blacks to spend time on unproductive Classical Studies, he replaced the teaching of Greek and Latin with technical and industrial training. Having visited the United States, he was familiar with the Tuskegee Industrial Institute model established by Booker T. Washington, whose philosophy for the upliftment of 'Negroes' included the acquisition of technical skills and the training of artisans. Stewart wanted to replicate this model, as a result of which Lovedale offered training in various trades and industries, including a printing works, and later incorporated a theological college, teacher training and nursing training facilities at the adjacent Victoria hospital.²⁵⁶ From its origins as a base for the spread of Christianity to surrounding villages by means of converted evangelists who had received their training there, by 1900 Lovedale represented a model of Black education in South Africa that was comparable to its counterparts in the United States.

The Wesleyan Methodists also asserted their presence in the area and ordained the largest number of Black pastors, a factor that obviously contributed to their popularity. They established a theological school at Healdtown in 1867, where over the next 40 years they

²⁵⁴ Estimates state that between 35,000 and 50,000 Xhosa died of starvation and 150,000 were displaced from their homes, while 400,000 cattle were killed (Ibid., 68 – 70).

²⁵⁵ Femia, 1981: 38 – 43.

²⁵⁶ Cobley, 1990: 122 – 124.

trained and ordained 125 pastors, and enjoyed the largest following in the area of 63,400 Blacks by 1891.²⁵⁷ A further possible reason for the support of the Wesleyan Methodist Church – offered as an unresearched hypothesis – was its “emotional act of conversion” and emphasis on “feeling”,²⁵⁸ which could have been less alienating than the “methodically rationalised ethical conduct” and “dogmatic background of Puritan morality” of the Presbyterians.²⁵⁹ Whatever the reasons, the Wesleyan Methodists presented considerable competition to the Presbyterians, exacerbated by the geographical proximity of Lovedale and Healdtown, a distance of approximately 20 kilometres.

Healdtown focused on training theology students, whilst Lovedale endorsed a technical education with a practical and instrumental purpose. Stewart’s preferences prompted contestation from the Black petty bourgeoisie, who wanted the same education as Whites, and not a modified version. Whilst the *Christian Express* reports Stewart to have fervently backed the notion of higher education for Blacks²⁶⁰ – albeit within certain limited fields such as teaching and the ministry – under the auspices of the Christian church, the Black petty bourgeoisie were less positive about his influence.

J.T. Jabavu, who was to become a driving force in the quest to establish a college of higher education for Blacks, had worked as a writer for the newspaper *Isigidimi*. This was published under missionary auspices and monitored by Stewart, constraining Jabavu’s ability to express his views. He left in 1884 because of Stewart’s restrictions on printing political opinion,

²⁵⁷ Switzer, 1993: 124.

²⁵⁸ Weber, 1930: 139 – 140.

²⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 125.

²⁶⁰ Towards his death, there was some controversy over Stewart’s opinion on ‘Native education’, and he was reported to have said that Lovedale had been a “splendid failure”. However, a letter from Bishop W. Edmond Lebombo to the *Christian Express* recounted a meeting with Stewart in which he expressed his support for a ‘Native College’ and his concern that he had been misinterpreted on the issue. Stewart cited the pass rates and the number of former students who had joined the clergy, civil service and the teaching profession, claiming he had been misquoted when he had said that the only aspect of failure was human and “if he and those who worked with him had corresponded more perfectly to the grace of God, results would have been more satisfactory still” (*Christian Express*, 1 December 1905).

particularly from a Black perspective.²⁶¹ Decades later, the editorial opinion in a 1908 newspaper article on the progress towards the establishment of the South African Native College expressed the hope that the College would

meet the ever-increasing demands of knowledge and enlightenment. Lovedale will always claim the honour of Parent School, it is to be hoped she not develop the spiteful ecclesiastical opposition to independent Native effort which marred the Stewart Dynasty. The crazy fears of narrow-minded Colonials and pettifogging Cape politicians should be ignored by the Natives if they are ever to rise out of the slavery of ignorance in which it is the policy of many to keep them.²⁶²

Notwithstanding this frustration of their educational aspirations, by the end of the nineteenth century several hundred Blacks had gained a missionary education and acquired some land. Even after the franchise requirements had been raised in 1892 to increase the amount of property owned and to include basic literacy, Black people still managed to qualify for the vote for the Cape Parliament. The various mission schools had created a large pool of educated citizens whose aspirations to become members of the petty bourgeoisie relied on the pursuit of their studies, and these individuals provided new leadership whilst universalising demands for their own 'Native' college.

Competition, contestation and ambition in the origins of the SANC

In the meantime, in the last few years of the nineteenth century a challenge to the educational stronghold of the United Free Church in the Eastern Cape arose, in the form of the discovery that Blacks could pursue their education at Black American colleges. The attempts by the AME Church to solder educational links towards the end of the nineteenth century were accompanied by the provision of funding to the South African AME for members of the congregation to study in the AME's Wilberforce Institute in Ohio in the United States.²⁶³ Its material support was interpreted by the South African congregation as an indication of solidarity with the struggle of Black people to end the racist laws and discrimination that prevented Black Africans from progressing in the same way as former Afro-American slaves

²⁶¹ Switzer, 1993: 147.

²⁶² Izwi Labantu, 14 July 1908.

²⁶³ Copley, 1990: 118 – 119.

towards modernity.²⁶⁴ Slavery had been formally terminated at the end of the Civil War in the United States in 1860, and after this the nominal freedom gained by Afro-American people enabled them to acquire an education and strive towards the benefits this afforded.

The work carried out by the AME in offering access to higher education to Black people drew the attention of the Ethiopian Church, founded in South Africa 1892. Rejecting the paternalism of the missionary churches, the independent churches generated a large following in small and large urban areas, and, to the consternation of the British missionaries, the option of studying in America was pursued by members of various independent church congregations. Various estimates have been made as to the number of Africans who either visited or studied at American colleges in the first decade of the twentieth century: Figures between 100 and 400 have been provided.²⁶⁵ Suffice to say that at a time when the University Colleges that existed in various centres in South Africa were enrolling a handful of students each, enrolments of Black students by the hundred in American institutions caused considerable alarm, presenting a challenge to the British model of higher education that had been installed.

At the same time, the leader of the AME, Bishop Turner, wasted no time in demonstrating the seriousness of their intentions to establish a college for Blacks by purchasing 12 acres of land in Queenstown. This was to be the site of a University where preachers, teachers, doctors, engineers and businessmen could be trained in the same way as students at Wilberforce.²⁶⁶ Two years later, the AME mouthpiece, *Voice of Missions*, reported that it had sent \$4,000 to its Cape Town-based representative, Dr Levi J Coppin, to buy a 12-roomed building for a college in the city.²⁶⁷ The rapid growth of the following in South Africa led the AME to proclaim proudly the unity of Black races, an assertion that created alarm among missionaries and settlers. One such article in the AME's *Voice of Missions*, bearing the title: "Is the AME Church loyal?", announced that "when our descendants shall grow strong as they were in the

²⁶⁴ Cobley, 1990: 119.

²⁶⁵ Switzer (1993: 179) and M.O.M. Seboni (1959: 5) provide figures of 100 and 200 respectively, whilst Cobley (1990: 121) places the figure anywhere between 100 and 400.

²⁶⁶ *Christian Express*, 1 December 1899.

²⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 1 December 1901.

great centuries of the foreparents of the foreparents of our foreparents, they shall, if the British be still extant in Africa, whip them until they reach the banks of the Thames.”²⁶⁸

As noted earlier, the increasing number of Blacks obtaining an education in America unnerved White settlers in the Eastern Cape, and the assertiveness of the new Black petty bourgeoisie was resented as ‘race antagonism’, a sentiment reflected in an editorial of the Grahamstown-based newspaper, the *Journal*, as follows:

Those natives who have left South Africa to get an education under Negro influences in America can hardly help imbibing the same race antagonism and we fear that when they return to South Africa they will come inoculated with this dangerous poison, and with the power of communicating it to their own people in this land. The South African native is not sufficiently educated to appreciate this new danger and fortify himself against it. It would be better if the Government, through the Education Department, were to make it possible for him to get here, in his own land, under loyal and wise influences, the best education he is capable of receiving.²⁶⁹

Settler opinion on education for Africans: Adaptationism versus Enlightenment

Another dimension to the tussle over the form of education that should be provided to Africans was added by the so-called ‘adaptationists’, represented by Charles T. Loram. The adaptationists considered that Africans should receive an education in the form of a curriculum adapted to their social circumstances, which were at the time considered as falling between primitive and civilised societies. Like other liberals in the decade after the formation of the Union of South Africa, Loram believed in segregation and also that the future of Africans lay predominantly in agriculture. He subscribed to Booker T. Washington’s ideas of an education comprising a blend of industry and intellect, believing that a specific class of Africans should be educated to lead their communities. This leadership was envisaged as initially providing technical instruction in current techniques that would improve agricultural production, based on the belief that training in industry and agriculture should precede an education in the liberal arts.

²⁶⁸ *Christian Express*, 1 August 1902.

²⁶⁹ *Journal*, 24 December 1901.

The adaptationist notion was supported by Kenneth Hobart-Houghton, a Presbyterian minister at Lovedale College, who had envisaged training teachers who would also receive agricultural and technical instruction in much the same way as at Lovedale, but at the level of higher education. The difference he perceived was that future African leaders who emerged from the SANC would be morally as well as intellectually equipped for leadership, by virtue of having received an education offered by a multi-denominational Christian education that had balanced intellect with practical application.²⁷⁰ Loram, by way of contrast, was opposed to the idea of higher education for Africans, unless it was purposefully oriented towards what he perceived as their developmental needs.

James Henderson, the Lovedale Principal from 1906-1930, had advocated an essentially liberal curriculum, but with more emphasis on African languages. His intention was that there should be fewer academic encumbrances and impediments to success for non-native English students being educated in the English language, and also that the syllabus should be geared to their future in colonial society.²⁷¹ It was the resolute determination of Lovedale to influence the curriculum at the SANC towards assuming a form that differed from the White colleges that angered many of the emergent Black petty bourgeoisie. Their suspicions that any deviation would produce an inferior curriculum pointed to a widespread awareness of the inherently political nature of the curriculum, as will be shown.

Political and ideological wrangling over the first Native College

Whilst settlers were nervous at the prospect of the wrath of the vengeful 'Native', the assertive pro-African ideology that was evident in AME and in the Ethiopian movement of independent churches was also articulated at the political level by the South African Native Congress leadership. Political tensions between the South African Native Congress and Jabavu's *Imbumba* crystallised around the issue of the 'Native College', with Rubusana demonstrating his support for the pro-Africanist sentiment of the Ethiopian movement, declaring that "no White man will lift up the Black nation".²⁷² In 1902, the Queen Victoria Memorial (QVM) project was launched by the South African Native Congress, with its

²⁷⁰ David Burchell, 2001: 42.

²⁷¹ Ibid., 44.

²⁷² Switzer, 1993: 179.

reported purpose “to perpetuate the memory of her late Majesty Queen Victoria as an expression of the esteem in which she was held by all Native races in South Africa”.²⁷³

Although largely symbolic, this stated intention demonstrated the identification on the part of the emerging Black petty bourgeoisie with aspects of the colonial project, and is testimony to the partial success of the imperial hegemonic project in relation to this class. An African University was one of six projects proposed, another one being a school where young women would be able to learn domestic skills. The same edition of *Izwi Labantu* contained articles about Black American education, notably the Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute and its founder, Booker T Washington, acclaiming the achievement in “transferring every Negro who goes there, so far as in him lies, into a self-respecting, self-supporting, responsible citizen” in a college where “men work with their hands as well as their minds”.²⁷⁴

A growing sense of self-empowerment for Black people was evident in both the growth of Ethiopianism in the last few years of the nineteenth century and the interest among the emerging Black South African petty bourgeoisie in obtaining an education in America. This caused concern not only to settler society, but also to the missionaries, who were experiencing the exodus of Christian converts to the Black AME. They protested indignantly against the ‘poaching’ of converts by AME,²⁷⁵ and took advantage of the opportunity to emphasise the possibility of the Ethiopian movement provoking more widespread social resistance.²⁷⁶ In this respect, settlers and missionaries were united in their fear of resistance and the instigation of rebellion by the Black American Churches, as illustrated by the comment of Chief Magistrate

²⁷³ *Izwi Labantu*, 4 February 1902.

²⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁷⁵ In an article titled “Missionary raiders”, the Lovedale-based *Christian Express* reported that “South Africa seems at present the happy hunting grounds for all sorts and conditions of men... their efforts and adventures are not confined to financial schemes or even to military raids ... The quiet field of missionary work is being similarly invaded. Some time ago we called attention to a movement which is now known as the Ethiopian Church of South Africa” (*Christian Express*, 1 April 1898).

²⁷⁶ The Bishop of St Johns, Cape Colony, warned that “the new Church movements are, consciously or unconsciously, it is difficult to say, enflaming the passions of the people” and “it is worth noting that in places where such movements have had lodgement for a time, the cry for arms has been loud and deep” (*Christian Express*, 2 January 1899).

Major H.G. Elliot, “Take that Ethiopian Church and the spirit that started it; do you not think that is a dangerous thing?”²⁷⁷

Ethiopianism versus the post-War drive towards modernity

The determination by the Black petty bourgeoisie to gain access to higher education must be considered in the context of the onset of modernisation in South Africa. After the defeated Boer republics had been placed under British administration, economic reconstruction of the four provinces began, supported by the revenue from gold and diamond mining. Triggering the industrialisation that characterises South African modernity, there was enormous public expenditure in key areas of the infrastructure and commerce. This was accompanied by spending on welfare and on education and training in White civil society. At higher education level, as we have seen, this led to the establishment of a smattering of University Colleges throughout the four provinces. However, the support by Rubusana and the South African Native Congress for the Ethiopian Movement’s idea of an African College – and indeed, an African future – for Africans did not have a place within the State’s hegemonic project.

The ideals of political equality through self-empowerment based on an American political model appeared to present sufficient a threat to the State for the SANAC to recommend at a meeting held on 10 November 1905 in King Williams Town “that a central Native College or similar institution be established aided by various States for training Native teachers and in order to afford various opportunities for Higher Education to Native students”.²⁷⁸ This meeting followed shortly after the formation of the Inter-State Native College Scheme (ISNCS) in October 1905 at a meeting also held in King Williams Town, chaired by James Weir, a leading merchant trader and the town mayor. It was tellingly attended by other businessmen, influential chiefs, and representatives from the Church and State. Its explicit aim was to secure a location, funding and curriculum for a ‘Native College’ and it is hardly a

²⁷⁷ This comment was made when Elliot was giving evidence to a committee investigating the functioning of the Glen Grey Act, an Act which pioneered racial segregation by allocating a specific area of land to Blacks and providing for a system of political representation via the establishment of local district councils, rather than participation through registration on the common Voters’ Roll. Predictably, the Act was contested by Black organisations, and in particular the South African Native Convention, which supported the Ethiopian Movement (*Christian Express*, 2 January 1899).

²⁷⁸ *Christian Express*, 1 December 1905.

coincidence that a month later the SANAC was to endorse this idea. The common views of the State, Church, traditional and business leaders regarding the role and purpose of education is significant in that it indicates the extent to which the effect of the Ethiopian Movement was considered disruptive and a threat to social stability.

At the SANAC meeting, J.T. Jabavu seized the opportunity to garner political support for a proposal that would counter that of his rivals in the South African Native Congress and pitched his support for the SANAC resolution. Jabavu's support for the establishment of a 'Native College' was personally as well as politically motivated, as his son, Davidson Don Tengo (D.D.T.) Jabavu, had been refused entry to Dale High School in King Williams Town on the grounds that it was for 'Europeans' only.²⁷⁹ Following this, his father sent him to Wales to complete his high school studies, then to the University of London to complete his degree, and thereafter to Birmingham University, where he furthered his studies.²⁸⁰ His father's backing for the SANAC resolution earned him the position as one of the delegates appointed to represent the "Natives of the Colony",²⁸¹ and, fortified through his position as editor of *Imvo*, J.T. Jabavu's views in favour of a 'Native College' were widely read and popularised. Containing scores of articles in the form of editorials and reports on progress towards its establishment between 1905 and 1915, the advocacy provided by *Imvo* can be said to have proved instrumental in the growth of support within Black civil society for the establishment – after more than a decade of discussion and doubt – of the first institution of higher learning in South Africa for 'Natives', the South African Native College.

However, it was the second resolution of the SANAC that was to prove troublesome. This entailed the signing of a petition which was to be sent to the High Commissioner by "Natives in other protectorates and territories" in support of a 'Native College'. Each supporter would commit to a certain contribution and it was estimated that a sum of £50,000²⁸² would be collected, entailing the efforts of 200,000 signatories.

²⁷⁹ Switzer, 1993: 394.

²⁸⁰ Ibid.

²⁸¹ *Christian Express*, 1 December 1905.

²⁸² This sum equals the amount that was granted by the Rhodes Trust for the establishment of Rhodes University and it is presumably why this figure was identified as the required amount.

It was clear that at this stage the colonial State had already signalled that its support was largely symbolic and aimed at placating demands from the emergent Black petty bourgeoisie. No commitment was made in the form of policy enactment with a view to the definitive outcome of the establishment of a 'Native College'. The actual existence of a 'Native College' was to rely on the determination and financial means of those who supported the ideal, with the State assuming a passive role. This point was reinforced on other occasions, such as an address at Lovedale by Colonel Walter Stanford, Under-Secretary for Native Affairs, who said that Lord Selborne had been approached and was in favour of the scheme, and that, "When you have the money in hand or promised so as to be an asset, then you can approach our Government and High Commissioner for practical consideration of the site, building method of control and curriculum."²⁸³

The process leading to the establishment of the SANC, from the time that the idea was first mooted until the College became a reality, was extremely protracted, lasting for 10 years.

The decision emanating from the SANAC meeting led to the Lovedale Convention shortly afterwards in December 1905, sponsored by J.T. Jabavu. Following vigorous advocacy in his newspaper *Imvo Zabantsundu* and extensive campaigning, it was attended by more than 150 delegates from the Eastern Cape, Basutoland and Transvaal.²⁸⁴ Notwithstanding the prolonged and active campaigning in the field, there was little real progress after the initial launch of the ISNCS. In his doctoral thesis, Professor M.O.M. Seboni, an academic staff member in the Faculty of Education at Fort Hare during the apartheid era, chronicled in great detail the years of discussion and consultation that preceded the eventual establishment of the SANC. He described how the initial substantial support for the project that had been evident between 1905 and 1907 gradually dissipated, citing two main reasons for this. Firstly, the pronouncement that the curriculum would differ from that offered by White colleges drew suspicion, and secondly, the alarm within Black society relating to SANAC recommendations, specifically those concerning land and the franchise, caused many Black people to lose interest in the ISNCS and focus their activities on protest against the pending Union instead.²⁸⁵

²⁸³ *Ilange Lase*, 30 November 1906.

²⁸⁴ Switzer, 1993: 180.

²⁸⁵ Seboni, 1959: 121 – 124.

Misgivings around curriculum and location

The scepticism and misgiving expressed by a Mr Mvula at the 1905 conference was prophetic, as he enquired, “Is there nothing behind this proposal of the Native Affairs Commission? Will they not say ‘the Natives have accepted Inter-State support for their College’ and follow this up by a claim in other areas not in favour but against the Natives?”²⁸⁶ Later, in 1906, the Superintendent-General of the Cape Department of Education, Thomas Muir, expressed his preference for a high school to be established, given the absence of sufficient ‘feeder’ schools for Africans that would qualify them to undertake studies at college level, and refused to provide funding. To sway public opinion, Jabavu published an article in *Imvo* in January 1907 stating that feedback to their consultation campaign had indicated the need for teacher training, an agricultural course, and general education.²⁸⁷ An article in the *Education Gazette* cast doubt on feasibility of higher education for Blacks, stating that “not a single native having been successful in the [last matric] exam”,²⁸⁸ no Black students would be eligible to continue to higher education. The article concluded pessimistically that “The plain truth is that what Natives have got to give serious attention to for some considerable time is common school education”.²⁸⁹ The final blow to hopes around provision of higher education was dealt by the Education Department Inspector, W.G. Bennie, with the announcement that the College would start at high school level.

Apart from the issue of curriculum, there were also initial reservations among African delegates about the proposal by the Presbyterian missionaries that the College be located near Lovedale in Alice. This was considered by many to be too isolated to benefit Blacks in the manner envisaged, that is, the development of professionals and intellectuals. Other suggested sites of Kroonstad, Potchefstroom and Bloemfontein were established urban areas, but the latter two were already under consideration as sites for the White University Colleges that had been established in these towns in 1905 and 1910 respectively. Maseru had also been proposed, due to the backing of the Basotholand authorities for the project, but it was deemed too remote. In 1908, land in Tsolo, in

²⁸⁶ Seboni, 1959: 23.

²⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 88.

²⁸⁸ *Imvo*, 1 February 1907.

²⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

the Transkei, was offered as a site²⁹⁰ by the Transkeian Territories General Council (TTGC).²⁹¹ However, the donation of land by the United Free Church of Scotland at the second Inter-State Native College Convention held at Lovedale in July 1908 convinced delegates to support Alice, particularly due to its proximity to Lovedale, from where it was envisaged graduates could proceed to the SANC, as was indeed to be the case during the early years of its existence.²⁹² The land allocated by the Church included the original Fort Hare, and so it was that, once established, the University became known by its place name, rather than by the formally designated name of the South African Native College.²⁹³

In the interim, in October 1907 another conference had been held in King Williams Town, again chaired by the mayor, James Weir. The outcome of this was the establishment of a 10-member Executive Committee to drive the project forward, with Jabavu being given a paid secretary to accompany him on his fund-raising trips with Kenneth Hobart-Houghton and Dr McVicar (of the Victoria Hospital in Alice) through the provinces, as well as the colonies of Basotholand²⁹⁴ and Nyasaland.²⁹⁵ The task of the executive, of which J.T. Jabavu and Simon Peter Gasa, a political and educational figure in the Transkei, were the only two Black South Africans, was to negotiate with officials in the four colonies in favour of the establishment of a 'Native College'. The 1907 meeting was a prelude to the May 1908 Inter-College Conference held in Pretoria, which was expected to finalise the matter.

²⁹⁰ *Journal*, 11 February, 1908.

²⁹¹ The TTGC consisted of four Native Council representatives from the Transkei district councils. Four district Native Councils in the Transkei established by the Glen Grey Act in 1894 had joined to form the Transkei General Council in 1895, thereafter expanding to include other districts, forming the Transkeian Territories General Council in 1903 (<http://www.oocities.org/haigariep/TkeiE.html>). In the Ciskei, where the districts were geographically separated, and where ethnic rivalry between the Rharhabe and the Mfengu had been institutionalised in the Councils, the nine Councils met separately until the Ciskei General Council was established in 1934 (Leroy Vail, 1989: 397).

²⁹² Seboni, 1959: 53.

²⁹³ The formal change of the name of the institution to include the designation 'Fort Hare' will be discussed in Chapter Four.

²⁹⁴ Now Lesotho.

²⁹⁵ Now Malawi (Seboni, 1959: 80).

In the meantime, at the Missionary Conference held in King Williams Town in February 1908, a decision was taken to send a deputation to request an audience with Cape Prime Minister JX Merriman on the issue of funding of the Inter-State Native College. A large deputation comprising Colonel Walter Stanford (former Under-Secretary for Native Affairs), J.W. Sauer (Member of Parliament), Reverend Henderson, J.W. Weir, Dr McVicar, and Reverends E. Makiwane, S.P. Sihlali, I. Wauchope, J.K. Bokwe, J. Tengo Jabavu and S.P. Gasa proceeded to Cape Town with a view to requesting an annual grant of £10,000 and to petition for the College to be opened 1909.²⁹⁶ As observed earlier, there had been a mushrooming of University Colleges based on the British model throughout South Africa subsequent to the 1899 – 1902 War, as part of the colonial State's nation-building, and there was impatience among some to see the opening of a University College for 'Natives'.

Throughout this period, the South African Native Congress had refused to support the proposals or form part of consultations and discussions orchestrated by the ISNCS, and its political activities had become consumed by anti-Union activities after the South African War. Switzer alleges that the Congress lost a degree of credibility because of its refusal to drop the Queen Victoria Memorial proposal of a University in the Eastern Cape for Africans, even when it had become evident that the ISNCS was attracting support from groups and individuals beyond South Africa in Basutoland, Rhodesia and Bechuanaland.²⁹⁷ Certainly the well-resourced and executed promotional campaign of the ISNCS enabled it to canvass support more widely in rural areas, and the effectiveness of Jabavu's single-minded determination in influencing opinion positively towards the proposed 'Native College' cannot be underestimated.²⁹⁸ Despite the disruption of campaigns for and against the Union by various factions within the Black petty bourgeoisie, the ISNCS triumphed on the strength of its perseverance, whilst the QVM plan petered out.

By 1909, the already extended consultative and public relations exercise had been undermined by the political events that were to culminate in the establishment of the Union of South Africa in 1910, as outlined earlier. As we have seen, the pending Union was

²⁹⁶ *Imvo*, 11 February 1908.

²⁹⁷ Switzer, 1993: 180 – 181.

²⁹⁸ As evident in numerous editorials and articles in *Imvo* between 1905 and 1915.

regarded with mistrust by the Black petty bourgeoisie, who feared the loss of both land and political rights that would ensue.²⁹⁹ As attention shifted towards the Union and away from a 'Native College' and interest on the part of Black civil society waned, so did its willingness to contribute to the fund required. It will be shown that by the time the SANC was eventually founded, it was on the basis of considerably less funding than had originally been prescribed by the SANAC in 1905.

Financial vagaries and fragile foundations

Following the first Lovedale Convention in 1905, there had been a flurry of activity within small congregations as funds were collected in support of the SANC. Two larger donations of £2,500 from the De Beers Mining Company and £500 from Sir Philipson-Stow, a liberal Cape diamond magnate who attended the meeting of the ISNCS in 1905, provided an initial boost to the fund-raising.³⁰⁰ A further pledge of £6,000 from Basutoland³⁰¹ and a large grant of £10,000 from the Transkeian Territories General Council³⁰² seemed to provide financial security to the proposal. Numerous smaller pledges made at the 1907 convention were a testimony to the backing – in principle – of hundreds of Africans, including ordained pastors, chiefs, businessmen and teachers. Jabavu's zealous endeavours to garner financial support were reflected in the coverage provided to donors in *Imvo*,³⁰³ which related not only stories of funds received, but also of those promised.

In the end, pledges were to remain more at the level of 'support in principle'. Although in early 1908 the Lovedale Principal, Henderson, said that £20,000 had been collected by 'Europeans' and £23,000 promised by Africans,³⁰⁴ Seboni recounts how by 1910 only £8,600 had been

²⁹⁹ Seboni, 1959.

³⁰⁰ *Nyasaland Times*, 8 Sept 1906.

³⁰¹ *Ilange Lase*, 30 November 1906.

³⁰² It was reported that until then, £40,000 - £50,000 had been contributed (*Rand Daily Mail*, 1 February 1907).

³⁰³ For example, an article complimented small efforts such as that of Reverend Motiyane from Brandfort, a community where wages were between 7 and 10 shillings a month for women and 1 – 2 pounds a month for men, and whose congregation had held a concert and sent the proceeds of 7 pounds 4 shillings and 2 pence (*Imvo*, 1 February 1907).

³⁰⁴ *Journal*, 11 February 1908.

collected.³⁰⁵ Bennie's restriction on the college activities to preparation for matric examinations only may have been one of the reasons why pledges were not fulfilled; however, fifty years later, just before the Apartheid State appropriated the College, it transpired that donations over the entire period amounted to just £40,350.³⁰⁶ By way of contrast with the speedy decision by the Rhodes Trust to provide £50,000 for the establishment of Rhodes University in 1904,³⁰⁷ it is clear that 'Native' education did not form part of the hegemonic project of the post-colonial, imperially-aligned State.

By the end of 1910, subsequent to the conclusion of the Union Act, the plan to open a College for Africans seemed to have stalled. The settler-backed *Journal* in Grahamstown, which had previously vigorously promoted the plan to establish Rhodes University, reported, almost smugly, that:

it seems the Native College project hangs fire, whether for want of native support or because of the change of Government in South Africa adumbrates and a change in policy. We confess we could never see the wisdom of the scheme ... To our thinking, it was merely fathered by a few benevolent doctrinaires obsessed by an impractical desire to promote racial equality ... That the idea ever commended itself to the sane judgment of Colonists, we by no means longer believe.³⁰⁸

Six months after the establishment of the Union of South Africa, the fears of British settlers that, through a non-racial franchise, Black people might exert greater political power, had been allayed.³⁰⁹

³⁰⁵ Seboni, 1959: 63 – 64.

³⁰⁶ As of 31 December 1957, total donations included £10,000 from the TTGC; £5,320 from the United Free Church of Scotland; £6,172 from the Carnegie Foundation; £5,000 each from the Bantu Welfare Trust and Rhodes Trustees; £2,500 from De Beers Mines; £1,000 from the Witwatersrand Mineworkers Memorial Fund, and several other smaller donations (Fort Hare Calendar 1959: 133).

³⁰⁷ <http://www.ru.ac.za/rhodes/introducingrhodes/historyofrhodes>

³⁰⁸ *Journal*, 17 November 1910.

³⁰⁹ The pre-Union National Convention that was held in October 1908, attended by White representatives from the four colonies, had decided that Black people in the Cape would retain the right to vote, but that they would not be allowed to sit in parliament. Over and above this was the provision for the complete exclusion of Blacks from political participation if a two-thirds majority in both houses voted in favour of revocation of the Black franchise (Switzer, 1993: 159, 167).

By 1913, when another conference of the ISNCS was held, it was very poorly attended. By this stage, a delegation had been organised to protest against the forthcoming designation of separate areas of land to Blacks and Whites in the form of the Land Act. The pressing issue of land and property rights absorbed the attention of various members of the ISNCS who formed part of the delegation that intended to travel to England to protest against the Land Act, instead of attending the conference.³¹⁰

With declining grass-roots support, the prospects for the establishment of the 'Native College' were far from promising, and in June 1913, due to the lack of progress, the TTGC held a meeting to discuss whether to withdraw the sum of £10,000 that had been pledged, throwing the entire scheme into jeopardy.³¹¹ However, the determination of the Presbyterian missionaries was unwavering, and it appears that, in desperation, they approached the Wesleyan Methodist Church, whose strong support base in the Eastern Cape has been described. Fortunately, in an apparent spirit of goodwill and cooperation, the Wesleyan Methodist Church decided at its June 1913 conference to support the SANC,³¹² providing a new impetus. Once again, the plans to open the College were revived, but by now with a greater sense of urgency.

In November 1914, a further assurance of funding to the tune of £5,000 was provided by the United Free Church of Scotland, which had by this stage already bought four houses to accommodate staff. Finally, the Union government committed to an annual grant of £600 per annum for salaries, plus a £200 and a £50 grant for agricultural training.³¹³ Although the funds forthcoming did not approach the sum initially envisaged, a decision was taken to make the definitive step forward. The longstanding Executive Board was dissolved and replaced by a Governing Council headed by Hobart Houghton, heralding the start of the next phase, that of planning the administration of College affairs.

³¹⁰ Seboni, 1959: 121 – 124.

³¹¹ *Imvo*, 25 March 1913.

³¹² *Christian Express*, 20 June 1913.

³¹³ Seboni, 1959: 128 – 130.

The Governing Council held its first meeting in January 1915, at which its constitution was adopted. Consisting of representatives of the United Free Church, the Transkeian Territories General Council, the University of the Cape of Good Hope and the Department of African Secondary Education, its composition testified to dominant interests and agendas.

It was perhaps unremarkable that Jabavu was excluded from the Governing Council, having publicly stated, in an obvious reference to Hobart Houghton, that he had no wish to see a Presbyterian from Lovedale be selected as the first Principal of the SANC.³¹⁴ This was possibly because of Hobart Houghton's endorsement of adaptationist principles that supported a special curriculum containing technical and industrial training for Black students, so as to improve agricultural production in Black communities. As a successful businessman, Jabavu represented the Black petty bourgeoisie who had no wish to return to their rural roots, but he also favoured business training over the liberal arts. As it transpired, Jabavu found his way back on to the Governing Council as a representative of donors, a position from which he was able to criticise the membership of the Selection Committee for the first Principal and the choice of London as location for the interviews.

Two posts – those of Principal and teaching assistant – had been advertised in England by the High Commissioner at the end of 1914, and the colonial- and missionary-dominated agenda was evident in the composition of the Selection Committee, constituted by the Union High Commissioner, the Principal of the Westminster Training College and a former Foreign Mission Commissioner of the United Free Church. Interviews were held in London, and a young Scottish United Free Church candidate and school headmaster, Alexander Kerr, was selected for the post of Principal. Possibly as a form of atonement offered to J.T. Jabavu, his son was chosen as the teaching assistant. Whether or not this was an inevitable choice, Davidson Don Tengo Jabavu was certainly well qualified, having received his education in London and Birmingham Universities. He had also travelled to America to become familiar with the American college system, an experience that was to prove advantageous for various reasons, not the least of them being the contacts he had established that would later be of material benefit to the SANC.

³¹⁴ Seboni, 1959: 131 – 132.

On the strength of fragile resourcing and funding, and subject to the parameters imposed by its robustly constituted Governing Council, the South African Native College was officially opened on 8 February 1916 by the Union Prime Minister, General Louis Botha.

The first five years of the SANC: priorities and practices

The College was far from what had been originally envisaged: an anticlimax rather than the culmination of more than a decade of planning and campaigning. It offered preparation for matric examinations leading to university entrance, and diplomas in agriculture, teaching and commerce, taught by its two staff members, namely, the Principal and his assistant. Its first enrolments comprised 16 Black and 2 White men (the latter were sons of Lovedale teachers),³¹⁵ and 2 Black women. Due to low enrolments and the demand among Black students for matric, after just four months the College agreed to accept Indian and Coloured students too. Among the first students were sons of chiefs who were to be provided with technical training aimed at increased productivity through the introduction of new methods in the field of livestock and pasture. The emphasis on agricultural training “to foster modern methods of field and animal husbandry”³¹⁶ was clearly aligned to the colonial obsession with increased land productivity, but teacher training was equally important, and Lovedale was to serve as a feeder college to the SANC. A classical education was not pursued: instead, the aim was to provide education and training that would enable students to occupy productive roles in colonial society. Ironically, this approach was to resonate with the modernising purpose that was later to be promoted by the Apartheid State, to be discussed in Chapter Five.

Whether or not it was immediately evident to the missionaries – though certainly it had been anticipated by the Black petty bourgeoisie – the formation of the Union of South Africa would shift the activities of the State towards protecting and securing the interests of its White electorate against encroachment by the Black petty bourgeoisie. Legislation passed by the State in the aftermath of the Union curtailed political ambitions by excluding Blacks from the possibility of direct representation in parliament and preventing them from acquiring more land and thereby accumulating capital and becoming established as a class force on its own.³¹⁷

³¹⁵ Z.K. Matthews, 1981: 50.

³¹⁶ Burrows and Matthews, 1961: 6.

³¹⁷ Switzer, 1993: 164 – 177.

The previous threats in the form of the support for the pro-Africa Ethiopian movement, the growth of a Black agrarian bourgeoisie and the growth of the number of registered Black voters through property acquisition had by then been contained. There no longer appeared to be a political threat from the Black petty bourgeoisie in the Eastern Cape, and, as a result, the State turned its attention elsewhere. In doing so, it abandoned its interest in educational initiatives within Black civil society to counter dissent and neglected the issue of resourcing the prospective Native College.

Whilst the new Principal may have been unaware of the political rivalry behind the establishment of the SANC, it was soon evident that obtaining finance was to be his priority. From the outset, the minutes of the meetings of the Governing Council point to a preoccupation with issues of resources and funding, one that was to be continued, foregrounding the financial performance of the institution in the face of hardship. This was presumably so as to impress upon the post-colonial State both its hardships and its ability to endure these, whilst proving its worthiness to be assigned more funding in the form of government grants.

Due to its own tenuous origins as an institution reliant on the political and ideological backing of the colonial State, the SANC administration was reluctant to antagonise the State through challenging its ideology and practices. From the start, it was dependent on its annual teaching grant, and, in the hope of securing a more favourable funding arrangement similar to that of the White University Colleges, its tendency was to defer to the Union government. One of the tensions that assumed a central role in the decision-making by the SANC administration was that between the wish to act according to its own liberal ideology and the need to defer to the prescripts of the State. It therefore found itself constantly trying to avoid being seen as defying or confronting an increasingly racist body of legislation whilst simultaneously striving to behave in a principled manner, according to its non-racial values.

Playing down the ideological element of its existence meant that it strived to demonstrate other aspects of its existence, such as the success of its students, or its resourcefulness and accountability in functioning on a very small budget. Lacking the funds forthcoming from wealthy patrons and parents of students, the SANC was from the outset heavily reliant on donations from the Church and State. It was the expectation of the first Principal that once it had been demonstrated that 'Natives' were capable of the same academic achievements as their

‘European’ counterparts, the State would logically provide the same funding to the SANC that was granted to other University Colleges. The agendas and minutes of the meetings held throughout the early period point to an ongoing quest by the SANC to, firstly, raise funds from donors such as its founding member churches (Methodist, Presbyterian and Anglican), as well as State departments and patrons, and secondly, not to overspend its budget. The State, on the other hand, urged the SANC to attract funding for the purpose of providing lecture facilities and student accommodation. The primary purpose of the SANC’s administrative activities was thus geared towards financial goals, a situation that persisted throughout the period during which the SANC was under the administration of the missionaries and, as will be seen in Chapters Four and Five, into the apartheid and post-apartheid eras.

The paltry annual government grant received by the SANC did little to contribute to the operational expenses of the SANC – let alone capital costs. Due to the scarcity of financial resources, five years after its opening, at a meeting of the Governing Council³¹⁸ attended by the Honourable F.S. Malan, a Cambridge-educated liberal member of the South African Party and Minister of Education in the Union Government, the Principal asked for the SANC to be put on the same financial basis as other University Colleges for Whites. According to these arrangements, 75% of the salary bill was subsidised by the Union government, and Colleges were reimbursed for expenditure incurred in the provision of education. Malan had agreed to consider the request as urgent, although, as it transpired, it was not considered as a priority, since the State was embroiled in the political rivalry between supporters of English-speaking and Afrikaner nationalist interests.

Another aspect that predominated at the outset and that has prevailed through the history of the institution is the significance of administration, as both a structure and an array of responsibilities. The Principal at the same meeting requested administrative support, saying that his work as treasurer and secretary for the previous four years had detracted from the more important task of teaching and general oversight. Eventually, at the end of the year, it was decided that a ‘Native clerk’ would be appointed for the Principal’s office.³¹⁹ Nevertheless,

³¹⁸ Minutes of the meeting of the Governing Council held 6 January 1921.

³¹⁹ Minutes of the meeting of the Governing Council held 21 November 1921.

administrative duties continued to absorb Kerr's attention, along with the increasingly pressing responsibility for fund-raising.

At the end of 1921, it was communicated to the SANC that the Department of Education had agreed to the SANC request for equitability in terms of financial support, but that this had been rejected by the Union Treasury.³²⁰ At this stage, the SANC was in overdraft by £1,089 – a substantial sum – and so the Council agreed that Kerr should embark on a three-month fund-raising to the United States at the beginning of 1922. The aim was to approach the Phelps-Stokes Commission, a philanthropic organisation funded by the Carnegie Corporation that had been established to finance educational initiatives in Britain's African colonies. Although its broad aim was to fund the education of Africans, it transpired that two thirds of the funds assigned to Africa before 1940 had been allocated to the education of 'poor Whites' in South Africa.³²¹ Although Kerr's visit provided insights into the Black American colleges that had inspired the Ethiopian and American Methodist Episcopalians two decades earlier, he was unsuccessful in obtaining funds from the Commission.

As further testimony to its financial fragility, the SANC was periodically obliged to subsidise its activities through the sale of livestock it had acquired, and then to recover its capital losses – when it was able to – through further acquisitions. At the start of 1922, it was announced that the SANC had been forced to sell a significant amount of livestock to clear an overdraft of £3,462.³²² However, the capital loss was made good in 1925, when 1,250 acres of land were purchased, as well as a large number of cattle, bringing the total area of land occupied to 1,600 acres. The extremely shaky financial foundations of the SANC meant that the University Administration was forced to account for every penny, saving money wherever it could. This was particularly evident to students, whose protest originally took the form of complaints around the poor quality of food, as will be seen in the next Chapter.

The inadequacy of resources extended to teaching and residential facilities, with students initially accommodated in wood and iron structures and *rondawels* (traditional huts built of mud, reeds and clay), and forced to use buckets of water collected from the Tyhume River for

³²⁰ Minutes of the meeting of the Governing Council held 16 June 1921.

³²¹ J. Bottaro, 1985: 5. In Switzer, 1993: 408.

³²² Minutes of the meeting of the Governing Council held 16 January 1922.

their ablutions.³²³ The Principal had assiduously lobbied both the State and the Church for funding, and in 1918 the Union government had granted a loan of £10,800 for Stewart Hall, to be used for teaching purposes. In 1921 the Methodist Church donated funds for the building of Wesley Hall, with a capacity for 45 Methodist students, and in 1923 funds were donated by the Presbyterian Church and Church of Scotland for the construction of Iona Hall, which was completed in 1924. However, Beda Hall, a collection of wood and iron structures that had been erected for Anglican students in 1920, was replaced by a permanent structure only in 1934 – and was until that time the only hostel that accommodated Indian students.³²⁴

Final conclusive evidence of the SANC's dependence on and subordination to the State was demonstrated by its legal status. It was subject to the decisions of a Council comprising members who numbered more than the entire SANC staff, consisting of representatives of the Union government (usually from both the Departments of Education and Native Affairs), the Transkeian Territories General Council, the Church of Scotland, the Methodist Church and the Church of the Province, Basutoland Administration, the Chief Magistrate of the Transkei and Chief Native Commissioner of the Ciskei³²⁵ and representatives of donors. The initial membership of the Governing Council was augmented over time to include representatives of alumni, principals of secondary schools and members of Senate.³²⁶

Analysis: the social and cultural context of the exercise of hegemony

Situated in a rural area characterised by the lack of education of its population, whether of settler or indigenous origin, the location of the SANC did not appear to resonate with the traditional site of an institution of higher learning, usually a cultural hub that is linked to organisations that are crucial to the State. Its rural location underscored the symbolic nature of

³²³ Kerr, 1968.

³²⁴ Burrows and Matthews, 1961.

³²⁵ This post was occupied by an official appointed by the Department of Native Affairs who had overseen the nine district councils in the Ciskei and chaired the meetings attended by Native Councillors. Being geographically fragmented, they became united only as a General Council in 1934, and an Executive Committee comprising White and Black representatives was formed only in 1961 (Anonymous, in Vail 1989: 397).

³²⁶ Hostel wardens, appointed by Council on the recommendation of the Church, later joined Council in the capacity of Senate members. Minutes of meetings of the Governing Council held 1916 – 1935.

its existence as an institution of higher learning that would further the aims of the Presbyterian missionaries and their existing interests in the area. Its conceptualisation, at a time when a strident Africanism that rejected colonial hegemony threatened to overshadow the Scottish missionary influence, points to the driving motivation of countering dissident ideology and promoting a worldview that was steeped in liberal ideals. In the foregoing presentation of evidence, it has been argued that one of the reasons why the State agreed to assign responsibility for the provision of higher education to Black people to the Scottish Church was because it was envisaged as countering an emergent Africanism.

It has been shown that whilst the missionaries attempted to replicate colonial values in what can be likened to a textbook representation of the reproduction of a class system, the weak State was unable to formulate a hegemonic project. The initial concerns harboured by settlers and missionaries at the end of the nineteenth century related to the counter-hegemonic ideas presented by the Ethiopian and AME church influence, and these did not dissipate as the influence of these bodies waned. Instead, settler fears grew as the ambitions of the Black petty bourgeoisie became crystallised around political issues within political structures, particularly as the extent of their support became evident within Black society over the ensuing decades. However, the nature of contestation had changed completely, and, rather than rejecting the colonial system outright, the emergent class strove for access to privilege instead.

The struggle for hegemony within the State between the agrarian and emergent industrial bourgeoisie was not equally played out across the geographically dispersed provinces of the Union of South Africa. The absence of a strong State with a consistent discourse enabled the development of diverse political aims within dominant and subaltern classes in rural areas of the Eastern Cape, and strategic, opportunistic alliances were sought between factions of the emergent, mission-educated Black elite and settler society. Rather than towards contestation and competition between these classes, the tendency was towards collaboration.

In his study of subaltern classes, Jackson Lears³²⁷ asserts that the result of the impact of capitalist modernisation on traditional societies, where resistance has been displayed on the basis of cultural identity, rather than class, has been towards reformism, rather than radicalism. Traditional culture, embodied in a hierarchical structure that incorporates deference and

³²⁷ Jackson Lears, 2002: 338.

patronage, partially gives way to a culture based on Christianity, with a similarly structured hierarchy that replicates the patterns of authority and offers rules within which traditional conventions can be assimilated. This proposition resonates with the circumstances that have been described in this chapter.

The weakness of the State in terms of a unifying discourse has been alluded to. Yet, with the ‘practical experience’ of subaltern groups being one of racially based dispossession, subjugation and thwarting of aspirations, what prospect was there for the exercise of hegemony through a justifying ideology? Eastern Cape society comprised a ‘stratification’ of groups representing pre-capitalist and capitalist modes of production,³²⁸ in which social relations were complicated by the cultural tension between the British, Afrikaners and the indigenous population – itself unstable as a result of the expansion of the Zulu kingdom in the eighteenth century.³²⁹ At the same time, the responsiveness of Ciskei homesteads to the market economy was demonstrated by their producing and selling a surplus, which enabled their incorporation into a cash-based form of exchange and led to the development of a wealthy class of peasants who presented an element of competition to White farmers.³³⁰ The existence of different modes of production and numerous factions within dominant and subaltern society impeded the development of a hegemonic project. In the aftermath of the conquest of Black (Xhosa) society, instead of attempting to elicit their consent, the British administration aimed at control.

In this respect, the collaboration on the part of the missionaries performed a crucial role in the cultivation of values around a new social order. These imbued the spirit of capitalist society and Christian virtue, such as self-discipline, sacrifice, humility and hard work. At the same time, the new social order introduced a different social structure and hierarchy, requiring submission to a different form of authority. Whilst these values and practices were being transmitted to members of the emergent Black petty bourgeoisie by the missionaries, it cannot be claimed that they were completely assimilated, or that other existing beliefs were ousted. Other forces were at work, acting both for and against the adoption of new beliefs and their integration within the common sense of subaltern society.

³²⁸ Clifton Crais, 1992.

³²⁹ Peires, 1981: 85 – 88.

³³⁰ Colin Bundy, 1979.

Bocock³³¹ underscores Gramsci's presentation of the State as a complex conglomerate that cannot be considered as a monolithic entity with a coincidence of ideology and aims that serve the interests of a particular group. The repressive activities of the State and the antagonism displayed towards subaltern groups by certain segments of White settler society also contributed to the common sense of subaltern groups. In the absence of a coherent ideology articulated by the dominant class that is able to permeate civil society and become a part of 'common sense', a fluidity of beliefs and opinions associated with different classes and social groups exists. This prompts diverse acts that, in the absence of a distinctive hegemonic project, cannot be construed as either completely consensual or counter-hegemonic.

Following on from the above proposition, the ambiguity of the ideological role of the Presbyterian missionaries at Lovedale can be analysed. On the one hand, they formed part of the class of 'traditional' intellectuals associated with pre-capitalism and its faith-based values, whilst, imbued with the spirit of the Enlightenment, on the other hand they functioned as transmitters of the new social order. Imparting beliefs that were a composite of pre-capitalist and capitalist ideological premises, they also introduced technological innovations such as literacy and Western healing, as well as integral element of the new order, the cash nexus, through encouraging consumption of Western goods such as clothes and implements.

A missionary education was the means by which access to the benefits and status of colonial society could be achieved, and to many of the converts to Christianity such as Jabavu, a College of higher learning run by missionaries was the most expedient way of gaining access to the social classes that benefited from colonialism. Rupturing the ties with Xhosa culture and identifying with the White middle class and its imported culture presented a future that promised more than the traditional structures that still existed.³³² However, to the traditionalists who rejected the colonial agenda and the missionary insistence on abandoning the spiritual relationship between the Xhosa and their ancestors, a purely African movement with accompanying strategies was considered the only manner in which Africans would be able to control their future.

³³¹ Bocock, 1986.

³³² Ndletyana, 2008.

Whilst the battle lines between the Ethiopian churches and the Scottish missionaries had been drawn over religious terrain, their different ideologies symbolised the racial distinction that assigned the status of dominant and dominated, master and apprentice, or tutor and student: this was the very basis of the Enlightenment principle of providing tutelage towards modernity which had served to justify colonialism. The colonial intent of ideological leadership inherent in the provision of a British form of higher education to Africans was contested by the Africanism of Ethiopianism, which articulated a firm preference for the education of Africans by Africans. However, both the imported Ethiopianism and orthodox Christianity offered an alternatively structured social order with its own hierarchy, rituals and belief systems – and, more importantly, social status and mobility, as well as access to the urban settler lifestyle.

The world view of the missionaries portrayed the tenacity of a philosophy of rationalism that was not widely present among settlers or colonial administrators. However, at the same time, it was directed by self-interest in the sense that the quest to build a College was motivated by the need to counter the influence of AME and Ethiopianism. The ethos of the SANC was thus a blend of purposefulness and idealism that maintained an uneasy relationship with the colonial imperative of control. The aims of the first Principal and administration of the SANC reflected the tension between the rationalism reflected in the triumph of the will, and the need to demonstrate to the State the alignment of the SANC to colonial aims. The triumph of British cultural hegemony was described by Oliver Reginald (O.R.) Tambo,³³³ one of Fort Hare's most renowned alumni, in his inaugural address as the first Chancellor of the post-apartheid University of Fort Hare in 1991. Speaking about the ambiguous role of Fort Hare, he said that it had offered "the inestimable advantage of access to the intellectual traditions of enlightenment".³³⁴ The Principal, Alexander Kerr, he said, had embodied the "colonial

³³³ O.R. Tambo was a student at the SANC, graduating in 1941 with a Bachelor of Science. He was a founder of the ANCYL in 1943, holding the position of National Vice-President from 1948 – 1949 and becoming ANC Secretary-General in 1955, Deputy President in 1958, and Acting President in 1967, after the death of Alfred Luthuli. He was sent abroad to lead the ANC in exile and returned to South Africa in 1991.

³³⁴ O.R. Tambo, Inauguration Speech as Chancellor of the University of Fort Hare, 19 October 1991.

sensibility” that was “perhaps responsible for the worst faults of that period”, notwithstanding his “immense compassion and dedication to scholarship”.³³⁵

The desire on the part of the missionaries to prove that Blacks were capable of the same learning as Whites concealed the sub-text that the education offered would create a privileged class with a strong loyalty to the values and beliefs of the colonial system. This class would perform an instrumental role in domination, partly as providers of professional and administrative services, and partly as an intermediary layer between the colonial administration and subaltern groups. The Black petty bourgeoisie, spurning traditional social structures and roles, was typified in the young men and women who became students of the SANC. Though groomed towards cultural assimilation, this goal was partly successful. While many of them were later to provide ideological leadership aligned with liberal values, Fort Hare became renowned for displaying the spirit of resistance to White domination.

The development of a form of political leadership that by and large nurtured petty bourgeois beliefs will be described in the following chapters. It will nonetheless be shown that the form of resistance displayed by students was not always explicitly political, particularly in the first two decades of the SANC’s existence. The transition from initial acceptance of the role of the SANC to outright rejection four decades later will be examined in the following chapters.

³³⁵ Ibid.

Chapter Four: The dependent post-colonial State and the early South African Native College 1924 – 1959

This Chapter outlines the transition in the expression of a capitalist State from the post-colonial to the bureaucratic authoritarian State, framed within the context of changes in the political economy and continued contestation within the national bourgeoisie. Challenges presented by the Afrikaner faction of the national bourgeoisie to the faction representing British capital culminated in the Afrikaner-based National Party gaining control of the State in 1948. The primary effect of the shift in the balance of power to a weak faction of the national bourgeoisie will be shown to have been the increasingly authoritarian behaviour of the State vis-à-vis political challenges presented by antagonistic groups and classes.

In relation to the exercise of cultural hegemony, the tensions between the aims of the State and those of the SANC will be analysed within the overarching framework of the advent of the Afrikaner Nationalist State and its hegemonic Apartheid project. Within the ranks of civil society, in the broader sense of the term, the relationship between the State and the University will be examined according to the concepts of control, conformity and contestation. Whilst the authoritarian State aimed at enforcing compliance and eliminating counter-hegemonic discourse, the implementation of the Apartheid project provoked contestation. At the level of the university, the examination focuses on the manifestation of conformity and limited contestation on the part of the missionary-dominated Administration of the SANC.³³⁶ Within the student body, on the other hand, expressions of conformity and contestation are shown to illustrate the successfulness or otherwise of the attempted exercise of cultural hegemony.

The University Administration

At this point, a detour will be taken to expand on the nature of University Administration in general, and the particular form that it assumed at the SANC (later Fort Hare). While the role of the University Administration is clearly indicated by the term, its responsibilities in running the affairs of the institution are imbued with a particular view concerning the role of

³³⁶ Note the interchangeable use of the terms “missionary-dominated Administration” and “missionary Administration”, both referring to the body with responsibility for administration of the SANC (later the University College of Fort Hare) in the period before 1960.

the university in society. This informs its activities in shaping the curriculum, in the broadest sense, that of directing and shaping the learning experience of students. Embedded in this understanding are apparently mundane aspects such as admitting students, approving courses and conducting examinations, all of which are conducted according to institutional policies and rules. Although the University Senate, constituted by academic staff and chaired by the Rector or Vice-Chancellor, approves rules that are implemented and administered by the Administration, the Senate is not necessarily the body that drafts rules or proposes resolutions to situations as they arise. In light of the teaching and research prerogatives and priorities of academic staff, this is understandable, but even so, the situation at the SANC was unusual.

The first Administration of the SANC was headed by the Principal, Alexander Kerr, who was also one of the only two academic staff members. The fusion of administrative and academic functions in the person of the Principal set a precedent for the concentration of power in the main administrative post, with academic staff tending to defer to decisions and follow this lead. Given the strength of Kerr's character, this was to persist, even after the number of staff had expanded and a Senate had been established. By the time of his retirement in 1948, after holding the post of Principal³³⁷ for 32 years, the practice of deferring to the word of the University's main administrator seemed to have become part of the institutional ethos, akin to common sense. The top-down nature of the Administration was to serve the interests of the Apartheid State when it assumed control of the University in 1960, as will be seen in Chapter Five. Similarly, the absence of forceful leadership in the post-Kerr period (1949 – 1955) and in the post-apartheid era (post-1990) will be manifest in the explicit expression of ideological differences among academic staff. This will be discussed in this chapter and in Chapter Six.

Kerr was by all accounts a serious and formidable figure, insisting on discipline, punctuality, hard work and the virtue of manual labour.³³⁸ He was also a conformist by nature. Zachariah Keodirelang (Z.K.) Matthews, the first graduate of the SANC, who later became a member of the SANC academic staff and a renowned scholar in the field of Social Anthropology, worked alongside Kerr for decades and knew him well. In his autobiography, while recognising Kerr's positive attributes such as his personal commitment to his principles, he

³³⁷ During the apartheid era, the designation of 'Principal' was changed to 'Rector', then to 'Vice-Chancellor' in the post-apartheid era.

³³⁸ Z.K. Matthews, 1986: 51.

criticises Kerr for not having used his position as Principal or his contact with leading members of the Union government to speak out “on public questions”.³³⁹

Returning to the nature of power in the university, it must be observed that, although responsible for making decisions and organising the affairs of the university respectively, the power of both the Senate and the Administration is curtailed. These bodies are jointly accountable to a governing body, the University Council, some of whose members, in the case of publicly funded universities, are appointed by the State. The function of a university Council is to oversee the activities of the university, thus constraining the ability of the Administration and the Senate to act independently. This arrangement leaves no doubt as to the location of power in relation to decisions that establish the parameters for university activities. It is significant that in the case of the SANC, all Council members were appointed by the State, an arrangement that illustrates perfectly Gramsci’s hypothesis of the interconnectedness between members of political and civil society in the exercise of hegemony.

An investigation of the changing relationship between the State and civil society – in the form of the University Administration, staff and students – will reveal the existence of different grounds for conformity, according to Femia,³⁴⁰ as well as inertia on the part of the missionary Administration, particularly in the last decade before the Apartheid State assumed control of the SANC, which was by then known as Fort Hare.³⁴¹ Instead, according to Donovan Williams,³⁴² an academic staff member during the 1950s, it remained committed to

³³⁹ Matthews observes that Kerr used church channels to try and influence public opinion, rather than make public statements about any issues other than education (Z.K. Matthews 1986: 56).

³⁴⁰ Femia, 1981: 38 – 43.

³⁴¹ Details of the change in name, which took place in 1952, will be provided shortly.

³⁴² History lecturer, and later Professor, Head of Department and member of Senate, Donovan Williams worked at Fort Hare from 1952 to 1960. As indicated in the acknowledgments, a substantial amount of information has been gained from Williams’ book about the final years of Fort Hare before it was placed under the administration of the Apartheid State. It must be emphasised that his account offers insights into the divisions and tensions that existed within the academic staff and Senate in relation to Fort Hare’s mission and its position vis-à-vis the Apartheid State. Although his intention was to depict resistance offered by Fort Hare, the details provided confirm the researcher’s hypothesis relating to the tendency towards conformity on the part of the missionary Administration.

the narrow parameters of established routines and principles that incorporated a strong element of discipline and subordination to authority. Following the lead that had been established by Kerr, it avoided confrontation with the State and strove not to offend.³⁴³ It will be shown that the Administration wished to avoid representations of dissent of any form that could perhaps sully the image they strove to recreate of the diligent and studious pursuit of 'knowledge'. Williams reveals that for this reason "not surprisingly, the Senate was unsympathetic to increasing student political activity."³⁴⁴

The rigidity of the missionary Administration, coupled with a belated symbolic stance against the State's project of racial separation and subordination, was to lead to it being identified with the oppressive State by the student body, as will be shown. In this chapter, the heterogeneous nature of the student body, as members of civil society in its broadest sense, will be illustrated by examining different responses to the attempts by the missionary Administration and the State to exercise control. In doing so, the narrative also traces the rise of a racially exclusive African nationalism in South Africa that accompanied the Pan-Africanism sweeping through Africa in the 1950s, as former colonies gained independence.

We have seen how the Black franchise and land ownership were sacrificed in the Union project, and the legal institutionalisation of White domination culminated in the 1948 electoral victory of the National Party. The result was the introduction of an official discourse of racial separation, called Apartheid. This directly opposed the founding principles of the SANC, notwithstanding the fact that the missionary Administration inadvertently participated in racially aligned activities by classifying students according to race and ethnicity.³⁴⁵

However, its financial dependence on the State and its hopes to achieve the same access to State funds and grants as other University Colleges compelled the SANC to be prudent in its pronouncements on racial separation. Abstention from critique constitutes conformity, but,

³⁴³ Donovan Williams, 2001: 281.

³⁴⁴ Ibid., 43.

³⁴⁵ The University Calendar and annual reports during the period under the missionary Administration note the number of enrolments according to ethnicity. When the apartheid State took control of Fort Hare in 1960, this practice stopped, mainly because from this point on Fort Hare was supposed to accommodate Xhosa-speaking students.

over and above this, the SANC was careful to emphasise its loyalty to State ideals after 1948.³⁴⁶ This was in sharp contrast to the period before the advent of the Apartheid State, when senior members of the University Administration had been openly critical of racial discrimination.³⁴⁷ Fear of negative repercussions is one of the four reasons for conformity posited by Femia;³⁴⁸ all will be discussed as they present themselves in the research findings.

According to Williams, it was because of the geographical isolation and institutional insularity of the SANC that the missionary Administration failed to recognise the threat that the hegemonic project of Afrikaner nationalism posed in relation to its own purpose.³⁴⁹ As a result, the SANC was ill-prepared for the ideological assault in the form of legislation aimed at racially segregated education. By the mid-1950s, the missionary Administration found itself alienated from both the State and the student body, which had become increasingly politicised by the African independence movement post-Second World War. The fundamental aim of the missionary Administration was to provide higher education to Blacks, but the introduction of legislation aimed at ethnically segregated education would thwart this purpose.

Nonetheless, the first legislation aimed at racially educated separation in the form of the Bantu Education Act of 1953, which provided for separate schools and curricula for Blacks,

³⁴⁶ The University Education Act No. 61 of 1955 qualified what was by then known as Fort Hare College as a university institution, a status that entitled it to the same administration and subsidies as other universities. In response, the university Administration stated its optimistic intention of “continued cooperation between church, state and community ... in the wisdom of those in control of State policy and public funds” (H.R. Burrows and Z.K. Matthews, 1961: 9). In 1958, when the Apartheid State announced its intention to place Fort Hare under the administration of the State, the Senate claimed that Fort Hare had hitherto enjoyed “a successful and harmonious working relationship with the Department of Educations, Arts and Culture” (Williams, 2001: 415).

³⁴⁷ An example of open criticism was that of a speech made at the SANC’s 21st anniversary celebrations, to be described in due course.

³⁴⁸ The first of Femia’s reasons, acquiescence under duress, and the third, conscious agreement with basic principles, are manifest in the conformity of staff, White and Black, in the 1950s (Femia, 1981: 38 – 43).

³⁴⁹ Williams, 2001: 6 – 7.

did not provoke a response from the SANC Administration. It was only when the liberal minority in Senate managed to prevail on that body to elicit a statement opposing the Apartheid State's decision to take over the University in March 1957 that direct opposition was publicly displayed.

The rise of the nationalist State

The discussion that follows outlines the political activities of the State. The activities of the state in this period were characterised by domination and the exercise of coercion, rather than the cultivation of consent. Covering the period 1920 to 1960, this chapter can be conceptually split into two periods: the first two decades are characterised by the growth of a sense of Black solidarity in civil society under liberal, non-racial leadership; the last two by the emergence of a younger and more militant generation strongly influenced by Pan-Africanism and African nationalism. In terms of the State as political society, the first three decades reveal activities aimed at legal subjugation and exclusion, such as the withdrawal of the rights of Blacks to political participation through the Representation of Natives Act of 1936. However, the State's activities from the 1950s onwards are indicative of the coercion and domination that characterise an increasingly authoritarian State, which utilised violence to counter and eliminate dissidence.

Economic and political overview – the State, subaltern groups and dissent

As explained in Chapter Three, the indigenous inhabitants of South Africa were overpowered in war by the combined forces of settlers and the British military. By the early twentieth century, they had been subjugated to the status of a labour supply for the needs of the mining and agricultural sectors of White settler society. The expropriation of land from the peasantry is portrayed by Alex Callinicos³⁵⁰ as exemplifying the 'Prussian' form of capitalist development. However, characterised by the racial nature of conquest and expropriation, racial exploitation was, from the outset, a central feature of capitalist development in South Africa.³⁵¹ The subjugation of the conquered by the colonial State occurred for the specific

³⁵⁰ Alex Callinicos, 1988.

³⁵¹ Ibid., 10 – 11.

purpose of ensuring a supply of labour, a feature that was to be reinforced by the control embodied in a sequence of laws designed to exclude Blacks from political participation.

We have seen that in the 1880s, there were a significant number of registered Black voters in the Eastern Cape. Successive legislation aimed at limiting access to the franchise, and by 1920, the voter profile of the Eastern Cape had changed significantly. The number of registered Black voters had been greatly reduced and their political significance had diminished. Although the Black petty bourgeoisie in the rural area around Alice continued with the formal political struggle to retain and recover their voting rights, a new political force emerged in the form of organised labour in urban areas. In the ports of East London and Port Elizabeth, the militancy of the working class movement was displayed in the strike action carried out after 1918 under the auspices of various trade unions. A number of unions were consolidated under the Industrial and Commercial Workers Union (ICU) in Cape Town in 1919, and the Eastern Cape branch of the ICU was established in 1922.³⁵²

This transformation in the source and nature of political contestation from the Black petty bourgeoisie to the working class resulted in a switch in the focus of the State's attention, prompted it to respond with violence, both legal and physical. However, its attacks were not limited to members of the Black working class, and an example of the use of coercion against Whites is provided by the infamous so-called 'Rand Revolt', which took place in 1922 on the Witwatersrand in the interior of the country. On this occasion, the army was called in to drive thousands of striking miners back into the mines, in the process killing more than 200 miners, of whom nearly all were Whites.³⁵³

Because White workers constituted a political force, the consequences of this attack by the State were evident in the 1924 election results. The so-called 'Pact' Government, constituted by the Labour and Nationalist parties, representing working class and anti-imperialist elements of White society, won the elections and embarked on a strategy of accommodating the demands of the White working class. These demands were secured to the detriment of Black labour and Black civil society in general, as certain jobs were reserved for Whites and

³⁵² Switzer, 1993: 254 – 255.

³⁵³ Ibid., 254 – 255.

restrictions were placed on the rights of Blacks to live in urban areas. Control was embodied in legislation such as the 1923 Native (Urban Areas) Act, which enabled municipalities to designate separate areas called locations for Blacks. The Act also established Advisory Boards to approve applications for business and trading rights, and, most significantly, withdrew the rights of Blacks to acquire property in towns. Control over movement in the form of the notorious Pass Laws' required all Blacks to carry identification that confirmed – or denied them – their right to be in a particular area.

Accompanying the sporadic and violent labour resistance in the 1920s was the deterioration of the global economy, as the leading economic powers in Europe and the United States headed towards the 1930 Depression. Amongst the adverse repercussions on the South African economy were a decline in the demand for raw materials and a relatively short-lived instability caused by fluctuations in the price of gold. The weakness of the national economy at the time will be shown in due course to have been reflected in the precarious financial situation of the SANC during the early 1930s.

However, as the economy recovered in the second half of the decade, South Africa's industrial base expanded, leading to increased urbanisation, particularly of the Black working class. This trend, too, was evident in the profile of students enrolling at the SANC, who were no longer primarily the children of the Black elite (chiefs and petty bourgeoisie), but members of the working class striving towards upward social mobility. As Black urbanisation intensified, so did White anxiety around the number of Blacks living in close proximity, shifting to the right the political attitudes of the former liberals who had supported the continued extension of the franchise to Blacks on the basis of property and literacy criteria.³⁵⁴

In 1933 an alliance between the National Party and the South African Party formed the United Party, with its increasingly conservative ideology concretised in the legislation that eliminated Black political participation, the 1936 Representation of Natives Act. This confirmed the fear of being disenfranchised that had caused the Black petty bourgeoisie to oppose the formation of the Union of South Africa some three decades previously. Shortly

³⁵⁴ Information contained in the discussion to follow has been sourced primarily from Switzer (1993), Chapter 9, "Opposition Politics and Popular Resistance II".

afterwards, the outbreak of the Second World War in 1939 led to an increased demand for manufactured goods from South Africa, whose industrial production benefited from the inability of British and French industries to produce sufficient goods whilst their countries were directly engaged in the war. Industrial growth accelerated Black urbanisation to the extent that segregation policies ceased to be implemented between 1942 and 1943. This in turn encouraged the development of an established Black urban population whose members were aware of the need for labour and were hence more confident in their demands for higher wages, lower rentals and an improvement in living conditions.³⁵⁵

The children of this urban Black working class were to inject a more radical element into the student body at the SANC in the 1950s, as will be shown. Prior to this, a detour will be made to examine the project of the Afrikaner National Party, which was instrumental in gaining popular support among White Afrikaners, described as “an almost textbook illustration of Gramsci’s notion of a hegemonic party ruling by consent as well as force”.³⁵⁶

With its strategy of intensive cultural and political organisation, Afrikaner nationalism succeeded in cultivating the consent of the majority of Whites. It was supported by State participation in the establishment of an economic infrastructure that would provide a base for economic development as well as jobs for White Afrikaners. However, by excluding Black people, the Afrikaner Nationalist State evoked widespread resistance and dissent, and took recourse to domination to secure compliance. Conformity was, however, present in various forms throughout civil society, in its broader sense, and will be described in the latter part of this chapter as well as in subsequent chapters.

The rise of Afrikaner nationalism

The inclusion of the former Boer Republics in the post-South African War modernisation project described in Chapter Three was a prelude to the formation of the Union of South Africa in 1910. This Act offered a clear indication of the future subjugation of South Africa to an imperial agenda, stimulating the development of Afrikaner nationalism. It was formally

³⁵⁵ Nigel Worden, 1994: 61 – 63.

³⁵⁶ Callinicos, 1988: 29.

established as a political force by the 1914 formation of the National Party, under the former Boer General J.B.M. Hertzog, with the intention of safeguarding White Afrikaner identity.

Afrikaner nationalism was stimulated by the founding in 1918 of the *Broederbond* ('brotherhood'). The activities of this organisation were initially aimed at engendering a sense of cultural identity, but later at developing an overarching strategy that would offer a political, economic and cultural framework that would provide leadership to Afrikaners. The role of the Broederbond in consolidating State power and developing the Afrikaner national bourgeoisie illustrates the inextricable linkages between political and civil society and the manner in which the bureaucracy operated to organise hegemony within a certain sector of White society. Broederbond members (all male) were recruited from the upper ranks of civil society and comprised ministers of religion, teachers, farmers, lawyers, lecturers and businessmen. After the National Party assumed State power in 1948, members of the Broederbond were appointed to key posts throughout political society, contributing to and supporting the State's hegemonic ideological project whilst performing their technocratic functions.³⁵⁷ Bureaucrats were able to elicit information from members whilst organising the exercise of hegemony – or control over subaltern classes. The way in which this was executed with respect to the SANC will be examined in greater detail in Chapter Five.

According to historian Robert Ross,³⁵⁸ the initial intentions of the Broederbond did not include a coherently antagonistic stance towards other groups in society. However, it soon became one of the vehicles of the Afrikaner bourgeoisie for promoting a loyalty to 'Afrikaner' values that would cut across social classes through affiliation to a specific culture, uniting otherwise disparate groups. The Broederbond was instrumental in the establishment of the *Federasie van Afrikaanse Kultuurverenigings* (Federation of Afrikaner Cultural Associations), or FAK, in 1929. This formed the cultural strand of the Apartheid project, accommodating Afrikaner clubs, religious and youth groups, professional associations and employees of State organisations. The media also played a significant role: *Nasionale Pers* was established as a holding company for Afrikaans language magazines and newspapers,

³⁵⁷ L.R. Migliaro and P. Misuraca, 1982.

³⁵⁸ Robert Ross, 2008: 113 – 118.

prominent among which was *Die Burger*, which actively disseminated ‘facts’ and news according to ‘Afrikaner’ values.

The economic component of this nationalism was initiated in the 1920s by the Afrikaner faction of the national bourgeoisie, an agricultural oligopoly of wealthy Cape farmers, to develop and consolidate a financial and industrial base that would counter British capital. Its aim was to attract and consolidate Afrikaner capital, and this was effected through the establishment of SANLAM (*Suid-Afrikaanse Nasionale Lewenassuransie Maatskappy*, or South African Life Assurance Company), followed by SANTAM (*Suid-Afrikaanse Nasionale Trust Maatskappy*, or South African National Trust Company), and thereafter *Volkkas* (*People’s Bank*). Another element of the strategy was to elicit support from the Afrikaner working class and ‘poor Whites’, the urbanised and unskilled Afrikaners displaced by the Anglo-Boer War who had drifted towards urban areas in search of work in the early twentieth century. Through the 1924 alliance between the Labour and Nationalist Parties, the Pact government introduced the so-called ‘civilised labour’ policy, which amounted to a strategy of buying the loyalty of the White working class through the allocation of certain privileges and status. In essence, particular jobs were reserved for Whites, therein cultivating a racial and cultural identity that would prevent the development of a working class solidarity, combating socialism and eliciting political support.³⁵⁹

In 1939 SANLAM underwrote the *Reddingsdaadfonds* (Rescue Fund) to support Afrikaner businesses, whilst during the 1930s public companies founded on the base of taxes generated by the mines included the national electricity supplier, the Electricity Supply Commission (ESCOM), and national provider of iron and steel for manufacture, the Iron and Steel Corporation (ISCOR). These public and private enterprises were aimed at enabling Afrikaner capital to compete with British companies, whilst ISCOR and ESCOM served as a catalyst for the establishment of smaller engineering and manufacturing firms.

At the political level, power struggles between the conservative and liberal factions of Afrikaner nationalism acted against the unifying force of cultural and economic forces. To

³⁵⁹ Heribert Adam and Hermann Giliomee, 1983: 247.

overcome this, according to Dan O'Meara,³⁶⁰ a concerted effort on the part of a small group of intellectuals and politicians was required. This was achieved after a conservative group broke away from the so-called Fusion government (a coalition of the pro-British United Party and the Afrikaner National Party) in 1934 to form the Purified National Party under DF Malan. Supported mainly by wealthy Cape farmers and business leaders of the by now powerful financial organisations SANTAM and SANLAM,³⁶¹ this political party became the champion of Afrikaner capitalism. Its organic intellectuals were responsible for developing the apartheid ideology which was aimed at containing and disguising political and class divisions among Afrikaners through the "laboriously constructed"³⁶² project of Afrikaner Nationalism. This appealed for unity on the basis of a *volk*, or people, who shared the same past, the same Christian values and ideals, and conception of their destiny.

So successful was the economic project of the National Party that by the 1940s it had consolidated a strong financial base. However, it was apparently only towards the end of the 1950s that the success of cultural hegemony was evident in the way that the carefully crafted 'Afrikaner' values had become absorbed as part of the 'common sense' of the majority of the White Afrikaner electorate.³⁶³ It has been pointed out by O'Meara that the National Party extended its support base to include non-Afrikaner Whites during the late 1950s and 1960s on the basis of 'bread-and-butter' rather than ideological issues, securing support through strategies that resulted in an elevated standard of living for Whites.³⁶⁴ Whilst in 1948 the National Party achieved a majority in Parliament, and enjoyed an incremental increase in its support from the White electorate, both English- and Afrikaans-speaking, this was mainly due to the greatly improved standard of living for Whites, rather than conscious agreement with Nationalist ideology.³⁶⁵

³⁶⁰ Dan O'Meara, 1997.

³⁶¹ Ross, 2008: 117 – 118.

³⁶² O'Meara, 1997: 3.

³⁶³ Apparently it was not until the 1958 election that a majority of White Afrikaners voted in support of the National Party and its hegemonic project (O'Meara 1997: 6).

³⁶⁴ Ibid.

³⁶⁵ O'Meara, 1997; Ivor Wilkins and Hans Strydom, 1979.

The hegemonic project of Apartheid

The concerted effort to unite Afrikaners across classes after 1934 utilised a multi-pronged strategy, the cultural element of which was until the 1960s successfully executed by the FAK, Broederbond and *Nasionale Pers*.³⁶⁶ The ideological roots of the apartheid scheme can be traced back to this period, when Afrikaner intellectuals belonging to the *Afrikanerbond vir Rassestudie* (Afrikaner Union for Racial Studies) and later the South African Bureau of Racial Affairs (SABRA) proposed various modernising strategies.³⁶⁷ In the aftermath of the Second World War, the 1948 Fagan Commission recognised the permanency of Blacks in urban areas. However, the National Party favoured the previously commissioned 1946 Sauer Report that advocated consolidation and greater control over ‘Native reserves’ and Black settlements and segregation of facilities for different races. ‘Separate Development’, the term used by the National Party to lend a veneer of respectability to the racial domination of apartheid, became the official election plan of the National Party prior to the 1948 election, on the basis of which it was won.³⁶⁸

A key member of the Broederbond and National Party during its first years in control of the State was the former academic, Dr Hendrik Verwoerd, occupying the post of Minister of Native Affairs until 1958, when he was elected Prime Minister. As party leader and later Prime Minister “he could expound the ideology of Separate Development better than any academic. He was in fact the master of the ideology. He appropriated some of the ideas of certain SABRA intellectuals and discarded those that did not fit into his grand scheme.”³⁶⁹

Examples of this ideological rigidity can be found in Verwoerd’s determination to implement the Apartheid project, despite the financial impracticality highlighted by the reports of both the Holloway Commission on higher education of 1953 and the 1955 Tomlinson Commission

³⁶⁶ Worden, 1994: 90.

³⁶⁷ Prominent among these was the establishment of more Afrikaans-medium universities and ‘technikons’ (Afrikaans for university of technology). As an institution at higher education level that foregrounds the technical element of education and training, striving towards technological proficiency and innovation in support of business and industrial ventures, a university of technology is a key element of the modernisation project.

³⁶⁸ Worden, 1994: 92 – 93.

³⁶⁹ Adam and Giliomee, 1983: 245.

on an economic policy for the 'reserves'. Commissioned by the National Party, the findings of the Holloway Report on separate higher education, released in 1955, were that racially segregated university education for 'non-Whites' was financially unfeasible. However, by November 1955 a committee had been appointed to organise the provision of racially segregated higher education, and in March 1957 the draft 'Separate University Education Bill' was presented to parliament. It will be shown shortly how the legislation that was initiated in 1957 would two years later remove the University College of Fort Hare from the administration of the Church and place it directly under the control of the Apartheid State.

The key element of the Apartheid project was derived from the £100 million plan presented by the Tomlinson Commission to consolidate and improve land. Verwoerd's department reduced this sum and drafted a £36 million plan that for the implementation of the 'Separate Development' policy whereby Blacks would be citizens of and reside in areas of land called 'Bantustans', later known as 'homelands'.³⁷⁰ A month after his election as Prime Minister in 1958, Verwoerd set about implementing the two projects outlined above. In lieu of the single Department of Native Affairs he had headed, he established two new departments, 'Bantu Administration and Development' and an entirely separate organ for 'Bantu Education'.³⁷¹

By this time, so successful was the discourse around Afrikaner Nationalism – and its corollary, the Apartheid project – in Afrikaans society, that “most White, male Afrikaans-speaking workers defined themselves as Afrikaners first, as White South Africans second, and as workers only third.”³⁷² On the basis of this support, the National Party carried forward the Apartheid project in the form of the 'homelands' scheme. The Promotion of Bantu Self-Government Act was passed in 1959, formally making provision for the first eight of what were to become 10 'homelands' areas.

Returning to the role of the Broederbond, it is important to note that members were required to display loyalty to the Afrikaner National Party and to form a part of the hegemonic project. Verwoerd had personally suppressed the political influence of academics whose ideas he disagreed with during the 1950s and 1960s, but during the 1970s the opinion of Afrikaner

³⁷⁰ Switzer, 1993: 325 – 329.

³⁷¹ Williams, 2001: 434.

³⁷² O'Meara, 1997: 5.

University Rectors was actively solicited by senior members of political society heading government departments, as will be shown in Chapter Five.³⁷³ In 1972, a total of 24 university Rectors belonged to the Broederbond and Rectors of 'non-White' universities met as a separate group to discuss topics circulated by the Executive Committee and make recommendations on these.³⁷⁴ The close links between political and civil society referred to earlier were evident in the highly political nature of the Administration at the University of Fort Hare and other Universities established for providing higher education to Blacks.

After the above detour to explore the nature of Afrikaner Nationalism and its hegemonic project, we now return to examine the change in the expression of the State that resulted from the National Party gaining control of the State.

The demise of the post-colonial State and advent of the authoritarian State

As Chapter Three showed, the political landscape that had existed in 1910 at the time of the establishment of the Union of South Africa displayed a fluidity that afforded opportunities for a certain degree of contestation on the part of the emergent Black petty bourgeoisie. This was manifest in the activities of the South African Native Convention and the establishment of the South African Native National Congress in 1912 to challenge the threats of political exclusion and the legally enforced appropriation by Whites of land that had been expropriated from African societies during conquest. It was the fragmented nature of the national bourgeoisie that permitted and accommodated this contestation, but the Pact government in 1924 produced a certain cohesiveness on the part of Afrikaner and English capital vis-à-vis Black civil society, prompted by the demand for labour and the desire to control a growing urban Black population.

Continued tensions between the factions of the bourgeoisie between 1920 and the 1940s generated a political instability that was marked by the State's inability to develop a unifying

³⁷³ As illustrated by Verwoerd ignoring and overriding the findings of the commissions referred to. He also marginalised Afrikaans academics at universities by ignoring their intellectual contributions, preferring the rigid conceptualisation of the mechanisms and functioning of apartheid proffered by party loyalists in SABRA and senior bureaucrats (O'Meara, 1997).

³⁷⁴ By 1978 there were over 11,000 members, of whom 20.4% were educators, including 176 university professors and 176 university lecturers (Adam and Giliomee, 1983: 245).

nation-building ideology and to exercise hegemony across civil society. Elections held in the first three decades of the twentieth century were testimony to the switching allegiances of the White electorate between the pro-British and Afrikaner elements of the national bourgeoisie, resulting in contradictory alliances as well as breakaways by an uncompromising Afrikaner nationalist element. Divisions within the national bourgeoisie were bridged by their unified stance vis-à-vis Blacks, whose status was perceived as essentially that of a labour supply, rather than citizens of a common society. The emergence of a large urban Black population whose political demands were expressed in strike action was countered, first by physical force, and then by legal repression as a means of control. These controls were relaxed briefly during the Second World War, as will be explained shortly, but thereafter intensified by the Apartheid State.³⁷⁵

In this context, it is useful to consider the notion of a crisis of legitimacy: this refers to a situation in which the State is unable to maintain power through its political and ideological functioning and instead has recourse to coercion and repression, in order to retain control. This forms part of the Guillermo O'Donnell and Philippe C. Schmitter hypothesis of the bureaucratic authoritarian State,³⁷⁶ an expression of the State in which there is a reliance on controlling mechanisms to compensate for the State's inability to obtain the general consent – or support – of its citizens. Controls are consolidated through centralised administrative structures and the expansion of the role of what Gramsci referred to as political society,³⁷⁷ that is, the bureaucracy, to disseminate the values of the dominant political party. The bureaucracy is populated by party loyalists and infused with its ideological discourse, and is backed by the repressive elements within the bureaucracy, namely, the police and military.

³⁷⁵ For example, troops were dispatched to quash the resistance to forced removal by a messianic group in the *Bulhoek* massacre near Queenstown in 1921 (Switzer, 1993: 263 – 264), and the armed forces were used to drive striking miners back to work in 1922 (Ross, 2008: 113).

³⁷⁶ Guillermo O'Donnell and Philippe C. Schmitter, 1988. Note that the conceptualisation of the bureaucratic authoritarian State is used in the context of the characteristics of the overarching political economy and social conditions from which it emerges. The conceptualisation of the transition from authoritarian rule to democracy, for which the two authors are renowned, is not applied to this research, although it has been widely applied in the transition to democracy in South Africa.

³⁷⁷ Antonio Gramsci. In Hoare and Nowell Smith, 1971: 12, 258.

The Apartheid State displayed the coercive traits described above, albeit that the support of large sectors of White society had been secured. Dissent was not tolerated and the State's activities assumed a coercive form, both within a legislative framework that institutionalised the elimination of dissent, and in its use of force to eliminate contestation. It was the explicit nature of repression of the Apartheid State that provoked resistance from Black civil society, although this was by no means uniform or inevitable, as will be shown in Chapter Five.

We will now return to the institution at the core of this research into cultural hegemony, the South African Native College, to follow its trajectory after the first few years of its existence.

The ambiguous role of the SANC in the exercise of hegemony

In Chapter Three, the SANC was shown to have aligned itself to the State, professing a liberalism that was nonetheless strongly contested at the level of the State. In the decades that followed the establishment of the SANC, this contestation was manifest in a political discourse that shifted slowly and inexorably away from the former Cape liberalism to racial segregation, manifest in racial exclusion and domination. For the duration of this decades-long transformation in the nature of the State, the SANC Administration elected to avoid recognising the changes in the political landscape, throwing itself instead into its routine of religious and teaching rituals. In the process, it ignored the changes taking place that resulted in the emergence of a more militant and radical student body, and was unable to exercise the authority it had at the time of its foundation, when the missionaries and students alike were imbued with hopes for a liberal future.

Chapter Three revealed how the Black petty bourgeoisie had gained a certain political significance in the Eastern Cape prior to the unification of the two Afrikaner *Boer* republics of the Transvaal and Orange Free State and the two British provinces of the Cape and Natal, therein garnering the support of liberals in the Cape government for the establishment of a college for 'Natives'. However, the period subsequent to Union saw their political power diminishing and the activities of the State vis-à-vis the Black petty bourgeoisie aimed at control, rather than the incorporation, which, we are reminded, is "key to domination".³⁷⁸

³⁷⁸ Williams, 1980: 38.

Throughout the period 1920 to 1960, the SANC Administration will be shown to have exercised caution and kept a watchful eye over the activities of its students. This was primarily for the purpose of demonstrating the successful outcome of a liberal education in producing 'Natives' whose knowledge and skills could match those of White students. The State project of firstly, the political exclusion of Blacks, and next, direct domination, elicited resistance in the form of unruliness and rebellious behaviour on the part of students, particularly after the installation of the Apartheid State in 1948. However, rather than backing the students' demands for political equality, the SANC Administration invariably responded by attempting to reassert its authority and restore order.

It will be shown that the activities of both the State and the SANC Administration tended towards efforts to impose stricter controls that corresponded to the increase in resistance on the part of Black civil society, including students at the SANC. During the 1930s, Senate and Council resolutions expressed disapproval of the legislation that deprived Blacks of the same political rights as Whites, the 1936 Representation of Natives Act. After decades of whittling away the Black franchise, this Act removed Black people definitively from the Cape Voters' Roll. By the 1950s, the majority of the Senate was inclined to follow the conservative tendency of their missionary background, supporting the principle of maintaining discipline over the student body and prohibiting participation in politics.³⁷⁹

Among Black staff at the SANC, political affiliation in the earlier decades had been to liberal organisations. This was exemplified in the activities of both Davidson Don Tengo (D.D.T.) Jabavu and Z.K. Matthews. D.D.T. Jabavu exemplified a liberal lifestyle, encouraging individual enterprise and self-reliance, and he chaired the debating society to promote reasoning skills. He was worried about the influence of Marxism in encouraging militancy among Blacks, asserting in 1920 that "Socialism of the worst calibre is claiming our people".³⁸⁰ Having visited and been impressed by the Tuskegee Institute, he believed firmly in the edifying value of work. These values were at the core of the All-Africa Convention (AAC), of which D.D.T. Jabavu was president until 1948. It was established in 1935 in response to the Representation of Natives Bill that proposed the disenfranchisement of

³⁷⁹ Williams, 2001: 92 – 100.

³⁸⁰ Switzer, 1993: 249 – 250.

Blacks, through the establishment of a Natives' Representative Council as a substitute for direct political participation. The AAC's tactic was to assume a passive approach, appealing to sympathetic White liberals in parliament and submitting requests to the British parliament for comment, whilst also calling a National Day of Prayer against the proposed legislation.³⁸¹

Z.K. Matthews was also a member of the AAC, but because the difference in political approaches between the AAC and the ANC were nuanced at the time, he transferred his allegiance to the ANC in 1940. Switzer³⁸² and Nigel Worden,³⁸³ among others, have pointed to the reformist nature of the ANC in those years, as a broad-based party whose leaders were influenced by the non-racialism of its White allies, causing it to assume a moral stance rather than to take mass action to attain its ideal of political power-sharing.

Considerably later, after the radicalising influence of mass urbanisation that occurred during the Second World War and the repressive nature of the new Apartheid State, Z.K. Matthews was involved in the mass-based consultations that culminated in the launch of the Freedom Charter in 1955. This was endorsed at a broad-based mass gathering of delegates of the ANC, South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU), South African Indian Congress (SAIC), South African Congress of Democrats (SACOD, a White organisation) and South African Coloured People's Organisation (SACPO). Nonetheless, although the Charter endorsed socialist principles such as land re-distribution and the nationalisation of mines and the banking system, its content symbolised the popular desire for political and social equality, and its guiding principles were firmly based on liberal principles of individual rights.

The Freedom Charter was rejected by more militant Africanists, particularly the younger generation, not on the grounds of its fundamentally liberal underpinnings, but because of its non-racialism.³⁸⁴ Imbued with values and ideals of African nationalism that had been widely disseminated during the Second World War and the Italian occupation of Abyssinia (now Ethiopia), they formed the ANC Youth League (ANCYL) in 1944, led by Anton Lembede, an alumnus of the SANC. The ANCYL represented a commitment to Black unity that was

³⁸¹ Switzer, 1993: 280.

³⁸² Ibid., 299.

³⁸³ Worden, 1994: 82.

³⁸⁴ Ibid., 105 – 106.

strengthened in the 1950s under the influence of the Pan-Africanist discourse articulated by leaders of newly independent post-colonial African States, such as Ghanaian President Kwame Nkrumah. Following the 1958 Accra Conference on Pan-Africanism, the Pan-Africanist Conference (PAC) was established when another SANC alumnus, Robert Sobukwe, broke away from the ANC in 1959, representing a radicalism that did not subscribe to the liberal non-racial ideals advocated by older leaders such as Alfred Luthuli.³⁸⁵ The relative autonomy of the ANCYL from the ANC in its ability to take a stance against the racist State was reflected in the opposition shown by Black students against the Administration in the 1950s, as will be shown.³⁸⁶

Before proceeding to examine the nature of conformity revealed by the example of the SANC, a short explanation of the research process is necessary. In this chapter, the manifestation of control and conformity is examined in the context of actions and opinions (values) documented in both primary and secondary sources. The former comprise formal records of minutes of meetings, and the latter, written accounts by those who were present as staff or students during this period, or interviews conducted with those who were.³⁸⁷ An investigation of the manifestation of control and conformity was carried out by separating the University of Fort Hare into groups according to the location of the group in relation to the exercise of hegemony. This yielded the Administration, Council, academic staff, the Student Representative Council (SRC) and student body, as well as sub-categories. The behaviour and opinions of these groups will be described in relation to Femia's four reasons for conformity. To recap, these reasons are: conformity under duress, conformity as a result of conscious agreement, conformity as a result of unreflecting participation and conformity in the expectation of reciprocity.³⁸⁸

³⁸⁵ Worden, 1994: 106 – 107.

³⁸⁶ Daniel Massey (2010) and John Lamprecht (1984) have documented in detail student protest during this period, whilst Williams (2001) has provided an account of student protest in the late 1950s. These sources have been used extensively to support or expand on information that is available in primary sources in the form of minutes of SRC and Senate meetings.

³⁸⁷ Much of the substance of this chapter is borrowed from interviews conducted by Massey (2010) and Williams (2012).

³⁸⁸ Femia, 1981: 38 – 43.

Conformity on the part of the missionary-dominated Administration prevailed between 1916 and 1959, notwithstanding a short-lived display of opposition in the late 1950s. This took place when the State initiated legislation to place Fort Hare under the control of the newly established Department of Bantu Education,³⁸⁹ a move that will be described presently. Though the Administration adopted an initially collaborative and then conciliatory position vis-à-vis the State, protest by students – particularly during the 1950s – was to undermine the efforts of the missionary Administration in presenting the SANC as an institution of learning in which student political activism was absent.

The conformist behaviour of the Administration will be shown to have displayed Femia's second and third motivations for conformity, these being unreflecting as well as conscious agreement with dominant principles and values. In the segment of Black civil society representing the emergent – yet politically stifled – petty bourgeoisie, that is, Black staff and students, the first and fourth reasons for conformity will be shown to have existed. These were demonstrated in the form of reluctant compliance (acquiescence under duress) or compliance in the expectation of reciprocity (pragmatic acceptance) respectively.³⁹⁰ The varying responses by Black staff and students correspond to the representation by Jackson Lears of conformity on the part of subaltern groups as contradictory, ambiguous and inconsistent,³⁹¹ and will be illustrated shortly.

We will now proceed to investigate an aspect that is central to the exercise of cultural hegemony, the relationship between State and civil society, as displayed by a particular institution in civil society, the University.

The relationship between the State and the SANC

Between 1920 and 1960, the expression of the South African State underwent a gradual transition towards authoritarianism. Throughout this time, in relation to the SANC, it will be

³⁸⁹ Initially the State proposed placing Fort Hare under the administration of the Department of Native Affairs, but the latter was split into the Department of Bantu Administration and Development and the Department of Bantu Education at the end of 1958 (Williams, 2001: 434).

³⁹⁰ Femia, 1981: 38 – 43.

³⁹¹ Jackson Lears, 2002.

shown to have determined the limits beyond which the liberalism of the SANC would not be accommodated. This was done in several ways. Firstly, in its control over the curriculum, the State refused to allow access by Blacks to the same professions as Whites. Secondly, in terms of funding, the SANC was denied the money required for buildings as it expanded in size, in this way curtailing the studies that could be undertaken and the number of students admitted. Finally, and most significantly, the legislative tools of the Apartheid State were used to remove the missionary Administration and take direct control over the institution so as to serve the State's Apartheid project.

From 1915 until 1948 Alexander Kerr served as Principal, and, in spite of setbacks experienced due to resistance from the State and White civil society in general to his aims of proving that Blacks were capable of the same achievements as Whites, he remained steadfast in his purpose. Both his strength of character and the isolation of the SANC contributed to the tendency of the Administration towards inertia, described by Williams as the "victims of insularity" that prevailed. In the 1950s, "the outer world, beset by rampant change, obtruded into Fort Hare, [but] the mainly White missionary Administration failed to read the signs of the times".³⁹² These signs were those emanating from the South African State and Africa, with African nationalism also promulgated by the SRC, which was dominated in the first half of the 1950s by students from outside South African borders in Rhodesia and Nyasaland (now Zimbabwe and Malawi).³⁹³

1948 was a watershed year in terms of regime change: in this year the Apartheid State came to power, Alexander Kerr retired as Principal of the SANC and the Victoria East branch of the ANC Youth League was established on the SANC campus. It was at this conjuncture that Clifford Dent became Principal,³⁹⁴ having been nominated and strongly supported by Alexander Kerr for the post.³⁹⁵ Dent was a layman from a Methodist background who had joined the staff in 1921 as a Chemistry and Physics lecturer, and Kerr must have believed that

³⁹² Williams, 2001: 6.

³⁹³ Ibid., 50.

³⁹⁴ See *Appendix B: Vice-Chancellors and Staff Statistics*, for details of the Principals and Rectors from 1916 – 2000.

³⁹⁵ Ibid.

Dent could be relied on to continue providing the same type of leadership, moulded by the disciplined routine of religion and study.³⁹⁶ Of Dent's personality, Z.K. Matthews said:

he coupled honesty and integrity with a certain rigidity of mind and habit not normally associated with the scientific bent. He permitted no deviation from what he thought was right, and was always a little too right. He saw students as people who had to be taught and put straight on certain matters. This is not always the most useful attitude in meeting human problems.³⁹⁷

As we have seen, South African politics had hardened in the three decades between 1920 and 1950 and the student body in the 1950s responded to the influence of continental and national events and the ethos of change. Whilst Matthews was considered conservative by the ANCYL,³⁹⁸ Dent was perceived by students as repressive and reactionary.³⁹⁹

Attempts on the part of the student body to shake off some controls such as rules about leisure activities and student movement, were resisted by the Administration under Dent. His unyielding attitude aggravated tensions between students and the Administration and "institutional problems compounded significantly".⁴⁰⁰ At the same time, the number of students had increased dramatically. They had almost no interest in religion, nurtured little respect for the authority of the White Administration, and rejected interpretations of historical events in South Africa as presented by White academic staff.⁴⁰¹ Student participation in politics had been strongly discouraged under Kerr's administration and though the ANCYL had been banned from the campus at the end of 1949,⁴⁰² political activities continued in the

³⁹⁶ Williams described Dent as a man with a "strong sense of mission", who like Kerr, made sacrifices for the institution and students. However, he had little exposure to events outside the campus, and, unlike Kerr, had not travelled much, venturing only to the coast for holidays (Williams, 2001: 9).

³⁹⁷ Z.K. Matthews, 1986: 65.

³⁹⁸ Massey, 2010: 57 – 59.

³⁹⁹ Ibid., 66 – 67, 69 – 70, 78 – 82.

⁴⁰⁰ Williams, 2001: 6.

⁴⁰¹ Ibid., 60 – 61, 208 – 211.

⁴⁰² The banning followed the boycott of a sermon by Dr R.H.W. Shepherd, who had openly opposed the nurses' strike at Lovedale Hospital. The Senate held the ANCYL responsible and decided that a branch should no longer be allowed to exist on campus (Williams, 2001: 135 – 136).

form of clandestine meetings, crystallising in antagonism towards Whites in general, including White staff.⁴⁰³

Dent's efforts to lead in the same stern tradition as Kerr were to fail, and, like Kerr, he was not inclined to challenge the State. His public utterances suggesting that he was prepared to collaborate with, rather than oppose, the actions of the Apartheid State. These were resented by students and certain members of staff alike.⁴⁰⁴ Dent's conformity for the reason of not wishing to incur the disapproval of the State was exhibited when he asked Z.K. Matthews not to deliver a speech to the Political Committee of the United Nations in 1952,⁴⁰⁵ following a direct warning from the Secretary of the Department of Education Arts and Science, H.J. van der Walt, that the department would take a serious view of such action on the part of an employee of "your college which receives a considerable subsidy from the state".⁴⁰⁶

Dent's intolerance of contestation, or "rigidity of mind", according to Z.K. Matthews,⁴⁰⁷ was inappropriate during a period in which increasing repression was being experienced by members of Black civil society at large. Despite his efforts to control the student body, he was unable to cultivate their respect, and this was one of the main reasons for his resignation in 1955. Students had boycotted the May graduation ceremony, after which Senate took the decision – endorsed by the Council – to close the College.⁴⁰⁸ These events will be discussed in greater detail in the analysis of student conformity and contestation to follow shortly.

⁴⁰³Williams, 2001: 60 – 61.

⁴⁰⁴ The most prominent example is an incident that occurred in October 1952, when Dent addressed the opening of the Ciskeian General Council, or Bhunga, in King Williams Town. On this occasion, he expressed approval of official agricultural and land use plans, accusing Black leaders who opposed them of "false and unwise leadership", and advocating compliance. This provoked a student boycott of the General Assembly, an act which was condemned by Senate. Williams observes that this took place at the height of the Defiance Campaign in 1952 and students were motivated to resist more robustly (Williams, 2001 147 – 154).

⁴⁰⁵ Matthews, 1986: 162 – 164.

⁴⁰⁶ Williams, 2001: 156.

⁴⁰⁷ Z. K. Matthews, 1986: 65.

⁴⁰⁸ Williams, 2001: 240 – 242.

Despite the conformity displayed by the Administration under both Kerr and Dent vis-à-vis the activities of the State, the striking act of non-conformity of the SANC was that of providing a liberal education that equaled what was offered to 'European' students. In this respect, the SANC was determined to persevere, contending with oppositional forces emanating from the State and transmitted through government departments. The tensions in the relationship between the SANC Administration and the State, dominated by the latter, will be examined shortly in the context of the legal framework, aspects of the curriculum, finance and the incipient culture of student protest at the SANC.

The exercise of control and display of conformity by the SANC

As observed earlier, the establishment of a University Council answerable to the State is one of the mechanisms that is used to exercise control over the scope of the academic activities of universities. In 1923, in terms of the Higher Education Act No. 30 of 1923, the SANC had begun offering courses towards the Bachelor of Arts degree that was examined and awarded by the University of South Africa (UNISA).⁴⁰⁹ In terms of this Act, the SANC was to be governed by a Council incorporated under the Union government and was also eligible to receive the same funding as other constituent colleges of the University of South Africa.

For an institution the size of the SANC, the size and composition of the Council was indicative of the vested interests in the SANC and the determination of the State to keep a firm check on its activities. As observed in Chapter Three, the progress of the protracted initiative to establish the SANC had for a decade prior to its formal opening been materially influenced by private donors, the Presbyterian Church, the Transkeian Territories General Council, the Basutoland Administration, and, shortly before its opening, the Methodist and Anglican churches. All these organisations and institutions were well represented. Of necessity, the Union government, which had committed to the provision of a certain annual grant, was also represented, forming the strongest of the many vested interests. Between 1915 and 1959, the membership of the SANC Council varied between 21 and 38 members, with a

⁴⁰⁹ It was explained in Chapter Three that UNISA was a federal University comprising the various South African colleges that did not have full university status.

strong weighting in favour of senior members of the State bureaucracy.⁴¹⁰ The constitution of the Council explains the conservative and cautious nature of decisions taken by the missionary Administration, which were fundamentally aimed at financial survival.⁴¹¹

It is in the minutes of Council meetings and reports that the intrinsic values of post-colonial settler-dominated society, sometimes tempered by the liberal and paternal ideals of the missionary Administration, become evident. Despite the purpose of the SANC having been construed as that of providing an education that was not to be tarnished by politics, the Administration was confronted more frequently than it acknowledged by dissident students. In this respect, the silence around student resistance is notable in the annual reports of the Governing Council to the Union Government. Instead, these noted the professional trajectory of students who had followed careers in law, medicine, education and other fields. Nonetheless, despite embracing the cultural hegemony of the petty bourgeoisie by striving

⁴¹⁰ In 1938 it consisted of the Principal, Chair, Vice-Chair, Librarian, Bursar and Secretary; four Union government representatives (Education, Native Affairs, Chief Magistrate of the Transkei and Chief Native Commissioner of the Ciskei); two UNISA representatives; two members of the Transkeian Territories General Council; two members of the Church of Scotland, one member from the Methodist Church and Church of the Province (the Anglican Church); one representative of the Basutoland Administration; one from Native Secondary Education; one from the International Committee of the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA); two members of the College Senate and 14 academic staff; and private donors. It is significant that the YMCA was included subsequent to its donation of funds for building the Christian Union Hall (Burrows and Matthews, 1961: 77 – 79).

⁴¹¹ Of the total of 208 Council members between 1915 and 1959, there were 36 members from the Union government, 31 from the Transkeian Territories General Council, and seven from Basutoland administration. To this total of 74 members of the State bureaucracy can be added 19 representatives of other universities and 19 representatives of Bantu Secondary Schools. Hence, a total of 112 Council members (more than half the combined total over this period) directly represented the interests of the State. A further 40 members represented the interests of the Church (17 from the Church of Scotland, 13 from the Methodist Church and 10 from the Church of the Province), whilst there were 13 donor representatives, 7 alumni representatives and 36 members of Senate, as well as the Principal, in an *ex officio* capacity. There is explicit reference to the three women featuring on this list, though it is unknown which sectors or organisations they represented in the list compiled by Burrows and Matthews (1961: 77 – 79).

towards occupying particular careers and assuming a certain social status, students did not display traits that were indicative of political subordination, as will be shown.

Whilst the SANC Council minutes presented a perhaps deliberate impression of compliance, the routine administration of the SANC by its Senate focused on academic matters, intent on achieving its educational aims within the stern and disciplined parameters of Christian beliefs and practices. Stalwartly claiming a relationship of cooperation with the State in the provision of higher education for those termed varyingly 'Blacks', 'Natives' and 'non-Europeans',⁴¹² the SANC was careful to avoid public criticism of the State: however, caution was thrown to the winds on one memorable occasion in 1936.

This particular event was the SANC's 'Coming of Age' – the twenty-first anniversary celebrations in 1936. This coincided with the legislation in the form of the Native Representation Act that removed Blacks from the Voters' Roll and deprived them of the right to direct political participation in electing members of parliament. Whilst in South Africa the political aspirations of the Black petty bourgeoisie were thwarted, outside South Africa, Italy had invaded Ethiopia, sparking a renewed Pan-Africanism and anti-colonialism. At the height of this turmoil, the content of the speech delivered by Senator F.S. Malan on behalf of the State⁴¹³ was clearly inappropriate for students who were hopeful of political change that would be beneficial to Black South Africans. Though his presence had been intended to reflect the unity between the State and the SANC and reinforce the relationship between the two, Malan's speech amounted to a declaration of White hegemony, by proclaiming:

This is my message to you this afternoon, as a friend of this institution and a friend of the Bantu people, because I believe the highest interest of the White man is to be fair and reasonable and just to all. My message to you is to use what has been given to you, to build on what you have got, and not to be tempted to become agitators or mere propagandists, but to be practical in your activities.⁴¹⁴

⁴¹² Burrows and Matthews, 1961.

⁴¹³ Senator F.S. Malan had been a member of the Union government that had agreed to provide a maintenance grant to the SANC in 1915, and had from that point onwards been considered by the Administration as an ally.

⁴¹⁴ Burrows and Matthews, 1961: 35.

Urging students to develop their “natural gifts”, which he apparently considered related to physical rather than intellectual effort, he suggested that in all colleges a course in practical work should be a compulsory component of a degree.⁴¹⁵

In response to this, the Council member representing Native Secondary Education,⁴¹⁶ Professor Edgar Brookes, articulated the aim of the missionary Administration. The Principal of Adams College for Black students in Natal, Brookes had in the 1920s supported the principle of racial segregation on the basis of anthropological studies that emphasised the unchanging nature of African society. He had been an advisor to the National Party leader, J.B. Hertzog, until the disclosure of the inherent principles of the Native Bills of the 1920s that aimed at the creation and regulation of a labour supply in reserves. After this, he publicly retracted his earlier support.⁴¹⁷ After the Representation of Natives Act was passed, Brookes served as Senator in Parliament, representing Africans from Natal. On conferring an honorary Doctor of Laws degree on Kerr, he observed that African students had, in their academic achievements, “forever dispelled the myth” that the European intellect was superior.⁴¹⁸

Brookes’ views reflected the liberal unease at the time concerning the possible consequences of the political and social exclusion of Blacks, as demonstrated in the speech he made on this occasion. Warning against the pending legislation aimed at removing all Blacks from the Voters’ Roll, he admonished that:

the one-sided kind of segregation which we find today in South African life cannot continue indefinitely. If the colour bar is not to go, the situation of the European who finds himself on the Bantu side of the line will become more and more difficult ... [the] supporters of the [Native] bills have also to face certain cold truths. They have to face the fact that the Bills are grossly unjust, that from no possible point of view can one justify the separation of Bantu voters from European voters coupled with insistence on the Bantu voters being represented by a European. Above all, those who are enthusiastic for the Bills must realise ... this is not the end of the war; it is merely a drawn battle.⁴¹⁹

⁴¹⁵ Burrows and Matthews, 1961: 29.

⁴¹⁶ Brookes served as representative of Native Secondary Education from 1936 – 1939.

⁴¹⁷ Worden, 1994: 78.

⁴¹⁸ Burrows and Matthews, 1961: 14.

⁴¹⁹ Ibid., 15 – 16.

The underlying liberal fear of African nationalism was evident in his cautioning against a “dangerous” and “more militant Bantu nationalism”⁴²⁰ that could be prompted by deprivation. Instead, he encouraged what he termed “constructive” nationalism, founded on the development of Bantu languages and literature. Urging the audience not to be “hostile” to the English language and culture, but to be “temperate and friendly”, he encouraged Black people not to prevent “the life of the world from flowing into Africa, but ensuring the life of Africa flows into the world.”⁴²¹

Notwithstanding his open critique of the removal of Black people from the Voters’ Roll, Brookes emphasised the role of religion and education in the pursuit of justice, calling for patience and acceptance of new structures. This fundamentally conformist stance was echoed by Reverend D.J. Darlow, who confirmed that “our position at the College is this; we are intensely interested in the Bills as we are in everything that concerns Bantu welfare, but we feel that our function is to provide a stabilising element”.⁴²²

The conformist nature of the SANC missionary is manifest in various ways. Within Femia’s framework of the motives for conformity, the fourth, that of expectations of reciprocity,⁴²³ is revealed in Alexander Kerr’s belief regarding the future status of the SANC. In a strictly confidential memo circulated by Kerr to staff prior to the meeting of Senate on 15 August 1939,⁴²⁴ he outlined the changes he anticipated. Kerr believed that on the basis of the number of past graduates and increasing student enrolments, the SANC’s reputation would ensure that it be granted the status of an independent University, along with other University Colleges whose status was to be elevated to that of University. The fact that the SANC was obliged to assume a subordinate status relative to UNISA clearly riled Kerr, particularly

⁴²⁰ Burrows and Matthews, 1961: 17.

⁴²¹ Ibid., 8.

⁴²² Ibid., 27.

⁴²³ Femia, 1981: 38 – 43.

⁴²⁴ Minutes of the meetings of the Governing Council held 1916 – 1959.

because the SANC was the main teaching centre of many subjects examined by UNISA.⁴²⁵ Academic representatives of the so-called 'Bantu college' were excluded from the UNISA Committee and relegated to a sub-committee of the Committee of African Studies, with no influence in the Faculty or Senate of UNISA, a situation that Kerr pronounced the SANC Senate could not "indefinitely accept".⁴²⁶

Kerr stated his expectation of an imminent secession from UNISA by the Colleges of the Orange Free State and Natal, noting that "such a destiny for their Colleges has been confidently asserted." Rhodes University College would then request a similar status and thereafter only Wellington, Potchefstroom and the SANC would remain in UNISA.⁴²⁷ Subsequently, he pronounced, "there can be no doubt that, whatever intermediate positions may be expedient or necessary, the ultimate destiny of Fort Hare will be that of an independent University". Kerr optimistically anticipated a possible affiliation of Cape Town, Stellenbosch, Rhodes and Fort Hare; or alternatively, of Rhodes and Fort Hare as one Eastern Cape institution, with technical colleges in Port Elizabeth and East London providing industrial training. He concluded by asserting that "no alliance should be entertained which did not recognise in the Constitution of Council and Senate the Fort Hare principle of non-discrimination on the grounds of race or the equality of status of professors and lecturers of Fort Hare and other colleges".

However, Kerr's expectations were to be completely thwarted a decade later, when the National Party assumed power and set about reversing the non-racialism that had

⁴²⁵ While UNISA accommodated 'non-European' students, examining courses in Social Anthropology, Physical Anthropology, Ethnology, Archaeology, Native Law, Native Administration and Bantu Languages, most 'non-European' students registered for these courses were at Fort Hare.

⁴²⁶ The College Principal plus four members of the SANC Senate, nominated by the University, and not SANC, to Boards of Faculties of Arts, Education and Science, could attend UNISA Senate meetings, but could not vote or speak without permission. Attendance of Committees of Studies and Faculty Boards was possible for teaching members of the SANC only once every three years (Memo dated 15 August 1939). PR4118.

⁴²⁷ Wellington, Potchefstroom and the SANC were situated in smaller towns and were possibly considered as not having the means required to enjoy autonomous status.

characterised the ethos of the SANC. This event confirmed the futility of conformity in the hope of receiving favourable treatment, as will be shown.

The process by means of which control over the SANC by the Apartheid State was established will be discussed shortly. Suffice to say that by 1959 the legislative framework was in place and in August a new Council was appointed by the Department of Bantu Education, the government department with direct control over Fort Hare from 1960 onwards. In September a letter was sent to Fort Hare by the Secretary of the Department of Bantu Education, Mr van Wyk, outlining the future staffing structure and lines of authority between staff and the new Council or the State, for White or Black staff respectively. Shortly afterwards, another letter from the Department announced the names of the eight members of staff whose appointments would not be renewed. This triggered the resignation of nine members of staff, later joined by others, so that by the end of 1959, only 25 of the staff complement remained in place.⁴²⁸ The principled resistance by those members of staff who resigned was an act of symbolic resistance that followed years of generally conformist behaviour. It is to this prolonged state of conformity that we now turn our attention.

Conformity in the face of widespread change: the 1950s

In the 1950s, when change in broader society had a radicalising effect on Black civil society in terms of resistance to apartheid, the SANC Senate had displayed the opposite tendency. The academic staff body was mostly from a missionary background⁴²⁹ and was relatively stable, with 115 academic staff serving between 1915 and 1959. While subscribing to liberal principles of non-racialism, they were nonetheless more committed to Christian values.⁴³⁰ In 1923, the SANC had 10 staff members and 102 students; in 1937 it had 50 staff members and

⁴²⁸ Williams, 2001: 518 – 534.

⁴²⁹ Williams claims that staff appointments until the late 1950s were made on the basis of an English-speaking background “with missionary connections or inclinations” (Williams, 2001: 92).

⁴³⁰ Williams points out that the SANC employed staff “imbued with a missionary concern for Blacks” who were not inclined towards participation in politics (Ibid., 448).

139 students;⁴³¹ in the decade between 1940 and 1950 enrolments climbed from 188 to 382; and by 1959 there were 70 staff, of whom 29 were Senate members, and 500 students.⁴³²

However, Senate consisted almost entirely of White academic staff, with only four Black staff in a Senate of 29 members by the end of 1959.⁴³³ These members were Z.K. Matthews (African Studies, Native Law, Social Anthropology and Public Administration), C.L.C.S. Nyembezi (Bantu Languages), S.B. Ngcobo (Economics) and J.A. Mokoena (Physics and Mathematics). According to Williams, White Senate members could be broadly divided into three groups, comprising a conservative missionary element who were concerned with maintaining the status quo in terms of SANC practices and who did not oppose the idea of segregated education; a principled liberal element who opposed the advent of the Apartheid State; and a centre block whose decisions were guided by practical considerations, such as the possibility of losing their posts if they opposed the State.⁴³⁴ However, notwithstanding this categorisation, Williams observes that academic staff could not be distinctly grouped because of the “enduring bonds of missionary calling” that cut across all the groups, including Black staff members, creating a solidarity that was stronger than political beliefs.⁴³⁵

For this reason, both the SANC Administration and the missionary-dominated Senate had a predominantly conservative approach, illustrated by Williams in his detailed exposition of events in the 1950s leading to the Apartheid State taking control of Fort Hare.⁴³⁶ As student resistance to the Apartheid State assumed the form of an increasing rebelliousness against university authority, so the Senate’s attempts to instil discipline and order increased. Williams, who considered himself a member of the “middle” group, recalls that he considered non-compliance and the lack of discipline among students as being the “Achilles heel” of Fort Hare, saying that it was not dispensed adequately. Because discipline was associated with the control exercised by the Afrikaner Apartheid State to “keep the Black in

⁴³¹ Burrows and Matthews, 1961: 48

⁴³² Williams, 2001: 77.

⁴³³ Ibid., 68 – 69.

⁴³⁴ Ibid., 80 – 90.

⁴³⁵ Ibid., 99.

⁴³⁶ Ibid., 99.

his place”,⁴³⁷ Williams claims that liberal members of the White staff had exacerbated the tendencies of students to protest, because they did not want to appear as repressive. He notes that even Black staff on the Senate “tended to be more indulgent towards the students when in fact a firmer hand was needed”.⁴³⁸

The treatment of students illustrates the limited extent to which the missionary Administration was prepared to accommodate student expectations, foregrounding what lies at the core of cultural hegemony: the incorporation of subaltern classes into the dominant society, according to the conditions established by the dominant society. The liberal dilemma was illustrated by the tension between the desire to retain control over the subaltern, whilst professing recognition of their rights.⁴³⁹ Faced with contestation on the part of students, the contradictory nature of the exercise of hegemony is illustrated in the discourse and actions of the Senate. On the one hand, pronouncements confirm the equal rights of Black people, but at the same time the Senate curbed the manner in which students could express their views. A striking example of this will be illustrated in the suppression of the SRC public statement on the State takeover of Fort Hare, to be discussed in the context of student activities.

Jackson Lears observes that consent and complicity are integral to the behaviour of subaltern groups, in that whilst they challenge the power of the dominant group, their very complicity at the same time may undermine that challenge.⁴⁴⁰ The experience of Z.K. Matthews is an example of the ambivalent role of those who worked within the system to try and change it, and the potential that exists to either undermine or strengthen the challenge to domination. Professor Monica Wilson, a colleague in the 1940s, recalls that he was openly accused of being a “stooge” by some students, whilst, on the other hand, many Whites considered him “extremist”.⁴⁴¹ Despite his advocacy of equal rights for all, he was a restraining influence on students who wanted to take a more activist stance against the University Administration,

⁴³⁷ Williams, 2001: 496. The actual phrase is “to keep the ‘Kaffir’ in his place”.

⁴³⁸ Ibid., 495.

⁴³⁹ See Chapter Two for the discussion on the exercise of hegemony by Jackson Lears (2002), who observes that a hegemonic project must be able to conceal the nature of subjugation.

⁴⁴⁰ Williams, 2001: 332.

⁴⁴¹ Note that this section of Z.K. Matthews’ autobiography is the final chapter, in the form of a memoir written by Monica Wilson (Matthews, 1986: 228).

urging that they educate themselves first.⁴⁴² At the same time, Daniel Massey points out that subsequent to the student boycott of lectures in 1941, only Z.K. Matthews identified student protests as part of the broader struggle against White domination.⁴⁴³ In the 1950s, Black students at the SANC considered him not assertive enough, whilst Dent and the “missionary element” of White staff felt he was too extreme.⁴⁴⁴

As has been shown, the behaviour of the SANC Senate illustrated Femia’s reasons for conformity.⁴⁴⁵ In the first few decades, this was manifest in actions and behaviour in the expectation of reciprocity, or favourable treatment from the State. By the 1950s, following the Apartheid State assuming power, conformity was attributed to fear of the repercussions of non-compliance in response to the State’s exercise of control. However, as observed by Williams, there was a small academic staff contingent who did not fundamentally disagree with the State’s intention to take control over higher education of Blacks by means of a separate dispensation. The conformity of this group corresponds to the third of Femia’s reasons for conformity, namely, conscious agreement with basic principles.⁴⁴⁶

Along with control exercised through the legislative framework, the other two particular mechanisms utilised by the State to exercise control over the SANC, as indicated previously, were control over the curriculum and financial control. It is to the former, which constitutes a crucial element of the exercise of cultural hegemony, that we now turn our attention.

Control over the curriculum

As we learned in Chapter Three, the curriculum offered by the SANC had been a contested issue from the time that discussion of a ‘Native College’ started. Delegates to the 1907 Inter-State Native College Convention were opposed to a curriculum that differed from that of

⁴⁴² Matthews was not prepared to discuss politics with students, saying they should instead focus on the acquisition of knowledge and development of their reasoning skills. He is famously reported to have admonished students to “start jiving on your books” (Massey, 2010: 56).

⁴⁴³ Ibid., 37.

⁴⁴⁴ Williams, 2001: 44 – 49.

⁴⁴⁵ Femia, 1981: 38 – 43.

⁴⁴⁶ Williams, 2001: 86.

White University Colleges in South Africa. However, by the time it was founded, the momentum of the first two years of enthusiastic public discussion and consultation within Black society had dissipated. In the end, the Cape Department of Education had forced the SANC to open its doors to students preparing for matric examinations, after which courses towards degrees were offered. Further discussion around the purpose of the SANC took place within White society and crystallised around arguments proposed by the adaptationists, represented by Charles Loram, and the defence of a liberal education containing certain African elements, promoted by Alexander Kerr.

Charles Loram was considered by State education authorities as an expert in African education. As a member of the Native Affairs Commission, he had direct communication with both the State and the SANC, which he thought could in time become the leading Pan-African University. He nonetheless considered that Africans should proceed towards modernity along an adapted curriculum path at a different pace to Europeans.⁴⁴⁷ For this reason, Loram supported the SANC attempts to secure an internal matric certificate for mature students (headmen, chiefs, and aspirant ministers of religion) in its first few years, so that these graduates would be able to lead their communities.

We have seen that in 1920 the SANC was a small, impoverished college offering secondary school qualifications, diplomas in Agriculture and Business Training, and some post-matric courses towards a Bachelor of Arts degree. Possibly the only African element – apart from its students – was the fact that African languages were taught alongside English and Latin by D.D.T. Jabavu. Almost all students – barring Indians – were from missionary school backgrounds in Lesotho (then Basotholand) and various parts of South and Southern Africa.

In 1924 the SANC capped its first university graduates, Z.K. Matthews and E. Ncwana, after which Kerr was determined to expand the offering of higher education that had been the original aim of the SANC. As we have seen, the embryonic South African university system, including the University Colleges, followed the British model. Although the missionaries considered the American college model inferior, the United States presented opportunities for financial support that were simply not forthcoming from the British churches. For this reason, contacts established with American philanthropists were to prove influential in the direction

⁴⁴⁷ David Burchell, 2001: 44.

in which the curriculum was expanded after 1920. The influence of American funders was evident in the interest expressed by the SANC in natural sciences and medical training, for which the Administration motivated from this decade onwards. However, this direction was initially considered unnecessary by the Union government, which steadfastly rejected requests from the SANC to expand the curriculum to include training for the legal and medical professions. Instead, the barriers to social advancement were reinforced as the SANC was reminded that it should educate Black students as teachers and agricultural advisors.

Legal courses were a popular choice among students aspiring to become members of the professional classes. In November 1920 a proposal had also been put forward to offer Law, and it was agreed that the Union government would be requested to sponsor a post in Law. The TTGC however opposed the proposal, indicating that they would not support a grant for a Law lecturer, but were prepared to support a proposal for a scholarship to another college offering Law instead.⁴⁴⁸ The TTGC reminded the SANC Governing Council that the SANC focus was supposed to be on training students who would become legal clerks and court interpreters, not preparation for those wishing to join the legal profession as fully qualified lawyers. Those wishing to graduate with a Law degree would have to undertake postgraduate studies at other institutions. It was in this way that Z.K. Matthews notched up another academic first for being awarded the first postgraduate Law degree by UNISA in 1931.

In the same year, consistent in its quest to restrict the growth of the Black petty bourgeoisie and to prevent its infringement on what was considered the terrain of the White professional class, the Union government rejected a request to offer veterinary training. This was despite the fact that his service was urgently needed in the rural agricultural areas of the Ciskei and Transkei. It was claimed that investigations were underway concerning the provision of veterinary training, but the minutes of the meeting of Governing Council reported that the government was “not prepared to recommend that Native students should be trained in veterinary science” as there was “no large opening for Natives in medical practice”.⁴⁴⁹

⁴⁴⁸ Minutes of the TTGC meeting held 6 July 1931.

⁴⁴⁹ Minutes of the Governing Council meeting held 4 November 1931.

Instead, students were encouraged to pursue studies in agriculture that would enable them to become demonstrators. This point was emphasised by G.W.D. Hughes, the Director for Agriculture in Transkeian Territories, who reported to the meeting that “practical training” was needed so that local communities could benefit from the skills imparted by graduates.⁴⁵⁰ The State’s determination to foist agricultural training on to the SANC has been discussed, as have the attempts by the SANC to steer higher education for Black students in a direction away from pastoral pursuits. In 1926, presumably in an effort to deflect the State’s initiatives away from the SANC, D.D.T. Jabavu, supported by M. Peteni, the Magistrate of Keiskammahoek, lobbied successfully for an agricultural school to be established some 20 kilometres to the east of the SANC at Fort Cox. The Fort Cox Agricultural School was opened in 1930, with an entrance requirement of Standard Six, that is, secondary school level, indicative of the practical nature of the agricultural training provided.

The tension between the State objectives of inserting practical training at higher education level for ‘Natives’ and the SANC aims of offering a liberal education that matched the offerings of other universities was evident in the remark from the SANC lecturer in Agriculture, Paul Germond. Criticising Hughes’s observation, he remarked that, “[I]f the greater proportion of the students who have passed through the College are employed as agricultural demonstrators and teachers of agriculture at Native institutions, it is by force of circumstances ... the College training claims for its best students the ability to fill posts of greater responsibility.” Reminding the Governing Council that the SANC syllabus contained Botany, Zoology and Chemistry at third year level, he attacked an agricultural syllabus that “confines itself to field husbandry and animal husbandry”, claiming that SANC tuition was “wider than that offered at government agricultural schools for Europeans 18 years ago ... before the standard had been reduced”.⁴⁵¹

⁴⁵⁰ Minutes of the Governing Council meeting held 6 July 1931.

⁴⁵¹ Remark recorded in minutes of the Governing Council meeting held 16 November 1931. It was a reference to the Elsenburg College of Agriculture in the Western Cape, founded in 1898 and amalgamated with the University of Stellenbosch in 1926. The two-year diploma originally offered had been replaced with a one-year course in 1927, which in turn was replaced by practical courses in 1931, indicating an increasingly practical orientation that was evidently perceived as a lowering of standards. In fact the two-year diploma was reinstated in 1939, presumably as a result of public disdain for what

Ironically, shortly thereafter, Germond's concerns proved to have been substantiated. The next representative for the Department of Agriculture announced at a Governing Council meeting that his Department could not continue to accommodate SANC students as demonstrators.⁴⁵² With little desire to pursue a future on the land, student enrolments in agriculture had always been lower than other courses, and this trend was to continue. The practical nature of agricultural studies that appeared to anchor graduates to the soil, rather than liberating them to join the professions, evidently lacked appeal.⁴⁵³ By 1959, the number of graduates with the Advanced Diploma in Agriculture – along with Diploma in Theology graduates – lagged behind other qualifications.⁴⁵⁴

Whilst the prospect of a career as an agricultural demonstrator or minister of religion may have lacked appeal to Black students, the situation vis-à-vis basic medical training differed notably. Not only was there a shortage of trained medical professionals due to increasing urbanisation, but the two professional options of Law and Medicine were the most attractive. Kerr's 1922 trip to the United States generated the first formal offer of medical training for Blacks, which was received from the American Board Mission in 1923.⁴⁵⁵ The ambitious expectation of the SANC that it would be able to offer a four-year preparatory degree, followed by two years of training in urban hospitals, was unrealistic. Although the Rockefeller Foundation had offered funding to the value of £70,000 to establish a medical

was considered as an excessive emphasis on practical training in a college that had been absorbed by a university (<http://www.elsenburg.com/ciat/about.html>).

⁴⁵² Minutes of the Governing Council meeting held 8 March 1933.

⁴⁵³ The agricultural colleges that had been established at the turn of the century as part of the post-War reconstruction programme of the British had aimed at the establishment of commercial agriculture undertaken by White farmers. Colleges were established in Cedara (Natal), Potchefstroom (Transvaal), Glen (Free State) and Grootfontein (Middelburg, Cape Karoo) and fell under the Division of Chemistry of the Transvaal Department of Agriculture, which later became the Agricultural Research Council. The purpose was to conduct research into plants, animals and soil, and later irrigation, with a view to large-scale farming, as opposed to the training offered to Blacks to serve as demonstrators for subsistence farming in the reserves (<http://www.arc.agric.za/home.asp?pid=776>).

⁴⁵⁴ See *Appendix A: Student Statistics*.

⁴⁵⁵ Minutes of the Governing Council meeting held 28 November 1923

training facility, the SANC proposal was vetoed by Dr Carter, a representative of the Rockefeller Foundation and former Dean of the Medical Faculty of the University of Texas. The grounds proffered were that the nearby Victoria Hospital had inadequate clinical facilities and was unsuitable for training.

At this time, it is clear that medical facilities in the rural areas were virtually non-existent, a fact to which Dr Roseberry T. Bokwe, the only Black district surgeon in the 1930s and Z.K. Matthews' brother-in-law, had drawn attention. He had to serve an area inhabited by 30,000 Black people and lamented that all needed medical attention and education on preventative medicine. Criticising the proposed Medical Aid Scheme as inadequate, Dr Bokwe instead urged that full medical training be provided for Black doctors. They would then deal with the medical requirements of people in Black areas, supported by trained health officials.⁴⁵⁶

Nonetheless, the SANC persisted with preparation to offer a year-long 'pre-medical' course that would be recognised by certain universities, notably Natal and Witwatersrand (Wits). After the 'pre-medical' course, students could gain access to the medical qualifications offered at these universities, as well as exemption from the first year or the first professional exam. In 1928 the Loram Commission supported the proposed introduction of the 'Medical Aid Scheme', which was basically a training course for paramedics comprising three years of chemistry, physics and medicine at the SANC, followed by a two-year hospital internship. Funding had been received from the American Board for four years in preparation for offering the course, but the 1929 Depression led to the suspension of the grant of £250 per annum.⁴⁵⁷ The Wits Medical School, on the other hand, had been assigned a sum of £65,000 by the Rockefeller Foundation, channeling resources to this institution. The Union government then informed the SANC that it was not appropriate for medical training to be offered at that stage.⁴⁵⁸ Subsequent to this rebuff, reinforcing the notion that 'Natives' should receive a different form of education and training at the SANC, the TTGC noted that it would instead approve financial aid for students to study medicine elsewhere.⁴⁵⁹

⁴⁵⁶ Undated memorandum from Dr Roseberry Bokwe on the proposed Medical Aid Scheme (Kerr Papers, 4118).

⁴⁵⁷ Minutes of the Governing Council meeting held 6 November 1929.

⁴⁵⁸ Minutes of the Governing Council meeting held November 1931.

⁴⁵⁹ Minutes of the Governing Council meeting held 2 November 1932.

The issue of a special curriculum at the SANC was further explored by Loram while he was at Yale University in the early 1930s. He undertook an evaluation of the SANC curriculum along with Mary Dick, a lecturer at the SANC and a likeminded adaptationist. Concerned with the absence of career prospects for graduates in the liberal arts, she and Loram pressed for the introduction of further courses in science and technology.⁴⁶⁰ Although denied the right to offer full medical training, the SANC was sufficiently persuaded to offer courses in science as an alternative to the liberal arts.

The instrumentalism of the adaptationist approach was also evident in industry, particularly in mining companies, where accidents and illness among Black workers adversely affected production. This prompted the Chamber of Mines to donate £75,000 in 1934 for the establishment of the departments of Botany and Physics, which would form part of the Bachelor of Science degree. In recognition of the need for more medical facilities and professionals, the Union of Black Mine Workers also donated £1,000 towards the building. At this time, owing to the critical shortage of trained medical professionals, public hospitals were unable to provide appropriate medical care. As a solution, the State adopted a strategy of allowing Blacks to serve in the profession as medical aids, nurses and doctors, whilst requiring them to remain subordinate to Whites.⁴⁶¹

In 1936 the training of Medical Aids for health services commenced. At the opening ceremony, Senator F.S. Malan, representing the Union government, applauded the advantages of offering specialised training and treatment to ‘Natives’. One was that it served as a preventative measure against the spread of communicable diseases to Whites, because “many diseases may arise in the one section of the population and be communicated to the other”.⁴⁶² However, the opportunity of receiving limited medical training thwarted the prospects for many students of becoming doctors, and by 1940 the Council envisaged a situation in which “fully trained men as well as medical aids” would be able to assume the responsibilities of State health care, because “it is hardly possible to conceive that the problems of ill-health arising from a population of low economic and education standards can

⁴⁶⁰ Burchell, 2001: 46 – 48.

⁴⁶¹ The first year of the ‘pre-medical’ Bachelor of Science was offered at Fort Hare until 2012.

⁴⁶² Burrows and Matthews, 1961: 35.

be effectively tackled in any other way”.⁴⁶³ The State, nonetheless, conceived otherwise of the “Native contribution” to health care, with the Native Affairs Department offering only 10 annual scholarships of £45 each. These were to cover the pre-medicine Science course, a Science or “Advanced Agriculture” degree, and five annual scholarships to SANC students who had completed the pre-medical Science degree.⁴⁶⁴ As it transpired, Black students showed little interest in undertaking studies that were inferior to a medical degree and which led to a lesser qualification that did not earn them the right to practise as doctors. Only 24 completed the Medical Aid programme,⁴⁶⁵ with most preferring to study Science subjects and then proceed to a *bona fide* medical degree at Wits University.

In the meantime, the SANC Administration persevered with its quest for equality of opportunity, taking advantage of the fact that Blacks were being recruited to provide support to South African troops fighting alongside the British and French in the Second World War. The Report of the Governing Council to the Minister of Education of 31 December 1940 specifically addressed ‘Black and White’ matters, noting:

It sometimes seems as if the educated Native were on the horns of a dilemma. If he qualifies for one of the recognised professions he may find it over-crowded owing to the dearth of opportunities in other walks of life; and if he prepares himself for a service to which men of his race have not hitherto been admitted, he may find that he has to wait a long time before any call is made for his services. After a long, and, for a non-European, expensive course, this is a real hardship, perhaps, but one which may be partly responsible for inducing the great majority of students to prepare for the teaching profession, in the high reaches of which it would seem that, not only at present, but for some time to come, there will be demand in excess of the number of candidates offering [their services].

On employment, the Report stated:

There is a distinct duty lying upon the Council to explore ways and means of diversifying the types of employment in which educated non-Europeans, and especially Natives, may engage ... There are so many restrictions and

⁴⁶³ Minutes of the Governing Council meeting held 31 December 1940.

⁴⁶⁴ Students would be funded to continue their studies in Medicine or Dentistry at other institutions whose courses were accredited by the South African Medical Council.

⁴⁶⁵ Burchell, 2001: 54.

artificial barriers in the way of employment of Natives that there is far more necessity laid upon the Council of this College to see the opening and the extension of suitable ways of earning and living for its students, than there is for the governing body of a European College.

The concerns expressed about the State's restrictions on providing equal opportunities provided an oblique way in which the Administration expressed its dissonant view in terms of the State policies of job reservation that had been introduced in the 1920s, but they also related to a problem closer to home. Students were becoming increasingly frustrated with the racist policies that stifled their aspirations to upwards social mobility through entering the professional classes, and this was manifest in the rising levels of protest on campus.

Despite the pressure from Loram, transmitted via the Department of Native Affairs, for the SANC to offer a curriculum with a greater technical component, Kerr continued to emphasise that the role of the SANC was to offer a university education. Whilst criticising the SANC for being the cause of Black students coveting only university degrees, Loram nonetheless believed in the eventual Africanisation of staff, which was one of the reasons for his having arranged a sponsorship for Z.K. Matthews to study a Masters in Anthropology at Yale, despite Matthews' disciplinary roots in Law. This was presumably because Matthews was deemed one of the Black elite who would provide future intellectual leadership within a Western paradigm. Matthews was to lead the Department of Social Anthropology that opened at the SANC in 1936, and, as will be shown in examples of his involvement with students, he was indeed to remain steadfast to the liberal values he had assimilated during the course of his university education.

The permission given by the State to the SANC to offer Anthropology and Native Law, rather than Medicine, illustrates the accommodation – albeit limited – of the aspirations of subaltern groups that is necessary for their ideological incorporation.⁴⁶⁶ At the same time, it is indicative of the fascination of the dominant group, the colonisers, with the subaltern, or 'the Other', and the desire to control the development of knowledge.⁴⁶⁷ Anthropology initially

⁴⁶⁶ Guy A. Williams, 1960; Jackson Lears, 2002.

⁴⁶⁷ In British universities in the 1920s, Social Anthropology scarcely had a disciplinary presence, and when in 1921 the University of Cape Town advertised a Chair in Social Anthropology, it was the first in the subject in Britain and the British Empire. A.R. Radcliffe-Brown was appointed to the post and

appeared to offer little to commend it to the emergent Black petty bourgeoisie in terms of its career or professional prospects, as students preferred to follow the established disciplines instead.⁴⁶⁸ Later, thanks to D.D.T. Jabavu and to Z.K. Matthews, Anthropology was to become a central element of the academic identity of the SANC.⁴⁶⁹ The FS Malan Museum, opened in 1940 to house artifacts illustrating traditional Xhosa culture and customs, was considered one of the most prestigious collections at the time.⁴⁷⁰

Within the parameters of a curriculum that fulfilled the function of the university in reproducing classes, class functions and values, the tension between the SANC and UNISA has already been referred to. UNISA established curricula, set examinations and awarded degrees for university courses studied by students at the SANC. As noted earlier, SANC academic staff members involved in these courses were relegated to a sub-committee of the Committee of African Studies, with no influence in the Faculty or Senate of UNISA.⁴⁷¹ It was not only in the subjects offered under the umbrella of African Studies that UNISA dominated. A further example of tensions between UNISA and the SANC's approach to knowledge is illustrated by the case of English, in which the UNISA curriculum emphasised ancient rather than modern English. "I must make my annual protest against Anglo-Saxon as a compulsory subject for Bantu students taking third year Bachelor of Arts English," was Gertrude

his approach directly opposed the evolutionist school that had dominated until then, motivating D.D.T. Jabavu, who supported the concept of acculturation, to offer Social Anthropology at Fort Hare. In the evolutionist school, the main figure was the Afrikaner nationalist and later apartheid ideologue W.W.M. Eiselen, who in 1932 became the first professor of ethnology at the Afrikaans-medium University of Stellenbosch (Kuper, 1999: 85 – 96).

⁴⁶⁸ Burchell, 2001: 50 – 51.

⁴⁶⁹ After returning to South Africa, Z.K. Matthews joined Fort Hare as a lecturer in the Department of African Studies under D.D.T. Jabavu. Z.K. Matthews became Professor and Head of Department in 1944, with his scholarly achievements lending prestige to the University (Williams, 2001: 39).

⁴⁷⁰ Both the missionary and apartheid era Administrations boasted of the museum collection in the annual Fort Hare calendar and although the museum no longer exists, the plaque bearing F.S. Malan's name is still at the foot of the stairway to the Henderson Building that housed it. The exhibits were placed in the National Heritage and Cultural Studies Centre, whilst a lone skeleton lingers in the shadows of the Department of Development Studies in the Henderson Building.

⁴⁷¹ Memorandum dated 15 August 1939 (PR4118).

Darroll's contribution to the 1930 Principal's Report. She was supported by the Head of the English Department, Reverend D.J. Darlow, who observed that the aim of teaching English was to cultivate appreciation and understanding, rather than to accumulate knowledge for examination purposes.⁴⁷²

The issue of curriculum was to remain contested, with requests to expand offerings being rejected by the State. There was a brief glimmer of hope in anticipation of the findings of the 1947 Brookes Commission on South African Universities, which expected to recommend that all the existing constituent colleges of the University of South Africa become independent. The Commission did indeed make this recommendation – but excluded the SANC. Instead, in March 1951 the SANC gained autonomy from UNISA, but was then affiliated and made subordinate to Rhodes University as the University College of Fort Hare. In effect, this amounted to a transfer of tutelage, with the curriculum prescribed, examinations set and degrees awarded by that institution, instead of UNISA. The change in name from the South African Native College to the University College of Fort Hare was gazetted on 3 October 1952, formalising the long-standing practice of referring to the institution as 'Fort Hare', as opposed to that of the 'South African Native College'.

From an academic perspective, staff at Fort Hare gained a greater degree of representation on matters relating to curriculum. They were represented on committees and Faculty Boards, at which Heads of Department had the right to speak and vote, something of which they had been deprived whilst subject to oversight by UNISA. However, by 1950 the SANC had gained the right to set its own examinations for the degrees awarded by UNISA and the Senate regretted losing the privilege it had gained.⁴⁷³ Subordinated yet again to the academic standards and curricular constraints of another academic institution, the unwanted tutelage was to continue, causing considerable resentment of the "superior, even impatient attitude on the part of some Rhodes faculty members towards their counterparts at Fort Hare".⁴⁷⁴

⁴⁷² SANC Calendar, 1927: 27.

⁴⁷³ Minutes of Senate meeting held 27 November 1950.

⁴⁷⁴ Williams, 2001: 110 – 111.

By this time, the National Party government was in power, and advances that had been made in terms of demonstrating the ability of Black students to perform at the same level as their White counterparts were to be subsumed by the Apartheid project, as will be seen in Chapter Five. Subsequent to the approval of legislation approving the handover of Fort Hare to the Department of Bantu Education at the end of the 1950s, the final measures for implementing segregated education at higher education level were put into place at Fort Hare, and control over the curriculum reverted to UNISA, having come full circle over the past decade.

The exercise of financial control

As observed previously, the funding provided by the State was another control mechanism used to limit the degree to which the SANC could expand the offering of higher education to Black students, and to steer the funds towards particular purposes. SANC students could not afford to pay the substantial fees associated with a university education, and the financial fragility of the SANC was a source of constant concern to the Administration.

As the only institution offering higher education to Blacks in Southern Africa, shortly after its opening, demand for places exceeded the availability of hostel accommodation and teaching facilities. As a result, the SANC stopped offering secondary school courses leading to matric in 1936. This caused a short-lived drop in enrolments, after which student numbers rose rapidly, once again placing pressure on the facilities available. As was noted earlier, there had been increased urbanisation due to industrial growth during World War II, and the number of students from urban working-class backgrounds grew, outnumbering those from the rural areas of the Ciskei and Transkei.⁴⁷⁵ By 1959, after almost 45 years of existence, the number of students had increased from fewer than 20 to just below 500.⁴⁷⁶

Throughout these 45 years, the SANC experienced severe financial pressure, as reflected in the requests to the Cape government for additional funding that were a regular feature of its Annual Reports and financial statements. These offer a detailed account of the struggle to

⁴⁷⁵ This had a radicalising effect on the student body from the late 1950s, as more students joined the action-oriented – banned from campus – ANC Youth League, relative to the more liberally-inclined Sons of Young Africa (SOYA). This will be discussed in more detail shortly (Massey, 2010: 115).

⁴⁷⁶ See *Appendix A: Student Statistics*.

balance the books with a contribution from the State so meagre that it was negligible in the face of the monies required for the establishment of buildings, tuition, board and accommodation for students. Subsequent to the 1923 Higher Education Act, there had been improved subsidy and access to capital grants and loans. In terms of this Act, the SANC was entitled to receive a 75% subsidy for tuition and a maintenance grant subject to not more than a 10% annual increment. However, this was insufficient for the expansion of buildings and facilities that was required as the number of students increased.

The contribution of fees was minimal,⁴⁷⁷ and, with no alumni to whom the SANC could appeal, the primary benefactors were inevitably the participating churches, as well as philanthropic organisations based mainly in the United States. For example, in 1930 the Christian Union Building was established as a gift from the Rockefeller Foundation in the United States and the Canadian branch of the YMCA, after an appeal from Max Yergan, an American who worked for the YMCA on the campus between 1922 and 1936. That the State displayed little interest in promoting the higher education of Blacks is evident in its position regarding buildings and infrastructure, for which the SANC was obliged to find donors, sponsors, loans and grants. The State did, however, commit to funding one-third of the maintenance required for the upkeep of the residences, and in 1942 the Carnegie Corporation partially financed the library and museum building called Henderson Hall, as a result of which the Union government agreed to match the expenditure on a pound-for-pound basis.

As noted earlier, the SANC's precarious financial situation had been detrimentally affected by the 1930 Depression, which led to a reduction in the government grant⁴⁷⁸ that could not be offset by the College through sales of stock, its normal recourse when funds were required. This was because stock prices had fallen and the SANC was unable to raise sufficient funds from sales to pay off its overdraft. In 1932 income from grants and revenue was outweighed by expenditure and, in addition to the debt, a hefty 14% was payable on government loans. A turn in the financial fortune of the SANC appeared to be in sight in 1933, following the release of the Report of the Commission of Enquiry into Subsidies to Universities, University

⁴⁷⁷ The 1959 Fort Hare Calendar notes that fees contributed 12% towards revenue, an improvement on previous years.

⁴⁷⁸ The 1931 Report of the Governing Council to the Minister of Education lamented that the grant had decreased from 5,704 pounds in 1930 to 5,190 pounds in 1931, an almost 10% reduction.

Colleges and Technical Colleges.⁴⁷⁹ The Report highlights the SANC's financial plight, noting that only the Basotholand Government provided a stable annual grant-in-aid of £300 per annum, and that apart from student fees and a government grant averaging £5,283 per year over the preceding eight years, there was no other source of income. The adaptationist influence on the curriculum was evident in recommendation that the College increase its agricultural training and provide technical training in medicine, offering basic science subjects – Physiology, Chemistry, Botany and Zoology. The justification was that medical training would protect the health of Whites as well as benefitting Blacks, and that agricultural production would benefit from the development of agricultural trainers and instructors.⁴⁸⁰

A serendipitous outcome of the Report was that the annual grant was increased to the amount recommended of £6,500 per annum until 1937, which, the Report had noted, would enable it to employ two more Science lecturers. Conditions were attached to the improved grant, one of these requiring the SANC to offer the basic medical training previously envisaged. The SANC was also relieved of its loan of £4,000 from the Native Development Funds that had been taken to meet the SANC's accumulated deficit and a £12,000 grant was secured on a pound-for-pound basis to build laboratories for science, agriculture and medicine.⁴⁸¹

For a short time, the SANC Administration was able to congratulate itself that its overtures to the State were being reciprocated. In 1936, donations from the Chamber of Mines and the Black Mineworkers Union were made towards the establishment of the chemistry and physics building that would be needed to offer the pre-medical year of a Bachelor of Science degree, and the SANC appeared to be on the verge of a prosperous expansionary phase – one that was, however, interrupted by the outbreak of the Second World War in 1939.

The sense of achievement despite all odds was once again evident in the Governing Council's Report to the Minister of Education of 31 December 1939. The 1939 Report observed that the decline in enrolments from 168 to 139 that the SANC had experienced after dropping matric

⁴⁷⁹ Commission of Enquiry into Subsidies to Universities, University Colleges and Technical Colleges. Details of the outcomes of the Report were disclosed in the minutes of the Governing Council meeting held 8 March 1933.

⁴⁸⁰ Minutes of the Governing Council meeting held 8 March 1933.

⁴⁸¹ Ibid.

offerings in 1937 had been recovered by 1939 and the SANC was experiencing a growth that necessitated the expansion of its buildings and facilities. Enrolments had increased in all programmes except the Diploma in Agriculture – which had declined to 1 – with 63 in Diplomas in Teaching, 25 in Diplomas in Theology, and 31 in the Medical Aids programme. There were 106 enrolments in degrees, with the largest course enrolments being in English, followed by Education and then Bantu languages, and by the end of 1939 a total of 18 Bachelor of Arts degrees and 6 Bachelor of Science degrees had been awarded.⁴⁸²

Due to the expanding number of graduates and enrolments, appeals were made to the State for the £600 required to complete the women's hostel, Elukhanyisweni, which had initially been funded by donations from the churches. Funds were also needed for the Botany and Zoology laboratories, by then under construction. However, the State was unresponsive, which was hardly surprising at this conjuncture. Its attention was occupied with providing military support to the Allies and containing the potential for internal rebellion among Afrikaners who supported the Nazis.

Even after the War had ended, throughout the 1940s the SANC was forced to rely primarily on its own resources. Prospects of financial support from the State were raised after the release of the 1947 Brookes Commission Report on the University of South Africa and its constituent colleges. The Report recommended that the University Colleges, including Fort Hare, become independent institutions, a change in their status that entailed the provision of capital grants. Potential financial benefits were also perceived in the University Education Act (No. 61) of 1955, in terms of which the SANC was entitled to the same administrative structures, rights and subsidies as other universities. This provided an immediate financial impetus as subsidy increased to £90,221 in 1958 and then £120,140 in 1959.⁴⁸³ Had all other circumstances remained unchanged, there would have been cause for celebration of the

⁴⁸² See *Appendix A: Student statistics*.

⁴⁸³ A new subsidy basis was established for university salaries, but Fort Hare received 40% less than the extra amount due, as the government refused to accept that salaries of Black staff be compatible with those of White staff. Fort Hare thus undertook to meet the cost of ensuring parity among salaries. The subsidy basis provided funding on a per capita basis for students registered on approved courses, administrative services, laboratories, library and miscellaneous services (Z.K. Matthews, 1957: 10).

recognition of a more autonomous status for which the Administration had striven for two decades, as well as more advantageous funding arrangements.

The change in circumstances was the State's plan to remove the missionary Administration and to assume direct control over the University, which will be discussed in detail shortly. Although entitled to access capital grants in the 1950s, these were suspended in 1958,⁴⁸⁴ due to the imminent handover of the University to the State. Ironically, the Bill proposing racial segregation of university education was drafted in the same year that the University Education Act No. 61 was approved, eliminating the prospect of receiving extra funding.⁴⁸⁵ Requests put to the Department of Education, Arts and Science after 1955 were rejected on the grounds that they should stand over for consideration by the Department of Native Affairs, to which it was envisaged control over the affairs of the University would be transferred. That the missionary Administration had requested funding according to the normal processes indicates that even at this stage it nurtured a naïve hope that the University would retain the nominal autonomy it enjoyed.

As we have seen, the Apartheid State's plans for segregated education, including university education, dated back to the Eiselen Commission that was conducted in the late 1940s. Because of the significance of both the ideological foundation of the plan and the repercussions of its implementation, we now turn to the Apartheid State's plan regarding racially segregated higher education.

The Apartheid State and racially segregated higher education

Until the National Party gained control of the State, the Department of Education, Arts and Science had been assigned the responsibility for handling all matters related to higher education. However, immediately after coming to power, the 1949 Eiselen Commission was

⁴⁸⁴ Due to the increase in student numbers from 200 in 1940 to almost 500 by the late 1950s, applications for grants and loans to fund expansion of buildings to the value of 101,100 pounds were sent to the Department of Education, Arts and Culture in 1958. The funds were to be used for another building for teaching, extension of the library, an agricultural laboratory, extensions to the dining hall, two staff houses, a sanatorium and a sports pavilion (Burrows and Matthews, 1961: 34).

⁴⁸⁵ Z.K. Matthews, 1957: 10 – 12.

appointed to investigate racially segregated education. W.M.M. Eiselen, one of apartheid's founding intellectuals, was an advocate of racial and ethnic segregation who believed that social integration should be curbed by creating reserves for Africans – the 'Bantu' – where cultural institutions and traditional values would be retained.⁴⁸⁶ Under his guidance, the Commission's findings were, predictably, in favour of separate education for different races.

Following the Bantu Education Act of 1953, the implementation of the policy of racially differentiated education was implemented. Management of Black schools was removed from provincial administration and churches, and control was centralised under the Department of Native Affairs. One of the fundamental tenets of racially segregated education was that certain subjects were not required by 'Bantu' races, as a result of which the teaching of mathematics and science was discouraged in schools for Black children. At this stage, it is significant that the majority of Fort Hare students were registering for subjects in the 'hard' sciences, with chemistry and mathematics enjoying the highest enrolments.⁴⁸⁷ This preference points to the successful exercise of cultural hegemony and the triumph of 'science' over tradition, vindicating the attempts by missionary educators to steer their young students to the 'civilisation' envisaged by Enlightenment ideals.

As it was, the signs of the State's intention to execute the Apartheid project and engineer the future of Black civil society had become evident in 1953, when the practice of accepting students from Southern and central African countries was ended. This was a prelude to further restrictions on the students who would be permitted to study at Fort Hare. In the same

⁴⁸⁶ W.W.M. Eiselen was the first professor of Ethnology at Stellenbosch University in 1932 and held conservative views on race, ethnicity and anthropology, an emerging discipline in South Africa. He opposed the social integration of Blacks in modern society and preferred to "reverse the tendency towards acculturation" (Kuper, 1999: 93).

⁴⁸⁷ The 1959 calendar reported that 178 students were registered for Science, as opposed to 171 for Arts. This can be contrasted with the situation two decades previously, when between 1936 and 1940 enrolments for the BA degree were more than double the enrolments of the BSc degree (68 versus 31). Throughout this period, Agriculture had been scorned, with only two students choosing this field between 1966 and 1940, and 11 in 1959. Enrolments in Education had remained fairly constant in absolute terms, through declining as a percentage of the total number of students, with registrations of 54 and 56 respectively for the same two periods (Fort Hare Calendar, 1959: 131).

year, we have seen, the Holloway Commission was established, tasked with investigating the feasibility of racially segregated university education. Despite the submissions in favour of separate institutions from UNISA, Pretoria University, Potchefstroom University and SABRA, as well as Eiselen, Holloway had found the proposal unfeasible and the 1955 Report indicated that the proposal was impractical and financially unviable. Nonetheless, the Minister of Native Affairs at the time, Hendrik Verwoerd, rejected Holloway's findings. Instead, he called for the further investigation of Eiselen's proposal of three separate institutions for 'non-Whites' and established a committee to develop the draft 'Separate University Education' Bill, to give effect to this vision.

Planning went ahead in preparation for the comprehensive implementation of Bantu Education through the establishment of racially separate institutions for Whites, Coloureds, Indians and Blacks, with the latter further subdivided along ethnic lines. By March 1957 the first draft of the Separate University Education Bill had already been completed, proposing the handing over of Fort Hare and the Natal Medical School to the State. After a setback incurred by the rejection of the Bill by a select committee in May 1957 over technicalities relating to the difference between private and public institutions, the Bill was amended and its name changed to the Extension of University Education Bill. In terms of this, Fort Hare was to be placed under the direct administration of the Department of Bantu Education.

Racial segregation embodied the antithesis of the ideals championed by the missionary Administration, yet the SANC failed to respond publicly to the Bill until the final stages of its passage through Parliament. Essentially, the inertia on the part of the Administration can be ascribed to its inherently conformist nature and the ongoing reluctance of the Administration to challenge the State. Even the student body was relatively slow in openly displaying opposition to the Bill, giving rise to questions around the nature of conformity and dissent within the subaltern, which will be discussed below.

Students in relation to the State and the SANC

For the first two decades of the existence of the SANC, the incorporation of the subaltern by the dominant class – that is, the integration by Black students within the norms of the liberal culture as practised by the missionary Administration – had been by and large successful. As previously noted in the context of the exercise of hegemony, Jackson Lears has observed that the ability of the dominant group to influence the way people think is key to averting

fundamental conflict. Where the nature of subjugation is camouflaged, consent and complicity are more likely to be forthcoming. Conversely, where the nature of subjugation is revealed in a particular form, resistance is displayed. Furthermore, because of the complexity of any society, the real cause of subjugation is not easily identified or articulated. As a result, accommodation and acquiescence are compatible with contestation, owing to the subaltern's varied responses to domination. Importantly, subaltern groups are able to resist the dominant group to a certain extent, and they do so by smaller acts of resistance, though not always consciously so.⁴⁸⁸ These observations support Femia's four presentations of conformity as acquiescence under duress, unreflecting conformity as well as conscious conformity, and acceptance in the expectation of rewards.⁴⁸⁹ At the same time, they also provide for the opposite to conformity, that is, resistance.

The response of students to the Administration and the State will be examined in the light of their unconscious as well as conscious responses. In relation to the latter, their actions reflect their evaluation of the nature of oppression and their interests as an emerging elite group with the potential to acquire a power base within Black civil society. This will be shown to be particularly evident in the behaviour of members of the SRC.

In terms of the relationship between the State, the SANC and students, tensions became more pronounced during the 1940s, with external influences exerting a stronger politicising force on the student body than previously. During the 1950s a clear split emerged between the liberal element of the student body, loyal to the non-racialism that had characterised the political struggle of the Black petty bourgeoisie in the Eastern Cape in the first decades of the century, and a more militant group, swept up in the new wave of African nationalism.

The establishment of a branch of the ANCYL on the campus in 1948 paved the way for a more militant approach by students who were often from an urban, working class background and who were unaffected by the liberal influence of a missionary education.⁴⁹⁰ Although banned from campus in 1949, the ANCYL influence was evident in the rise of African nationalist sentiment among students, and, in response, the fainter liberal voice acquired a

⁴⁸⁸ Jackson Lears, 2002. Note that the enumeration of these points is the researcher's.

⁴⁸⁹ Femia, 1981: 38 – 43.

⁴⁹⁰ Massey, 2010: 64 – 65.

following in the form of the Sons of Young Africa (SOYA), a branch of which was established on the campus in 1952. SOYA supporters were influenced by their parent body, the Non-European Unity Movement (NEUM), formed in 1943 as the product of parties supporting non-racialism, that is, the AAC, the South African Indian Council and the National Anti-Coloured Affairs Department Organisation.⁴⁹¹ It is significant that the ANCYL did not similarly reflect the views of its parent body, the ANC, which remained committed to non-racialism, reflected by the stance of staunch members such as Z.K. Matthews. Williams reports that, despite the obvious appeal of the non-racial SOYA to Coloured and Indian students, its more principled and philosophical approach did not translate into action. The ANCYL, on the other hand, attracted students through its strategy of direct confrontation, and its membership in the late 1950s exceeded that of the SOYA.⁴⁹²

Student protest in the 1950s was to become dominated by an overtly anti-missionary and anti-White character, with tensions between the SOYA and ANCYL in the SRC apparently based more on personality, rather than ideology, as will be shown.⁴⁹³ The division among students was to persist, albeit that during the apartheid era it came to assume the form of a schism between conformist and dissident students, and will be discussed in Chapter Five.

Student responses to attempted control: compliance and resistance

It was taken for granted by the missionary Administration that students would comply with the dominant norms of English culture, as reflected in rules and practices. Students did indeed adopt elements of the hegemonic Western culture that was part of their conversion into 'Black Englishmen', opting for a future among the petty bourgeoisie. While at the SANCA, students

⁴⁹¹ We learned in Chapter Three that the All-Africa Convention had been founded in 1935 with D. D. T. Jabavu as president until 1948, and that Z.K. Matthews was a member of the AAC until he joined the ANC in 1940 (Williams, 2001: 29 – 30).

⁴⁹² Williams, 2001: 30 – 31, 50.

⁴⁹³ Ibid., 51.

they assumed some of the customs of this class, wearing the same clothes and forming social clubs that replicated those on campuses of European or American universities.⁴⁹⁴

However, expectations of subordination to authority were made explicit from the time that the SANC began offering higher education courses only, in 1936. From then onwards, until the College was taken over by the Apartheid State, each student was required to sign an academic oath, in terms of which a commitment to consent (obedience) was made. A register contains the names, dates of birth and addresses of every student admitted between 1936 and 1959,⁴⁹⁵ signed by each, to the effect that:

I, student of the South African Native College, Fort Hare, do give my sincere and sacred promise, and wish this my signature to testify thereto for ever, that I will be dutiful and industrious in my studies; and by this promise I acknowledge that in all matters relating to the teaching and discipline of the college I have willingly placed myself under the jurisdiction of the Senatus Academicus, and I recognise that if, in the opinion of the Senatus, my studies or my conduct are unsatisfactory, it has authority to forbid my continuance upon courses qualifying for a degree; and I engage that as a deserving alumnus of my college I will pay my debt of gratitude and goodwill on every occasion to the best of my powers, so long as I live.⁴⁹⁶

Notwithstanding the initial effectiveness of this ritual on entering the College, it was gradually dispelled over the course of the next four decades as the post-colonial liberal State, with close links to British capital, was replaced with an Afrikaner nationalist State, and the means of securing power through racial exclusion and domination was intensified.

⁴⁹⁴ The 1959 Fort Hare calendar reveals that students could become members of the following clubs on campus: Chess, Drama, Bioscope, Music, Jazz Society, Literary and Debating Society. They could also participate in sports such as athletics and cross-country, cricket, rugby, soccer and netball.

⁴⁹⁵ All the signatures of Fort Hare's famous alumni are contained, including that of Nelson Mandela. His date of birth is entered as 8 June 1918, instead of the widely acknowledged date of 18 July.

⁴⁹⁶ In 1951 this oath was abridged, following the affiliation of the SANC to Rhodes University. Students then swore to submit to the 'disciplinary jurisdiction' of Rhodes University. In 1953, the SANC became the University College of Fort Hare and the oath was amended accordingly. It was only in the 1990s that students were required to sign acknowledgements of debt, reflecting the change from academic to financial priorities in the era of neoliberalism, to be discussed in Chapter Six.

In the 1930s, student protest against the paternal University Administration was sporadic and crystallised around internal issues such as food and restrictions on students' social activities, without being explicitly political. However, from the 1940s, protest was articulated in terms of an African nationalism which found expression as insubordination against the authority of the SANC Administration. Whilst not embodying relations of domination and exploitation, White liberals symbolised the discrimination experienced by the Black petty bourgeoisie, and it was against this discrimination that an early expression of Black Consciousness presented itself. However, the Black Consciousness of the petty bourgeoisie must be distinguished from the wider movement that sought to end the exploitation experienced by Black people.⁴⁹⁷ By the 1960s, Black Consciousness was to assume the form of broader protest against the cultural hegemony exercised by the Apartheid State. Due to the physical limitations on forming allegiances with other groups – the small town of Alice was inhabited by White townsfolk and officials, who did not have a place in the students' political aspirations – student protest usually occurred in isolation, on the campus.⁴⁹⁸

Student protest during the period 1930 to 1972 has been carefully documented by Massey⁴⁹⁹ in the context of the increasing exclusion of Black society from political participation that accompanied the burgeoning urbanisation over the course of four decades. During the 1940s, the rise of a militant generation, whose goal was to achieve political rights for Black people, was characterised by carefully orchestrated acts of protest derived from intellectual arguments and was motivated by African nationalism and Pan-Africanism.⁵⁰⁰ This form of

⁴⁹⁷ Robert Fatton, 1986: 90.

⁴⁹⁸ Notable exceptions were the campaigns in solidarity with striking nurses at the nearby Victoria Hospital in 1949 and 1959 under the leadership of SRC presidents Robert Sobukwe and Ambrose Makiwane respectively.

⁴⁹⁹ Massey, 2010.

⁵⁰⁰ Pan-Africanism had taken root in the aftermath of the Second World War and Williams refers to this as “historical Black Consciousness”, based on Tiyo Soga’s notion of a unifying bond between African people that is deeply rooted in culture (Williams, 2001: 211). Infused with Pan-Africanist ideas, “historical Black Consciousness” was an element of the ANCYL ideology and was strongly present on the Fort Hare campus by the mid-1950s. Williams distinguishes this form of Black Consciousness from the militancy of the Black Consciousness movement that arose in the late 1960s

organised resistance against political domination by broader White society replaced the spontaneous acts of protest around isolated incidents that had characterised earlier rebellion against missionary control. Whereas the earlier period of protest had been symptomatic of a sense of aggrieved indignation around specific, localised issues, after the Second World War student protest was motivated by Black solidarity and directed towards wider social goals.

Initially manifest in the form of unruly behaviour in the Dining Hall in the 1920s and 1930s, the apparent cause of student protest was dissatisfaction with the quality of food and restrictions on social activities. By the late 1940s, student protest of an explicitly political nature arising from mass meetings had become a hallmark of Fort Hare. As indicated previously, the influence of events in Africa and in South Africa had led to anti-colonial protest assuming an explicitly anti-White nature, which escalated after the establishment of the Victoria East branch of the African National Congress Youth League on campus in 1948. At this point, students had greater contact with the outside world and became aware of their potential to assume the role of “organic intellectuals”, in the Gramscian sense of providing political leadership.

However, the Fort Hare student body was not, as often depicted, united in its opposition to apartheid. Recognising that students aspired to social advancement as members of the petty bourgeois class, their behaviour can be at least partly explained according to Femia’s reasons for conformity.⁵⁰¹ The actions of the SRC, which were typified by disunity in the 1950s, are indicative of the varying nature of student politics, ranging from the mundane, such as maintaining order in the dining hall, to the more socially significant, namely, taking a stance against the pending takeover of Fort Hare by the State in the late 1950s. Internal disagreement and contestation for leadership is also present in the minutes of SRC meetings, but the period after 1950 is particularly relevant. During this decade, the connectedness of the student body to organised resistance in Black civil society is revealed in the minutes of SRC meetings. In order to gain deeper insights into the nature of student conformity and

and which was influenced by the Black Power movement in the United States (Williams, 2001: 65 – 66, 211 – 212, 232).

⁵⁰¹ Femia, 1981: 38 – 43.

contestation, we will now turn our attention to an examination of events recorded in the SRC minutes during this period.⁵⁰²

Control, compliance and conformity: the role of the SRC

Incorporation is described by Raymond Williams⁵⁰³ as a selective mechanism that absorbs members of other classes through the dissemination and acceptance of the values and practices of the dominant culture. This is the effect of the successful exercise of cultural hegemony and has a pacifying effect on the subaltern, diffusing its dissatisfaction as it aspires to what is perceived as within reach. An examination of the minutes of SRC meetings demonstrates the extent to which incorporation of the subaltern was successful.

Notwithstanding its rejection of the paternalism of the Administration and the racist State, an overarching acquiescence is evident in the role of the SRC as defined by its Constitution and in the duties assumed by the SRC vis-à-vis the student body. Despite the existence of incidents that illustrate the nature of student resistance, the minutes of meetings reveal a predominance of issues concerning aspects of authority and protocol, foregrounding the importance of rituals and organisation that bestow status and privilege. This would suggest the grooming of members of the SRC for leadership according to liberal conventions and procedures relating to discussion, voting, decision-making and the documentation thereof. These formed a direct contrast to traditional practices aimed at arriving at consensus through discussions according to the norms of kinship and seniority – a criterion that excluded younger men from enjoying the kind of influence they did in the SRC.

Membership of the SRC usually changed annually after members had served one term of office, but the issues remained the same – food, socials, student club reports, club finances and student behaviour. Unsurprisingly, the minutes of SRC meetings are almost entirely taken up with issues around the exercise of power according to the specifications of the SRC constitution. These involve control of student behaviour in the dining hall and at socials; organising of clubs and societies; monitoring of funds allocated to and spent by societies and the SRC; food served in the Dining Hall (the terrain in which the SRC exercised direct

⁵⁰² SRC minutes 1947 – 1959 (MS14788).

⁵⁰³ Williams, 1960: 39.

control over behaviour); and the identification of issues to be brought to the attention of and discussed by the student body at mass meetings.⁵⁰⁴ Although the practice of consulting with the student body at mass meetings prior to making decisions bestowed an apparent democracy on the process, the SRC also made decisions on some issues without consulting the student body. The practice of selectively obtaining student support would then appear to be for the purpose of lending weight to decisions made, particularly when these were to be presented to the University Administration, as will be shown.

The exercise of control by the SRC: authority, prestige and secrecy

The SRC was conscious of the prestige attached to its status, part of which was related to their privileged position in not only representing students, but also having authority over them in certain circumstances, as described above. Concern with their inability to exercise power is a constant element of SRC meetings, threading together the 33 years during which the SRC existed under the missionary Administration. The complaints that students did not listen to the SRC members in the Dining Hall, were insolent, drank too much and misbehaved at socials and at mass meetings characterise the concerns of the SRC throughout the period.⁵⁰⁵ Clearly the SRC expected fellow students to follow suit in behaving in the manner that was appropriate to their class, which was considered above that of others in Black society. SRC member G. Yeni urged formal dress to be worn to all social occasions on the grounds that “dress differentiated the labourer from the student, also that how a man dresses to a certain extent determines behaviour”.⁵⁰⁶ The desire to exercise power over others was not restricted to students. Minutes record remarks such as those that the waitresses were impertinent,⁵⁰⁷ as well as SRC dissatisfaction with the “kitchen hands’ wrong ideas of their position”. Dissatisfaction with the level of service expected from those who were clearly perceived as subordinates was evident in the comment that “some women would be told to wait on students during meals”.⁵⁰⁸

⁵⁰⁴ SRC minutes 1947 – 1959 (MS14788).

⁵⁰⁵ Minutes of the SRC meeting held 19 April 1942 are typical of minutes of meetings during the 1940s and 1950s. The same complaint was expressed at the SRC meeting on 15 April 1958.

⁵⁰⁶ Minutes of SRC meeting held 17 March 1958.

⁵⁰⁷ Minutes of SRC meeting held 19 April 1942.

⁵⁰⁸ Minutes of SRC meeting held 15 August 1942.

The SRC members were highly aware of the authority they wielded and of the issues that would serve to strengthen their power by appealing to the student body against the Administration and the Union government. However, the student body was neither malleable nor submissive to the SRC, with participation in mass meetings often far from formal. “The attention of the SRC was drawn to the abusive language used in the mass meeting and the intensified spirit of hostelism which is unfortunately gaining ground,” lamented the SRC, referring to a mass meeting on the Amateur Theatrical Syndicate, a society that was affiliated to non-campus organisation and refused to subordinate itself to the SRC rules for societies, although its President was a member of the SRC.⁵⁰⁹

Part of their privilege derived from access to information the student body did not have and the right to discuss issues and measures to be taken – for example, to discipline students – as a body to whom authority had been delegated by the Administration. An unwillingness to forfeit power through disclosing information suggests that the SRC displayed the same characteristics of bureaucratic organs in general, which are defined by their organisational and instrumental functions of control. The tendency of the SRC to control and direct was more prevalent than its representative function, as illustrated by the examples that follow.

Power politics within the SRC

Whilst Massey⁵¹⁰ has presented the student body and the SRC in a manner that foregrounds their political commitment, as expressed by alumni in interviews, the more ignoble qualities of secrecy, jealousy, racial undertones and personal ambition cannot be ignored. These traits, common to all political behaviour, were also present within the SRC.

The tendency towards secrecy – a fundamentally undemocratic aspect – is evident in various instances in which the SRC discussed withholding information from the student body. In one such instance in 1941, in response to a call for confidentiality on issues discussed at SRC meetings, SRC member S. Latane cautioned that students could be misinformed if they received information through non-SRC channels. It was then moved that no defamatory

⁵⁰⁹ Minutes of SRC meeting held 19 April 1944.

⁵¹⁰ Massey, 2010.

information should be divulged and that the SRC records should be open to examination by students on request. Although seconded, the motion was “left hanging”, leaving the SRC right to secrecy unresolved.⁵¹¹ Five years later, the issue emerged when, “It was pointed out [by L.M. Mashologu] that SRC proceedings should be kept secret, no remarks should be made outside that would undermine the prestige of the committee or that of any member.”⁵¹²

Accompanying the secretive nature of the SRC was internal competition. Students were far from oblivious to the internal strife and the SRC was criticised in letters accusing it of “gangsterism”, with power politics within the student body playing itself out in societies.⁵¹³ Two students (M. Lujabe and B.S. Rajuili) complained to the SRC, saying that it had no control over societies and requesting an explanation for the “unconstitutional representation” of the Student Sports Society, whose interests were promoted by the presence of its committee members in the SRC. The letter from Rajuili was “passed over on account of more pressing business”,⁵¹⁴ but the last recorded meeting of the SRC in 1942 defended the President’s holding five offices on various committees, noting its displeasure with Senate’s observation that it was exceeding its powers in the Dining Hall.⁵¹⁵

Jealousy was also present, with suspicions of privileges accruing to members. For example, accusations that the President and Vice-President were getting sour milk and better meat in the Dining Hall were raised at consecutive meetings⁵¹⁶ and were not denied. In the 1950s, after the emergence of the rivalry between the ANCYL and SOYA, there were periodic upheavals and resignations. In 1957, two SRC members resigned in 1957, with one of them, M.G. Moeti – who subsequently rejoined the SRC in 1958 – declaring “the President, in my opinion, is the SRC”.⁵¹⁷ His resignation had been triggered by the issue of SRC members

⁵¹¹ Undated minutes, 1941.

⁵¹² Minutes of SRC meeting held 16 March 1948.

⁵¹³ Minutes of SRC meeting held 3 May 1942.

⁵¹⁴ Ibid.

⁵¹⁵ Minutes of SRC meeting held 15 August 1942.

⁵¹⁶ Minutes of SRC meetings held 30 March 1948 and 26 April 1948.

⁵¹⁷ Letter of resignation by Moeti to SRC, dated 2 May 1957 (PR4145, File 4).

discussing SRC matters with friends (this item referred to allegations of the President's practices and was overruled by him) and the refusal of the SRC President to be censored.⁵¹⁸

There were also periodic racial tensions, starting with complaints recorded by the SRC throughout 1941 about Indians and Coloureds, once again over the issue of food. The SRC believed that Indians were getting better meat, though on further investigation it transpired that, due to religious beliefs concerning the cow, Indians received mutton instead of beef when this was served.⁵¹⁹

Other grounds for mistrust were the numbers of Coloured and Indian students admitted at a time when Fort Hare was unable to accept all the students who applied. At a mass meeting on 1 May 1941, students had asked whether there were racial quotas. The minutes reflected the effectiveness of the divisive strategies utilised by the colonial administration in dispensing privileges on a racial basis, therein creating a ranking according to race, recording that "Bantu students fear that Fort Hare may develop from a Bantu university college to a Non-European educational institution." As Indian and Coloured student barred from White universities flocked to Fort Hare, the SRC complained:

In some cases, the non-Bantu students are believed to form separate cliques. There are allegations afloat ... that some Bantu students were not admitted because there was no accommodation, while non-Bantu students were accepted, suggesting preference to the wrong group.⁵²⁰

A few months later, the SRC decided to hold a mass meeting on 25 September and scheduled an appointment with the Principal on, inter alia, the "vexed coloured question"⁵²¹ relating to admissions quotas that students believed existed, although there are no records to substantiate this. It may be that the sensitivity derived from what was perceived as general political and

⁵¹⁸ Minutes of SRC meeting held 1 May 1957 (PR4145, File 4).

⁵¹⁹ Undated minutes of the first SRC meeting held in 1941.

⁵²⁰ Minutes of mass meeting held 1 May 1941.

⁵²¹ Minutes of SRC meeting held 8 September 1941.

social favouritism towards Coloureds, who remained on the Cape Voters' Roll after Blacks had been removed by the Representation of Natives Act No. 12 of 1936.⁵²²

This was the last meeting of 1941 and there was no further mention of a bias in favour of the admission of Coloured students, but 1942 opened with a revival of the issue of race by the new SRC, amidst the usual club reports and plans for the Freshers' Social. "Indian students are somewhat insolent", it was recorded, with reference to the way Indian students began their prayers in the Dining Hall while the SRC was still ushering students to tables, prior to being called upon to do so by the SRC. Separate instances of Indian students entering the Dining Hall after the allocated time or through the wrong entrance were individually recorded,⁵²³ but after this the issue of colour appears to have subsided in the face of issues such as student behaviour in general.

It is important to recognise that, notwithstanding the role of the SRC in the last few years of the 1950s, which will be described shortly, the behaviour of the SRC displayed the same competitive characteristics as those displayed by the Black petty bourgeoisie in the first half of the twentieth century, described in Chapter Three. Personal aspirations towards an elevated status emerged in the behaviour of SRC members, and it is important to recognise these ambitions as well as the antagonisms between members. The tendency towards factionalism in student politics is an aspect that, at the national level, was to be disguised subsequent to the banning of the ANC and PAC in the 1960s, only to re-emerge in the post-apartheid era after former president Nelson Mandela – an unassailable leader capable of uniting all the factions within the ANC – had stepped down from office.

The conformist nature of the SRC in relation to class

Notwithstanding their readiness to confront members of the university staff or Administration over certain issues (such as food), the SRC was less hasty to act on issues that affected Black civil society in general, as will be illustrated in examples to follow. At the same time, the

⁵²² In terms of the Representation of Natives Act of 1936, Black voters had been struck from the common Voters' Roll and four White Senators represented the Black population of South Africa. However, Coloured voters remained on the Voters' Roll until the Separate Representation of Voters Act No. 46 of 1951 was validated by the South Africa Act Amendment Act of 1956.

⁵²³ Minutes of SRC meeting held 22 March 1942.

ambiguous position of the SRC as an intermediary between university authorities and the student body was reflected in the issues around which mass meetings were called. Apart from sporadic instances of protest aligned to the national context of resistance to racial domination, the SRC generally adopted a strategy of appealing to the student body on campus-based issues that would guarantee them support. This was preferable to the risk of incurring the disfavour of the Administration and possible expulsion from the SRC and Fort Hare.

In April 1959, the same month for which protest against the transfer of Fort Hare to the Apartheid State-appointed Administration was planned, an SRC meeting illustrated the SRC concern with the issue of discipline. By then, students were angry and concerned about their future at the University, and the atmosphere was, according to Williams, highly volatile.⁵²⁴ Subsequent to an apparently rowdy Freshers' Social, the SRC, seemingly anxious to present an impression of orderliness and to exercise control, undertook to draft guidelines for behaviour and to work with hostel committees to enforce discipline.⁵²⁵ The power assumed by the SRC at that time included control over admission to social functions and the authority to eject troublemakers, as well as enforcement of rules through referral to the Disciplinary Committee.⁵²⁶ An elitist and chauvinist element is evident in the resolutions that all should be "decently attired" in formal wear, "no 2 men should dance together" and that "boys from the neighbouring villages will not be admitted to a function. But the women will be".⁵²⁷ It is significant that female members of the SRC were in the minority throughout the period 1926 – 1959, and were introduced to the SRC as representatives of the women's hostels.

The absence of broader class interests on the part of the SRC is evident in the largely apolitical nature of SRC minutes of meetings held between 1926 and 1959. The self-directed nature of discussions of the agenda topics and the absence of discussion on issues that affected Black people, particularly the working class, is noteworthy. For example, an appeal was received in 1944 from the Guardian Board in Cape Town, requesting assistance in paying £40,000 to defend the African Mineworkers Union. The SRC deliberated on whether or not to read the letter at a mass meeting, noting that they "would take the opportunity of

⁵²⁴ Williams, 2001: 122, 483.

⁵²⁵ Ibid., 483.

⁵²⁶ Minutes of SRC meeting held 13 April 1959.

⁵²⁷ Ibid.

warning students against taking an active part in party politics”. However, they decided against reading the letter because they feared that if students supported the cause, the SRC would be blamed and “students of this College are not expected to take an active part” in political activities.⁵²⁸ The same decision was taken on a letter from the Anti-Pass Committee in Johannesburg, the content of which the SRC decided to refrain from revealing to the student body. Notwithstanding the fact that the University Administration had expressed its disapproval of students participating in political activities, it is not clear that the conformity exhibited in these instances is that of conformity under duress:⁵²⁹ both the SRC and the student body were prepared to display open disobedience in other circumstances that affected students directly, as will be shown.

Along with being groomed for exercising authority, the SRC was also being trained in financial discipline, by having oversight over the activities and finances of student clubs and societies. In the latter part of the 1950s, the SRC’s financial controls appear to have become skewed towards the benefits of financial gain. In the same tradition as their White college counterparts, Rag celebrations had been carried out to raise funds for distribution to charities decided on at mass meetings, and these included beneficiaries such as the blind, TB patients and children’s homes. In the latter part of the 1950s a dance was planned, proceeds of which were to support the defence of the accused in the Treason Trial. However, a subsequent SRC meeting resolved to request the Principal to allow the proceeds of the fund-raising dance to be split 50/50 between the Treason Trial defence fund and the SRC, in order to provide indoor games for students.⁵³⁰ Z.K. Matthews replied that Senate had already approved the previous request to hold a dance for the benefit of the treason trial defence fund, and that the decision could not be changed before the dance was held.⁵³¹ As one who was on trial, Matthews could not have received much comfort from this indication of SRC priorities.

The following year the Principal complained that the proceeds after expenses from Rag the previous year had been so low that they were “the subject of wide and unfavourable comment, and may lead to the withholding of many of the usual donations [from businesses

⁵²⁸ Minutes of SRC meeting held 20 April 1944.

⁵²⁹ Femia, 1981: 38 – 43.

⁵³⁰ Minutes of SRC meeting held 7 May 1957 (PR4145, File 4).

⁵³¹ Undated letter from Z.K. Matthews to SRC (PR4145, File 4).

who sponsored Rag]”.⁵³² Demanding information about the proceeds from the recently held Treason Defence Fund Ball, he continued that “allegations of widespread financial irregularities in regard to student functions ... [were] apt to give the College a bad name” and that expenses related to other student activities had been incurred on “far too liberal a scale”.⁵³³ While this comment reflects a judgment expressed by the Administration, it is supported by minutes of various SRC meetings noting the use of club and society funds for the benefit of students. The consumption of alcohol evidently perturbed SRC Committee members throughout the period and was commented on several times.⁵³⁴

Contestation versus conformity

Despite the preceding illustrations of conformity, the SRC was not consistently and exclusively self-seeking. Robert Sobukwe’s leadership in 1949 exemplified a different character. Towards the end of the 1940s, the influence of the Pan-Africanism that accompanied the achievement of independence by African nations was evident in the thinking of the Youth League and was articulated by Sobukwe. A serious student, he was later to become one of the leaders of the Africanist breakaway from the ANC to found the Pan-African Congress in 1959, on the grounds that the ANC included racial minorities in its conceptualisation of citizens. Whilst at Fort Hare, Sobukwe had felt that the University was too isolated and its students too frivolous, intent on enjoying themselves and lacking political commitment. He complained that male students drank too much, misbehaved and harassed women.⁵³⁵ Though almost every previous SRC had made similar observations – echoed by the Administration – on the excessive consumption of alcohol by students, Sobukwe’s concern was that students were betraying Black citizens in the broader society. He also gravely warned the SRC that “standards at Fort Hare are going down”.⁵³⁶

An outspoken and powerful orator, Sobukwe articulated his views in his speech at the 1949 ‘Completers’ Ball’, held to honour students who would be completing their studies at the end

⁵³² Letter from Principal to SRC, 15 May 1958 (PR4145, File 6).

⁵³³ Ibid.

⁵³⁴ For example, see minutes of the SRC meeting held 19 April 1942.

⁵³⁵ Minutes of SRC meeting held 7 March 1949.

⁵³⁶ Minutes of SRC meeting held 2 May 1949.

of the year and leaving Fort Hare. On this occasion, he attacked former radical students who had become collaborators within the system as “spineless stooges and screeching megaphones of White Herrenvolkism”.⁵³⁷ Advocating African solidarity in the face of European domination, he also accused missionaries of being responsible for the tensions between the Xhosa and the Fingo (Mfengu).⁵³⁸ He shared the platform with another graduating student, Ntsu Mokhehle, who would later form the Basutholand Congress Party, with Pan-African ideals, and a continuing student, Temba Hleli.⁵³⁹ As a result of the overtly anti-colonial and anti-missionary sentiments expressed, Hleli was refused readmission in 1950, raising considerable concern among students about the consequences of political opinions being expressed on campus.⁵⁴⁰

Sobukwe’s call for African solidarity on campus does not appear to have been widely supported. At a mass meeting held on 15 March 1950 to discuss the desirability of dissident political views being expressed, SRC member A. Mazibuko, about to deliver the speech at the Freshers’ Social, reassured the meeting that he would avoid political issues. There was overwhelming support within the student body for the exclusion of politics from speeches, with little dissent. “One speaker drew the attention of the house to the policy of the College which was so glaringly consonant with that of this country i.e. an attempt to cripple the mind of the youth,” noted the minutes of the meeting. In a display of self-censorship, Mangosuthu Buthelezi, then a student, framed a resolution that was carried by 108 to 1 that “in view of the fact that electing students to represent our opinion means the ruining of their careers, as is shown by what took place last year, I move that ... no student shall be elected to speak on Saturday [the Freshers’ Social] and subsequent socials”. A token of dissent with the compliant role of the SRC was manifest in the resignation of member S.K. Ngqangweni, stating as his reason that the SRC was a “lax, carefree toy for amusement”.⁵⁴¹

⁵³⁷ Speech delivered by Sobukwe on behalf of the graduating class at Fort Hare, 21 October 1949 (Benjamin Pogrand, 2006: 36).

⁵³⁸ Ibid., 38.

⁵³⁹ Pogrand, 2006: 33.

⁵⁴⁰ Mokhehle later went into exile after his party had gained a majority in the 1970 Lesotho elections and the leader of the ruling party at the time, Leabua Jonathan of the Basotho National Party, declared a state of emergency and had the leaders of the BCP arrested

⁵⁴¹ Minutes of SRC meeting held 18 April 1950.

It has been argued that the behaviour and actions of the SRC demonstrated a conformist nature in which personal ambition prevailed. However, in the last few years of the decade before Fort Hare was placed under the control of the Apartheid State, the SRC, under the leadership of a more radical student, Ambrose Makiwane, ruptured the conformist tradition to challenge the State directly. The politicisation that took place within the SRC in the 1950s can be directly linked to the changes in broader Black civil society, as the Apartheid State embarked on its hegemonic project.

The emergence of direct dissent in the 1950s: small acts of rebellion

The strict prohibition by Senate on political involvement by students was reinforced early in 1950 when an SRC request to host a conference to establish the Progressive South African Student Union was forcefully rejected.⁵⁴² The Senate injunction not to become involved in politics, combined with the ideological differences among SRC members, translated into an apparent inertia that was evident in the self-directed nature of small acts of rebellion in dining halls and female residence common rooms.⁵⁴³

At the same time, students isolated themselves from their White counterparts, with whom they shared no common political ground. In 1952 Fort Hare disaffiliated from the National Union of South African Students (NUSAS), founded in 1924 as a broad-based student body, when NUSAS refused to accept Fort Hare's request to take a stand for political as well as social equality.⁵⁴⁴ In 1953 the SRC received a request from another student organisation, the South African Union of Democratic Students (SAUDS), to host its first conference at Fort Hare, at which the President-General of the ANC, Albert Luthuli, was to deliver the inaugural address. While the SRC decided not to agree to the request, there were considerable differences in the grounds for doing so by various members of the SRC, including dismissal on the grounds that Senate would not allow students to join it, resistance to being led by

⁵⁴² Minutes of the Senate meeting held 13 October 1952.

⁵⁴³ Massey (2010) and Williams (2001) provide numerous examples of 'bad behaviour' directed against the Administration.

⁵⁴⁴ The protracted events leading to disaffiliation are contained in the minutes of various SRC meetings between 11 March 1951 and September 1952.

communist sympathisers, and claims that Black people would be led by ‘National Liberatory [sic] Movements’ and not a White student organisation.⁵⁴⁵

One member, Frank Mdlalose,⁵⁴⁶ argued that he had been a member of the commission the previous year, investigating complaints about food, and that he and another SRC member had asked for eggs and sausage to be included on the menu, knowing that Senate would refuse. This he proffered as an example of what he considered was Senate’s invariable tendency to turn down student requests. Making requests and demands in the expectation of these being refused offered opportunities for contestation, or, in this case, grounds for a grudge. This illustrates the description by Jackson Lears of the nature of resistance to hegemony on the part of subaltern groups, typified by “small acts” and not necessarily “always consciously a counter-hegemonic or oppositional struggle”.⁵⁴⁷

However, whereas prior to the 1950s these acts had been sporadic, the repressive activities of the Apartheid State, combined with the intolerance of the missionary Administration of student political involvement, led to an environment which was to provoke concerted resistance to the exercise of control, as will be shown. Williams claims that the SRC played a significant politicising role within the student body in the latter part of the 1950s: as part of the ANCYL network, they received information on political events in clandestine “bush meetings” held beyond campus perimeters and took it to mass meetings.⁵⁴⁸

As it became more dissatisfied with the lack of responsiveness of the Administration to the legislation of the Apartheid State, the SRC began to articulate political dissent over specific issues. In 1954 the SRC called on the University Council to support the student body in their condemnation of the Bantu Education Act by submitting a statement to the Press. Other requests in the same letter were that the student body be allowed to form a “non-European” student organisation that would connect them to other Black universities and for a Committee

⁵⁴⁵ Minutes of SRC meeting 2 held March 1953.

⁵⁴⁶ Frank Mdlalose later opposed the Freedom Charter and became the national Chair of Inkatha yeNkululeko yeSizwe, the conservative political party founded on the basis of Zulu nationalism (Massey, 2010: 273 – 274).

⁵⁴⁷ Jackson Lears, 2002: 332.

⁵⁴⁸ Williams, 2001: 125 – 127.

of External Affairs to set up a fellowship of Fort Hare students, past and present.⁵⁴⁹ The latter indicates both the isolation that students experienced and the desire for solidarity with other Black organisations in civil society, reflecting the African nationalism in South African politics from the 1950s onwards. Relaying Senate's response, the Registrar's reply was crushingly dismissive, informing the SRC that "the Senate does not feel called upon to express an opinion upon the Act",⁵⁵⁰ a stance that was to be reversed shortly afterwards.

Under Kerr's successor, Dent, the persistent refusal by the missionary Administration to allow students to assume a political identity by expressing dissent was to culminate in a showdown in 1955. This took the form of a boycott of the May graduation ceremony, the catalyst being the imposition of stricter rules concerning the rights of male students to visit female student residences.⁵⁵¹ Political division within the student body between supporters of the ANCYL and the SOYA was overcome when these two factions united to organise the boycott,⁵⁵² which triggered further protest action. An apparent paranoia experienced by Senate concerning student "caucuses" plotting a rebellion led to Senate taking the decision, supported by Council, to close the campus and send students home.⁵⁵³

The 1955 strike offered a prototype for the pattern of events that was to be repeated in many subsequent protests over the next three and a half decades, as we shall see, in which students were expelled from the campus and required to write letters to the Principal – or Rector, during the apartheid era – requesting readmission. The strike also marked the first incidence of collaboration between the police and University Administration, as police were called on to the campus to monitor student behaviour and to escort them to the railway station when they were sent home. It was the nature of this alliance between the professedly liberal Administration and the apartheid police that alienated the White Administration from Black students. According to Williams, this created a rift that could not be undone until the end of 1959, shortly before the final takeover of Fort Hare by the Apartheid State.⁵⁵⁴

⁵⁴⁹ SRC letter dated 10 August 1954 (PR4145, File 1).

⁵⁵⁰ Undated letter (PR4145, File 1).

⁵⁵¹ Williams, 2001: 190 – 193.

⁵⁵² *Ibid.*, 232.

⁵⁵³ Massey, 2010: 82.

⁵⁵⁴ Williams, 2001: 245, 257.

Prior to a discussion of the political assertiveness of the SRC before this event, it is worthwhile considering the Report that was commissioned by the Fort Hare Council subsequent to the 1955 closure. Some were of the opinion that the commission was engineered by the Chair of the Fort Hare Council between 1951 and 1957, Dr Thomas Alty, also Vice-Chancellor of Rhodes University, because he considered Dent unsuitable as a Principal due to his inability to maintain student discipline.⁵⁵⁵ Whether or not this was indeed the case, the Report was used by bureaucrats within the Apartheid State to single out what were considered weaknesses in the missionary Administration in providing grounds for the State assuming direct control over Fort Hare shortly afterwards.⁵⁵⁶

Report by the Duminy Commission on student unrest and the state of the university

Following this disruption of academic activities, a three-man Duminy Commission led by JP Duminy of the Pretoria Technical College was appointed by the Council to investigate the cause of the student protest, as well as the conditions at Fort Hare. Other members of the Commission were Professor Edgar Brookes, well-known to Fort Hare, and M.C. Botha, former Superintendent of Education in the Cape and former Secretary for Union Education. They spent several days on the campus interviewing about 70 staff and students⁵⁵⁷ and their observations were contained in the ensuing “1955 Report by the Duminy Commission on student unrest and the state of the University”.⁵⁵⁸ The Report drew attention to the hostile atmosphere, foregrounding the absence of trust and “suspicion of the college authorities,

⁵⁵⁵ Williams, 2001: 259 – 296.

⁵⁵⁶ Burrows and Matthews, 1961: 43.

⁵⁵⁷ The commission of enquiry had a conservative outlook, yet it was nonetheless significant in the manner in which it can be contrasted in its form, scope and procedure with the 1972 commission of enquiry into student unrest conducted by the Administration, which will be discussed in Chapter Five. Whereas the 1955 commission took place over the space of several days, the 1972 Commission consisted of interviews during the course of one afternoon with the only two students who volunteered to provide information to the University administration.

⁵⁵⁸ A striking aspect of the Report is its cognisance of issues around language and discourse, and the explicit recognition that what was presented as verbal evidence by students was not necessarily what they were trying to convey, given that they were using a language that was not their own, and that the understanding of members of the commission relied on particular contextual interpretations.

suspicion of many (not all) Europeans, suspicion of one another. The last-named, a most distressing feature, was seen to be partly due to unwise encouragement of ‘tale-bearing’ as a means of control”.⁵⁵⁹

The Report noted the dissident behaviour of students and the prevalence of anti-Christian sentiments accompanying the general anti-colonialism, pointing to the failure of the exercise of hegemony in terms of the University’s role within civil society. Indeed, it observed that students considered Fort Hare as “in the vanguard of the political and racial struggle”⁵⁶⁰ and commented on the “exaggerated sense of self-importance of the students”⁵⁶¹ in their perception of their own role in the struggle against racial domination.

Elements of the contradictory nature of resistance of control was that whilst rejecting missionary Administration and Whites in general, student aspirations reflected the acceptance of English culture, characterising the ambitions of an emergent petty bourgeoisie who aspired to upward social mobility. The Report observed “a very strong tendency on the part of students to place the emphasis on examinations and degrees, what these will bring in the way of material advancement, to the exclusion of the social and cultural side of education”.⁵⁶²

The most important grievance articulated by students was the victimisation of those who spoke publicly against racial oppression, foregrounding their claim to the right to contestation and dissent. The Report states that “no point of university freedom was more stressed in student evidence than freedom of speech”,⁵⁶³ a right that was supported in the Commission’s final recommendations, albeit tempered by their disapproval of the students’ participation in political activities, therein construing a contradictory interpretation of freedom of speech.

Laying blame squarely on the Principal, the Report established that responsibility for the antagonism between students and the Administration and the collapse of authority should be attributed to the paternal authoritarianism and the efforts by the Principal and one hostel

⁵⁵⁹ 1955 Report by the Duminy Commission on student unrest and the state of the university, 1955:4.

⁵⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁵⁶¹ Ibid., 5.

⁵⁶² Ibid., 8.

⁵⁶³ Ibid., 4.

warden, in particular, to enforce compliance. It refers to a “high school atmosphere”, an inappropriate intended “kindly paternalism” that was instead executed in the form of “concentration of powers in the hands of the Principal”, manifest as authoritarian control instead of guidance. These allegations amounted to a condemnation of Dent and were to lead to deterioration in his health and his resignation at the end of the year.⁵⁶⁴

The Report also highlighted the absence of Blacks on the Fort Hare Council and the negligible Black staff representation on Senate, which reinforced the students’ perception of White domination, saying that this was partially responsible for the rebellious attitudes and the prevailing “spirit of lawlessness and disrespect for authority”.⁵⁶⁵ Notwithstanding the correctness of the Report in this respect, it nonetheless failed to recognise the subordination of Blacks to Whites throughout South African society as having contributed to the generally rebellious attitudes among students.

Following its observations, all of which were confined to the internal affairs of the University, the Report made several recommendations. Predictably, these related to internal changes that should take place, inter alia, fewer and better enforced rules, less control on the part of the Church and the right to freedom of speech without fear of punishment. It was proposed that the Church-appointed hostel wardens for the Presbyterian, Methodist and Anglican residences be removed; there be less control over student leisure activities; a review of compulsory attendance of religious services be conducted; and more social and cultural contact be established with other universities. Interestingly, it was hoped that through greater contact with other institutions, students would be less inclined towards politicisation. Finally, it was recommended that improvements be made to the buildings and facilities.⁵⁶⁶

Both the anti-White sentiments of the students and their claim to a role in the political struggle against the government seemed to vindicate the State’s view of Fort Hare as a subversive institution, and Fort Hare’s attempted illustration of harmonious inter-racial relationships appeared to have failed. The ‘student unrest’ was later used as an argument to promote the Fort Hare Transfer Bill, in terms of which control over education at Fort Hare

⁵⁶⁴ Williams, 2001: 261 – 262.

⁵⁶⁵ 1955 Report by the Duminy Commission on student unrest and the state of the university, 1955: 29.

⁵⁶⁶ Ibid., 39 – 40.

was passed from the missionary Administration to the State. However, at the time, the Administration was mortified by the student disobedience and defiance, and hastened to assign blame to a few individuals. The 1955 Report of the Governing Council noted that the Fort Hare Commission had investigated the “acts of indiscipline” as a consequence of which classes had been suspended, the subsequent re-registration of all except for 14 students, and the outcome in which five had appeared before the Disciplinary Committee, with one person being re-registered and the other four allowed to remain until the end of the year.⁵⁶⁷

The post-1955 SRC: militancy over circumspection

Subsequent to the 1955 closure of campus, the next SRC was elected only the following year, and it initially assumed office with a focus on the mundane.⁵⁶⁸ Yet the guarded nature of the topics for discussion on the agenda concealed the tense atmosphere within the student body, described by Z.K. Matthews, then Acting Principal, as “in ferment”, with students “in a sullen mood”, mistrustful of the motives of the Administration.⁵⁶⁹

However, a month later, after the SRC Committee of External Relations pointed out that the Universities of Witwatersrand and Cape Town had taken a stance against the proposed introduction of separate universities for Black students, the SRC called a mass meeting. With the threat of racially segregated education and possible “inferior standards” at Fort Hare as a result, the SRC wanted students to vote on whether or not to collaborate with NUSAS.⁵⁷⁰ There are no records of the outcome, but in August the SRC met with Z.K. Matthews, Acting

⁵⁶⁷ 1955 Report by the Duminy Commission on student unrest and the state of the university, 1955.

Williams reported that the Council had accepted a recommendation from the Senate Executive Committee that 12 students not be recommended for re-admission, and had added a 13th name (Williams, 2001: 257).

⁵⁶⁸ At their first meeting, the SRC called for a meeting with the then Acting Principal Z.K. Matthews on 20 March 1956. Insofar as the SRC tradition of minuting non-contentious issues was concerned, it signified a return to ‘business as usual’, with the agenda consisting of two items, viz., the Dining Hall and the quality of food. Later, the issue of the women’s hostel common room being out of bounds to men was added to the agenda (Undated minutes of SRC meeting held 1956).

⁵⁶⁹ Williams, 2011.

⁵⁷⁰ Undated record of mass meeting held in about April 1956 (PR4145, File 2).

Principal at the time, who asked them to behave in a constructive way in the face of uncertainty and speculation around the future of Fort Hare.⁵⁷¹ This request appeared to have a positive outcome in the sense that there were no visible expressions of student dissent on the Fort Hare campus in 1956, although the SRC sent telegrams of appreciation to its counterparts at the Universities of Cape Town and the Witwatersrand in recognition of their stand against the State's planned separate university education.⁵⁷²

In February 1957 the State announced its plans for the implementation of apartheid in universities, confirming that Fort Hare would be placed under the control of the Department of Native Affairs. One month later, Ambrose Makiwane, a 34-year-old former teacher who had joined Fort Hare as a full-time student, became President of the SRC. Having been a member of the Communist Party of South Africa before joining the ANCYL, he brought with him the benefits of previous political experience.⁵⁷³ There was an immediate change in the organisation of students in overt opposition to apartheid, and the forceful nature of his leadership – not approved of by all SRC members and students – is reflected in the SRC minutes, which record decisions of mass meetings and planned protest action. Informed by his political experience, his first move was to call a mass meeting to secure a motion from the student body that formed the basis of a telegram to the Minister of Education, Arts and Science, copied to NUSAS, protesting against the takeover of Fort Hare.⁵⁷⁴ In May a protest march through the streets of Alice was organised by the SRC, and staff were invited to join students in solidarity, without the approval of Senate having been obtained, a gesture that riled the conservative members of the Senate and conformists fearful of being perceived as showing defiance of the State.⁵⁷⁵

⁵⁷¹ Minutes of SRC meeting held 10 August 1956.

⁵⁷² Minutes of SRC meeting held 2 August 1956.

⁵⁷³ Massey, 2010: 138.

⁵⁷⁴ Minutes of 'Emergency SRC meeting' held 14 March 1957. It was subsequent to Makiwane becoming President that Moeti resigned – as referred to earlier in the context of competition in the SRC. Williams points out that Moeti represented the conformist element of the SRC, reluctant to clash with the Administration or goad students into rebellious behaviour (Williams, 2001: 333 – 334).

⁵⁷⁵ Williams, 2001: 320 – 327.

From this point on, Makiwane orchestrated student protest activities through the SRC. In a letter to all staff dated 18 August 1958, the SRC requested support for their stand against the Fort Hare Transfer Bill, which, according to the SRC statement drafted for press release, “aims at making the student mind mere pulp that can be manipulated to suit the whims and fancies of a fatal ideology”.⁵⁷⁶ The Principal responded three days later that the Senate Publications and Public Relations Committee had rejected the statement on the grounds of its content. He drafted a revised statement on 22 August, on behalf of the SRC, saying that the Bill “will make permanent the subordinate position of the Non-Europeans by subjecting students to a mental regimentation which is the instrument of an undemocratic party policy”.⁵⁷⁷ The SRC responded with a counter-offensive, calling a mass meeting to protest against this encroachment of its academic freedom, but the discussion of the Academic Freedom Campaign was deferred until correspondence had been received.⁵⁷⁸ Due to the frequent absence in the SRC records of motions carried at mass meetings, the views of the student body are usually unrecorded. On this occasion the SRC, decided to abandon its principled stance of isolation from NUSAS and estrangement from the Administration, opting for a united front against the pending takeover of Fort Hare.⁵⁷⁹

In the meantime, there had been widespread protest by students at the White universities of Cape Town, Rhodes, Natal and the Witwatersrand – as well as universities overseas – against the Extension of University Education Bill. After the SRC President was invited to join a Rhodes Protest march, the SRC decided to plan its own day of protest against the pending takeover of Fort Hare by the Apartheid State.⁵⁸⁰ The SRC protest day was planned for 1 May 1959 and was to include a picket and a march through Alice, speeches by the Vice-Chancellor of Rhodes University and the Principal of Fort Hare and the singing of the African National Anthem.⁵⁸¹ However, the Principal requested that the march be postponed until after the meeting with the Select Committee appointed by the State – due to begin with

⁵⁷⁶ Draft S/21/8/58/381 (PR4145, File 6).

⁵⁷⁷ Revised draft S/21/8/58/381 (PR4145, File 6).

⁵⁷⁸ Minutes of the SRC meeting held 15 September 1958.

⁵⁷⁹ Williams, 2001: 428 – 433.

⁵⁸⁰ Minutes of the SRC meeting held 31 March 1959.

⁵⁸¹ Minutes of the SRC meeting held 25 April 1959.

its sittings in May – and the SRC acquiesced, deferring the protest.⁵⁸² The rest of the SRC meeting discussing the postponement was occupied with routine matters such as clubs, an SRC representative for the Annexes (accommodation outside the main hostels), the issue of whether nurses should attend College socials, the state of latrine walls in the Christian Union and the SRC Dance.⁵⁸³

Despite the social distractions, protest by students against the Apartheid State's future administrators, who visited the Fort Hare campus in October 1959, namely, J.J. Ross (future Rector), H.J. du Preez (future Registrar) and S. Pauw (the Vice-Chancellor of UNISA), was carefully planned and executed. Leaflets with instructions were distributed to all students and rhymes mocking the incoming Administration had been composed. Strips of black cloth to be worn as armbands were handed out, signifying mourning.⁵⁸⁴ This protest was almost certainly coordinated by the ANCYL, as no formal records of any such plans having been made by the SRC exist in the minutes of its meetings.

The minutes of the penultimate meeting held by the SRC while Fort Hare was under missionary Administration are significant in both the apparently non-contentious nature of items recorded and the underlying issue. Substantial space is dedicated to the minutes of a special SRC meeting called on 13 August 1959 to discuss the outcome of a mass meeting held a week earlier on 7 August. A motion passed at the meeting, calling for potatoes to be excluded from the menu, had been rejected by the Administration, causing the SRC to assert indignantly that "the student body is free to decide what it shall eat". At face value, if this was the most pressing issue occupying the minds of student leaders on the eve of the takeover

⁵⁸² Williams believes that the SRC decision was possibly due to the influence of the president, J.M. Majola, whom he describes as "judicious" and respected by staff, implying a willingness to comply (Williams, 2001: 478 – 479).

⁵⁸³ Minutes of SRC meeting held 27 April 1959.

⁵⁸⁴ Instructions were distributed on what students were supposed to do on the afternoon of the apartheid administrators' visit, starting with assembly outside Stewart Hall, the building in which their meeting with the Fort Hare administration was scheduled, 10 minutes before it was to take place. All students had to wear Black armbands as part of the "solemn protest demonstration", and satirical poems had also been composed "by a *nie-Blanke*", with lines such as "Beware of this red-faced bear [Ross] / Instructed to make Blackies / Into government lackies [sic]" (PR3122).

by the Apartheid State, the future Apartheid Administrators may have been comforted at the prospect of the apolitical priorities of the student body. However, in fact the boycott of potatoes was linked to an earlier call for a boycott by the ANC in May 1959, in protest against the working conditions of farm labourers, and at the end of June – just as Fort Hare students were leaving campus for the winter recess – potatoes had been burned by the ANC at a meeting in Sophiatown.⁵⁸⁵

As Williams observed, the protest was more symbolic than purposeful in intent, and marked the onset of defiance leading to the takeover of Fort Hare by the Department of Bantu Education: we shall see that within a month the student body was organising protest against a planned visit by the future apartheid administrators. The SRC refused to abandon its stance on potatoes and responded angrily to the Principal's observation that the mass meeting approving the motion had been attended by less than 50% of the student body.⁵⁸⁶ In the spirit of confrontation, the SRC organised a further mass meeting to be held on 2 September,⁵⁸⁷ and in their September meeting with the SRC Liaison Committee, accused the Principal of treating SRC members like "school boys".⁵⁸⁸ After this, the issue appears to have dissipated and the final meeting of the SRC covered the same ground as that of the first year of the SRC's existence, 33 years previously, that is, club reports, socials and student behaviour.⁵⁸⁹ As in many previous confrontations, the underlying issue had given rise to a stand-off between those exercising power and those contesting it.

It seems ironic that the focus of the first SRC meeting in October 1926 had also been on potatoes, except that at the time students had been annoyed that potatoes had been excluded from the menu and replaced by beans, due to the escalating cost of the humble root vegetable. As pointed out by Williams,⁵⁹⁰ the issue of food at Fort Hare was proxy for a wider spectrum of issues that on some occasions simply enabled students to express their anger as members of the dominated social group, and on others represented a specific external political event.

⁵⁸⁵ Williams, 2001: 511.

⁵⁸⁶ Letter from Principal to SRC dated 11 August 1959 (PR4145, File 7).

⁵⁸⁷ Minutes of SRC meeting held 18 August 1959.

⁵⁸⁸ Minutes of meeting of SRC Liaison Committee held 23 September 1959 (PR4145, File 7).

⁵⁸⁹ Minutes of SRC meeting held 18 August 1959.

⁵⁹⁰ Williams, 2001: 222 – 223.

Whilst the minutes of SRC meetings over the period 1926 to 1959 seldom link protest to external catalysts, their significance is that they represent the expression of authority of members of a subaltern group who would have no alternative means of assuming a position of power once leaving the campus, where they would be subject to domination by an Apartheid State and White society. As such, the minutes are testimony to the authority enjoyed by members of the SRC and their aspirations towards greater recognition and responsibility, whilst also reflecting the extent of and parameters within which the expression of dissent took place. It has been shown that it was only in the latter part of the 1950s, under the leadership of Makiwane, who was the driving force behind the actions of the SRC, that it assumed an overtly political stance. At this point, it displayed a defiance and unwillingness to conform that had until then been generally absent.

The transition from institution in civil society to organ of political society

The last five years of missionary Administration were characterised by the absence of leadership, as has been noted. Following the resignation of Dent after the release of the Duminy Commission Report, Z.K. Matthews had been appointed as Acting Principal. He was to retain this post whilst he was periodically being called on to appear in court on charges relating to the Treason Trial.⁵⁹¹ During this period, the State pushed ahead with its intention to implement racial segregation and ethnic exclusivity at higher education level, therein demolishing the principle of non-racialism on which Fort Hare prided itself. In January 1957 letters were sent to Rhodes University and Fort Hare, announcing the pending disaffiliation of Fort Hare and its transfer to the Department of Native Affairs within the framework of racially segregated education.

Throughout the three-year period in which the legal framework was being prepared for the implementation of the apartheid plan in universities, the passivity of the Administration was evident. As observed previously, the absence of a clear response was due to the division within Senate, accompanied by its inherent conservatism and tendency towards compliance. The limbo in which Fort Hare vacillated is illustrated in the minutes of a meeting that took

⁵⁹¹ Z.K. Matthews was also Acting Principal when Dent was on sick leave from May to November 1954, and, subsequent to Dent's resignation, from December 1955 to November 1956, and October to December 1957 (Williams, 2001: 229, 281).

place between Professor Malcolm Giffen, Acting Principal of Fort Hare, and the Rhodes University Senate, on the issue of the letter received by Rhodes University in January from the Secretary of Education, Arts and Culture. This letter confirmed the future disaffiliation of Fort Hare from Rhodes University, announcing that Fort Hare would be placed under the control of the State. The minutes reflect Giffen's attitude of resignation in his statement that Fort Hare "could see no alternative but to accept the change in status".⁵⁹²

Williams recounts the division between the liberal and conservative elements within the Fort Hare Senate over the course of action that should be taken in responding to the proposed Separate University Education Bill.⁵⁹³ The liberal contingent attempted to take the lead, proposing issuing statements to the press and sending letters to the Minister of Education, Arts and Culture. However, they were opposed by the conservative Senate members, who emphasised the risk of antagonising the State and jeopardising the future of Fort Hare – and their future employment.⁵⁹⁴ In a demonstration of conformity for fear of the repercussions of non-compliance, the Fort Hare Council yielded to the viewpoint of the conservative element, resolving that the Senate should submit representations to the Council, which was the only body from which official statements representing Fort Hare's viewpoint should emanate.⁵⁹⁵ This decision effectively muzzled the liberal element in the Senate, silencing dissent.

The Rhodes University Senate adopted a different tactic by openly objecting to State interference with University autonomy. The Senate recommended that a formal protest be submitted to the Secretary of the Department of Education, Arts and Culture, stating its objection by altering the University Charter without consultation. The Senate expressed its satisfaction with the current affiliation and announcing its intention of refusing to cooperate.⁵⁹⁶ However, the vested interests of achieving a larger number of graduates for as long as the affiliation to Fort Hare was retained were expressed only within the confines of

⁵⁹² Minutes of the meeting of the Senate of Rhodes University held 19 February 1957.

⁵⁹³ Williams, 2001: 297 – 358.

⁵⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 308 – 311.

⁵⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 313.

⁵⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

the Senate Advisory Committee.⁵⁹⁷ In fact, one third of Rhodes graduates were Fort Hare students, and the loss of these students led to Rhodes embarking on other plans, as will be shown.⁵⁹⁸

In the interim, lobbying within the Fort Hare Senate continued, as the conservative element allied with Senate members who were alarmed by the assertively anti-apartheid stance of the liberal group. In April 1957 these groups joined forces and drafted a memorandum implying that the takeover of Fort Hare by the State could be attributed by the failure of the Administration to implement the recommendations of the Duminy Commission Report.⁵⁹⁹ The memorandum called for the appointment of a “substantive Principal”, the reconstitution of the Senate as per the Report’s recommendations,⁶⁰⁰ the enforcement of regulations in the College handbook, the establishment of a joint committee to study the Report and to initiate action, and the refusal of readmission to the College of any student who had inflicted bodily harm on another.⁶⁰¹ After some discussion and altercation, the Senate approved an amended set of resolutions highlighting the need for the post of Principal to be advertised and the recommendations of the Report to be implemented. This apparently mollified the conservative element of the University Senate without affronting the liberal element.⁶⁰²

Internal struggles in the Senate prevented the Administration from presenting a united front against the transfer of control of Fort Hare to the State, and the absence of leadership prompted the Chair of the Council, Dr Alty, to offer the post of Principal on a fixed two-year contract to Professor Henry R. Burrows, who had previously held the Chair of Economics at the University of Natal. This unprocedural appointment was apparently motivated by Alty’s exasperation with the sequence of Acting Principals and the absence of strong leadership.⁶⁰³

⁵⁹⁷ Minutes of the Rhodes University Senate Advisory Committee meeting held 18 February 1957.

⁵⁹⁸ Williams, 2001: 298.

⁵⁹⁹ Williams was one of the protagonists and kept a copy of the memorandum in his private papers (Williams, 2001: 314 – 315).

⁶⁰⁰ The Duminy Commission Report had recommended removing the church wardens of the residences from the Senate, and one of the most assertive members of the liberal group in the Senate was the new warden of Iona, Rev. J.S. Summers (Williams, 2001: 306).

⁶⁰¹ Ibid., 315.

⁶⁰² Minutes of the Senate meeting held 9 April 1957.

⁶⁰³ Williams, 2001: 281.

The principalship had previously been offered to and declined by Professor Hobart Houghton of Rhodes University, who was a member of the Fort Hare Council, in March 1956. He gave as his grounds the impending introduction of racially segregated higher education that had been announced by the State.⁶⁰⁴

By this stage, although the prognosis was clear, the least that was expected was that Fort Hare should present a semblance of resistance. While Fort Hare prevaricated, with the split Senate preventing the development of a tactical approach regarding the imminent State takeover, Rhodes University was more resolute in its course of action, as will be shown.

Rhodes University saves face and abandons Fort Hare

Behind the scenes, a member of Rhodes University Senate, Professor Ernest Wild, had been tasked with drafting the official response to the letter received from the Department of Education, Arts and Culture in January 1957. At the next Senate meeting in March he was able to produce a draft resolution that was unanimously approved by Senate for the purpose of releasing to the press and sending to the Department of Education, Arts and Culture. It announced its conformist intention clearly in that “without wishing to enter into political implications of the Separate University Education Bill of 1957, the Senate of Rhodes University feels compelled to record its view of the academic consequences of the Bill”. These were outlined as constituting an incursion on academic freedom comprising the right to decide what was taught, and by whom, the right to decide who to admit, and autonomy in selecting principals and academic staff.⁶⁰⁵

A year later, the spirit of academic freedom at Rhodes was once again offended by the removal of the so-called ‘conscience clause’, which foregrounded the liberal premises of the rights of the individual – as opposed to those of entire social groups and classes – from the renamed ‘Extension of University Education Bill’. The Senate Advisory Committee, chaired by Professor Wild, recommended lodging an objection on the grounds that “The ‘conscience clause’ secures that no-one, student or teacher, shall be barred or in any way prejudiced in academic matters on the grounds of his private beliefs”. However, the same committee declared that, having lodged the objection, “no further action [would] be taken by the

⁶⁰⁴ Williams, 2001: 286 – 287.

⁶⁰⁵ Minutes of the meeting of the Senate of Rhodes University held 22 March 1957.

University with regard to the Extension of University Education Bill”.⁶⁰⁶ Accordingly, a resolution was drafted and approved by Senate and Council for release to the press and dispatch to the Union government, objecting to the Apartheid State’s intention of making Christian education the basis of education in ethnically separated University Colleges. The expedient manner in which the issue was closed without further challenging the State dispels the image that Rhodes University held of itself as a defender of liberal principles.

The last stand of the University College of Fort Hare

In January 1958, after Professor Burrows had joined Fort Hare as Principal, he and two other senior Fort Hare staff members⁶⁰⁷ were called to give evidence to the Separate University Education Commission. This opportunity was utilised by Fort Hare to boast of their success in terms of the number of graduates produced and to argue against its transformation into an institution accommodating one ethnic group, the Xhosa. In mid-1958 a joint meeting of the Fort Hare Council and Senate drafted a belated memo on the Extension of University Education Bill, comprising objections to reductions in subsidy pending transfer of responsibility of the affairs of the College to the Department of Native Affairs, specifically to control over Fort Hare, its staff and students by the State. It also opposed the proposed reduction in funding and the “ethnification” of higher education, in terms of which the University was envisaged to accommodate the Xhosa, stating that this would diminish the “universal” nature of the College. Sent in July 1958 to the Ministers of the Departments of Arts and Science, Education, and Native Affairs and circulated to the media, the request for an audience was rejected.⁶⁰⁸

After the petition to be heard by Parliament had been declined, the antagonism towards Fort Hare and what it represented was illustrated by the observation of a Member of Parliament that “government control is needed energetically to cope with smouldering and undesirable ideological development”.⁶⁰⁹ The purpose of the Bill was identified as to “prepare this code

⁶⁰⁶ Minutes of the Senate Advisory Committee meeting held 22 August 1958.

⁶⁰⁷ Vice Principal, Professor Z.K. Matthews and Professor David de Villiers (Head of Department, Psychology), a staunch opponent of the pending takeover by the Apartheid State.

⁶⁰⁸ Burrows and Matthews, 1961: 40.

⁶⁰⁹ Ibid., 42.

of discipline ... so that we will have the necessary control over them and so that we can prevent evil influences infiltrating ...”⁶¹⁰

That Fort Hare was considered as ideologically subversive by the State was clear, but within White civil society it was the prospect of Black people having an equal or possibly superior social status that posed a threat. White antagonism was directed against the provision of a form of higher education to Blacks that would encourage middle class aspirations, expressed in parliament in statements such as “Colleges must prevent a spirit of equality arising” and “Colleges will obstruct the disastrous influence of liberalism which is using the University as a breeding place”.⁶¹¹ Once again, the fear of a political threat constituted by the Black petty bourgeoisie, similar to that exhibited in the Eastern Cape in the 1880s, was evident.

In August 1958 the Extension of University Education Bill was passed, giving effect to the plan for the establishment of University Colleges for ‘non-Whites’ and for restricting their admission to institutions designated to offer higher education to ‘Whites’. In November 1957, assured of a future of State control over Fort Hare, staff were required by the State Attorney to make a decision regarding their future at UFH by ticking one of the boxes on a form to indicate whether they were in favour of or opposed to the Bill, or noncommittal. As Acting Principal, Z.K. Matthews referred the form and letter from the State Attorney’s Office to Fort Hare’s legal advisors, who said that while staff could not be compelled to complete the form, those who stated their opposition would be unlikely to be re-employed. It is not known how many staff members completed and returned it. Williams notes that he did not return the form, and knew of at least two others who similarly ignored it, namely Terence Beard, Head of the Philosophy Department, and David de Villiers of the Psychology Department.⁶¹²

Uncertainty surrounding the future of Fort Hare led to resignations as staff sought posts elsewhere. Between 1957 and mid-1959, more than half the academic staff left Fort Hare. By November 1958, although 47 posts had been advertised, no appointments had been made for 14 of these. 22 had been accepted and nine declined by those to whom they were offered.⁶¹³

⁶¹⁰ Burrows and Matthews, 1961: 43.

⁶¹¹ Ibid.

⁶¹² Williams, 2001: 356 – 357.

⁶¹³ Burrows and Matthews, 1961: 44.

In the same year the Fort Hare Transfer Act No. 64 was passed, effectively giving the State the power to appoint members of Senate, Council, advisory body members and faculty to the Minister of Bantu Education. The State's assumption of control over the University had commenced in 1959, when notice had been given to nine staff members who were known to oppose apartheid, including three senior members of the administrative staff, namely, the Principal, the Registrar and the Librarian. At this stage, only 24 academic staff remained. Of the 28 Senate members, 14 would not return in 1960 and two would be on long leave.⁶¹⁴ No Black staff members were dismissed, presenting an interesting dilemma in that the choice was to collaborate with the State and accept the principles of Bantu Education, or resign.

Of the four remaining Black Senate members, only one, Mr Ngcobo decided to remain, with Messrs Phahle, M'Timkulu and Nyembezi opting to leave.⁶¹⁵ However, Mr Ngcobo, who was a conservative Presbyterian staff member, did in fact later resign, along with his colleagues.⁶¹⁶ This particular instance is indicative of both the dilemma and the principled decisions of the subaltern. By remaining at Fort Hare and on the Senate, the Black academic staff stood to gain materially under the Apartheid State. However, by leaving, they would sacrifice their careers and prospects for regaining their status or maintaining the standard of living they had attained. Other Black staff members who remained at Fort Hare, such as Messrs G.I.M. Mzamane and M.O.M. Seboni, were duly rewarded by becoming members of Senate and later Professors under the apartheid era Administration. The accrual of privileges and benefits was to be a strong motivation for conformity, as will be shown in Chapter Five.

H.J. du Preez, a bureaucrat with a legal background who had served in the public sector from the 1920s onwards, and whose conformity will be illustrated during the course of Chapter Five, was appointed by the Apartheid State as Registrar on 1 September 1959. He was assigned the task of serving notices of dismissal. Du Preez observes in his unpublished memoir of his term of office at Fort Hare⁶¹⁷ that Matthews was perceived by the State as

⁶¹⁴ Minutes of the 213th meeting of the Senate of the University College of Fort Hare held on Monday 9 November 1959 (PR3138).

⁶¹⁵ Ibid.

⁶¹⁶ Williams, 2001: 534.

⁶¹⁷ H.J. Du Preez, 1971.

being less of a threat on campus than off, as his activities would be under surveillance, making it difficult for him to engage in ANC activities. Although Matthews apparently, in discussion with Du Preez, initially accepted the Department of Bantu Education's offer to remain, he was urged by his son Joe Matthews not to do so, and was subsequently to rescind his decision.⁶¹⁸

Throughout this period, the stance of Rhodes University Senate was conspicuous by virtue of its self-restraint. Apart from an address to a meeting on 4 April 1959 to protest against the University Bills, in which Alty reiterated the sentiments expressed two years previously relating to academic freedom and the University's right to autonomy, the Rhodes Senate was silent and subdued. Alty conceded that "in our own University, we have, for our own reasons, admitted relatively few non-Europeans, but nonetheless, we are jealous of our right to decide these matters for ourselves".⁶¹⁹ He maintained that White universities should train the academic staff for the new Non-White Colleges, but did not reveal the reasons for the apparent indifference on the part of Rhodes University to the severing of ties to Fort Hare.

It seems likely that the remarks made by the Senate Advisory Committee in 1957 relating to loss of graduates that would result from the disaffiliation of Fort Hare had been absorbed by the decision-makers at Rhodes. To complement the small number of graduates, Rhodes set its sights on the alternative of a second campus in the large urban area of Port Elizabeth. By July 1959, a month after Senate had decided to discontinue examining Fort Hare students after

⁶¹⁸ Du Preez maintains that he had presented to Matthews the possibility of his being labelled as a sell-out and asked whether he felt he could accept the stigma, to which Matthews responded in the affirmative. According to this account, Du Preez then relayed the decision to Ross and the Department of Bantu Education, following which there was consternation in the adjoining office – where the telephone exchange was located – and numerous calls were made in which the word "sell-out" was audible. The *Natal Witness* on 30 September 1959 reported 'Prof Matthews re-appointed', stating that he had 90 days to confirm his acceptance. Du Preez recounts that due to pressure from his son, Joe Matthews, Z.K. Matthews later retracted his decision and resigned from Fort Hare, setting up a legal practice in Alice and forfeiting his pension. This principle was later to be rewarded by his being offered positions by international organisations such as the United Nations (Du Preez, 1971: 7).

⁶¹⁹ Address to a meeting of protest against University Bills on 4 April 1959 (PR4123).

disaffiliation,⁶²⁰ the process was well underway. Approval had been obtained from the Union government allowing Rhodes to offer courses in Accounting, Architecture and Quantity Surveying, an appropriate site near the centre of town had been located, and a grant had been secured on a pound-for-pound basis, with an option of buildings and equipment.⁶²¹ The loss of the Port Elizabeth campus to the Apartheid State's plans for the University of Port Elizabeth does not fall within the scope of this research; suffice to say that Rhodes was to experience a betrayal on the part of the Apartheid State that resulted in it gaining the status that it currently enjoys as the smallest University in South Africa.

As for Fort Hare, the sense of resignation was embodied in a resolution passed by Senate on 12 October 1959, condemning the State decision as follows: "Senate unanimously resolves to record its extreme regret at the action of the Minister of Bantu Education in regarding normal university procedure by arbitrarily terminating the services of members of the academic and administrative staff", whilst "expressing appreciation and sympathy". On 26 November 1959, Council resolved that:

the Governing Council has heard with the greatest regret of the termination of the employment of certain members of staff of the college who were appointed in good faith by the Council with the full knowledge of the Minister of Education, Arts and Science ... The Governing Council received no prior official notification of these dismissals or of the reasons necessitating them and dissociates itself entirely from this very unusual academic procedure on the part of the government department concerned.⁶²²

Analysis: Fort Hare as symbolic of *laissez faire* liberalism or compliant conformity?

'Resigned passivity' encapsulates the general ethos of the University Administration in the 1950s, characterised by conformity and acceptance of what was perceived as inevitable.⁶²³ Forty years after having been founded on the basis of a professed conviction in the unity of ideals of church and State, the missionary Administration capitulated to the Apartheid

⁶²⁰ Minutes of the meeting of the Senate of Rhodes University held 15 June 1959 (MS17504)

⁶²¹ Minutes of ad hoc Senate of Rhodes University Committee meeting held 31 July 1959 (MS17504).

⁶²² Minutes of the Council meeting held 26 November 1959.

⁶²³ Williams, 2001: 24 – 25.

project. In doing so, it illustrated various reasons for conformity, as posited by Femia.⁶²⁴ The transition from professed agreement with the basic principles⁶²⁵ of the post-colonial State in the 1920s to conformity in the expectation of reciprocity⁶²⁶ from the Apartheid State of the early 1950s was gradual. I argue that this followed the innately conservative tendency of the missionary Administration towards compliance vis-à-vis the legal mandate of the State, in this sense taking the form of an unreflecting conformity.⁶²⁷ Finally, in the late 1950s, submission to domination was exhibited in the form of conformity under duress,⁶²⁸ at which stage the missionary Administration was removed by the Apartheid State, despite the belated and moderated contestation finally exhibited by the missionary Administration.

Though the missionary Administration had attempted to cultivate Christian morals within the context of a liberal education, in doing so, it had by and large successfully exercised cultural hegemony by eliciting the acceptance of students to liberal norms and values. The motto bestowed on Fort Hare in 1916 by the missionary Administration, “*In lumine tuo, vide bimus lumen*”, translated from the Latin as ‘In thy light, we see light’, is significant. It encapsulated the Enlightenment aims and nature of the missionary education, whilst also reflecting the acceptance by students of the curriculum in its totality. In this respect, it serves as an illustration of the successful exercise of cultural hegemony.

It has been shown that among students, the nature of contestation was essentially prompted by the racial character of a capitalist society that excluded Black people from political participation and thwarted their prospects of social advancement. Notwithstanding rhetoric, dissent took the form of a selective and partial rejection of specific racial elements of a capitalist society. As an expression of general student aspirations, the conformity of the SRC revealed the successful exercise of cultural hegemony in the cultivation of a consenting petty bourgeois class imbued with liberal values.

⁶²⁴ Femia, 1981: 38 – 43.

⁶²⁵ The third of Femia’s reasons for conformity (Ibid.).

⁶²⁶ The fourth of Femia’s reasons for conformity (Ibid.).

⁶²⁷ The second of Femia’s reasons for conformity (Ibid.).

⁶²⁸ The first of Femia’s reasons for conformity (Femia, 1981: 38 – 43).

In terms of the change in the expression of the State, the subordination of Fort Hare to control by the Apartheid State represented a definitive ideological rupture with the missionary expression of liberalism. This had promoted the notion of rights-based individual liberty – more specifically, the right to higher education – whilst accommodating the racial inequality that was institutionalised in legislation. The Janus-faced nature of liberalism fostered Black petty bourgeois ambition, but the demise of the missionary Administration at Fort Hare was marked by the abrupt transition from the promotion of non-racialism to the imposition of race as the fundamental organising principle in every aspect of society. This disrupted the predominantly liberal element that had hitherto prevailed in the exercise of cultural hegemony at the SANC, as will be seen in Chapter Five.

In relation to the exercise of cultural hegemony, a comment on the entrenchment of Christian values and norms as part of the institutional culture at the University of Fort Hare is apt. After being accepted by the mission-educated Xhosa, Christianity was synonymous with education and social advancement, instilling itself not only as a faith, but as symbolic of learning. Today, to staff and students alike at Fort Hare, Christianity is a powerful unifying force, an affirmation of strength and perseverance, and a promise of good fortune, happiness and wealth. Senate meetings commence with prayer, and the university motto – “in thy light we see light” – is proclaimed at formal ceremonies, where the guidance of a Christian God is acknowledged and sought. Prayer ceremonies are held before examinations and, on Sundays, lecture venues are filled with worshipping students from different Christian denominations. In defiance of Enlightenment rationalism, the power of an almighty presence to which human action is subordinate is recognised, and, in support of Gramsci’s conceptualisation of the resilience of elements of the ‘common sense’, success and wellbeing are attributed as much to the grace of God as to human endeavour.

Chapter Five: The bureaucratic authoritarian state and Bantu Education: the University of Fort Hare 1960 – 1990

This Chapter begins by outlining the relative weakness of the Afrikaner faction of the national bourgeoisie after the National Party had gained control of the State in the 1948 elections. Having risen to power on the basis of ideological support from a White Afrikaner minority, the National Party then set about implementing its hegemonic project of Apartheid. The tenuous economic base of Afrikaner capital rendered the State susceptible to challenges from other classes, both dominant and dominated, and its fragility within the context of global capital was responsible for its ongoing quest for economic self-sufficiency. The weakness of the State was also manifest in its inability to consolidate political power by gaining the widespread support of civil society for its hegemonic project, which emphasised the racial and cultural separation of society. Economically weak and with its ability to offer moral and ideological leadership limited to White civil society, the fragility of the Afrikaner national bourgeoisie found expression in the bureaucratic authoritarian State,⁶²⁹ to be described shortly.

The University of Fort Hare's anticipated role in the attempted exercise of cultural hegemony is the core element of this Chapter, while Apartheid, as an ideological construct and hegemonic project, is the theme that threads throughout the discussion. The Apartheid project was a complex of ideas and plans whose implementation was laden with contradictions. Based on the idea of different trajectories of development for various ethnic groups, as an ideological project it appeared to resonate with the evolutionary claims of the structural-functional approach proposed by the American sociologist Talcott Parsons (1902 – 1979).⁶³⁰ Notwithstanding the inherently conservative premise that different societies develop in different ways, Afrikaner ideology justified the Apartheid project within the broad claims of modernisation, proposing racially separate developmental paths. When the Ciskei was declared an independent homeland in 1981, it represented the materialization of the Apartheid Plan, but it was in reality a 'State within a State' by virtue of its material dependency on South Africa. Organisationally, it was

⁶²⁹ G. O'Donnell and P.S. Schmitter, 1988.

⁶³⁰ Structural-functionalism presents societies as comprising systems and sub-systems according to which human beings make decisions, in the process of which societies move from simple to more complex forms.

an extension of the bureaucracy, and Fort Hare was seen as instrumental in training the civil servants with which it was populated.

As part of the attempted enactment of the State's hegemonic project, Fort Hare illustrates conformity, collaboration and contestation. Although generally presented as a core element of the liberation struggle, the activities and behaviour of different groups within the University of Fort Hare between 1960 and 1990 display a wide spectrum of responses to the Apartheid State's hegemonic project. On the one hand, Fort Hare was characterised by the resistance displayed by students to the Apartheid State and the synchronicity of the relationship between its senior Administrators and the Apartheid State. However, on the other hand, notwithstanding the indisputable character of resistance during this time, the lesser known response to the State, that of conformity, was also widely present among students and Black staff Fort Hare, as will be illustrated presently.

Chapter Three described how members of the Broederbond were involved in shaping and directing the Apartheid project and the exercise of cultural hegemony. As education lies at the core of cultural hegemony, it is not surprising that by the 1970s, the largest single group of Broederbond members were found in the teaching profession (20.36%). In this group were 24 Rectors of universities and training colleges,⁶³¹ among these being the first two Rectors of Fort Hare appointed by the Apartheid State, Johannes Jurgens Ross (1960 – 1968)⁶³² and Johannes Marthinus de Wet (1968 – 1981).⁶³³ Their role in the implementation of the Apartheid project will also form a prominent theme in the discussion of the relationship between the State and the University in the exercise of cultural hegemony.

Having outlined the main components of this Chapter, we will now turn our attention to the first, the political economy of the South African bureaucratic authoritarian State.

⁶³¹ Wilkins and Strydom, 1980: 362.

⁶³² Ibid., Appendix – Broederbond membership list, A198, membership no. 3018.

⁶³³ Ibid., Appendix – Broederbond membership list, A58.

The South African bureaucratic authoritarian state

We have seen how the complexity of alliances between sectors of classes with intrinsically inimical interests created a 'shared hegemony' formed around specific issues of racial domination and cultural and linguistic autonomy between Afrikaner and English Whites. By politically excluding the Black majority, this alliance produced an unstable State capable of exercising hegemony only within the limited scope of White civil society. In order to implement its hegemonic project, the Nationalist Party that gained power of the State structures in 1948 was more concerned with the implementation of its hegemonic project in relation to Black society than eliciting their consent. The use of coercion to maintain power, the most evident manifestation of the bureaucratic authoritarian State, will be shown to have predominated during the era of the Apartheid State.

The second characteristic is that of the centralisation and expansion of bureaucratic structures in order to maintain control. This is linked to the first characteristic, in that the repressive element of the bureaucracy, namely, the police and military, perform the key function of coercion and control – as opposed to organisation – of civil society. The Afrikanerisation of the bureaucracy was the means by which the Apartheid State executed its hegemonic project, with the bureaucracy serving as a 'transmission mechanism' for values and morals. As a mechanism for the reproduction of values, the bureaucracy is able to establish contact with different levels and classes, thereby enabling values to permeate through society. At the same time, the political role of education, as both a form of control and a means of cultivating consent, becomes fused within the State's broader bureaucratic function to reinforce control over ideological structures and mechanisms. This is strikingly evident in the Apartheid State's stringent control over universities that were established to promote ethnically based 'Separate Development', the ideological cornerstone of apartheid.

The control that is executed by the bureaucratic authoritarian State is aimed at eliminating the contestation that cannot be contained within the scope of ideological differences in civil society. The inability to accommodate dissent is linked to the weakness of the dominant class that has control of the State. At some stage, the disjuncture between the material means required to execute coercion and the extent of popular resistance becomes too great: for this reason, a bureaucratic authoritarian expression of the State is untenable. At this point, the political party representing the interests of a new class (or alliance of classes) is able to make

political headway by forcing the weakened dominant class either to capitulate or to share political power. The sequence of events that led to this stage will be seen to coincide with forced removal of the Apartheid era Administration in 1990, in an unusual synchronicity of events at the level of the State and at the University of Fort Hare.

As indicated above, the primary feature of the bureaucratic authoritarian State is its use of various forms of coercion, comprising the legal system (the institutionalisation of repression), the police and the army. It is to the first that we now turn our attention.

The legal framework of coercion

In the decade after it had gained control of the State, the Afrikaner National Party put in place a legislative framework that would enable the implementation of the Apartheid project. It was initiated by the Population Registration Act of 1950, the Group Areas Act of the same year, and the Resettlement of Natives Act of 1954, enforcing racial classification and racial separation in urban areas. The Bantu Authorities Act of 1951 aimed at direct control over matters relating to Black civil society, and, as discussed in Chapter Four, the 1953 Bantu Education Act formulated the expression of ideological domination through the provision of education to prepare Blacks for their position as a subaltern class. Finally, legislation designed to create separate ‘national homelands’ for different race and ethnic groups was introduced in the Promotion of Bantu Self-Government Act of 1959. This established the framework for administration and self-government structures in the reserves, which were henceforth known as ‘homelands’, to be administered by a compliant political elite.

At the same time, the State put in place legislation designed to counter political threats. The Suppression of Communism Act of 1950 signalled both the State’s fear of class-based revolt and its paranoia regarding the ambitions of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). However, if the aim of legislation passed during the 1950s was to establish a framework for the Apartheid project and to control civil society, it was ineffective. The mass-based Defiance Campaign of 1952 pointed to continued resistance, and the State displayed a readiness to rely on the other coercive mechanisms at its disposal, namely, the police and the army. The State’s recourse to violence culminated in the Sharpeville massacre of March 1960, in which 60 people were killed during a peaceful march against carrying passes. One of the consequences

of this mass protest was the banning of the ANC and PAC, after which these organisations went underground and initiated the armed struggle against the Apartheid State.⁶³⁴

Underground resistance took the form of an ongoing campaign to mobilise Black civil society, accompanied by acts of sabotage aimed at disruption of the existing order and bringing down the State through a strategy consisting of external and internal assault.⁶³⁵ Whereas in the 1950s, legislation had focused on establishing the framework for the implementation of the Apartheid project, in the next decade it aimed at eliminating dissent. In 1965 the Official Secrets Act Amendment Bill was passed to prevent the publication of information that would interfere with operations of the security police. The Bureau of State Security (BOSS), a new branch of the police force, was established in 1969 for the specific purpose of surveillance and suppression of dissidence in the wider civil society. These Acts facilitated the suppression of information deemed to constitute a danger to the State and encouraged the use of civilians as spies. The Terrorism Act No 83 of 1967 was widely applied, enabling the State to take action against any person or thing deemed to threaten law and order, granting the police unlimited power of arrest and introducing detention without trial, as well as the death penalty for treason.⁶³⁶

Externally, the ANC army in exile, MK, formed alliances in 1965 with the Zimbabwean African People's union (ZAPU) and its armed forces, the Zimbabwean People's Revolutionary Army (ZIPRA), while the Azanian People's Liberation Army (APLA) had links with the Zimbabwean African National Union (ZANU) and its Zimbabwean African National Liberation Army, in the struggle to overthrow the White regime in what was then Rhodesia.⁶³⁷

⁶³⁴ *Umkhonto we Sizwe* (Spear of the Nation), or MK, was the ANC army in exile and the Azanian People's Liberation Army (APLA) that of the PAC, receiving training and arms from Russia and China respectively.

⁶³⁵ Resistance took the form of the armed struggle waged against the State from beyond its borders; guerilla attacks planned inside South Africa by members of underground resistance groups; political lobbying for support for the ANC outside South Africa; and the cultivation of support internally through various tactics. These included the use of 'cells' who worked to disseminate anti-apartheid ideology and coordinate the internal struggle (Vincent Maphai, 1994: 44 – 51).

⁶³⁶ The infamous Section 6 enabled the police to detain anybody suspected of being involved in terrorist activities for 60 days, after which the detention order could be renewed.

⁶³⁷ Rocky Williams, 2000: 5 – 6.

Although military operations did not take place in South Africa in the 1960s, MK and APLA were organising support within civil society and recruiting members to join the external army. In response to the threat of ‘terrorism’, the South African State introduced the Defence Amendment Act, making military service compulsory for all White male citizens. Public expenditure on defence soared from \$63 billion in 1960 to \$1 billion in early 1970s as the State embarked on a protracted war against Black citizens in exile and their allies.⁶³⁸

In the 1970s, the focus of the State was of an organising nature, aimed at bringing the Apartheid project to fruition. The 1970 Bantu Homelands Citizenship Act and the 1971 the Bantu Homelands Constitution Act provided the framework and the procedure for the ‘homelands’ to achieve independence. By the early 1980s, the so-called ‘TBVC republics’ had been established, comprising four ‘homelands’ whose initials formed the above acronym, namely, Transkei, Bophutatswana, Venda and Ciskei.⁶³⁹ To deal with the issue of ‘non-Whites’ who could not be officially assigned to ‘homelands’, namely Coloureds and Indians, a new constitution with a tricameral parliament was introduced in 1984. The House of Assembly was for White voters, the House of Representatives for Coloured voters and the House of Delegates for Indian voters. The House of Representatives and House of Delegates assumed responsibility for education of Coloureds and Indians respectively, while responsibility for education of Blacks was assigned to the new Department of Education and Training.

Whilst presenting a semblance of sovereignty by holding elections and establishing legislative and executive structures, the ‘homelands’ had limited opportunities for autonomy. Sovereignty is – justifiably or not – equated with legitimacy, and usually understood as derived from a process that produces evidence of a certain minimum level of support; whilst autonomy refers to the capacity of the State to exercise power and execute resolutions. Nonetheless, a State may have sovereignty without autonomy, and vice-versa, with a lack of autonomy characterising a dominated, dependent State,⁶⁴⁰ as was the case of the Ciskei and other ‘homelands’. The semblance of independence was embellished by infrastructural arrangements such as airports, and symbolically enhanced by flags and national anthems. Budget revenue, whilst partially

⁶³⁸ Michael Morris, 2004: 192.

⁶³⁹ Bophutatswana and Venda had been part of the Transvaal Province, while the Ciskei and Transkei had been part of the Cape.

⁶⁴⁰ David Held, Anthony McGrew, David Goldblatt and Jonathan Perraton, 1999.

derived from taxes levied in the homelands, nonetheless originated primarily from the South African State: as a result, there was no question as to where actual power lay.

As a 'homelands' University, the anticipated role of Fort Hare in implementing the Apartheid project was clear: it was supported by senior Administrators, but generally resisted by students, many of whom left Fort Hare to become involved in the external resistance struggle.⁶⁴¹

It was pointed out earlier that the bureaucratic authoritarian State is an expression of the weakness of the class that has control at the level of the State, as a result of which it establishes coercive mechanisms in order to control society. We will now turn our attention to an examination of the economics of the bureaucratic authoritarian State.

We have seen that early capitalist development in South Africa was characterised by the development of oligopolies in the financial and mining sectors. Private capital was owned by Afrikaner, Jewish and British interests and public capital was represented by State enterprises founded on the basis of mining capital in the 1930s. Mining dominated the economy, and capital accumulation was dependant on the supply of cheap Black labour.⁶⁴²

In the period subsequent to the Second World War, export-led industrial growth was experienced as South Africa continued to be a supplier of manufactured goods to the former colonial powers. As stated previously, the Apartheid State was successful in achieving the complicity of the majority of the White electorate, Afrikaner as well as English-speaking, at least partly because of the material advantages that were made available to them.⁶⁴³ However, the provision of concrete benefits was feasible only to the extent that State funding could accommodate a certain amount of welfare spending on health, education, recreation and so forth through the income received as tax revenue. Throughout the 1950s and 1960s this was made possible through exploitation of the Black working class.

⁶⁴¹ Examples of students who left South Africa in the 1960s and 1970s to join MK are provided by Massey, 2010. The trend continued in the 1980s (Interview with Vusumzi Duma, former student and current lecturer in Sociology at Fort Hare, on 26 May 2011).

⁶⁴² Worden, 1994: 51 – 52.

⁶⁴³ Ibid., 114.

In 1958 the National Party won the national elections with substantial gains in both votes and seats in parliament, whilst the United Party, which had traditionally enjoyed the support of English-speaking White South Africans, lost support. The Labour Party lost its seats in parliament, with the White working class having been convinced by gains in its standard of living – at the expense of Blacks – to support the National Party.⁶⁴⁴ When a referendum was held among the White population in 1960 on whether or not South Africa should form a Republic and leave the British Commonwealth, the result was in favour. Politically, this symbolised the defeat of British imperialism and the triumph of Afrikaner nationalism.

Despite the political triumph of Afrikaner nationalism in the establishment of the South African Republic in 1961, foreign capital continued to dominate the economy. The weakness of the national bourgeoisie vis-à-vis global capital was to be clearly demonstrated in the 1980s. Foreign capital investment in South Africa had not been adversely affected by the declaration of a Republic, and remained profitable until the 1970s. According to Bond, a decline in profitability in the manufacturing sector, accompanied by rising oil prices, drove investment funds elsewhere, and the economic structure in South Africa reverted to the dependence on the agricultural and mining base from which it had recently departed, weakening the economy due to reliance on world commodity prices.⁶⁴⁵ At this stage, more capital-intensive methods of production and the need for semi-skilled and skilled labour reduced the profitability of mining operations, whilst requiring a stable urban labour force in the proximity of White urban areas. These changes placed a strain on two of the basic premises of apartheid, namely, the reservation of skilled jobs for Whites and the racial separation of living areas.⁶⁴⁶

Economic decline prompted the reappearance of factions within the national bourgeoisie as multinational organisations withdrew investment, ostensibly in protest against the Apartheid State, and by the mid-1980s about 500 multinational corporations had withdrawn from South Africa.⁶⁴⁷ Representing the conservative element of the national bourgeoisie, the agricultural oligopoly, Prime Minister P.W. Botha made his infamous “Rubicon” speech in 1985, in which

⁶⁴⁴ The National Party held 103 seats, gaining 9, whilst the United Party held 53 (losing 4), and the Labour Party lost its political presence (Williams, 2001: 378).

⁶⁴⁵ Patrick Bond, 2001.

⁶⁴⁶ Worden, 1994: 121 – 122.

⁶⁴⁷ Morris, 2004: 234.

he announced that the South African State would not relinquish political power to a Black majority government. In response, Chase Manhattan Bank of New York refused to renew its loan to South Africa and other foreign banks followed suit, forcing the State to freeze foreign debt repayments and creating consternation within the industrial faction of national bourgeoisie, as well as business interests within White civil society in general.⁶⁴⁸ The industrial faction of the national bourgeoisie was compelled to investigate with urgency the prospects for alliances with transnational capital, which were presented within the parameters of political reform and the instalment of a Black majority government that would constitute an amicable partner to foster the ambitions of global capital.⁶⁴⁹ Lending substance to the prospect of a future Black government, the ANC was recognised as constituting a government in exile and meetings between delegates of South African business, churches and trade unions and the ANC took place in Lusaka, in anticipation of a non-violent transition to Black majority rule.⁶⁵⁰

At the same time, resistance from within civil society was revitalised.⁶⁵¹ By the mid-1980s, the strict controls on the movement of Black people had been relaxed in the face of a surge of protest emanating from unions and supported by civic groups, intent on the aim of making

⁶⁴⁸ Maphai, 1994: 61 – 63.

⁶⁴⁹ For example, in 1987, two liberal politicians, Alex Boraine and Van Zyl Slabbert, arranged for a group of 50 Afrikaner businessmen, professionals and academics to meet members of the ANC in exile in Dakar in Senegal (Morris, 2004: 238).

⁶⁵⁰ Worden, 1994: 131.

⁶⁵¹ The Tricameral representation system devised for representation of Blacks, Indians and Coloureds in their separate living areas was rejected, leading to the murder of elected representatives denounced as “collaborators” (Morris, 2004: 225). In 1983 two significant organisations with different strategies for change were founded: the pro-liberation Azanian People’s Organisation (AZAPO) and the broad-based United Democratic Front (UDF), a conglomerate of organisations in civil society including trade unions, religious and community groups. Trade Unions united in the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), which organised massive stayaways that were matched by those arranged by the Congress of South African Students (COSAS). In response, the State President, P.W. Botha, announced a State of Emergency in 36 municipalities in 1985, in terms of which police could arrest and detain without trial any person suspected of acting against the interests of the State. This led to 8,000 people being detained and 22,000 charged with offences related to protests (Morris: 2004, 231 – 234). However, this was ineffective in curtailing resistance, which re-consolidated itself continuously as part of the strategy of non-governability within Black civil society.

society ungovernable.⁶⁵² By the late 1980s, despite the violence on which it was based, the fragility of the bureaucratic authoritarian State had been revealed: in the face of increasing acts of terrorism in civil society and wars against liberation movements on its borders, it became clear that the State did not have the means to retain control indefinitely.⁶⁵³

This broad-based resistance was reflected on the campus of Fort Hare in the almost ceaseless protests by students in conjunction with clandestine liberation movements and the development of a tripartite alliance comprising the unrecognised Fort Hare Workers' Union, the Student Representative Council and the Black Staff Association (BSA), representing Black academic staff. This alliance represented a solidarity that was to persist into the 1990s, offering to the majority element within staff, namely, Black staff in non-academic posts, a position of power relative to academic staff, the repercussions of which will be discussed in Chapter Six.

Within the highest levels of political society, the capitulation and demise of the Apartheid State was orchestrated and phased in without the participation of civic organisations that had led the struggle against apartheid. In 1988 the first meeting was arranged between the imprisoned Black political leader, Nelson Mandela, and the Prime Minister, F.W. de Klerk, with a view to negotiating Mandela's release and the transition to a non-racial State. In 1989, the same year that the Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union officially ended, De Klerk announced the roll-out of social integration. The Group Areas Act, Land Act and Population Registration Act were subsequently repealed, making provision for compliance with non-racial liberal conventions. In 1990, following the disintegration of the Soviet Union in 1989 and in recognition that Communism no longer represented an ideological and political threat, the banning of the ANC, PAC and Communist Party was lifted.

The process of the transition from the Apartheid to the post-Apartheid State presents an example of Gramsci's theorisation of the "passive revolution".⁶⁵⁴ This is a political transition

⁶⁵² Worden, 1994: 123.

⁶⁵³ Maphai presents the arguments around the contrasting claims that a political stalemate had or had not been reached between the Apartheid State and liberation movements. His analysis is that a deadlock had been reached and that the notion of a negotiated settlement then replaced the armed struggle as a means of achieving a Black majority government (Maphai, 1994: 44 – 64).

⁶⁵⁴ Antonio Gramsci. In Hoare and Nowell Smith, 1971: 106 – 107.

in which social and political structures remain unchanged when State power is assumed by a new political party that purports to represent subaltern groups. The chain of events constituting the South African “passive revolution” will be discussed in Chapter Six, which also explores the short-lived attempt by the Ciskei – in the form of a coup – to claim a *bona fide* independent status vis-à-vis the “new South Africa” in 1990. In order to gain an understanding of the historical and political role of the Ciskei, we will now turn our investigation in this direction.

The making of the Ciskei Homeland

In describing the development of the Black petty bourgeoisie in the Eastern Cape, Clifton Crais⁶⁵⁵ describes how, despite the colonial discourse of introducing and establishing civilised European society in the Eastern Cape, colonial goals had become concretised by undermining the traditional authority of the Xhosa chiefs. This was accomplished by establishing an administrative layer of ‘headmen’ who had previously served as councillors in traditional structures of the Xhosa, but who functioned as intermediaries – along with their erstwhile chiefs – between colonial administrators and the Xhosa.

The 1920 Native Affairs Act had provided for the creation of local councils for reserves in lieu of the general franchise for Black South Africans. Generally, the aim of the State in establishing ‘reserves’ was that they should support the Black population on the basis of agricultural production, but they also served as a political sop. The Ciskeian General Council was established in 1934 to represent the local councils, which were responsible only for administrative affairs. The Ciskeian General Council – or *Bhunga*, as it became locally known – depended on the small percentage of revenue received from each of the constituent local councils, and spent it on scholarships, repairs to schools, and donations to mission hospitals. Little was spent on agriculture or public works, indicating, firstly, that the *Bhunga*’s priorities lay less in ‘developmental’ projects than in provision of welfare services, and secondly, that their ability to allocate resources to direct beneficiaries would strengthen relations of power and patronage. Local councils were tasked with implementing the State’s plans for improving

⁶⁵⁵ Crais, 1992.

agricultural production through new farming techniques and attempting conservation in the already over-crowded and overstocked reserves, of which the Ciskei was the worst.⁶⁵⁶

Switzer has pointed to the contradictory role played by the *Bhunga* in that it simultaneously reinforced and legitimised the plan for White domination through assigning separate ‘reserves’ to Blacks, but also provided a platform for Black councillors to express their concerns about the racist legislation that aimed at securing domination. Thus, the lack of public transport for Blacks, the inadequacy of education provision for Black children and increasing poverty were frequently highlighted. Significantly, the means of poverty alleviation was identified by councillors as job creation in the form of more clerical posts in the civil service. Motions were passed by councillors in support of job creation through expanding the bureaucracy as a solution to poverty.⁶⁵⁷ This appears to indicate that the councillors expected that their own positions of power would be strengthened through being able to assign posts, a phenomenon of patronage that has endured and become established in the post-apartheid State. Whilst the councillors supported the notion of expanding the bureaucracy, they nonetheless simultaneously supported the notion of more authority being assigned to chiefs and headmen.

This collaboration between the emergent petty bourgeoisie and traditional authorities dates back to the period when Blacks had been able to register as voters⁶⁵⁸ and appears to signify the desire within the subaltern to support one another against the dominant State. However, the conservative or reactionary effect of this form of resistance impedes attempts to modernise, as observed by Gramscian scholar John Girling’s study of social and political transformation in Thailand.⁶⁵⁹ Here, Girling found that the simultaneously coercive and motivational characteristics of colonialism that gave rise to patron-client relationships between dominant and subaltern classes have persisted until the present time. These cut across and challenge historical socio-cultural relations, generating an antagonistic dynamic between two forces: the traditional classes and their usurpers and successors, the bureaucracy, take sides against the modernising classes that are the product of new social relations

⁶⁵⁶ Malnutrition in the Ciskei by the end of the Second World War was a matter of extreme concern to the State (Switzer, 1993: 210 – 230).

⁶⁵⁷ Switzer, 1993: 229.

⁶⁵⁸ Ibid., 146.

⁶⁵⁹ John Girling, 2002.

generated by industrialisation and urbanisation. The coexistence of the two gives rise to a contradictory system of patronage that extends itself across traditional as well as modern bureaucratic structures. This was to be the case in the creation of a vast bureaucracy in the 'homelands', as well as in longer-serving members of the post-apartheid Administration, the obstructive effects of which will be discussed in Chapter Six.

The system of representation through councillors ended in 1955, when the Apartheid State dissolved the local councils and the *Bhunga*, replacing these with the three-tiered system of Bantu Authority. This comprised Community, Regional and Territorial Authorities who were placed under the administration of chiefs, therein bolstering traditional power structures. The veneer of civilian representation that had existed in the form of councillors disappeared. In 1961 the Ciskei Territorial Authority (CTA) was established, assuming a semblance of legitimacy in 1968 by virtue of comprising elected as well as nominated members representing Community and Regional Authorities. Nonetheless, because the CTA received funds from sources controlled by the South African State, power continued to reside with bureaucrats answerable to the Apartheid State.⁶⁶⁰

The Apartheid project was inexorably rolled out and Ciskei was declared a self-governing homeland in 1972. In 1973, elections were held for the Ciskei Legislative Assembly, which was dominated by chiefs, as had been the case with the CTA. Privileges and benefits were enjoyed by the fortunate few within the ranks of chiefs and traditional leaders, on the one hand, and the petty bourgeoisie (civil servants, teachers, commercial farmers and emerging entrepreneurs) on the other. Prospects of gain, together with general ignorance in the rural areas around issues of democracy and lack of awareness of the limited power of the Ciskei government, led to participation in elections by those who perceived an opportunity for gain or those who feared that they would lose the little they had by abstaining.

Ethnicism was reinforced by the emergence of opposing candidates representing the Rharhabe and Mfengu respectively, and the winning candidate, Chief Lennox Sebe, of the Ciskei National Independent Party (CNIP), consolidated his power by creating new chieftainships backing the CNIP, as well as through eliminating opposition by means of thuggery and

⁶⁶⁰ Switzer, 1993: 330 – 331.

intimidation.⁶⁶¹ Piggy-backing on the Apartheid State, power in the Ciskei was maintained in the same way, through the mechanism of coercion exercised through the bureaucracy, the police and the army, all of which were supported by the South African State.

The relationship between the South African State, the Ciskei government and Fort Hare was shaped by the mutual efforts of the Apartheid State, the Rector of Fort Hare and senior Ciskei bureaucrats, led by Sebe. On 4 December 1981 Ciskei was declared an independent republic, but in terms of an agreement between Ciskei and South Africa that expired at the end of 1986, Fort Hare continued to be administered by the South African Department of Education and Training. Technically, control of Fort Hare had been handed by the South African department to its Ciskei counterpart, but funding continued to be provided by the South African State and decisions to be made by Fort Hare's senior Administrators.⁶⁶²

Despite the material dependence of the Ciskei State on the South African State, backed by a substantial budget and the cooperation of the South African State, Sebe deemed himself as the supreme authority. He claimed the title of 'His Excellency' and demanded recognition of this status from Fort Hare. Lacking a tertiary education, Sebe nonetheless perceived the value of a University in its developmental role and potential contribution to Ciskei projects and required demonstrated loyalty from Fort Hare, insisting that the Rector make staff available in a consultative and advisory capacity for his various plans and projects. At the same time, he was aware of his own political vulnerability and the opposition to his regime, and simultaneously exercised the right for Ciskei police to enter the Fort Hare campus. The duty of the Fort Hare Administration – and of other bureaucrats of the South African State placed parallel to the administrative structures of the Ciskeian State – was to collaborate with Sebe, thereby demonstrating shades of the various reasons for conformity proposed by Femia (conscious agreement, unreflecting participation, expectation of reciprocity and acquiescence under duress), which will now be examined.

⁶⁶¹ Switzer, 1993: 333 – 334.

⁶⁶² Interview with Geoffrey Antrobus, former Academic Registrar of Fort Hare between 1988 and 1990, on 12 July 2011.

The role of Fort Hare in the hegemonic project of the State

As outlined in Chapter One,⁶⁶³ one of the aims of this research is to examine the relationship between the State and the University of Fort Hare in the exercise of hegemony. During the apartheid era, the senior administrators comprised the Rector and Registrar,⁶⁶⁴ who relayed instructions received from the State to academic Heads of Department and managers of operational divisions (campus control, finance, residences, maintenance, stores and so forth), for execution. The apartheid system imposed a line of authority that confined the role of Senate to academic matters, so that the Rector, as the intermediary between the State and the University (or, between political and civil society), was the key decision-maker.

The core of the research for this Chapter is therefore constituted by records of the activities of the various apartheid era Rectors in relation to the State, the University community (staff and students) and broader civil society (peers at other institutions, political and church organisations, parent bodies, and so forth). The response by staff and students to direct domination will be analysed within the context of Femia's reasons for conformity,⁶⁶⁵ or, alternatively, of dissent and resistance.

The apartheid era Administration at Fort Hare

Replacing the liberal intentions of the missionary Administration, the goal of Fort Hare as articulated by the apartheid era Administration was to provide "adequate and effective university training for the Bantu and more specifically the Xhosa ethnic group, and in this manner to contribute materially to the development of the community concerned".⁶⁶⁶ The narrow and instrumental focus of this mandate was aimed at the training of future

⁶⁶³ See Research Aims, Chapter One.

⁶⁶⁴ While the Rector had ultimate control over the affairs of the University, the responsibility of the Registrar was to assume responsibility for direct implementation of policy. As Fort Hare grew and tasks proliferated, the number of Registrars increased and there was a separation of different aspects of university administration. By 1990 there were three Registrars with different areas of responsibility, viz. Academic Administration, Finance and Administration.

⁶⁶⁵ Femia, 1981: 38 – 42.

⁶⁶⁶ Excerpt from the brochure provided in 1970 on the occasion of the celebration of academic autonomy of the University of Fort Hare in terms of Act No. 40 of 1969 (De Wet files).

administrators and civil servants in the Ciskei, with whom, as we have seen, a relationship of cooperation was intended to exist. The primary allegiance of the apartheid era Administration was to the State, signifying a new relationship of direct complicity between the Administration and senior bureaucrats of the State, replacing the ambiguity of the “unity of purpose” claimed by the missionary Administration in relation to the State.⁶⁶⁷

Towards the end of 1970, the Executive Committee of the Broederbond, representing the most senior members of political society, decided that a special committee of the Rectors of Black universities should be established, to discuss “matters of common interest and concern”.⁶⁶⁸ This committee received policy decisions and directives from the Executive Committee for implementation within universities and its establishment signalled the State’s perceived need for a mechanism by means of which the affairs of Black universities could be uniformly regulated. The Rectors’ Committee also served as a source of information regarding the climate in Black civil society in the university environment and provided a sounding board for proposed policy outcomes by providing recommendations to the Executive Committee.⁶⁶⁹ The committee offers not only an example of how the bureaucratic authoritarian State functioned, with directives emanating from a centralised structure and an information flow between senior bureaucrats and heads of institutions, but also shows the linkages and overlaps between

⁶⁶⁷ See Chapters Three and Four.

⁶⁶⁸ Letter to De Wet from the Minister of Bantu Education, M.C. Botha dated 3 November 1970. The letter commenced with the standard greeting used by members of the Broederbond, ‘*Geagte vriend*’ (Dear friend). Members of the Committee were as follows: Prof E.J. Marais (Chair), Rector of UPE (nominated to *Uitvoerende Raad* or Executive Council of Broederbond in 1968); Prof J.M. de Wet (Rector UFH and member of EC Science Committee in 1973); Prof N. Sieberhagen (specialist on Coloured affairs); G.V.N. Viljoen (Rector of Rand Afrikaans University); Prof J.L. Boshoff (Rector of Turfloop University); Prof S.P. Olivier (Rector of University of Durban Westville); J.A.G. Maree (expert on NUSAS); Dr C.J. Jooste (Director of SABRA); and Mr N. Botha (institution not indicated) (De Wet files, 1970).

⁶⁶⁹ The first meeting was scheduled for 25 November 1970 in the Broederbond council chamber, 4th floor, Christian de Wet Building, Johannesburg. The De Wet files contain records of invitations, agendas and minutes of this and all subsequent meetings until 1976.

political and civil society. The fundamental agreement of the Administration with the basic principles of the Apartheid State points to the third of Femia's reasons for conformity.⁶⁷⁰

The weakness of the missionary Administration, caused partially by the lack of sufficient funding and partially by the primary allegiance of the Administration to a non-secular cause, was replaced by an Administration whose ideology resonated with that of the State. However, the University's lack of autonomy and the need for subordination to State departments – such as the Department of Bantu Education, to whom the University reported – was to prove frustrating at times to the Rectors, as will be shown.

It has been emphasised that the financial fragility of the missionary Administration was partly responsible for its weakness in attempting to exercise hegemony at the level of the University. It had also experienced a growing distance between its liberal intentions and those of the emerging Apartheid State. The apartheid era Administration was able to benefit from access to both financial support and ideological reinforcement emanating from the State, strengthening its ability to exercise control and to counter the dissent with which it was faced. The material resources to which it had recourse were intended to serve as a means of convincing students of the benefits of the apartheid system and its inherent appropriateness as a basis for social organisation, and it is to this aspect that we now turn our attention.

The Apartheid University: an expensive exercise

In accordance with the modernisation project of which Fort Hare was deemed a critical element, funding that had never been available for expansion during the period of missionary Administration was allocated through the budgets of the Department of Bantu Education and the Department of Bantu Administration and Development. According to H.J. Du Preez, the first apartheid Registrar, Fort Hare in the 1960s was “on its way to higher standards than before”,⁶⁷¹ with a significantly larger cash injection in the form of staff subsidies and maintenance grants than it had enjoyed before.

⁶⁷⁰ Femia, 1981: 38 – 43. The third reason for conformity provided by Femia is conscious agreement with basic ideological principles.

⁶⁷¹ H.J. du Preez, 1971: 2.

Capital expenditure on buildings and equipment was a testimony to the funding that was made available by the State subsequent to its assumption of control over the University. The apartheid era Administration prided itself on the expansion of capital in the form of buildings, the first one being the large administration building that was completed in 1963. The 1970s saw a flurry of investment in buildings and equipment, subsequent to the introduction of new qualifications and by 1976, there were new departments in Music, Fine Art, Biochemistry and Computer Science, as well as new residences. In the 1980s new lecturing blocks were built for the Faculties of Arts and Science and in 1984 a Sports Centre that was expected to serve as an antidote to student protest was finally completed. It was to be absolutely ineffective in diverting the students' energy away from protest, as will be shown.⁶⁷²

It was during J.J. De Wet's tenure as Rector that the greatest strides were made, his ambitions being to raise the academic status of Fort Hare to disprove allegations that it was a 'tribal college' providing inferior education, an accusation frequently levelled by the dissident English press, students, local organisations such as NUSAS and international anti-apartheid organisations such as the World Council of Churches.⁶⁷³ His ambitions included the expansion of lecturing venues and laboratories, student residences and staff housing, as well as new Faculties for Engineering and Medicine. Nonetheless, his correspondence with senior bureaucrats in the Departments of Bantu Education and Bantu Administration and Development reveals tensions with political superiors, whom he clearly sometimes considered obstructive and uncomprehending of the role of Fort Hare in the greater scheme of 'Separate Development'.⁶⁷⁴

Some of these frustrations were shared by Broederbond colleagues at other universities, such as their irritation with the funding arrangements for 'non-White' universities, recorded in the minutes of the Committee of Rectors on non-White Universities.⁶⁷⁵ The Committee suggested

⁶⁷² Information sourced in University calendars 1960 – 1989.

⁶⁷³ The De Wet files contain multiple folders of press clippings of speeches and articles that were critical of the 'Bantustan' universities, and he usually responded personally to criticisms, referring to the physical facilities, faculties and academic staff.

⁶⁷⁴ Various letters 1972 – 1978 (De Wet files).

⁶⁷⁵ The 'non-White' universities were the University of the North, the University of Zululand, the University of Fort Hare and the University of the Western Cape, and the minutes of this meeting

that the Minister should listen to University Councils rather than departmental officials, hinting at the tensions within the layers of the Afrikaner bureaucracy. Resentment by those involved in the execution of the Apartheid project was felt at having to receive instructions from those who were perceived not to have sufficient knowledge or experience of reality.

De Wet emphasised the costliness of the provision of tertiary education to Black students relative to the cost per capita for White students,⁶⁷⁶ stating that relative to other institutions, financing the provision of higher education in a homeland was exorbitant, with special privileges accorded to staff at least partially responsible.⁶⁷⁷ As early as 1969, De Wet had made overtures to various Witwatersrand-based mining and mining-related industrial corporations that provided student bursaries,⁶⁷⁸ although the student protests from 1972 onwards thwarted his presentation of Fort Hare as an institution that was respected and valued by its students.

Notwithstanding the urgent need for funding, the Administration was aware of the resistance to apartheid in civil society, particularly in church organisations. However, this was also present in the business sector, and donations, especially from liberal organisations, were seen as potentially threatening, if accompanied by conditions that could undermine apartheid ideology. Control over funding was thus considered essential and when private funding was offered to

recorded the dissatisfaction of those present with the formula for fixed costs and capital and the provision of separate administrative units for Coloureds, Indians and 'Bantu' (Minutes of meeting held 29 May 1974, De Wet files).

⁶⁷⁶In the context of pleas for re-admission by parents of students who had been expelled, in response to a Mr N.G. Mbuli, whose son's studies were sponsored by a firm, De Wet said, "Worse still is the waste of taxpayer's money. It costs R2,400,000.00 to run the University this year. Divided among the 1000 students it means the taxpayer pays R2,400 per student, less approximately R240 which is paid in fees. That money has been wasted by about 500 students." (Letter dated 28 September 1972, De Wet files).

⁶⁷⁷ See *Appendix A: Student Statistics*. In 1973/4, at R2,475 per annum, the cost per student was almost double that of the Universities of Cape Town, Natal and Stellenbosch, two and a half times that of Pretoria and Potchefstroom, but slightly less than the new Port Elizabeth and Rand Afrikaans Universities.

⁶⁷⁸ For example, various letters dated 11 December 1969 were sent to African Oxygen, Barlow and Sons, African Explosives and Chemical Manufacturers, asking for donations towards the building of the Student Centre (De Wet files).

the Animal Science Department in 1974, the Head of Department was advised that “the Council [had] expressed its complete disapproval of members of staff being permitted to solicit donations from business concerns”.⁶⁷⁹ Another possible reason for the Council’s wishes to control directly all incoming funds was to prevent their abuse or misuse: at the time, many academic staff had small businesses that they were operating during official working hours.

The positivist approach of the modernisation project of apartheid – as it was viewed by its architects – identified achievements in quantitative terms. In his inaugural address, De Wet’s successor, John Lamprecht, boasted of the benefits of State control: “The University came to be financed on a scale beyond private means and the student body grew from a few hundred to over 3,000.”⁶⁸⁰ As buildings and facilities were put in place and State spending on Black students increased, compared to White students, the value of higher education became gauged according to expenditure per capita.⁶⁸¹ In his 1984 Report, Lamprecht expressed his satisfaction that the cost per student was R5,167 and that income exceeded revenue, with the combined first and second semester income of over R30 million,⁶⁸² easily outstripping expenditure. The report noted the new subsidy system to be introduced, based on student numbers and throughput, which would allow the University to keep unspent money in its reserves, rather than returning it to the central government.

By 1982 Lamprecht had assigned the responsibility for fund-raising to the Fort Hare Foundation, a body of trustees in the private sector, which assumed the responsibility for attracting and generating funds through strategic investment. Lamprecht boasted in 1987 that he had in the space of five years generated R5 million through the Foundation,⁶⁸³ and indeed,

⁶⁷⁹ The centralisation of the administration and financial affairs of Fort Hare enabled the Rector to control the source of funds and prevent undesirable donors from entering into any form of relationship with the University. (Letter dated 11 July 1974 from De Wet to Professor Brown, De Wet files).

⁶⁸⁰ John A. Lamprecht, 1981.

⁶⁸¹ See for example the figures in *Appendix E: State expenditure on universities 1973 – 1976*.

⁶⁸² The amounts were R13,877,880 and R16,952,250 respectively (Ibid.).

⁶⁸³ “Reply to anonymous letter to his Excellency, the President, received by the University of Fort Hare on 22 April 1987”, Lamprecht files.

the investigation into the financial affairs of Fort Hare in 1999 – which will be discussed in Chapter Six – verified this claim.⁶⁸⁴

No financial contribution to Fort Hare was made by the Ciskei government, a fact that was publicly disclosed by the Department of Education and Training.⁶⁸⁵ This explains why the *de facto* administrative arrangements remained under the auspices of the South African Department of Education, despite a veneer of accountability to the Ciskei. Once the University Administration had passed into the hands of post-apartheid Vice-Chancellors – in a chain of events that will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter Six – financial controls lapsed, as different priorities were assumed, culminating in the investigation into financial management at the University commissioned by the Minister of Education in April 1999.⁶⁸⁶ These events will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter Six; the important point is that, in terms of its financial performance, Fort Hare was considered by the apartheid era Administration and the State as exemplary.

The role of the Council as an intermediary between the State and the University

We have seen in Chapter Four that the State was able to exert pressure over the SANC – later Fort Hare – through its right to appoint Council members. Whilst the Apartheid State maintained this prerogative in relation to Fort Hare, the Extension of University Education Act of 1958 which gave rise to racially separate universities had provided for duplicate Councils and Senates in Black universities.⁶⁸⁷ Parallel structures in the form of an ‘Advisory Council’ and ‘Advisory Senate’ in Black universities with Black members would serve – as

⁶⁸⁴ The Saunders Report of 1999 noted that rampant expenditure during the year after Lamprecht’s departure plunged the university into debt of R7.8 million, a figure that more than doubled over the course of the next year and peaked at R46.8 million at the end of 1998 (Report to the Minister of Education, the Hon. SME Bengu by Emeritus Professor SJ Saunders on an investigation into the affairs of the University of Fort Hare, 1999: 2).

⁶⁸⁵ Notes taken at meeting on 26 March 1990 with White staff in Fort Beaufort, addressed by a representative from the South African Department of Education and Training, Lamprecht files.

⁶⁸⁶ Report to the Minister of Education, the Hon. SME Bengu by Emeritus Professor SJ Saunders, on an investigation into the affairs of the University of Fort Hare, gazetted in the Government Gazette, Vol. 405, No. 19842, 12 March 1999. Hereafter referred to as “Saunders Report”.

⁶⁸⁷ Extension of University Education Act of 1958.

indicated by the names – in a purely advisory function. The explanation offered by the Minister of the recently-formed Department of Bantu Education, Mr W.A. Maree, was that “non-Europeans did not have sufficient experience to take control of the institutions established for them, but over time they would assume more responsibility and eventually have full responsibility, with Whites assuming the advisory function.”⁶⁸⁸ This arrangement satisfied the Apartheid State’s need to demonstrate its intention of mentoring Blacks towards taking full responsibility for administration of Black institutions at an unspecified future date. Fort Hare’s ruling body was the Governing Council, appointed by the State. This body was chaired by Professor S. Pauw, Principal of the University of South Africa and also a member of the Broederbond,⁶⁸⁹ and included various members of political society representing strategic State departments and divisions.⁶⁹⁰ In order to include representation from civil society, a member of the Missionary Institute at Wellington and some teaching staff at ‘European universities’ were accommodated, all on the basis of State appointments.⁶⁹¹

Alongside the Council was the Advisory Council, comprising “Bantu educationists, businessmen and ministers of religion”, with its first Chair as S.M. Mabude, a UNISA graduate and member of the Transkei Territorial Authority.⁶⁹² Members of the Advisory Council were nominated by the Rectors and approved by the Minister of Bantu Education, holding their seats for a period of four years. Du Preez wrote approvingly that the Advisory

⁶⁸⁸ Report in the East London-based newspaper, the *Daily Dispatch*, 29 April 1959 (Williams, 2001: 474).

⁶⁸⁹ Appendix – Broederbond membership list, A179 (Wilkins and Strydom, 1980).

⁶⁹⁰ Deputy Secretary for the Department of Bantu Education, the Chief Bantu Affairs. Commissioner for the Ciskei, and the Regional Director of Bantu Education for the Ciskei.

⁶⁹¹ The Council’s first members were, with the exception of two, Afrikaners, as evident in their surnames: Pauw, Badenhorst, De Wet, Gerber, Jonker, Keyter, Olivier, Van Dyk. Non-Afrikaner members were Reverend Pitts (Wellington College) and Mr Young (Secretary for Bantu Affairs Department).

⁶⁹² Other members of the first Advisory Council were Chief Douglas Ndamase, Chief Kaiser Matanzima, Chief Ephraim Sangoni, Mnu Reginald Cingo, Mnu Guzano, Rev Jolobe, Dr M.O.M. Seboni (an apartheid apologist and member of UFH academic staff in the Education Faculty who had in 1960 just completed his doctoral degree with UNISA). Later editions of the Fort Hare Calendar were to refer to traditional leaders as ‘headmen’, rather than ‘chiefs’.

Council “represented cooperation at the highest level”, a comment that is indicative of its thoroughly conformist nature, which is further reinforced by Du Preez’s appreciation of the Advisory Council’s recommendations against NUSAS and “White trouble-makers”.⁶⁹³

The apparent duplication of responsibilities in a Council and Advisory Council was replicated in the existence of a Senate and an Advisory Senate: the former for White academic staff and the latter for Black senior lecturers and Heads of Department. During 1960, one Black staff member, G.I.M. Mzamane, had been allowed to sit on Senate, but the Advisory Senate was established for separate representation of Black staff members the following year, a move that had the unintended effect of providing a channel for articulating the grievances of Black staff members. Requests were submitted by the Advisory Senate for concessions relating to the practice of using Afrikaans in Faculty and departmental committee meetings and for a reduction of the salary gap between “European” and “non-European” staff.⁶⁹⁴

As a result of the requests relayed to Senate, despite Du Preez’s endorsement of the Advisory Council, his opinion of the Advisory Senate was that it was a “propaganda platform”.⁶⁹⁵ This view was evidently shared by the Rector and other Senate members, with the result that it was dissolved in favour of allowing Black professors to sit on Senate again from April 1963 onwards.⁶⁹⁶ As there were only two Black professors in the 1960s, G.I.M. Mzamane and M.O.M. Seboni, of the department of Bantu Languages and the Faculty of Education

⁶⁹³ Du Preez, 1971: 10.

⁶⁹⁴ The issue of language highlighted the fact that Afrikaans-speaking staff had become a majority, so that meetings were held and minutes recorded in Afrikaans. The Advisory Senate requested that English be used instead (Minutes of Senate meeting held 17 April 1962, containing items from Advisory Senate meeting held 12 April 1962; minutes of Senate meeting held 6 August 1962, containing items from Advisory Senate meeting held 2 August 1962).

⁶⁹⁵ Du Preez’s hand-written memoir refers to the threat of communist infiltration by organisations such as NUSAS and displays the paranoia concerning the infiltration of communist ideals that typified conservative elements of White society during the apartheid era. For this reason, the apartheid era Administration was eager to support and protect collaborators.

⁶⁹⁶ Minutes of the Senate meeting held 1 April 1963 and subsequent Senate meetings record both Mzamane and Seboni as being present or as having submitted apologies.

respectively, dissatisfaction could no longer easily be expressed. In any event, such was the nature of Seboni's conformity that his loyalty lay with the Administration.⁶⁹⁷

By 1970 the rigid racial separation of the University Council and Advisory Council had proved ineffective in terms of its professed purpose of the representation of acceptable Black opinion. At the second meeting of the Broederbond-convened committee comprising Rectors of 'non-White' universities held in June 1971, a motivation for 'non-Whites' to be members of the University Council to promote the acceptability of 'non-White' institutions to students was presented. This was the main item on the agenda for discussion, and the meeting passed a resolution in favour of the principle of Black membership of between a quarter and a third of the Council at Black universities, because "the time has come for the various population groups (*volke*) to be represented on university Councils".⁶⁹⁸

The Advisory Council was also considered ineffective by the Commission of Enquiry appointed by Council of the University of Fort Hare into student unrest in May 1972. In its report, the Commission wrote that the absence of Blacks as members of the Fort Hare Council was problematic and that the Advisory Council should be dissolved. Nonetheless, it remained in place, an example of the intransigence of senior members of political society – that is, within the Department of Education – in relation to the senior apartheid university administrators, namely, the Rectors. The convoluted process of securing nominations from the requisite bodies, soliciting the agreement of nominees to serve and the approval of the Department of Bantu Education for their appointments was evidently a time-consuming task that was not deemed worth the effort by the Rectors tasked with it. Members were elected for a renewable period of four years, but a general problem, recognised by the Commission of

⁶⁹⁷ In the preface to his doctoral thesis, *The South African Native College, Fort Hare, 1903 – 1954, a historical critical survey*, which is an account of the tripartite cooperation between the missionaries, the South African government and the imperial British State, Seboni had applauded the "co-operation between the State, the Christian missions in South Africa and the United Kingdom in the provision of Higher Education for non-Europeans" (1959: i). His subsequent allegiance to the apartheid era Administration was the subject of frequent denunciations by students, who considered him a sell-out (Massey, 2010: 171).

⁶⁹⁸ Minutes of meeting of Broederbond committee held 15 June 1971, De Wet files. Despite this recommendation, the Advisory Council was not dissolved, and continued to exist until 1981.

Enquiry, was that there were too few African lecturers and senior administrators to sit on the Council⁶⁹⁹ – apparently too few, that is, with an appropriate disposition.

In the interim, the constitution of the Fort Hare Council had been changed to include four Black members, the first ones being Robert (Bob) Seretlo, Professor of Physics at Fort Hare, R. Cingo, Inspector and Chair of the Bantu Teaching Council, H. Nabe, teaching planner, and M.B. Potelwa, a circuit inspector, who sat alongside committed apartheid ideologues G.G.A. Munnik, the Chief Justice for Umthata, G.V.N. Viljoen, Broederbond member⁷⁰⁰ and Rector of Rand Afrikaans University, J.J. Gerber, Broederbond member⁷⁰¹ and Dean of the Faculty of Education at Rhodes University, G.J. van Zyl, Broederbond member and Chair of *Saambou Nasionale Bouvereniging*,⁷⁰² and others. In 1973 the Minister of Bantu Education, M.C. Botha, decided that his department no longer needed to be represented on the Council,⁷⁰³ and that instead matters requiring his department's attention should be dealt with through standard communication channels. This decision suggests the effectiveness of the linkages between political society (government departments) and civil society (the University) in exercising control through the functioning of Broederbond networks.

Notwithstanding the power of Council in terms of general University strategy, the Rector was the person charged with controlling the University routine on a day-to-day basis. As we have seen, Rectors of 'non-White' Universities formed a separate committee in the Broederbond and were charged with gathering information for and making recommendations to the Broederbond Executive Committee, as well as executing directives from the State. Rectors were also responsible for the exercise of control within their institutions, a function that was undertaken through authoritarian leadership. However, the three apartheid era Rectors had different leadership styles, as will be shown.

⁶⁹⁹ Report of the Commission of Enquiry into Student Unrest at the University of Fort Hare in 1972: 13.

⁷⁰⁰ Wilkins and Strydom, 1980. Appendix Broederbond Membership List, A285.

⁷⁰¹ Ibid., A89.

⁷⁰² Ibid., A277.

⁷⁰³ Letter from De Wet to the Secretary of Bantu Education dated 31 October 1973, De Wet files.

Ideological conformity: Fort Hare's apartheid administrators

As we have seen, the first two apartheid era Rectors, J.J. Ross and J.J. De Wet, were members of the Broederbond who were linked to the State through direct contact with its senior bureaucrats. However, the last apartheid era Rector, J. Lamprecht, was not a member of the Broederbond. Appointed the same year that the Ciskei was granted 'independence', his mandate was to ensure that Fort Hare was seen to serve the interests of the Ciskei and the transmission of directives from the South African State to Fort Hare ceased.

Throughout this period, the values and attitudes of academic staff were crucially important, assuming enormous significance during the recruitment process. In the 1960s, during the period of the Ross administration, Afrikaners were appointed to prevent liberal influences from infiltrating, and students generally felt that lecturers did not have a thorough grasp of their subjects.⁷⁰⁴ Under the De Wet Administration in the 1970s, it was not just the appropriate '*gesindheid*', or ideological outlook, that mattered. De Wet sought to achieve his goal of proving that Black institutions were academically on par with those of Whites by concentrating on recruiting well-qualified academic staff with the appropriate disposition.⁷⁰⁵ In the 1980s, ideology was again of paramount importance to J. Lamprecht, who assumed personal responsibility for ensuring staff compliance, taking swift action against any signs he perceived as undermining the integrity of Fort Hare or the Ciskei.

Within the institution, few White staff opposed the apartheid ideology sufficiently to articulate disagreement with the system. Those that did were soon to leave. Among Black staff, it appeared that the availability of a secure post with benefits overcame ideological

⁷⁰⁴ Interviews with students reveal the conviction that Afrikaans staff members were racist and lacked sufficient knowledge. The latter impression may have been created because of the difficulty Afrikaans staff had in teaching in English, but students most resented the racist ideology implicit in their presence (Massey, 2010).

⁷⁰⁵ For example, De Wet compared the role of SA universities for Blacks to the upliftment of Blacks in 'Negro Colleges' in the United States, claiming that American Blacks preferred separate colleges and performed better. He emphasised two principles to be avoided, namely, i) contempt (*minderwaardigheid*), because the standards and study materials were the same, and ii) paternalism, because "students want to be treated and respected like adults. This is especially valid for non-White students" (1974 SABRA Youth Congress speech dated 4 April 1974: 10, De Wet files).

dissent; once again, few opposed the system. Dissidents within the ranks of academic staff left in different circumstances: Andrew Masondo, Mathematics lecturer, was arrested on charges of sabotage in 1963;⁷⁰⁶ Clive Millar, English lecturer, chose to leave after his students had emphasised that Whites had no role in the struggle;⁷⁰⁷ Jonathan Jackson, English lecturer, was suspended and left of his own volition after denouncing the Rector for expelling students in 1982;⁷⁰⁸ and Arnold Stofile, Theology lecturer, was arrested in 1986 under Section 6 of the Terrorism Act. Lamprecht said he had provided information that led to the discovery of an arms and ammunition cache, following which Pierre Andre Albertini, French lecturer, was also arrested and his appointment terminated.⁷⁰⁹

The overarching ethos was one of conformity: an uneasy conformity for those whose views did not resonate with apartheid ideology. Many academic staff assumed a disciplinary focus that steered attention away from the political context in which education was offered, as was often in the case of the sciences. Support for the Apartheid project was particularly evident in the 1960s, when academic staff were elected on the basis of their ideological outlook.

The authoritarian control concentrated in and exercised from the office of the Rector is strikingly evident in their personal records. In an era pre-dating the existence of Human Resource departments to handle staff matters, all staff queries and requests had to be directed to the Rectors, whose decisions were final. Official as well as confidential correspondence between the Rectors and staff reveals a strict hierarchy of authority, within which directives and decisions were cascaded. Occasionally, a Faculty Dean's advice would be solicited, based on expertise in a specific area.⁷¹⁰

In essence, as part of the Apartheid project, the role of Rectors was to receive instructions from the State. There is little evidence of contestation, apart from the occasional expression of unease directed in the form of a query to senior bureaucrats in the Department of Bantu

⁷⁰⁶ H. du Preez, 1971.

⁷⁰⁷ C. Millar, 2011.

⁷⁰⁸ Lamprecht files, 1982.

⁷⁰⁹ Telex from Lamprecht to the Department of Education dated 28 October 1986, Lamprecht files.

⁷¹⁰ This was the case with Professor J.B. Thom, Dean of the Faculty of Law, whose professional opinion was often sought on matters relating to implementation of State policy.

Education or Bantu Administration and Development. These were invariably expressed with deference and met with a resolute confirmation of the State's decision. An example is provided by a letter to the Secretary of the Department of Bantu Education, H.J. van Zyl, from the second apartheid era Rector, De Wet, on the issue of promotions and salary increases. Because Fort Hare was under the control of the Department of Bantu Education, all appointments had to be approved by the Minister, a time-consuming and apparently demeaning process implying that the Rectors were not suitably equipped to apply their judgment in making appropriate appointments. On occasion, the Department would reject the candidate recommended by the University, and in this instance De Wet's annoyance was unconcealed as he admonished the Secretary that "at any White university a decision of this nature would have been taken by Council. It would be inconceivable that something like this should be referred to the Department of Higher Education".⁷¹¹

The tension between the University Administration and senior bureaucrats in the Department of Bantu Education was most evident around issues such as the approval of capital and operational expenditure. As previously observed, the apartheid era Rectors were periodically frustrated with what they perceived as obstructiveness or interference on the part of the State bureaucracy. It is here that the effectiveness of the bureaucratic authoritarian State was undermined by the antagonisms generated within the ranks of the bureaucracy on which it relied to fulfil its mandate of control. These contradictions within the bureaucracy were intensified by the varying shades of Afrikaner nationalism, revealing the ideological divide between the extremely rigid views of the '*verkrampes*', literally translated from Afrikaans as the 'cramped', referring to their conservative political perspective, and the '*verligtes*', translated as the 'enlightened'.⁷¹² While both were members of the National Party, the *verkrampes* were traditionalists who strongly resisted all change, whilst the *verligtes* were pragmatists who acknowledged the need for limited reforms so as maintain relative power.

⁷¹¹ Undated copy of letter in the De Wet files, 1970.

⁷¹² The De Wet files contain a great deal of correspondence with his counterpart at the University of the North, J.L. Boshoff, also a member of the Broederbond,⁷¹² displaying the camaraderie resulting from their common ideological stance: they considered themselves as *verligte*, or enlightened, relative to the extremely change-resistant conservative element within the National Party camp.

The conservatism of the *verkrampes* has been linked to agricultural capital and the more pragmatic outlook of the *verligtes* to industrial capital. From a socio-economic perspective, the ideological split in the National Party is seen to have originated in the tensions within the Afrikaner capitalist class that can be traced back to the early twentieth century. At this time, within the emergent national bourgeoisie, Afrikaner agricultural oligarchy became a powerful force in its struggle for hegemony against British industrial capital.⁷¹³

J.J. Ross assumed office in the 1960s at a time when the authoritarian State launched its offensive against Black dissidents by imprisoning them, and during his term of office from 1960 – 1968 there was relatively little resistance. Ross had been Professor of Public Law at the Afrikaans University of the Free State and his strategy – or natural inclination – was to argue students down.⁷¹⁴ Taking over at Fort Hare at a time when staff had been selected by the State-appointed Council on the basis of their Afrikaans background, and civil society had been cowed by the removal of leaders in Black civil society,⁷¹⁵ his term of office was characterised by conformity in the form of unreflecting submission to authority on the part of staff and enforced compliance on the part of the student body.⁷¹⁶

Coming from the Afrikaans University of Potchefstroom, where he had headed the Department of Statistics, J.M. de Wet was appointed by the State as the second apartheid era Rector in 1968, coinciding with the emergence of Black Consciousness as a racially exclusive, radical political force. A committed apartheid ideologue, De Wet's aim was to prove that the apartheid system would modernise and lead to development of Black homelands and Black people according to the imperatives of their diverse cultural contexts. However, Black Consciousness was to become embedded in the South African Student Organisation (SASO), founded in 1968, which articulated, organised and coordinated student protest across Black University campuses in the 1970s. Also founded in the 1970s, the Black People's Convention and the Black Consciousness Movement were based on sufficiently broad ideological claims to invoke a solidarity among Black people that was likened to the

⁷¹³ David du Toit, 1981.

⁷¹⁴ Du Preez praises Ross's open-door approach and his ability to out-do students with his logic, so that they would be forced to "run to NUSAS for advice" (Du Preez, 1971: 5).

⁷¹⁵ See the earlier accounts provided in this chapter.

⁷¹⁶ Femia, 1981: 38 – 45. These represent reasons two and one respectively.

Afrikaner nationalism of the early twentieth century.⁷¹⁷ Although initially accommodated by the Apartheid State, both organisations were later banned when their political militancy became evident. In the face of a burgeoning political groundswell from Black civil society, De Wet remained steadfast in his apartheid mission, futilely attempting to win students over by claiming the sincerity of his intentions.⁷¹⁸

In the face of growing opposition from civil society, De Wet's tenure coincided with the period in which the Apartheid State intensified its repressive activities: there was an escalation of surveillance activities by the police's Special Branch and an increasing military presence in urban areas. In this context of the exercise of coercion, although De Wet enjoyed the support of most White staff whose conformity was based on agreement with the principles of apartheid or gains derived from the system,⁷¹⁹ he encountered enormous resistance from students and passivity from Black staff whose conformity was not based on agreement with the principles of apartheid.

John Lamprecht assumed office in 1981, the same year that the Ciskei was assigned independence by the South African State. His responsibility was to demonstrate the developmental role of the University in relation to the Ciskei. Lamprecht was neither a member of the Broederbond nor of the Dutch Reformed Church and had been nominated by Senate, as opposed to being appointed by the State, like his predecessors. Nonetheless, he was so anxious to impress the Ciskei president of his willingness to serve that his leadership style was as authoritarian as his predecessors, as will be seen.

⁷¹⁷ The president of the Black Consciousness Movement, Ms W.M. Kgware, had in 1972 addressed a meeting of the parents of students from Fort Hare and the University of the Western Cape, urging them not to condemn SASO, which was behind the student protest on various Black university campuses, because it was fighting for the rights of Blacks in the same way that Afrikaners had fought for their rights in 1914 (*Daily Dispatch*, 20 August 1973: 3, De Wet files).

⁷¹⁸ In the De Wet files there are several cartoons drawn by students (removed from dining halls and hostel common rooms where they had been posted), showing him uttering his hallmark phrase "I have your interests at heart".

⁷¹⁹ These represent the third and fourth motives for conformity (Femia, 1981: 38 – 43).

Having gained some background information about the three apartheid era Rectors, we will now turn our attention to the role of Fort Hare, as perceived by the Apartheid State.

Fort Hare as the embodiment of State ideology: a homeland University

During the 1960s, under the Ross Administration, an independent Ciskei was being conceptualised by the State, without firm plans regarding the time frame for bringing it into existence. As already discussed, after 1972 it was nominally governed by the Ciskei Legislative Assembly, though in reality decisions were engineered by pro-apartheid White bureaucrats who were embedded in the senior levels of its departmental structures, which replicated those of the South African public service. Fort Hare was to be the quintessential University for the Xhosa in the Ciskei and was a cornerstone of the notion of independent Black homelands – albeit that these were administered by the Apartheid State. For this reason, the primary allegiance of the Rectors in the 1960s and 1970s was to the Apartheid State. As a result, the University's mission and vision of serving towards the development of the independent Ciskei homeland under Black Administration proved to be more rhetoric than reality. As noted above, Lamprecht was to be assigned the task of demonstrating the University's relevance to the development of the Ciskei.

Ross's rectorship in the 1960s pre-dated the existence of the Ciskei as a political entity and his mandate was that of establishing an ethnic University aligned to apartheid ideals of racially separate education, rather than locating this project within the context of an independent Ciskei homeland. At the same time, Ross wanted Fort Hare to play an instrumental role in the modernisation of the homeland, and soon after he assumed the post of Rector he expressed the wish to introduce Engineering, Medicine, Pharmacy, Librarianship, Nutrition and Economics.⁷²⁰ The Department of Bantu Education was not amenable to these ideas, which were expanded on in 1962 to include Surveying, Architecture, Dentistry, Veterinary Science, Social Work, Physical Training, and Music and Fine Art.⁷²¹ Nothing was to come of these in the 1960s, though, following a request in 1965 from the Department of Bantu Education, a qualification in Land Surveying was duly introduced.⁷²² By curtailing the

⁷²⁰ Minutes of the Senate meeting held 3 May 1960.

⁷²¹ Minutes of the Senate meeting held 8 May 1962.

⁷²² Minutes of the Senate meeting held 11 May 1965.

range of qualifications offered at Fort Hare, as well as reducing the number of schools offering Mathematics and Science, the emphasis on higher education was skewed away from the 'hard sciences' that had dominated in the late 1950s towards Education, Commerce and the Social Sciences.

De Wet's responsibility as Rector during the 1970s, before the Ciskei had gained its official independence, was to expand Fort Hare's offerings to other campuses. An opportunity was afforded in 1974 to establish a campus north of the Kei River in the Transkei. Because Transkei independence was planned by the Apartheid State to precede that of the Ciskei in 1976, De Wet was requested by M.C. Botha, Minister of the Department of Bantu Education, to establish a satellite campus of Fort Hare in Umthata, to be managed by the Rector's representative. However, these initial plans to offer a part-time BA were revised when Kaiser Matanzima, the first president of the Transkei and an alumnus of Fort Hare, decided that Transkei should have its own University, and Fort Hare's planned expansion was curtailed.

Until then, little interest had been displayed by the Ciskei administration in the affairs of Fort Hare, apart from a brief interaction in 1977. At that time, a meeting with Fort Hare management was requested to discuss "issues requiring attention", prominent among which appeared to be the issue of Black staff. A letter from G.D. Maytham⁷²³ to the Rector of Fort Hare stated that the items on the agenda were the role of Fort Hare in the Ciskei community, the relationship between Fort Hare and the Ciskei government; the filling of senior posts at Fort Hare with Blacks; the high failure rate in Agriculture and Science; and representation on Fort Hare Senate.⁷²⁴ De Wet's notes after the meeting are an indication of how the discussion took place, highlighting the concerns about a lack of representation of the Ciskei government in the affairs of Fort Hare, the alleged failure of Fort Hare to respond to the needs of the Ciskei in not offering appropriate part-time courses, the inadequate number of students registered to become teachers, the poor pass rate, and finally, the excessive number of non-Xhosa students. In his customary style of providing technical details to disprove allegations

⁷²³ Maytham was the (White) Secretary of the Department of the Chief Minister of Finance to the Commissioner General of the Xhosa National Unit for Ciskei.

⁷²⁴ Letter dated 10 May 1977, De Wet files.

against himself or Fort Hare, De Wet dismissed each complaint, except that of Africanisation, which he claimed had been covered in the meeting.⁷²⁵

The Ciskei government seemed to have backed down on its demands once the issue of finances was raised. In his formal response to Maytham's letter, De Wet foregrounded the absence of Ciskei's financial contribution. On the issue of meeting the Ciskei's needs for part-time courses, he stated that the delay in establishing a new centre in Zwelithsa was regretted, but the cause was the financial implications for Fort Hare, which did "not expect any significant contributions from your government in this respect". As to the other issues, they were similarly settled with cutting replies that left no doubt as to the fact that decision-making power lay with Fort Hare, not the Ciskei government. On governance, he clarified that the Ciskei government had no right to be represented on Senate, but since 1975 it had enjoyed and exercised the right to appoint two members to the University Council as well as being represented by four members on the Advisory Council, a body that was appointed for a term of four years after consultation with the Ciskei government. De Wet observed also that there were 24 students registered for Education in 1974 and that he could not force students to do the postgraduate Bachelor of Education, which, in the absence of bursaries, was not particularly attractive. His outrage at the accusation of low pass rates illustrates his sensitivity concerning the academic status of Fort Hare, and De Wet admonished the Ciskei government, saying that academic standards would not be sacrificed in order to populate the Ciskei civil service. As for the excessive number of non-Xhosa students, he provided the 1976 enrolment statistics for each 'ethnic group', showing that more than 90% were Xhosa.⁷²⁶

This obdurate stance was to change dramatically in 1981, when Lamprecht became Rector subsequent to De Wet's sudden departure after being involved in a near-fatal car accident,⁷²⁷

⁷²⁵ On the Africanisation of posts, he stated that 50 posts had been frozen and Fort Hare would require the sum of R875,000 to fill these, an unfeasible amount. For this reason, further appointments of Black staff could not be made (Memo dated 3 June 1977, De Wet files).

⁷²⁶ De Wet's response states that of a total of 1651 students, 1514 were Xhosa (Memo dated 3 June 1977, De Wet files).

⁷²⁷ Five candidates were presented by Senate to Council. One, S.M. Guma of the University College of Swaziland, was external, and the other four, including Lamprecht and Seretlo, were internal (Agenda for Special Senate Meeting dated 6 October 1980, De Wet files).

in the same year that the Ciskei gained independence. As observed, Lamprecht's aim was to demonstrate attentiveness to the needs of the Ciskei, and his efforts in this respect will be described in greater detail shortly.

Notwithstanding the fact that Fort Hare was supposed to embody the realisation of 'Separate Development', throughout the 30 years during which it was under the control of the Apartheid State, it was headed and staffed mainly by Whites, and all senior posts were occupied by Whites. This contradiction will now be examined in greater detail.

Afrikanerisation versus 'verswarting': a Black University staffed by Whites

With the appointment of the first apartheid era Rector, the transformation of Fort Hare Administration reflected that of political society, that is, the *Afrikanerisation* of bureaucrats and civil servants. The primary strategy was to employ Afrikaans-speaking senior administrative and academic staff whose values and behaviour resonated with those of the State and its apartheid ideology. Corresponding to the values of Afrikaner religious beliefs, discipline, obeisance and submissiveness to authority was paramount. Whilst the control exercised by the missionary Administration had been aimed at achieving behaviour that conformed to Christian principles of obedience, those of the apartheid era Administration were obviously premised on the basis of racial subordination and the submission of Blacks to Whites. Du Preez describes the purging of undesirable elements that occurred at the end of 1959 and the subsequent caution exercised in making appointments of staff with the appropriate "*gesindheid*", or attitude, towards 'Separate Development'.⁷²⁸

As previously observed, both Ross and De Wet were imbued with a conviction in the modernisation that they believed 'Separate Development' would achieve, and both anticipated a stage at which control of Fort Hare would be handed to a Black Administration. Whereas Ross's task had been to appoint White Afrikaner staff whose political views resonated with those of the State, his successor, De Wet, was supposed to recruit ideologically compliant Black academics. This point was made repeatedly, particularly when he was challenged by civic organisations and church movements, but it proved to be a greater

⁷²⁸ 21 new appointments were made in 1960, over half the total number of academic staff (Du Preez, 1971: 7).

challenge to locate suitably qualified Black academics who supported the notion of Bantustans. As a result, the number of Black academic staff remained stagnant for most of the 1970s, despite pressure from the State.⁷²⁹ “There is no doubt that the control of these [Black] Universities must be taken over by Blacks as soon as possible,” he said, in the aftermath of the 1973 student protests, and “It is a necessary and integral part of our leadership that facilities of Universities for Bantus are brought to the same standard as Universities for Whites”.⁷³⁰ This discourse remained nonetheless an unfulfilled statement of intent, as will be seen.

The goal of ‘*verswaring*’, or substitution of Whites by Black staff and administrators, was shared by the Rectors of ‘non-White’ universities who met as Broederbond members from 1970 onwards. This item featured regularly on the meeting agendas until the second half of the 1970s, when, as the reality of homelands independence drew nigh, the future position of Whites in the homelands became a concern that featured prominently in the agendas. In 1974, in the Broederbond-convened meetings of Rectors of Non-White Universities, the minutes noted that a motion would be put to the Executive Committee – of the Broederbond – to require the State to make it clear whether the administration of ‘non-White’ universities would be handed over to full control by *volksregerings*, or homeland governments. It was noted that the committee was in favour of a positive outcome, but that guarantees should be given to White staff in terms of their conditions of service and property.⁷³¹

Over and above the directive to appoint Black staff emanating from the Apartheid State through the Department of Bantu Education and Development, a feature of De Wet’s desire

⁷²⁹ In 1972, there were 116 White academics, 28 Black academics, 46 White administrative staff and 63 Black administrative staff (almost four White academic staff to each Black academic staff member). By 1975 there were 92 Black staff, of whom 27 were academic and 65 non-academic staff (Information compiled from memos and letters in De Wet files).

⁷³⁰ Documentation includes letters written by students requesting readmission, and motivations in support of readmission from parents, guardians and sponsors, as well as formal complaints from Christian and civic organisations, student organisations and influential individuals, each of which De Wet responded to personally (De Wet files, 1973).

⁷³¹ Minutes of the meeting of the Committee of Rectors of Non-White Universities held 29 May 1974, De Wet files.

for *verswaring* was undoubtedly his belief that students would accept a Black University Administration. “It is clear that many of these problems will vanish when the Bantu one day assume control”, he stated, acknowledging in the same letter that “the Black student has not accepted Bantu universities”.⁷³²

In the expectation that students would more readily accept the leadership of Black residence wardens, one of the first moves that had been made by Ross on assuming the post of Rector had been to install Black wardens to exercise control and maintain discipline. This had not had the desired effect, and actions by Black wardens were cited as one of the main causes of outbreaks of student protest, with the most obvious instance being the 1973 attack on a warden’s house,⁷³³ to be described in greater detail. A “fact sheet” produced by SASO after this incident identified Black collaborators as among those who opposed the interests of Black students and Black people, denounced the behaviour of some Black staff members:

one of the most disgusting aspects of Fort Hare life is the apathetic approach of the Black lecturers to the student problems. This is not the sin of commission but the sin of omission. As Black parents on campus they fail to come up to expectations for fear of possible intimidatory reaction of the authorities.⁷³⁴

However, in the same way that the De Wet perceived the obstacles to *verswaring* as being, firstly, the “preparedness” of Blacks to assume the administrative responsibilities associated with senior level posts in the University, and secondly, the danger of making appointments that exposed the University to the influence of dissident elements who would use the opportunity to undermine the apartheid plan, particularly if the level of senior management were infiltrated.⁷³⁵ White staff members were on the whole considered ideologically

⁷³² Undated letter referring to the 1972 student protests, De Wet files.

⁷³³ See *Appendix D: Dates and nature of student protest*.

⁷³⁴ SASO Fact Sheet. *Persoonlike Lëer* (Personal File) 1973, De Wet files.

⁷³⁵ Point 1 of the memorandum of minutes of a meeting with the Minister of Bantu Education M.C. Botha notes that the “Achilles heel” of the substitution of Whites by Blacks is the process of transferring management, because of the risk of “extremely dangerous foreign influence”, although the desirability of having White staff reporting to Black staff in certain cases is not disputed (Memorandum dated 12 August 1972 of interview with Minister M.C. Botha in connection with “non-White” universities, De Wet files).

appropriate matches for their posts and their general conviction in their contribution – similar to the missionaries’ conception of sacrifice for the common good – is evident in the irritated remark below, made by the Dean of the Education Faculty, B. de V. van der Merwe.⁷³⁶ When his proposal to replace the late Professor M.O.M Seboni with a White academic staff member was rejected by the Secretary of the Department of Bantu Education, he complained:

Of all the inconveniences to which White lecturers at Black universities are subjected, this directive from the Department takes the cake. One asks oneself if it is worth making sacrifices for a job that Bantu Education does not appreciate and on the contrary sees as closing doors for the Bantu.⁷³⁷

Due to the ever-present fear of subversion, Black academic staff were almost always at a disadvantage when applying for posts in terms of the level of academic qualifications obtained, not having been able to enjoy the same opportunities for postgraduate studies as Whites.⁷³⁸ Throughout the three decades during which Fort Hare was under the control of apartheid administrators, senior posts were seldom relinquished for occupation by Black staff, who generally remained in posts reporting to Whites and as a minority.⁷³⁹ The outcome was a tension between De Wet’s dedication to the aim of high quality education and the recruitment of the best qualified contender for the post, and the aim of *verswarring*, so that he was rebuked by the Secretary of the Department of Education when requesting promotion for White academics and admonished for failing to appoint and promote more Black academic staff.⁷⁴⁰

⁷³⁶ He was later to become the Rector’s representative at Fort Hare’s Umthata campus in 1976.

⁷³⁷ Letter from B. de V. van der Merwe to De Wet dated 11 October 1972, De Wet files.

⁷³⁸ After more two decades as an apartheid University, Fort Hare had one Doctoral, nine Masters and 62 Honours students (1984 Report on Student graduation).

⁷³⁹ By 1970, Fort Hare had 1050 students (just over double the number in 1959). There were 116 White academics, 28 Black academics (almost all of whom were lecturers), 46 White and 63 Black administrative staff, most of whom occupied junior posts and reported to Whites (Report containing evidence presented to the Bantu Affairs Commission by Professor De Wet dated 24 January 1974, De Wet files).

⁷⁴⁰ Responding to a request for the promotion of three White staff members, C.C. du Preez, Secretary of the Department of Bantu Education, stated that although the requirements of Whites to fill the post of Associate Professor were a PhD, publications, research and 10 years’ experience in the field, Blacks need fulfil only the requirement of a doctoral qualification (S2/14/1 of 1975, De Wet files). However, there were obstructions to the promotion of Coloured staff. De Wet complained to the

Under Lamprecht's Administration, the replacement of White by Black staff was accelerated, with Lamprecht anxious to demonstrate that Fort Hare was following an affirmative action policy. In a letter to the Vice-Rector, Dermott Moore, he drew his attention to practices that had to be implemented according to the policy. This stated that, in making new appointments, all applications for Black persons should be considered and called for interviews, ordering that:

when a Black South African applicant – and particularly a Ciskeian – has the necessary qualifications, this person should be considered before a White person who was equally or more qualified. The notion is to give the appointment to Blacks whenever they are found suitable for the post.⁷⁴¹

Whilst the few senior Black academic staff members at Fort Hare in the 1960s and 1970s were supposed to epitomise Black intellectual achievement within the apartheid system, their position as intermediaries between White administrators and students meant that they performed a difficult and ambiguous role, of which they were highly conscious, and vacillated between the lure of career advancement and the disinclination to be identified with apartheid domination, particularly by Black students.

One of the few Black academic staff who succeeded in being promoted to a senior position was Professor R. Seretlo, who, in response to pressure from the Department of Bantu Education, was promoted to Professor in January 1973 over several overseas candidates, and was also nominated to serve on the Advisory Council in the same year. In this privileged position he was to encounter compromising and contradictory situations, such as having to defend himself against a complaint lodged against him for failing to attend a Board of Studies meeting in November 1973, when he had been engaged in academic matters off-campus and had tendered a request to a colleague. In his letter to De Wet, he said, "I deplore the

Secretary of Bantu Education, Mr Rousseau, that his request for an upgrading of the post and salary of a Coloured employee had been declined. He argued that "Mr Walton has always been loyal to this institution and has e.g. refused the use of his private telephone to organisers of strikes" and accused the Department of displaying no respect for the recommendations of the University Council, "which is supposed to be a responsible and well-informed body" (Letter dated 12 January 1970, De Wet files).

⁷⁴¹ "Applicants for positions at Fort Hare", letter dated 4 October 1988, Lamprecht files.

impression created, viz. that one is always looking for the slightest opportunity for sneaking out of the University to evade responsibility.”⁷⁴²

On another occasion in 1975, in his capacity as warden of the women’s residence, Elukhanyisweni, Seretlo pleaded for the readmission of two female students subsequent to their expulsion in the aftermath of the almost annual student protests. He pointed out that by refusing to readmit these women, both of them Hostel Committee members, De Wet was confirming the students’ belief that those who expressed their views openly would be victimised. Seretlo remarked, “I find myself in the untenable position wherein the information I have about these girls would seem to recommend them for readmission, whilst the Administration has at its disposal information seemingly at variance with mine.”⁷⁴³

Seretlo’s academic career was unfortunately asynchronous with both the apartheid and the post-apartheid era. His participation in the apartheid management system was not conducive to his own advancement, and he was prevented in 1980 from obtaining the Rector’s post to which he had been nominated by Senate, through the Fort Hare Council’s decision to appoint Lamprecht instead.⁷⁴⁴ The nature of this conformity – compliance in the expectation of reward – was evident, but his hopes were thwarted again a decade later in 1990, when the Black Staff Association demanded that Lamprecht and other senior members of the Administration step down to make way for a Black Administration. Despite being nominated by the Council at this stage to serve as interim Rector, the Black Staff Association rejected the Council’s nomination and Seretlo was once again sidelined.

The circumstances around these events will be discussed later in this Chapter. Suffice to say that the appointment of Lamprecht over Seretlo marked the second occasion on which a Black candidate for the most senior University post had been passed over (the first had been the Council’s choice of Dent, rather than Matthews, when Kerr retired as Principal in 1948). In both cases, the Black candidates had been in the unfortunate position of having been ‘too Black’ for a White Administration that mistrusted the abilities of Black administrators, and, in the case of Seretlo, ‘too White’, that is, collaborationist, for the Black staff constituency.

⁷⁴² Letter to De Wet dated 7 January 1974, De Wet files.

⁷⁴³ Undated letter from Seretlo to De Wet, September 1975, De Wet files.

⁷⁴⁴ Undated Special Senate meeting held October 1980, De Wet files.

Organising among Black staff: the Black Staff Association

During Ross's regime, there had been few Black staff. Subsequent to the Masondo incident, which had resulted in him being sentenced to 15 years' imprisonment for sabotage, Black staff displayed no overt resistance to apartheid. We have seen that the Senate Advisory Committee, which offered a platform to Black staff to develop a collective identity, had been phased out because it had enabled Black staff members to articulate grievances.

In its place, a Black Staff Association (BSA) had existed, but, wrote De Wet to his counterpart at Turfloop University, J.L. Boshoff, it had become like a trade union and had disappeared. He expressed his hope that it could be re-established on a "healthy basis".⁷⁴⁵ The BSA was duly re-established in 1972, with the minutes of its meetings recorded in Afrikaans.⁷⁴⁶ The main grievances of the BSA expressed in its inaugural meeting remained the same as those identified by the Senate Advisory Committee in the 1960s, namely, the absence of equity in terms of pay, the absence of opportunities for Black staff, and the obstacles in the way of professional advancement.⁷⁴⁷

A memo from the Black Staff Association to De Wet complained that the Department of Bantu Administration and Development had no training programme aiming at the takeover of Black universities by Black administrators. The memo suggested that, with the exception of the Registrar's and the Rector's posts, for which Blacks should be trained, Blacks should be appointed to posts, and degrees – as opposed to Senior Certificates – should be required for administrative posts.⁷⁴⁸ This recommendation stemmed from the number of Whites without tertiary qualifications who occupied administrative posts. As for academic staff, the very real problem of a lack of postgraduate qualifications beyond Honours level – due to the focus of Black university education being on teaching rather than research – had prompted the

⁷⁴⁵ Letter dated 20 April 1970, De Wet files.

⁷⁴⁶ The De Wet files contain several copies of the minutes of BSA meetings, but the BSA files could not be located.

⁷⁴⁷ Undated minutes of Black Staff Association meeting held 1972, De Wet files.

⁷⁴⁸ Undated memo, De Wet's 1972 files.

obvious suggestion, then being implemented, that Blacks with Honours degrees should be appointed to junior academic posts, from where their qualifications could be improved.⁷⁴⁹

Similarly, under the Lamprecht Administration in the 1980s, complaints by Black staff refer to the lack of opportunities for promotion, as well as obstacles relating to the expected transformation of the University as part of the Ciskei. Whilst during Lamprecht's era there were more appointments of Black staff, senior academic and administrative positions were still occupied by Whites. The fact that Fort Hare by this stage was a Ciskei institution rankled many Black staff whose ambitions were being thwarted, and whose sentiments are illustrated by an anonymous letter in the Lamprecht files, saying, "It is very hard for a Black man at this University, as he comes against a wall when he wants to achieve something."⁷⁵⁰

For three decades, then, the transition from a White to a Black Administration at Fort Hare was in a limbo until the release of Nelson Mandela from prison in 1990. It was a sudden transition that was to take place after the coup that ousted Chief Lennox Sebe and installed Brigadier Oupa Gqozo as the new president of the Ciskei. This event will be discussed in greater detail, but for now, suffice to say that it served as a catalyst for Black staff at Fort Hare to force the senior White Administration out of office. Within a few months, the face of the senior Administration was totally transformed, and the post-apartheid Administration will form the focus of the discussion in Chapter Six.

It has been shown above that the relationship between the State and Fort Hare as an institution within civil society ensured the resonance of ideology and political aims between senior bureaucrats and the most senior University administrator, in the form of the Rector. However, the nature of conformity within the staff and student body, representing civil society, was far more complex than during the period under missionary Administration. As a reminder, the four reasons for conformity proposed by Femia were evident, as follows: firstly, acquiescence under duress; secondly, subconscious acts of conformity or 'unreflecting

⁷⁴⁹ Undated memo, De Wet's 1972 files.

⁷⁵⁰ Letter dated 6 September 1988, Lamprecht files.

participation’; thirdly, active and conscious agreement with basic social principles; and fourthly, expectations of reward.⁷⁵¹ These will be illustrated in the discussion that follows.

The nature of conformity and compliance among staff

Whilst Ross had recruited staff whose ideological views conformed strictly to the values of apartheid ideology, De Wet had experienced criticism of academic standards at Fort Hare from pro- and anti-apartheid factions, and he was more concerned with attracting well qualified academics. He recruited not only those whose ideological alignment recommended them,⁷⁵² as had his predecessor, but also well qualified academics who joined Fort Hare without reflecting on their participation in the activities of an apartheid institution or because of the prospects for gain.⁷⁵³ The provision of substantial material benefits accompanying an academic post that offered good career and research prospects nurtured a general conformity, which, despite reservations that may have existed within the minds of White and Black staff, resulted in their acceptance of the political context of the higher education offered at Fort Hare.

Compliance: conformity under duress

It is conformity as “acquiescence under duress”⁷⁵⁴ that appears to have been relevant to most Black staff who wanted to pursue an academic career and could not do so outside the apartheid framework unless they left the country, a step that many were not prepared or able to take. Blacks who assumed principled anti-apartheid positions – as staff or students – were on record with the security police and struggled to find ordinary employment to occupy posts for which they had been trained, most being within the civil service.⁷⁵⁵ The fourth reason for conformity

⁷⁵¹ Femia, 1981: 38 – 43.

⁷⁵² Conscious agreement represents Femia’s third reason for conformity (Ibid.).

⁷⁵³ Unreflecting participation and the expectation of reciprocity form Femia’s second and fourth reasons for conformity respectively (Femia, 1981: 38 – 43).

⁷⁵⁴ Femia’s first reason for conformity (Ibid.).

⁷⁵⁵ Information on dissidents was shared between the Fort Hare administration, the security police and State departments, and the Rectors’ files contain many records of correspondence, formal and informal, relating to staff and students whose ideas and activities were considered a danger to the State. One such person was Vusumzi Duma, a student activist during the 1980s, who was unable to obtain a lecturing position until the 1990s, placing him at a disadvantage relative to those who

proposed by Femia, namely, motivated by the expectation of reciprocity or reward, applies to both White and Black staff who benefited from the material benefits and prospects of working within the apartheid system. The act of ideological capitulation implies a pervasive defeat, one of the lasting elements being a passive acceptance of subordination, a phenomenon that emerges from discussions with staff and is considered in Chapter Six.

Both Ross and De Wet had close links with the security police, and the personal memoir written by Du Preez is testimony to the close collaboration between Ross and the security police.⁷⁵⁶ In addition to soliciting background information from members of the Broederbond, every staff appointment recommended by the Fort Hare Administration had to be approved by the Department of Bantu Education. When he had misgivings concerning staff behaviour, De Wet had recourse to the advice of the Dean of the Law Faculty, Professor J.B. Thom, who was providing legal opinion as early as 1969 on how to handle dissident staff.⁷⁵⁷

Compliance in the expectation of rewards

Judging by the volume of correspondence, a great deal of De Wet's time was spent on ensuring that White staff received the benefits that would keep them at Fort Hare. In September 1969, in response to a 1968 decision by the Fort Hare Council that all staff should live in Alice,⁷⁵⁸ which was designated as a White residential area at the time, the Department

collaborated and were able to gain employment through the system (Interview with Vusumzi Duma on 26 May 2011).

⁷⁵⁶ Du Preez claimed with pride that the security police and the police had performed an "*uitstekende rol*" (outstanding role) in preventing communist influences from infiltrating the campus (Du Preez, 1971).

⁷⁵⁷ Thom provided legal advice in his capacity as High Court Judge (*Hooggeregshof*) and not as a staff member, concerning which laws could be applied to staff. He referred him to Section 30(1) of the Transfer of Fort Hare Act of 1959 and the Civil Service Act no. 54 of 1957, in terms of which Minister could dismiss staff members after consultation with Council. Thom assured De Wet that the scope of 'bad conduct' was so broad that he could implicate a staff member (Letter dated 27 May 1969, De Wet files).

⁷⁵⁸ The decision was accompanied by a directive that staff should be in their offices until 5p.m. every weekday, implying that it was a common practice for staff to spend little time on the campus, prioritising private affairs instead. It is interesting to note that resistance to subordinating to

of Bantu Education had ruled that if housing was not available in Alice, staff could get a travel allowance for a year from the Department. During that time it was expected that they should build their own accommodation in Alice, but although the State had at that stage not decided on a time frame for granting independence to the Ciskei, disgruntled White staff were not prepared to risk building their homes in a future Black ‘homeland’. A final directive was issued by H.J. van Zyl, Secretary of the Department of Bantu Education, that staff should live in Alice or resign.⁷⁵⁹ This is a rare illustration of Whites being subjected to a principle providing no perceptible gain to them, so as to enforce the implementation of the Apartheid project. In this case, compliance occurred “under duress”, without their willing consent.⁷⁶⁰

In 1972 the Alice Town Council assured De Wet that the town would not form part of the area designated as the future Ciskei ‘homeland’, but senior bureaucrats had different plans, revealed by the 1974 Commission of Enquiry into the future of Alice.⁷⁶¹ After this, De Wet – who also lived in Alice – undertook a campaign to ensure that White staff who resided on campus or in Alice would not be prejudiced by the declaration of Alice as a zone for occupation by Blacks and that the interests of White staff who continued working at Fort Hare would not be detrimentally affected. The relocation of Whites and compensation for their houses in Alice was the focus of numerous discussions between De Wet and the Department of Bantu Administration and Development between 1974 and 1975, and De Wet proffered several ideas, including separate areas for Blacks and Whites in Alice.⁷⁶² In a pragmatic response to the State’s decision that Alice would form part of the Ciskei, gradually the standpoint of the Alice Town Council shifted. By 1978 it welcomed the proposition investigated by a Commission of Inquiry into making Alice the capital of the Ciskei.⁷⁶³

requirements relating to punctuality persisted: one of the first instructions given by Derrick Swartz when he assumed office as Vice-Chancellor in 2000 was that staff should arrive and leave on time.

⁷⁵⁹ Letter to De Wet from H.J. van Zyl, Secretary of the Department of Bantu Education dated 17 October 1970, De Wet files.

⁷⁶⁰ Femia, 1981: 38 – 43.

⁷⁶¹ Evidence presented to the Bantu Affairs Commission by Professor JM De Wet, Rector of the University of Fort Hare, on 24 January 1974, De Wet files.

⁷⁶² Letter dated 16 September 1975, De Wet files.

⁷⁶³ Letter from the Town Council to De Wet dated February 1978, De Wet files.

Though De Wet argued that Alice should retain zones for Whites, he acknowledged that Whites were often seen by Black colleagues as ‘*indringers*’, or invaders. Nonetheless, he considered they played an “outstanding role and performed a very important task”, stating that “University of Fort Hare staff must be considered as people who are instrumental in achieving a specific ideal”. Painting a picture of stoicism, De Wet noted that White staff had been compelled to live in Alice, but with only 57 staff houses and flats available at rentals between R11 and R58 per month, they had been forced to build their own homes (47 staff had done so, subsidised by a low interest rate of 5% on their bonds).⁷⁶⁴ Unwilling to form part of a future Black homeland when the future of Alice became clear, 25 White academic staff members resigned in 1975.⁷⁶⁵

However, there was lesser accommodation of the needs of Black staff. Whilst De Wet was prepared to lobby for housing and fair compensation to Whites who would have to vacate their homes, he showed limited concern in addressing the severe shortage of accommodation for Black staff. By 1974, subsequent to the employment of more Black staff as academic and administrative staff, as well as skilled and unskilled workers on campus and on the Fort Hare farm, the situation was critical. Black staff members were living in a designated homeland, and yet there was no accommodation provision for them on the Fort Hare campus, where they were being crowded into makeshift shelters. In a letter to Minister M.C. Botha, De Wet expressed his concern that “if some of the conditions described below became known outside Fort Hare, it would be ideal material for hostile press”,⁷⁶⁶ indicating that the issue of bad publicity was of more concern than solving the problem itself.

⁷⁶⁴ Evidence presented to the Bantu Affairs Commission by Professor JM De Wet, Rector of the University of Fort Hare, on 24 January 1974, De Wet files.

⁷⁶⁵ Letter dated 16 September 1975, De Wet files.

⁷⁶⁶ The said conditions included 27 families and eight single people being housed in zinc shelters, and outside rooms being used for the administrative clerk, library assistant, two foremen and their families; 29 kitchen and dining room staff being accommodated in 11 rooms; 60 workers in three halls that were each 20 by 30 feet in size; and four families in a 25 by 25 foot hall. Aside from these arrangements, the former Church of Scotland flatlets that had housed 19 staff were being used to accommodate 10 families and 6 single staff. Over and above the Black staff accommodated on campus, there were another 275 workers who lived in a 10-kilometre radius around Alice “in primitive conditions”, given the absence of any township or housing provision for Black people in the

De Wet used the shortage of accommodation for Black staff and workers to motivate for the expansion of the Black township of Ntselamanzi, adjacent to the Lovedale campus and Queen Victoria Hospital, to accommodate Fort Hare staff. Members of the BSA expressed their indignation that their lot would be to reside in the township with the Black working class, stating their point of view that Alice should be declared a residential area for Blacks.⁷⁶⁷

A year later, still pursuing his ideal of separate living areas for Whites and Blacks in Alice, De Wet proposed optimistically to Mr L.P. van Onselen, the Secretary for Bantu Administration and Development, that some Whites were expected to leave the campus houses they occupied to make them available to Black staff, and therefore Alice could be divided into different zones for Black and White residential areas. Whites occupying zones that would be declared Black would be favourably compensated and given new houses in the White zones. Clearly De Wet's conceptualisation of the implementation of apartheid was flexible and opportunistic, differing from the overarching grand plan of complete segregation of living areas for different races. The end result was that in 1981, when Ciskei gained independence, the Department of Public Works bought many houses owned by Whites, who moved to Fort Beaufort, 22 kilometres away, just beyond the official Ciskei 'border'.

The creation of the Ciskei as an independent homeland gave rise to many complications concerning the legal accommodation of existing situations and practices regarding where people lived and worked, and sometimes convoluted solutions.

An example is the case of the creation in 1983 of Vista University through the Vista University Act no. 106 of 1981. In terms of this Act, five campuses were established in large urban areas designated as White to accommodate the need for higher education – teacher training, in particular – for Blacks living there. A further example is the 1985 Staffing Act, which allowed for the secondment of staff employed in White areas to institutions in Black areas. In keeping with the designation of the Ciskei as an independent homeland, staff of the University of Fort Hare who were not Ciskei residents – whether Black or White – were

area apart from facilities offered by Fort Hare, Lovedale and the Victoria Hospital (Letter dated 26 August 1974, De Wet files).

⁷⁶⁷ Letter from the BSA dated February 1974, De Wet files.

considered ‘foreigners’. They had the choice of being employed directly by the University Council, or by the Vista University campus in Uitenhage, an industrial area near Port Elizabeth, in which case they were deemed as having been seconded to Fort Hare in Alice, where they would work as foreigners.⁷⁶⁸ Though administration of Fort Hare was transferred from the South African Department of Education and Training to its Ciskeian counterpart at the beginning of 1987, the South African State committed to continuing to pay Fort Hare subsidy on the same basis as South African universities.

Whilst financial incentives such as low taxes of 15%, a so-called ‘inconvenience allowance’, as well as travel allowances for employees and their children were paid prior to Ciskeian independence in 1981,⁷⁶⁹ after 1981 the benefits to those who chose to be appointed on the basis of secondment were greater. In addition to the ‘foreign allowance’ in the form of an increment of between 18% and 24% to the basic salary, campus housing or low-rental off-campus housing in University properties in Alice and Fort Beaufort was made available along with free water and electricity. Alternatively, a State-subsidised low interest loan for the purchase of housing was made available to those who wished to build their own houses. Due to the low interest, loans could be paid off in five years, saving more than half of what would otherwise have been paid.⁷⁷⁰

Additional incentives had been deemed necessary to attract Whites to live and work in the Ciskei, but they also applied to Black staff members. However, the fundamental difference remained that of the different salary scales and the fact that most Black staff were unable to secure senior positions, so that despite the prospect of material benefits, compliance by Black staff was understandably of a deeply resentful nature.⁷⁷¹

Until this point, we have considered conformity and compliance in the relationship between the Apartheid State and the Fort Hare Administration, and between the Administration and staff. We have not investigated the relationship between the independent Ciskei State and the

⁷⁶⁸ Memo from Lamprecht to the Fort Hare Foundation dated 26 August 1986, Lamprecht files.

⁷⁶⁹ De Wet files, 1970 – 1976.

⁷⁷⁰ Lamprecht’s staff files 1980 – 1989, Lamprecht files.

⁷⁷¹ Lamprecht’s staff files contain several letters from Black staff complaining about the salary differentials, as well as about the behaviour of White staff towards them.

Fort Hare Administration, which was obliged to recognise the legal status of the Ciskei. We will now examine the nature of conformity as constituted by a legal obligation.

Compliance as an apartheid obligation

Technically accountable to Council, the third apartheid era Rector, John Lamprecht, was in no doubt as to the necessity of maintaining a good relationship with the Ciskei president. Much of this depended on satisfying Sebe's needs. Acutely aware of the need to present Fort Hare as collaborating with and contributing to the development of the independent Ciskei, Lamprecht could not behave in an arrogant manner as his predecessor towards the Ciskei State. He openly subordinated himself to Sebe, addressing him as "Your Excellency", and prioritised his wishes, commissioning the investigation by Fort Hare staff of projects identified by Sebe as required by the Ciskei.⁷⁷²

In his inaugural address, he urged those assembled at Fort Hare to "cultivate the wider vision of putting back something to the common wealth in gratitude for what we have received", saying that Fort Hare had the responsibility to "roll up its sleeves and get its hands dirty in the task of community- and nation-building."⁷⁷³ His own background in Theology is evident in his espousal of the same virtues upheld by the missionary Administration, calling for "a spirit of self-respect and mutual trust", "unselfishness", "responsibility and self-discipline".⁷⁷⁴

Whereas Ross and De Wet had been privy to direct linkages with the Apartheid State and had executed a mandate that originated at the level of senior apartheid bureaucrats, Lamprecht's position of subordination was complicated in that he received his instructions from the Council and from Sebe, which led to heavy demands on both his time and the resources at his disposal. Sebe's requirements of Fort Hare were not necessarily related to education, and the need to be seen to collaborate with the Ciskei president without losing focus of the Apartheid State's project required him to dedicate his attention to matters not related to Fort Hare. This

⁷⁷² One such example was a proposed recreational resort on the Binfield Dam on the road between Alice and Hogsback. Sebe also required Lamprecht to dedicate much of his time to the establishment of the Border Technikon in Fort Jackson, Mdantsane, outside East London (Interview with Geoffrey Antrobus on 12 July 2011).

⁷⁷³ Inaugural address of JA Lamprecht, 1981.

⁷⁷⁴ Ibid.

compelled him to delegate responsibilities at weekly meetings to a core group of senior managers comprising the Vice-Rector, Academic Registrar, Finance Registrar and Administrative Registrar, and Deputy Registrar.⁷⁷⁵

Lamprecht's stated priority was to demonstrate responsiveness to the needs of the Ciskei government, and though he made it explicit that Black appointments should increase, he remained silent on the issue of the substitution of Black for White at senior levels. Whilst there had been little formal interaction between the Administration and senior members of the Ciskei bureaucracy in the 1970s, there had been considerable interaction between Ciskei departments and Fort Hare academic departments, particularly around issues such as agriculture, soil conservation and economic development. These were critically important if the notion of an independent Ciskei was to be considered as viable. Some academic staff had served in their private capacity as consultants,⁷⁷⁶ by entering into private agreements with Ciskei departments, a practice that had mushroomed in the 1970s. In order to ensure that he was personally aware of all the activities of Fort Hare relating to the Ciskei, Lamprecht imposed restrictions on the amount of time that could be spent on private work, whilst simultaneously embarking on measures to monitor the nature of the work performed. Memos to staff in the Lamprecht files insist that all communication with members of the Ciskei government be dispatched via the Registrar's office, with the dual objective of ensuring that he was fully informed, and that the content of communiqués would not offend Sebe.

⁷⁷⁵ Interview with Geoffrey Antrobus on 12 July 2011.

⁷⁷⁶ For example, the Professor of Politics, M.C. Eksteen, was granted permission by De Wet to 'advise' Sebe in his private capacity (Letter dated 11 March 1974, De Wet files). He continued his work as a consultant until March 1987, when Lamprecht was requested by Tshefu, Director-General of the Department of Education in the Ciskei, to withdraw his secondment with immediate effect, on the grounds of his "involvement in activities which are harmful to the good relations between the Ciskei Government and the University of Fort Hare" (Letter dated 25 March 1987, Lamprecht files). Subsequent to a meeting with Lamprecht on 26 September, Eksteen tendered his resignation and was released with immediate effect and instructed to submit to the Faculty Dean all printed materials and details of lectures conducted in Zwelitsha, and not to return to the campus without Lamprecht's permission (Memo from Lamprecht dated 26 September 1987, Lamprecht files).

One of the most voluminous and costly disciplinary actions initiated against a staff member who failed to comply with this directive was based on a single letter sent by Professor M.C. Botha to Minister of Manpower Utilisation, Chief Maqoma.⁷⁷⁷ In this letter, Professor Botha had notified Chief Maqoma that due to the Fort Hare Council having placed restrictions on private work conducted by staff, he would no longer be able to make a meaningful contribution and he was therefore withdrawing his services. This prompted a telephonic query five days later to Lamprecht from Mr De Vries, Sebe's assistant, accusing Botha of having jeopardised the relationship between Fort Hare and the Ciskei in "this sensitive and serious matter". Lamprecht ordered an inquiry and internal disciplinary proceedings commenced in November 1983, conducted by a King William's Town firm of attorneys whose services were utilised for Lamprecht's frequent disciplinary hearings.

The ensuing disciplinary process generated boxes of documents and evidence (minutes of meetings, legal documents and records) and lasted three months. Botha was found guilty of misconduct and resigned in January 1984, after which in March 1984 the verdict – accompanied by copious documentation – was forwarded by Lamprecht to B.J. Du Plessis, the Minister of Education and Training, for ratification. Lamprecht must have been very disappointed to receive the reply telegraphed to him by Du Plessis two months later, just three brief paragraphs long, acknowledging receipt of the documentation and observing, "I don't doubt that Prof Botha did not apply sound judgment ... and I accept that the relationship between the University and the Ciskei was at least temporarily disturbed ... However, I doubt whether a charge of something as serious as misconduct was justified." Du Plessis concluded that Council should consider reprimanding Botha, only taking more serious steps if the incident were to be repeated.⁷⁷⁸

This affront did not deter Lamprecht from his quest for absolute control over staff: his quest for compliance bordered on paranoia. The Lamprecht files contain numerous warning letters and copious files of disciplinary proceedings against staff members for issues ranging from alleged rudeness to another staff member to disloyalty to the Ciskei. However, he considered himself a "fair and firm" administrator, a defence that he submitted to Sebe in 1987 after the

⁷⁷⁷ Letter dated 6 October 1983, Lamprecht files.

⁷⁷⁸ Telegram dated 8 May 1984. Lamprecht files.

latter had received an anonymous letter accusing him of autocracy and of hiring and firing at will, and had referred it to him for comment.⁷⁷⁹

In keeping with his determination to maintain control over the campus, Lamprecht's closest ally was the Administrative Registrar, Mr J. De Goede, whose office was located opposite the Rector's. Because his portfolio included the responsibility for campus control and security, De Goede was tasked with vigilance over staff and student activities and with keeping Lamprecht informed of developments. Apart from being in constant communication with De Goede, rather than with the Academic Registrar and Deans, Lamprecht's sense of duty and deference to Sebe meant that a large part of his time was dedicated to off-campus affairs. In this way, he alienated himself from academic staff as well as students. Lamprecht's diaries detail the multiple cases in which he deemed it necessary to intervene to preserve the image of Fort Hare as an institution loyal to the Ciskei and Sebe, particularly when Fort Hare's image appeared to have been tarnished by student protests or staff indiscretions.⁷⁸⁰

One such incident occurred in 1988 after Professor Antrobus had given a public address at Rhodes University that had been written up in the local newspaper, the *Daily Dispatch*. It was reported that the sustainability of large agricultural projects at Tyefu, Keiskamma and Whittlesea in the Ciskei had been questioned, as R5 million had been lost, whereas smaller projects had been successful. Lamprecht instructed the unfortunate Professor to draft an apology and to submit corrections to the *Daily Dispatch*. These were checked and amended by Lamprecht prior to being dispatched to the Minister of Agriculture and Forestry in Ciskei, Mr L.W. Ngome, as well as to Sebe.⁷⁸¹ The letter apologised for the "false impression" created by the report, saying it had not reflected the "immense positive benefits in agriculture, human development and employment following from Ciskei large-scale irrigation projects", and the

⁷⁷⁹ Reply to anonymous letter to his Excellency, the President, received by the University of Fort Hare on 22 April 1987, Lamprecht files.

⁷⁸⁰ Lamprecht's personal diaries, Lamprecht files.

⁷⁸¹ Letter from Lamprecht to Ngome and Sebe dated 10 May 1988, Lamprecht files.

author was “confident about the future of Ciskei agricultural development” and “[praised] the enthusiasm with which it was being tackled as well as the demonstrably good results”.⁷⁸²

A further cause of tension between the Ciskei State and Fort Hare was the interference of the Ciskei police and Security Police on campus. Lamprecht was averse to becoming involved, preferring to defer to authority. On one occasion, two academic staff members, Messrs. S. Mayatula and M. Makalima, claimed that the security police had woken them up in their respective homes in the middle of the night and harassed them, allegedly because Mr Makalima had refused to hand a letter from a staff member at Rhodes University to the security police the day before.⁷⁸³ After conducting his own investigation into the facts, Lamprecht declared that there had been a misunderstanding and that the matter should be dropped, telling the BSA that on the issue of the security police presence “the University can make requests on behalf of staff but cannot prescribe to authorities”.⁷⁸⁴

If the authoritarian leadership of the apartheid era Rectors was successful in eliciting conformity on the part of Fort Hare staff, this was certainly not the case with students, and it is to this body that we now turn our attention.

Student and staff dissent

As a microcosm of society, the University reflected the tensions present in the broader society. Despite the fact that they were not a united and homogenous body and represented different classes and ambitions, the student body was defined by its overall rejection of apartheid and the Apartheid State’s representatives in the form of the University Administration. The protest that had characterised earlier forms of student resistance was intensified, assuming an explicitly political resistance nature that the University Administration attempted to contain through rules and the surveillance exercised over the student body.

⁷⁸² The draft of Antrobus’s letter was modified by Lamprecht before submission to the *Daily Dispatch* for publication. Lamprecht had inserted the word “praised” in his corrections to the letter, prior to releasing it to the press (Draft letter from Antrobus to Sebe, Lamprecht files).

⁷⁸³ Letter from Mr Mayatula dated June 1989, Lamprecht’s diary 1989, Lamprecht files.

⁷⁸⁴ Letter dated 11 August 1989, Lamprecht files.

However, the student body was by no means unified in its resistance to the system, and, despite sustained and forceful resistance during the apartheid era, there was an ongoing tension between the conformists, whose choice was to comply with the system (called ‘dissenters’ by dissident students), and the dissidents who refused to do so. Examples of these tensions and open conflict will be described separately, but at this point it is important to note that the grounds for conformity – as described by Femia⁷⁸⁵ – were not always clear. There were letters from older students employed by the Ciskei as civil servants whose motives are clearly those of expected gain, but there were many students who represented the family’s only possibility of escaping poverty and achieving a different social status, and who were pressurised by members of the family and community to focus on their studies.

Surveillance on campus

As described in Chapter Four, student protest against the Apartheid State’s takeover of Fort Hare was manifest during Ross’s first visit to the campus in 1959, in a display of hostility ascribed by the incoming Registrar to the influence of NUSAS.⁷⁸⁶ As a student organisation based on non-racialism, Du Preez was convinced that NUSAS had been infiltrated by communists who were using university students as a tool in order to undermine the State, an assessment that was widely shared in conservative White civil society. The paranoia around communist infiltration was prominent within the discourses of the apartheid era Rectors and is a common current in their confidential correspondence and personal files. This conviction that students were being used by infiltrators was the justification for introducing what was deemed by the State to be counter-surveillance, namely, the use of the security police, who established a network of informers among staff and students on campuses throughout South Africa.

The presence of the security police and of informers on campus had originated after the Apartheid State gained power in the 1950s, whilst Fort Hare was still under missionary

⁷⁸⁵ The first of Femia’s reasons, conformity under duress, is considered as a consciously unwilling motivation by the researcher and termed compliance, whilst the fourth, expectation of material gain, is consciously voluntary (Femia, 1981: 38 – 43).

⁷⁸⁶ After encounters with Ross, according to Du Preez, students would “go back to their White rabble-rousers for direction” (Du Preez, 1971: 3 – 5).

Administration, and has been described as a cause of tension and anger among students.⁷⁸⁷ The collaboration of the security police was praised by Du Preez, who observed that although they used to pay informers to obtain information whilst the missionary Administration was in place, after the apartheid takeover they were able to come on to the campus “with great stealth” so as not to be observed by the students. They also used to try and befriend students to obtain information, a tactic of which students were fully aware. Du Preez applauded the security police for their “*onskatbare waarde*” (priceless value) in surveillance at a time when Fort Hare was a “powder keg”, after having been “run by leftists who refused to let the police on campus”.⁷⁸⁸ The Special Branch of the police was indispensable to the Administration, and ran checks on all staff and students before they were admitted, as well as on visitors to campus. Du Preez remarked that the Special Branch “had their hands full investigating FEDSEM” and recalled that before the Administration had routed NUSAS and Church organisations, he had often clashed with “White troublemakers” and had to call Special Branch for help.⁷⁸⁹

Despite the involvement of the Security Police, the apartheid era Rectors took pains to emphasise that the police were not permitted on campus unless there was a threat to life and property.⁷⁹⁰ Due to the many student protests and strikes that took place, the police were frequently called to the campus, with the first such incident occurring under the missionary Administration in 1955.⁷⁹¹ However, instead of relying on the police to maintain control on campus, the apartheid era Administration relied on the effectiveness of campus security staff, or campus control, who embodied a coercive force. Their tendency towards thuggish behaviour and the apparent approbation thereof by De Goede was the cause of frequent complaints by

⁷⁸⁷ Williams, 2001: 218 – 219, 397 – 398.

⁷⁸⁸ Du Preez, 1971: 35.

⁷⁸⁹ Du Preez’s suspicions knew no bounds and he remembered, “I was often called at night to decide if undesirable visitors should be followed. I also often had to call security to warn a Rhodes student or lecturer. One became suspicious of every strange car” (Ibid., 34).

⁷⁹⁰ In response to accusations by external organisations, students, parents and the press subsequent to the frequent protests when police were called on the campus, the Rectors claimed repeatedly that the police were not allowed to enter the campus unless requested by the Rector to do so. There appear to have been many occasions on which a staff member would panic and call the police, violating this principle (Various memos and notes, Rectors’ files 1960 – 1990).

⁷⁹¹ See Chapter 4.

students during the 1980s. In response to a complaint by Mr Sigadi, the Dean of Students, Lamprecht was forced to write a stern letter to De Goede instructing him to bring to the watchmen's attention the fact that they were required to behave with courtesy at all times to students, warning that they "may not be assaulted".⁷⁹²

The strategy of the apartheid era Rectors for countering communism and anti-apartheid ideas was to prevent the contamination of student minds by preventing and prohibiting contact with anti-apartheid individuals or organisations, and, when this failed, to purge the campus by expelling dissident elements. Thus, invitations extended to Fort Hare students or requests to visit the campus from outside organisations had to pass through the Rector's hands. When these were considered of undesirable origin – which was more frequent than not – they were declined.⁷⁹³ Correspondence was courteous to the point of irony⁷⁹⁴ and the attempts by the apartheid era Rectors to prevent contact with those deemed to exert an undesirable influence was indicative of the authoritarian nature of the control exercised.⁷⁹⁵

⁷⁹² Letter from Lamprecht to De Goede dated 23 March 1988, Lamprecht files.

⁷⁹³ Requests were mainly from church and student organisations, ranging from community-based groups to high-profile anti-apartheid organisations and individuals overseas. Unless they were related to sport, all invitations extended to students, no matter how innocuous, were refused. One such example is a letter inviting choir members from Wesley House to participate in a Methodist Church Youth Rally in Duncan Village, leaving on Saturday afternoon and returning the same evening. It was rejected on the grounds that students needed to study (Undated letter, De Wet files).

⁷⁹⁴ The unfortunate H.M. Kentoni incurred De Wet's scorn when, as the new secretary of the non-racial United Christian Movement, which had recently been banned on Fort Hare campus, he requested permission to visit Fort Hare to promote the aims of the movement. De Wet wrote: "SCM is a prohibited organisation for Fort Hare students. One would have assumed that you knew this, but it appears you are a visitor to Jerusalem, who does not know the things that have happened in these days." (Letter dated 22 January 1970, De Wet files).

⁷⁹⁵ In his response to a 1969 letter from James Polley, a lecturer at Rhodes University, asking questions relating to the banning on certain organisations on campus, De Wet replied that he should mind his own business, reminding him of his intention, stated in the letter, not to interfere in the affairs of Fort Hare (Undated letter, De Wet files).

Undesirable organisations: NUSAS and FEDSEM

Following the assumption of control over Fort Hare by the Apartheid State in 1960, the first student protest in September 1960 had been caused by Ross banning NUSAS and refusing to allow three representatives of NUSAS to address students on campus. Although the strike was short-lived relative to protests during the 1970s and 1980s – lectures were suspended for only a few days – it led to the students disbanding the SRC pending the re-drafting of the constitution, which Ross refused to allow.⁷⁹⁶ Given the responsibilities assigned to the SRC of exercising control over the behaviour of their fellow students and organising club and social activities – as well as their most important role of serving as an intermediary between students and the Administration – it is understandable that their absence was regretted by De Wet, Ross's successor in 1969. He found his time absorbed by administrative processes relating to clubs and societies, and was compelled to hold dozens of individual and time-consuming meetings on mostly mundane matters. He was, nonetheless, wary of reinstating an SRC that would serve to channel student resistance against the Administration.

Barely a month after De Wet was installed as Rector in July 1968, he was asked for permission to allow a branch of the United Christian Movement (UCM), another non-racial organisation, to be formed on campus. Ross and Du Preez had kept a wary eye on their activities, having been alerted by the first issue of the UCM's bulletin proclaiming "contact, criticism, courage – these are the three elements that are necessary for the creation of a genuine revolutionary movement among South African students ... if the UCM is to be of any use at all it must be totally committed to student revolution".⁷⁹⁷ He refused to allow this and declared it a prohibited organisation, prompting a three-day boycott of lectures that culminated in students being given a warning to attend class or have their registration cancelled. After this warning was ignored, the police were called to escort 200 students (half the student body) off campus and to the Alice station, to be sent home by train.⁷⁹⁸

⁷⁹⁶ Minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee of Senate held 12 September 1960.

⁷⁹⁷ United Christian Movement Bulletin, July 1968, De Wet files.

⁷⁹⁸ Students were required to sign a declaration that they would abide by the rules in order to be readmitted, but unconfirmed reports stated that about 20 were not allowed to return (De Wet files; Lamprecht 1984: 55 – 61).

However, the UCM was active at the neighbouring Federal Theological Seminary, FEDSEM,⁷⁹⁹ where NUSAS was also welcome, with representatives giving anti-apartheid talks from time to time. FEDSEM hosted visitors from Britain who would openly denounce apartheid⁸⁰⁰ and also raised funds to defend students at Lovedale College – alongside Fort Hare – who had been accused of taking part in PAC activities in 1963. This convinced both Ross and De Wet that FEDSEM was a subversive influence.⁸⁰¹

On 21 June 1966 Ross appointed an ad-hoc committee to investigate the relations between Fort Hare and FEDSEM, including in the investigation the academic activities of FEDSEM. The committee concluded that FEDSEM had presented false grounds to the Department of Education in stating that its graduates would proceed to Fort Hare and had illegally (without the Department's permission) introduced its own qualifications. The Secretary of the Department of Bantu Education, J.H. van Dyk, wrote to FEDSEM on 23 May 1968 that “the seminary has failed to comply with the conditions which formed the basis of the concessions granted to it by Government at its conception”, that it had no permission to offer degrees and that it discouraged prospective students from studying at Fort Hare, “disclosing a tone which is not only uncooperative but in certain respects openly hostile towards the University of Fort

⁷⁹⁹ FEDSEM was established after the Anglican, Methodist and Presbyterian churches had in 1960 been ordered to leave the residences that formed their foothold at Fort Hare. They were granted permission to establish a multi-denominational seminary on ground adjoining Fort Hare, where the Federal Theological Seminary was formed in 1963, including the Congregationalists. The plan had been approved by the State on the basis of their stated aim of sending students to Fort Hare, but what transpired was that students registered with the University of London to study via correspondence, receiving tuition at FEDSEM (FEDSEM box, De Wet files).

⁸⁰⁰ In one memo written by Ross, the Anglicans and Congregationalists, who were often from overseas and were granted temporary visitors' visas, were accused of antagonistic political commentary (S.268 dated 21 June 1966, FEDSEM box, De Wet files).

⁸⁰¹ In 1963 the Anglican Church assisted in the legal defence of students accused of political activities and Father Stubbs collected funds to defend 19 Lovedale students accused of taking part in PAC activities. The Anglican contingent in FEDSEM was thus perceived as promoting communism by supporting the ANC and PAC, both of which were crudely considered as communist-infiltrated organisations and tools (FEDSEM box, De Wet files).

Hare”.⁸⁰² This marked the beginning of a six-year campaign embarked on by De Wet to have FEDSEM closed, a feat that was eventually achieved through the expropriation of its land for the expansion of the Fort Hare campus.⁸⁰³

In the meantime, the appointment by Prime Minister B.J. Vorster of the “Commission of Inquiry into certain organisations” in 1972,⁸⁰⁴ the Schlebusch Commission, whose aim was to report on the organisation and financing of NUSAS, UCM, the South African Institute of Race Relations (SAIRR) and the Christian Institute of South Africa (CISA), wrongly reflected the belief that these organisations were behind Black resistance. This confirmed De Wet’s belief of the appropriateness of banning NUSAS and the UCM from the Fort Hare campus, although despite the failure on the part of the State to investigate the role of SASO in organising Black student resistance, De Wet was keenly aware of their significance and presence on the Fort Hare campus, as will be shown.

SASO was banned in 1979 and was succeeded by the Azanian Students Organisation (AZASO), which adopted a non-racial position, whilst SASO went underground and continued to align itself to Black Consciousness movements such as the Black People’s Convention.⁸⁰⁵ Despite initially having reconciled themselves with the concept of Black Consciousness as able to be accommodated within the overarching scheme of ‘Separate Development’, the Rectors of Black universities were confronted with the militancy of Black student movements whose ideology was infused with that of MK and AZAPO, calling for armed struggle to overthrow apartheid.

⁸⁰² This was a reference to Reverend Gqubule, a Methodist preacher at FEDSEM who conducted services attended by Fort Hare students, having chastised students who remained on campus when others were boycotting classes.

⁸⁰³ The five boxes of dossiers and files of documents in the De Wet files relating to the expropriation of the land and buildings belonging to FEDSEM warrant further research into the arduously pursued process of eliminating this source of undesirable ideology through the forced removal of FEDSEM.

⁸⁰⁴ Government Gazette no. 1238 of 14 July 1972.

⁸⁰⁵ AZASO was to collaborate with ANC-aligned organisations such as the United Democratic Front (UDF) and the Congress of South African Students (COSAS). South African History online, AZASO (<http://www.sahistory.org.za/organisations/azanian-students-organisation-azaso>).

Student mass action: dissent, dissidents and dissenters

Notwithstanding the ongoing student resistance that was a hallmark of student life at Fort Hare, the convictions of Ross and De Wet in their own beliefs remained unshaken and indeed strengthened by what they considered as their duty, the elimination of dissent. Both firmly believed in the need for a student body with whom they could reason, and both were stymied by the repeated failure of students to organise within the parameters of compliance. The established pattern of student resistance over three decades became that of grievances being raised at a mass meeting, presented to and rejected by the University Administration, followed by warnings, ensuing protest and a police presence on campus, culminating in student arrests, mass expulsions, and subsequent requirements from the Administration to submit written apologies and undertakings to obey the rules, on which re-admission was conditional.⁸⁰⁶

Student protests offered the opportunity to exclude those who were judged as a subversive influence by virtue of their activities within Fort Hare as well as their membership of SASO or organisations that had been banned by the Apartheid State. Each student applicant was vetted by the security police prior to being admitted, and recommendations were made to De Wet on both first admission and readmission, subsequent to student strikes and mass expulsions.⁸⁰⁷ This continuous purging of the student body in an attempt to distil it into an ideologically compliant mass was continued by the third Rector, Lamprecht, after the Ciskei had been declared an independent State. During Lamprecht's rectorship, the flow of information was unsolicited and took place in the form of interventions by the Ciskei security police, who would arrest students suspected of being involved in anti-Ciskei activities. The student body at

⁸⁰⁶ See *Appendix D: Dates and nature of student protest*, for details of student protests and expulsions during this period.

⁸⁰⁷ This information appears in lists of students who have been identified as undesirable for admission by the security police in the De Wet files. Subsequent to the recurrent student protests in the 1970s, De Wet would request background information from the security police. It is revealing that, in the age before information technology enabled a rapid and easy transfer of information, the Special Branch was able to provide details for each student on their activities and those of their families throughout South Africa (political affiliation, meetings attended, membership of organisations, including religious).

this time was influenced by various ideologies originating from dissident banned political parties such as the ANC, PAC and the Azanian People's Organisation (AZAPO).⁸⁰⁸

However, within the student body there were also staunch supporters of the Ciskei regime, as well as a large number who were unwilling to participate in political activities and attempted to defy calls for boycotts and strikes. As a result, student dissent assumed a coercive form in order to consolidate and enforce resistance so as to present a united front against the Administration, as will be shown.

The strategy adopted by Ross in handling the first incident of student protest in September 1960, described earlier, was to serve as a blueprint for dealing with subsequent student protests. The cancellation of classes and requirement that students sign a declaration undertaking to abide by the University rules or have their registration cancelled had been sufficient a threat to deter students from continuing with the strike. On this occasion, Ross had gained the upper hand with ease, but this tactic was to be used with less success in the 1970s and 1980s, by which stage student leaders had become more militant and strategic, calling on students to leave campus rather than capitulate.

Dissent in the 1960s

Although Du Preez attributes Ross's ability to contain student protest to his "open door" policy, his experience in arguing legal cases – which presumably provided a solid technical background and technocratic logic that won him the upper hand in exchanges with students – and his calm manner of defusing tense situations.⁸⁰⁹

Nonetheless, it was not entirely due to Ross's persuasive abilities that student protest was relatively contained in the 1960s. The vigorous State repression in the early 1960s that had seen the arrest of Nelson Mandela and other leaders and the banning of the ANC, driving it underground, was reflected on the Fort Hare campus. In 1962, a petrol bomb was thrown

⁸⁰⁸ This emerges from pamphlets disseminated by these organisations and posted in residences and dining halls, later confiscated by campus control and handed to the Rector (Samples of confiscated pamphlets, De Wet and Lamprecht files).

⁸⁰⁹ Du Preez, 1971: 4.

through the bedroom window of a lecturer's house at Lovedale College and three first-year students were arrested, one of them from Fort Hare. One turned State witness and the Fort Hare student, Rex Lupondwana, was charged with sabotage and sentenced to five years in prison, with an additional three years for participating in ANC activities.⁸¹⁰ According to Du Preez, the state witness disclosed the names of his "*makkers*" (Afrikaans colloquialism for "sidekicks" or buddies) who had participated in clandestine ANC activities, after which there was a purge of leaders Seretse Choabi, Ebna Saule, Stephen Gawe and Edward Dladla.⁸¹¹ They were detained under the 90-day clause of the Prevention of Terrorism Act and finally Choabi and Saule were given sentences of three years, while Gawe and Dladla were given a sentence of one year's imprisonment.⁸¹²

Subsequent to Andrew Masondo's arrest in March 1963 on charges of sabotage for having attempted to saw down two electric pylons near Alice on 3 March 1963, three Lovedale carpentry students and six Fort Hare students were also taken into custody. While Masondo was sentenced to 15 years in prison, two of the Fort Hare students were sentenced to eight years each. Two other students accused of participating in PAC activities, M. Mdingi and N. Sidzamba,⁸¹³ were sentenced to six years each in prison, but after successfully appealing their sentences, left South Africa. Du Preez observed with satisfaction that this harsh punishment intimidated students, whilst also encouraging some to report on the activities of dissidents.⁸¹⁴ This had the effect of achieving submission for the duration of Ross's sojourn as Rector and of reinforcing divisions that were to persist.

⁸¹⁰ Du Preez, 1971: 29.

⁸¹¹ Ibid., 30.

⁸¹² Lamprecht, 1984: 52.

⁸¹³ The names of those arrested and the reasons recorded as responsible for the arrests in the Advisory Council agenda for 21 March 1963 differ from those provided by the Registrar (Du Preez, 1971: 30). The Advisory Council agenda notes that M. Mdingi was arrested, along with G. Vakala, in connection with the sabotage of the ESCOM power line (Lamprecht, 1984: 51), and not for PAC-related activities.

⁸¹⁴ Du Preez, 1971: 31 – 34.

Dissent in the 1970s

Ross's duty had been to lay the foundations for the provision of higher education on the basis of ethnicity in the 1960s, the decade during which political resistance had been suppressed by the imprisonment of ANC leaders. However, his successor, De Wet, became Rector when Black Consciousness was emerging as a strong unifying force based on a notion of racial solidarity, countering the attempted creation of ethnic identities by the Apartheid State.

When De Wet assumed office, students tested the waters by striking and boycotting classes, demanding that he attend a mass meeting with them. This he refused to do. Instead he followed Ross's example by holding a special Senate meeting and obtaining the consent of Senate, the Council and the Advisory Council to expel 294 students – almost two-thirds of the student body – from campus on 6 September. Three weeks later, 273 were re-admitted and 21 were refused re-admission, though they were allowed to write final examinations.⁸¹⁵ From this point onwards, De Wet began collecting evidence in the form of incriminating posters and notices, as well as making meticulous notes and recording protest events and participants, carrying out surveillance on campus that corresponded to that of the security police off campus. In a letter to H.J. van Zyl, the Secretary of the Department of Bantu Education, he provided the names of those who had been refused readmission as well as those who had not re-applied,⁸¹⁶ in this way contributing to the State data on persons involved in undesirable activities.

Student protest was fortified by the Black Consciousness disseminated by SASO that overcame other affiliations in its call for unified action against apartheid. Its effectiveness is exemplified in an undated letter signed "Soul-searching and Looking Ahead",⁸¹⁷ urging a boycott of the May University of Fort Hare autonomy celebrations, saying that "to be a student – a scholar – does not mean to be blind about other things but books, but to be a man [sic]. It is not some conformist act which makes a true student but participation in the struggle against mental blackout". The anonymous author referred to the "tardiness, apathy, non-commitment and outright opposition" in the student body, an attitude that was later to be dealt with by forcing students to participate in acts of student protest. In a similar vein a letter

⁸¹⁵ Questions in Parliament on 3 February 1969, De Wet files.

⁸¹⁶ Letter dated 12 February 1969, De Wet files.

⁸¹⁷ Undated letter among correspondence and papers from 1969 to 1970, De Wet files.

from “Morally Concerned” lamented the disbandment of the SRC 10 years previously and its replacement by a Cultural Committee, drawing attention to the promotion of ethnicism, saying “the trumpet summons...I leave [sic] beyond the bonds of sectionalism: I’m neither a MTEMBU nor a VERKRAMPT”,⁸¹⁸ and calling for action against the “common enemies of men: Tyranny, Dissent and Oppression” through a united stand by the student body.

De Wet’s single-minded commitment to apartheid rendered him oblivious to the protest articulated by students, and on one occasion offered his own justification, blaming disturbances on the lack of facilities (particularly sports), and overcrowding of residences and lecture venues, which “provide a breeding ground for grievances. In my opinion, students are more than justified if they complain about the lack of facilities”.⁸¹⁹

In that year, 1972, student protest had re-surfaced, with widespread demonstrations against Bantu Education and apartheid in general triggered by the expulsion of SASO leader Onkgopotse Abram Tiro from the Turfloop campus of the University of the North. The student boycotts of classes were followed by a warning from De Wet on 30 May that Senate had resolved that no legal or disciplinary action would be taken against students and all tests would be re-scheduled. The rejoinder to this overture was a long statement from the students on 7 June encompassing several issues, including the condemnation of apartheid and Fort Hare as part of the oppression, whilst accusing White staff of being racist and objecting to the use of the word “Bantu” and the use of Afrikaans as a medium of instruction. Black staff were condemned “for allowing themselves to be used as pawns to dilibitate [sic] the success of a joint cause and thus selling out the Black community”, as were students who participated in the system “with the belief they have something to lose [sic] in this apartheid-based Bantu institution of so-called Higher learning”. The statement ended with a call for students “to leave this Tribal University, to struggle all our lives until this corrupt Bantu Education is changed and Education is free for all”.⁸²⁰

⁸¹⁸ “*Mtembu*” denotes a tribal identity that the writer of the note rejects, and “*verkramp*” refers to the narrow-mindedness associated with conservative political views (Anonymous letter dated 24 March 1970, De Wet files).

⁸¹⁹ Summary of events dated 5 September 1972, De Wet files.

⁸²⁰ Students’ Manifesto dated 7 June 1972, De Wet files.

The subsequent campus protest – of which details were documented by Lamprecht⁸²¹ in his 1984 analysis of the causes of student protest at Fort Hare – culminated in the expulsion of 333 students, the largest number of students to have been sent home. The process of readmitting students was time-consuming and intensive, comprising a scrutiny of the reasons provided by each student for having boycotted classes, accompanied by information gleaned from wardens, lecturers and the security police. This almost annual purging of the student body was aimed at eliminating “*belhamels*” (ringleaders) who the Rectors considered to be “*uiters gevaarlik*” (extremely dangerous). De Wet blamed student protest on the fact that:

a group of persons outside the University ... with political and other sinister motives in mind. I cannot but regard these persons as enemies of the Black people, because by their actions they have ruined the academic careers of hundreds of Black students, at a time when the services of these students are indispensable to their development.⁸²²

The scale of the protest and the circumstances in which it had originated, namely, widespread student protest apparently organised by SASO, prompted the Fort Hare University Council to appoint a commission of enquiry⁸²³ headed by the Honourable Mr Justice G.G.A. Munnik, who was to become Chair of the Fort Hare Council between 1978 and 1990.⁸²⁴ Its terms of reference were to investigate student grievances, and it met four times over the course of several months, receiving and investigating evidence volunteered by two students and five staff members⁸²⁵ – by way of contrast with the far greater number who had provided evidence to the Duminy Commission in 1955.⁸²⁶ The two students identified various reasons, including De Wet’s “equivocal replies” to students, student expulsions, allegations of police

⁸²¹ Lamprecht, 1984: 61 – 67.

⁸²² Letter dated 13 September 1973, De Wet’s dossier on 1973 student protest, De Wet files.

⁸²³ Members of the commission included Professor J. Gerber of the Faculty of Education at Rhodes University (identified earlier as a member of the Broederbond), members of the Advisory Council drawn from the Ciskei and Transkei civil service Messrs H.Nabe, S.S. Guzana, R. Cingo and T.M. Mbambiso and Mr J.L.K. Heystek, an Afrikaner educationist (Lamprecht, 1984: 63).

⁸²⁴ Fort Hare Calendars 1978 – 1989 .

⁸²⁵ The Rector, Professor A. Coetzee, Dr Seretlo and Messrs J.W. Makhene and V.Z. Gitywa (Lamprecht, 1984: 63).

⁸²⁶ Approximately 70 students and staff had provided evidence to the Duminy Commission (Williams, 2001: 262).

harassment, the refusal of the Rector to address intimidation of students (by lecturers), an explanation of the composite fee, inadequate intramural facilities, poor quality of food, Black antagonism to apartheid, Fort Hare as a “launching pad” for Afrikaner academics, class tests, deliberate failing of students, the absence of an SRC and the lack of representation by Blacks on university bodies.⁸²⁷

The two students who provided evidence claimed that resistance to the establishment of an SRC on the part of rural students, referred to by the Administration and the Report as “*tuislanders*”, or homelander, was prompted by their being the minority. It was claimed that they feared being dominated by “*noordelike gevaar*”, or ‘northern danger’, a reference to the origin of students from the urban areas around Johannesburg, an explanation aligned to the emphasis of apartheid ideology on ethnic identity that was accepted by the Commission.⁸²⁸ The existence of these tensions is borne out by interviews conducted by Massey⁸²⁹ with alumni of Fort Hare, as well as by letters penned to various apartheid era Rectors by students in support of the Apartheid project. In Massey’s interviews, mainly with former student activists and dissidents, those referred to in the Report as the *noordelike gevaar*, children of working class parents with radical views, were identified as *abaKaringes*, or rebels, whilst *abaThembus* were children of the conservative rural petty bourgeoisie in the Eastern Cape, many of whom had received a missionary education.

Unsurprisingly, the Commission’s findings were that there was no truth in most of the allegations. The Report denied a police presence on campus or staff victimisation of students. It did, however, acknowledge the lack of Black representation and recommended the appointment of an African Dean of students who had the trust and respect of students. Furthermore, it recommended that attempts to resuscitate an SRC be abandoned in favour of the utilisation of a neutral student body like the athletic union, which was the nucleus of a

⁸²⁷ 1972 Report of Commission of Enquiry appointed by Council of the University of Fort Hare into student unrest in May 1972.

⁸²⁸ Ibid.

⁸²⁹ Massey, 2010: 206 – 210.

wider body, to represent students. Finally, mass meetings, the site of instigation, should be reduced to the “bare minimum”.⁸³⁰

Despite the recommendation against the establishment of an SRC, De Wet was set on the establishment of an intermediary student body with whom he could liaise, as indicated earlier. The SRC was duly re-established in 1976 on the explicit undertaking that it cooperate with the Administration – more specifically, the Rector – but it was treated with hostility from non-conformist students, who accused the SRC President, W.D.M. Memani, of being a “goeie [good] Bantu” who was a “diplomatic sell-out”.⁸³¹

Whilst the protests outlined above have offered examples of the nature of student resistance and the manner in which the Administration responded, it must be noted that protests continued almost annually for the next 20 years,⁸³² with the division between conformist and dissident students becoming clearer, as will be illustrated shortly. At this point, a diversion will be made to examine briefly the relationship between conformist Black staff and students.

Student action against staff collaborators

Most of the student accusations of collaboration on the part of staff were directed at Black house wardens, who were responsible for orderly behaviour and were required to function as a mechanism of control, part of which involved passing on information about disruptive students. For this reason, they had been denounced as “mouthpieces of the administration” by SASO,⁸³³ and the duality of their role compromised their relationship with students. Sub-wardens were senior students and were even more conscious of the contradictory nature of

⁸³⁰ 1972 Report of Commission of Enquiry appointed by Council of the University of Fort Hare into student unrest in May 1972.

⁸³¹ This occurred after the 1976 campus closure between August and October. At a mass meeting on 6 October students resolved to complete the year, the SRC was instructed to negotiate for readmission of students excluded for non-payment of fees, and a resolution was taken that arsonists would be dealt with. This collaborative stance prompted threats from the dissident faction in the form of notices posted that if Memani did not resign, there would be violent protest (Rector’s notes, student posters, De Wet files).

⁸³² See *Appendix D: Dates and nature of student protest*, for dates and causes of protest.

⁸³³ SASO Fact Sheet 3 (Problems 1973, Persoonlike Lëer, De Wet files).

their role and the way in which it exposed them to student hostility, as captured in the following extract from a letter to Lamprecht:

The action of each and every sub-warden is being watched carefully during times of unrest, and that meant that I had to exercise extra care of each and every step I take so as to save myself ... The students usually consider sub-wardens as people furthering the aim and objects of the university in matters that students regard as directed or unfavourable towards them.⁸³⁴

Student suspicions concerning surveillance by wardens were confirmed when hundreds of students who were sent off campus in September 1973 – following protests in which another warden, Mr Makunga, was the catalyst – were not re-admitted, primarily on the basis of information provided by wardens. A note on De Wet’s control list containing the names of all students who were refused readmission reads “NB 1. The names of all former students and 1973 students applying for admission in 1974 were submitted to the Bureau of State Security and the Special Branch for their investigation and comment.” Alongside the list of names are columns for comments by the security police and the grounds for refusing readmission. Few were refused readmission on the basis of information provided by the police: nearly all were “considered undesirable by warden”, indicating the power exerted by wardens and the extent to which they were complicit in surveillance and in enforcing compliance.⁸³⁵

⁸³⁴ Undated letter from sub-warden M.A. Mbangata requesting re-admission after the mass expulsions in July 1982, De Wet files.

⁸³⁵ The “*Hertoelating*”, or “Readmissions” dossier in the De Wet files contains details of students re-admitted in 1974 after re-application; entry was refused on academic grounds for missing too many lectures, although the lists were divided into different categories providing the real reasons. Category 1 students were refused re-admission because of “taking a leading role”, and of the 51 who were suspended for taking a leading role, the number whose applications for readmission were refused was 13 (though some did not re-apply). Category 2 was those who had boycotted lectures, of whom 97 were refused readmission. Only one in category 2 (A.B.C. Hintso) was denied on grounds of being “Leftist, anti-White, member of SASO, BPC and Transkei Youth League” and another (T.V. Matika) was “not recommended by the Bureau of State Security and Special Branch”. Others were considered undesirable because they had participated in meetings, organised meetings, been rude to wardens or Whites elsewhere. In the file is a list of all students who had requested admission who belonged to SASO, with details of their addresses and all meetings attended, indicative of the extent of infiltration and surveillance by the State. Of the total 661 students who applied for readmission in 1974, by 25

Apart from the contribution of wardens to the atmosphere of mistrust, it was the extra-mural activities of some White staff members, through their voluntary participation in nocturnal campus patrols, that most exacerbated tensions on campus. This had been an occasional practice by Black and White staff during times of heightened tension in the 1950s, but under the apartheid era Administration it assumed a vigilante form, with some White staff eagerly patrolling campus on a regular basis. This practice also compromised the position of Black staff members who would encounter vigilante White staff members in the course of their duties and have to treat them as though there was nothing extraordinary about their nocturnal escapades. The ambivalence of the role of academic staff in mentoring students whilst observing their behaviour and passing on information about anything deemed suspicious to the Administration, illustrates the element of agency in Femia's first reason for conformity, that is, duress. However, passing on information was certainly also motivated by agreement with basic ideological principles, the third of Femia's motives for conformity.⁸³⁶

Student ambivalence – dissidents and dissenters

As indicated earlier, the student body was divided in its response to apartheid and while most students disagreed with its aims and principles, they were reluctant to participate in activities for fear of possible negative repercussions. These displayed the reason for conformity as being the fear of negative consequences, Femia's first reason for conformity.⁸³⁷ Examples are provided in the letters that expelled students would be compelled to submit in the aftermath of student protest, motivating for re-admission. There were always many appeals for clemency based on an alleged fear of victimisation as the reason for having participated in

January 1974 only 387 had been re-admitted. At the same time, of new applications for 1974, a total of 18 were not recommended by BOSS and SB. In the same admissions dossier is a letter from the Principal (Mr Ndandani) of a Gugulethu High School stating that he did not support the application of a certain Mr Sidika, who was a member of SASO, illustrative of the collaboration and complicity in Black civil society. Also in file are typed lists – some on South African Police letterhead, others with no indication of the origin, but marked “confidential” for the attention of De Wet – of students who were listed as members of SASO or BPC or other undesirable organisations, including Church organisations (*Hertoelating dossier*, De Wet files).

⁸³⁶ Femia, 1981: 38 – 43.

⁸³⁷ Ibid.

protest. The De Wet files contain letters from students, their parents and sub-wardens, ascribing their actions to “cold fear”, claiming that they had been “overcome by fear for my safety”, or that “nobody could refuse to comply” for fear of a “mass controlled by impulses”.⁸³⁸ At the same time, dissenters submitted anonymous letters to the Administration identifying particular students of having master-minded the protests, with most pointing to SASO as the leading force behind the boycotts.

Others, those who had already benefited from the system, exhibited Femia’s fourth reason for conformity.⁸³⁹ An example is provided by an anonymous letter received by Lamprecht from an older part-time student, the Principal of a Zwelitsha school, telling him to “Forget these young people – they think that they can tell everybody how to run the world ... most students are against the SRC and these stayaways. They are at University for an important purpose, to get their education”.⁸⁴⁰

Some, determined to complete their studies and progress within the parameters of Apartheid, were defiant of the dissidents. A letter signed “Faithful student”, written by a “dissenter” who had remained on campus in 1982 after the SRC call for all to leave, wrote “May God help and protect you ... a true, powerful and constant leader. We’re in a university, not a state of chaos and confusion caused by aimless, crazy, confused elements.”⁸⁴¹

The division within the student body was manifest in physical as well as verbal attacks. In the context of intense resistance vis-à-vis conformity, passivity often prevented dissidents from claiming majority support, so that the tactic adopted was to enforce participation by those unwilling to do so. Those defying the call to boycott lectures would be chased out of lecture halls and the library, pelted with stones and bricks, attacked with sticks, and threatened with various forms of punishment. The invariable recourse by the Administration to the support of

⁸³⁸ Excerpts from letters in the De Wet files on the 1972 and 1973 student protests.

⁸³⁹ The fourth reason is the expectation of reciprocity (Femia, 1981: 38 – 43).

⁸⁴⁰ Anonymous letter dated 11 September 1986, Lamprecht files.

⁸⁴¹ Anonymous letter dated 29 July 1982, Lamprecht files.

the police and the evacuation of men's residences where dissidents were suspected of organising protest would generally lead to students submitting to calls to leave campus.⁸⁴²

Whilst dissident students were putting up notices calling for resistance against apartheid and the University Administration, dissenters responded by urging students not to follow their lead. The SRC was implicated in the "disciplining" of dissenters and was seen by dissenters as responsible for intimidation, as evident in a notice posted in a women's residence, Ezola, urging students to go back to class because "They [SRC] make personal decisions and allege that they are mass decisions".⁸⁴³ A letter to the Rector stated that "those who had written tests and failed were intimidating if not forcing others to join ... The Rector really saved the 'dissenters' who would be victims throughout the year".⁸⁴⁴

To these accusations, the dissidents responded with the threat:

Some of our fellow students have taken it upon themselves to identify themselves as Lamprecht's collaborators by defying. All betrayers will feel the harshness of their deeds ... we are calling for a mass action against dissidents ... The library and lecture halls are still out of bounds. Anybody who does not abide by this condition will be declared an enemy of the student body.⁸⁴⁵

This confrontation continued unabated during the 1980s, but, as we have seen, 1986 was a watershed year in South Africa and in the face of intensified resistance to apartheid, a general State of Emergency had been declared. On the Fort Hare campus, tensions were brought to a head when backing to dissident students was provided by Black workers who had previously remained uninvolved. The united front they presented managed to consolidate resistance, as will be described below.

⁸⁴² See *Appendix D: Dates and nature of student protest*, for a summary of student protest between 1936 and 1989.

⁸⁴³ Poster filed in Lamprecht's 1986 diary, Lamprecht files.

⁸⁴⁴ Anonymous letter dated 3 August 1982, Lamprecht files.

⁸⁴⁵ Notice recorded by campus security as found in Tyhali (a men's residence) at 04h55 on 10 August 1986. Lamprecht's 1986 diary, Lamprecht files.

Students and workers combine forces

Whilst the Vista University Act of 1981 and the Staffing Act of 1985, referred to previously, had secured the future of academic and administrative staff by allowing for the secondment of staff to institutions in Black areas, the future of the more than 1,000 unskilled and semi-skilled Black workers, including farm labourers, was uncertain. Coinciding with the rising tide of union-based resistance and the increasingly strident demands emanating from workers throughout South Africa, Fort Hare workers had demanded some form of representation, and on 2 February 1986 the Council had agreed to the establishment of a “Wage-earners liaison committee”. This proposal was rejected by workers and the latent discontent emerged as an active strike that lasted for nearly three weeks from 3 until 20 March.⁸⁴⁶ Due to the ease with which they were able to be replaced – with White staff in many cases performing manual labour such as milking the dairy herd – the strike did not achieve much. However, in its aftermath, the unrecognised Fort Hare Workers Union was formed, and this point marked the beginning of collaborative protest against the Administration by workers and students. Lamprecht observed that “this year for the first time we have experienced considerable unrest among workers and I regret to say that the attitude of students as expressed through their leaders, the SRC, has been aggressive if not hostile”.⁸⁴⁷

The first united action was in the form of a stayaway and boycott of lectures on 1 May 1986 in solidarity with union mass action throughout South Africa. Protest was “unusually violent”⁸⁴⁸ and those who displayed resistance were chased out of class by students wielding bricks and iron bars. Car tyres were slashed, televisions in residence lounges burned, windows broken, trucks stoned and security guards attacked, whilst at union meetings, tyres were held aloft to warn dissenters.⁸⁴⁹ The response on the part of the Administration had been to call in the police, who had fired rubber bullets and tear gas at students, and, following the usual pattern, students were expelled from the campus. Fort Hare was closed from 3 – 19 May, allowing students to return to write exams and then closing again on 13 June. By 6 May, students had attended only 12 of a total of 32 days’ lectures and Lamprecht conceded

⁸⁴⁶ Report to Council on student and worker stayaways, R/55/86 of 2 May 1986, Lamprecht files.

⁸⁴⁷ Memo from Lamprecht to Fort Hare Foundation dated 26 August 1986, Lamprecht files.

⁸⁴⁸ Report to Council on student and worker stayaways, R/55/86 of 2 May 1986, Lamprecht files.

⁸⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 3.

that “it is obvious that order is breaking down on campus” as manifest by “intermittent violence, lawlessness, disregard for authority”.⁸⁵⁰

Yet the second semester was to prove even more disruptive, with class boycotts starting at the end of July, shortly after students had returned to class. Buildings were stoned and set alight, and protest continued almost unabated until the end of August, when Lamprecht wrote a letter to parents stating that unless students returned to class, disciplinary action would be taken.⁸⁵¹ On the same day a memo was sent to all staff instructing them to take attendance registers and do headcounts, and submit this information to Faculty Administrative Officers for relaying to his office. Lamprecht also began planning a mass expulsion by getting information on trains to Port Elizabeth and Johannesburg. The customary to-and-fro of accusations of victimisation and harassment and counter-accusations of irresponsibility and disorderliness between students and management continued, complicated in this instance by the workers’ stayaway. Unable to exercise control over the workers, Lamprecht obtained a court order forcing 1,300 workers back to work.⁸⁵²

Lamprecht also consulted the attorneys Fort Hare relied on for all matters, Hutton and Cook of King Williams Town, requesting advice on how to deal with the striking student. Duly instructed, he wrote a letter to the SRC president, prohibiting him and the other 22 SRC members from entering the campus, then suspended the SRC.⁸⁵³ The SRC responded by distributing notices through insider contacts accusing management of trying to divide the student body and calling on them to continue the struggle.⁸⁵⁴

⁸⁵⁰ Report to Council on student and worker stayaways, R/55/86 of 2 May 1986, 4. Lamprecht files.

⁸⁵¹ Letter dated 25 August 1986, Lamprecht files.

⁸⁵² Details in telex messages sent to Director-General of Special Assignments in the Department of Education and Training dated 29 August and 3 September 1986, Lamprecht files.

⁸⁵³ Letter dated 2 September 1986 from Lamprecht to SRC president P.K. Mankahlana, Lamprecht files.

⁸⁵⁴ This incident illustrates the close collaboration between the University Administration and the security police. Campus security would mark the time, date and venue where posters were found and hand them to Lamprecht, who would act on them and file them in his personal diary of events. On one notice, Lamprecht noted that the original had been found by security police at Arnold Stofile’s house

The student exodus began mid-September as posters warned dissenters:

Failure to respond to this legitimate and well-considered call renders any defaulter as an unrehabilitated, blatant criminal deserving purification ... we realise the futility of threats devoid of serious action and therefore resolve to
1. purify homes to exterminate the virus at grassroots level 2. A happy revolutionary welcome at your respective stations. VIVA NECKLACE!!!!⁸⁵⁵ ASIJIKI!!!!⁸⁵⁶

Women students on their way to class were attacked and two petrol bombs were thrown into a classroom, an incident that led to the arrest of four students.⁸⁵⁷ Despite the scale and intensity of violence throughout the campus, Lamprecht issued a statement to the press asserting that the campus would not close,⁸⁵⁸ followed by a telex to the Director General of Special Assignments a week later reassuring him that academic activities were ensuing normally. He did, however, estimate that half the student body had left the campus, and confirmed that the University had received its first bomb threat, which had turned out to be a hoax. This situation must have alarmed the Director General of the University and Technikon Division of the Department of Education and Training, because he sent an urgent request for information. Lamprecht dispatched a telex to the effect that the situation was under control: a total of 3,192 students had been registered and examinations would be held at the usual time, although 20% more teaching days had been lost than the previous year.⁸⁵⁹ He noted that the 767 part-time students at Zwelitsha and the 250 nursing students on the Mdantsane campus had been unaffected by the student protest. This was an indication of both how localised the resistance was and the conformist tendency among those employed as civil servants in the

and handed to campus control, headed by Mr Venter, who worked closely with the Deputy Registrar Administration, Mr De Goede (Undated note, Lamprecht files).

⁸⁵⁵ “Necklace” refers to the method by which suspected informers were killed, by placing a rubber tyre around the victim’s neck, pouring petrol over it and setting it alight.

⁸⁵⁶ “*Asijiki*” is an isiXhosa expression meaning “We are not turning back” (Poster dated 30 September in Lamprecht’s 1986 diary, Lamprecht files).

⁸⁵⁷ Details in telex message sent to Director-General of Special Assignments in the Department of Education and Training dated 2 October 1986, Lamprecht files.

⁸⁵⁸ Letters and press statements dated 3 October 1987, Lamprecht files.

⁸⁵⁹ Telex message dated 17 October 1996, Lamprecht files.

King Williams Town area, and among nursing students. It appears that nursing students on the Mdantsane campus – part of the Ciskei – did not participate in strikes.⁸⁶⁰

By then, October was over, examinations were underway, and Lamprecht knew that for the remainder of the year there would be no further disturbances. The respite was, of course, temporary, and in 1987 protests and strikes resumed with renewed vigour, illustrative of the solidarity that had developed between worker unions and the South African Students Congress (SASCO), the Fort Hare branch of the Black student organisation that had succeeded the broad-based SASO in September 1991.⁸⁶¹

However, there was a palpable change to the atmosphere on campus after 11 February 1989, when De Klerk announced that negotiations would begin for the release of Nelson Mandela. At this stage, those White members of staff, both administrative and academic, who had clung resolutely to the hope that calm would return once those whom they perceived as ‘agitators’ and ‘instigators’ had been dealt with, were confronted with the prospect of receiving instruction from and being ruled by Black leaders, at Fort Hare and in broader society. The Vice-Rector, Dermott Moore, responded to this possibility by developing a new Academic Plan, outlining a future organogram that incorporated more Black staff members in senior posts and included as critical planning factors the needs of the Ciskei, government policies, community expectations and the influence of political pressure groups.⁸⁶² This was not distributed, and many White staff began looking for posts elsewhere, presumably fearing their future prospects under a Black Rector.⁸⁶³

⁸⁶⁰ Their compliance can presumably be attributed to the fact that they did not wish to be barred from joining the South African Nursing Association, the professional body of which all nurses had to be members in order to find formal employment.

⁸⁶¹ SASCO was the result of a merger of NUSAS and the South African National Student Congress (SANSCO). SANSCO had developed out of AZASO, the Azanian Students Organisation, formed in 1979 after SASO was banned.

⁸⁶² Draft Academic Plan in the Lamprecht files, 1989.

⁸⁶³ Interview with Geoffrey Antrobus on 12 July 2011.

1990 Ciskei coup d'état and the formal exit of the apartheid era Administration

However, change at Fort Hare came unexpectedly, shortly after Nelson Mandela's release from prison on 2 February 1990. This event possibly served as a catalyst for the actions of a group of officers in the Ciskeian Defence Force, who, prompted by the widespread dislike of Sebe, seized the opportunity of his absence on a trip to Japan to stage a bloodless coup. On 4 March 1990, Brigadier Oupa Gqozo was installed as the new head of the Ciskei State.⁸⁶⁴

Gqozo's decision to release political prisoners, disband the Elite Unit (a hit squad that had terrorized Ciskeians), draft a new constitution and bill of rights and allow all political parties and trade unions to conduct their activities openly, augured well for the future.⁸⁶⁵ Responding to this fortuitous sequence of events, the Black Staff Association, which had renamed itself the Democratic Staff Association (DSA), requested his intervention on the issue of a White Administration at Fort Hare. In response, Gqozo summoned the Rector, Vice-Rector, Registrars and members of the DSA to the Ciskei Chamber to discuss the future of the University. Though Gqozo made it clear at the outset that he believed more Black staff were needed in senior posts, he announced that, in the "spirit of oneness", a representative from each side should state its case. Lamprecht proposed stepping down to allow a new Rector to assume his post and suggested that plans for affirmative appointments should be put in place. His next step was to request the withdrawal of his secondment from Fort Hare and on 20 March he tendered his resignation to the University Council. This action was followed by calls for all members of senior management to step down, prompting a crisis Council meeting in Cape Town on 24 March, with Professor R. Seretlo as interim Rector.⁸⁶⁶

These circumstances created consternation among White staff, who held a meeting on 26 March in Fort Beaufort, just outside the Ciskei. They were addressed by a representative from the Department of Education and Training, they were reassured that Gqozo was not insisting on the immediate installation of Black management, and that their choices were to stay, request de-secondment, or resign.⁸⁶⁷ Dr Meiring, Deputy Director General of the Department

⁸⁶⁴ Colin Stewart White, 2008: 42 – 43.

⁸⁶⁵ Ibid., 53.

⁸⁶⁶ Interview with Geoffrey Antrobus on 12 July 2011.

⁸⁶⁷ Copy of minutes of meeting in the Lamprecht files.

of Education and Training, asked Lamprecht to remain until June 1991, when he would be 60 years old.⁸⁶⁸ In response, Lamprecht wrote to Mr Heath, counsellor to the South African Ambassador in King Williams Town, withdrawing his resignation.⁸⁶⁹ However, the following week, just before the long Easter weekend, a message was given to the six White members of senior management by an insider from campus security that they would be marched off campus the following day. This caused all to put in leave for the next few days, with five of them never to return.⁸⁷⁰ On Tuesday 17 April, after the Easter weekend, at a Senate meeting chaired by Seretlo, the DSA called for the Rector to be suspended. However, they would not accept Seretlo as Acting Rector, requesting instead that Dr Brian Gardner, in the Faculty of Business Management, assume the interim responsibilities. Ironically, Gardner had tendered his resignation to accept a post at the University of Zululand, but he was persuaded to stay on until the next Rector was appointed.⁸⁷¹

In the resulting confusion and chaos of the next few weeks, characterised by looting and trashing of the campus by students and workers and the occupation of offices and lecture venues, the South African army was called in to camp on the Fort Hare farm.⁸⁷² This sent a menacing signal of intent that exacerbated the tensions on campus. However, work resumed and students returned to classes, albeit in a volatile atmosphere interrupted by frequent strikes and disturbances. There was one significant difference: a visible shift in the locus of power. A new University Council had been constituted, with members nominated by the DSA,

⁸⁶⁸ Letters in Lamprecht's 1990 personal file, Lamprecht files.

⁸⁶⁹ Letter from John Lamprecht to Mr Heath dated 5 April 1990, Lamprecht files.

⁸⁷⁰ The Rector, Vice-Rector, and all Registrars except for the Academic Registrar, Geoffrey Antrobus, subsequently handed in requests for de-secondment and withdrawal from Fort Hare (Interview with Geoffrey Antrobus on 12 July 2011). Lamprecht and Moore were given study leave, and De Goede, Slabbert and Faure were given sick leave until the end of May, prior to their withdrawals becoming effective (Letter from Mrs du Plessis, accountant for salaries and wages, to Mr G. Zide, Acting Registrar Administration, dated 30 May 1990, Lamprecht files).

⁸⁷¹ Letter from Brian Gardner to Lamprecht dated 8 March 1990, Lamprecht files.

⁸⁷² This could have been due to the connections of the Chair of the Fort Hare Council, Justice Munnik, to the military. Ironically, Munnik was the last person to be awarded an honorary doctorate in Law by the apartheid era Administration in 1989 (Interview with Geoffrey Antrobus on 12 July 2011).

making it the first body elected by Black citizens to represent the “new South Africa”.⁸⁷³ The era of White administration at Fort Hare had been definitively terminated, and from then onwards, decision-making power would rest in the hands of a Black Administration.

Analysis: control, compliance and conformity under the apartheid era Administration

In this chapter, it has been shown how the political organisation of the State was reflected and transmitted through the University Administration. The authoritarian nature of the Apartheid State inclined towards domination, rather than engaging in activities aimed at cultivating the consent of the masses in Black civil society. Whereas the exercise of hegemony involves a range of activities aimed at “saturating the consciousness of a society”⁸⁷⁴ in order to secure a general support for the State, the authoritarian State solicits the consent of a strategically important section of society and eradicates dissent where it is encountered. This tendency was replicated in the University Administration during the apartheid era, with varying effects.

Among White staff, the general response was shown to be conformity, whilst the often ambivalent behaviour of Black students and staff can be understood within the context of attempts by the subaltern to overcome their domination.⁸⁷⁵ Outright resistance of the system is both the spontaneous and the considered reaction of those situated themselves at the periphery of society who are subjected to exclusion and domination. However, where opportunities are perceived to result from conformity and compliance, the choice between accepting or rejecting prospects through conforming or contesting the system is more complex and produces diverse responses, as has been shown.

All four of Femia’s reasons for conformity⁸⁷⁶ were illustrated: among White academic and administrative staff in general and the Rectors, it was manifest in either conscious conformity

⁸⁷³ Council members included Govan Mbeki and Desmond Tutu. Francis Wilson was elected as Chair on the basis of “ancestral grounds”: his mother had been a Fort Hare lecturer, and he had been born in Lovedale, where he lived as a boy (Interview with Francis Wilson on 30 July 2011).

⁸⁷⁴ Williams, 1980: 37.

⁸⁷⁵ See Chapters Two and Four for references to, *inter alia*, the analyses of Jackson Lears (1985) and Bocock (1986).

⁸⁷⁶ Femia, 1981: 38 – 43.

(compliance) or an unreflecting acceptance of the dominant values. As part of the former, namely conscious agreement with basic principles, many Whites believed that they were contributing to the future development of the Ciskei republic and its citizens through the provision of higher education.⁸⁷⁷ Fear of the repercussions of non-conformity as well as expectations of gain, explain the behaviour of Black staff members, who were assured of a post if they submitted themselves to the Apartheid project. As testimony to the deeply rooted nature of domination, few staff, Black or White, actively contested the political function of Fort Hare in the domination of Black society.

The complexity of that section of subaltern society constituted by students was evident in the different ways in which conformity, compliance or contestation was demonstrated. It was shown that the same conformity present in staff was also manifest among some students, who were fearful of the repercussions of rebelling as well as of sacrificing potential gains to be made within the system. However, the more conspicuous behaviour, by virtue of the form it took, was contestation. Dissidents organised the student body to challenge the University Administration and the authority of the University, also having recourse to coercion to ensure compliance by students. It emerged that the student body experienced coercion emanating from the University Administration and the dissidents, resulting in a tendency towards behaviour resulting from decisions taken at mass meetings called by student leaders. The existence of anonymous letters from students, both opposing and supporting apartheid, is testimony to the ethos of fear and the reluctance to be identified as a non-conformist.

The transient nature of student leadership, due to the finite period for which students are able to be present on campuses, is a deterrent to the sustainability of the organisation of resistance. However, once dissident students had formed alliances with the large contingent of workers

⁸⁷⁷ In Clive Millar's unpublished memoir of the time spent at Fort Hare during 1975 – 1978 as a lecturer in the Education Faculty, he observes that most staff believed that they were providing upliftment to Blacks through higher education, and recalls that: "I was attacked in Senate for saying that the University had a political function." He himself was undeceived of his ideals concerning his relevance when a student he knew well told him that he was complicating the situation, saying that as part of the problem, he could not be part of the solution. Millar recalls: "This was my introduction to Steve Biko. I took his words to heart. This was not what I wanted to hear. It was time to get out." (Clive Millar, 2011).

who were able to offer resistance of a different nature through striking, the power of the University Administration was eroded. This was due to both the sheer numerical strength of the combined forces of students and workers, and the fact that workers could not be expelled from campus and sent home for an extended period of time. A more tenacious resistance was displayed as workers became aware of their strategic significance. It was workers' demands and labour disputes that would assume the bulk of the post-apartheid Black Administration's time and energy for a great deal of the 1990s, as will be seen in Chapter Six.

Chapter Six: The post-apartheid State and society: the absence of ideology

As in previous chapters, in this Chapter the political economy of the State will provide the overarching context. The transition from the bureaucratic authoritarian to the post-apartheid expression of the State will be outlined through an illustration of the formal reintegration of South Africa in the global political economy during the 1990s.

In previous chapters, we have seen that in the first half of twentieth century South Africa, the weakness of the State was evident in the existence of fragile and volatile ‘pacts’ between political parties and factions of the national bourgeoisie in the minority White society. After having accomplished the objective of gaining State power on the basis of its broad appeal to the White electorate – obtained through providing political and material privileges mid-way through the century – the Afrikaner nationalist State pursued particular ideological and political goals in the implementation of its hegemonic Apartheid project.

The non-violent transition from a bureaucratic authoritarian State to one brought to power on the basis of a non-racial franchise will be examined according to the Gramscian notion of a “passive revolution”.⁸⁷⁸ During the transition phase, an interim arrangement of a ‘caretaking’ government, the Transitional Executive Council, was charged with presiding over the State. It consisted of representatives of the outgoing Apartheid State and the ANC, which was sure to gain power over the State in the first democratic elections. In an almost classical text-book depiction of a passive revolution, power was handed over to new members of political society with limited changes in existing social relations. It will be argued that, irrespective of the absence of an economic class base, the incoming political elite was coopted politically and ideologically by the existing national bourgeoisie, in alliance with powerful transnational interests. As a result, it failed to develop a hegemonic project according to which social transformation would be carried forward.

⁸⁷⁸ In this situation, rather than a revolution that transforms social relations of production, reforms are put through to safeguard the interests of the dominant group (in this case, transnational financial capital), and the existing State “leads” the group that should have been leading, thereby absorbing them and pre-empting fundamental change (Gramsci. In Hoare and Nowell Smith, 1971: 59, 105, 115).

The definitive difference between the Apartheid and the post-apartheid State, in terms of securing and maintaining power, relates to the racially exclusive hegemonic project of the former, and the absence of ideological clarity on the part of the latter. The hegemonic project of the Apartheid State had been crafted by the organic intellectuals of the Afrikaner-based National Party before it assumed control of the State in 1948; however, the ANC, banned as a political party, had focused on overthrowing the Apartheid State. Members of its army in exile, Umkhonto we Sizwe, trained in Russia, subscribed to socialist ideology; its organic intellectuals in exile, scattered around the globe in African, European and North American cities, articulated liberal principles based on human rights, and were careful to elicit support by avoiding radical political doctrine that might offend supporters and patrons. United in opposition to the Apartheid State, the ANC encompassed a range of political ideologies and did not develop a coherent hegemonic strategy to be executed after the abolition of apartheid.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1989, the global political economy experienced a transitory limbo in terms of the absence of tension between communist and neoliberal ideologies. The ideological vacuum that remained in Eastern Europe was rapidly penetrated by neoliberal values accompanying the disintegration of the Eastern bloc, and Fukuyama triumphantly proclaimed the end of the history of ideology,⁸⁷⁹ referring to the demise of a global force in the form of an oppositional ideology.

Following the release of Nelson Mandela from prison on Robben Island the following year, the rounds of multi-party negotiations towards the transition to Black majority rule took place within the ideological context of the by now globally dominant neoliberalism. Several factors were to facilitate the insertion of neoliberal values, policies and practices into political discourses and to encourage their adoption by the post-apartheid State after 1994. Firstly, the incoming State lacked any independent economic base: the only way to secure this would be to nationalize strategic resources and industries. To do this, it would require the support not only of the masses in civil society, but also strategic international allies. Secondly, senior members of the ANC were divided in their political outlooks, and thirdly, having operated in exile for thirty years, the ANC had not developed a coherent hegemonic project on the basis of which the party could govern.

⁸⁷⁹ Francis Fukuyama, 1993.

Consultants and advisers from transnational institutions such as the World Bank and International Monetary Foundation hovered in the background of the negotiations, and strongly influenced the policy framework and parameters within which social change was to occur in post-apartheid South Africa. Lacking a clear ideological position or coherent governing strategy, the ideological pressure from transnational sources was to compound the difficulty of the ANC in developing plans for post-apartheid social transformation.

In terms of the exercise of cultural hegemony, the most immediate change in the relationship between the State and the University will be shown to have been the rupture in March 1990 of the previously close linkages between the Fort Hare Administration and the State. As we will see, the instalment of Black senior Administrators at Fort Hare in 1990 pre-dated the first democratically elected Parliament. Between March 1990 and April 1994, the date of the first democratic elections, the new University Administration received no directives from the State, although the new Vice-Chancellor, Professor Sibusiso Bengu, was close to senior members of the ANC. Beyond the change in its senior Administration and other management positions, and despite the tensions relating to the competition for power within the institution, there was no substantive change at Fort Hare. Academic structures and curricula remained the same, as though awaiting further directives.

By the mid-1990s, we will see that the post-apartheid State had laid claim to the University of Fort Hare as a symbol of the struggle for political freedom. Coinciding with this was the appointment of a number of Fort Hare academic staff in high-ranking posts in political society.⁸⁸⁰ However, the absence of a coherent hegemonic project on the part of the post-apartheid State meant that the University no longer formed part of an overarching plan: its significance was symbolic, not strategic. The inwardly-directed focus of the former apartheid Administrators also dissipated, as a host of international academic institutions and educational organisations approached the post-apartheid era Vice-Chancellors of Fort Hare, seeking to forge alliances with an institution that had been the *alma mater* of so many African intellectuals and political leaders. We will see that these conversations were to subtly

⁸⁸⁰ Arnold Stofile was one of the Fort Hare staff who joined the senior ranks of political society, and he commented that the ANC had erred in taking “most of the leaders of Fort Hare into government” in 1994 (Caroline Swinburne, 2001).

reinforce and facilitate the introduction of ‘new managerialism’, or the subordination of the academe to values and practices that originate in the corporate environment, as these were already present in academic institutions in the United States and Europe. Facilitated by new technologies such as computers, the Internet and electronic mail communication, neoliberal values were to advance stealthily but relentlessly to permeate post-apartheid society, exercising a new form of cultural hegemony whose physical presence was not necessary.

Internally, all was far from calm. Expectations of the first Black University Administration ran high and it faced annual student protest against fee-based exclusions during the 1990s. Resistance was no less present in the post-apartheid era than it had been during the previous decades, and the challenge to authority on the part of students remained, although the grounds had changed. The focus shifted from political demands to ‘bread-and-butter’ issues among students as well as staff, with the former calling for the abolition of academic and fees-based exclusions, and the latter for salary increases and promotions. In terms of the relationships among staff, there was a palpable transformation as Black staff were appointed to positions from which they had previously been excluded; White staff, meanwhile, were confronted with the need to submit to the directives of Black superiors, or to leave.

The concentration of power in the post of the Rector – now called the Vice-Chancellor – dissipated as the notion of negotiating over power was introduced and Unions gained ground, seeking to establish a power base within the ranks of staff, academic and non-academic, and workers. Tensions among the Unions were evident in the ‘palace politics’⁸⁸¹ that was played out in the contestation of power at Fort Hare, which will be shown to replicate the contestation that occurred during the 1990s at the level of the State.⁸⁸²

⁸⁸¹ The term ‘palace politics’ was used by Francis Wilson to describe the activities of the Union in attempting to establish power bases for themselves on the basis of different university staff constituencies and issues around posts and salaries within the broad framework of ‘transformation’ (Interview with Francis Wilson on 30 July 2011).

⁸⁸² The nature of the struggle among Unions is extremely complex and the brief discussion in this Chapter does not fully do justice to the causes, manifestations, or outcomes. However, as the aim of this research is to illustrate the existence of compliance, conformity and control at the University of Fort Hare, the investigation has been restricted to an overview with no more than this in mind.

Having been offered an overview of the scope of this Chapter, we will now examine the demise of the Apartheid State more closely, so as to understand the reasons for the ensuing ideological void within which the University of Fort Hare was to find itself.

The advent of the post-apartheid State

Colonialism and its derivatives do not, as a matter of fact, constitute the present enemies of Africa. In a short time this continent will be liberated. For my part, the deeper I enter into the cultures and the political circles the surer I am that the great danger that threatens Africa is the absence of ideology.⁸⁸³

Fanon's prediction of the post-colonial State's downfall has been prophetic. Post-independent African political history is one of the de-mobilisation and disbandment of activist movements and the installation of a political elite whose integrity is compromised by virtue of its acceptance of the political and economic structures inherited by the incoming State. With no perceptible change in a form of government that was developed so as to exercise control for the sake of colonial profit, post-independence administration has been executed in an authoritarian manner.

Notwithstanding its good intentions, the post-colonial State exists in alienation from the masses. Newly appointed bureaucrats cultivate systems of patronage upwards and downwards, thereby nurturing dependency on the part of the masses, whose welfare is dependent on the State's bureaucratic mechanisms. Gramsci considers this as the outcome of a situation in which subaltern groups cannot pressurise the political society that purports to represent them. Instead, the masses have different forms of active or passive affiliation to the dominant party that allow them to make only "limited" or "partial" demands, rather than forming part of the State.⁸⁸⁴ The capitulation of erstwhile revolutionaries to the prospect of personal gain is described by the Fanonian intellectual, Richard Pithouse, as follows:

But once capture of the colonial state is in sight, the nation, which had been experienced as a collective work in progress, is appropriated by a political elite who abandon the ideas and practices that have emerged in popular struggle and return to the language of Manicheanism as they make a pact with the colonial elite to deracialise the colonial state and share its spoils ...

⁸⁸³ Frantz Fanon, 1964: 186.

⁸⁸⁴ Gramsci. In Hoare and Nowell Smith, 1971: 52.

The party, once, at least in part, a space for popular thought and action, becomes a means of social control and political advancement.⁸⁸⁵

This hypothesis will be developed shortly.

As we have seen in Chapter Five, by the late 1970s, the economy had weakened in the face of rising oil prices and an unstable supply, and inflation in the mid-1980s eroded the ideal lifestyle that had gained the support of the White electorate for the apartheid plan.⁸⁸⁶ Accompanying the decline in economic performance was the pressure applied by transnational organisations through trade and arms sanctions, accompanied by disinvestment. Expenditure on the military and the police absorbed the largest portion of the South African budget,⁸⁸⁷ yet political resistance continued in the form of the armed struggle waged against the State from beyond its borders, combined with guerilla and terrorist attacks planned inside South Africa by members of underground resistance groups. According to Vincent Maphai, a deadlock appeared to exist, with the forces of resistance equalling those of domination.⁸⁸⁸

However, this apparent impasse coincided with the fall of the Berlin Wall and the demise of the communist Soviet bloc, thereby eliminating what had been perceived by the West and the Apartheid State as the greatest threat to the way of life embodied in capitalism. It also terminated support by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics for the ANC in the armed struggle, as the United States achieved the political, economic and ideological status of a global hegemon. This cleared the way for the initiation of the process of transition from apartheid to the undefined nature of a post-apartheid society, which, at least, was expected by the Apartheid State, the national bourgeoisie and the transnational bourgeoisie poised to invest in South Africa, to be free from the threat of infiltration by Communist influences.⁸⁸⁹

Negotiations towards a transition of power were undertaken by the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA), representing 18 political parties, of which the ANC and the National Party were the main players. The PAC refused to capitulate and participate

⁸⁸⁵ Richard Pithouse, 2009: 144.

⁸⁸⁶ The next section is largely derived from Switzer (1993) and Maphai (1994).

⁸⁸⁷ Public expenditure on defence in the early 1970s was \$1 billion (Morris, 2004: 192).

⁸⁸⁸ Maphai, 1994: 44 – 51.

⁸⁸⁹ Ibid., 45 – 46.

in talks around power-sharing, maintaining that demands should instead be made.⁸⁹⁰ Despite the willingness of the involved parties to negotiate, multilateral talks aimed at reaching a multi-party democracy were fraught with ideological confrontations. In the context of increasing violence in which the apartheid police were implicated, the ANC withdrew from talks in 1992, although still committed to negotiations. In 1993 CODESA was replaced by the Multi-Party Negotiating Forum, at which stage the more radical elements of the Liberation Movement succumbed to pressure, agreeing to the establishment of Transitional Executive Council.⁸⁹¹ The extent of the influence of transnational organisations was at this stage perceptible in the fact that the ANC had made concessions to the principles of a free market and private property, which were concretised in the interim Constitution that was adopted. For the period in which the Transitional Executive Council shared power, the political space at the level of the State could not be claimed by the discourse of one particular political party, but it was clear that the National Party, representing capitalist interests, had gained a stronger position. This was reflected in the neoliberal principles that were entrenched in the interim Constitution through the protection of private property and the exclusion of the possibility of nationalisation of industry, as well as the emphasis on individual freedom and rights.

In order to bolster their positions in the negotiating process, leaders of both the ANC and the ruling National Party, namely, Nelson Mandela and F.W. De Klerk respectively, had sought international support for strategic reasons. The quest for credibility was one of the primary reasons why the ANC had agreed to the disarmament of MK and given assurances that core principle of the free market, such as private property, would prevail.⁸⁹² The intrusion of neoliberal values and the displacement of socialist ideals was thus a result of this display of hospitality on the part of the ANC, which, it was hoped, would garner international support during and after the transition, materialising in a concrete form.

Throughout this period, transnational organisations and multinational banks and corporations lingered on the sidelines, waiting for the conclusion of negotiations and the instalment of a non-racial government that would signal the commencement of 'business as usual'. Diplomats, emissaries and consultants representing States, neoliberal regimes, business and

⁸⁹⁰ Maphai, 1994: 67.

⁸⁹¹ Ibid., 78 – 84.

⁸⁹² Ibid., 72 – 80.

organisations, in many ways reminiscent of the missionaries who had preceded them in the nineteenth century, were anxious to move in and stake their claims, albeit that these were of a different and more worldly nature.

The passive revolution and the dawn of democracy

As presented above, a non-violent transition of power occurred within the context of the global hegemony of financial capital in circumstances that Gramsci terms a “passive revolution”.⁸⁹³ Different political positions assumed within the ANC became congealed in relationships of political patronage that were to become evident in the mid-1990s, with a definitive shift to the adoption of a neoliberal position by the dominant element of the ruling party. At the same time, the tumultuous events at Fort Hare that will be described shortly reflected the tensions that lay beneath the surface in Black society, as rivalry developed between factions on campus representing various interests.

Critical theorist Robert Cox⁸⁹⁴ presents the aftermath of a passive revolution as a situation of unresolved conflict within civil society. This is manifest in sporadic protests and acts of civil disobedience that the State attempts to contain by recruiting influential members of civic organisations to strategic positions within the political elite, where they are assigned a nominal shared responsibility for the exercise of control.⁸⁹⁵ As the new bureaucracy, consisting of a pact between the old and new political elite, dedicates itself to this function, claims to ideological positions dissipate in the face of the primary task of governing. As a result, “the party, once, at least in part, a space for popular thought and action, becomes a means of social control and private advancement”.⁸⁹⁶ Government continues to be authoritarian in nature, administered through a bureaucracy that regulates civil society in a manner that alternates between systems of patronage and repression.

The political analyst Patrick Bond⁸⁹⁷ identifies the three primary functions of the State as representation of civil society, symbolic leadership, and regulation of decision-making. The

⁸⁹³ Gramsci. In Hoare and Nowell Smith, 1971: 59, 105, 115.

⁸⁹⁴ Cox, 2002.

⁸⁹⁵ Ibid., 367 – 368.

⁸⁹⁶ Pithouse, 2009: 144.

⁸⁹⁷ Bond, 2001.

latter takes place in accordance with norms imposed by those with the power to sanction the outcomes of decisions and to support the State's credibility. Those with 'power' could be ordinary citizens, but this is improbable: they are more likely to be constituted by power 'blocs' representing vested interests of a corporate nature. To compensate for its failure to represent civil society (and distribute resources accordingly), the State resorts to symbolic legitimising acts. Whilst protest against the post-apartheid State was not immediately forthcoming in civil society, the disappointment among the masses at the limited extent and nature of social change was to erupt with increasing frequency from the late 1990s onwards. On the Fort Hare campus, however, disruptions caused by dissatisfied striking workers occurred throughout the 1990s. To counter this, both the State and Fort Hare Administration were to seek recourse to symbolic acts signifying political loyalty, as will be shown.

Tracing the political and economic activities of the post-apartheid State between 1994 and 2000, Bond asserts that despite its rhetoric about redistribution, it focused on policy development aligned to neoliberal norms, practices, institutions and structures. This is explained by David Held *et al*⁸⁹⁸, who refer to the intrusion in the national political arena of transnational 'regimes' that focus on securing control over decision-making at the level of the State through the provision of expertise in a specific area. Having achieved legitimacy as democratic organisations, transnational 'regimes' that are exclusively economic in orientation, such as the World Trade Organisation, World Bank and International Monetary Fund, collectively curtail the independent functioning of the State's political mechanisms through the provision of policy advice. Operating on the basis of consultancy, transnational regimes exercise influence through advice rather than contesting the right of the nation-State to make independent decisions, foregrounding the role of trade and foreign investment in growth and development.

The original economic policy of the first post-apartheid government, the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) reflected the principle of redistribution of wealth that had been part of the package of promises with which the African National Congress gained political power in 1994. However, the lack of a clearly formulated strategy that had been evident before the change in regime had enabled an agreement to be concluded between the

⁸⁹⁸ Held, D., McGrew, A.G., Goldblatt, D., and Perraton, J., 1999.

World Bank and a team drawn from the Transitional Executive Council, comprising members of the ANC and members of the Apartheid State's Department of Finance. Naturally, this rested on neoliberal terms and although the loan of \$850 million was not a substantial amount in terms of State finances, it nonetheless established the terms of a relationship in which the post-apartheid State received advice, rather than developing independent strategies as to how policy goals could be achieved.⁸⁹⁹ Based on an acceptance of neoliberal principles, the post-apartheid State embarked on a monetary policy that prioritised limitations on public expenditure so as to contain the fiscal deficit whilst promoting exports. In this way, it privileged existing wealth-owners who had no need for the public services and facilities that were not available to subaltern classes, such as schooling, health care, housing, and so forth. Most noticeable was the substitution of the RDP less than two years after its introduction by the neoliberal policy framework of the Growth, Employment and Redistribution Plan (GEAR). Based on the premise that economic growth would lead to social change as more people earned incomes, it aimed at attracting investment and replaced the RDP principle of 'growth through redistribution' with that of 'redistribution through (economic) growth'.

The impact of neoliberalism on the post-apartheid University

The influence of transnational organisations was similarly reflected in the development of policy and legislation relating to Higher Education that followed from the recommendations of the National Commission on Higher Education (NCHE). This was convened in 1995 to develop a higher education policy with a view to transforming the sector. In their accounts of the work conducted by the NCHE and the outcome of its report, which produced various recommendations that were incorporated into the Higher Education Act of 1997 and subsequently implemented, 'development' and 'nation-building' served as rhetoric in relation to the position of the nation-State in the global political economy.⁹⁰⁰ The proposed new dispensation in higher education was justified according to the national imperative of transformation, but policy-borrowing led to the introduction of the 'new managerialism' that was manifest in a layer of structures aimed at tightening control over academic practices.⁹⁰¹

⁸⁹⁹ André Kraak, 2001: 105.

⁹⁰⁰ Cloete and Muller, 1998; Kraak, 2001.

⁹⁰¹ A member of the ANC Education Study Group constituted in 1994 within the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Education to develop recommendations relating to future legislation on education, Sue Mathieson, observes that the Study Group had been "left behind" in the draft White

The influence of neoliberalism was to become evident in the emphasis on accountability for the use of public funds, the power assigned to quality assurance regimes, the prioritisation of science and technology and a change in the way in which the purpose of the university was expressed: to meet the needs of the economy for highly specialised “human capital”.⁹⁰²

Before it assumed power of the State in 1994, the ANC had already supported the concept of ‘Mode 2’ knowledge production,⁹⁰³ based on the assumption that universities respond to needs in their environment that lead to growth and an improved quality of life. A corollary of this was the ‘triple helix’ model, in terms of which the University was seen as jointly responsible for social development, along with the State and industry. The expectation of the post-apartheid State was that universities would address the many pressing social needs as well as support technological and economic development by forming alliances with the State and the private sector. However, in accordance with the principle of university autonomy, it was the University’s prerogative to interpret ‘cooperation’ and ‘responsiveness’ according to particular institutional cultures and circumstances.

The outward orientation of Mode 2 knowledge production, combined with the form of agreement envisaged by the ‘triple helix’, encouraged the formation of partnerships around research projects, scholarships, and staff and student exchanges. With funding forthcoming from donors, partners and sponsors located outside the University, the net effect was to nudge academic research and teaching towards the funder’s goals. At the same time, the corporate model was introduced in universities. Departments of Finance, Planning and Human Resources gained control of decision-making, as university Senates were subordinated to models of planning in which financial aims took precedence over academic issues.

Paper on Higher Education. The draft White Paper was supposed to consolidate the findings and recommendations of the NCHE, but it had been written by two consultants from the World Bank with a “crude economism which saw higher education as a provider of human capital for an untransformed labour market in a seemingly benevolent global order” that had not existed in the original Green Paper (Mathieson, 2001: 57).

⁹⁰² Mathieson, 2001: 57 – 60.

⁹⁰³ Michael Gibbons, Camille Limoges, Helga Nowotny, Simon Schwartzman, Peter Scott and Martin Trow, 1994.

The corporate University in South Africa began to take shape as the effect of neoliberal cultural hegemony became evident in national policy and partnerships with external institutions such as the European Economic Community. This provided funding for the establishment of a national qualifications framework⁹⁰⁴ to which all qualifications had to be aligned, and on which all education providers, including universities, had to register their qualifications. Whilst this did not necessarily involve substantive changes to qualifications, it signalled the subordination of the university to the State and the foregrounding of technocratic aspects that were to characterise directives emanating from the Department of Education (DOE), as it responded to the homogenising effect of the global domination of neoliberalism. Fort Hare was to be given advance warning of the influence that the NCHE recommendations and DOE decisions would have on its activities, as will soon be seen.

The post-apartheid State, neoliberal ideology and the University of Fort Hare

Significantly, from a symbolic perspective, the University of Fort Hare became the first institution in South Africa State to be headed by a Black person – that is, outside the confines of the Apartheid State and its structures – when Sibusiso Bengu was formally inaugurated as Vice-Chancellor on 19 October 1991. Bengu, a former teacher and school principal from Natal, had recently returned from exile after having left South Africa in 1978 and worked for the Lutheran World Foundation in Europe.⁹⁰⁵

His appointment followed a process that was characterised by the “massive participation”⁹⁰⁶ of all members of the University community, including the Fort Hare farm and maintenance workers. It served as a model of democratic norms and principles that provided a striking contrast to the autocratic and secretive practices of the previous Administration. On the historic occasion of Bengu’s inauguration, memorable for both its symbolic significance in

⁹⁰⁴ The South African Qualifications Framework was established by the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) Act of 1995.

⁹⁰⁵ He was not a member of the ANC at the time that he went into exile, but he met and befriended Oliver Tambo and developed close relationships with other members of the ANC, later joining the organisation and becoming a member of the National Executive in 1994.

⁹⁰⁶ Interview with Francis Wilson on 30 July 2011.

formally acknowledging a Black leader of a public institution in South Africa and by virtue of the fact that Fort Hare had been the first University for Black students in Southern Africa, established 75 years previously, Bengu announced his intentions to democratise Fort Hare. “The University will pull out all the stops to stimulate the growth of Black intellectuals to buttress and enrich the liberal voice that has so far held the forces of darkness at bay,”⁹⁰⁷ he vowed. “This University will take deliberate steps to make bold interventions to stimulate the growth of the Black intellectual.” At the same time, he hinted at the direction that academic liberation would take as, “We are interested in the linkage programmes with universities in the United States. We hope that staff and senior students will travel to Europe and North America for studies ... we also seek to establish ties with universities in Africa.” At the same time, towards the end of his address, he hinted at the possibility that State spending on Fort Hare would be reduced, saying, “The South African government is scaling down its financial commitment to universities such as ours.”⁹⁰⁸

In foregrounding the links to the United States and Europe, rather than Africa, Bengu’s speech was an indication of the direction that the post-apartheid State and the University of Fort Hare would pursue. Three and a half years later, in March 1995, after he had been appointed to the post of Minister of Education in the aftermath of the first non-racial elections in South Africa, Bengu was guest speaker at the inauguration of his successor, Professor Mbulelo Mzamane, who had returned to South Africa in 1993 and was appointed as Vice-Chancellor of Fort Hare in 1994. Unlike Bengu, Mzamane had had a distinguished academic career⁹⁰⁹ and fervently supported the idea of an African intellectual renaissance, but he lacked exposure to the political complexity of post-apartheid South Africa and the seething tensions on the Fort Hare campus.

Bengu had gained insights from his position as a senior bureaucrat in the post-apartheid State, and he no longer urged Fort Hare along the path of academic freedom, as he had done a few years previously. Instead, from his privileged position with insider information on policy-making, he referred to the recommendations arising from the work of the NCHE task groups,

⁹⁰⁷ Inaugural address of Sibusiso Bengu, 1991.

⁹⁰⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁰⁹ Mzamane had a Doctorate in English Literature from the University of Sheffield in England and had lectured at the University of South Australia, Yale University and Boston University.

saying that priorities had shifted.⁹¹⁰ Hinting at the presence of the influence of a neoliberal influence on national education policy, Bengu called for the prioritisation of governance, finance and a new programme and qualifications framework.⁹¹¹ He cautioned that government funding would not be allocated to universities *carte blanche*, to be spent at the discretions of institutions themselves, saying that they “will have to learn to do more with less, which implies they will place increasing emphasis on issues of efficiency and of the extent to which they are meeting national HE goals”.⁹¹² In the same speech, he gave a further indication of the agenda that was being compiled at the level of the State with his reference to a new direction in higher education that would be embarked on, emphasising human resource training and development – a premonition of the introduction of the neoliberal notion of the University’s role in the development of human capital.⁹¹³

At the time, the far-reaching content of his speech and its hints towards the introduction of the phenomenon which became known as ‘managerialism’ was perhaps not analysed by an audience that was more intent on welcoming a new Vice-Chancellor than heeding the warning signs emanating from the level of the State. Yet, his speech forewarned of the shift in the locus of power at the university away from academics and its entrenchment in non-academic administrative departments of finance and human resource management. The aspects that Bengu had highlighted came to dominate deliberations and planning throughout the public higher education sector in South Africa, with governance and finance at the core of university planning.

The ascendancy of neoliberalism and the associated discourse of ‘new public management’ that had originated in Europe and the United States during the 1980s and further disseminated to subaltern societies in the 1990s, had a profound effect on universities. National policy took its lead from neoliberal discourses around public accountability and financial viability,

⁹¹⁰ Bengu’s speech at the inauguration of Professor M.V. Mzamane as Vice-Chancellor of Fort Hare University, 4 March 1995.

⁹¹¹ The South African Qualifications Framework, with strong financial backing from the European Union, was introduced in 1995.

⁹¹² Bengu’s speech at the inauguration of Professor M.V. Mzamane as Vice-Chancellor of Fort Hare University, 4 March 1995.

⁹¹³ Ibid.

requiring universities to define their existence in relations to quantitatively measurable goals. As observed earlier, a national qualifications framework had been introduced in 1995,⁹¹⁴ serving as one of the mechanisms by means of which the nature and scope of teaching, learning and research is controlled by the State. Neoliberal tones were prominent in the Higher Education Act 101 of 1997, which assigned various regulatory controls in the guise of ‘quality assurance’ over universities.⁹¹⁵ The Act also provided for the mergers of higher education institutions that were to take place in the early 2000s, reducing the number of universities and technikons from 36 to 23.⁹¹⁶ Funding formulae and enrolment quotas were introduced as universities were required to present ‘rolling plans’ relating to enrolments and ‘throughput’. Controls were further tightened by capping the percentage of students who could enroll in qualifications offered in the Social Sciences and Humanities, instead favouring enrolments in Science and Technology, followed by Commerce.

In terms of Bengu’s forewarning of the expectations of the State in relation to the future activities of South African universities, the absence of an internal plan of action for Fort Hare was conspicuous. Perhaps the most obvious and striking difference in the University Administration before and after 1990 – apart from its racial character – was the dissipation of the former obsession with control. Whilst the apartheid era Rectors’ personal files comprised hundreds of documents relating to the exercise of control over staff, students and the University, the post-apartheid Vice-Chancellors’ diaries were crammed with travel arrangements and engagements with foreign sponsors and donors. Mzamane’s 1995 calendar reveals trips to Lesotho, Transkei, Namibia and Kenya, and he received visitors from India, Norway, and the United States, which he visited frequently. Having previously held a post at Vermont University, he had many contacts at this and other universities with which he

⁹¹⁴ The South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) Act of 1995.

⁹¹⁵ A later amendment in 2012 enables the Minister of Education to appoint an administrator where the Minister believes that a university is not performing according to its mandate.

⁹¹⁶ The ‘rationalisation’ of the higher education system through mergers professed to aim at redressing the inequalities of the apartheid system and to eliminate the differentiation between the universities that had been established for different racial groups, reducing the number of higher education institutions from 306 to 72 (note that this figure includes universities, technikons, teacher training and nursing colleges).

apparently hoped to establish academic relationships, with a view to enriching the intellectual environment at Fort Hare.⁹¹⁷

Whereas the apartheid era Administration had focused on internal controls and the implementation of the State's hegemonic project, the post-apartheid era Administration encountered an ideological void beyond the discourse of non-racialism. It was thus receptive to ideas and projects originating elsewhere, particularly from the United States, during Mzamane's term as Vice-Chancellor.

There was an instant transformation in the symbolic value of the role that Fort Hare assumed as a University. Its historical significance of being the oldest University in Southern African and the *alma mater* of Nelson Mandela meant that Fort Hare was suddenly the world's favorite University. After having served in the implementation of the apartheid plan in the context of the Ciskei homeland, in 1990 Fort Hare laid claim to the status of an iconic institution that had produced some of Africa's most illustrious leaders and scholars. As the *alma mater* of so many famous personalities in the African and South African political elite, Fort Hare was inundated with offers for funding and collaborative ventures, many directed to academic departments and faculties, whilst other overtures were made to the Vice-Chancellor. These proposed funding for a variety of projects that illustrated the intensity of neoliberal intentions, ranging from the development of a strategic plan (funded by the Kellogg Foundation), to the sponsorship of studies by academic staff at United States universities (notably Michigan), and advice and support on curriculum and academic development, with the latter linked to technology-intensive innovation.⁹¹⁸

⁹¹⁷ Mzamane's calendars and files reveal no indication of the purpose of his visits to various countries, and none of his trips raised any funds for the University (Saunders Report, 1999:3).

⁹¹⁸ For example, foreign funding provided for the academic development programme at Fort Hare was directed towards spending on specific items provided by specified overseas suppliers. The academic development unit obtained video cameras and recording material so that staff could be filmed while conducting practice classes, and a studio was equipped with the necessary items for soundproofing and recording. A camera operator was employed and a dedicated staff member to manage the unit. In the Quality Assurance Unit offices and storeroom there is redundant equipment that erstwhile staff members had acquired, including a large sound system, television, audio-visual equipment, desk top

Within a year of John Lamprecht's ignominious departure and the abrupt termination of his rectorship, funds began to pour into various 'projects' at Fort Hare. Funds originated primarily from United States-based sources such as the Ford Foundation and United States Agency for International Development (USAID), but also from the European Commission, which, in Policy No. C235/5 committed to providing funding to South Africa in key areas, including education and training.⁹¹⁹ Partnerships were forged at the departmental level, such as the Science Outreach in Education programme financed by the Netherlands, and money was channelled into Fort Hare projects and bursaries via World University Service and a local trust fund, Kagiso.⁹²⁰ The Deputy Director of the United States Information Services initiated contact between Fort Hare and North American colleges and universities, as a result of which many Fort Hare staff studied towards Masters and Doctoral degrees in the United States.⁹²¹

Besides receiving funding, Fort Hare attracted prospective academic staff from diverse parts of the world. The Bengu files contain dossiers of letters and curriculum vitae submitted by academics in Africa, the United States, Britain and South Africa, some of whom were in exile and wanted to return and work at Fort Hare, while others simply wished to work at a University of such symbolic and historical significance.⁹²² Subsequent to the initial exodus of White and Black staff in the early 1990s, the academic staff contingent was relatively stable until 1999, at which stage a swathe of retrenchments led to further losses. By this stage, however, Fort Hare had gained some notoriety within South Africa due to the general state of

monitors, modems and printers. A former employee of the unit says that with funding provided by USAID, even flights had to be booked using specific airlines.

⁹¹⁹ 1992 Fort Hare Foundation Annual Report.

⁹²⁰ Sums of R400,000 and R202,850 respectively were received from these donors (Ibid.).

⁹²¹ On the subject of the Fulbright programme, the Deputy Director of USIS, R.L. Hugins indicated that he would visit the Fort Hare campus on 24 April 1991 (Letter to Brian Gardner from, dated April 1991). Correspondence with USIS Directors continued throughout the 1990s, with USIS promoting scholarships and exchanges.

⁹²² Bengu files. The Bengu files contain dozens of applications from academics in the United States, Europe, Asia, Africa and India, and replies in the form of letters of regret, although some enquiries were referred to Heads of Department.

internal disorganisation, and was no longer as sought-after as it had been in the immediate post-apartheid period.

Post-apartheid power struggles within Fort Hare

Whilst overseas universities and organisations were courting Fort Hare, its internal politics reflected the same tensions and uneasy alliances that characterised civil society. A climate of mistrust within the institution was based partially on the change in the balance of power, but also due to the organisational vacuum that had been left subsequent to the departure of the senior White administrators.

During this time, values and priorities were being shaped in accordance with the third and fourth of Femia's reasons for conformity,⁹²³ namely, conscious agreement with basic principles and expectations of patronage and reciprocity, which were seen to play out within the context of a power struggle between Unions and the new Administration. Despite the impression of triumph over apartheid in the form of Bengu assuming the post of Vice-Chancellor as the first Black leader of Fort Hare in 1991, the absence of a clearly defined ideological position or intellectual aim was evident in the lack of proactive leadership. Recently unionised workers were quick to spot this and moved swiftly to make their demands, thereby forcing the first Black Administration into a position in which it had to respond reactively to ongoing challenges in the form of workers' demands for higher wages and status, and students' issues with fees and finances.

During his term of office, Bengu was exposed to the intense competition for the locus of power that had been vacated by the apartheid era Administration. Worker Unions aligned themselves with students and staff in administrative and support services, whilst academic staff were a minority group. Acting against solidarity among academic staff was the fact that there were jealousies relating to the re-structuring of posts and the realignment of salaries, as at the time of the exodus of the apartheid era Administration, substantial salary differences existed between White and Black, as well as between male and female staff.

When Bengu assumed office as Vice-Chancellor in 1991, he arrived at a campus in the throes of a strike by lower level administrative staff, some of whom were by then, due to successful

⁹²³ Femia, 1981: 38 – 43.

demands for wage increases emanating from strikes by the workers' Union, earning less than Fort Hare farm labourers.⁹²⁴ Successive increases of between 22% and 34% per annum for Black staff were aimed at achieving salary parity between Black and White employees,⁹²⁵ and issues around salary levels were to set the tone for internal relations from this point onwards. Surplus funds to the value of R4.8 million in 1989 were rapidly exhausted and by 1990 there was a deficit of R7.8 million, which had increased to R16.7 million by 1991, reaching a record high – for that decade – of R46.8 million at the end of 1998.⁹²⁶ The amount assigned to increased wages for the more than 1,000 farm workers and the increases aimed at parity between Black and White salaries was mainly responsible for depleting the reserve funds.⁹²⁷ However, in the context of the violence that prevailed in South Africa between 1992 and 1994, rumours abounded. It was believed by many staff that the missing millions had been siphoned off to external recipients, and that the person who was privy to this information had been dispensed with.⁹²⁸ A third accusation aimed at the post-apartheid Administration was levelled by Arnold Stofile, who had returned to Fort Hare as a member of the post-1990 Governing Council and also served as Director of Public Relations and Development from 1992 until 1994, claiming that “unscrupulous leaders” had “plundered” Fort Hare.⁹²⁹

Although addressed in ongoing sequels of demands and negotiations that occupied most Council meeting agendas after Bengu's inauguration,⁹³⁰ no lasting wage agreement was reached, and matters came to a head in 1996. After unsuccessful negotiations around salaries

⁹²⁴ Interview with Geoffrey Antrobus on 12 July 2011.

⁹²⁵ Letter explaining increases of 12% for White and 22% to 34% for Black staff, 1991 staff files.

⁹²⁶ Saunders Report, 1999: 8. Lamprecht had predicted, when ousted from power, that the millions in the UFH reserves would be exhausted within a year, and had insisted on an internal audit prior to withdrawing (Interview with Geoffrey Antrobus on 12 July 2011).

⁹²⁷ Interview with Francis Wilson on 30 July 2011.

⁹²⁸ The conspiracy theory points to the murder of an employee in the Information Technology department, Mr Stoffel Erasmus, who apparently used to speak openly of what he alleged was prevalent fraud. He was found murdered near Alice in 1995 and the case was never solved (Interview with anonymous staff member 30 April 2011; interview with anonymous clerk of the Alice magistrate's court on 12 June 2011).

⁹²⁹ Swinburne, 2001.

⁹³⁰ Interview with Francis Wilson on 30 July 2011.

and as a result of a show of strength in the form of mass action by the combined forces of three employee Unions, the DSA, Union of Democratic University Staff Associations (UDUSA) and the Teachers Association of South Africa (TASA), the University was forced to close on 14 October. A Supreme Court interdict forced all back to work, but an agreement was reached with Council on 23 October for a 15% salary increase for junior lecturers, lecturers, technical and administrative staff, and a memorandum of understanding making provision for a bargaining forum and job grading was signed. At this point, 89% of the budget was allocated to salaries, a proportion that prompted the announcement on 16 May 1997 that there would be a restructuring in terms of Section 189 of Labour Relations Act No. 66 of 1995. This decision implied retrenchments and job losses, and constituted a throwing down of the gauntlet as far as Unions were concerned, triggering the beginning of the end of the road for the second post-apartheid Vice-Chancellor, Mbulelo Mzamane.

Returning to Fort Hare in 1995 as Minister of Education to give a speech at the inauguration of his successor, Sibusiso Bengu, who had been exposed to the internecine conflict during his tenure as Vice-Chancellor, had called for “democratic, inclusive transformation” and “critical and constructive debate rather than conflict” to characterise the transformation process.⁹³¹ For his part, Mzamane, returning to South Africa after 30 years in exile, was clearly aware of the conflict that had become embedded in matters of administration. In his inauguration speech he called for “participatory democracy, representative structures, accountability and transparency in management. But we must also cultivate a firm style of leadership, not dictatorial, but firm”, urging that “negotiations must replace confrontation as a principle of conflict resolution”, with a new slogan of “productivity with dignity”. However, most of his speech was eloquent in his vision for Fort Hare to respond to social needs and “to situate ourselves within the communities we serve principally: the historically downtrodden, disadvantaged and oppressed people of the land, who are our priority constituent”, “to research with social responsibility” towards “a new epistemological democracy”.⁹³²

⁹³¹ Bengu’s speech at the installation of Prof M.V. Mzamane as Vice-Chancellor, 4 March 1995.

⁹³² Inaugural address of Sibusiso Bengu, 1991.

Whilst Mzamane did not ignore Union demands, his indisputable passion was for academic matters, and he made frequent references to the “African Renaissance” at Fort Hare.⁹³³ However, having spent a long period of time in exile in circumstances in which he had been able to freely express himself, he perhaps linked academic advancement to studies overseas. Furthermore, having been steeped in the liberalism of Vermont University in the United States, his expectations were that Fort Hare would respond to overtures by United States universities in transforming towards the prototype of a liberal institution. Mzamane’s aspirations for Fort Hare were aligned to the foreign universities he admired.⁹³⁴

When he had, during his inauguration, urged his academic audience to undertake re-circulation to instil a “culture of critical thinking, and a culture of lifelong learning ... a pedagogical democracy that makes of teachers, students and the community patrons in the quest for knowledge and for solutions to the collective predicament”, he could not have been conscious that by sending academic staff to study in the United States he was undermining the prospects for an indigenous intellectual revitalisation. His encouragement of furthering studies at Masters and Doctoral level in North American and European universities established an invisible relationship of intellectual subordination and domination between the post-apartheid University and their counterparts in the west. Notwithstanding the considerable benefits, every dollar, pound or Euro donated or lent arrived accompanied by neoliberal values and practices nudged on to the campus, such as increased reliance on information communication technology and the introduction of a corporate structure with separate marketing and human resources departments reporting directly to the Vice-Chancellor that shifted the balance of power away from academic staff. Whilst the University was adjusting to its new-found academic freedom, the values and practices of the global ‘knowledge economy’ were being cultivated.

⁹³³ This was frequently divulged in conversation with University of Fort Hare staff who were employed in the University in the 1990s, and corresponded to the vision exemplified by Thabo Mbeki, who assumed the presidency of South Africa in 1999, similarly imbued with enthusiasm around the re-awakening and re-vitalisation of the African intellectual and Africa’s contribution to civilisation and the world.

⁹³⁴ Stephen Berkowitz, a former colleague of Mzamane’s at Vermont, was a frequent correspondent and middleman in arranging meetings for discussions around projects with US partners.

Whereas during the apartheid regime, Fort Hare academic staff had served as consultants to the Ciskei, the tables were turned as a substantial amount of the budget was allocated to consultancy fees and paid to American advisers for the support in developing strategic plans.⁹³⁵ At the same time that academic staff were being lured to study at well-resourced institutions in the US, attempts were being made to coach Fort Hare into the exercise of corporate management by developing the University's first Strategic Plan, funded by the Kellogg Foundation. Sipho Pityana, who had been Special Assistant to the Vice-Chancellor, chaired the Strategic Planning Committee and was tasked with installing the culture and values of the corporate sector into university structures and practices, and persuading the University community to become involved and to commit to the new style of management.⁹³⁶ Trouble was possibly inevitable, as hinted at in the minutes of one of the first meetings, at which Mzamane and the Director of Finance, Mr Dlabantu, were present, when it was pointed out that the strategic planning was not subject to financial constraints, as no budget had been allocated.⁹³⁷ In the end, a spectacular budget was added to the plan, approaching a billion and including housing for all Fort Hare farm workers, although Mzamane's priorities were clear in that two-thirds of the budget was assigned to academic projects.

The notion of the University as a strategically purposeful organisation was being instilled – although implementation of corporate principles of efficiency and profitability had not been demonstrated. The Mzamane files contain numerous offers of support from management consultants, as well as from the American Council on Education (ACE), clearly anxious for United States universities to secure ties with Fort Hare before others grabbed the partnership opportunities. Isaac Mabindisa, then Academic Planner, was sent for training in November 1995 under the ACE programme, and Dr Monde Mayekiso, then special assistant to the Vice-Chancellor, when asked to select an ACE workshop in which to participate, selected firstly

⁹³⁵ The Bengu files contain the names of consultants whose services had been proposed to assist with strategic planning, including Robert Albright, Barbara Uehling, Judith Sturnick and Patricia Plante.

⁹³⁶ Sipho Pityana's career followed a similar trajectory to that of Cyril Ramaphosa, as both emerged from the Trade Union movement to become wealthy businessmen through their positions in the ANC. After leaving Fort Hare in 1995 to serve as Director General of the Department of Labour and then the Department of Foreign Affairs, in 2002, Pityana moved to the private sector to assume various senior executive positions in mining and finance.

⁹³⁷ Minutes of Strategic Planning Steering Committee, 26 September 1994, Bengu files.

strategic planning and fund-raising, followed by research and academic programme reviews. At the same time, in an all-encompassing strategy, both the ACE and USAID were also working with academic staff in the Tertiary Education Leadership Project (TELP), which targeted historically disadvantaged Black institutions and aimed at establishing academic development (AD) programmes and curriculum development initiatives. This undisguised herding of Black educational institutions towards the adoption of academic priorities endorsed by the United States was accompanied by the provision of funding for approved projects, and served to guide Fort Hare towards emulation of American practices.⁹³⁸

Although the United States had taken the lead in the provision of funding, it was not the only source of funding. In February 1996 the Centre for International Studies in Education in Bristol, the United Kingdom, launched its Education and Training Project for South African Historically Disadvantaged Institutions, and a distance education project was founded in 1997 in conjunction with the University of South Australia and the Eastern Cape Department of Education, Culture and Sport. However, the uncoordinated and incoherent nature of the funding was evident in the fact that it was the aims of donors that shaped the nature and direction of activities planned and undertaken. Despite the nominal existence of strategic plans that had been developed with input from Fort Hare staff and students, such as the one orchestrated by Sipho Pityana, funded by the Kellogg Foundation, their existence was largely symbolic. Actual activities were centred around the project management of externally sponsored ventures which, given the absence of a fundamentally Fort Hare-defined need, tended to be finite in nature, with Fort Hare reverting to former practices or inertia once funding had been exhausted or when an alternative dominant paradigm was encountered.⁹³⁹

The willingness to take directives from others can be regarded in two ways, using the complementary hypotheses of Gramsci and Fanon. In Gramscian terms, the common sense of

⁹³⁸ Provision of TELP funding continued until 2006, when the last projects were finalised. At this stage, Norwegian interests replaced those of the United States, with the initiation of various projects under the auspices of South African Norwegian Education Development (SANTED).

⁹³⁹ One example is the subsuming of Fort Hare's academic development structure to that of Rhodes University after the merger of the two universities in 2004. Fort Hare staff were absorbed into the model that was introduced on to the Alice campus by Rhodes University, and staff reported to the Director of the unit that had existed on the Rhodes University campus.

the subaltern is imbued with beliefs that are the result of long-standing practices, resulting in a tendency to cede to imperatives transferred from those with power – in this case, the University Administration, which in turn received direction from foreign donors. To Fanon, systematic colonial subjugation engenders a sense of inferiority in the mind of the colonised, inducing behaviour that emulates “The Other”,⁹⁴⁰ and fosters continued subordination.

A further illustration of the subordination of Fort Hare to the plans of other parties relates to the establishment of the National Liberation Archives housing ANC and PAC documents on the Fort Hare campus. As the *alma mater* of so many African leaders and intellectuals, it was deemed appropriate that the collections of documents amassed around the liberation struggle conducted by the PAC and the ANC should be archived at Fort Hare, and an extensive public relations campaign, accompanied by preparation of the archives and training of archivists, was carried out. Funded by the Kellogg Foundation and implemented by the University of Michigan, the process was documented by a Michigan academic who pondered:

perhaps because of Fort Hare’s famous alumni and its historical significance ... several players, foreign and domestic, have cultivated exchange programmes and joint projects ... many of these initiatives have gone uncoordinated, negotiated without the benefit of centralised input ... Good intentions notwithstanding, to some it might be construed as a more benign form of imperialism, the last vestiges of colonialism.⁹⁴¹

With such intense interest on the part of universities in the United States and Europe to form partnerships with Fort Hare,⁹⁴² Mzamane appeared oblivious to the importance of finances at Fort Hare. He had been appointed on the basis of his intellect and openly admitted that he would not become involved in financial monitoring,⁹⁴³ and, furthermore, a Deputy Vice-

⁹⁴⁰ Fanon, 2008: 119.

⁹⁴¹ Williams and Wallach, 2007: 328.

⁹⁴² Francis Wilson comments that there was immense interest by foreign universities in developing Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) with Fort Hare, although the motives of prospective partners were generally unclear (Interview with Francis Wilson on 30 July 2011). Conversations with colleagues reveal that research is generally the overarching motive behind partnerships, as, in a competitive global environment, Fort Hare provided - and still provides – rich ground for research and the potential for publishing papers, articles and book chapters.

⁹⁴³ Saunders Report, 1999:3.

Chancellor of Finance was responsible for that particular aspect of administration. Notwithstanding Mzamane's lack of interest in finance, it was precisely this issue, along with Union wage demands and poor administration, which occupied Council meeting agendas and dominated discussions. Mzamane's prioritisation of academic issues and of private and personal matters⁹⁴⁴ above finances was later to serve to his detriment when, due to the University's failure to make payments to third parties for three months or to pay salaries on time in December 1998, he fell out of favour. This essentially bread-and-butter issue was the catalyst that led to his being forced out of office in 1999, as we will see shortly.

The first decade of post-apartheid University Administration was characterised by an atmosphere of ongoing contestation, although it was no longer of a primarily political and racial nature, revealing increasingly that it was motivated by issues related to social class and internal relations of power. Fraught with confrontations with Unions and students, neither Bengu nor Mzamane were able to instil the desired culture that would prioritise the development of the African intellectual, during the struggle for internal power that was to last throughout the decade. Staff members who were present at the time refer to the jostling for power and the attempts at 'empire-building' among academics, administrative staff and Unions, particularly the National Health and Allied Workers Union (NEHAWU), representing non-academic staff, and the National Tertiary Education Staff Union (NTESU), representing academic staff. At the same time, what Professor Francis Wilson, Chair of the first post-apartheid Council of the University of Fort Hare, refers to as a lack of "disciplined attention to detail" and little capacity to organise and manage at the operational level,⁹⁴⁵ was to prevent Fort Hare from performing according to the desired criteria of efficiency and productivity, for which it was to draw the attention of the newly neoliberalised State.

⁹⁴⁴ For example, Mzamane's file contains correspondence with his secretary and his daughter, who was studying in the United States, concerning payment of her university fees, which were paid for by Fort Hare. This was to emerge as an accusation of mismanagement of finances in the report commissioned in 1999 by the Minister of Education (Saunders Report, 1999: 3).

⁹⁴⁵ Interview with Francis Wilson on 30 July 2011.

The road to financial ruin

Despite funds streaming into specific projects in different departments, Fort Hare was spending money without the guarantee of a steady revenue stream. As a University in an impoverished rural area, Fort Hare students were in general unable to pay their fees, thus leading to a perpetual shortage of revenue in the face of significantly larger operating costs. When Mzamane assumed office, he appeared to be unaware of the focus on financial matters at Fort Hare.⁹⁴⁶ In September 1995, on a fund-raising trip to the United Kingdom that was sponsored by the British Council. Mzamane seemed unperturbed and his personal expenditure was apparently lavish relative to the funds available.⁹⁴⁷ For their part, it was around the issue of finance that students protested in the 1990s, as fees increased every year and inadequate financial assistance was available.⁹⁴⁸

While funds poured into Fort Hare projects, money was leaking out elsewhere. In 1994 Fort Hare received a qualified audit report on the annual financial statements, due to the absence of controls and the lack of maintenance of the fixed asset register.⁹⁴⁹ The first sign of trouble was in 1996, by when the contradictions between Mzamane's lifestyle and the stringency in relation to student fees had become an open source of disputes and accusations. Throughout the 1990s, student protests had continued to disrupt the academic year, as they had done in the 1970s and 1980s. However, the causes were now protests against the exclusion of students for non-payment of fees owing, and not against the Administration. Priorities had

⁹⁴⁶ He is reported to have told the Saunders investigation into the situation at Fort Hare in 1999 that he was "not interested" in financial management (Saunders Report, 1999:11).

⁹⁴⁷ Mzamane was renowned for his parties, a typical event being a *braai* (barbecue) for 51 people in March 1996. The caterer's invoice was almost R7,000 but it was reduced after a complaint from Mzamane's office to the amount on the original quote for 40 people, with an extra R3,597 for alcohol consumed (Invoices and correspondence relating to *braai* on 13 March 1996, Mzamane files).

⁹⁴⁸ The National Financial Student Aid Scheme was under discussion at this stage, but was only introduced in 1996/1997. In 1996, students were required to pay R1,000 to register, a fee most could not afford, as only 1,429 – less than half the total number expected – had registered in Alice (Report by N. Jooste, Deputy Registrar, to a Special Senex meeting on 5 March 1996).

⁹⁴⁹ The report stated that "we have not been able to satisfy ourselves as to: whether all boarding fees have been correctly recorded and deposited; whether compensation paid to staff was properly authorised and correctly stated" (Draft of 1994 Annual Financial Statements, Bengu files).

switched dramatically after the attainment of political freedom to material issues of funding and finance. In May 1996, students demanded information on the financial well-being of Fort Hare, but the Senate Executive Committee (Senex) deflected the issue by focusing on student debt. Senate called for Mzamane to address students on four issues; namely, non-payment of fees owed, fee increases, non-servicing of the student debt and the termination or suspension of academic exclusions.⁹⁵⁰

Just like the good old days...

In November 1996 it was agreed that fees payments would be split, with 20% payable on registration, and the remainder payable in equal parts in the first and second semesters, but at registration the next year students again protested against being required to pay this amount in order to register. Following fruitless talks between the SRC and management on 13 and 18 February, students resumed their protest tactics, barricading gates, burning tyres and disrupting classes. Recourse to the anti-apartheid behaviour clearly shocked the State: both Bengu and Mbeki, then Minister of Education and President respectively, flew down to meet with students and management on 28 February. This intervention was fruitless and students ignored a circular distributed on 10 March instructing them to return to class. Instead they put up more barricades, trashed the administration building and burned tyres, resulting in the campus being closed the next day. At an emergency meeting on 14 March, the Executive Committee resolved to re-open the campus on 1 April, and letters were sent to parents and guardians, advising them of the fees agreement in 1996 and subsequent events.⁹⁵¹

The contrast between the undisciplined spending of the Vice-Chancellor and the unyielding attitude of the Administration vis-à-vis student debt and wages was bound to erupt into protests. Student and worker disturbances and protests continued unabated, particularly at the commencement of each academic year, when protests would be organised over exclusions on the grounds of fees owed. A typical example of the inconsistency in the University Administration's attitude towards finances is illustrated by the January 1997 tour to the US Mzamane had embarked on, in which he visited 11 universities, including Harvard, Boston,

⁹⁵⁰ Minutes of the Senate Executive meeting held 5 May 1996.

⁹⁵¹ Letter dated 17 March 1997, Mzamane files.

Vermont, Syracuse and Cornell,⁹⁵² followed by the University's refusal to readmit students who owed fees in February. This led to protest and the disruption of classes on 10 March 1997, although these took place without further incidents of violence.

The frequent student protests prompted Fort Hare's most illustrious alumnus, Nelson Mandela, on being awarded an honorary doctoral degree in 1998, to call for discipline, observing that, "South Africa could not tolerate a situation in which, while the country's resources were being poured into improvement of university facilities, some people become involved in destroying or abusing these very facilities."⁹⁵³ His appeal went unheeded and the issue of fees remained at the heart of student politics, to the extent that the first three rules in the new General Rules for Students specified the financial obligations of students,⁹⁵⁴ a striking contrast to the practice under the missionary Administration of having students sign an academic oath on admission. The academic focus of the enlightenment ideal had clearly been displaced by the financial priorities of the neoliberal State.

Contestation for power within the staff component

In the 1990s, Fort Hare lost some of its best qualified Black academic staff to high-level posts within political society, whilst many White Afrikaans-speaking academic staff left to join former Afrikaans-medium or bilingual universities such as the nearby University of Port Elizabeth.⁹⁵⁵ The more stable staff contingent thus comprised administrative staff, who constituted a strong unionised force and assumed the dominant voice in terms of discussion and debate on university bodies, as indicated earlier.⁹⁵⁶ Union demands were consistent on

⁹⁵² Memorandum dated 17 January 1997, Mzamane files.

⁹⁵³ "E-Cape must look for own solutions." ANC Daily News Briefing, April 23 1998.

⁹⁵⁴ The first rule states that students who are admitted and who sign the registration form will be temporarily registered until their financial obligations have been met; the second that students whose fees remain unpaid by the specified dates will be de-registered; and the third that interest will be charged at a rate of 1.5% per month on all overdue accounts (General Rules for Students 1999).

⁹⁵⁵ The University of Port Elizabeth was the first bilingual higher education institution, offering degrees that were taught in English and Afrikaans. It later merged with the Port Elizabeth Technikon and the Uitenhage branch of Vista University near Port Elizabeth to become the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University.

⁹⁵⁶ Interview with Francis Wilson on 30 July 2011.

the issue of wages and eclipsed the disparate discourses of the academic staff contingent, a racially and ideologically differentiated body with divided loyalties and affiliations, which enhanced the consolidation of power within the administrative sector of the University.

The leadership void was captured by the organisation with the most consistent set of demands, NEHAWU, which acted quickly to consolidate its power by cultivating agreements with Mzamane's successor, Derrick Swartz, in terms of which power was definitively removed from academic staff and assigned to NEHAWU.⁹⁵⁷ The process through which the definitive shift in power to the senior University Administration occurred in 2000, supported by NEHAWU leadership, reflects the post-apartheid alliance in political society between the ANC, the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) and the South African Communist Party (SACP) COSATU. The consolidation of power at the level of the State was replicated in the alliance between the University Administration and NEHAWU at Fort Hare, illustrating Pithouse's thesis, outlined earlier, of the way in which power is crystallised within a self-serving elite that distances itself from civil society.⁹⁵⁸ The alliance between NEHAWU leadership and the Swartz administration that took place after 2000 does not fall within the scope of this Chapter, which outlines events during the 1990s. Suffice to say that the process by means of which linkages between the State and the University's senior Administration were reinforced warrants further research, as it has a bearing on various debates around what constitutes academic autonomy, the notion of the University as serving the interests of the State, and, with specific reference to Fort Hare, cadre deployment in the University for the specific purpose of strengthening ties between the ruling party and the University. It is thus worthwhile outlining the process through which the shift in the balance of power occurred.

Tensions in the transformation process

Throughout the 1990s, the unionised services and maintenance staff had been extremely active on campus, eliciting the support of students for their grievances and, in turn, adding

⁹⁵⁷ Interviews with Fort Hare colleagues and NEHAWU members from 2010 – 2013. At the end of 2012, the long-standing executive of NEHAWU was ousted in elections that installed a new executive.

⁹⁵⁸ Pithouse, 2009: 144.

weight to student protests.⁹⁵⁹ At this stage, members expressed frustration about gender discrimination, security, corruption in the ranks of the University's Senior Administration, ineffective maintenance and support services, the Vice-Chancellor's absence from campus, poor control of student residences and a lack of sufficient accommodation. Proposing that future membership be drawn from the ranks of Unions⁹⁶⁰ the SRC and other student organisations,⁹⁶¹ as well as Fort Hare senior management, the Council and Senate, the Transformation Forum aimed at a representativeness that would prove a sufficiently broad-based strength to counter what had hitherto been domination by Senate.⁹⁶² Two members of the Transformation Forum presented their position at a Special Senate meeting held four months later, in response to which Senator J.B. Thom noted his concern that the Forum was accountable to nobody, not even Council.⁹⁶³ A few years later in 1999, as will be shown, the Saunders Report to the Minister of Education on an investigation into the affairs of the University of Fort Hare observed that Unions were "improperly over-represented on a number of university committees, including selection committees and the Interim Institutional Forum" (previously the Transformation Forum), and noted the views that the latter was "seeking to usurp the functions of top management and the Council".⁹⁶⁴

⁹⁵⁹ For example, shortly before Lamprecht's demise, workers used to support student boycotts. A poster warns 'decenters' [sic] to "wait for us we are coming tel your prof" (Poster, Lamprecht files). The awkward English and handwriting is that of one who has not reached tertiary level education, such as one of the unskilled workers.

⁹⁶⁰ NEHAWU, UDUSA, TASA and the DSA. Minutes of the Transformation Committee meeting held 8 February 1996, Lamprecht files.

⁹⁶¹ SASCO, Azanian Students Convention (AZASCO) and the International African Students Association (IASO) (Minutes of the Transformation Committee meeting held 8 February 1996, Lamprecht files). AZASCO is linked to AZAPO, whereas SASCO succeeded and replaced AZASO, linked to the ANC.

⁹⁶² Minutes of the Transformation Committee meeting held 8 February 1996, Lamprecht files.

⁹⁶³ Minutes of the Special Senate meeting 24 held June 1996.

⁹⁶⁴ Report to the Minister of Education, the Hon. SME Bengu by Emeritus Professor SJ Saunders, on an investigation into the affairs of the University of Fort Hare, 1999: 7.

In spite of attempts by Union leaders to win over Mzamane, welcoming him as a “son of the soil”,⁹⁶⁵ they had been unable to prevent the retrenchment of 938 farm workers in 1997.⁹⁶⁶ This was not a personally orchestrated decision, but one that was taken by Council to reduce the burgeoning expenditure on wage labour on the Fort Hare Farm.⁹⁶⁷ Nonetheless, Mzamane and the Academic Registrar, Mabindisa, who had the misfortune to be tasked with implementation, were held personally responsible by NEHAWU. In doing so, they were irreversibly alienated from what was by then the most powerful element on campus, and from this stage on, Mzamane’s financial profligacy, previously accommodated by those who had indeed benefited from his lack of due diligence in controlling salaries and expenditure in general, was held against him as evidence of his mismanagement of university affairs.

During 1998 NEHAWU communicated its disapproval of the alleged financial mismanagement to the Department of Education and in August met with officials, demanding an investigation by an independent assessor into the finances of the University. At the end of 1998, when the University paid salaries late and made no payments to third parties for salary deductions, the Transformation Committee called for the suspension of the Vice-Chancellor, Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic, the Registrar and Council.⁹⁶⁸

At the same time, academic staff unionised within NTESU⁹⁶⁹ were politically divided into the remnants of the old guard from the apartheid regime, namely, liberal Whites and Black lecturers, lacking an effective and united presence. Among White staff, there does not appear to have been resistance to Black leadership, undoubtedly because most of those who objected to the change in University management had simply left Fort Hare. However, the events connected with finances taking place created an atmosphere of fear among Whites,

⁹⁶⁵ Interview with Vusumzi Duma on 26 May 2011.

⁹⁶⁶ Saunders Report, 1999: 6.

⁹⁶⁷ The Saunders Report claimed that in 1998, through overtime payments, drivers and herders earned the highest salaries. The general increases in wages after 1990 were augmented by additional overtime costs, contributing to massive escalation in expenditure on salaries and wages (Ibid., 6).

⁹⁶⁸ By 1999, when Saunders interviewed members of the Transformation / Institutional Forum, 11 of the 21 members represented union interests, with only three representing academics and four students (Saunders Report, 1999:1 & 7).

⁹⁶⁹ National Tertiary Education Staff Union.

particularly after the murder of an employee in the Information Technology department, Stoffels Erasmus, who was rumoured to have been indiscreet in his revelations of financial mismanagement and fraud.⁹⁷⁰

The stage is set for the installation of a neoliberal agenda

The crisis came with the non-payment for between two and six months to third parties of salary deductions for PAYE,⁹⁷¹ UIF (Unemployment Insurance Fund), medical aid and various other debit and stop orders, prompting the call on 29 January 1999 for a vote of no-confidence in Mzamane by the Chair of the Institutional Forum, Siyabonga Kobese. The Chair of NTESU, Theo Bhengu, also called for an investigation by an independent assessor into financial irregularities and an apparent misrepresentation of the size of the deficit,⁹⁷² the retrenchment of workers and the awarding of tenders to companies which had not been properly monitored.⁹⁷³

Mzamane appears to have relied on his charisma and negotiating skills – for which he was renowned – to prevent the Unions from becoming dominant. With his attention focused elsewhere, however, he under-estimated the ambition of Union leaders and similarly failed to either read or heed the signals emanating from the neoliberal State regarding the need for stringent planning and controls over expenditure. Just four years after his inauguration, Mzamane found himself at the receiving end of the investigation instigated by his

⁹⁷⁰ This was the rumour – as the case was never solved, it must remain a rumour – circulating among Fort Hare staff, one that was recounted to the researcher by several staff members, independently of one another. An anonymous letter to Mzamane complains about undemocratic practices among employees that infringe on the rights of all, apologising for remaining anonymous and explaining, “Sorry I cannot give you my name. It seems we are not in such a democratic country after all ... a staff member got shot a few weeks ago” (Anonymous letter to Mzamane dated 30 October 1995).

⁹⁷¹ Acronym for ‘pay as you earn’, a monthly income tax deducted from salaries and payable to the South African Revenue Services.

⁹⁷² A deficit of R13.8 million had been declared, whereas the deficit in fact amounted to R46.8 million (Saunders Report, 1999:8).

⁹⁷³ “Bengu says no need to investigate mismanagement of Fort Hare.” ANC Daily News briefing, 28 January 1999.

predecessor, Bengu, Minister of the Department of Education, in response to the demands by the same staff and student body that had hailed his return.

Subsequent events were to demonstrate the power of the Unions. Having denounced Mzamane, the Unions also targeted Mabindisa. As indicated earlier, he had been held responsible for retrenching over 900 workers in the cost-cutting exercise aimed at rationalising operations. The third unfortunate person who was the object of the Union's ire was Professor T. Maqashalala, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic), whose failure to assume a leadership role during Mzamane's frequent absences from campus had incurred the frustration of academic and administrative staff alike. The "3 M's",⁹⁷⁴ as they were known, were collectively held responsible for the situation of financial maladministration and marched off campus, although evidently there was some disquiet among the less vocal minority, who were aware that financial malpractices were not confined to these three parties. In a public letter to University staff, Professor T.M. Jordaan, the Senate representative on the Institutional Forum and Council, stated that he had been shouted down at the Institutional Forum, and wanted to ask why only the "three M's" were being investigated in the audit, and not the entire University.⁹⁷⁵

Events moved swiftly thereafter, with the Unions gaining the support of the student body in their calls for an investigation.⁹⁷⁶ On 12 March 1999 an independent assessor, Professor Stuart Saunders, formerly Vice-Chancellor of the University of Cape Town, was appointed to investigate the "source and nature of discontent" and the "steps required to restore proper governance" at Fort Hare.⁹⁷⁷ Saunders duly undertook his investigation of the situation at the University according to specific terms of reference requiring reasons for the deterioration of relationships within the University and the "serious lack of confidence" in its governance structures, particularly with relation to finances, maladministration and the role of Council.⁹⁷⁸

⁹⁷⁴ That is, Mzamane, Mabindisa and Maqashalala.

⁹⁷⁵ Open letter from Professor T. Jordaan dated 9 February 1999, Mzamane files.

⁹⁷⁶ SRC president Liso Sogayise said the appointment of a national team was a "good move" ("Students back call for Fort Hare probe", ANC Daily News Briefing, 3 February 1999).

⁹⁷⁷ Saunders Report, 1999.

⁹⁷⁸ Ibid.

The 12-page report highlights financial mismanagement and reckless expenditure that was responsible for a projected overdraft of R70 million by the end of 2000, as well as the lack of morale among academic staff, the abuse of conditions of service by staff, and the absence of leadership on the part of Mzamane that had enabled the Unions to assume power. Its recommendations, almost entirely related to finance, were that Council, after consultation with the University, appoint a ‘troika’ to manage the University, assisted by sub-committees to manage administration and financial affairs, that salary packages of top management be investigated, that plans be put in place to get rid of the deficit within three years, that the University ensure that students pay their fees, and that an internal auditing structure reporting to Council be established. The report urged that Unions and the SRC should act with regard to the interests of the University as well as their members and that Unions should “cease to have a disproportionate influence in university affairs”.⁹⁷⁹ It is significant that whereas specific recommendations were made to establish financial and administrative controls, there was no indication as to how the Unions should be reined in, and no attempt was made to interfere with their activities, thereby enabling an accumulation of power on their part.

Mzamane, along with Mabindisa and Maqashalala, were duly suspended on 16 April 1999 and the immediate response was a call for nominations for interim management. Emails were circulated on behalf of the Transformation Forum, representing primarily non-academic Union members, and NTESU, representing academic staff, calling meetings for all staff at the same time on the same day, the 19th April – albeit in different venues. Staff were invited to submit nominations to the Chair of the Transformation Forum, Nhlangula Cebekhulu, or, for NTESU, Professor Sipho Buthelezi, an ANC stalwart closely connected to leading members of ANC political society and Director of the Institute for Public Management. This was illustrative of the division between the academic staff Union and the administrative and service staff Union, whilst simultaneously serving as an admission the formal University structures were not functioning in the way intended, as substantive decisions such as these were being formulated by Unions, rather than through the standard hierarchical committee nomination and approval processes.

⁹⁷⁹ Saunders Report, 1999: 12.

Dr Derrick Swartz, who at the time headed the division of Fort Hare responsible for offering short courses and training to public sector officials in Bhisho,⁹⁸⁰ was nominated by Buthelezi to serve as Acting Vice-Chancellor.⁹⁸¹ Extolling his management experience and his achievements in generating revenue, Buthelezi convinced those present of the advantages of placing a skilled administrator in the post to which Swartz was later appointed.

One of the primary weaknesses of the University as an institution has always been its financial dependence on the State; however, what was more significant in the context of Fort Hare University in the first post-apartheid decade was its inability to transcend the legacy of ideological domination and break away from a tradition of submission to historically imposed ideas and practices. In the absence of an intellectual revitalisation, the tendency among a disunited academic staff body was towards inertia, enabling the establishment of structures in which new divisions aligned to corporate principles were to dominate, as will be shown.

The consolidation of authority in the University's Senior Administrator

Swartz was installed as Vice-Chancellor in 2000 with a clear mandate: to re-establish financial control as well as to rein in the Unions.⁹⁸² This he did through a system of centralised management with reporting mechanisms linked directly to his office, and by appointing key Union members to well-paid positions where a certain status was enjoyed. In

⁹⁸⁰ This was the successor to the Division of External Studies in Zwelithsa, which had been relocated after Bhisho was built as the administrative capital of the Ciskei. Lamprecht was aware of the strategic importance of the Division of External Studies (DES) in Zwelithsa in the 'cultivation of consent' and emphasised its responsibility for community upliftment through the provision of adult education, rather than its narrow focus on the provision of part-time courses to civil servants in King William's Town. However, 20 years later, it was still only offering training to civil servants.

⁹⁸¹ Siphso Buthelezi worked with Swartz on the Bhisho campus, and both were – and still are – well connected to senior members of the ANC.

⁹⁸² The Report had pointed to an "inappropriate representation" by Unions on the Transformation Forum (later Institutional Forum), which in turn was "seeking to usurp the functions of top management and the council" (Saunders Report, 1999: 7). This view was echoed by the Council Chair at the time, Francis Wilson, who said that this body had assumed responsibility for setting the parameters and criteria according to which transformation was to be pursued and implemented in the University (Interview with Professor Francis Wilson on 30 July 2011).

terms of governance, the iron fist of Fort Hare's most senior manager appeared to be as unresisting as that of his apartheid era predecessors, and the freedom granted to academics to pursue their intellectual goals was subdued by the imperative for a balanced budget.

It is worth recounting the events that led to the demise of the academic staff union, NTESU, which illustrate the subjugation of academic staff to managerialism. Shortly after the 1997 retrenchments of over 900 wage labourers, which strengthened NEHAWU resolve against management, NTESU had been weakened by the wave of retrenchments of academic staff in 1999. NEHAWU was both numerically superior and united in its intent, whereas the presence of conservative elements within NTESU rendered it susceptible to accusations of obstructing transformation. Whilst Swartz was aware of the disruptive potential of both NEHAWU and NTESU, he was aware that NEHAWU presented a greater threat to stability and his strategy was to co-opt NEHAWU leaders.⁹⁸³ With NEHAWU leadership behind him, he undermined the academic voice constituted by NTESU, which by 2004 had ceased to exist.⁹⁸⁴ Fearful of the prospect of humiliation, the docility of academic staff displayed Femia's first grounds for conformity, namely, fear of reprisal.⁹⁸⁵ Senate meetings became occasions for conducting checks on matters relating to academic administration and no substantive debate took place.⁹⁸⁶ As managerialism crept into Fort Hare through the creation of layers of management concentrated in the departments of Finance and Human Resources, academic staff became more isolated and submissive, subsumed by the barrage of reporting demands that constitute the disciplinary mechanisms of managerialism.

At the same time, the connection to political society that had had been neglected during Mzamane's term of office, when the cultivation of an academic identity had been favoured,

⁹⁸³ In conversation with various members of staff, Black and White, academic and administrative, accounts have been offered of how Swartz is reported to have courted NEHAWU leadership by bestowing privileges and status in the various offices they held – and some still hold – at Fort Hare.

⁹⁸⁴ Academic staff refer to Swartz's authoritarian leadership style, which did not entertain open-ended debate. One staff member spoke of the fear of being derided in Senate that resulted in items on the Senate meeting agendas being reduced to formalities around academic administration (Interview with anonymous academic staff member on 20 July 2011).

⁹⁸⁵ Femia, 1981: 38 – 43.

⁹⁸⁶ Ibid.

was reinforced as the information flow from the VC's office to the Department of Education was resumed. Within a short time, the new Vice-Chancellor was being praised for having contained the profligate spending of his predecessor, established sound administrative structures and installed a rigorous system of accountability.⁹⁸⁷ The ominous tone of Bengu's 1995 address, hinting at financial and governance priorities, had become a reality.

Whilst the previous apartheid era Administration had received directives from the State, it was the installation of a neoliberal agenda that originated from transnational sources and was transmitted via the State, which distinguish this period from the previous one. National policy was informed by values and aims that resonated with those of the market, heralding the dawn of managerialism.⁹⁸⁸ In the University, the advent of corporatism was marked by the launch of the University's first strategic plan in May 2000. Celebrated as a significant achievement – which, in neoliberal terms, it was – the occasion was marked by the attendance of the Minister of Education, Kader Asmal, and the Eastern Cape Premier, Arnold Stofile.

⁹⁸⁷ The University of Fort Hare website's acclaim for Swartz is illustrated by the highlighting of his achievements, which were aligned to national neoliberal imperatives, as follows: "After his return to South Africa, he became professor and Director of the Institute of Government at the University of Fort Hare. In 1999 at the time when the University was on the brink of collapse he was called in to lead the University. Under his leadership, UFH experienced a dramatic and positive change in fortunes through a new growth plan, Strategic Plan 2000, which saw the creation of five new faculties, rising student numbers, growth in income and unprecedented stability. It was largely on the strength of these interventions that the Government's 'merger reforms' of higher education in 2003 left UFH in tact [sic], with an additional campus in Buffalo City. Based on a vision of a vibrant, sustainable and 'engaging' university, UFH under the leadership of Vice Chancellor Swartz and his management team has grown into a reputable higher education institution with a rich and well-established brand name locally and internationally. The recent award of the Supreme Order of Baobab, Gold Class, South Africa' [sic] highest honour, to the University of Fort Hare, is a testimony of its collective achievements" (<http://www.ufh.ac.za/vc/swartz/>).

⁹⁸⁸ The marketisation of the higher education environment is synonymous with a "new managerialism that is a reflection and outcome of a broader neoliberal discourse that has transformed relationships between the State, civil society and universities in major ways throughout the world (Everard Webster and Sarah Mosoetsa, 2001. In Jonathan Jansen *et al*, 2007: 164).

Asmal highlighted two elements of the strategic plan that most impressed him, those being, firstly, the plan to align resources to the shape and size of the University, which was “substantially in excess of its requirements”; and secondly, the re-alignment of academic programmes, “including improving quality”, to meet local needs.⁹⁸⁹ Stofile’s speech highlighted what he considered were the guiding principles, including training towards productivity and goal-oriented knowledge that would contribute to reconstruction and development rather than “knowledge for the sake of it”.⁹⁹⁰ Stofile’s approbation of the proposed strategy to be applied at Fort Hare was not, however, one of unqualified admiration. Speaking as one well acquainted with the average ‘man in the mass’ at Fort Hare and the underlying motivations for their actions, he warned that in terms of practical implementation, national developmental theories and plans had not transpired as envisaged due to self-interest, and, in a reference to the failure of plans to get off the ground, he cautioned that he had “seen it happen at this University after 1993”.⁹⁹¹

Epilogue: neoliberalism at Fort Hare – a triumph of principle or practice?

Notwithstanding the existence of neoliberal principles in the discourse generated by Fort Hare in its public documents, their existence in print was not necessarily an indication that these would transpire into the stated objectives. Stofile’s cautioning that plans do not necessarily transpire into reality was prophetic. Over the course of a few years, the objectives of the Institutional Operational Plan for 2004, derived from SP2000, were duly substituted, without having materialized, by those of SP2009 – 2016.⁹⁹² Fort Hare’s nominal commitment to a neoliberal agenda was noted in the 2009 Audit Report by the Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC).⁹⁹³ The report commented on the aims of 2000 Strategic Plan of 2000 to

⁹⁸⁹ Address by the Minister of Education, Prof Kader Asmal, to the General Assembly of the University of Fort Hare, Alice, 2 October 2000: 3.

⁹⁹⁰ Address by M.A. Stofile, Premier of the Eastern Cape, at the Launch of the Strategic Plan 2000 at the University of Fort Hare on 12 May 2000: 2.

⁹⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹⁹² Strategic Plan 2009 – 2016: Towards our centenary.

⁹⁹³ The HEQC is a sub-committee of the Council on Higher Education (CHE), a statutory body established by the Higher Education Act 101 of 1997 that is tasked with oversight of issues relating to the quality of higher education in South Africa. The CHE has broad oversight and performs a consultative and advisory function to the Minister of Higher Education and Training, also acting as an

address “critical challenges” in the three main areas of financial sustainability, academic viability and governance, leadership and management and pointed out that the vision and mission were developed in alignment with “appropriate corporate goals and strategic objectives”.⁹⁹⁴ It further noted that “the roles of key components of corporate and institutional governance, leadership and management were also redefined” and that Fort Hare had developed an implementation plan with “working principles, timelines, accountabilities, financial requirements and a high level monitoring and an evaluation template”, as well as “new operating plans, culminating in the Institutional Operating Plan of 2004”.⁹⁹⁵ However, many of the recommendations of the audit report pointed to the need to implement these.

While the period after 2000 falls outside the scope of this research, it is worthwhile pointing to the continued conformity in which relationships in Fort Hare are steeped. Strongly enmeshed networks of patronage derived from kinship, status, religious affiliation or community are responsible for generating and fulfilling expectations of reciprocity.⁹⁹⁶ Mutual obligations, implicit or explicit, induce conformity through expectations of reciprocity, thwarting the ideal of impartiality that is crucial for bureaucratic efficiency. Ranging from subtly communicated expectations of deference to authority due to age or social status, to a disregard for university policy in granting favours, the playing out of relationships of patronage is particularly evident in non-academic divisions and departments.⁹⁹⁷

intermediary between the Department of Higher Education and Training and both public and private providers of higher education. The HEQC has specific responsibility for dealing with issues relating to quality and quality assurance. Significantly, the Higher Education Act installed the policy framework and structures for quality assurance, another element of managerialism borrowed from the corporate environment.

⁹⁹⁴ CHE Final Audit Report on the University of Fort Hare April 2009: 15.

⁹⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁹⁶ Femia, 1981: 38 – 43.

⁹⁹⁷ The Strategic Risk Assessment commissioned in 2009 by Fort Hare from KPMG, the auditing firm used by Fort Hare for its internal audits of departments and divisions, revealed risks in various areas that prevented the University from achieving its goals, inter alia, poor quality staff, fraud, corruption and collusion, a dysfunctional institutional culture, poor corporate governance and inadequate community engagement (Final Strategic Risk Assessment Report, 27 January 2009: 4).

In this context, in relation to the concepts of common sense and cultural hegemony, the tradition of resistance on the part of the Xhosa that is the product of centuries of defiance against colonial intrusion appears to have lingered as a 'residue', in the context of components of the Gramscian 'common sense'. Alongside cultural values, conventions and beliefs that are played out in working relationships that assign status and authority on the basis of age and kinship, the passive resistance to new ideas is manifest in many simply not being implemented, even when formally agreed on. The institutional ethos on the rural Alice campus is one of cultural solidarity, sometimes evident in the muted form of xenophobia that was identified in the 2008 institutional audit.⁹⁹⁸ Resistance in the form of opposition to new ideas and unfamiliar initiatives by longer-serving staff is typical of the conservatism described by Girling when the vestiges of groups or classes with traditional authority combine with the bureaucracy to oppose modernisation.⁹⁹⁹

The second significant aspect is that, as a result of both the advent of managerialism and the demise of the academic staff union, the locus of power at Fort Hare until 2012 lay with an alliance of NEHAWU leaders, senior non-academic administrators who had been appointed to positions of status and power by Swartz in 2000, so as to pre-empt challenges to his position and plans. This act directly mirrored the substitution by the ANC at the level of the State of the self-acclaimed intellectual, former President Thabo Mbeki, by the populist Jacob Zuma, who had not completed his schooling and was seen to be a leader of the masses. Many academic staff wishing to contribute to dialogue became members of NEHAWU, aware of the tacit acknowledgment by the University Administration that it was the leadership of NEHAWU, and not Senate, which had the power to influence institutional decisions. With effective decision-making in the hands of the NEHAWU executive, the main thrust of academic responsibilities, reflected in the scope and content of Senate meetings, became that

⁹⁹⁸ Recommendation No. 6 reads as follows: The HEQC recommends that the University of Fort Hare investigate the extent of xenophobia among and between staff and students across the institution, and, in the light of its findings put in place (i) interventions to prevent the occurrence of xenophobic activities, and (ii) mechanisms that increase tolerance and respect for persons whatever their nationality; (iii) resources the International Office in such a manner that it can provide better service to international students and play a meaningful role in helping to manage xenophobic behaviour in campus (CHE Final Audit Report on the University of Fort Hare, April 2009: 10).

⁹⁹⁹ Girling, 2002.

of serving as a check on matters of academic administration. Reporting demands obliging academic staff to prove performativity and efficiency, namely, productivity and outputs relative to inputs, deprive academic staff of the time and opportunity to engage in collegial intellectual discussion. Although the ‘old guard’ of NEHAWU was ousted in 2012, the former members of the executive still retain their posts at senior levels in the university, as a result of which control is still wielded over crucial areas. Senate meetings still revolve around technical issues and matters of academic administration.¹⁰⁰⁰

These characteristics assign Fort Hare to a university category referred to by leading South African scholar in the field of higher education, Joe Muller, as “domain-protecting”.¹⁰⁰¹ This is unflatteringly described as characterised by a generally weak academic component and a weak, change-resistant management which displays an over-accommodation of internal interests.¹⁰⁰² Nearing its centenary celebrations, the legacy of conformity that has given rise to this weakness presents a sharp contrast to the image of heroic struggle and intellectual achievement of which the University of Fort Hare boasts.

Analysis: compliance and conformity in the absence of a hegemonic project

The final part of this chapter examined the relationship between the global political economy, the State and the University, and the relationships between various segments of the university community during the 1990s. This decade ushered in what has been termed, for want of a more analytically appropriate description, the ‘post-apartheid’ era. In much the same way that

¹⁰⁰⁰ As reflected in the agendas and minutes of Senate meetings 2009 – 2013.

¹⁰⁰¹ Muller, 2001: 14.

¹⁰⁰² Eight years later, the University of Fort Hare was audited by the arm of the Council on Higher Education responsible for quality assurance, the Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC), as part of a national cycle of university audits. The subsequent report noted the apparent inactivity of the Institutional Forum, which had been tasked with amending the Fort Hare Act and Statutes and had failed to complete this. The HEQC included in its recommendations that “the University of Fort Hare clarify and strengthen the role of the Institutional Forum so that it functions effectively in accordance with the University of Fort Hare Statute” (CHE Final Audit Report on the University of Fort Hare. April 2009: 10). This was an ironic observation on the absence of a revised statute, eight years after the task had been assigned.

‘post-colonialism’, as a theoretical approach, embraces a range of oppositional positions without offering a rigorous intellectual clarity,¹⁰⁰³ the term ‘post-apartheid’ signals a need for further theoretical engagement to lead beyond the current ideological void. In retrospect, the 1990s have been revealed as a hiatus between the crisis in capital accumulation and political resistance that prompted the dismantling of the apartheid system, and the resumption and consolidation of a political economy directed by the neoliberal world order into which South Africa was absorbed over the course of the first few years of democracy.

The first part of this chapter examined the changing ‘world order’, as neoliberalism gained a global stranglehold, and the accompanying changes in the South African State as the revolutionary movements that had struggled against apartheid were either accommodated directly within political society, or defused through the dismantling of resistance movements that had existed in civil society.

It has been shown that in the last decade of the twentieth century, the leadership of the University Administration was handed to its first Black Vice-Chancellors, who, in the absence of either a Black South African academic identity or a clearly defined hegemonic project on the part of the African National Conference that provided a way forward for Black scholarship, were unable to offer either resistance to the looming neoliberal hegemonic project or to provide the academic leadership that could nurture a strong Black intellectual presence at Fort Hare. The transition from three decades of a rigorously enforced authoritarianism to an ideological void rendered it susceptible to the external agendas which came to dominate. Having been suppressed at Fort Hare in the apartheid era, the traditional intellectual culture of open enquiry and debate was largely lacking when the transition towards a non-racially defined society occurred. Thus, in the absence of coherent opposition to a new political and ideological hegemony, the change that took place was essentially one relating to the shift in the power base from White to Black.

In examining the changes in the relationship between the State and the University, it was seen that the claims by the post-apartheid State to Fort Hare as the *alma mater* of leaders of the

¹⁰⁰³ It has been argued that theoretical intention has been foregrounded, to the detriment of academic practice (Paul T. Zeleza, 2010: 75).

liberation movement and symbolic of the struggle against apartheid belied the ongoing tensions in the University itself. As a mirror of those tensions that existed at the level of the State and of the ontological transition to the global hegemony of neoliberalism, Fort Hare served to exemplify the reformulation of ‘common sense’ that resulted in citizens identifying themselves as consumers, with demands for a greater share of resources and income replacing those of political equality and social liberation, as the focus of both student and Union activities was adjusted according to the neoliberal lens of the economy.

At the same time, the political tensions at the level of the State between COSATU and the senior leadership of the ANC were mirrored in the struggle at the level of the University in the competition for power between the academic staff Union and the administrative staff and workers’ Union. This, coupled with the change in institutional culture towards an implicit acknowledgment of relationships of patronage, has undermined the ability of the University Administration either to initiate an intellectual revival or to cultivate a ‘neutral’ corporate culture oriented towards efficiency.¹⁰⁰⁴ The subsequent intellectual doldrums have continued to plague Fort Hare, which has, instead of seeking intellectual autonomy, identified itself with the primarily symbolic political intentions of the ruling party.

Within the student body, the shift in demands from political equality to financial issues marked the intrusion and insertion of neoliberal priorities and practices. Broader political and social issues ceded to individual interests as student protest became centred around narrowly defined aspects relating to fees and personal benefits.

¹⁰⁰⁴ This was exemplified by the suspension in 2012 of a substantial number of administrative staff involved in a syndicate coordinated by a senior University administrator. Bribes were being taken from prospective students and their parents in order to gain admission to the university. The practice of passing a ‘brown envelope’ to receptive staff in return for being admitted was so widespread that it was recognised by prospective students as an alternative access route. Some staff implicated in the syndicate resigned to take up posts elsewhere, but, despite the Vice-Chancellor having undertaken to update Senate on the findings, the results of the investigation, concluded in 2013, were not disclosed. This is at least partly due to a reluctance on the part of senior management to be seen meting out punishment. However, it also reveals the relations of patronage that predominate at Fort Hare, countering the ‘efficiency’ and ‘neutrality’ of modernity, encouraging passivity and conformity in the ‘expectation of reciprocity’ (Femia, 1981: 38 – 43) on a possible future occasion.

Finally, in terms of the exercise of hegemony and the nature and extent of conformity and compliance, the 1990s witnessed at Fort Hare the withering of ‘acquiescence under duress’, the first of Femia’s reasons for conformity,¹⁰⁰⁵ as Black staff and students, along with members of the wider Black civil society, readily accepted the promise of a “better life for all” proclaimed by the ANC. This signified the substitution of political resistance on the part of the masses in Black civil society by the second of Femia’s reasons for conformity, that of ‘unreflecting participation’ and unconscious agreement.¹⁰⁰⁶ The third, that of conscious agreement,¹⁰⁰⁷ was manifest in the considered consent offered by large numbers of former dissidents, and, as observed earlier, the fourth, that of ‘pragmatic acceptance’,¹⁰⁰⁸ was foregrounded as potential gains became evident.

In concluding, the findings of the research on which this chapter is based point to the strengthening of the relationship between the State and the University of Fort Hare and the cultivation of relationships of conformity and consensus between political society and the University Administration. Despite the generally accepted principle that the University should enjoy academic autonomy, enabling it to offer critique and commentary with a view to striving for social justice, the case of Fort Hare proves instead to be one of striving for a unanimity of intent, as compliance becomes paramount in the efforts on the part of the Administration to demonstrate loyalty to the ruling party and solidarity with its prerogatives.

¹⁰⁰⁵ Femia, 1981: 38 – 43.

¹⁰⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰⁸ Ibid.

Chapter Seven: Conclusion

As emphasised in Chapter One, the purpose of this research was not to generate ‘new knowledge’ in an absolute sense, but rather to illustrate the applicability of a theoretical framework constituted by different layers and conceptual linkages. Within the broad approach of critical theory, which aims at demystifying and clarifying social relations of power and domination, the political economy of the State was used as scaffolding to support a Gramscian approach to the State’s exercise of hegemony. At a more precise level, the research investigated the exercise of cultural hegemony by examining the nature of the relationship between the South African State and the Administration of the University of Fort Hare. This was done over three periods representing different expressions of the dependent capitalist State as it responded to both national circumstances and changes in the broader global political economy. The research also analysed responses to the State’s attempted exercise of hegemony, broadly manifest in conformity and compliance, as presented by Joseph Femia,¹⁰⁰⁹ or contestation.

It was felt that the purpose of illustrating the validity of a Gramscian approach, through utilising different levels of analysis and conceptual linkages, was better achieved by summarising the findings in the analysis offered at the end of each of the empirical chapters. This also avoided an overload in the concluding chapter, which, as a result, may appear relatively parsimonious in terms of its presentation of the research findings, as much of what has already been included in the preceding chapters will not be repeated.

Before offering an overview of the findings, let us briefly reconsider the theoretical premises. The Gramscian notion of the exercise of hegemony perceives it as constituted by those activities carried out by the State that are aimed at securing power through eliciting the consent of society at large to its leadership. To do so, it is necessary to disguise the primary cause of domination by fabricating and disseminating a set of beliefs and values that both conceals the real nature of power and legitimises existing social relations. These beliefs and ideas are formally institutionalised in both practices and the organisations which give rise to these, such as courts of law, the bureaucracy, and the schooling system. Public schools

¹⁰⁰⁹ Femia, 1981: 38 – 43.

perform a crucial role by cultivating and promoting the beliefs, values and practices that are appropriate to the continued reproduction of social relations.

Universities are traditionally considered as enjoying an autonomy that enables them to encourage scholarship and critique, but they nonetheless have an instrumental function in preparing students for participation in society as both citizens and members of privileged or dominant social classes. Within this constraint, universities may strive towards attaining a relative autonomy from the State, in which they are able to critique power; or they may align themselves with the values and ideals of the dominant classes that are embedded within State policy (or hegemonic project), assuming a predominantly instrumental role. They may also capitulate to the dominant values that find expression in the State, accommodating the reproduction of ideas, norms and practices that contribute to maintaining relations of power and domination.

In investigating the nature of the relationship between the State and the University of Fort Hare in the exercise of cultural hegemony, this research presented an argument for the role of the University as conformist and complicit in the cultivation of consent to the new form of society presented by modernity. The University Administration was shown to have generally shared and reinforced the dominant values that corresponded to different expressions of the capitalist State. It was also shown to have performed an essentially instrumental role in providing an education that was aimed at the establishment of a suitably trained cadre of civil servants and professionals, who would serve to maintain and reproduce existing social relations, whilst legitimising domination through the values inherent in the curriculum.

Ultimately, notwithstanding the decades of student protest, the resilience of the inherently conformist University Administration was evident in its ability to resist change, until such a time that wider social change afforded the opportunity for this in 1990. Fort Hare had institutionalised practices to secure compliance and conformity, and these were reinforced to withstand cohort after cohort of dissident students. One of the most significant outcomes of the subordination of academic staff to the mandate of the University Administration, apart

from the ensuing conformity, has been the lasting effect of intellectual passivity in the form of an absence of engagement with issues around power and justice on campus.¹⁰¹⁰

However, Gramsci also pointed to the need for domination, in instances where the State fails in its attempts to provide the ideological leadership that is able to secure the consent of society at large. It then becomes necessary to exercise control through coercive measures instead. The aim is essentially the same, that of reinforcing relations of power and domination: however, in one, the method is force, rather than persuasion.

This control was necessary to counter outright contestation by Black students of the explicitly racial nature of domination embedded in the first two expressions of the post-colonial State, described in Chapters Four and Five. Notwithstanding the rejection by Black students of the racial nature of capitalist exploitation, there was no evidence of an outright rejection of the overarching ideals of a capitalist society, or of the social inequality in a society divided according to social classes. In general, Black students readily exchanged the social constraints of traditional forms of African society, instead aspiring to the privileges derived from membership of the professional and petty bourgeois classes that could be accessed by a university education.

In this respect, it was shown that the exercise of cultural hegemony was successful in the period under consideration in cultivating liberal values based on individual freedom and access to class-based material and social privileges.

In relation to the above claim, a further purpose was to present a critical biography of the University of Fort Hare, interrogating the prevalent ‘mythology’ relating to its academic status as the *alma mater* of generations of African intellectuals. Whilst it certainly graduated thousands of intellectuals, it never nurtured the critical thinking that is necessary to challenge fundamental social injustice. It was unnecessary for Black people to attend university to become aware of racial domination, but for those who acquired a university education, it offered the opportunity to obtain important leadership skills and meet with a wide network of

¹⁰¹⁰ The *Daily Dispatch* arranges a series of public dialogues, dating back to the time when the East London campus of Fort Hare was part of Rhodes University. Called the “Dispatch – Fort Hare dialogues”, they are still held only in East London and are organised by the *Daily Dispatch*.

young people with similar values and aspirations. It thus enabled future collaboration and provided access to future positions of leadership.

In examining conformity, the research investigated the extent to which the exercise of cultural hegemony was successful in cultivating consent; either as an unreflecting acceptance of ‘the way things are’, or as a conscious acceptance (whether unwilling, or in agreement with the basic principles of the world view presented). The reasons for conformity presented by Joseph Femia were used to explain its various manifestations under different circumstances. Conformity in the expectation of future reciprocity, or reward, was presented as a compelling reason for staff and students adopting the liberal views and ideals of the petty bourgeoisie, in so doing accepting the inequality inherent to a class-based society.

In sum, the research demonstrated the applicability of a Gramscian approach to the exercise of cultural hegemony. This approach was able to explain relations of power and domination as originating in the political economy, and the role of the University as an instrument of cultural domination and subordination. It was shown that the University of Fort Hare provides a particularly explicit example of the cultivation of consent in relation to the overarching values of capitalist society in the form of liberal values and ideals. At the same time, the research demonstrated the resistance shown by the subaltern (Blacks) to the State’s hegemonic project, as transmitted through the University Administration, between 1920 and 1990. The general successfulness of the exercise of cultural hegemony, evident in conformity with liberal values, was countered by rejection of a society defined by the subjugation of Black people.

One of the researcher’s personal motives was to rekindle interest in a Gramscian approach to the examination of power and its manifestation in the form of cultural hegemony. The extent to which consent in relation to “the way things are” is elicited from citizens in societies throughout the world is indicative of the effectiveness of the exercise of cultural hegemony and the subjugation of subaltern societies to the values and norms of powerful capitalist societies. In an era characterised by the homogenising effect of globalisation and a strong tendency towards conformity of ideals, it is imperative that a forceful argument be presented to counter the intellectually numbing effect of an education oriented towards subjugation to the needs of dominant transnational capital in hegemonic societies.

Overview of the research results in relation to the existence of conformity

At the outset, the intention of the research was illustrative and investigative: the research both illustrated the course of 100 years of the exercise of cultural hegemony and investigated responses to this in various motives for conformity. According to Raymond Williams,¹⁰¹¹ hegemony exceeds the mere notion of ideology, and is constituted by “saturating the common sense of society”¹⁰¹² to the extent that there is a general consonance of values, practices and expectations. The means of testing the existence of conformity in the form of a general consensus relating to values and norms was demonstrated in records of pronouncements, utterances, discussions and decisions at the level of the State and in the University, and also evident in national policy as well as the policies and principles of the University.

The preceding chapters have illustrated that the relationship between the State and the University, as an institution within civil society, was generally one of subjugation to and conformity with the mandate and values of the South African State, even though this did not necessarily always represent a consonance of ideals.

In the first period, conformity was evident not through active advocacy on the part of the missionary Administration, but rather through the withholding of critique. Conformity was to a large extent due to force of necessity, owing to the lack of financial resources at the disposal of the University Administration. Notwithstanding this constraint, the overarching values and aims of the missionary Administration did not extend beyond the boundaries of intellectual equality and precluded equal political rights. It was shown that the Administration also displayed a fear of the possible negative consequences of any form of critique of the State, engaging in a self-censorship indicative of Femia’s first grounds for conformity, fear of the repercussions of non-conformity.¹⁰¹³ The exercise of cultural hegemony was increasingly effective in terms of the response of subaltern society. As industrialisation facilitated the dissemination and permeation of values associated with modernity and the notion of progress towards a civilisation based on industry and technology, education was accepted as being the means by which social ambitions would be realised. By the 1940s, students at Fort Hare were

¹⁰¹¹ Williams, 1980: 37 – 38.

¹⁰¹² Ibid.

¹⁰¹³ Femia, 1981: 38 – 43.

drawn not only from the emergent petty bourgeois class and traditionally privileged groups, but from the working class, leading to a greater militancy against obstacles to upwards social mobility and the political ambitions of an intellectual Black elite.

In the second period, there was an almost complete consonance in the values and aims of the State and the University Administration, although it was shown that the broad division within the political elite was reflected in the frustrations often experienced by the university Administration in their efforts to execute the Apartheid project of separate development. From time to time, tensions erupted between conservative senior State bureaucrats and the more pragmatic apartheid Administration at Fort Hare, intent on successfully running an ethnic University. However, between 1960 and 1990, the synergies between the Apartheid State and the University Administration were illustrated by the almost consistently conscious agreement that constitutes the third of Femia's motives for conformity.¹⁰¹⁴.

Finally, in the third period, there was an interlude in which the University Administration floundered, whilst ideological tussles at the level of the State between socialist and neoliberal elements created an ideological vacuum that could have been filled by a strong intellectual leadership. However, the party loyalty of the first post-apartheid Vice-Chancellor resulted in an inertia as he waited for directives from the State, which vacillated during the transition period that ended in 1994. Calls for an African intellectual renaissance by his spendthrift successor were subordinated to the newly emergent neoliberal State's demands for a demonstration of accountability in the form of academic productivity and financial controls. Its financial weakness once again disciplined Fort Hare into re-cultivating a relationship of dependent complicity with the State, which cleared its debt at the end of the 1990s.¹⁰¹⁵ Subsequent to this, the post-apartheid State seized the opportunity to tighten the links with Fort Hare through the appointment of a Vice-Chancellor whose party loyalty to the ANC was known. In this way, Fort Hare was claimed as both a symbol of the liberation struggle and as a site for the development of values aligned to those of the ruling party.

¹⁰¹⁴ Femia, 1983: 38 - 43.

¹⁰¹⁵ Apart from State funding for teaching and research, Fort Hare does not gain from the so-called "third-stream" income other universities receive from alumni. Despite the financial status that many alumni have achieved, there is little acknowledgment in the form of donations that Fort Hare has contributed to their success (Observation by long-serving staff member in Alumni Office).

Turning to the relationship between the University Administration and the staff and student body, an overwhelming conformity on the part of staff was evident throughout the period under consideration, irrespective of whether this was conscious or unconscious consent. During the apartheid era, a clearer distinction emerged between staff who conformed in the hope of benefiting from the system and those whose compliance was reluctant, owing to the lack of opportunities elsewhere for those who wished to follow an academic career. In the case of Black academic staff, this was evident in those who conformed “under duress”¹⁰¹⁶ or those who were motivated by expectations of reciprocity.¹⁰¹⁷ In the immediate post-apartheid decade, unease developed among White staff, as their hitherto privileged position eroded in the face of the advancement of opportunities for Black staff.

In a display of rejection of the new non-racial values of the post-apartheid University, many White staff exited, in an ironical replication of the exodus of staff with liberal values who had left when Fort Hare was placed under the Apartheid State. In both cases, this is indicative of a passive form of dissent, that of turning away from, rather than confronting issues that elsewhere provoked contestation. The almost complete absence of resistance by staff to an authoritarian Administration was to facilitate the subjugation of academic staff to the Union, fostering the enduring passivity encountered among staff at the University of Fort Hare today.

However, it was shown that the student body presented more diverse responses to the activities of the State and the University Administration, ranging from various types of conformity to direct contestation. The grounds for dissent were constituted by demands for an end to White domination and the political exclusion of Blacks. The sub-text pointed to the underlying aim as being the desire to form part of a ‘modern society’ by joining the professional and petty bourgeois classes. Once the right to political participation was achieved, the response of students to the recently instated neoliberal State was seen to resonate with that of students throughout the world faced with rising fees, resultant debt and the prospects of joblessness after graduation.

¹⁰¹⁶ Conformity under duress is the first of Femia’s four grounds for conformity (Femia, 1981: 38 – 42). However, as explained in Chapter One, the researcher has chosen to consider forced conformity as ‘compliance’, on the basis that it is a conscious position directed against dominant principles.

¹⁰¹⁷ Femia, 1981: 38 - 43.

Within the framework of the exercise of hegemony, the nature of conformity was shown to be consonant with the reasons proffered by Femia,¹⁰¹⁸ adapted by the researcher to accommodate ‘compliance’ as illustrating either a conscious and principled conformity, or a reluctant conformity. It was shown that each of Femia’s four reasons for conformity were displayed over the period of almost a century of the existence of the University of Fort Hare, either by the University Administration in relation to the State, or by staff and students in relation to the University Administration.¹⁰¹⁹ It should be noted that general consent and acceptance of the new social classes of ‘modern’ society prevailed. Underlying tensions flared up among students with increasingly greater frequency as the effect of widespread dissent within civil society at large became evident during the 1980s.

Conformity after 2000

The current Fort Hare Administration has made it clear that the role of the university is not that of maintaining its distance from the State in order to be able to offer independent critique. Instead, Fort Hare cultivates a relationship of patronage in ‘the expectation of reciprocity’.¹⁰²⁰ Collaboration between State and University is evident less in ideological conformity – this being difficult to achieve in a party with diverse ideological perspectives – and more in its complicity. Lacking a coherent ideological project, the State lays claim to Fort Hare as symbolic of the struggle for political freedom and utilises the University in much way that the Apartheid State did, to serve its education and training needs. Fort Hare frequently hosts senior ANC members as speakers on campus¹⁰²¹ and the ANC uses Fort

¹⁰¹⁸ Femia, 1981.

¹⁰¹⁹ This is notwithstanding the fact that a greater degree of resistance to dominant principles was displayed by members of the student body.

¹⁰²⁰ Femia, 1981: 38 – 43.

¹⁰²¹ The Z.K. Matthews Memorial Speech was delivered by the Minister of Higher Education and Training, Blade Nzimande, in 2011 and in 2012 by the President, Jacob Zuma. The Secretary General of the ANC, Gwede Mantashe, was on campus in April 2012 to address students, shortly after the initiation of the process to expel former ANCYL President, Julius Malema, from the ANC (Malema had visited the campus in March prior to the SRC elections to urge students to vote for the ANC). In October 2012, before being ousted from his post as Minister of Human Settlements for opposing President Zuma in the Mangaung Conference, Tokyo Sexwale gave a talk in which he said that the

Hare facilities to host its annual provincial congress. The instrumental function of Fort Hare relative to the exercise of hegemony is evident in its responsiveness to the education and training needs expressed by national and provincial departments.¹⁰²² In relation to the reasons for its performing this instrumental function, long-standing political loyalties based on expectations of reciprocity must be taken into account. The University's senior Administration complies with the State's mandate not simply because these programmes resonate with the University's stated mission, or of funding that is accrued for additional programmes assigned to Fort Hare for tuition, but because of the recognition afforded to individuals involved in initiatives, and the prospects for further advancement.

Recommendations for further research

It was observed earlier that the vast amount of data available proved to be the greatest challenge, requiring an ongoing sifting and elimination according to relevancy to a particular concept. The most immediate recommendation would thus seemingly be that further research be undertaken within the time of the apartheid Administration, where the availability of primary resources on the Fort Hare campus, ranging from formal university records to the former Rectors' personal files, offers opportunities for investigation into a range of aspects and perspectives, from the historic-political to the psycho-political. Another logical recommendation would be to link the stage at which this research ends to the present, covering a 12-year trajectory characterised by the trend towards greater connectivity between the State and the University of Fort Hare.

In an outcome that exemplifies what is widely considered as the pessimist nature of critical theory, the researcher has come to doubt the prospects for radical social change in the face of the overwhelming nature of consent to the values (greed and selfishness) of the rampant

ANC had capitalist elements, but that they were not liberals. In 2013, whilst President Zuma was being accused of subverting justice, the Minister of Justice, Jeff Radebe, gave two talks on campus.

¹⁰²² Between 2009 and 2013, new qualifications and short courses have been introduced in response to requests by national, provincial and local authorities in the fields of Public Administration, Education, Business Management, Nursing, Agriculture, Social Development, Human Settlement, Law, African Languages, Library and Information Science and even Pharmacy (though Fort Hare does not have a Department of Pharmacy).

consumerism spawned by the global triumph of capitalism. In much the same way that Adorno critiqued jazz as having a pacifying influence on the masses, the endless availability of commodities and the promotion of insatiable consumption as the ideal ‘way of life’ has convinced subaltern society that things are indeed the way they should be. Education serves as the means by which a job and salary can be procured so as to enable participation in this consumer paradise, and uncritical participation as a ‘unit’ of human capital enables further advancement, promising the achievement of greater levels of consumption.

A further and more intellectual misgiving has arisen during the trajectory of research at the Fort Hare over the last four years, leading the researcher to question the validity of a vast body of knowledge that is informed essentially by Western belief systems, norms and morals. Much of what is held as ‘true’ and ‘good’, particularly in relation to systems of government and resource distribution in post-colonial societies, is imbued with liberal values that have not been assimilated into the common sense of subaltern societies subjugated to capitalist systems of production and a set of social relations supposedly informed solely in relation to the market and the place occupied in production. Even the most astute intellectuals are still inclined towards moral judgments in relation to what is perceived as ‘corruption’ on the part of African systems of government. My personal experience highlights this, as outlined below.

Arriving at Fort Hare at the beginning of 2009, my overwhelming impression, as one steeped in Western values of democracy, was that the institution was inefficient and harboured corrupt practices.¹⁰²³ The failure of both administrative and academic staff, senior and junior, to perform according to the neoliberal imperatives of impartiality and efficiency, led to the exercise undertaken by the post-apartheid State – through outsourcing to a private consultants – to ‘rationalise’ the workforce at Fort Hare relative to productivity.¹⁰²⁴

¹⁰²³ Probably the most prominent among these was the admission of students to both qualifications and residences on the basis of bribes, a practice that was disrupted at the beginning of 2012 when students and parents were called upon to identify staff members who participated in the scheme, leading to their suspension and subsequent investigation.

¹⁰²⁴ This exercise was undertaken by a firm of consultants who conducted similar exercises at other public universities. The aim was ‘rationalisation’, or achieving the ‘appropriate’ ratio of staff relative to purpose and productivity.

At the same time, the widespread existence of what was defined by external auditors as fraud, suggested the institutionalisation of these practices.¹⁰²⁵ With the righteous indignation of a liberal mind, I drew the attention of my colleagues to these. Staff and students alike were seemingly aware of ‘malpractices’ originating from positions of control, acknowledging these as unfair and undesirable. Yet, the extent of recourse to people, rather than policies, to achieve desired outcomes, pointed to the significance of systems of patronage and the need to acknowledge status, as well as the acceptability of doing so. ‘Corruption’ appeared to have become absorbed into the common sense. However, I later recognised in these relationships one of Femia’s grounds for conformity, that of expectations of reciprocity:¹⁰²⁶ failure to recognise personal status would not achieve the required end.

Viewed from the perspective of a liberal set of morals, this is ‘wrong’. However, considered as the manner in which subaltern societies have adapted the governance systems of dominant societies according to the long-standing practices of traditional societies in which privileges accrue to leaders, it is simply an illustration of a hybrid system. Not all societies consider that leaders should not be extraordinarily wealthy, or that it is wrong to act opportunistically and the existence of systems of patronage is sufficiently widespread to warrant being considered within a context other than the value-laden and judgmental frame of reference of ‘corruption’.

After a while, I began to perceive differently what I had initially considered as inertia, passivity or corruption, which could be better understood in the context of responses by the subaltern to a prolonged and relentless subjugation experienced over the course of centuries. Resilience and resistance have many forms, among these being stubbornness in the form of passivity, or the use of resources in ways or for purposes that are not intended by the dominant group. This selective accommodation of practices and values of the dominant society is evident in the behaviour of a subaltern society imbued with materialist ideals and consumer values of capitalist society, yet best able to attain the desired outcome through recourse to traditionally recognised forms of authority. As observed in Chapter Two, “hegemony is ... laden with contradictions of the periphery”.¹⁰²⁷ Similarly, the unconscious demonstration of defiance by subaltern groups in the form of failure to perform according to

¹⁰²⁵ As indicated by the Strategic Risk Assessment commissioned in 2009 by Fort Hare from KPMG.

¹⁰²⁶ Femia, 1981, 38 – 42.

¹⁰²⁷ Cox, 2002: 368.

the neoliberal criteria of efficiency and productivity, accompanied by the contradictions between policy and practice, represents as much a resistance to an imposed set of practices as the “messiness” of the common sense referred to by Jackson Lears.¹⁰²⁸

The above observations suggest possibilities for further research into cultural resilience and the skewing of cultural and ‘modern’ values and practices towards new hybrid practices. The retention of practices associated with a social differentiation that is not of a class-based nature also points to the resistance displayed by subaltern societies to a universal acceptance of the norms and values of dominant societies. Ultimately, it seems to explain the existence and persistence of post-colonial governments with complex networks of patronage that are able to dominate in estrangement from the masses in civil society.

Finally, and more significantly in relation to the overarching notion of the University’s role in striving towards identifying what constitutes ‘truth’ and producing ‘knowledge’ in general, is the issue of academic autonomy. In the sense of retaining the ability to ‘speak truth to power’, this appears to have been stifled at Fort Hare for the sake of an apparent unity of intent, in much the same way that the missionary Administration refrained from openly challenging the racist discourses and practices of either the post-colonial or the Apartheid State. The difference now is not that there is a suppression of disagreement with basic principles, but that conformity exists for its own sake, in accordance with the ANC practice of adhering to the formal party opinion. As is the case in many post-colonial African States, consensus is the aim and dissent is unwelcome. The significance of consensus is another aspect that lies beyond the scope of this research, and, like the issue of the power of individuals within a hierarchy based on networks of patronage, warrants further exploration.

As symbolic of the struggle by Black people for political freedom, the significance of protest against a racially divided and dominated society by thousands of former Fort Hare students cannot be disputed. However, whether the University of Fort Hare has been definitively conditioned into a relationship of conformity and complicity with the State remains a question for present speculation and possible future research.

¹⁰²⁸ Jackson Lears, 2002.

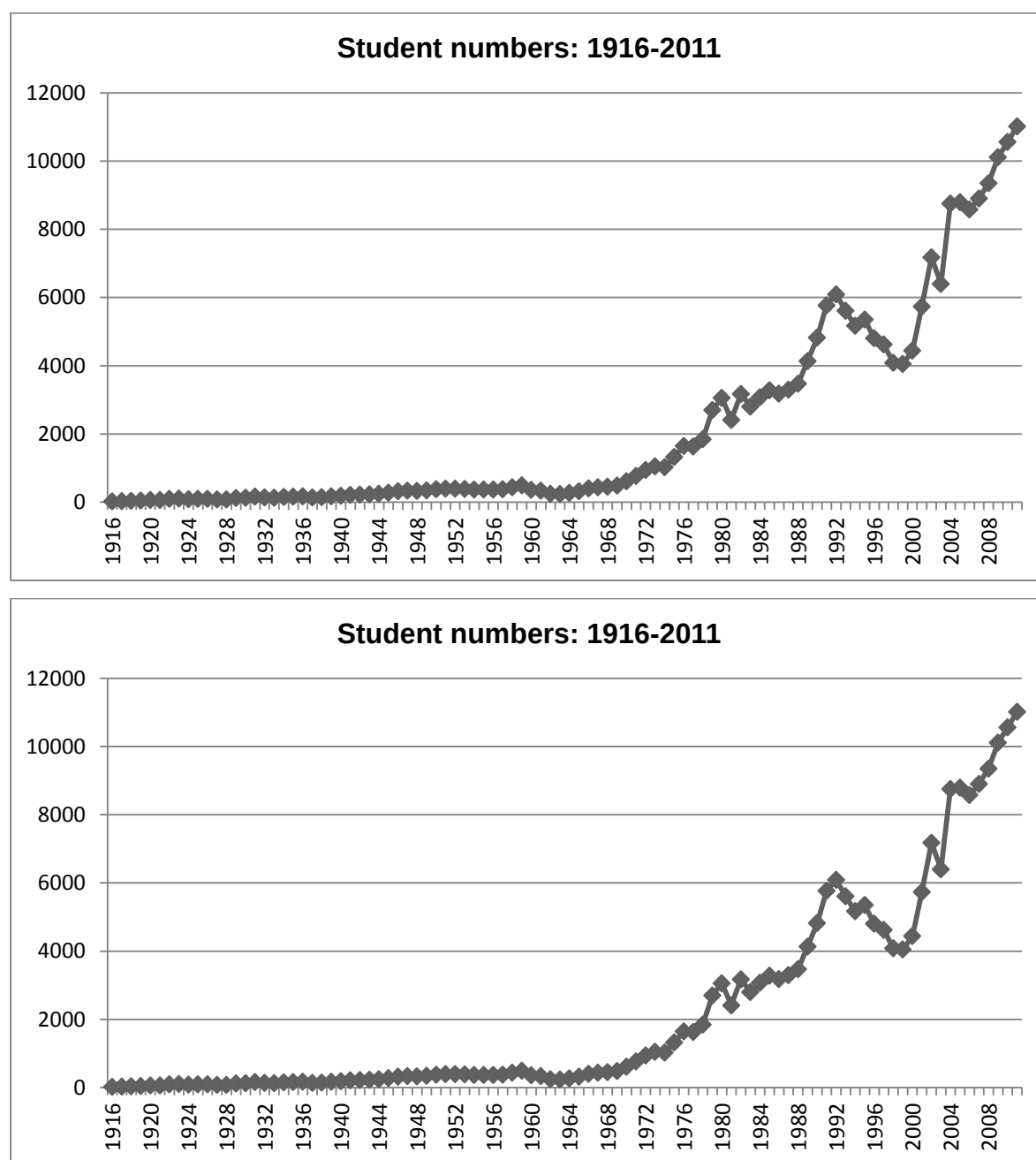
Acronyms

AAC	All-Africa Convention
ACE	American Council on Education
ANC	African National Congress
ANCYL	African National Congress Youth League
AME	African Methodist Episcopal [Church]
AZAPO	Azanian People's Organisation
AZASCO	Azanian Students Convention
AZASO	Azanian Students Organisation
BC	Black Consciousness
BSA	Black Staff Association
CHE	Council on Higher Education
CISA	Christian Institute of South Africa
CNIP	Ciskei National Independent Party
CODESA	Convention for a Democratic South Africa
COSAS	Congress of South African Students
COSATU	Congress of South African Trade Unions
CTA	Ciskei Territorial Assembly
DoE	Department of Education
DSA	Democratic Staff Association
FAK	<i>Federasie van Afrikaanse Kultuurverenigings</i> (Federation of Afrikaner Cultural Associations)
FEDSEM	Federal Theological Seminary
GEAR	Growth, Employment and Redistribution
HEQC	Higher Education Quality Committee
IASO	International African Students Organisation
ICU	Industrial and Commercial Workers Union
ISNCS	Inter-State Native College Scheme
MK	<i>Umkhonto we Sizwe</i> (Spear of the Nation)
NAHECS	National Heritage and Cultural Studies Centre
NCHE	National Commission on Higher Education
NEHAWU	National Health and Allied Workers Union
NTESU	National Tertiary Education Staff Union

NUSAS	National Union of South African Students
PAC	Pan-African Congress
QVM	Queen Victoria Memorial
RDP	Reconstruction and Development Programme
SABRA	South African Bureau of Racial Affairs
SACD	South African Congress of Delegates
SACP	South African Communist Party
SACPO	South African Coloured People's Organisation
SACTU	South African Congress of Trade Unions
SAIC	South African Indian Congress
SAIRR	South African Institute of Race Relations
SANAC	South African Native Affairs Commission
SANC	South African Native College
SANSCO	South African National Student Congress
SANLAM	<i>Suid-Afrikaanse Nasionale Lewenassuransie Maatskappy</i> (South African Life Assurance Company)
SANTAM	<i>Suid-Afrikaanse Nasionale Trust Maatskappy</i> (South African National Trust Company)
SASCO	South African Students Congress
SASO	South African Students Organisation
SOYA	Sons of Young Africa
SRC	Students' Representative Council
TASA	Teachers' Union of South Africa
TBVC	Transkei, Bophutatswana, Venda and Ciskei
TELP	Tertiary Education Leadership Project
TTGC	Transkeian Territories General Council
UCM	United Christian Movement
UDUSA	Union of Democratic University Staff Associations
UFH	University of Fort Hare
UNISA	University of South Africa
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
YMCA	Young Men's Christian Association

Appendices

Appendix A: Student statistics



Source: Statistical Digest 2011, prepared by Rod Bally, Institutional Planner.

Student enrolments 1916 - 1959

	1916	1921	1923	1930	1937	1940	1950	1959
Students	20	66	102	130	139	188	382	489
Staff	2	7	10	9	15	18	27	49
Departments		7	10	9	15	18	16	19

In 1919, of the total of 39 students, 18 were from Lovedale, 9 from Healdtown, and 12 from further afield. There were 21 Fingo and 2 Xhosa students, representing the missionary-educated contingent from the nearby areas, 1 Indian and 6 Coloured students, 2 Zulu students and 7 non-South African students (5 from Basotholand and 2 from Bechuanaland). (*Christian Express*, March 1919).

In 1959, the last year before Fort Hare was declared an ethnic college by the Apartheid State, 38% of students were Xhosa-speaking, 20% were Black South Africans whose language was not Xhosa, 14% were Coloured and 20% Indian, and 6% were international students.

Total graduates as of December 1959:

Bachelor of Arts	–	687
Bachelor of Science	–	507
Diploma in Education	–	452
Advanced Diploma in Agriculture or Theology	–	91

85 graduates had proceeded to study Medicine at other universities.

72 graduates had continued to postgraduate level.

Source: Burrows, H.R., and Matthews, Z.K. (1961: 48)

Student enrolment 1960 – 1989

1960: Enrolments drop to 360 after non-Xhosa, Coloured and Indian students are forced to register at University Colleges assigned to specific races.

1966: 402 students

1970: 613 students

1973: 1050 students

1975: 1320 students

1989: 4134 students

Source: Rectors' confidential files and University calendars. Howard Pim Library, University of Fort Hare

Student enrolments after 1990

Enrolments continued to increase until 1992, but then decreased sharply. Students began to enrol at historically White and Coloured universities from which they had been barred. As a result, Fort Hare resorted to a policy of enrolling 'walk-ins' in January and February of each

academic year, registering students who had failed to gain admission to the institutions to which they applied, and who did not necessarily meet the minimum entrance requirements of the University of Fort Hare. This led to an increase in enrolments, although throughput declined, and the average time taken to complete a qualification increased.

By 2000, the ‘massification’ of the higher education sector was evident in South Africa, and despite the turmoil at Fort Hare at the time – or possibly because of the administrative disarray – the number of students climbed sharply, as evident in the chart above.

Appendix B: Vice-Chancellors and Staff Statistics

Principals

1915 – 1948	Alexander Kerr (appointed by SANC Council, retired after 33 years)
1948 – 1955	Clifford Dent (early retirement, citing ill-health)
1955 – 1957	Zachariah Keodirelang Matthews (arrested on treason charges in 1957)
1957	Professor Giffen and various staff members who served as Acting Principal in the absence of ZK Matthews
1958 – 1959	Henry Burrows (appointment not renewed by Apartheid State)

Rectors

1960 – 1968	Johannes Ross (appointed by State)
1968 – 1980	Johannes de Wet (appointed by State)
1980 – 1990	John Lamprecht (appointed by Council)

Vice-Chancellors

1991 – 1994	Sibusiso Bengu (appointed by Council)
1995 – 1999	Mbulelo Mzamane (appointed by Council)
2000 – 2007	Derrick Swartz (appointed by Council)
2008 –	Mvuyo Tom (appointed by Council)

Academic Staff

1915 – 1959: total of 115 staff employed over the entire period

1970: 90 academic staff

78 White academic staff (27 professors, 35 senior lecturers, 16 lecturers).

12 Black academic staff (2 professors and 10 lecturers)

Source: Report to Department of Education preceding celebration of institutional autonomy.

1975: 144 academic staff (117 Whites and 27 Blacks)

Source: letter to Mr van Onselen, Secretary Bantu Administration and Development, on subject of insufficient accommodation for Black staff and plans for re-zoning of Alice.

1984: 189 academic staff (48 professors, 34 senior lecturers, 97 lecturers, 9 junior lecturers).

Racial breakdown not provided.

Source: Undated Rector's report to Council.

Appendix C: Commissions of Enquiry and Acts relevant to the SANC and Fort Hare

1903 – 1905 South African Native Affairs Commission (SANAC) explored possibilities of land allocations to different races, land ownership by Blacks and the Black franchise.

1923 Higher Education Act No. 30 recognised the SANC as an institution offering courses towards the Bachelor of Arts degree examined and awarded by UNISA (University of South Africa).

1928 Loram Commission recommended training of ‘Medical Aids’ instead of full medical training for doctors for Black students at SANC.

1933 Commission of Enquiry into Subsidies to Universities, University Colleges and Technical Colleges investigated funding of different education and training institutions and increased allocation to the SANC

1947 Brookes Commission of Enquiry on UNISA and constituent colleges recommended that university colleges become independent institutions, but that the SANC be affiliated to Rhodes University.

1949 Eiselen Commission of Enquiry on Bantu Education recommended separate education provision for different races and ethnicities.

1949 Rhodes University (Private) Act granted the SANC gained autonomy from UNISA, after which it was affiliated to Rhodes University in March 1951.

October 1952 University College of Fort Hare changed the name from the South African Native College to the University College of Fort Hare.

1953 Holloway Commission of Enquiry on separate training facilities for non-Europeans at Universities – the 1955 report considered provision of racially separate university education both impractical and financially non-viable.

1955 University Education Act No. 61 assigned to Fort Hare the same rights, including subsidies, as other universities.

1955 Duminy Commission found that hostility existed between students and the University Administration; and undesirable political activity was taking place within the student body.

May 1957 Extension of University Education Bill provided separate university education for different races and placed Fort Hare under the Department of Bantu Administration.

1959 Promotion of Bantu Self-Government Act provided framework for autonomous ‘Bantustans’, or homelands, for different ethnic groups.

1959 Fort Hare Transfer Act transferred ownership and administration of Fort Hare to the Apartheid State.

1970 Bantu Homelands Citizenship Act provides for Black people to be citizens of Bantustans. In the same year, Fort Hare gains autonomy from UNISA.

1972 Commission of Enquiry into Student Unrest at the University of Fort Hare finds that factionalism is responsible for the student strike.

1981 Ciskei Independence celebrated on 4 December.

1985 University of Fort Hare Act grants full university status to Fort Hare.

1991 Ciskei coup and substitution of Brigadier Oupa Gqozo for Chief Lennox Sebe.

1997 South African Higher Education Act introduces quality assurance regimes and state regulatory bodies tasked with oversight of the quality of higher education.

1999 Report to the Minister of Education, the Honourable SME Bengu by Emeritus Professor S.J Saunders on an investigation into the affairs of the University of Fort Hare. Report finds general absence of control exercised by the Senior University Administrators.

Appendix D: Dates and nature of student protest

***Missionary Administration* 1916 – 1959**

Principal: Alexander Kerr Cause, form and results of protest

- | | |
|----------------------|--|
| 1936 | Quality of food results in walk-out from Dining Hall. |
| 1937 ¹⁰²⁹ | Anonymous notices posted opposing segregation.
Support for Abyssinia (Ethiopia): 43 volunteers for service.
Anonymous notices posted against Coloured and Indian schools refusing admission to Africans. |
| 1941 | Racist behaviour of warden leads to student strike 18 – 20 September. |
| 1942 | No tennis allowed on Sunday leads to student strike, after which members of Hostel Committee and 45 other students sent home for refusing to sign a declaration of obedience. |

Principal: Clifford Dent

- | | |
|------|---|
| 1955 | Boycott of graduation ceremony due to rule regulating visits by male students to women's residences.
College closed 4 May – 1 July. 330 of 367 students suspended and SRC members resign.
Students required to re-apply and submit letters giving reasons for non-attendance of graduation.
14 students excluded by Council. |
|------|---|

Principal: Henry Burrows

- | | |
|------|---|
| 1959 | Opposition to Fort Hare Transfer Bill.
Student protest against apartheid takeover in silent demonstration: banners with slogans, future administrators pelted with tomatoes. |
|------|---|

¹⁰²⁹ The information on the 1937 incidents is contained in Lamprecht's analysis of student protest at Fort Hare (1984).

Apartheid Administration 1916 - 1990

Rector: Johannes Jurgens Ross

- 1960 Student strike and boycott of lectures due to Rector's refusal to allow NUSAS to address students.
 Mass meeting dissolves SRC.
 Lectures suspended and students required to sign a declaration that they would abide by rules, or leave campus.
- 1961 Kaiser Matanzima, member of Fort Hare Advisory Council, insulted in student protest and student Stanley Mabizela (termed 'exemplary' by lecturers) takes blame and is expelled.
 Senate recommends sentence be commuted if written apology submitted to Matanzima.¹⁰³⁰
- 1961 Boycott of lectures in solidarity with call for anti-apartheid strike.
 College closes 1 June - 19 July.
- 1962 Isolated incidents, including arrest and sentencing of student to 5 years' imprisonment for throwing petrol bomb into Lovedale building.
- 1963, 1964 Students detained under Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1963, 90-day detention clause, charged and found guilty (see details in Chapter 5: 238).

Rector: Johannes Marthinus de Wet

- 1968 SASO founded.
 Boycott of inauguration ceremony of De Wet as Rector.
 Strikes and sit-ins after UCM prohibited on campus.
 Students required to sign declarations of intention to cease boycott or have registration cancelled and leave with immediate effect.
 200 students sent home, to return later, with 21 exclusions.¹⁰³¹

¹⁰³⁰ Minutes Special Meeting Senate 1 May 1961 (Lamprecht 1984: 45)

¹⁰³¹ Lamprecht 1984: 59-60

- 1972 Students leave campus in protest against ‘tribal colleges’.
333 expelled but most return after being required to write letter of apology.
providing reasons for having left, and apply for readmission.¹⁰³²
- 1973 Students attack Beda warden Makunga’s home.
159 Beda students suspended.
Lecture boycott in August; activists evacuate halls, chasing students from
lectures with *knobkieries* (sticks used for fighting) and stones.
Walk-out of approximately 400 students.
Students required to apply for readmission; 6 refused re-entry, 30 do not
reapply. Administration blames protest on fact that most SASO leaders were
Beda inmates.¹⁰³³
- 1976 SRC requests meeting on day of prayer in solidarity with Black students on
other campuses on 18 July (Nelson Mandela’s birthday).
Arson attacks on buildings cause substantial damage after SRC refused
permission to continue meeting.
University closes until 23 August. Reopens with readmissions based on
individual undertaking by students to abide by regulations, not hold mass
meetings, and pay R50 indemnity
Renewed protest and campus closes again 25 August till 4 October.¹⁰³⁴
- 1977 Arson attempts on 1 May (Workers Day).
Food strike 4 – 11 August.
Boycott of lectures 12 – 22 September after death in detention of Steve Biko.
1000 students arrested on 15 September after open air meeting contravening
Government Notice, Department of Justice No. 549 of 31 March 1977.
Male students held and released on bail 20 September.¹⁰³⁵

¹⁰³² For full details, see Chapter 5: 240-242

¹⁰³³ Rector’s confidential files.

¹⁰³⁴ Lamprecht 1984: 81-87.

¹⁰³⁵ Ibid., 90-94.

1979 Boycott of lectures 4 June till end of semester, with examinations and lectures resuming on 24 July 1979.

Boycott due to student being killed by security guard. University Administration claims student had broken into security guard's home at night; students claim he had been killed elsewhere and dragged into guard's house. Forensic evidence produced in court in support of claim by University Administration.¹⁰³⁶

1980 Boycott of lectures against inferior Bantu Education system begins 6 May and campus closes on 19 May.

Classes set to resume 15 July, but returning students are reluctant to attend until threatened with expulsion.

August bomb scare in women's hostel and building evacuated.

Copies of Freedom Charter distributed by dissidents, as well as notices threatening dissenters who would not support boycotts.¹⁰³⁷

Rector: John Lamprecht

1981 Lecture boycott, protests against food, and Student Centre vandalized.¹⁰³⁸

1982 Attack on Ciskei presidential motorcade as it arrives at 1st May graduation ceremony (first after Ciskei independence). Car windows smashed and motorcade forced to retreat. 16 students arrested and lecture boycott follows. Buildings vandalized and arson in residences.

Mass walkout: 1317 students arrested by Ciskei police for illegal gathering 3 May. Police patrol campus and curfew imposed until 13 May, when most students return to class.

Arrested students released 17 May.¹⁰³⁹

¹⁰³⁶ Lamprecht 1984: 95-97.

¹⁰³⁷ Ibid., 98-105

¹⁰³⁸ Ibid., 106-107

¹⁰³⁹ Ibid., 108 – 112.

- 1982 July-August boycott of lectures.
 18 July meeting and Umkhonto we Sizwe and ANC pamphlets distributed.
 Calls for solidarity with General Workers Union and boycott of Coca Cola.
 27 July midnight meeting calls for students to leave campus. Of 2832 students, 1588 remain.¹⁰⁴⁰
 Death threats to dissenters and one female student dies in residence. One male student stabbed and hospitalized.
 Students return to campus after being required to request readmission and sign undertaking to obey rules.
 Adverse effect of boycott is 27% pass rate in final examinations.
 Messages of support from church organisations, SRCs and Black Sash.
 Petitions in support from AZASO (Azanian Students Organisation), SAIRR (South African Institute of Race Relations), and UCT lecturers.¹⁰⁴¹
- 1983 9 June boycott of classes and hostels vandalized after 3 ANC members executed by hanging. Pro-ANC and Umkhonto we Sizwe notices posted around campus.
 23 August newly refurbished staff centre gutted by fire.
 11 September violence on campus, followed by boycott of lectures on Biko Day, 12 September. Armed students prevent dissenters from attending class. Doors and windows smashed, and 4 petrol bombs thrown into dissenters' bedrooms.¹⁰⁴²
- 30 October 'Mkatshwa incident': Catholic priest Father Mkatshwa, General Secretary of Southern Africa Bishops' Conference, arrested as he leaves Fort

¹⁰⁴⁰ Note that an account published in the *Wits Student* differs from Lamprecht's version, saying that 2500 students were escorted off campus by police after boycotting lectures on 28 July and failing to register by noon the following day with Faculty secretaries, leaving approximately 500 students on campus ("Fort Hare – repression and student resistance", *Wits Student* Issue August 1982, 1982-34-20).

¹⁰⁴¹ Lamprecht 1984: 115 – 124

¹⁰⁴² *Ibid.*, 130 - 138

Hare campus after delivering an address at a Sunday service serving as an alternative venue for a UDF service in Alice that had been banned.

- 1984 One-day boycotts on 21 March (Sharpeville Day) and 1 May (Workers' Day). Self-acclaimed student vigilante group publishes names of members of "Spear", a group of student activists, accusing them of intimidation and arson. August stayaway prior to first elections for separate representation of Coloureds and Indians in tricameral parliament. Some students arrested in Newtown, a Coloured township in Fort Beaufort.¹⁰⁴³
- 1986 Workers' strike 3 – 20 March and Fort Hare Workers Union established, supported by students. Worker stayaway and boycott of lectures 1 May. Those attending class chased out by students wielding bricks and bars. Car tyres slashed, TVs in residence lounges burned, windows broken, trucks stoned, watchmen attacked and arson attempts on residences. At union meetings, tyres held aloft to warn dissenters. Police called on to campus, rubber bullets fired and tear gas thrown at students. Fort Hare closed 3 – 19 May, and again on 13 June. After students return in July, lecture boycott resumed until end August. SRC suspended, but distributes pamphlets calling for continued stayaway. Ciskei army and police called on to campus on 18 September. Students started to leave campus mid-September, with approximately half remaining to write final exams in October.¹⁰⁴⁴

Strikes by a united force of workers and students continued according to the same pattern on an annual basis until 1990.

Post-apartheid protest 1990 – 2000

Annual protests took place shortly after the re-opening of the University after the summer break. Protest assumed the form of student demands for a reduction in fees as well as re-admission of students owing fees, whilst supporting worker demands for higher wages.

¹⁰⁴³ Lamprecht 1984: 142 - 153

¹⁰⁴⁴ Information extracted from Lamprecht's personal files.

Appendix E: State expenditure on universities 1973 - 1976

Comparative cost of education

Name of Institution	1973/74	1974/75	1975/76
University of Cape Town	1279		
Stellenbosch University	1278		
Witwatersrand University	1184		
University of Pretoria	999		
Rhodes University	1573		
Natal University	1291		
Potchefstroom University	961		
University of the Free State	1184		
University of Port Elizabeth	2681		
Rand Afrikaans University	2873		
University of Fort Hare	2475	3031	2950
University of Zululand	2004	1998	1976
University of the North	1996	2113	2250
Cost of food and accommodation	1973/74	1974/75	1975/76
University of Fort Hare	94.96	121.48	122.95
University of Zululand	61.28	58.82	61.54
University of the North	107.21	180.46	210.53

Source: Letter from Department of Bantu Education 17 October 1974 to Rectors of Bantu Universities detailing costs (in South African rands) per student per annum at all South African Universities, indicating that expenditure on Fort Hare per student was third highest of all universities at the time.

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Interviews

Geoffrey Antrobus, 12 July 2011.

Professor Antrobus was the Academic Registrar of Fort Hare between 1988 and 1990. He was the only member of the senior Administration who remained on campus after the combined forces of students, workers and members of the Black Staff Association had warned the (White) senior administrators not to return to campus after Easter in 1990.

Vusumzi Duma, 26 May 2011.

Mr Duma is a senior lecturer in Sociology and former student activist whose direct contestation of the apartheid authorities in the 1980s was to result in his being blacklisted by the University of Fort Hare. He was only able to secure a lecturing position after the ousting of the apartheid era Administration.

Francis Wilson, 30 July 2011.

Professor Wilson was Chair of the first post-apartheid Council of the University of Fort Hare from 1990 – 1999.

Anonymous administrative staff member, 30 April 2011.

The staff member has been employed since the mid-1990s in a department dealing with university records.

Anonymous clerk of the Alice magistrate's court, 12 June 2011.

The clerk was employed at the time the case of the murder of Stoffels Erasmus was opened and subsequently closed without prosecution, due to lack of evidence.

Anonymous academic staff member, 20 July 2011.

The academic staff member has been employed as a lecturer since 1991.