

**Printmaking at the Dakawa Art and Craft Project:
The impact of ANC cultural policy and Swedish
practical implementation on two printmakers trained
during South Africa's transformation years.**

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ABSTRACT

In 1998, the national Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology published a document aimed at the growth of culture industries in South Africa (DACST, "Creative South Africa", July 1998). Focussing on aspects of economic growth which this development could generate for South Africa, it nonetheless points to issues of cultural understanding which need to be addressed. Projects aimed at the development of arts and culture in South Africa have followed troubled paths. While projects aimed at establishing discourse for this development have succeeded on many levels, the imperatives of showcasing, rather than implementing cultural concepts appropriate to South African contexts, have tended to dominate.

When the Dakawa Art and Craft Project was established by the ANC, in 1992, in Grahamstown, as the locus for the development of an arts and culture discourse in the liberated South Africa, all seemed set for success. Yet, less than four years after opening, the Project was closed. While speculative reasons for closure tended to focus on financial and administrative problems, the basis for this closure had its roots in problems of cultural understanding manifesting themselves at the Project. These reflected a lack of cultural understanding on the part of the ANC and SIDA, the Swedish administrators sent to the Project, and the lack of clear cultural guidelines on the part of the trainees to the Project itself.

These reasons for the Project's failure are integral to an understanding of arts and culture development and needs in South Africa today. As other projects, aimed at the same issues of development grow, an understanding of the history of the Project's failure is essential, for it poses questions still in need of answers.

Part One examines the historical significance of the Dakawa Art and Craft Project between 1982 and 1994, recording the reasons for its establishment, the path of implementation it followed, and the cultural misunderstandings it posed to development. Part Two examines the cultural context of the trainees to the Project, followed by an account of the printmaking teaching practice, and the effects of cultural concepts on two printmakers trained during the Project's initial establishment, at the time of South Africa's political transformation.

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Plate 1, Sandile Goje, *The Meeting of Two Cultures*, 1993.

INTRODUCTION

In August 1993, Sandile Goje, a printmaking trainee at the Dakawa Art and Craft Project in Grahamstown, South Africa, produced the linocut print, *The Meeting of Two Cultures* (Plate 1). Here, the artist has conceptualised the meeting of 'traditional' Africa and 'progressive' Europe. Personifications of a traditional Xhosa hut and a westernised building shake hands in what could appear to be a symbolic acceptance of each other.

Since the print's production, which coincided with the dismantling of South Africa's apartheid past, it has popularly been used both within South Africa and outside, to illustrate the hoped for development of democracy, and to promote acceptance of the country's multicultural identity. However, this image was produced at the time of the Swedish printmaking consultant's departure from the Dakawa Art and Craft Project, and Sandile's original intention, when conceiving the subject of the print, does not altogether accord with this popular interpretation.

In an interview with Sandile, he explained the inspiration and content of what he had originally termed, *Peace between Two Cultures*, which he later changed to, *The Meeting of Two Cultures*. Regarding its inspiration, he said, "I had been thinking about culture and about what I had learnt and so I came up with the African culture and the, I don't know, Swedish culture?" (GB/SG, 1998:17). However, after this, and after doing drawings for the picture, Sandile had difficulty in making an image of his idea. This was where Kristina Anshelm, his Swedish teacher, came to his assistance, after which the successful print was made. Sandile's explanation of the iconography is that the Xhosa hut represents the rural culture he himself had known, whereas the westernised house is a well-observed representation of the Dakawa textile building. When questioned, he suggested that the white personification was Swedish and it was they who had brought this building to Grahamstown. As will be shown in this thesis, Sandile's artistic development owed a great deal to the way development ideals were implemented at the Dakawa Project, during the initial period of South Africa's transformation. But he himself had only the vaguest idea of the ideals of this broader transformation. Instead, his inspiration was personal.

The Dakawa Art and Craft Project, was initiated by the African National Congress Department of Arts and Culture (ANC DAC), with the principle of forming a firm cultural thrust in the liberated South Africa. Its practical implementation was by Swedish consultants, funded by the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA), in Grahamstown, in 1992. The ANC's cultural ideal of developing a new national identity was mediated by Swedish consultants who brought to Dakawa their own African ideal, as well as their Swedish training and personal notions regarding training. The ANC's ideals, therefore, remained relatively remote to trainees in the Dakawa workshops, while the impact of Swedish implementation between 1992 and 1994, was immediate and powerful. The history of this immediate contact between ideals and actual, experienced, culture, is the context of Sandile's print and the main subject of this thesis.

The Project, located in an area in Grahamstown known as the buffer zone between the coloured and black townships and white suburbia, came to reflect important issues surrounding concepts of arts and culture development in South Africa.

As other arts and culture projects, with aims and objectives similar to those of the Dakawa Project, have also received foreign funding for their establishment, the impact of foreign driven development has become an issue of major importance in the question of cultural identity. What is cultural identity in South Africa, and how do these organisations and their artists and trainees develop identities? What effect does foreign development have on the individual, and on whose understanding of culture is development based?

Contact between cultures can be dynamic and creative, but it can also be uneasy. The question of the effects of first world culture making contact with that of the third world, has been debated in terms of cultural imperialism. Schechner, while believing that confrontation with 'the other' can deepen 'our grasp of who we ourselves are', nevertheless highlights that a problem occurs when the 'other' ceases to be 'another', but becomes a tabula rasa onto which one projects one's ego, "then all one has is a glorification of the self and a co-option of other cultures in the name of representation" (Schechner, 1982:52).

Although there has been no documentation prior to Morrow's 1998 research on Dakawa's Tanzanian origins, the history of this Project contains all the contradictions and polarities that form part of the debate surrounding arts and culture imperatives, and the processes of identity formation in post-apartheid South Africa.

In the early 1990's, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, borrowing the idea from America, stated that South Africa was "the Rainbow Nation". This highlighted the issue of multiculturalism in South Africa. Debates followed on the representation of this multiculturalism, but these were never resolved. In 1997, Deputy President of South Africa, Thabo Mbeki, also borrowing a concept, stated the need for South Africa to contribute to an African Renaissance. However, considering the unresolved problems of cultural identity and representation in South Africa, let alone what is envisaged by this new concept, the chances of any renaissance occurring, are limited. Although definitions of culture and identity in South Africa have been attempted, none have come to grips with multiculturalism as yet.

Culture, which Williams explained as one of the three most difficult terms to define in the English language (Williams, 1976:76), still defies definition. While early anthropological researchers into the field of culture broadly defined the term as the whole way of life of people, including their artefacts, practices, social structures, technologies, languages, myths, rituals, stories and economic systems (Young, 1996:37-8), research from the 1960's onwards began more closely defining the term.

Culture was no longer seen as that which encompassed all activities. The distinction was made between what people do and the framework of ideas and sentiments through which these actions make sense to them (38). This framework of ideas and sentiments reflects sets of circumstances and experiences more or less shared by individuals within a group, if what is being referred to is a communal culture. Culture, in modern analyses, can then be defined as the determining experience relevant to the formation of a group's identity.

The determining experience which is of particular interest to this thesis, is that which occurred

during South Africa's deliberate search for cultural identity. This, in turn, is reflected in the images produced at the Dakawa Printmaking workshop between 1992 and 1993. In these, the process of acculturation, between the imposed ANC democratic cultural ideal, and Swedish African aesthetic ideal, is elided with the reality of the trainees' cultural experience in Grahamstown.

Printmaking, which, since its inception, has been regarded as a democratic arts medium, owing to the ease with which such images can be disseminated, as well as its position as commentator on events in society, also becomes the concern in this thesis. Personal involvement in the Dakawa Art and Craft Community Youth Programme, as a teacher of printmaking to young people during the years 1994 to 1996, as well as involvement in the re-opened Dakawa Art and Craft Community Centre from 1997, led to a growing interest, on the part of this writer, in gaining insight into the cultural imperatives behind the narratives in the prints produced there.

Printmaking at the Dakawa Project during the years 1992 to 1993 was meant, in accordance with Kristina Anshelm's wishes, to illustrate 'stories close to people's hearts'. But, conflicting notions of identity, between trainees and consultants, led to misunderstandings about these stories, which, in turn, led to the failure of the Project. At the root of the problem, was this lack of cultural understanding.

While the two trainees, Edith Bukani and Sandile Goje, who have been chosen for discussion in this thesis, attained prominence in the years during which they were trainees at the Project, and, as a result, are still active printmakers today, the lack of development of a democratic arts and culture principle, as well as the lack of cultural identity at the Project, from its establishment in 1992 until its closure in 1996, has led to the disappearance of the majority of their fellow trainees from the Project today.

This thesis will attempt an account of the response of a cultural institution, funded by foreign aid and established at the time of South Africa's troubled re-invention, to the calls of cultural leaders for a re-alignment of cultural policy. The impact of this on the courses offered at the

institution, on the trainees and their work, will also be discussed. It will also be an account of two individuals attempting to find their own meaning against a backdrop of management crises, within the context of the wider socio-political transformation in South Africa. In effect, this thesis is part of a larger discourse on the role of cultural institutions in South Africa during the transformation period.

The focus of this thesis is confined to the above-mentioned issues. While there were other factors which contributed to the failure of the Project, including those of financial and administrative mismanagement, these are outside the scope of this thesis, and are therefore treated as peripheral to the central problem of cultural misunderstanding.

In order to analyse the processes of arts and culture development at the Dakawa Art and Craft Project, this thesis has been divided into two parts.

Part One traces the ANC's general understanding of arts and culture prior to the establishment of the Project in Grahamstown. The history of the Project, from its initial establishment as part of a larger ANC exile camp in Dakawa in Tanzania, is briefly outlined, with emphasis on the ANC's practical understanding of the implementation of its cultural ideals, forms part of this discussion. This is followed by an account of the development of the Project in Grahamstown, once these ideals had to be applied in practice. Lastly, Part One analyses the impact which the combination of the ANC's ideals, SIDA's African ideal and the Swedish administrators' practical application had on the development of cultural discourse.

Part Two investigates cultural identity among Grahamstown township residents in general. This is followed by a more detailed account of the development, during and after their exposure to the Project's methods, of personal cultural identity, on the part of the two artists selected for this research. Examples of their work produced in the printmaking workshop between 1992 and 1993, as well examples of work produced of their own accord, once direct Swedish influence had ended at the Project, will be analysed in order to trace this development.

Apart from the examples of work illustrated in this thesis, interviews with both artists provided most of the information regarding their biographical details, perceptions and memories. These interviews also provided insights into the teaching practice in the printmaking workshop and into the trainees' responses to this foreign driven teaching method. Finally, the interviews provided insight into the artistic development of the two artists involved.

PART ONE

The Dakawa Art and Craft Project, Grahamstown. 1992 - 1994

Background

On October 17th 1992, Walter Sisulu, then deputy president of the ANC, officially opened the Dakawa Art and Craft Project in Grahamstown. This training centre, aimed at the development and promotion of a national arts and culture programme in South Africa, was established as a pilot model during the cultural transformation of a country on the way to its first democratic elections.

Sisulu's speech, on this occasion, was a blend of political rhetoric and idealism, informed by cultural ideals the ANC had strategised and adopted in exile.

As we hand over the Project to the independent Trust, we do so in the firm belief and hope that it will prosper and grow into the type of cultural community centre that we would like to see develop in a post-apartheid South Africa. Besides providing badly needed skills in the arts and crafts, "Dakawa" should epitomise our burning desire to democratise our culture as well... As we move closer to our goal of liberation, it is becoming all the more evident that rebuilding South Africa into a peaceful and prosperous democracy will demand hard work from all of us...It is in this light therefore, that projects such as "Dakawa" are of the utmost importance. By setting up community projects such as this one, we are not only economically empowering our people on the ground, but we are also giving meaning and substance to democracy (Dakawa Archives[D.A.], Opening Speech by Walter Sisulu, 17 October 1992:2-4).

Reasons given by the ANC for choosing Grahamstown for the Project's location were significant. The Dakawa Art and Craft Project was meant to redress not only the arts and culture imbalances in the country, but to redress specific imbalances in the economic and political needs of the country's 'cultural capital' as well. The local newspaper, the Grocott's Mail, noted:

Grahamstown was already established as the cultural capital of South Africa. The transfer of the Dakawa Art and Craft project to the city reinforced the claim...Grahamstown had the highest unemployment rate in South Africa with 85 per cent of the potential work force unemployed...Mr Lebona Mosia, chairman and director of the Dakawa Trust said..."The aim is to provide training. It is a community-based project which could be employing as many as 60 people by the end of 1993...Mr Sisulu said, "May it prosper and grow into the type of community we would like to see in post-apartheid South Africa as well as providing skills"...it was hoped Dakawa could go some way to alleviating the unemployment in Grahamstown and the attendant feelings of debilitating poverty which were the products of a socio-economic system based on greed, exploitation and injustice (Grocott's Mail, 20 October 1992:1-2).

The underlying political significance of the Project was noted:

"Dakawa is a message of hope", said Mr Sisulu..."Many have laid down their lives believing apartheid would be overcome, as it has. Now we may talk freely about non-racialism, non-sexism and democracy"...Grahamstown with its visible divisions between the communities was a total apartheid experience. It was hoped Dakawa would pull down the walls of apartheid letting the sun shine on Grahamstown "for real" (1-2).

Originally established in Tanzania as part of a larger ANC camp for exiles of the apartheid regime in the 1980's, the Project had all the makings of a major player in South Africa's cultural redress: equipment and materials of the highest standard; consultants and teachers trained at reputable art and craft schools in Sweden; a board of Trustees with ties in the ANC DAC and local structures such as the Power Station Craft Co-operative and Rhodes University's Fine Arts Department; as well as a director, Malin Sellman, who had a working knowledge of African arts and culture gained at grassroots level at Rorke's Drift and in Tanzania. While funding for the implementation of the Project was received from the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA), ideological support was received in the form of the ANC's Freedom Charter and Constitutional Guidelines, which were aimed at the development of a national cultural identity.

Yet, less than four years after opening, what were intended to be the doors of culture and learning at the Dakawa Art and Craft Project, were closed. While speculative explanations for the Project's closure ranged from financial mismanagement to administrative corruption (Morrow, 1998(b):33), this thesis will attempt to show that the root of the problem lay in a basic misunderstanding of the dynamics of cultural processes and social context determining success or failure of such projects.

Established specifically for the training of black visual artists, neither the discourse, nor the research, which would have formed a sound theoretical basis for the implementation of the Project's objectives, within the broader socio-political transformation, was available.

The ANC, since its banning by the South African government in 1960, was faced with the mammoth task of establishing a Project which, given changed circumstances, had to break from the ANC's overarching ideology of using culture as a weapon of struggle for political purposes. In making this break, a new and democratic approach to arts and culture in South Africa, which would initiate the ANC's hoped for national culture, had to be fostered.

However, neither the ANC DAC nor the Swedish consultants sent to administer the Project, had more than a limited knowledge of ground level discourse. Instead they had a conception of an ideal African aesthetic which had been formulated while the ANC was in exile. The implementation of this ideal however, was to prove that it simply could not be grafted onto specific African situations. Exacerbating this, these organisations lacked knowledge of the social and cultural context of either Grahamstown or the rest of the country at the time of the Project's establishment in Grahamstown in 1992.

The lack of a sound, practicable, basis for the establishment of a project such as Dakawa, and the tendency to rely on sweeping rhetoric instead, is reflected in the ANC DAC's national newsletter of 1992:

We have struggled for many years now to put up democratic cultural structures in our country. We mobilised both the cultural workers and our communities so that as oppressed

and progressive people, we can claim our right to create, express and appreciate culture. We also used it to raise consciousness, to promote our struggle and contribute generally to human culture. We did this against the backdrop of an escalating struggle, fierce repression and abject oppression...For years without number, a misconception of what culture is has formed itself and settled in the minds of our people. It is for this reason that the Department of Arts and Culture - DAC after the unbanning of the movement swiftly moved to establish itself in the country (ANC DAC Newsletter, Vol 1 No1, 1992:1-3).

The Dakawa Art and Craft Project did not in fact repeat the ANC's 1980's use of culture as a weapon for political struggle. Rather, an attempt was made to create a visual expression of the unique heritage of South Africa. But, when it came to bridging the gap between these two concepts of culture, and making the necessary adjustments, both theoretical and practical, there was confusion. A way of successfully implementing the new vision for culture was never found. This had its roots in a lack of understanding of authentic cultural expression in South Africa, and this preceded the Project's establishment in Grahamstown.

These problems, had a direct effect on the Project's courses and the development of its trainees. It is against this backdrop that the trainees discussed in this thesis attempted to find individual expression for their response to the wider socio-political transformation in South Africa.

However, a contextual analysis of the Project, and of the development of the two printmakers selected for discussion, must be preceded by an account of the major debates and influential events in South African arts and culture, leading up to the establishment of the Dakawa Art and Craft Project in Grahamstown in 1992. Specific reference will be made to the debates surrounding the ANC's use and understanding of culture during this period.

The Cultural Debate

When the Dakawa Project moved from Tanzania to Grahamstown in 1992, the debate surrounding the future of arts and culture in South Africa was well under way. In February

1990, the same month that the National Party Government had announced the unbanning of political organisations and the release of political prisoners, an article, "Preparing Ourselves for Freedom", written by Albie Sachs, then a major role player in the ANC DAC, was published in the *Weekly Mail* newspaper. This article stimulated an unprecedented amount of discussion about national cultural imperatives, current progressive practice in arts and crafts, and the dangers of narrow political expectations and prescriptiveness in this field.

Originally written in 1989 for an in-house ANC discussion on culture, "Preparing Ourselves for Freedom" received immediate and controversial acclaim. Sachs wrote,

We all know where South Africa is, but we do not yet know what it is. Ours is the privileged generation that will make that discovery, if the apertures in our eyes are wide enough. The problem is whether we have sufficient cultural imagination to grasp the rich texture of the free and united South Africa that we have done so much to bring about. For decades now we have possessed a political programme for the future - The Freedom Charter. More recently the National Executive of the ANC has issued a set of Constitutional Guidelines which has laid down a basic constitutional approach to a united South Africa with a free and equal citizenry. What we have to ask ourselves now is whether we have an artistic cultural vision that corresponds to this current phase in which a new South African nation is emerging. Can we say that we have begun to grasp the full dimensions of the new country and new people that is struggling to give birth to itself, or are we still trapped in the multiple ghettos of the apartheid imagination? (Elliot, 1990:10).

What Sachs' paper achieved, was a debate surrounding the ideological use of arts and culture by political organisations in South Africa. Sachs' main contention was that the continued use, by such organisations, of culture, for ends similar to those of the Russian proletpolit during the 1920s, emphasising party political needs only, should cease. Instead, Sachs was in favour of an authentic use of culture, by the individual, free from political restraint.

What are we fighting for, if not the right to express our humanity in all its forms, including our sense of fun and capacity for love and tenderness and our appreciation of the beauty of

the world?... It is as though our rulers stalk every page and haunt every picture; everything is obsessed by the oppressors and the trauma they have imposed, nothing is about us and the new consciousness we are developing (11).

Sachs' challenge inspired a number of cultural workers, including practitioners, teachers, theorists and members of cultural organisations, to enter into an extensive critical and introspective debate over the role of culture in South Africa.

The ANC DAC Culture Desk's response to Sachs' article was defensive:

The Interim Cultural Desk this week said that as much as it agreed cultural organisations should only provide leadership and not control or prescribe to artists the way they should contribute to the struggle, the Desk maintained that culture must be used as a weapon for struggle (21).

At the same time, there were cultural workers who had been calling for change against the pervasive use of what was termed 'resistance culture' as a weapon of political struggle. They responded to Sachs' challenge differently. Meintjies, executive member of the Congress of South African Writers (COSAW) wrote:

Now we need a new language, one imbued with the promotion of life, a celebration of democracy building on creative grassroot energy...Sloganeering soon becomes a barrier to depth and genuine expression. It stifles creativity and reflection, replacing it with a mechanical incantatory approach which [severs] the organic link between the work and the artist and the community he is trying to serve (17-18).

As can be seen from the two responses quoted above, cultural workers were ambivalent on this topic. The conflict between the understanding of culture as an autonomous field, reflecting individualised meaning acquired through artists' experience of their social context, and that of culture as a political tool, expressing political resistance, had become increasingly evident on occasions when negotiations between cultural workers and institutions broke down. This

occurred, for example, from 1988 to the early 1990's, when political organisations, such as the Transvaal Interim Cultural Desk, took to protesting about the choice of programme for National Arts Festivals in Grahamstown. The protests were accompanied by demands for greater representation of black arts and culture at the Festival (Grundy, 1993:31).

Realising the importance of the National Arts Festival as showcase for the development of arts and culture in South Africa, at the opening of the Festival's Winter School, in July 1990, Barbara Masekela, then head of the ANC DAC, re-iterated Sachs' sentiments and called for a new cultural understanding by all.

Writing from the position of a committed cultural worker who believes that art by its very nature is on the side of the oppressed, Sachs is merely asking us, without sacrificing our commitment, to open our eyes and ears, to open our minds. With Wally Serote, he is asking: what is it that we have not yet heard? He lays on us the responsibility of 'refashioning the categories and techniques of our art so that it expresses the new world coming into being and is part of its realisation' (Cory Library, Rhodes University, Pamphlet Box 105:6).

Refashioning arts and culture, away from its use as a weapon for political struggle, into that of authentic expression, was not an easy task. Political identity was not only associated with militant armed victory or struggle. The use of arts and culture as a means of propaganda, was deeply ingrained into the political ideology of the ANC.

Press' research on the origins of the connection between culture and politics, traces this connection back to mission-educated black journalists' use of art linked to politics in the early nineteenth century. She points out, though, that this connection was based on individual approaches, and was not part of a trend encouraged by community groups as a means of identification. The activities of these journalists, she writes, were used to assert the right of black people to freedom and equality in the land of their birth (Press, 1987:20).

The development of groups which began to incorporate culture into political ideology started around the 1970s, with the rise of the Black Consciousness Movement (BCM). During this

period, the ANC also began to exploit this connection. This was taken further during the Culture and Resistance Festival held in Gaborone in Botswana, in 1982. Press wrote:

The Black Consciousness Movement, which began in South Africa as a movement of students and intellectuals, saw cultural activity as a vital component of a strategy which would inspire black people to "[stand] up to be counted as black human beings...when the voiceless majority regain not only their dignity but the truth of their past, their history"(Mutloatse 1981:5). Many black writers, actors, painters, musicians, and others first began to practice their arts in this context; and whether working as individuals, or as members of many cultural groups initiated at the time, they defined their work as part of the process of asserting black identity, black humanity and creativity, in defiance of a dehumanizing social system (Press, 1987:21).

Highlighting the ANC's incorporation of culture as a weapon of struggle, Press continued:

The Culture and Resistance Festival in Botswana in 1982 was certainly not of the same order of significance as the BCM. It was, in effect, no more than an isolated event. But it was significant in that it was the first ever gathering of South African artists with the explicit aim of acknowledging "the constant battle among cultural workers to find a place for themselves in society which is not merely that of light entertainers but one of making an important contribution to the development of society" (background Information to the Symposium 1982;1) The organisation of the Festival, in which individuals linked to the ANC played a prominent role, indicates an interesting link with the activities of the BCM of the 1970's, in that the ANC appears to have been carrying forward the cultural initiatives of the earlier period, but now under the aegis of a different political tendency within the liberation movement. The 'link' between the two was more than a matter of strategy; many individuals who were active in the BCM in the 1970's, and who had left South Africa in the wake of the 1976-77 repression, became involved in ANC activities once in exile, and clearly stimulated an interest in cultural strategies within that organisation (Press, 1987:22).

The result, as Press indicated, was that the politics and liberation struggle of the ANC became

the catalyst for a process in which artists could begin to define their work in terms of the relevance it had to the struggle against apartheid. A number of black artists, she concludes, perceived themselves as having formal identities, either as individuals or as members of organisations within the liberation movement (22). The term, 'People's Culture', which encompassed this new-found use of culture for political purposes, was born. Culture, for the ANC, had thus found a new meaning, the sole intent of which was anti-apartheid political expression.

Many artists', both black and white, whether politically involved or not, were to utilise this form of cultural identity throughout the 1980s, as means of artistic expression. While William Kentridge, Jane Alexander and Sue Williamson were depicting their personal definitions of apartheid and its effects via subtle pictorial and sculptural expression, artists like Billy Madindi, and Lucas Seage were involved in the much rawer, authentic, depiction of the harsh realities of apartheid they experienced at first hand.

As the 1980's developed, the political climate within South Africa was, as the ANC desired, heading towards an ungovernability, in the wake of which living conditions were worsening in the townships, black education systems were failing, and the black population's hope for relief was dimming.

Measures to safeguard the use of culture as a weapon for political expression, became imperative. Younge, in his research on *Art of the South African Townships* of the 1980's, wrote how, in 1986, a number of anti-apartheid organisations and unions, realising that the status of the township artists, as visual documentors of political marginalisation, was diminishing, as the social and political situation intensified, decided to reappraise the role of the creative arts within their struggle (Younge, 1988:10).

The cultural co-ordinator of COSATU (Congress of South African Trade Unions) has remarked that 'the problem in the past has...never been given enough prominence within democratic organisations'. A pamphlet, To All Organisations and Cultural Workers, published on the occasion of the 1986 Cape Town Arts Festival, broached the issue directly:

'organisations have reawakened to the importance of culture within our struggle and the need to assert people's culture (10).

Younge documented how, with new impact, black township artists began to document the state of apartheid siege, which was the result of the state of emergency enforced in 1986. Illustrating this, Younge cited, amongst others, Billy Mandindi's *Necklace of Death*, 1986, where a raw and emblematic image of a 'necklace' victim emerges from scrap wooden and metal materials, Peter Clarke's images of urban poverty and Sam Nhlengethwa's *Putco Strike*, 1987, a collage conveying images of the dense congestion and vitality of township street life, which, Younge noted, also showed the shadows cast by armed security patrols of the South African National Defence Force (SANDF), who had been sent to quell resistance in the townships (17).

Just as individual artists were concerned with the subtle depiction of subject-matter related to the liberation and struggle, so progressive organisations and trade unions in the mass democratic movements were producing murals, banners, t-shirts and posters which drew heavily on the precepts of the armed resistance as direct art subject-matter (South African History Archive, 1991).

While institutions and academics had hastily been formulating terminologies as measures of coping with these new art forms and, in turn, legitimising them by doing so, this enabled an academic form of classification such as Township Art, from the 1960's and 1970's, Resistance Art, from the 1980's, and Transitional Art, from the late 1980's, to emerge. However, at the same time, the South African government was busy clamping down on the exhibition of these works it considered to be 'subversive'. For example, Younge documents how, in 1986, on the eve of the Cape Town Arts Festival, which was organised to expose the work of artists whose subject matter dealt directly with the struggle, the South African government declared the artworks subversive and hence banned the exhibition before it opened. As Younge wrote:

...it is likely that the authorities were more concerned with the overarching aim of the festival, that is, the building up of people's culture, than with the individual works on display

(Younge, 1988:16).

While many artists were utilising the banner of the 'People's Culture' as a means for expression, and being restricted in the public display of this 'subversive' work, subtler versions of similar subject matter began appearing. The commercialisation of what had started out as authentic images, started to emerge as a result of the economic possibilities which such works presented. This was encouraged by galleries and institutions, who veiled this commercialisation under the banner of displaying a cross-section of urban and rural-based art from white and black artists, and of the need for comprehensive presentation of the 'state of the art' in the country (Duncan, 1996:23). The effect of this commercialisation, was visible.

Geers, writing in 1999, on the impact which the politically informative use of culture had, noted that:

Art and culture were integral weapons of the struggle against Apartheid, often being the most effective way to draw the public's attention to events or situations that the traditional media were banned from outlining (Geers, 1999:7).

Yet, Geers' response to Sachs' 1990 speech, highlighted the lack of an authentic expression. This, he rationalised, was as a result of the economic value which galleries placed on the work. He noted:

Previously an artist was politically correct merely because s/he had selected the correct subject matter, namely fists, guns, spears or mouths screaming Amandla. It soon became nothing more than lip service (Elliot, 1990:23).

The debate over this politically prescriptive and economically viable use of 'People's Culture', utilised both by political organisations, as well as by galleries, had become evident. However, debate over this 'lip service', was subordinate to the broader social needs which were emerging in South Africa.

However informative of political reality the art produced by 'People's Culture' was, and however wide the audience, both within and outside the borders of South Africa, calls for a reassessment of this specific use of culture, began to emerge. In 1987, a reader of the newspaper, The New Nation, Basil Dube wrote:

Art cannot exist without society. There can be no line separating the artist from his community. The progressive effect of art on society gives rise to cultural growth. The artist in South Africa must seek new forms of changing his society for the better. The black artist particularly should dispute whatever obstacles he may face. He must avoid clenched fist protest and make an effective contribution. He must call on other cultural disciplines and discuss the role of art in the broader sense (Williamson, 1989:9).

Calls for reassessment of this political use of culture, which the author points out were made by cultural workers, and not by galleries, became more frequent as the language of resistance art became more entrenched in repetition. With the dawning of the new South Africa, aspects of culture, which had been overlooked in favour of the promotion of political ideology, were surfacing.

...it is an inadequate response merely to highlight the problem of poor quality and the dominance of overt political messages in art. Cultural organisations need to expose young artists to different forms of writing and painting and theatre, and to encourage greater attention to craft. Perhaps it is time to give space and recognition to the quieter, more reflective voices on our festival platforms, instead of only the more strident voices that usually come forward (Elliot, 1990:18).

Among the calls made in the 1980's, were those made by individuals who had been associated with the calling for change on the South African cultural scene. These included N. P. van Wyk Louw, Nadine Gordimer and Njubalo Ndebele. However, it was not until Albie Sachs' speech was published in the *Weekly Mail*, that an open forum on this debate ensued. South Africa was heading towards its democracy, and the need to clear this debate was urgent. Cultural expressions, Meintjies wrote,

...were lacking in depth and abounding in stereotypes, aimed more at overseas audiences than at the community at home (18).

Yet, the identification of a national culture to express the diversity of cultural experience was not available. In the 1990s, Archbishop Tutu, adopting the term 'The Rainbow Nation', emphasised the inherent multicultural identity of South Africa and the problems this posed in the search for a national identity. The country was at the critical point of having to find out, not only what the notion of culture and identity in South Africa meant, but also what role these concepts would play in the public and political arena. What the country had to break free of in order to move forward, was also in question.

Questions concerning this development began to emerge as the debate on national identity grew. Younge (now head of the Department of Fine Art at the University of Cape Town), in his search for an understanding of this issue, went beyond Sachs' speech, which posed questions but not answers. Younge observed that the notion of a national culture appeared to be at the helm of proletariat thought and not that of autonomous action. He questioned how the ANC's proposal of a national culture could be put into action, and what the implications of this would be:

Mi Hlatswayo of COSATU said that the South African proletariat, being the producers of wealth, should lay the basis for a yet to be invented national culture. This call for one national culture has echoed, sometimes rather hollowly, around community halls for the past few years but not many have chosen to define the specific content of this unitary national culture (25).

The question remained: What was culture in the new South Africa? What did culture represent and whose representation was it? Was culture to remain a weapon for political struggle, utilised both by 'The People' and by galleries, or would a new meaning and use of culture be formed? With the ANC DAC placed in a position of having to demonstrate its understanding and support of culture as a cornerstone of its ideals for a democratic South Africa, moves to establish cultural institutions, which would redress the past, and form the new national

identity, were put in place.

In 1990, with the political developments in South Africa which followed the unbanning of the ANC, the decision to move the already established and seemingly successful Dakawa Cultural Centre to South Africa became one of priority for the ANC DAC. However, this Centre, which had been formed as the cultural extension of the larger ANC Dakawa Development Centre for exiles at Dakawa in Tanzania, exemplified policies which raised fears among progressive cultural workers in South Africa. The fundamental notion of culture as an expression of direct experience rather than idealistic inexperience, was raised time and again by these workers. As Sears wrote in his response to Sachs:

The address of the paper throughout jumps from its immediate audience, our comrades in exile, to a larger identifiable South African audience. That the comrades living in exile at the moment have an extremely difficult task to catch up, as it were, with internal developments when they return is true (De Kock, 1990:58).

The establishment of the Dakawa Art and Craft Project in Grahamstown, as the locus for the formation of a new national cultural identity, was to endorse the position that a new culture cannot be constructed, let alone take root, without absorbing elements of the old. The first problem, in this regard, was that none of those involved in the debates following Sachs' article were able to formulate what culture in South Africa was or should be.

As for the old culture in South Africa, that part which was best known, namely white, Eurocentric, culture, was being rejected. The question of what should replace it, was an issue. South Africa's multicultural reality had not been well documented or researched, and implications of this raised questions. Uncertainty as to the content of the newly constructed culture emerged. While terminologies describing black artistic endeavours between the 1960's and 1990's had been academically formulated, the practical implications of these terms came to be of crucial importance. Could culture be constructed without an understanding of the varied practices and norms involved? Furthermore, could a cultural concept, of which little was known in South Africa, because it had been developed in Tanzania, be applied in South

Africa?

A pivotal question remained: What was the ANC's need for initiating a national cultural identity? Duncan, writing on the attempts made by cultural institutions to project the existence of a representative 'New South African' national culture, possibly answered this question by posing those of her own:

*Why is it necessary to strive for a national culture in a world where the internationalisation of culture has become an everyday reality? In apartheid South Africa it had been controversial to speak of 'the nation' because the existence of this entity had been denied through the use of statutes defining and separating different 'national cultures' or ethnic identities. Revisionist historians in the 1980s focused on how these identities were manipulated and even constructed by the apartheid state to serve its political aims of 'divide and rule'. Writings such as those in Vail's collection, *The Creation of Tribalism in Southern Africa*, provided a theoretical foundation for rejecting essentialist notions of culture, and undermined arguments put forward by sectional interests seeking constitutionally to protect the rights of certain 'cultures'. Such writings also endorsed the view that nation-building is a necessary precondition for the elimination of racism and ethnic prejudices, and for the depoliticisation of ethnic identities. In addition, a revisionist perspective emphasises that ethnic identities are intimately tied up with economic privilege and deprivation and that entire economic and political edifices of privilege may rest on keeping essentialist notions of ethnicity alive. This recognition has led to the argument that a radical nation-building project is central to the successful redistribution of wealth in South Africa (Duncan, 1996:25-7).*

Finally, a major question centred around the ANC's practical implementation of a Project aimed at the development of the new culture and identity for South Africa.

The Dakawa Cultural Centre in Tanzania

The establishment of the Dakawa Cultural Centre in Tanzania, a late cultural extension of the

larger ANC Dakawa Development Centre, was the result of observations about the use of culture in the ANC's liberation struggle in South Africa in the 1980's.

It had long been realised that the struggle against apartheid could not be defined in narrowly political terms, and that it was necessary to contest the dominance of the apartheid system on many levels, including the cultural...this was adopted as the first step in the foundation of a cultural centre not just for Dakawa, but for the movement as a whole (Morrow, 1998(a):13-14).

In 1986, a group of Swedish anti-apartheid activists secured funding from SIDA for the establishment of a textile printing workshop at Dakawa in Tanzania (13). Based on the principle of training through production, where trainees to the Centre would receive a practical understanding of designing and printing (D.A, Background to Dakawa Textile Workshop, 1986:1), a group of exiles was sent for training in Sweden before the workshop was opened in Tanzania. On their return, they, together with the Swedish textile consultant, Malin Sellman, established and ran the workshop with the purpose of initiating trainees at the Centre into the importance of culture as a tool for individual development in the still to be liberated South Africa (Morrow, 1998(a):14).

Although only the textile-printing workshop was ever in operation in Tanzania, Morrow wrote of how plans for the development of the Centre also included a theatre, pottery, graphic design workshop, weaving workshop, film, fine art, photography and music (14). However, with the political changes that were occurring in South Africa in 1990, plans for the incorporation of the other art media were suspended.

The Dakawa Cultural Centre in Tanzania, with its infrastructure, expertise and foreign funders (SIDA, Artists Against Apartheid and Arbetarnas Bildningsförbund [ABF], The Worker's Educational Society), looked to prove pivotal to the implementation of an ANC-guided Cultural Centre in South Africa. The blueprint for future action in South Africa, which was based on the Revised Dakawa Development Plan of 1984, stated:

...Dakawa Cultural Centre wants to be an example for future Cultural Community Centres to be developed in the liberated South African reality and a firm cultural thrust in our reconstruction period (D.A., Background to Dakawa Textile Workshop, 1986:1).

However, taking into account Sears' concern regarding the implementation of culture in South Africa by exiles who were not part of the daily struggle in South Africa, a brief consideration of Dakawa Development Centre policies is necessary. The key question is: Where would the Dakawa Cultural Centre place its focus, if it was meant to be the model for future cultural development in South Africa?

The establishment of the Dakawa Development Centre at Dakawa, in Tanzania, originated as a result of the needs for expansion of the Solomon Mahlangu Freedom College(SOMAFCO) in Mazimbu, following the influx of youth after the Soweto riots of 1976. The SOMAFCO Centre, which had been established to cater for the educational needs of political exiles fleeing the apartheid regime of South Africa in the 1970s, could no longer cope with the vast numbers of exiles who entered the camp. In addition,

... it became clear that there were needs which could not be answered at Mazimbu, and that there were certain ancillary functions that SOMAFCO itself required (Morrow, 1998(b):4).

Following the Tanzanian government's granting of land for further ANC development, the move to establish another exile camp was taken in 1982. This camp, which became known as the Dakawa Development Centre, was meant to cater for the educational needs of youth as well as adults, by preparing them in basic education for acceptance into SOMAFCO. Morrow wrote,

Here, the academic level of young people, and their security status, would be checked, they would receive basic education in subjects such as mathematics and English, and they would be given political instruction and taught about the history of South Africa and the ANC (4).

To cater for these needs, the Student Orientation Centre, later called the Ruth First Education

Orientation Centre (EOC) was established. (8) Although schooling of exiled youth did occur on very basic levels, and some youths were sent on to SOMAFCO, the role of the EOC soon took on dimensions beyond the scope of its original intentions. As the ancillary needs of SOMAFCO grew, the Dakawa Development Centre found itself catering for needs which were to include that of a rehabilitation centre. Education, which was meant to be the focus of the Centre, was to become secondary to the social needs the Centre had to provide.

At the rehabilitation centre, exiles, who were either mentally ill, or who were deemed in need of political rehabilitation, following their experiences in South Africa, would come to rehabilitate and reform (11). However, the role of the rehabilitation centre was broadened to encompass direct social rehabilitation as well. 'Comrades who might have offended the movement' (13), were expelled from SOMAFCO and sent to Dakawa to rehabilitate. As Morrow noted, the term, the 'Dakawa dumping ground' emerged as a result of this (11).

The impression cannot be avoided that the Rehabilitation Centre was virtually a penal settlement...People were sent there in a manner reminiscent of prison sentencing. One of many examples are the four males sent there in February 1986 for two years each for impregnating female comrades, the one female and one male sentenced to one year for abortion, and the two males given one year each for dagga addiction (13).

However, the educational and rehabilitation centres were not the only aspects of Dakawa. The geographical positioning of the Centre, in an area of bleak reality, dictated development of further social initiatives. Morrow wrote on how the Centre also attempted to develop a farm, to provide useful work for the cadres, and to promote self-sufficiency in food (14), in accordance with the ANC's philosophy of 'Education with Production' (15).

As a result, the expansion of the Dakawa Development Centre into a network of service departments, which were to include those of health, transport, education and construction facilities, became part of the Centre's growth (19). Amongst the most important of these, was that of the Vocational Training Centre(VTC), which embarked on training courses in carpentry, plumbing, brick-laying and electrical installation (20).

Although the Vocational Training Centre was meant to focus on the training of exiles in preparation for vocations which would be of use in the South Africa they would return to, there was a lack of policy regarding the implementation of the ANC's educational ideals.

The VTC encapsulated a dilemma, which was never resolved, between the needs of the individuals who were being trained, and the needs of Dakawa as an institution. Reports from various sources...make it clear that trainees were used for the immediate purposes of the construction programme, with little attention being given to the creation of a satisfactory training curriculum...This resulted in dissatisfaction amongst trainees, who were aware that their experience would not be of much use in the world outside, whether in South Africa or elsewhere. There were never sufficient well qualified instructors, and satisfactory certification, which would have validated the course and qualified the trainees for employment elsewhere, was never achieved (20 -21).

Other VTC attempts to create small industrial production units used to train exiles, were to follow the same unguided educational policy route. Although Morrow recorded no problems regarding the production of the garment factory, which produced items directly necessary for the whole Dakawa Development Centre (21), the leather factory,

...was plagued by discontent from petty nepotism and a lack of effective stock-taking, book-keeping and training (22).

The Dakawa Development Centre, which was established as an educational extension of SOMAFECO, was not able to fulfil its professed aims owing to problems associated with the lack of curricula and competent teachers, as well as the overriding need for social control of exiles. Administration centred on measures to cope with the latter. As a result, protests and dissatisfaction with the general administration of the Centre, and with the lack of realisation of development aims, grew more vociferous and violent as years passed by (22-7).

Although these deficiencies were clear to exiles involved in the Centre's activities, these realities were overlooked in the need to attract and secure financial funding vital for the

survival of the Centre (29).

The Cultural Centre, which, as Morrow recorded, was a late addition to the Development Centre's growth, came into existence thanks to foreign funding and the provision of foreign teachers. SIDA, which had been supporting ANC educational activities since the early 1970s (Micou, 1992:106), sent both equipment and trained consultants to set up the textile-training workshop in 1987 (D.A., Background to Dakawa Textile Workshop, 1986:1).

Although, as Morrow wrote, the early days of the Textile Printing Workshop were difficult due to infrastructure problems and, 'various personal and professional problems which made it impossible for some of the trainees to continue with the programme' (Morrow, 1998(b) :31), such problems could have resulted from the inevitable contact between the Cultural Centre's textile-printing workshop and other failed centres of the larger Dakawa Development Centre, owing to their close proximity. As a result, Morrow wrote how:

It was made clear - and in this it differentiated itself from the approach taken at the VTC- that the task of the centre was essentially educational... (31).

Although there was a need for a Centre which seemed geared towards successful training and education, and it seemed that the Cultural Centre had the necessary infrastructure for this, social and political handicaps were overlooked in the interests of hasty implementation.

The introduction of the training plans for the textile and the weaving workshops, worked out by Malin Sellman in 1986, seemed to have the prerequisites for success:

As Dakawa wants to be "an example for future Cultural COMMUNITY CENTRES to be developed in the liberated South African reality and "a firm cultural thrust in our reconstructing period" (quots)[sic], it's important to start the centres with techniques already known, to find those articles an economically vital and appreciative market and to transfer that knowledge and skill into modern materials. This will help people without a formal education to build up their selfconfidence[sic], cultural identity and integrity by

allowing them to express their views, feelings and aspirations in the very powerful media that art can be when of a high quality (D.A., Plans of a weaving workshop at Dakawa Cultural Centre, 1986:1).

While the training programme was meant to run over five years, in six stages, alternating between education and production (D.A., Background to Dakawa Textile Workshop, 1986:1), it was the introduction of the ideals to be achieved by the Centre, that highlighted the basic discrepancy between educational aims and the social context of implementation. Furthermore, as noted by Morrow, the Dakawa Development was geographically isolated, yet the marketing strategy for showcasing, became pivotal to the ideal (1-8).

The products of the workshops are UNIQUE...sold at world market prices and thus the market for them is to be found in the metropolitan areas...The Centre should as far as possible do its own selling through EXHIBITIONS in ART MUSEUMS/GALLERIES all over the world or through ITS OWN SELLING AGENCIES...If PRIVATE GALLERIES or SHOPS want to sell...they must pay cash and buy direct from the Centre's own exhibition hall at Dakawa or elsewhere (6).

However, with trainees with incomplete formal education, and even less artistic knowledge or experience, achieving the marketing ideal made it necessary to introduce foreign teachers and consultants from Sweden, who:

...If a specialist is called in at the initial stage then he/she should have a teacher's position during the period of building up the workshop and also be responsible for the outlay of the workshop, the equipment, initial production and the training of staff/weavers/spinners...After this period local people should be appointed...it is of utmost importance that the leader/supervisor also is an artist...or has a great knowledge, experience or understanding of a[sic] production of unique art and craft (7).

Thus, while ANC ideals guided the Centre's policy, training and marketing was applied by foreign teachers. All in all, the Cultural Centre, which by the time of Dakawa's closure in

Tanzania in 1992, had only the textile-printing workshop in operation, encapsulated the fundamental problem of the Dakawa Development Centre as a whole.

While the ANC attempted to present more realistic options, such as VTC courses, to such people Dakawa was 'a society whose day to day hopes and future plans tend to be dominated by illusions that will probably never materialise' (Morrow, 1998(b) : 26-27).

Although a considerable amount of work was produced in the textile workshop in the years in which Dakawa operated in Tanzania, and trainees were educated in the basic language of design and textile practice through their exposure to training at Swedish institutions, the project of preparing exiles to form a firm cultural thrust in the liberated South Africa, was not accomplished. Both the style of the textile designs produced and the intellectual preparation of exiles, were informed by the overriding problems of geographical isolation, harsh social and political realities at the Dakawa Development Centre, foreign teaching methodology, foreign market orientation and the general lack of education policy at the Dakawa Development Centre. Isolation from the South African context, and ignorance of the dynamics of grassroots arts and culture as a fundamental factor in development strategies, was evident.

Nonetheless, the aims and objectives of the Cultural Centre, which had been informed by both the ANC Dakawa Centre's ideology, and by Swedish funding and teaching methodology, were, like the equipment and materials of the Centre, packed up and shipped off to South Africa, once its relocation site in South Africa had been established.

The Move to Grahamstown

Following the Zabalaza Conference in July 1990, at which the ANC strengthened their Constitutional Guidelines and Freedom Charter (Elliot, 1990:30), the need for the ANC to establish cultural structures within South Africa became urgent. With the Dakawa Cultural Centre in Tanzania having the necessary infrastructure for easy establishment, the business of finding a new site began.

In February and March 1991, after it had become clear that the political developments within South Africa were irreversible (Morrow, 1998(a):15), the ANC Department of Arts and Culture sent two consultants on a feasibility tour to ANC regions, with the aim of identifying a suitable place for the relocation of the Textile Printing, Graphics and Weaving Workshops (Cory Library, Rhodes University, Feasibility Study for the Relocation of Dakawa Textile Printing, Graphics and Weaving Workshop, 1991:1).

Between the two consultants, Malin Sellman, who had worked as the Swedish Textile consultant at the Dakawa Cultural Centre in Tanzania, as well as at the E.L.C. Rorke's Drift Centre, and Bernard Thulo, who had worked in the ANC DAC's Cultural Office in Zambia (D.A., MC Meeting, November 1992:3), the aims and needs of both the ANC DAC and SIDA were officially well represented.

Areas and centres which the consultants visited were either all ANC affiliated, or, if not, had been involved in the promotion and development of black art and craft in South Africa for many years. Prominent amongst some of the sites visited were the E.L.C. Rorke's Drift Centre in Natal, and the Community Arts Project (CAP) in Cape Town (Cory Library, Rhodes University, Feasibility Study for the Relocation of Dakawa Textile Printing, Graphics and Weaving Workshop, 1991:1-12). No formal academic institutions, other than that of Rhodes University, were consulted. Although the Rhodes Fine Art Department did not have links with the grassroots structures the consultants were looking for, it was realised that this department would offer a possible teaching link, once the Centre had been relocated (17).

After an extensive tour, which encompassed all the then provinces of the country, three factors necessary for the relocation of the Centre became evident to the consultants. Most of the projects and sites visited were short of sufficient buildings for the intended workshops, had insufficient community organisation, or were still in the throes of the political violence which continued to erupt within the country at the time (Cory Library, Rhodes University, Feasibility Study for the Relocation of Dakawa Textile Printing, Graphics and Weaving Workshop, 1991).

Grahamstown, which was visited in 1991, appeared to offer the consultants what they were looking for and more. Political violence in the area seemed to have been quelled, the ANC's strength in the area was unaffected by any other political organisation, suitable buildings for the immediate installation of the workshops were available, and the Grahamstown black community was in need of industry to lift it out of its high unemployment rate. Thus, the introduction of culture as an industry, would be well accepted by all. The city was rural enough to provide the Centre with trainees who, after being trained, could leave to implement what they had learnt, once they returned to their rural areas. Mistakenly, the consultants were led to believe that the majority of the black population of Grahamstown consisted of 'people who were on the run and might want to go back home after they had finished training' (16). While Grahamstown did have this rural element as part of its make-up, it was also urban, and equidistant from the major centres of South Africa. The proximity of Rhodes University would facilitate the provision of trained teachers and strong artistic links, something which Malin Sellman felt had been lacking at the Rorke's Drift Centre. Lastly, the ANC and other representatives they met with seemed to have the necessary grassroots ties with the community (16-18).

Future arts and culture lobbying possibilities, although not immediately available, as the ANC DAC was still in negotiation with the National Arts Festival, seemed promising. The National Arts Festival, which had its home in Grahamstown, had, since the late 1980s been embroiled in heated debate with community organisations and other political lobbying bodies in South Africa, over issues of representation. Negotiations over the inclusion of a representative, rather than an exclusive, Festival, involving different arts and culture forms and practices were underway. The consultants concluded that, as they would be establishing a project promoting the development and exposure of black arts and culture in the new South Africa, the proximity of the Project to the National Arts Festival would be beneficial to the development of the debate about arts and culture in South Africa.

As stated by the organisations we interviewed the area is very neglected as such, and the big cultural festival seems to even more bring out these problems, by regularly exposing the vast contrasts in opportunities and life-quality between the different population groups. Therefore

we think that we can be an important “tool” in exposing these differences at the same time as we are doing something about it, by building up a “living” art centre with black local and national artists (16-17).

With what appeared to be all that was necessary for the implementation of the ANC DAC's political and cultural needs, as well as for SIDA's funding criteria for training needs, the ANC DAC approved of Grahamstown for the relocation of the Dakawa Cultural Centre from Tanzania (Morrow, 1998(b):33).

In the months following the consultants' visit to Grahamstown and the completion of the feasibility report to the ANC DAC, negotiations over site, structure and establishment of the Project in Grahamstown took place between local ANC representatives, the ANC DAC office in Johannesburg and SIDA representatives who visited Grahamstown to view the situation for themselves. An Interim Committee, consisting of ANC representatives, was set up in Grahamstown in order to allow for a community-controlled development of the Project to take place. In line with the ANC's Freedom Charter, the process of establishment was to be as democratic as possible, with members of the community to be implementing policy in the future (D.A., Management Committee and Interim Committee Meeting, 2 March 1992:1).

However, while hasty progress was being made on the groundwork and plans for the relocation to Grahamstown, the ANC's involvement in the Centre was being shrouded in secrecy. When the Dakawa Art and Craft Project first opened in Grahamstown in June 1992, surprisingly little background information regarding the ANC's involvement, or expected policy for the Project was publicised. The secrecy which prevailed around the Project, was such, that, as Morrow wrote,

...even some of those who, from 1992, threw themselves energetically into the development of the centre in its new home, admit, in the words of a prominent member of the committee that welcomed Dakawa to Grahamstown, that she knew ‘nothing, absolutely nothing’ about Dakawa in Tanzania when the project was mooted (Morrow, 1998(a):1).

While this secrecy could be explained in terms of the haste that had to be made in order to implement the Project in such short time, more obvious reasons for this secrecy were simple. Back in Tanzania, at the Dakawa Development Centre, the disbanding of the Centre and relocation of exiles to South Africa was causing much friction and trouble. Although the Dakawa Development Centre had popularly been referred to as the 'Dakawa dumping ground' by many exiles who had experienced the ambiguous, and often violent, nature of the camp, the security of its familiarity seemed to offer a safer haven than that of a return to South Africa, of which the exiles had little immediate knowledge. These apprehensions on the part of many of the exiles, some whom were still arriving at the camp, having recently fled South Africa, led to the looting of resources at the camp, according to Morrow "to obtain at least some resources for the unknown future"(16). Knowledge, not only of this, but of the dubious history of the Centre in Tanzania, would not bode well for the future development of the Project in South Africa, were it to become public.

Although the secrecy of the ANC's involvement in the Project was broken in July 1992, through a press report which the newly constituted Project Trust issued upon request to the newspaper, the Daily Dispatch (D. A., Press Release, 25 July 1992:1), the history and reality of the Dakawa Development Centre was kept well away from those involved in the Project from the beginning (Morrow, 1998(b) :36). Grahamstown, it was hoped, would provide the relocated Cultural Centre with a cultural reality which the Tanzanian Centre had not been able to do. While the Centre in South Africa did not see a repetition of the Tanzanian Centre's violence and disruption, the ambiguous nature of the mother Centre and lack of policy for implementation of ideals, had repercussions on the new Centre.

The Dakawa Development Centre exemplified a lack of clear distinction between social and educational policy, and between political ideology and cultural policy, neither of which was ever solved. While the Centre was meant to provide cultural education for exiles in preparation for the liberated South Africa, cultural policies were based more on foreign norms and ideals than on the expected realities of South Africa. For example, the textiles produced at the Dakawa Cultural Centre in Tanzania, were marketed in Scandinavian countries rather than in Africa. As a result, both foreign support and training, was favoured above that of South

African.

New Aims and Objectives

In February 1992, the ANC-DAC-appointed Management Committee (MC) members, Malin Sellman, Bernard Thulo and Vusi Khumalo (who had been involved in the textile-printing workshop at the Dakawa Cultural Centre in Tanzania) arrived in Grahamstown for the purpose of immediate implementation of the Project. This was to take place in collaboration with the ANC-appointed Interim Committee. This, however, proved impossible. The Interim Committee (IC), which consisted of a majority of ANC structure representatives, felt they had not known enough about the Project to be able to get it underway in Grahamstown, in the few months since they had been appointed in 1991 (D.A., M.C. Report to ANC DAC, 6 March 1992:1).

In the hope of clearing up the confusion, the MC held a meeting with the IC at which they stated the aims and objectives of the Project, by citing those of both SIDA and the ANC DAC. The following aims were documented, and these were to remain unchanged when the Trust was formally constituted in July. These read:

- a) To contribute to skills development in an area presently denied such training, far from large cities, thus enriching and empowering communities.*
- b) To give every talent a chance by not demanding any formal education or special age from the applicants, and with the commitment to accept students from oppressed rural and urban communities.*
- c) To allow the trainees to upgrade to be in a position to write a theoretical examination in respective technique.*
- d) To have at least half of the students coming from other regions of South Africa, so that they can go back and start small workshops in their own areas.*
- e) To gradually, during the training introduce painting and drawing to become the foundation of the creation in all techniques.*
- f) To broaden [sic] the scope by introducing desktop publishing and later sculpture, pottery,*

mural painting etc.

g) To introduce administrative and management skills

h) To be part of the development of a new art and craft training curriculum - to forge appropriate syllabuses [sic] and certificates

l) To train and expose black artists who can make an imprint on the South African art and design market - to be a visual evidence of change.

j) To promote South African and African textile designs.

k) To become self-reliant by sales of the production from the workshops, so that the students can get remuneration for a 50/50 participation in training and production. This is an important strategy as art and culture training is bound to come far down on the list of needs in education.

l) To establish a wide contact network with other art and craft centre/workshops for exchange of ideas and experience, and by offering short courses.

m) To be part of the establishment of a national non-profit marketing network, through exhibitions in National art galleries and museums, which do not charge the exhibitors, and through the establishment of non-profit communal or organisational art and craft galleries or shop

n) To nurture the unique artistic heritage of Africa.

o) To ensure that the Art and Craft project will function with and as part of the local community.

p) To provide an environment at the project where individuals can develop not only artistically, but towards full personal and social realisation.

q) To reach beyond the local community in order to propagate the ideals of the project in the nurturing and promotion of artistic talents, cultural expression and personal and spiritual fulfilment (D.A., M.C. Report to ANC DAC, 6 March 1992:6).

The Training Programme

As a means of implementing these aims and objectives, a training programme was drawn up and presented in September 1992, following a workshop held for Trustees and the MC. Although the pilot trainees had already been part of the training procedure since June, and

were receiving 'on the job training' in printmaking and weaving, it was made clear that "the management committee must ensure that the trainees and the contractors are not on the premises that day" of the workshop preceding the presentation of the training programme (D.A., MC Minutes, 14 September 1992:1). As a result, issues concerning the actual reality of the situation they were dealing with, were overlooked once again, in favour of the ideal.

Some of these ideals included:

The project should combine production and training, aiming at a 50/50 ratio...other Centres have tried to combine training and production, but often failed, especially when they have been situated in a depressed economical climate (D.A., Training Workshop Report, 18 September 1992:1).

However,

In order to have a better chance to succeed, Dakawa should try to maintain both production and training...If the training disappears from a project it is likely to fail, because Donors will not continue their support (1).

Training must lead to a job and an income for the trainee...(2-3).

However,

...it was noted that there is a need to promote an enterprising attitude in the black community(3).

Nevertheless,

We, as the Dakawa project is [sic] setting up a whole new tradition of culture and training...We need to aim at the highest quality skills and certificates. In South Africa people have been denied high quality skills for such a long time, that that becomes a priority in a project like Dakawa. Actually one of its prime aims from the beginning is : "to be an example for future Cultural Community Centres to be developed in the liberated South African reality and a firm cultural thrust in our reconstruction period" (2-3).

Marketing strategies, although never agreed upon, were to follow the course laid out in Tanzania:

...unique pieces of Art and Craft sold at world market prices, and thus the main market for them is to be found in the metropolitan areas....It is also important to sell the less expensive artifacts on the local market. This will be done in the Project's shop...(8).

Again, as in Tanzania, the issue of producing work as fast as possible in order to showcase it, was highlighted. As a result, a training programme aimed at achieving this, was hastily formulated. Similar to the training programme in Tanzania, the training at the Dakawa Art and Craft Project set out to follow a course of ten modules of six months each, in each workshop. Trainees at the Project, including exiles who needed skills, who chose to specialise in textile printing, weaving or graphic printing, were to be sent and paid for either by community organisations or by the ANC DAC, from across the country.

At Dakawa, trainees would enter the Project for six months of training and then return to the area they had come from to implement what they had learnt, in the following six months. This process would then be repeated until training was complete. Trainees who were interested in starting businesses, based on what they had learnt at the Project, would be able to leave the course after the first five modules. Trainees, who wanted to enter tertiary institutions with the aim of acquiring a more formalised education, would need to complete all ten training modules following which they would receive certification from an educational body, which the Project was still to find (9-12).

These aims and objectives, which had been drawn up far from the Project's actual location, with a training programme based on an ANC ideal carried over from the Tanzanian Centre, showed a radical misunderstanding of the local needs which would affect the future of the Project in practice. The Project organisers might have thought they had the necessary equipment, teachers, and Board of Trustees for quick implementation in Grahamstown. However, as time was to tell, lacking a clear policy regarding actual implementation of its aims and objectives, and its training programme, the Project's basic infrastructure was not able to cope with the realities of its Grahamstown context.

Given the poverty and lack of education in Grahamstown's townships, the level of the local

Grahamstown trainees employed by the Project from 1992 onwards, exposed the idealism of these aims and objectives, more so as none of the trainees had ever done any form of formal art training before. Furthermore, with a training programme which would have taken five years to complete, such ideals were unattainable.

Although work generated in the workshops between September 1992 and July 1993, particularly the prints from the Graphic workshop, could present to a visitor or funder an impression of progress, fundamental issues relating to Project policy, teaching practice, trainee policy and understanding of arts and culture practice were poorly formulated. Yet, these inadequacies only came to light in August 1993, through an evaluation by the funders, SIDA, in response to a request from the MC for further aid, until the Project would be able to stand on its own (D.A., SIDA Evaluation Report, August 1993).

SIDA, which had not wanted to fund the Project beyond the initial relocation and establishment phase, was faced with the reality of a project which had set out with high ideals and expectations, but which, owing to problems beyond the control of the organisers, was not succeeding as a centre for the promotion of arts and culture in South Africa.

After running for more than a year, the Projects [sic] lacks a clear statement of aims for its artistic orientation. In a project brochure it is stated that; "the aim of this project was to provide basic and advanced artistic and craft skills", and further that "our ultimate aim is a training with[the] highest possible standard at university level". But what is its policy and what is meant by "high artistic quality"? Should its five-year training be equated with the training in the arts at Grahamstown's Rhodes University, London's Royal College of Art, or the National College of Art(Konstfack) in Stockholm? With what examination and competence does this training terminate? Should it, like similar training in the arts in the western world, be based on Bauhaus ideas? Is it training in artistic handicrafts, design or art in the widest sense? (27-8).

Further observations made on the problems of the Project, included:

The project lacks proper management tools. There are not any clear and measurable objectives, nor is there a clear project policy...On the pedagogical/training side of the project the major short-coming is the lack of curricula and orientation. Currently the training is delivered without a clear orientation...Production should be separated from training. Experience from other training cum production projects and institutions has shown that the risks of production activities taking the upper hand, at the expense of training activities, are great...The cost per capita/trainee is much too high at Dakawa...Most employees are committed and hard working. However, some staff members do not have the expertise nor experience required to perform their duties at an acceptable standard...The facilities at Dakawa are generally good. All departments and office premises have good standards and are fully comparable with equivalent Swedish university premises...Simpler, more traditional equipment could with interest be used, partly to keep traditions alive, partly to get students used to the fact that, once they leave the school, they may have little else at their disposal (3-4).

Realising and noting the importance of the Project in South Africa, SIDA recommended drastic steps for improvements in the following areas: direction of Trust and Project policy; teaching practice and related methodology, applicable to the needs of an arts and culture Project; cost efficiency; appropriate technology; and trainee policy.

Problems regarding the lack of policy governing the objectives of the Project, set in even before the Project's official opening. Although the Project was established under ANC guidelines, the ANC, in accordance with its Freedom Charter, began the process of withdrawing from it soon after the decision was taken to relocate it to Grahamstown. The Trust could do little to help the situation. While the ANC DAC had requested Lebona Mosia, an academic at Rhodes University, to act as extended representative of the ANC DAC on the Trust, his knowledge of arts and culture and of training relevant to the new democracy was, like that of many of the other Trust members, to prove sorely lacking. The negative impact of this withdrawal, at a time of crucial importance, was never to be resolved.

With the ANC's withdrawal, and communication between the ANC DAC and the Project MC

over matters of ownership of the building relegated to long distance means, problems regarding funding were the first to be encountered. As noted, SIDA had only wanted to fund the Project in its initial implementation stage, after which the Project was meant to be funded by a South African organisation, possibly the ANC, when it came into power, as well as to be self-sustaining through the sales of art produced there. However, with the ANC hampering building and preparation work at the Project, at the beginning of 1992, through the constant delay of monies to the Project because of the lack of a formal Project structure, the MC realised that interim measures would be necessary (D.A., M.C. Minutes, 27 April 1992:1-2).

Although the Dakawa Art and Craft Project had stated, as one of its aims, the upliftment and empowerment of the local Grahamstown community through the training and business it hoped to introduce in the area, the inclusion of a majority of trainees from the Grahamstown township was not part of its initial plans.

In April 1992, barely two months into the Project's relocation, the MC noted three factors which would hinder the immediate start of the training programme. Firstly, although initial recruitment into the Project was meant to include trainees sent by the ANC DAC from other areas of South Africa, as well as exiles from the then disbanding ANC camps, which had operated outside of South Africa, the reality was that the relocation of these exiles to the Project would be delayed until at least the following year, owing to ANC DAC administrative problems(1-2).

Secondly, as more repairs were needed before any training could commence, the Project needed local workers to help with this. Thirdly, the Project needed urgently to commence with the training programme, to secure future funding from SIDA. Thus, the MC agreed to recruit trainees from the immediate Grahamstown community. Although 'not the ideal solution', this would serve as the best interim measure (1-2).

About this interim measure, the MC stated that the first six months of the Project would be regarded as a pilot programme until proper establishment of the Project had taken place (1). However, hopes for the ANC's involvement in the direction of this establishment, through the

supply of both trainees and South African teachers, were not satisfied.

The SIDA evaluators remarked on the impact of this interim measure, which, over the next few years, was to become the norm, by noting the problems posed to the Project by the level of the local trainees. Trainees, they noted, lacked:

...higher qualification... [needed to be] set for writing and reading, and abilities in simple mathematics, Afrikaans and English are mandatory. Some existing students have very poor abilities; some cannot read...their knowledge of the relevant economics, marketing, putative customers and so on is very poor. No-one regards their training as a cultural effort in which the individual judged to be doing something for his or her group (D.A., SIDA Evaluation Report, August 1993:23-4).

These problems, however, were further reinforced by the level of the teachers and their understanding of arts and culture development.

The Teaching Staff

The SIDA evaluators noted:

The dependency on expatriates is currently very high. This is a severe problem from several points of view. This has resulted in a situation where the costs are high, sustainability is low, continuity is a problem, etc. The mission is of the opinion that the expatriate personnel should be phased out as soon as possible. This can only be done once competent South African people are available to take on the posts currently held by expatriates (22).

Teachers at Dakawa were contracted not only by SIDA and the ANC DAC, but also by other Swedish funding bodies. Their brief was to help set up the workshops and training programme, and to build up the capacity of the first trainees so that the Project would be able to go into production once they had left in July and were replaced by South African teachers. However, because the ANC DAC withdrew from management processes, ostensibly to 'hand

the project over to the community', the appointment of South African teachers identified by the ANC DAC did not occur. It was only towards the end of 1993, after the SIDA evaluation explicitly stated the need for South African personnel in a Project intended for the South African community, that this occurred.

The initial teaching core, who, over the next year and half, was to come and go as contracts expired and were renewed, consisted of three Swedish consultants: Ann Giertz, who was contracted by the Swedish ABF Workers Union to teach weaving; Kristina Anshelm, who was contracted to teach graphic printmaking through funding from the Swedish Artists Against Apartheid organisation; and Malin Sellman, who was on contract from Tanzania through SIDA. In recognition of her experience at Dakawa, and previously with the Rorke's Drift Centre in Natal (1969 - '76, teacher; 1984,'85, consultant), Malin Sellman was promoted to the position of director of the Project by Wally Serote, head of the ANC DAC (D.A., IC Meeting, 25 July 1992:2).

The other teachers, although not of Swedish nationality, had had direct experience of Swedish teaching methodology. Vusi Khumalo, while at the Tanzanian Cultural Centre, had been sent by SIDA to Konstfack, in Sweden, to receive training in textile printing. Bernard Thulo(alias for Tebogo Dithlakanyane), was initially contracted to teach computer graphics because of his experience at the ANC DAC offices in Zambia, but, owing to his lack of teaching expertise, was, within a few months, made the maintenance officer instead (D.A., MC meeting, 3 November 1992: 1).

Further Swedish influence was introduced after Malin Sellman's appointment as Director. Not being able to spend concerted time teaching, while she tended to administrative duties, consultants for the textile workshop, who were to help implement training, were brought in from the Konstfack School in Sweden. Vusi Khumalo, it was noted, would need to complete his studies in Sweden before he could co-ordinate and teach in the textile workshop (D.A., Trust Meeting, 16 October 1992:3).

The direct implementation of Swedish teaching practices at Dakawa was not the only

manifestation of Swedish influence on the Project. While further problems with the ANC DAC's allocation of funds arose, direct contact between the MC and SIDA representatives was taking place. Both the director and the Trust chairperson, Lebona Mosia, were called separately to Sweden to meet the funders during this phase. Bilateral relations between the Project and Sweden, and a funding programme guaranteeing support for three years only, as five years needed Swedish government approval, was approved by SIDA (D.A., Report on visit to Sweden and Norway by Lebona Mosia, February 1993).

Conflicting Approaches to Training

A situation was developing which was to undermine the longer-term objectives of the Project. Major factors were:

i) The Project was becoming increasingly reliant on direct aid from SIDA. This meant that many management decisions and aspirations were based on SIDA's recommendations. The ANC DAC, fearing the strengthening position SIDA was obtaining at the Project, stated that SIDA should not dictate policy to the Project, and even suggested that an evaluator from the ANC's Department of Education be sent to the Project. However, following the visit to obtain funding from SIDA in January 1993, where the bilateral relations between the Project and Sweden were spoken of, Lebona Mosia stated that an evaluation from SIDA would be more beneficial, as the Project did not want to lose its 'international dimension' (D.A., Report on visit to ANC DAC Offices in Johannesburg, 17 March 1992:2).

ii) Ties with the Konstfack School were being strengthened, as the MC realised that no South African institution would be able to offer any form of accreditation for the Dakawa Project's courses. The reason for this was the poor level of formal education of the local trainees, taken in instead of the exiles and other better qualified South African individuals whose arrival had been promised, but not organised, by the ANC DAC (D.A., Brief Report on 17 October - 20 November 1992:1).

As a result, uncertainty about teaching approaches began to surface. While trainees were

meant to learn the fundamental principles of African art and craft, simultaneously there was the attempt to teach them both the English and Swedish languages, in preparation for external examination for certification through Konstfack. Negotiations with Konstfack eventually broke down because of the MC's lack of policy, and again, the level of education of the trainees. Therefore, the problem of accreditation remained (D.A., Report from a survey visit to the Dakawa Art and Craft Project by Barbara Berther of Konstfack, 17 December 1992: 1 - 12).

iii) Individual teaching methods, as they were applied within each workshop, were in accordance with their respective funder's aims. While the overriding principle was that of teaching trainees to become arts and culture practitioners, who would be able to set up their own businesses once they had left the Project, the ideologies of consultants and identities of trainees within each workshop differed. Trainees in the weaving workshop took on the role of workers, trainees in the textile workshop took on that of producers, while printmaking trainees took on the role of the artist (D.A., Weaving and Graphic workshop reports, 1992; D.A., Trainee evaluations and questionnaires, 1992 - 1994).

While only Malin Sellman had had prior experience teaching at 'grassroots' level, methodologies applicable to overseas levels of education were being introduced in principle and in practice. All trainees were supposed to be taught subjects, including general art theories of colour and form, etc., art history, applied English and mathematics (D.A., SIDA Evaluation Report, August 1993:13), but, in practise, the content of the courses was influenced by the teachers' own experience.

Weaving training was based on traditional Swedish styles, with little attention being paid to any African methods or designs. The SIDA evaluators noted:

The examples of techniques, images and woven material that have been done regrettably lack any higher artistic quality. This assessment is made with reference to the African woven material that has been shown at the African Arts Centres and elsewhere, and to what first year Scandinavian art students can achieve, etc (30).

The textile printing department continued the approach developed in Tanzania by Malin Sellman and the exiles, training through production. The influence of the consultants' Swedish aesthetic saw a general toning down of bright colours, together with a non African sophistication of design, perhaps to cater for an overseas market.

Patterns are not very interesting and lack certain elements in the formation of patterns and production. Strictly artistically, as yet they lack the particularities one expects of the combination of high artistic talent, African creativity and good supervision. The patterns lack tension and originality (29).

Printmaking was directed primarily towards illustrative image-making. Printers were given a thorough grounding in Kristina Anshelm's linocut techniques, but were encouraged to use themes documenting their own environment.

The artistic level in the graphic department is good. On the occasion of our visit students were working independently, being more capable of expressing themselves than the students in the Textile departments. This is largely because graphics techniques are less restrictive than textiles. Results were mature and individual, images harmonised with techniques. Students evidently took pleasure in their work and enjoyed experimenting. Further training and a training content more fully worked out would allow this Department to achieve a good comparative level in its artistic subjects (29).

iv) Trainees were paid to attend classes and the concept of art being their 'job' and not a creative act, became entrenched. The SIDA evaluators noted:

Students' understanding of their future working lives is vague, and the school is seen as a way of making a living. A collective 'student life' does not exist but there is a degree of fellow feeling and a music-and-song group has been formed...Questions affecting the social life of students and services available to them have not yet been addressed. Much depends on the school's status in society and by whom it is run. It is important that applicants clearly understand the Project's areas of training and labour-market questions (24).

With work contracts drawn up, trainees had to agree to rules stipulating their times of coming and going, code of conduct, etc. As motivation, they had to commit themselves to the improvement of their own education, and, most importantly, give their allegiance to the Project and its ideal (D.A., Trainee Contract, 1993).

Further, as the Project was paying the trainees a monthly salary 'to learn', the copyright of any work produced belonged to the employer. If an artwork was sold, it was agreed that the trainee would receive only five percent of the sale price. With prescriptive contracts and rigid work conditions, it is not surprising that, when tensions at the Project first came to a head in December 1993, it was less out of dissatisfaction with the teaching, than with the salaries. Incidents linked to this began to occur with increased frequency, especially upon the introduction of a salary grading system based on progress and commitment (D.A., MC Minutes, 1993 - 1995).

Evaluation, Possible Solutions

The Dakawa Art and Craft Project was now in a position similar to that experienced at the VTC Centre in Tanzania. SIDA, in response to the predicament, stated:

The point of departure for the development of Dakawa training programmes and curricula must accordingly be to determine what the training shall lead to and what the programme is expected to do for the community. In the Trust deeds it is stated that the objectives include increased employment, having students set up their own workshops, production of innovative design and artwork, etc. The mission is of the opinion that there is a need to be more focussed. For example, if the trainees are expected to establish their own production units from scratch they will need management and business skills different from the ones required to fit in to on-going projects. If they are establishing craft-production workshops, they may need more technical than artistic skill (D.A., SIDA Evaluation Report, August 1993:15).

But an appropriate system of governance and a model of education which could be applied, remained elusive:

The project's continued existence turns on the quality of its work, which raises several questions. Would it be wise to develop a European system of artistic training at Dakawa? If this were done, would it hamper students' creativity or distort their perceptions? Would it bring in techniques that lack a tradition in South Africa or are in some cases over-sophisticated? Would it introduce an unsuitable selection of techniques and materials? Could students' work possess a character associated with African art? Is it anyway desirable that the artistic part of the training at Dakawa derive[sic] from a foreign source? (28).

With SIDA's funding emphasis being the development of training in South Africa, the fundamental need, according to the consultants, was that of appropriate syllabi based on an 'African' model. Explaining the importance of the Project adopting a curriculum which would include a formal study of African art, attention was drawn to the global significance of African art: fascination with its 'primitive' qualities; original modes of perception; narrative representation and preference for decoration and ornament which had inspired artists throughout the world.

The Western world once saw African objects ethnographically, not artistically. They were most often objects of cult religions. Nowadays the world at large is greatly interested in African form. When, as now, genuine African artistic crafts are exercised to a shrinking degree, there is a risk that knowledge, tradition and skills may vanish. It should be an urgent task, thinking not merely of exports, but primarily of domestic values, to research, preserve and develop this African traditional knowledge of crafts and material. When black artists could not be educated and could not also not [sic] experiment and contribute to a renewal, it is important than an[sic] good training be created. It seems natural and important that an[sic] training should give good knowledge of traditional techniques including plaiting, weaving, work in pearls and ceramics, sewing clothes, making decorations and so on. To study combinations of colours in everyday objects of use and in elements of buildings and, suitably translated, to use them in new products. It is as important to re-depict myths and other particularities of various ethnic groups. To build up, in the course of training, a thoroughgoing knowledge of and understanding and feeling for the individual's own culture: the multiplicity of African art should offer the best basis for conscious creation (29).

In order to enable the Project to implement and foster 'relevant' training, SIDA insisted that the Swedish funded Curriculum Development Programme (CDP), based in Johannesburg, assist with the formulation of a new programme. In August and September 1993, Charlotte Schaer, an education specialist, together with appointed South African arts consultants, visited the Project to evaluate and assess its needs. Their findings followed further in-depth evaluations of the Project and the workshops. Similar to the SIDA evaluation, the CDP noted:

Although admirable the aims and objectives of Dakawa are at present not entirely compatible with the practice already implemented over the last year...This has given rise to some unrealisable expectations amongst trainees...That trainees should be able to go back to their own communities and set up self reliant projects is an essential objective, but the lack of training in management, marketing, numeracy, organisational and training transference skills, places these trainees at a distinct disadvantage (D.A., Summary of CDP Observations, 21-26 September 1993:3).

Further problems regarding language differences, teaching methodology, interruptions caused by consultants coming and going, inappropriate technology, lack of awareness of material costs, trainees' uncertainty regarding their positions at the Project, lack of exposure to other artists and lack of Project and Trust policy, were once again highlighted. However, of crucial importance, was:

Cultural relevance of the training programmes is not addressed. This implies cultural relevance to the lives and communities from which the trainees come, to the community in which Dakawa is located, and to the broader South African context. The creative experience must be rooted in the life experience of the trainees and broader context if the work they create is to be authentic and sincerely meaningful. Technical expertise is not enough...It is important to caution, on the other hand, of allowing artwork to fall into the trap of reproducing glib eth[n]ic cliches which have come to be commercially viable and regarded as "African". Also to caution against influencing trainees to emulate styles successfully developed at centres like Rorke's Drift, or the work of individual Graphic artists like Azaria Mbatha...(9).

In accordance with these findings, the CDP drew up a curriculum focussing on what they considered effective methodologies for the implementation of an African teaching discourse. This, however, was never implemented owing to suspicions of cultural ownership. Negotiations over implementation of new curricula between Malin Sellman and Charlotte Schaer were uneasy. While Charlotte Schaer questioned the language and methodology approaches considered necessary for measurable and effective outcomes at the Project, Malin Sellman's responses were defensive. A basic misunderstanding between the CDP, whose trainers had their understanding of grassroots realities, and the Project, which had its own understanding of such realities, became increasingly evident. One such example would be:

CDP: Basic and appropriate survival techniques - to be built into the syllabus: most trainees will return to their respective organisations and will have the experience and inventive skills to set up workshops or production where no high technology equipment exists. The possibility of, especially rural communities, affording to purchase expensive equipment must be assumed to be non-existent (D.A., Fax from Charlotte Schaer to Malin Sellman, 4 November 1993:1).

Malin Sellman replied:

The word high technology must be analyzed [sic] and discussed between us. Maybe we understand the word differently. To us the whole statement gives a negative feeling, as if rural people can never expect expensive equipment, as if our trainees must accept that there are certain high tech equipment that they can hope to never achieve. (This is contradicted by developments at projects like Rorke's Drift, who managed twenty years without electricity and a very poor supply of water. Dakawa itself in Tanzania started small and was able to produce high class printed materials in a refugee camp in a temporary structure of corrugated iron and netting, without electricity.... I have a strong feeling that you have misunderstood Dakawa in this respect. We are not making our trainees dependent on "high tech", on the contrary we teach them what you can do without, what you can make yourselves and what you must buy through a loan or a donation to at all be able to become profitable (D.A., Fax from Malin Sellman to Charlotte Schaer, 8 November 1993:4).

Further disagreements over similar matters, and Malin Sellman's dissatisfaction with Charlotte Schaer's process, were to lead to the CDP's training programme not being fully endorsed or implemented by the administrators. The repercussions of this were severe. When Malin Sellman left the Project in mid 1994, and was replaced by Princess Ngcobo, a Dakawa Trustee formerly of the Rorke's Drift Arts and Crafts School, as Director, the Project was faced with not only a severe lack of training policy, but cultural and administrative policy as well (D.A., MC Minutes, August 1994 - October 1995).

With the loss of Eurocentric administrators and lack of ideological guidelines, the real handing over of the Project to a South African teaching and administrative core became problematic concerning ownership, representation of identity, the trainees' culture of entitlement and cultural difference between Princess Ngcobo, a Zulu, the Xhosa trainees and the white South African teachers at the Project (D.A., MC Minutes, August 1994 - December 1995).

In 1995, a second SIDA evaluation of the Project was undertaken for the procurement of further funding. Observations made in the 1993 evaluation were repeated, only this time, the future regarding funding for the Project seemed dismal. The evaluators noted:

Most of the problems and risks identified by the 1993 appraisal mission are still there, and several have been aggravated. Too little has been done to address these problems, and when it has been done it has often been too late. The main responsibility for this development should be taken by the Dakawa Trust, but also by the Dakawa management and SIDA have contributed to the problems faced by Dakawa today. In case firmer action, in line with the recommendations of the 1993 appraisal, had been taken earlier, Dakawa would have been in a much better situation today. As the situation is in April, 1995, it is difficult to be optimistic about the prospect for Dakawa to sustain its role as an arts and craft training centre... The evaluators are of the opinion that there is too much money in the Dakawa project. The cost-awareness and resource utilisation is low, and can be low as money is easily available. In terms of sustainability and cost-effectiveness this is devastating as Dakawa has developed such a high donor dependency that it will have very big problems adjusting to a situation

where they will have to live with only local grants/subsidies...SIDA should consider phasing out its support to Dakawa...The prospects for the project in its present form[sic] a bleak[sic future] and Swedish support will probably never lead to sustainability nor cost-effectiveness (D.A., SIDA Evaluation Report, April 1995:2-3).

Unable to rectify the problems concerning training, as well as the general policy governing the Project, no further funding was received from SIDA. As a result, towards the end of 1996, the Eurocentric governed Dakawa Art and Craft Project closed its doors. The history of the Project, which was meant to form a firm cultural thrust in the reconstruction period of South Africa, became one of failure and of basic arts and culture misunderstanding. This misunderstanding, however, was not only on the part of the Swedish consultants sent to administer the Project, but also on the part of the ANC DAC, SIDA and the trainees at the Project.

While the Project had set out to empower and 'give meaning and substance to democracy' (D.A., Opening Speech by Walter Sisulu, 17 October 1992:4), through the promotion and development of a new arts and culture discourse for South Africa, an appropriate language and practice for this promotion was never found. Imposition of the ANC's cultural identity ideal, developed in isolation from South Africa and carried to the Project from Tanzania by the Swedish administrators, as well as imposition of the Eurocentric 'African' arts and culture ideal, promoted by SIDA, governed the Project's approach to the reality of Grahamstown and of the broader South Africa.

The concept of culture being applied according to political and social ideologies had come a long way. Initially, the concept had been political, but in practise had been implemented by Eurocentric foreigners to Grahamstown, and to South Africa. The ANC was in the position of having to find its feet in South Africa, but had adopted impractical ideals in exile, which left the task of implementing the cultural discourse to the Swedish administrators sent to the Project. Their practical understanding of this however, was inadequate in terms of theory and practise.

Understanding Grahamstown and its development needs, had never been on the grand agenda. This, in turn, demonstrates the inability of ideologues and donors to appreciate that culture is not a tool, but an organic phenomenon indicative of the social, economic and political experiences through which people establish their identity. As Tomaselli wrote:

Culture is the ensemble of meaningful practices and 'uniformities of behaviour' through which self-defined groups within or across social classes express themselves in a unique way or locate themselves within an identifiable 'field of significations'. It is the process which informs the way meanings and definitions are socially constructed and historically transformed by the social actors themselves (Tomaselli, 1989:39).

As a result, issues of cultural identity, which form the basis of development, were never resolved. Donors to the Project had based their understanding of identity on their perceptions of a shared ANC struggle history, and an African ideal formulated in Europe. But, these were inappropriate and, therefore, the donors were unable to formulate an idiom for the development of a new cultural identity at the Project.

This lack of understanding between foreign administrators and Grahamstown trainees, was the crucial element responsible for the Project's failure. As Hall wrote in *Cultural Identity* (1996):

In common sense language, identification is constructed on the back of a recognition of some common origin or shared characteristics with another person or group, or with an ideal, and with the natural closure of solidarity and allegiance established on this foundation (Hall, 1996:2).

Noting the concept of identity as not essentialist, but rather as strategic and positional, Hall wrote:

...this concept of identity does not signal that stable core of the self, unfolding from beginning to end through all the vicissitudes of history without change; the bit of the self

which remains always-ready 'the same', identical to itself across time. Nor - if we translate this essentializing conception to the stage of cultural identity - is it that 'collective or true self hiding inside the many other, more superficial or artificially imposed "selves" which a people with a shared history and ancestry hold in common' (Hall, 1990) and one which can stabilize, fix or guarantee an unchanging 'oneness' or cultural belongingness underlying all the other superficial differences (3-4).

The fundamental issue then, of the failure of Dakawa's development of an idiom for the new South African culture, rested in the ignored developmental needs which the culture of Grahamstown's township posed. Although Siyabulela Manona of the Grahamstown Cultural Congress is noted as having predicted the failure of the Project in Grahamstown, this was overlooked in favour of the ideal. The Feasibility Study report noted:

A personal feeling from Siyabulela concerning this project is that Grahamstown has very few people with original skills. Therefore he thinks a location in the Transkei could be more fruitful for the project. He feels that the main issue in Grahamstown is for people to get a job, not to stand up alone and make a living. He feels that there is a "negative cultural" attitude in the area...(Cory Library, Rhodes University, Feasibility Study for the Relocation of the Textile printing, Graphic and Weaving Workshops, 1991:6).

Implementing a Project aimed at the development of a new culture and identity, calls for an assessment of the notions and factors necessary for success. The first, Seers noted:

Another approach to development is to start not from production but from human needs...the realization[sic] of the potential of human personality...is a universally acceptable aim, and the development must therefore entail ensuring the conditions for achieving this aim (Allen, T & Thomas, A, 1992:6).

The second, lies in assessment of for whom the development is meant? The problems experienced at the Project during the years of South Africa's transformation, and lack of real solutions being found or fostered, raises this issue. Was it for the ANC and its cultural

imperatives, or was it for the Swedish and their African ideal? Or was it for the trainees to the Project? On whose human needs did the Project focus?

The human needs of the Grahamstown trainees, who were to become the subjects of the Project's intentions, were to be found in the township norms of the time, in South Africa. These norms were rooted in aspirations based on a South African European model, and not on a tribal, or ethnic, Xhosa model. The Grahamstown township needs called for a better assessment of this reality and, accordingly, a more appropriate method of implementation.

Understanding the development of Edith Bukani and Sandile Goje, as two printmakers to have developed as artists through the Project's history from 1992 to 1994, brings a question to light. What was the human potential of the Grahamstown township community, of which the Project had repeatedly failed to take cognisance? How did this community react to the Project, and what story do the prints, of the two artists to be discussed, tell of the policies, and lack of policies at the Project, during the years in which direct Eurocentric influence was imposed in the Printmaking workshop, under the Swedish consultant, Kristina Anshelm?

PART TWO

The Meeting of Two Cultures: Printmaking at the Dakawa Art and Craft Project

Art and Culture

Vansina in *Art History in Africa* wrote:

Culture is not the context of art, nor a matrix for art. Art is an integral part of the culture which it expresses and thereby communicates to others. Visual art works are the visual realization of visual concepts held in a community and realized by the artist (Vansina, 1984:121).

Prints generated in the Dakawa printmaking workshop between 1992 and 1993 have often been categorised as tourist art. While the technical superiority of the prints is evident, more often than not, the content is of questionable authenticity.

The Dakawa printmaking style, developed during these years, is widely known for its maturity and masterful technical execution, which can be seen in its stylistic clarity and brilliant, smooth technique. This is surprising considering that the trainees to the printmaking workshop are documented as never having done any form of art before. Would trainees, unaccustomed to visual discourse and inexperienced, have the ability to visually conceptualise subject matter as *Herdsmen* (Plate 2) and *Love and Peace* (Plate 3) by Linga Diko, or *The Wedding* (Plate 4) by Nonkoliseko Magutywa and *Going Home* (Plate 5) by Ayanda Maselana? Would the same inexperienced trainees have the formal compositional skills needed to create effective images from these themes? If not, how did these trainees generate such highly complex and visually competent images, within so short a span of time? Furthermore, were these images authentic expressions of cultural experiences?

It is hoped that some answers to the above questions will be found by analysing works by Edith Bukani and Sandile Goje. These two trainees are considered to be successful examples of the methods employed at the Project. It seems appropriate to examine the extent to which the cultural issues raised in this thesis are reflected in their work. While the majority of works produced in the printmaking workshop between 1992 and 1993 were thematically the same,

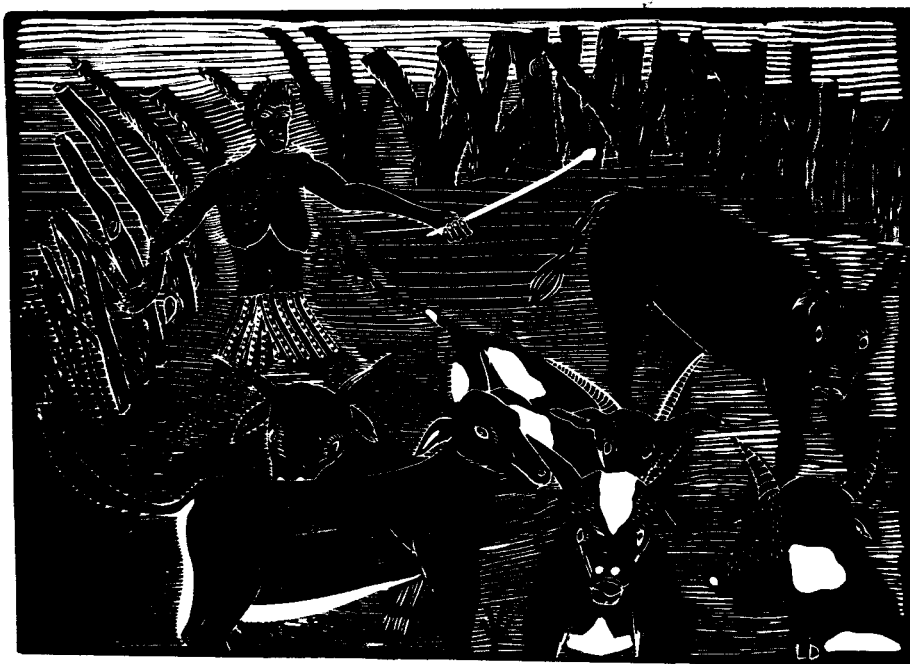


Plate 2, Linga Diko, *Herdsman*, 1993



Plate 3, Linga Diko, *Love and Peace*, 1993



Plate 4, Nonkoliseko Magutywa, *The Wedding*, 1993



Plate 5, Ayanda Maselana, *Going Home*, 1993

those by the two selected artists often differed from those of their fellow trainees. Why was this, given that all trainees underwent the same training process, and that the majority of documented prints produced were of the same theme? What effects did a notion of culture, imposed on these two artists, have on their work?

Part Two sets out to explore four fundamental issues: Firstly, the origins of the cultural identity of trainees to the Project; secondly, how specific perceptions of cultural identity were visualised; thirdly, what influence foreign cultural practise had on the development of Edith Bukani and Sandile Goje; fourthly, what cultural identity these two printmakers have today.

The Culture of Grahamstown

While the traveller approaching Grahamstown on the N2 highway from East London will immediately be met with the reality of township urban squalor, of an area bearing a remarkable resemblance to a semi-rural ghetto, the traveller approaching the city on the N2 from the Port Elizabeth side, will be met with the image of a country town reminiscent of colonial dignity and order.

The population of the city is symptomatic of these obvious contrasts. In orderly, relatively affluent, Grahamstown West, most of the residents are white, and are economically and intellectually active in areas such as academia, the civil and municipal services, the legal profession and the business sector. These, more affluent members of the Grahamstown community, form the visible support to the city's well-known educational and arts and culture infrastructures.

There has been considerable research on this section of the population, emphasising the history of the English Settlers who established the town in the 1800's and on the city itself. More notably, this has focussed on the documentation of the frontier struggle associated with the colonisation of the Eastern Cape from the Xhosa. Monuments and museums with relics and records from the days of the frontier struggle and architecture evocative of these memories, remain evident throughout the city (O'Meara, 1995).

The history and social structure of the residents of the township, Grahamstown East, however, has only in recent years begun to be documented, with more emphasis being placed on a general knowledge of Xhosa cultural heritage and the upliftment of residents from poverty, than on the personal stories of any of these residents (Holleman, 1997).

An early inquiry into the social and cultural development of Grahamstown township residents, ‘commencing from the spearhead effort of the Anglican Diocese’ (Cory Library, Rhodes University, Manuscript 17 824:1), was undertaken in 1976 by the Institute of Social and Economic Research of Rhodes University. While the aim of the inquiry was to ascertain social and cultural development needs in the township, through analyses of economic factors and of the availability of amenities such as housing, education and health services, a complex and seemingly insurmountable problem, rose instead.

Rosner, an American Professor of the Ohio State University, who headed these inquiries, found:

The rhetoric was to the extent that the residents in the townships were negativistic, apathetic, and had suffered a sense of loss of community. This, it was stated, was the “real problem base”, thus making it “impossible to initiate steps toward a community development project” (17).

With this realisation, the inquiry noted that ‘guided change in the levels of living [should include] the organised participation of the local residents of the township’ (19). However, Rosner noted:

Community development, as a concept, a programme, and, a method, is not a panacea to immediately provide “packaged” solutions to social and economic problems faced by the township population (31).

Even though this fundamental understanding had been pointed out by Rosner, development aimed at residents of the township, tended to overlook this reality. The continuing lack of

understanding of township cultural norms and practices, underlies the lack of development of this community.

To the viewer, the lifestyle of residents of the township, Grahamstown East, seems synonymous with the poverty, suffering and seething frustration symptomatic of communities previously marginalised in South Africa. Despite research, such as Rosner's, pointing to a perceived loss of community, projects and organisations aimed at social upliftment through economic assistance, are part of everyday life. These range from a number of municipal clinics to soup kitchens and self-help craft projects. Receiving charity and welfare has become almost second nature to township residents. It is this charitable approach, ignoring township community values, which has entrenched township residents' dependance on 'hand-outs' from white residents.

As a result, to many white inhabitants and visitors to the city, the differences between residents of East and West in Grahamstown lie in this obvious economic division, which, in turn, has given rise to the notion of a separate material culture in Grahamstown East. This superficial understanding has recently been exploited commercially in the form of "cultural heritage" experiences offered to tourists. These have been exploited by organised 'cultural' groups who entertain the visitors in the township with traditional Xhosa song, dance, food and regalia. Such performances and customs are in fact, seldom adhered to in everyday reality. As a result, knowledge of the true complexities of the urbanised Xhosa material culture in Grahamstown East has been neglected.

In 1997, the Grahamstown branch of the Black Sash, to create a better understanding of life of the residents in the township, published a tour guidebook called, "Graham's Town: The Untold Story - A social history and self-guided tour". The foreword to the booklet reads:

This booklet was born in the turmoil of the 1980's when Grahamstown - like the rest of South Africa - was reacting to the States of Emergency that had been imposed on it by an increasingly oppressive government. A group of women from the Black Sash decided that there was enough information on the Settler story of Grahamstown, but that there were a

number of untold stories about the other people who had played such an important role in making Grahamstown the place it is today (Holleman, 1997).

Aimed at enabling Grahamstown townships visitors to experience and recognise this social and historical narrative, three self-guided tours were drawn up. While providing insight into the historical and social reality of the township, the book is comprehensive enough only for a day visitor or tourist. To the uninformed, differences between the residents of East and West, locate themselves, as in many other areas in South Africa, in apparent cultural, economic and historical differences. While Grahamstown West is associated with the Settler history and culture, Grahamstown East is associated with traditional Xhosa culture. However, the reality is more complex, and these complexities affect art and culture production in Grahamstown. These need closer examination.

Recent research has emphasised the complexities of twentieth century African cultural identity. Vogel's writing on African Art in the Twentieth Century, could have been about the Grahamstown township cultural position:

Contact with the West has been the determining experience - though certainly not the only influence- for African art in the twentieth century. European military and political domination during the colonial period enforced countless changes, some overwhelming, others imperceptible, leaving virtually no one untouched, and repercussions³ from these changes have continued to echo through the quarter century since most African nations became independent (Vogel, 1991:14).

Furthermore, with regard to the issue of cultural exclusivity within this situation of flux, Vogel wrote:

In its place should come a recognition that African societies have a long history of contact both with each other and with cultures abroad, and have long demonstrated a readiness - even an eagerness- to appropriate art forms, objects, and ideas from remote sources (36).

There has been close contact between township residents and the European community of Grahamstown stretching back to the 1830's, to the time of the establishment of the city. Today, it can be said that black and white residents share more values than is often assumed. For example, both communities attach a great deal of importance to education, owing to Grahamstown's status as an educational centre. As Nyquist wrote:

...there is an identity at two levels: with one's township and, above this, with the total local African community. Despite the racial barriers, there is even the suggestion of an identity that reached beyond to include the total Grahamstown community, white and black, as exemplified in the pride of Grahamstown's reputation as an educational centre (Nyquist, 1983:18).

However, even though residents attach the same importance to some of Grahamstown's achievements, there are considerable differences when it comes to the reasons why these values are held. As Hall wrote, cultural values are:

...constructed within, not outside, discourse, we need to understand them as produced in specific historical and institutional sites within specific discursive formations and practices, by specific enunciative strategies (Hall, 1996:4).

Understanding the cultural identity of the residents of the Grahamstown township thus calls for an assessment of the specific enunciative strategies applicable to the township.

Nyquist, a sociologist who undertook a study of the township from 1966 to 1967 and again in 1975, in which he attempted to document the leadership potential of township residents, highlighted the complexities of the township situation in Grahamstown.

Nyquist's study points to a reality beyond the accepted norm of absolute cultural difference between the two communities. Instead, he focussed on what he regarded as striking similarities between the cultural value systems of Grahamstown East and West. Both communities, he notes, place equal value on Grahamstown's system of education, its economy, its social

structure, its religious governance and its cultural significance.

While Hammond-Tooke's earlier, 1930's, studies of the broader Southern African situation show that, while such a value system in a township might not be unusual, Grahamstown, with its particular emphasis on culture and education, cannot be regarded as the norm in South Africa. Hammond-Tooke observed that the cultural impact the city had on urbanised Africans produced, for them, a new identity. However, this was an identity which he regarded as being in flux. At that time he wrote:

...it is impossible to speak of an urban African culture...As Pauw(1963a:28) says: hardly any clear patterns seem to have crystallized yet, and the variations in patterns of behaviour, values and beliefs, and the different combinations of these in different regions of the culture, seem to defy systematization (Hammond-Tooke, 1974:454).

In the latter part of the century, Nyquist's research revealed a much clearer picture. While still finding the issue of cultural identity to be in flux, he defines a systematization he feels applicable to Grahamstown.

Ethnically defined, the culture and identity of the township is Xhosa, yet adaptation from the rural to peri-urban has led to a process of acculturation taking place. While older and poorer residents of the township constitute the majority of those who continue to practice traditional Xhosa ways of life, the overall majority have adapted to many aspects of the European way of life. As a result, the notion of residents of the township retaining a wholly traditional value system in their artefacts and practices has lost significance. The pursuit of the more economically successful European way of life has profoundly affected cultural identities within the township. The result of this has been such that,

The state of flux of African culture is true in Grahamstown...some aspects of tradition are strongly rejected, such as polygyny[sic polygamy] and the belief that parents should choose one's bride. Here Western ideas have become well-established among Africans living in Grahamstown...It is a truism that contact between two cultures leads to acculturation in the

sense of a selective borrowing of concepts and ideas. The extent of such borrowing depends in part upon the intensity and duration of contact and the form it takes. Conquest of one society by another would normally have a severe impact upon the culture of the conquered society. In the attitudes towards traditional aspects cited among Africans in Grahamstown, it is obvious that acculturation is a continuation. Certain old concepts are being drastically altered in favour of Western values, others are being retained largely unchanged, and others are in a state of uncertainty. There is an on-going shift in values under the pressure of the [economically] dominant European culture, which raises serious doubts in the minds of the local Africans about their whole social system (Nyquist, 1983:156).

Using the elite sector of the township society, the *abaphakamileyo*, as a comparative reference group, Nyquist wrote:

These urban abaphakamileyo are important as a reference group for other urban Africans. The community turns to them for organisational leadership and seeks their advice and assistance. Though resented by many Africans, they are, nevertheless, imitated in such matters as dress and occupational goals, as they most nearly live the kind of life that urban Africans would like to enjoy. This upper stratum is, however, an intermediate reference group. The ultimate reference group most often is the European, i.e. the white sector of the population (3).

Nyquist concluded that cultural values in Grahamstown East are based more on the absorption of European values by residents of the township than on traditional African culture(3). This indicates that the view of two distinct cultures coexisting in Grahamstown is an oversimplification. This search for a form of identity, as Hall pointed out, again reflects the issue of not 'who we are', but 'what we might become' (Hall, 1996:4). On these aspirations, Nyquist wrote:

Within the urban African communities it is the abaphakamileyo who most strongly aspire to the European mode of life. This is reflected in such aspects as reading habits, forms of organisational participation, employment, kinds of clothing worn and where purchased,

household acquisitions, leisure activities, and general attitudes. As a consequence of their living patterns and aspirations, the position of sociological marginality among the abaphakamileyo is particularly acute. This urban African upper stratum is success-oriented, and its measures of success are European measures: higher education, comfortable homes, expensive clothing, ownership of cars, a wide variety of leisure activities(golf, tennis, travel, reading, etc.), professional occupations, higher salaries and organisational leadership (Nyquist, 1983:3).

However, as Nyquist wrote, the social, historical and economic realities of the poverty-stricken majority in the Grahamstown township means that only a minority can achieve the ideal identity. He wrote:

But success is restricted to the limited opportunities available within the African society. There is a white-imposed barrier to upward mobility which prevents Africans from attaining social, economic and political equality with Europeans...they must [also] contend with continued pressure from below as lower-ranking Africans clamour to obtain higher status within the strictures established by white society. The boundary between themselves and other African strata is permeable, with a continued upward flow of Africans into the upper stratum (3-4).

Grahamstown East: Social Structures

Nyquist's study reveals three levels of social structure present in the Grahamstown township. These are fundamental to an understanding of the underlying cultural identity system.

The highest social strata of residents, commonly referred to as the *Abaphakamileyo*, are those considered to occupy the ranks of the elite. They form a social structure representative of residents with the highest or longest education qualifications, successful employment or self-employment. They fill the ranks of doctors, headmasters, lawyers, teachers, school inspectors, court interpreters, ministers of religion, headmen, shopkeepers, nurses, taxi owners, radio announcers and the like(24). They occupy modernised housing in the more established

locations and believe in the Christian religion as opposed to pure traditional beliefs.

Differences that exist between residents in this group and residents in other groups, are based on what Nyquist referred to as attitudinal differences to hope, dedication to employment, the efficacy of employment, and the importance of tradition (123-4).

Hope...refers to a belief in the possibility of "getting ahead" - of changing one's position in life. The average African is much more sceptical about being able to change his position in life than members of the upper stratum [abaphakamileyo], reflecting the lack of opportunity available to the ill-educated, especially in a segregated society with segregated opportunities (124).

Attitudinal differences are most marked...on traditional issues - that is, on issues where traditional African beliefs are likely to conflict with European beliefs...(125).

The second social strata, referred to as the *Abaphakati*, can be categorised as 'middle-class' residents. The majority of residents, Nyquist noted, fall into this category. Levels of education are not as long or as prestigious as those found among the higher strata. Occupations held can be ranked according to levels of education and economic success, with the highest being those of shop assistant, domestic servant, hotel waiter, cook, painter and the like(24). The cultural identity of this strata lies between the more modernised and the more traditional. The following of traditional rural customs is more common, although, in most cases, obviated by the search for better urban social positions.

The third social strata, which is referred to as the *Abaphantsi*, are categorised as the 'low-class' residents. Educational qualifications are minimal among this strata. Occupations of this category include those of peddler, herbalist, gardener, manual labourer, shebeen queen, lorry helper and the like. Wages are low, employment is uncertain(24), and the practice of customary Xhosa tradition is common.

Economic Situation: Employment Opportunities

The general economic situation of the township is one of severe poverty. While many have flocked to the city in search of employment, the lack of industry within the city has left many disillusioned and unemployed. Unemployment ratios continue to remain high, recently estimated at 80% of eligible township residents (Grocott's Mail, 8 January 1999:1).

Industry in Grahamstown is associated with institutions, such as the many educational institutions, civil and municipal services or businesses in town. The establishment of black-owned private enterprise, gaining force since the advent of democracy, is associated with the transport service, most notably that of taxi services, and smaller enterprises, such as spaza shops. The most financially successful of all businesses, remains that of the financial loan business, whether operated as a private venture, or as a group (Grocott's Mail, 1998/9).

With a severe lack of a skilled labour force, owing to the newness of South Africa's democracy and education adjustments, the majority of men find employment as labourers at Rhodes University, the law courts, the schools, the army, the hospital, or as messengers for businesses, or as gardeners for homes in the white suburbs. The more educated and skilled residents find work in schools as teachers or headmasters, administrative assistants in the government and municipal departments, or as members of the medical and legal professions. While skilled women are able to occupy the same positions, if employment is available, unskilled women find employment as cooks or cleaners to the businesses in town. The majority of women are employed as domestic servants in the white suburbs (Nyquist, 1983:22-24).

Cultural Attitudes

In his search for an understanding of the material culture of the township, Nyquist revealed a pervasive sense of cultural inferiority among the township residents when comparing their culture to that of the culture of white Grahamstown. These feelings of inferiority were such that they dominated approaches taken on important cultural issues.

In the late 1980's, clashes between residents of the township and organisers of the National Arts Festival(NAF) over issues of cultural representation occurred. Although, as Grundy wrote, the NAF organisers were to respond by calling for discussions with community leaders, these were not successfully met.

The consultation process among community groups was rather limited and undeveloped and no individual wished to be accused of speaking without authorisation, for his or her group. As a result, each insisted that he or she was there solely in a personal capacity...Amongst black spokespersons there were awkward and still unclear relationships between Grahamstown, Eastern Cape, national and even exile cultural and political groups (Grundy, 1993:29).

Nyquist's earlier observation of the cultural inferiority experienced by township residents, could be said to underly this:

What is most striking...is the frequent acceptance of the European view that the African(culturally at least) is inferior to the European. The African abaphakamileyo in varying degrees have been convinced that they are inferior. Yet when they seek to acquire aspects of the European culture, particularly the material fruits, they are told that these are not theirs to seek as they see fit. It is no surprise that many express a desire for social equality ... (Nyquist, 1983:197).

When the Dakawa Art and Craft Project placed advertisements for the recruitment of local trainees in May 1992, the desire for social equality with Europeans would have seemed possible through the education and employment the Project offered. With Swedish administrators, who were associated with fighting for the cause of the repressed blacks of South Africa, at the helm of the Project, chances for personal improvement were available. However, having suspicions regarding the ANC's involvement in the Project, only forty applicants from a township population estimated to have been over one hundred thousand in 1992, responded (D.A., MC Minutes, 10 June 1992:1).

Although the ultimate aim of the administrators had been to attract residents in positions of leadership to the Project(D.A., MC Minutes, 23 May 1992:2), the responses received were from residents in the *abaphakati* strata, rather than from the *abaphakamileyo* strata.

As a result, issues of social, economic, educational and cultural concern in the township, as highlighted by Nyquist, motivated those applying for recruitment to the Project. An even more important motivation was the search for cultural identity. This, in particular, gave rise to a clash of understandings between the views of the Swedish consultants, who saw themselves promoting the 'primitive Africa', and those of the trainees who aspired to a Europeanised *abaphakamileyo* identity.

Notions of the development of the ideal African aesthetic, as promoted by the ANC and the Swedish administrators, were rooted in their understanding of traditional African art and culture. Their ignorance of the actual culture of the trainees to the Project, and that this culture was in a state of flux, caused the problems experienced by the Project. As Vogel wrote:

All traditions were invented or brought into being: all traditions change. This discussion is predicated upon these two self-evident facts. A standard dictionary definition of "traditional" reads, "based on an order, code or practice accepted from the past." African artists have always drawn upon ideas, symbol systems, and art styles received from forebears both near and remote. But they have always digested contemporary events and adapted to change. Traditional African art forms and styles all began somewhere, obviously, and new ones are always in the process of being established. The word "traditional", then, is used to denote an elastic heritage (Vogel, 1991:32).

Printmaking at the Dakawa Art and Craft Project

Vansina's evaluation of the creative process of African art outlines three pivotal points. He wrote:

The creative process turned around three main pivots: the patron, the artist, and the products. However important the influence of the mental images of the patron and the public were, they only set the limitations or requirements on the creation of acceptable art (Vansina, 1984:136).

Expanding on this theory several years later, Vogel wrote:

Today, the interaction between African artist and patron in general continues the traditional relationship between artist and client, and between the artist and the work. It is an underlying assumption of the traditional artist's role that the client as collaborator in the making of the work, will reflect his or her ideas as much or more than the artist' (Vogel, 1991:21).

While the Swedish administrators of the Project considered the trainees to have originated from 'traditional Africa', an understanding of the true origins of Edith Bukani and Sandile Goje are necessary in order to understand the identity they brought to the Project, and the effect of acculturation which occurred when their identities and those of the Swedish met.



Plate 6, Edith Bukani, (1954-)

The Artists :Products of Grahamstown East

Edith Bukani

(Plate 6)

In the postscript to Marion Arnold's book, *Women and Art in South Africa*, she wrote about how her quandary over the connection between women and art in a transforming South Africa was put into perspective through one linoprint.

The print, a linocut by Edith Bukani, is called Manguni's Women. The artist has little training...Bukani's story is about rural African women. It states: 'These are Manguni's women. They were the wives of one man. Then he died and they suffered afterwards. They sat down and thought about making calabashes to sell.' This is a wonderful, simple story about women coping with adversity. It is about empowerment through art (Arnold, 1996:148).

Although Arnold's statement that Edith had had little training is inaccurate, the story of Edith's life is remarkably similar to the story of the print with its message about coping with adversity. Like the women in the print, Edith's background was one of poverty and, when she had the opportunity for social advancement through art, she saw this primarily in economic terms. More specifically, Edith's cultural identity is a direct product of her experience in the Grahamstown township.

Nompumelelo Edith Mpofu, was born on 10 December 1954 in Grahamstown, following her farm-labourer parents' move to the Grahamstown township in the early 1950s in search of employment(GB/EB, 1998:1). Having previously led a life of migrancy in search of employment as farm workers, Edith's deeply traditional parents were met by a lack of employment opportunities in the city (1). While her father was able to maintain his small stock of cattle on the commonage surrounding the city, as well as to practise small scale subsistence farming on the plot they lived on in the township, the promise of a better life for him and his family was not to come to fruition. Rather, the breakdown of traditional familial structures was to occur. Edith, who recalled her father as having acquired a measurable form of wealth

through cattle dealings, recorded the adverse effects this wealth was to have on family relations, owing to her father's reluctance to share this with his immediate family (GB/EB, 1999:26). As a result, Edith's mother was forced to support the family. With her mother having little education and few skills other than those of a farm labourer, Edith's childhood was one of economic deficiency and hardship, which, however, was shared by many in the township, creating a sense of urban kinship, held together by traditional values which many of the older township dwellers had brought with them from the rural areas.

Edith remembered her parents as strong followers of rural traditional Xhosa norms(6). While more urbanised interpretations of traditional attire and practices were adhered to while the family was in the town, and certain traditional occasions, such as the sacrificing of goats to ancestors, could be celebrated by the family in the township, deeply entrenched traditional customs such as *amaqhira* were practiced in the rural areas(1). These contrasts have had a lasting impact on Edith's view of life. While she has maintained contact with traditional ties through her beliefs, her practical life is non-traditional.

This disjunction, as Hammond-Tooke observed, is true of urbanised Africans who maintain rural ties. While previous studies asserted that urbanised Africans lose their ties with their rural and tribal traditions, Hammond-Tooke argued:

...a distinction must be made on the one hand between social, political and economic bonds with the tribe, and on the other hand, the preservation of tribal customs, language and other cultural characteristics in town...there is abundant evidence....that length of residence in town does not necessarily result in diminution of tribal identity or of adherence to at least some tribal customs (Hammond-Tooke, 1974:448).

The strong rural ties maintained by her parents led to Edith's father insisting on her leaving school after Standard Six and to marry a man of his choice to provide him with cattle for *lobola*. According to Edith,

I was so cross because I wanted to learn more to be a nurse or something, but my father is of

the old way and I had to listen to him (GB/EB, 1998:2).

Hammond-Tooke wrote:

[For the rural Xhosa inhabitant] Cattle are...the principal medium of exchange...also the means of obtaining sexual satisfaction, since a legal marriage cannot take place without the passage of cattle...The possession of cattle [also] gives social importance...on which virtues status largely depend. Cattle therefore loom largely in a man's thoughts. They are his principal form of wealth, his most treasured possession; and anything concerning them and their welfare focuses his attention (Hammond-Tooke, 1974:94).

Still maintaining this rural African association today, Edith related how her father, old and senile, placing great importance on the well-being of his cattle, often went missing while searching for lost cattle(GB/EB, 1998:1). This type of incident is indicative of the difficulties Edith's formerly rural parents experienced in making the transition to an urbanised township lifestyle. Edith's attempt at assimilating urban values, while maintaining traditional belief, began young.

Edith's desire to complete her schooling, or at least achieve a Standard Eight, was part of this assimilation of urbanised values. Like many other township schoolgirls, Edith had wanted to further her opportunity in life by studying for a nursing diploma(2), an occupation Nyquist's research points out as high on the agenda for social and economic security for women in the township (Nyquist, 1983:23). According to Edith,

A lot of girls in the township want to be nurses because there are jobs for them... (GB/EB, 1998:2).

Although tribal tradition had been maintained, Edith's marriage did not improve her social and economic situation. Her first husband, who had had as little education as she, struggled to find work and thus Edith was forced to find work to support her growing family, as well as her parents, who had been struggling to find employment, as more and more rural people

settled in the township(2).

Edith's predicament was severe. Like many other unskilled township women, she had few employment opportunities from which to choose. Knowing that employment as a domestic servant to a white household in Grahamstown was not possible because of her inability to communicate in English(2), Edith searched for work where this was not required. As a result, for many years, she worked for a number of businesses including the Stone Crescent Motel and Rhodes University, where she worked as a cook and cleaner, and the Grahamstown Golf Club, where she cooked and helped tend the greens(3, 17).

Even though these jobs provided her with a small income with which to support both her families, they did not provide Edith with long-term security. She augmented this income when she began brewing traditional Xhosa beer at home, to sell to friends and neighbours, maintaining and endorsing her rural ties while pursuing modernised economic needs(3).

During one of many spells of unemployment during the late 1980s, Edith, encouraged by women she had seen sewing in the township, enrolled for a two-week sewing course held at the Port Elizabeth Technical College at the beginning of 1990(2,24). However, with business being slow and, coupled with the divorce from her first husband, she realised that, as sole breadwinner for her family, financial survival would be impossible(3). Once more returning to work as cook and cleaner at the Stone Crescent Motel, she suffered a serious injury to her elbow which meant that she could no longer continue with heavy manual labour(3).

In 1992, on a visit to the local social welfare offices in Grahamstown for financial assistance, Edith's welfare officer suggested she apply for a seamstress job at a newly established project which was looking for people who were 'good with their hands'. Unable to do heavy manual labour, and knowing that her sewing diploma had never been used properly, Edith, as her welfare officer recommended, applied for a job at the Dakawa Art and Craft Project(3).

Although aware of rumours circulating in the township regarding the Project's ANC affiliation, Edith's desperation for employment governed her decision to apply(4-5). Unaware

that the Project was looking for people who could be trained to become its production unit, and having never done any form of art or craft before in her life, she attended interviews in June, under the impression that she might get a job as a seamstress rather than artist (3-4).

Edith's acceptance into the Project as one of the first trainees, was seen by her family as pure financial gain rather than as a possibility to further her education(4). Edith's second husband, whose surname, Bukani, is now her married name, like her first, was struggling to find work in Grahamstown, and financial stability rested solely on Edith. Education was to remain of secondary importance, and so was her art (3). The struggle to affirm her position as artist among her family and friends continues today(5).

The struggle to assert her belief in what she was doing at the Project, was also confusing. With this in mind, and with job security at the Project during its first year uncertain, owing to the administrative problems at the Project, Edith took her 'work' very seriously, hoping to impress her teacher, and in this way secure a future position at the Project when they selected trainees for permanent employment (7).

Edith, owing to her uncertainty during her June interview, had initially been placed as a trainee in the Textile workshop. But delays in the arrival of textile equipment from Tanzania, meant that she, like the other textile trainees, joined the graphic printmaking trainees to help clean, build and set up the printmaking workshop (4), prior to her introduction to printmaking. The efficacy of her production method, was noted by Kristina Anshelm, who wrote of her:

Edith Bukani is 38 years old. She works hard, tries to please and is very anxious about this job. Her designs are very naive, and she has a kind of flair for composition. So long as none of the other trainees tell her what to do she cuts very beautifully (D.A. Graphic Workshop Report, December 1992:4).

Although outwardly seeming to develop herself artistically, Edith found her first trainee year one of great personal difficulty(8). Struggling to learn the English language, the technical and practical instructions which were issued in English, were hard for her, and many of the other

trainees, to follow(7,10). In addition, the age difference and the comparative lack of education between herself and the other trainees, left her in a position where she felt that she had to prove herself as, if not more, capable, than the younger trainees around her(8).

...I wanted to leave at the end of the year because it was not nice. You know I was the oldest there, the mama, and then sometimes people would not like it and so I had to work very hard because otherwise they laugh and because I couldn't speak English too good. But my husband and children say I must stay because I get salary (GB/EB, 1998:8).

Edith's dedication to production mastery were to pay dividends. In 1993, on returning to the Project, Edith was upgraded to a higher salary, and was permanently moved over to printmaking as a result of the design ability she had shown in this medium(8). Even though her association with the Project was more secure, seeing training at Dakawa as employment, rather than as education, was not to change(9).

Edith, who had never done any form of art before, felt it necessary to do what she could to secure employment rather than to express her individuality. Although Kristina Anshelm's teaching focussed on trainees learning to express their individuality, 'to make meaningful comments about their own and other people's life and dreams'(D.A., Report from Kristina Anshelm, September 1993:4), the first year of training was based more on her themes than on those of individual trainees, owing to problems associated with the generation of subject matter on the part of the trainees.

This constituted a misconception, on the part of both Edith and the Swedish administrators. For Edith to express herself as an individual, she needed the freedom to choose her own subject-matter and style. However, for this to occur, she lacked the appropriate background and focus. The Swedish administrators, while offering good technical training, owing to the trainees' confusion over what art was, imposed their own ideas about subject matter and style on the trainees. This in turn, was determined by foreign marketing imperatives for which preconceived notions about primitive African art were a prerogative. Edith, anxious about employment, complied. The strength of her work was thus seen as lying in her ability naively

to depict this “Africa”.

Although Edith’s later work began to show how she came to terms with the fusion of rural and urban cultures, and began to understand the meaning she found in this connection, she viewed herself more as a financial provider than as an artist during the years in which she was a trainee at the Project.

Edith’s traineeship continued until 1995, when she and her fellow 1992/3 trainees graduated(GB/EB, 1998:21). Having barely completed two and a half years of the proposed five year training programme, the lack of basic information necessary for the setting up of a successful art-business, were to leave her and other trainees in a position opposite to the original ideals of the Project.

With little opportunity for trainees continuing what they had learnt in Grahamstown, and the Project administrators realising that these trainees needed to establish themselves in businesses(D.A., MC Minutes, 1995), an opportunity to work with other entrepreneurs, from the Power Station, was initiated. However, it was not long before tensions between Power Station producers and Dakawa trainees erupted(GB/EB, 1998:21). As a result, the Dakawa trainees were moved to a building at the Railway Station in Grahamstown. Here, they operated for a couple of months. However, when the space they were using was needed as a National Arts Festival venue in July, the group disbanded(21).

In an attempt to find a source of income, Edith began making and printing linocuts in the hope of selling them in Grahamstown(21). With little knowledge as to how she should market and price them, as this had never been taught at the Project, this attempt was soon discontinued and Edith returned to the Welfare Offices in search of financial assistance(21). She was back to where she had started in 1992.

When the Project re-opened in 1998, this time as the Dakawa Art and Craft Community Centre, with a grant-in-aid from the Eastern Cape Provincial Arts and Crafts Council, Edith returned as an entrepreneur(21).



Plate 7, Sandile Goje, (1972-)

Sandile Goje

(Plate 7)

For Sandile, his experience of the Dakawa Project was different. Although from the same social situation as Edith, he was younger and better able to adapt to change and exploration. His development as an artist was free from the overriding responsibilities of having to provide economic support for a family. He was in a position in which individual growth could take place.

Sandile Sidwell Goje, was born on 13 February 1972, in Grahamstown, to parents occupying the social position of casual labourers (GB/SG, 1998:1). However, while his parents' social status remains the same today, Sandile's social position is relatively high, bordering on that of the *abaphakamileyo*. To many people in the township, he represents an individual who has risen to success through education and through the opportunities afforded by his association with the Project and its Swedish administrators. The social strata from which he originated though, was the opposite.

Sandile's parents were both born on farms surrounding Grahamstown, following the migration of their family from the Ciskei. Once married, his parents left the farm to begin their search for better financial opportunity(1). As a result, Sandile recalled a childhood spent moving between Grahamstown and Peddie. His early education took place at a Seventh Day Adventist mission school between the two towns, and his higher primary school years were spent at a school in Port Alfred. During this period, he, his mother and brother, stayed with his maternal grandfather in Bathurst, while his father sought work as migrant labourer in Port Elizabeth (GB/SG, 1999:25).

The impact of living with his rural grandparents, as well as his having close contact with other grandparents on farms near to Bathurst, was to leave a marked impression on Sandile's recollection of Xhosa culture and tradition. Oral narrative, and the passing down of customs from his grandfather to himself and his brother, in his father's absence, were to leave a marked impression of traditional Xhosa culture. In particular, *Amatsiko*, the Xhosa oral tradition,

which Sandile recalled as making the greatest impact on his view of life and on his initial development of artistic narrative in his art (GB/SG, 1998:6). The passing of childhood in such close proximity to traditional Xhosa practice, runs deep. Its impact was described by Hammond-Tooke:

In Western society, home, school, church and peer group may all have different ideas about what constitutes suitable behaviour; in Southern Bantu society all the institutions and individuals concerned with socialization worked together within a homogenous framework to produce the ideal community member...(Hammond-Tooke, 1974:211).

Nonetheless, experiencing the rising impact of modernisation, Sandile was confronted with the reality of the need for better education, and this was to come first for him.

As Sandile's parents had been denied many opportunities because of their lack of education, their belief in education was such that, when Sandile and his older brother were moved to the Nathaniel Pumla High School in Peddie, his mother followed them there to ensure their success (GB/SG, 1998:1 and GB/SG, 1999:25). At the same time, his father was experiencing difficulties as a result of the influx of Xhosa job seekers to the cities. Having a brother who lived and worked in Grahamstown as a municipal gardener at the Botanical Gardens, his father, in the 1980's, decided that the family should move to the city in search of better opportunities (GB/SG, 1999:25).

Establishing himself in his brother's house, Sandile's father managed to find work as a labourer, while making preparations for his family to join him in Grahamstown. In 1991, Sandile matriculated in Peddie, moved to Grahamstown with his mother and brother and, like countless other black school leavers, began to search for work in the city (GB/SG, 1999:25 and GB/SG, 1998:4).

Sandile's dream had been to follow his secondary education with tertiary education. However, this was not possible owing to financial constraints facing the family. Although not sure what career he wanted to study for, the notion of acquiring further education, both he

and his parents felt, would have increased his chances of employment.

In May 1992, his mother's sister told him of the possibility of a job at a recently opened project, where training would be offered to people who were good with their hands (GB/SG, 1998:4). Having confidence in his artistic ability, which had been proven at school where the teacher had often asked him to draw geography and biology drawings on the blackboard as teaching illustrations, he applied, and was interviewed by the Management Committee of the Project in June 1992. On 10 June, Sandile began his training at the Dakawa Project (4).

Sandile, who at first, like the other trainees, viewed Dakawa as a job, was described by Kristina Anshelm as:

Sandile Goje is the youngest, 20 years old. He has a nice personality and seems to mix well with all the ladies. He is very creative and talented, and he is really interested in the work and has done more linos than the others. He is also quite handy and very careful. His English pronunciation is very good, but I don't think he understands much English (D.A., Graphic Workshop Report, December 1992:4).

Sandile was quick to rise to the challenge which the Dakawa concept presented to him. Drawing, the art of story-telling, and improving his education level, all of which had been instilled in him from a young age, were to play a major role in his response to the Project and in his personal development.

Although the Project was to experience administrative problems while Sandile was a trainee, he, unlike many other trainees, saw an opportunity for personal development through education. As a result, with the training he received, and with the opportunity to develop his dream of achieving a better position in society for himself, Sandile was also able to concentrate on furthering his ideal to develop his artistic ability.

Sandile's perception of himself and of his identity as an artist, were fostered faster than was the case with other trainees. In 1992, the trainees were taken on a field trip to view the

University of Fort Hare's art collection. Although he had never been exposed to other artists' work before, and his ability for visual criticism had not yet been developed, Sandile knew what he liked and what he did not. He found many works interesting, but there were many he did not understand and some he did not think at all good. His own aim was quite clear:

I wanted to make good art (GB/SG, 1998:8).

Dedication to this aim, and his unmistakeable talent, were to ensure rapid success within the Project's structures.

With the problems the Project was experiencing finding South African teachers suitable for the Project in 1993, the idea that Sandile should move into such a position was mooted.

However, as the Project was never to resolve the issue of certification of trainees, it became obvious that Sandile would have to receive further training, as it had only been possible to teach him linocutting and basic etching processes at the Project. As a result, in 1994, he was awarded a scholarship to study for one year at the Graphic Art School in Stockholm, Sweden. There, Sandile was meant to receive a thorough grounding in printmaking technique and theory so that he could return to the Project to teach (D.A., MC Minutes 1993 and 1994).

Away from South Africa, where he was in reality still part of a marginalised social structure, Sandile's time in Sweden, where the mystique of the primitive and oppressed African was held high, was one of ambivalent development for him. Distance from the cultural norm he knew and responded to, and experience of Swedish culture, which until then he had encountered on home ground at Dakawa, made this, for Sandile, a time of personal artistic doubt. While he knew that he wanted to be an artist, the question of what he wanted his art to express, became of personal concern during this year (GB/SG, 1998:2-3).

On his return to the Project in 1995, the skills he had acquired in Sweden were not put into practice. While Sandile had been in Sweden, relations between management and trainees at the Project had begun to break down. The unclear teaching and trainee policies, which were supposed to have been resolved in 1994, deteriorated further. With there being no job

description for teachers in the workshops, and problems defining who was meant to teach and who was meant to co-ordinate the workshop, Sandile's new skills were not implemented(GB/SG, 1998:19-20).

When the Project closed in 1996, Sandile, like the other trainees, was left to his own devices. While training had been meant to prepare trainees for the setting up of their own businesses, inappropriate technology and lack of business skills, made this impossible. Sandile did not have the capital to afford the expensive machinery and equipment he had been trained to use, nor did he have the expertise to set himself up as an independent artist. However, realising that financial survival in Grahamstown was imperative, he began cutting and printing lino's, using the spoon method, at home. But, the focus of his artistic ideals had been broken, and, out of the context of Dakawa, the generation of subject matter was difficult for him (20).

As a result, in 1997, Sandile found employment at a local ceramics factory, where he painted prescribed designs onto mugs and bowls. However, interest shown in the work he had produced during his years of training at Dakawa, began to increase. While many other trainees, who had, according to the contract signed between themselves and Dakawa, left their lino-blocks at the Project's buildings, Sandile had, upon the closure of the Project, removed his and he slowly began printing and selling them (20).

In 1997, Sandile's rise to artistic prominence within South Africa, as opposed to only overseas, began with his inclusion in the 'Printmaking in a Transforming South Africa' exhibition at the Standard Bank National Arts Festival in Grahamstown, curated by Philippa Hobbs and Elizabeth Rankin. Hobbs, who had been introduced to Sandile in 1996, was by that time Sandile's agent in Johannesburg, and an increase in the demand for his work began to occur, based on both his technical prowess and his subject matter, and, to the more discerning collector, on the historical impact of his association with the Dakawa Project.

In 1998, Sandile returned to the re-opened Dakawa Art and Craft Community Centre as the printmaking workshop manager.

The Patron: Kristina Anshelm

Kristina Anshelm was born in 1942 in Stockholm in Sweden. Upon completion of her schooling, she studied Printmaking at the Bath Academy of Art in Great Britain and further, at the Royal Academy of Fine Art in Stockholm (D.A., Catalogue to Swedish Printmaking Exhibition held at the Dakawa Art and Craft Project, July 1995:1).

With a training based on foreign academic discourse, her teaching methodology needs to be examined.

Ideals for the printmaking workshop first emerged at the end of 1992, six months after the workshop had been in operation. In a report which Kristina wrote to the funders of the workshop, the Swedish Artist's Against Apartheid, she outlined these ideals as:

In the Graphic workshop we will teach traditional Fine Art Graphic techniques and through these train not only the hand but the eye of the student. The trainees will learn artistic creativity through the practical work. The workshop is equipped for: Relief Printmaking, that is lino & wood cut, and intaglio printmaking which is etching, drypoint and engraving. After the first period of lino cut there should be a course in etching, black and white as well as colour. The trainees must learn all the possibilities of the workshop (D.A., Kristina Anshelm Report on Graphic Art Workshop, 26 November 1992:1).

Further, with the ANC DAC's criteria of creating jobs for the artist's, she wrote:

It is not possible to have a Graphic Fine Art production in the same sense as it is in the weaving or textile printing. Of course it will be possible to sell prints, and they will make good exhibitions, separately or together with the other crafts. But when the workshop is really functioning, the plan is to make practical use of the education by developing a commercial side of graphics: illustration, poster-printing, desk top publishing and exhibition-building. This will become part of the Graphic Workshop(1).

In order to implement these ideals, a basic artistic discourse was to be implemented through a training programme focussing on drawing and art history. Although the drawing component was established, there was little or no recorded evidence of the art historical component ever being in operation. However, the ideals laid out were:

DRAWING: Drawing practice is essential. There will be drawing classes both out-doors and indoors. Both still life and model drawing. It is important for an artist to learn to appreciate the proportions of dead and living things. Maybe the human being is most interesting of all. To be able to draw people is a great asset. Different kinds of perspective should be taught. This may also come under the subject of art history (2).

ART HISTORY: The World's art history, especially in regard to Graphics, should be taught. Not only for European art, but traditions from all over the world(2).

However, further reports by Kristina in 1993, until her departure, reveal a sense of the foreignness she must have felt when encountering the reality of the Grahamstown environment in relation to the implementation of her ideals. In her first report, Kristina documented the teaching procedures occurring in the printmaking workshop:

The design class teaches general artistic subjects, including the ability to see and to talk about pictures, and also some applied maths. For my part [in the design class] it is mainly black and white, pencil and Indian ink drawing. In the beginning the theme was room dimension, how to create it with different shades of grey, different sizes in fore- and background and overlapping. The trainees have also practiced human proportions by measuring their own proportions and by drawing skeletons, which also shows the joints that can move. In the graphic workshop we started with wood and linocuts, learning the variation of lines which can be used to create seemingly grey tones. All the trainees have made study visits...The sketches made on these visits have resulted in several paintings and print (D.A., Report from Dakawa Graphic Workshop, Period: 15 February - 10th June 1993:1).

However, while the teaching procedures seemed fitting, problems with regard to cultural

context began to surface. In a later report, Kristina wrote:

The project had open house in the workshops during the Festival. Half the trainees and staff were attending some cultural events, while the other half were on duty at Dakawa. We went to two theatre performances, one modern dance and some art exhibitions. The trainees seemed to appreciate it, but at the same time they didn't connect it with their own work... The trainees were supposed to make sketches from street life and the shows, but this was regarded as highly suspicious by the business men. The police was even called once, someone thought a trainee was planning an attack... (D.A., Report from Dakawa Graphic Art Workshop, June - September 1993:1).

While acceptance of the Project by the white community of Grahamstown was set in suspicion, acceptance of the Project by the trainees emphasised financial reward above training opportunity.

The trainees got a lot of spare time during the Festival, since they were free after the cultural visits. Some of them probably spent this time celebrating and drinking. To keep normal working hours during Festival time is better for our image and for the trainee's health (1).

Further problems with regard to language and cultural difference, were recorded by Kristina:

It has been of great help to have a Coordinator. Eric [Mbatha] has been responsible for the etching. As he talks the same language as the trainees, he can join in their conversation in another way than I can. Before Eric came, there was always a trainee who translated what I said. Since Eric started to translate for me, he also adds his own instructions, so I can never be quite sure of what is being said. I used to ask the advice of the group leaders, but now I ask Eric, so my contact with the trainees has diminished considerably. The group leaders have left a lot of responsibility over to Eric. They often forget to close the windows, they are never the last out of the workshop, closing for tea or locking up after work. They never check that everything is properly cleaned in the workshops, like rollers that might be destroyed if left badly cleaned over night (2).

These reports indicate some of the general problems which set in in the printmaking workshop, pointing to cultural misunderstandings between trainees with their understanding of culture, and Kristina's perceptions based on cultural relativity. While Kristina's aims were high, perhaps thanks to her Fine Art training and her Swedish experience, the course of events which followed regarding training at Dakawa, resulted in the generation of a large majority of prints termed 'tourist art'.

With the disruption of the teaching plan, when Kristina's contract expired and she returned to Sweden, the ideal of teaching trainees printmaking techniques other than that of basic relief, did not occur. As it is important for the reader to understand what this technique entails, a description follows.

The relief printing process utilises the raised areas of a matrix, or block, rather than the depressed, removes sections, as the printable surface (Plate 8). In simple terms, the positive areas of the printing block provide the positive image, while the areas that are to remain unprinted are cut away. Traditionally, wood is used to make the block, but linoleum has become an increasingly popular alternative and, more recently, other synthetic flooring materials. After the prepared printing surface is charged with ink from the roller (Plates 9 & 10), the image is transferred to a smooth paper surface, a process which is repeated to produce an edition of identical prints (Plate 11). Woodcuts provided the earliest form of printing and historically were closely associated with the development of the printing press, where the blocks furnished illustrations to the text...Often inviting subjects which are the inspiration for pattern or stylisation, this, the oldest of printmaking processes, has technical limitations that are the key to its compelling and dramatic effects. Because the non-linear image must be carved away from the block surface, a simplification of form, flattening of pictorial space and high tonal contrast result. Richness of surface, rather than precise detail, is characteristic. Expressive lines, sometimes angular, sometimes lyrical, record the arm movement of the carver. The resulting surface is seemingly woven, stitched or bound together with a mass of enveloping marks (Hobbs, P and Rankin, E, 1997:34).

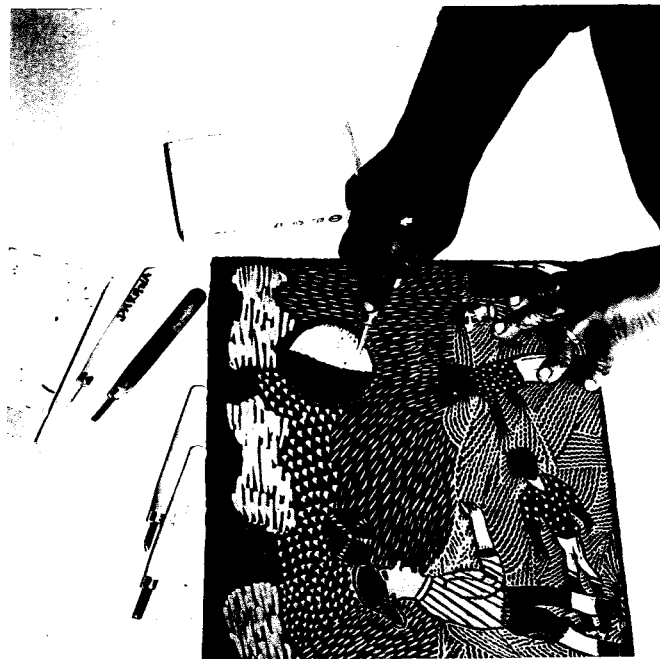


Plate 8, Edith Bukani demonstrating relief cutting techniques



Plate 9, Sandile Goje charging ink to the lino *Swedish Winter*



Plate 10, Sandile Goje preparing to print *Swedish Winter*



Plate 11, Edith Bukani demonstrating the printing process

Both Edith and Sandile have stated that Kristina was the only teacher ever to have taught relief printmaking at the Dakawa Project. This being so, if the general Dakawa style is often the same despite the artist, how did Kristina teach the technique, and how was subject matter generated?

The following section will explore the relationship between the patron, Kristina, and the artists, Edith and Sandile, and the implications, on a practical level, of the way in which technical knowledge was implemented and images generated.

Practical Relief Technique

Introduction to the relief printmaking process occurred through a series of test prints which each trainee had to execute. As both Edith and Sandile recalled, Kristina placed emphasis on trainees coming to understand the marks and patterns which each tool could achieve. The use of three tools in particular, was encouraged. These were the large U gouge, the small U gouge and the V cutting tool. Following the preliminary introduction of cutting, trainees were introduced to the printing of these linos on the press.

Once an initial understanding of technique had been achieved, test-block prints to explore fully the use of patterning and distance were employed. Here, as is evident in Edith's *Test Block* (Plate 12), a particular approach to pattern making, which was to become a stylistic element common to many trainees, was introduced.

Both Edith and Sandile distinctly remembered the emphasis Kristina placed on the variety of patterns which each tool was able to make. Asked if Kristina had shown any examples of other printmakers' works to them, in order to illustrate the effects of patterns and marks, both recalled that this only occurred in 1993. Kristina, it seems, did not want the trainees to be influenced by other work, but rather placed emphasis on each trainee's own personal use of tools and marks.

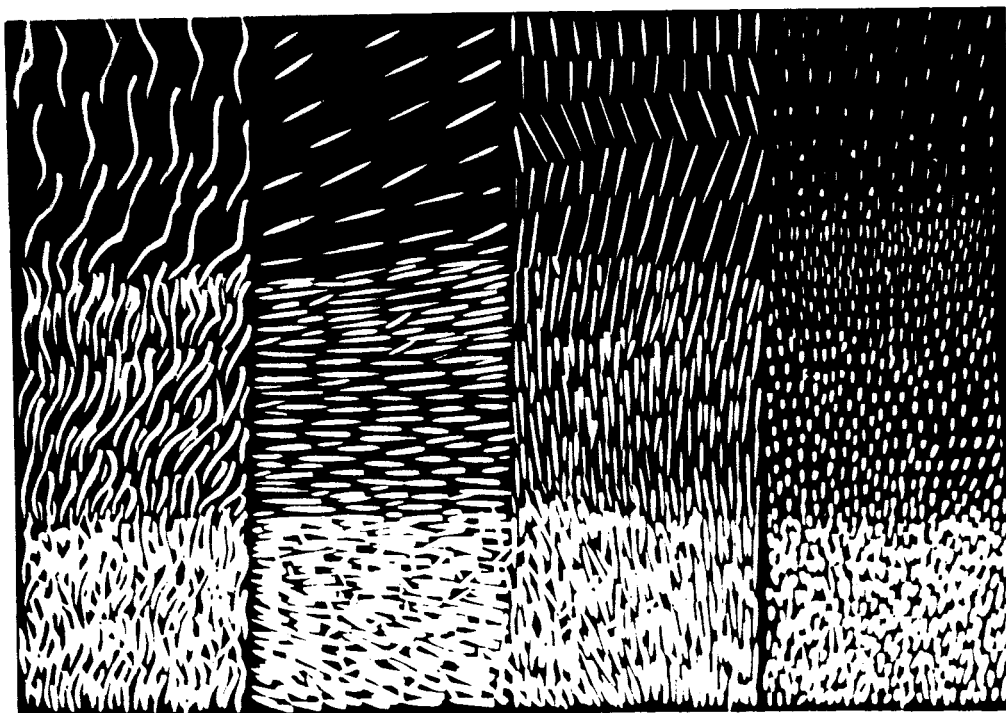


Plate 12, Edith Bukani, *Test Block*, 1992

However, as Edith recalled, once Kristina had allowed the new trainees to view examples of her works in 1993, many of the new trainees began copying the marks they had seen, in preference to the marks they themselves could invent.

I remember we all like her work because she cut so nicely...and then I remember that some people want to cut like her so we go and look quickly and try and copy...but I was scared to be caught by Kristina so I do my own (GB/EB, 1998:18).

Sandile's recollection of these events relates to the personal admiration he developed for Kristina's deft handling of tools. Although he stated that he did not copy her style, he recalled how he rather admired it because he was able to see in Kristina's work the same emphasis on fine detail and cutting which he preferred. However, he noted, Kristina did not want him to emulate her style and attempted to persuade him to change the style he had adopted.

She also like to work in fine detail but she always told me that I mustn't! But I carried on with it because I only [sic] liked it (GB/SG, 1998:13).

The problems Kristina must have encountered teaching trainees the importance of developing their own technical expertise, must have been considerable. With trainees who were faced with the need to learn as fast as possible to prove themselves worthy of the Project's economic assistance, it is not surprising that Kristina's techniques were soon emulated by many trainees.

An example of her work, *Smorgasblomma* (Plate 13), displays the similarity of mark making between patron and the majority of trainees. Kristina explained the clarity of her style as rooted in her passion for relief printing. Explaining motivations for her work, she wrote:

I have made woodcuts for more than twenty years, and I still have not achieved all that I think is possible from this technique. I love the blackness of the woodcut print, a blackness which emphasises the light. I have tried to print some colours but then I loose [sic] some of the light, I keep to black and white (D.A., Catalogue to Swedish Printmaking Exhibition held at the Dakawa Art and Craft Project, July 1995:1).



Plate 13, Kristina Anshelm, *Smorgasblomma*, no date

The second test block undertaken at the Project, set out to teach an understanding of the workings of positive and negative space. What Kristina emphasised here, was that trainees should not cut outlines to objects, but rather rely on patterns to create borders. Sandile's *Tools* test-print (Plate 14), shows a remarkable understanding of the principles applied. Compared with Edith's test print, Sandile, using the same range of tools and possible incisions, shows a difference of mark achieved and a different way of juxtaposing marks.

On the whole, most trainees acquired this technical proficiency as well. As the CDP evaluation noted, the trainees' understanding of the printmaking technique was excellent (D.A., CDP Evaluation, August 1993:11). However, the question as to how the subject-matter was generated was of concern. A brief overview of the linocuts produced between 1992 and 1993, displays a number of images of the same theme. This, and at times, the prescribed technique, is often criticised as having stunted the trainees' individual growth. If so, what were the reasons for this?



Plate 14, Sandile Goje, *Tools*, 1992

Subject-Matter Generation

Beginning with the basics of pencil and paper, trainees were asked to go home and draw scenes around them in the township.

Kristina would tell us to draw things that we saw...She tell us to go to loc 'shin and draw a picture of how we are. Then we come back and she would look. But it was difficult for me at first because I did not know what drawing was you see because I had never done any art before (GB/EB, 1998:6).

With the problems the trainees lack of artistic experience presented, Kristina was to abandon this perceptual approach, where trainees needed to understand elements necessary for a successful composition, such as dimension, in favour of a collective-object composition.

Both Edith and Sandile recalled that, with the problems all trainees were experiencing returning to Dakawa with 'pictures', Kristina had then changed plan and asked them to draw individual objects they saw around them in the township. These, as Edith recalled, included 'things like trees and houses and things' (GB/EB, 1998:7).

Once they had completed this exercise, they returned to Dakawa with the drawings and Kristina would help them to collage the single objects into a composition, which would then form a story for a linocut image.

Fundamental to the drawing process, was the understanding that trainees should use neither ruler nor eraser in their images, but rather work with the objects as they had originally been drawn. Edith experienced great difficulty in understanding this approach as she was aware that there were many mistakes in her work.

Kristina, she always say we must never use the rubber or ruler, so we try and draw and then she come and help me...I did not understand because I was not confident with my drawing(9).

While this approach might have applied only to Edith, it would seem that the other trainees were also receiving guidance and advice on drawing elements.

Edith's first image resulting from this process was *Iseland* (Plate 15), which is misspelt, but refers to an 'island'. She drew objects she thought of, then put them together to form a story, and then made a linocut from this. However, her capacity for a visual language which would form a composition, from three simple drawings of a house, a tree and a person, was inadequate. Distinction between positive and negative space and clarity of form and shape, are lacking. This lack indicates the poor levels of Edith's education and conceptual skills. Edith remembers Kristina helping her arrange the elements, but the execution of the linocut was left to her.

Sandile's first image was *Earthquake* (Plate 16). Told to do the same exercise, Sandile returned with the same simple elements as had Edith. However, in comparison to Edith's work, Sandile's displays a more advanced level of conceptualisation with its complex iconographical details. While the process of forming the story was left to him while worked on the lino itself, Sandile's educational advantage is evident in the observed detail made in this work. The trees, telephone poles, the road, with its painted markings, and the vehicle, all indicate his observational and compositional ability.

Kristina told us to make drawings of things around us, so I made some drawings of streets and houses and things like that. You see it all in the picture. The snake was something that just came, I didn't know I was doing it (GB/SG, 1998:14).

In these two prints it can be seen that the technical instructions which had been practised were beginning to take root. While neither print strictly adheres to the principle of not outlining objects, the development of the use of patterning is evident. While Edith's patterns have been used in her search for clarity of form, Sandile has begun to see the advantage of using pattern to create dimension.



Plate 15, Edith Bukani, *Island*, 1992



Plate 16, Sandile Goje, *Earthquake*, 1992

However, despite their lack of ability to compose elements to form clear visual narratives, trainees were introduced to themes and projects aimed at helping them in their search for visual content and meaning.

Kristina's approach was tied in with what is popularly termed the Zama Zama game by trainees from Dakawa. In this game, someone writes an idea onto a piece of paper, places it in a container and then allows each trainee an equal chance to choose an idea from the container, which they then have to visualise and draw. As is evident in many of the works, in order not to challenge the trainees too much, ideas and topics were drawn from commonly seen events, with subjects ranging from a girl on a bike to a wedding celebration. While trainees were encouraged to explore these on an individual basis, themes were also given to the whole group so that trainees could compare their development.

However, this method of subject generation was misunderstood by a majority of the trainees, and by the CDP evaluator, Charles Sokhaya Nkosi, who wrote:

One thing that surfaced when interacting with the trainees concerning their works which we saw, was that in most cases they were given themes to work on because the teacher felt that they may not be able to come out with their own self-initiated themes. This approach can be very prescriptive (D.A., Printmaking workshop evaluation, 1993:4).

Recommendations for improvement were made:

It [is] [sic] the creation of a personal, creative idiom that needs to be addressed...Room should be made, and motivated, for them to initiate their own themes and explore them to the final visual realisation in whatever medium they are working. The highlighting of developing this personal idiom would be achieved by instituting a very strong drawing base, eg landscape, life drawing, object drawing, that will positively impact on their competent technical skills in Graphics (6).

This process, based on a CDP misunderstanding about development of personal subject

matter, seemed to be central to Kristina's teaching approach. Technical ability, for her, should precede the development of subject matter. In order to allow for this, themes were given. However, many trainees were not to develop their personal idiom through this method. Two factors, which could explain this misunderstanding, seem applicable.

Firstly, the majority of trainees continued to view Dakawa as a job and not as art training. Secondly, as a result of economic implications, the majority of trainees did not see the necessity for the advancement of their own personal development beyond what they were asked to do. Trainees like Edith and Sandile, however, realised the importance of artistic development. As Sandile recalled:

A lot of them [trainees] stuck to the topics she had given. I think they were still too scared to think for themselves (GB/SG, 1998:7).

While Sandile was already beginning to think of his own interpretations, the development of Edith's personal technical style evolved because she had little need to think of a composition first. Free from the limitations experienced by other trainees, who were uncertain about their subject matter, Edith simply came to terms with technique.

Landscape (Plate 17), which was one of the first group of given themes, displays Edith's initial grasp of technique prior to being concerned about subject matter. The landscape is composed of an amalgamation of separately observed trees, rocks and stones. Although Kristina had emphasised to Edith the need for close observation of objects around her, Edith still lacked a visual language for the interpretation of these objects. While she employed the use of patterns to create the different pockets of the composition, her observation of scale regarding rock and plant sizes, is visually confusing.

Pot Plant (Plate 18) on the other hand, shows Edith's radical development of technical competence and observation owing to the focus on drawing ability by Kristina. This can be seen in the portrayal of the plant's formation. Where, in *Landscape*, plant forms had been generalised, here the specific shapes and sizes of leaves have been observed. However, the

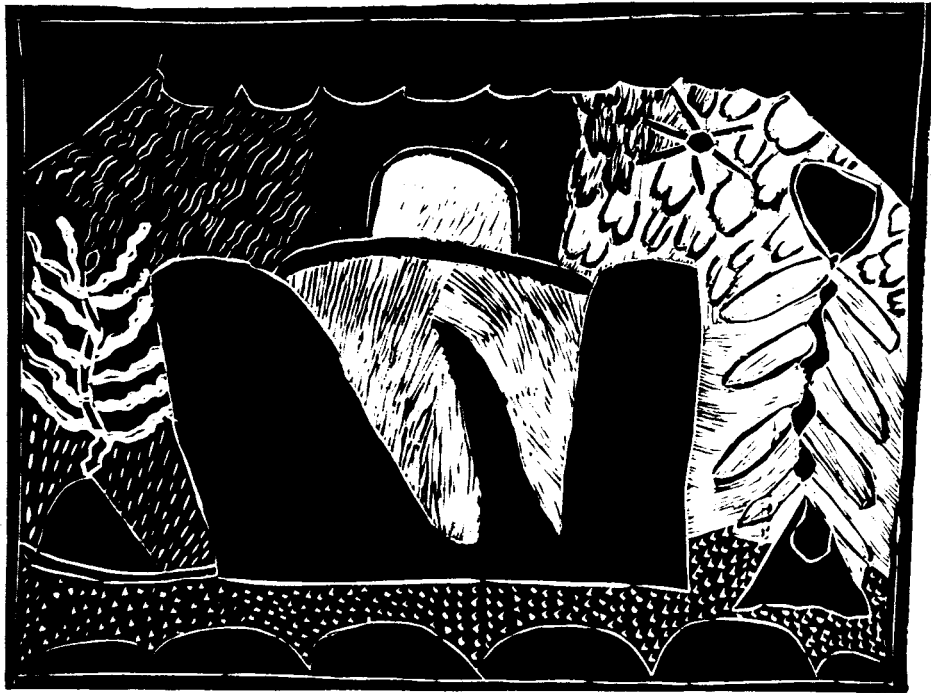


Plate 17, Edith Bukani, *Landscape*, 1992

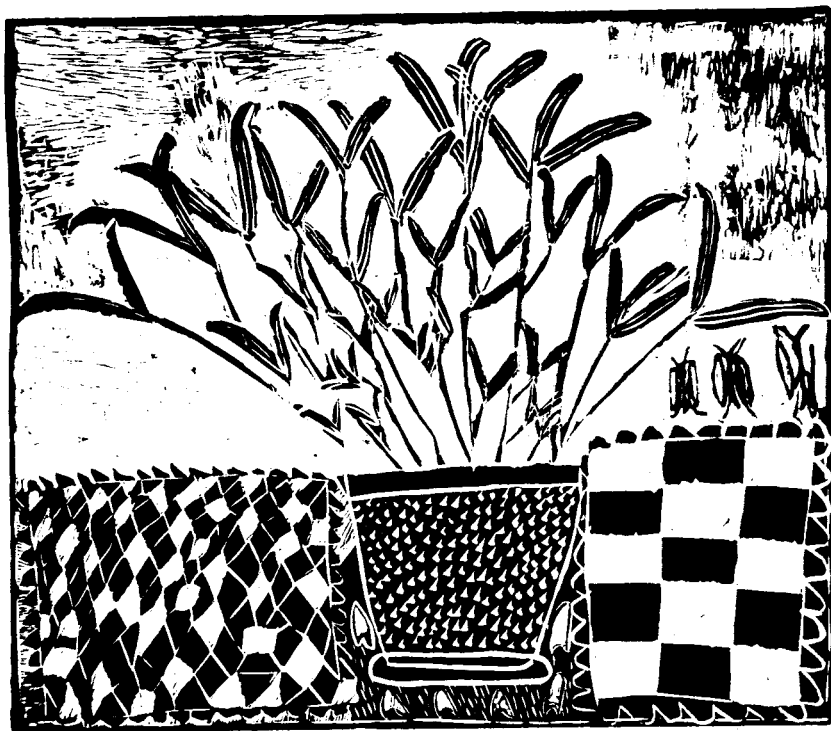


Plate 18, Edith Bukani, *Pot Plant*, 1992

exercise, which aimed at the development of pictorial and compositional skills, displays a lack of understanding of the depiction of space which has become a hallmark of Edith's style. Problems are also encountered regarding recession. This can be seen in the cutting marks which form a pattern for the tablecloth. Instead of a three dimensional space, a flattened two dimensional space has been depicted.

Birds, a theme intended to establish an understanding of the arranging of compositional elements, displays the disparate levels of education between Edith and Sandile. Edith recalled how they were asked to draw as many birds as they could see, in order to make a composition of them all. For this exercise, Sandile recalled how Kristina provided the trainees with illustrations from which the trainees were asked to observe, but not copy (GB/SG, 1998:15).

While Sandile's understanding of such a composition (Plate 19) is reminiscent of old pages of zoological drawings of the late nineteenth century, Edith's (Plate 20) represents a harried search for clarity and the placing of each bird within the picture frame. Perceptions of relative proportions are in stark contrast. Sandile's draws on his experience at school when he had been asked to draw on the blackboard. Intense observation of each bird's details, as well as anatomically correct proportions, show far greater technical, perceptual and conceptual skill on Sandile's part.

Tree Branches (Plate 21) by Sandile and *Lucky Bean Tree* (Plate 22) by Edith, for the first time shows a development away from a predominantly technical approach, to a more personal one and a better grasp of narrative. This group theme, based on direct observation in the Grahamstown Botanical Gardens, was set so that trainees could view the branches of the trees and apply this to their understanding of patterning and of the effects of positive and negative space. In addition, trainees were to apply the principles of distance which they had learnt in design class.



Plate 19, Sandile Goje, *Birds*, 1992



Plate 20, Edith Bukani, *Birds*, 1992

The next theme, tree branches is a variation of the room dimension, containing both overlapping and different tones. They are a bit confused by the theme, only branches, no tree trunk. I think that this time they were allowed to sketch a little on the blackened lino with white gouache paint. But they were told not to cut these white contours that they had painted. Most people cut white contours (D.A., Report from Dakawa Graphic Art Workshop, June - September 1993:3).

Sandile's version of this theme is technically proficient. All the elements of design which had been taught by Kristina are well ordered within the composition. Tree branches closest to the viewer are dark, while those behind are lighter. Patterns created through the use of the U and V gouge tools are deftly manipulated into forming contrasting areas of pattern between the branches, leaves and background sky.

Edith's rendering of the tree branches, although not nearly as detailed as Sandile's, introduces a hint of the development of a personal idiom. Edith, bearing in mind Kristina's credo that 'we must do things of culture that no one do before' (GB/EB, 1998:14), chose to draw what is commonly referred to as the Lucky Bean Tree, incorporating the additional elements of the ominous snake and the bird into the picture. Commenting on reasons for her inclusion of these, she explained:

In Xhosa we believe that this tree.....bring[s] luck to people.....Some people must be lucky to get lucky because there are things that don't want you to be lucky! (GB/EB, 1998:15).

Edith's use of personal narrative, which drew on her perceptions of cultural experience, had begun. After six months of being employed at the Project and, with the acquisition of a basic understanding of technique, the move away from set themes to those generated on their own, was to elevate Edith and Sandile onto a higher level of artistic understanding than that of many of the other trainees, who continued to do as they were told.



Plate 21, Sandile Goje, *Tree Branches*, 1992

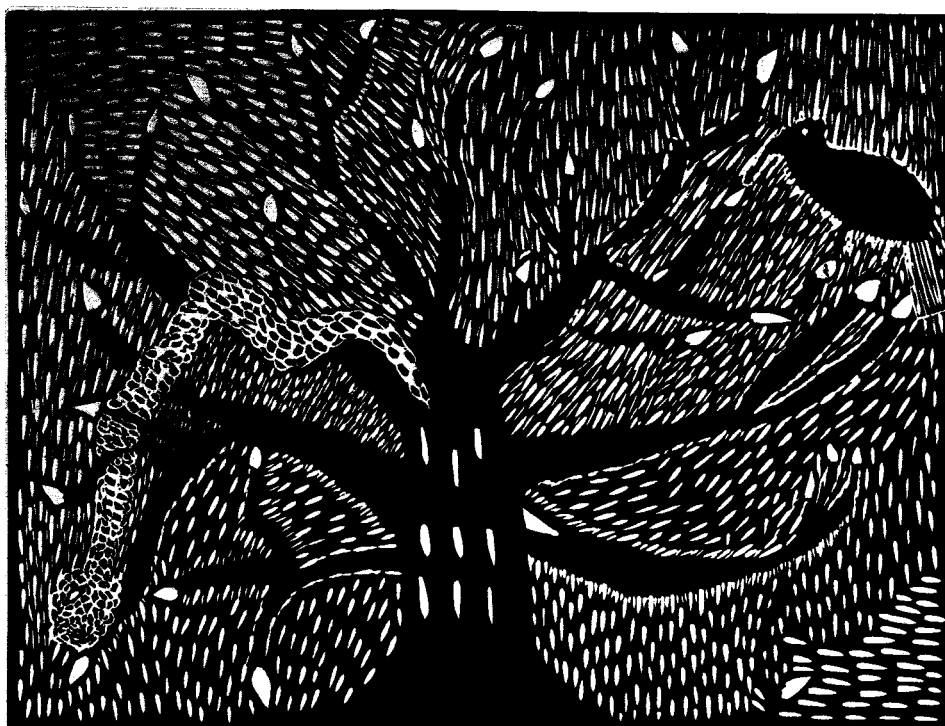


Plate 22, Edith Bukani, *Lucky Bean Tree*, 1992

However, with both Sandile and Edith, realising, either consciously, or unconsciously, that they would be drawing on their own understanding of culture, as opposed to that of the Swedish administrators, the first signs of cultural misunderstanding between them and the administrators began.

While Edith's knowledge of culture was deeply rooted in her own experience, rather than in what she aspired to experience, Sandile's took the opposite course.

In the following section, the expression of culture, as understood by Edith and Sandile, is discussed. Underlying this discussion, is Vansina's notion that:

As art expresses culture, so style, theme and motif are intimately linked to the perceptions and representations which are common cultural good. In general, the themes expressed in art are those dominant in a culture (Vansina, 1984:129).

The Beginnings of Personal Expression

When Edith and Sandile were asked which they considered to be their first breakthrough prints, in terms of what they viewed as their first most important visual stories, both pointed to prints they were told to generate over the Christmas vacation of 1992/3.

Sandile's *Circumcision School* (Plate 23), was his breakthrough. He realised that he was able to generate subject matter on his own. This, though, was only possible after he had received a solid grounding in technical and subject generation skills. As Sandile recalled:

...I felt proud that this was the first picture that I had done by myself without any supervision...At the end of 1992 we were told that we must go and make some lino's over the Christmas time. In those holidays I went to the bush to do the Xhosa Abakwheta School. I thought that this was the only experience that I had so I decided to make a lino of it (GB/SG, 1998:12).



Plate 23, Sandile Goje, *Circumcision School*, 1993

The significance of this event as a cultural moment, was understood by the Swedish teachers. Along most of the roads surrounding Grahamstown, the sight of boys undergoing initiation is common. As the Swedes' reaction to the technically proficient image was positive, Sandile realised that the depiction of what he knew and experienced, as opposed to what was imposed, made good subject matter. Just as the break from boyhood to manhood had been achieved, so his break from trainee to artist was beginning.

The image is complex, with a remarkable development in compositional elements being displayed, such as the rendering of differing shapes and textures of the river in comparison to the grass of the *bakwetha* hut. Although spatial understanding is still problematic, for example the sizes of foregrounded *bakwetha* in comparison to the *bakwetha* in the background, the attention to detail and significance of tonal use is well understood.

Edith's work, *New Years Day* (Plate 24) evolved as a result of the same process, but was accepted differently.

Before we go on holiday, Malin say to us that we must make drawings for new lino from what we be doing in our holiday. So I think that because I go to Port Alfred on New Years Day that I make lino of that....I like it [the lino image] very much because it is the first lino I do by myself so I feel right you know (GB/EB, 1998:11).

This image, which reflects a celebration shared by white and black South Africans, was partly well received by the Swedish administrators. While compositional technique had improved considerably, as is seen in Edith's increased understanding of clarity of form, Kristina questioned the depiction of the people celebrating the occasion. As Edith recalls:

...[Kristina] she like it very much but she ask me why there are only white people on the beach. So I tell her that it was not only white people but also black people. But she says she want to see it. So I make another lino...called Xmas Day(Plate 25) with black people too...she was very happy now because she say I must show myself too. But I say to her that some of us think we are white...(GB/EB, 1998:11).



Plate 24, Edith Bukani, *New Years Day*, 1993



Plate 25, Edith Bukani, *Xmas Day*, 1993

Despite the fact that Edith had displayed an important cultural event and hinted at her aspirations during the time of South Africa's awakening democracy, the misreading of this by Kristina, was to confuse Edith as to what culture was. With Kristina's emphasis on the depiction of the African, as a notion of the rural and primitive, a turning point for Edith came about. Her depiction of culture was thus adapted to suit the prescribed foreign notion.

Witchdoctors I and *Witchdoctors II* (Plates 26 and 27), depicts the black element which Edith felt Kristina wanted. Reception of these images by the Swedish administrators was very favourable. The Swedes, who began to use these images as banners for the training they were developing at the Project, reproduced them on postcards, reports, calendars and, finally, on the invitation to mark Malin's departure from the Project. They had found the image of Africa foreign viewers expected.

The commercialisation of an event which Edith held true to her identity, was occurring through the intervention of the Swedes. The significance of the portrayal of the *Witchdoctors*, Edith explained as:

You know in Xhosa culture we believe in the witch doctor because they must give us the things to make wrong things right. It is like when I tell you that I am going to Peddie to see the witch doctor because my father is not right. My parents always took us to the witch doctor when they want to know something because they talk to the ancestors who are looking at us and then they know what is wrong (GB/EB, 1998:17).

The depiction of culture, for Sandile, seemed grounded in more sophisticated ideas. Well known for his print, *The Meeting of Two Cultures* (Plate 28), Hobbs and Rankin analysed the print:

Sandile Goje...offers another vision of the arrival of democracy, in a solemn, yet humorous encounter of two 'human' houses personifying the Meeting of Two Cultures(1993). Goje's remarkable eye for detail has captured the minutiae of Western-style suburban house down to its Slasto fascia, and of a circular rural homestead with finger-tracings decorating the walls.



Plate 26, Edith Bukani, *Witchdoctors I*, 1993



Plate 27, Edith Bukani, *Witchdoctors II*, 1993

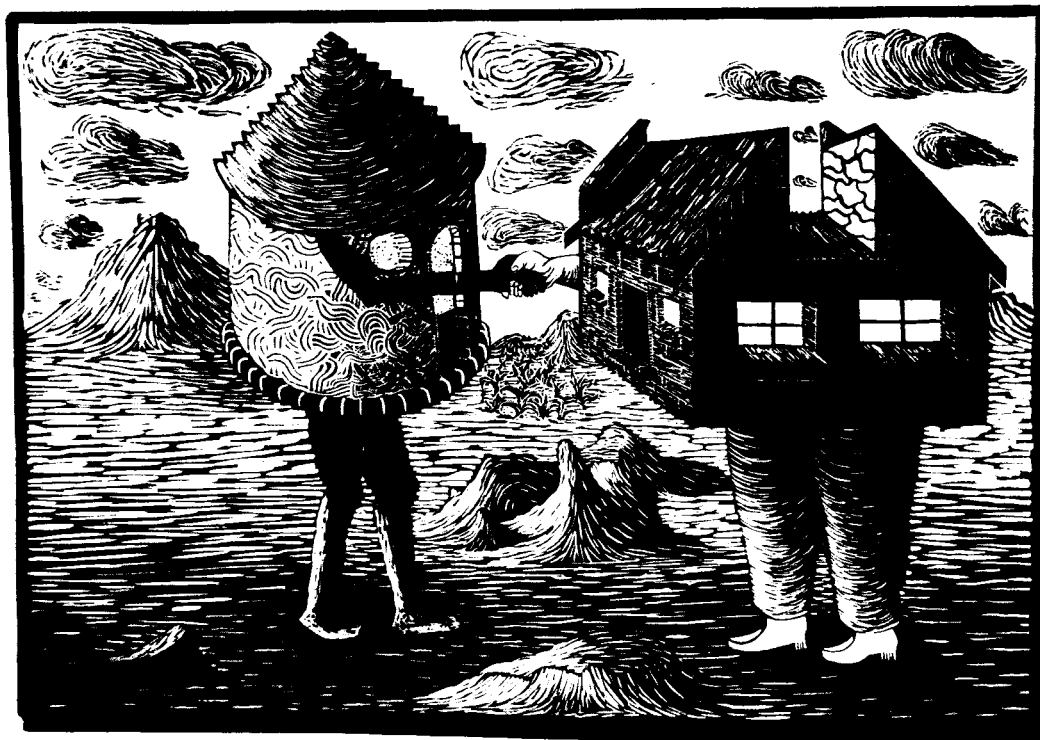


Plate 28, Sandile Goje, *The Meeting of Two Cultures*, 1993

These particulars lend themselves admirably to his cutting skills, as does the continuous rhythm of white lines marking the expansive panorama in which the encounter is set. The symbolism of the anthropomorphic dwellings prompts a similar reading of the landscape, so that the intermittent rocky outcrops suggest not only features of the Karoo vistas near the Eastern Cape, but a terrain of obstacles encountered by travellers en route to this historical moment. Although the two cultures are now shown in positions of equality as they shake hands across the empty landscape, past history is not forgotten in the more elaborate form of the 'white' house, and the robust, well-shod limbs that support it, as opposed to the thin black arms and legs and bare feet of the 'black' house. But light, a timeless symbol of hope, shines from the windows of both dwellings, perhaps welcoming the weary travellers home (Hobbs, P and Rankin, E, 1997:44).

The artist's reasons for the making of the print were:

I had been thinking about culture and about what I had learnt and so I came up with the African culture and the....maybe Swedish culture...I had the idea and I was doing many drawings for it. But I was stuck and so I went to ask Kristina what she thought. She helped me in terms of how I did it. You see, on the one side is the Xhosa culture, the hut with the bare legs. And on the other side is the white man with the house from his culture. He is wearing the pants. And the two are shaking hands, so the two cultures meet (GB/SG, 1998:17).

Although this print can be interpreted as depicting the South African democratic process, as Hobbs and Rankin do, its essence lies in its personal cultural intention which included the process of acculturation for Sandile. The print also coincided with Kristina's departure from the Project. Sandile's relationship with Kristina had extended beyond that of trainee/teacher. With his rapid development and his civilised manner, Sandile epitomised a success for the Project's training programme.

The image reflects a tabula rasa situation. The advanced Swedes had provided a rural boy with an opportunity for advancement. The image is a demonstration of gratitude for this. The 'white' man's building is none other than the Dakawa textile printing workshop building in

Grahamstown, depicting the foreign cultural technology and training which had been brought and given to the area by the Swedes.

The depiction of the two cultures here, that of 'rural and primitive' black Grahamstown, and that of 'advanced' Sweden, however, reflects issues of acculturation and cultural control which were to become contentious for future development at the Project.

This print raises several questions regarding the understanding, and at times confusion, on the part of the trainees, on the nature of the other 'gifts' and the cultural meaning bestowed by the Swedish on the Project. These concerned matters of cultural ownership, cultural economics and cultural identity.

Identity through "Ownership"

In an early attempt to teach trainees observation skills, Kristina set the theme of 'buildings'. While this theme could be interpreted in whatever way the trainees saw fit, the development of own subject matter as personal expression was unknowingly initiated.

Edith's rendering of a building is of a general trade store in the township, entitled *Nomuthle General Dealer* (Plate 29). While its technical competence is still in need of refinement, personal competence shown in the understanding of subject matter drawn from experience is evident. This trade store formed part of Edith's personal experience, and was thus associated with her identity. Questioned as to her choice of building, she stated:

Because I know the shop and we always go there to buy our things. The shop owner was a rich man and he even bought one when I was finished. You see this shop was there near to where I live and so I see it everyday when I go to Dakawa. And then a lot of people in the loc'shin [location] know about the shop too (GB/EB, 1998:10).

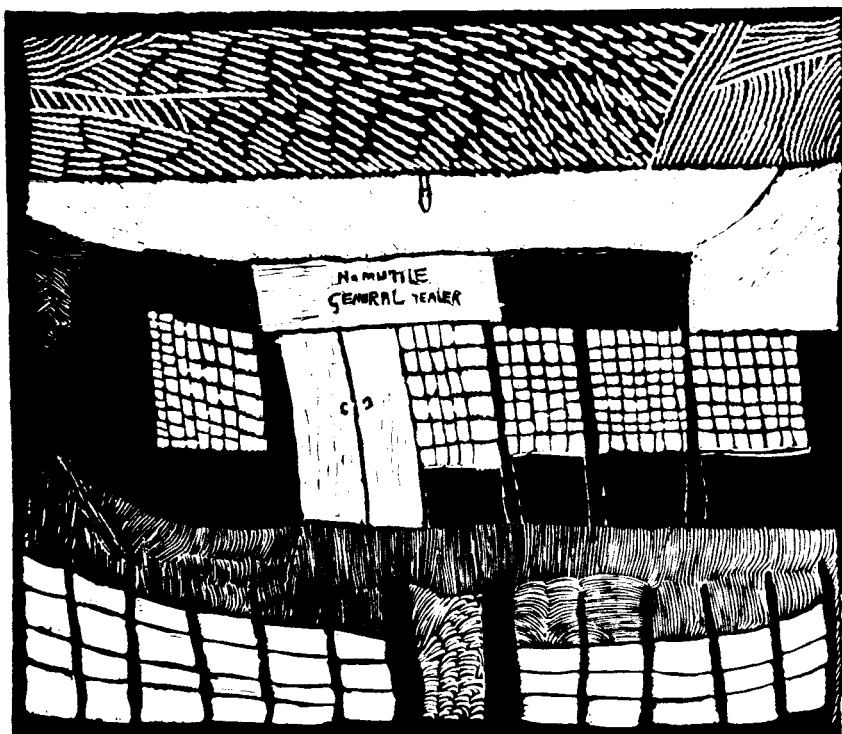


Plate 29, Edith Bukani, *Nomuthle General Dealer*, 1993

On the other hand, Sandile's choice of *Rhodes Buildings* (Plate 30), indicates values connected with education, rather than with daily familiarity. His rendering of these buildings indicates the desire for education, yet the lack of true observation and sketchy rendering of the subject, indicates his actual distance and lack of familiarity with both buildings and campus realities. The building, although bearing a resemblance to some of the architecture of the university campus, lacks architectural accuracy. In addition, the layout of the gardens and plants, is more stylised than observed.

In direct contrast to this, is a lino executed shortly after this one had been completed. Called *Dakawa Buildings* (Plate 31), striking differences in handling are evident. While the *Rhodes Buildings* are loose in cutting and quick in stylisation, exquisite attention to detail is found in the buildings of Dakawa, right down to the rubbish bin and barbed wire fencing. Questioned on the attention to detail, Sandile stated:

I think it is because I could take a long time in looking at the buildings and could put things in as I saw them...and I knew [why elements like the dustbins and barbed wire] why they were there (GB/SG, 1998:15).

Further use of the 'wave' lines in the background, which were to become a hallmark of Sandile's style, evoke a fanciful backdrop.

A sense of ownership over Dakawa is apparent in this print by Sandile. Unlike many other trainees, the Project had afforded him a sense of belonging and meaning. Meanwhile, for Edith, ownership and identity were still tied in with her original cultural context.



Plate 30, Sandile Goje, *Rhodes Buildings*, 1993



Plate 31, Sandile Goje, *Dakawa Buildings*, 1993

Identity through “Employment”

When Kristina gave the theme of ‘workplace’, Sandile did a rendering of the Dakawa printmaking workshop, called *Graphic Workshop* (Plate 32) and Edith did that of *Beads* (Plate 33), both images reflecting their understanding of ‘work’.

While Sandile had initially understood Dakawa to be a job, but had then realised that he was able to better his education, *Graphic Workshop* displays what the Swedes had wanted to achieve. Here he felt at home and the relationship between work and the opportunity for economic advancement was evident. Sandile explained:

I was thinking what to do when I remembered a theme of ‘people’s work place. So this was my workplace. You will see all the equipment that is in the workshop now is in the picture. There are all the trainees busy doing their work, one is cutting his lino, another is cutting some things on the cutter, and some others are printing...I observed everything and was proud of it all so I wanted to show it....[asked whether he viewed Dakawa as art or as a job] I think to a lot of people it was still a job, but to me, I felt I was lucky to be getting some training in art and also to be getting some money to help me (GB/SG, 1998:16).

However, the economic content of this print also contradicts Sandile’s newfound understanding. While trainees were paid a monthly salary and, as a result, had no economic control over the sale of their work, the opportunity for future economic advancement was deceptive. In one of Kristina’s reports, she notes that:

When Sandile shows visitors around, he always ends up showing the prints out of his own drawer, although I have told him he should direct them to the Shop for that (D.A. Report from Dakawa Graphic Art Workshop, June - September 1993:2).

Edith’s image, reflects this issue of economic control in a more complex light. On the one hand the image shows the economic aspect of craft marketing, yet at the same time it shows the control which Dakawa had over the works of the trainees. The bead seller who has not

produced the beads, is white. The only black person is at the bottom wondering whether to talk to the seller. Edith recalled:

I made it because I wanted to show the person who is selling the beads he makes. But you see the person who is selling the beads is not the man who makes them. He is there...at the bottom of the print looking and wondering if he can talk to the man at the table. [the seller is white]...You see sometimes for us it is the white person who sells our things to the other white people because they like it. Black people are funny. It is like my prints, only white people buy them, no black people (GB/EB, 1998:16).

While similar aspirations in terms of economic opportunities are evident in both works, basic differences in terms of educational aspiration and cultural understanding are displayed through other works by these artists. Edith, who essentially saw no opportunity for educational and social development for herself, remained true to the cultural attitudes of the *abaphakati*. Sandile however, saw the opportunity for personal development towards the status of the *abaphakamileyo*. These factors are evident in other works produced in 1993 by Edith and Sandile.



Plate 32, Sandile Goje, *Graphic Workshop*, 1993



Plate 33, Edith Bukani, *Beads*, 1993

Identity through Personal Assimilation of Experience.

Examples of Edith's other works from 1993, *Walk Tall* (Plate 34), *Calendar July* (Plate 35) and *Gulf Happy Day* (Plate 36), are direct expressions of experiences and meanings personal to her, with each event drawn from a passage in her life. Unlike Sandile, Edith is comfortable with her familiar social structure, seeking only an improvement in her economic standing.

Walk Tall expresses her understanding and hope for social aspiration:

This picture is about the white man who is walking down the street and he is happy and proud because he is seeing many things around him. It is like when you are in the township, and you see the white man and you know that he can be proud because of a lot of things he has. And so I know that one day we will all be proud because we will also have many things (GB/EB, 1998:17).

Calendar July expresses not only her ties with her family's traditional roots, but also recalls their past economic wellbeing:

[In the lino image] They are two old men who are sitting and talking...like my father. And they are watching their cows, you see, in the kraal. And then their houses are behind them. It is just like on the old farm, not like in the towns now. And then the old men could just sit and look at their cows and be sure that they are safe because they are lots of money!...I was thinking when my father had his farm and then his cows could go all over (GB/EB, 1998:15-6).

Gulf Happy Day, which represents a golfing event, expresses the narrative of her previous work experience at the Grahamstown Golf Club:

That is the people there by the Golf club who are playing golf and then there are other people who are watching them. Remember I told you that I worked at the Golf Club in the kitchen, so I could also watch some people play (GB/EB, 1998:17).



Plate 34, Edith Bukani, *Walk Tall*, 1993



Plate 35, Edith Bukani, *Calendar July*, 1993



Plate 36, Edith Bukani, *Gulf Happy Day*, 1993

Sandile had very different narratives. In 1993, realising that his technical prowess and artistic ability could be well received, he began taking on the task of the real artist, of fulfilling commissions. *Kiddies Playground* (Plate 37) reflects something planned for the Project. On his own initiative, Sandile realised that he could take what he saw around him and make an image which could be important. This stemmed from his advancement within the ranks of trainee authority, which gave him the confidence to comment on events affecting Dakawa.

In *Pre-Historic Man* (Plate 38), which originated as a result of the trainees' visit to the Albany Museum in Grahamstown, Sandile's personal search for meaning of man's origins is humorously displayed. While the apes swing on the branches of the tree, the human proportions and actions given to the apes reflect Darwin's theory of evolution. Again, as in *Circumcision School*, another hallmark of Sandile's style comes through. The river, which runs from the foreground and disappears to the background, was explained by Sandile as reflecting the fact that 'things never end, that they always carry on' (GB/SG, 1998:13). Attention to detail and the placing of the apes in a landscape with elements bearing some resemblance to the Eastern Cape, the protea tree for example, give further personal meaning to the work.

Assimilation of a sense of place, however, was different for Sandile in Sweden, while studying there in 1994 to 1995. Although no prints which were executed during this time exist for documentation purposes, it was upon his return to South Africa that the visual evidence of his experiences there was displayed.

This can be seen in *The Memories of the 80's* (Plate 39) and *Swedish Winter* (Plate 40). Removed from the context of the Dakawa Project, in which he had rooted his identity, the images which recollect his stay in Sweden reflect a sense of isolation and lack of identity.

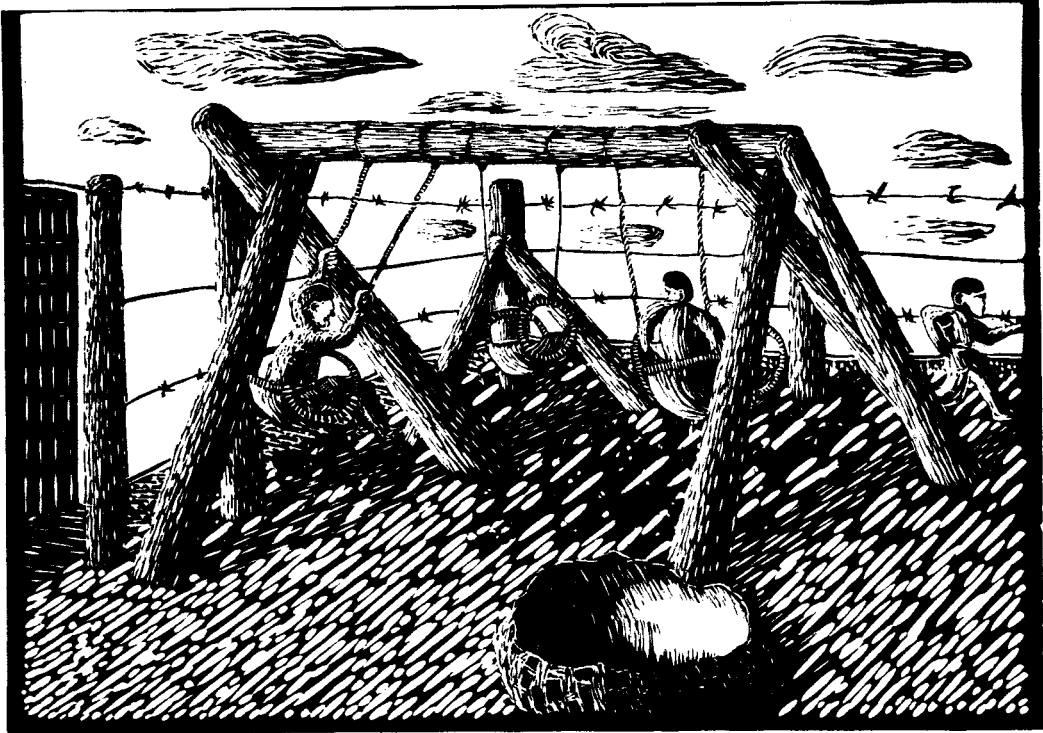


Plate 37, Sandile Goje, *Kiddies Playground*, 1993



Plate 38, Sandile Goje, *Pre-Historic Man*, 1993

Although Sandile was never involved in any political activities in South Africa, *The Memories of the 80's* tells the story of an exile in isolation, a story similar in some respects to Sandile's position in Sweden. Although he spoke only with praise of his stay in Sweden, the cultural shock of being in a country vastly different to that he had known, must have taken its toll. Sandile recalled:

Sometimes I was homesick. But I think this picture is about what was happening to people in the 1980's in South Africa. The man is like an exile, all alone, and thinking of the things he had seen and done (GB/SG, 1998:19).

Whereas Sandile's images of buildings and landscapes in South Africa show familiarity and human feeling, *Swedish Winter* expresses the opposite. Sandile recalled:

Sometimes I would spend a whole week-end in my room alone and so I wouldn't actually see any people at all. Maybe that is why [there are no people and] why I did that (GB/SG, 1998:20).

At the time of Kristina's departure in September 1993, the artists and their personal idioms for future visual narrative had been unwittingly well developed by Kristina through the technical rather than cultural training which she had provided.

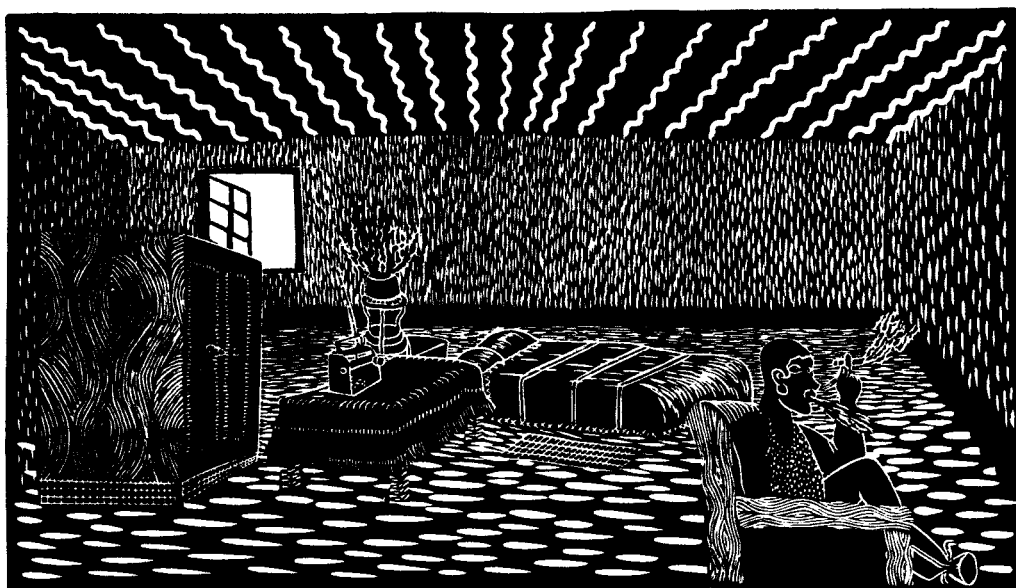


Plate 39, Sandile Goje, *The Memories of the 80's*, 1996



Plate 40, Sandile Goje, *Swedish Winter*, 1996

Edith's more recent subject matter is a continuation of the personal narrative she had developed earlier, drawing almost exclusively on events and experiences around her. The cultural emphasis in her new work is less influenced by a foreign conceptual approach and her depiction of authentic cultural events has come to the fore.

Makoti (Plate 41), relates the narrative of the passage a Xhosa bride must travel from unmarried woman to acceptance by her new husband. Having problems with her own husband during 1998, the image seems to have originated as a direct result of Edith's personal feelings and emotions on this matter, and shows a sense of attempting to come to terms with the reality of the position she found herself in. Unlike her first marriage, which took place under traditional Xhosa norms, her second had been urban and modern. In the hope of reclaiming traditional acceptance, perhaps both from society and from her husband, Edith rendered the *makoti* bride positioned in the centre of the traditional hut, waiting for her acceptance by her husband with the beaded veil covering her eyes.

Family (Plate 42) relates the story of marriage and children. Having come to terms with her marital problems, and perhaps her acceptance of her husband, Edith recalled:

You know in many of our houses they are so small that there is no chance that the husband and wife can be alone, and so when they talk about their love they must try and do it so that the small ones don't see it, so there is the stamp [postage] because they are writing each other letters of love (GB/EB, 1998: 22).

The Lame and Christ (Plate 43) relates a narrative of redemption which Edith believed necessary. She recalled:

I made this earlier in the year [1998] when it was Easter time. So I think about what the bible say to me about some things and then I remember the story of Jesus and the man who was lame. So Jesus help the man and then he walk and all is right with him again (GB/EB, 1998:22).

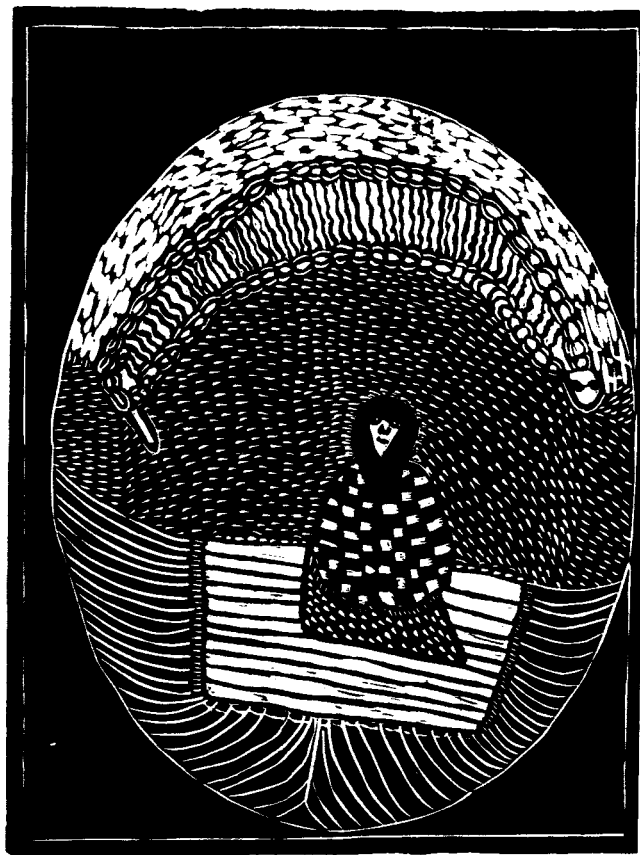


Plate 41, Edith Bukani, *Makoti*, 1998



Plate 42, Edith Bukani, *Family*, 1998



Plate 43, Edith Bukani, *The Lame and Christ*, 1998

Inspiration for Edith's narratives rests in a conceptual appreciation of dreams.

You know when I dream...I think of all the things that I must do and then I know that I must make a picture of what I see...it is like last night, I was dreaming and then I was crying and then when I wake up I want to make the picture...I think all the time what my dreams are telling me and then I must draw it because my ancestors are telling me something (GB/EB, 1998:21).

What Edith's training at the Dakawa printmaking workshop had done, was to afford her the technical capacity to illustrate her dreams. With the technical expertise imparted by Kristina, and her own urge to begin the process of seeing art as a personal expression, Edith's work today is an authentic expression of her own experience.

By 1998, the real Sandile, free of foreign notions, had emerged. Images he produced deal with lyrical and realistic passages of events and happenings he has seen around him. Although Sandile has been reluctant to say whether these are in any way reflective of his personal experience, his close associates cannot help but think this.

I will pull up my socks for just one more time (Plate 44), *Tomorrow is like living in a chewing-gum world* (Plate 45), *Building and Preparing for the Better Future* (Plate 46), all of which were produced in 1998 upon Sandile's return to Dakawa, are a social commentary not only in a Grahamstown context, but on a more national level as well.

I will pull up my socks for just one more time, one of the first prints produced in 1998, narrates the difficulty he experienced returning to Dakawa. Although Sandile did not verbally express this difficulty, it was to become evident through the problems he experienced in the sourcing of subject matter earlier that year. He started off producing images of rural traditional scenes, soon abandoning them in favour of the personal and authentic. He explained:

It's a saying we have in Xhosa which means that a person who has made a mistake must do better things so that they don't get into trouble again (GB/SG, 1998: 22).

In the print, a single large foot with a small hand pulling up the tattered sock is displayed. While the toes of the foot stick through the sock as a result of the sock desperately needing darning, the comparative size differences between the foot and the hand pose a question. Whose or what foot is this? Although Sandile has been reluctant to express ownership over the foot, the assumption of the foot being that not of a person, but rather of a concept, emerges. Could this be the foot referring to Dakawa? Or could this be the foot referring to Africa? A seemingly rhetorical question was the aim of this work for Sandile.

Following this print, Sandile's development was phenomenal. While visual clues as to the identities and ownership of many of the human elements in the prints are shown, no verbal identity is ever told. Sandile has shown a remarkable ability to pose questions, aimed at the viewer, through his recent works.

Tomorrow is like living in a chewing-gum world could be a social commentary on the failure of the ANC government's delivery of promises made in 1994 or, it could be a commentary on the failure of promises made by the Swedish to the trainees of the Project. Without identifying whose failure the print refers to, Sandile explained:

...It's like when we blow bubbles, you know there is the saying when the bubble bursts'? Well, all the things on top of the bubble, like the house and the car and things, these are the things that people want, but maybe they will never get them?(GB/SG, 1998:21-2).

Building and Preparing for the Better Future reflects aspirations particular to both the Grahamstown ideal of educational achievement, and to the ideal which Sandile has continued to hold dear. Still wanting to further his studies, perhaps this time with a management diploma, he explained the image:

It is about education and the levels of education that people have. The one on the right hand side hasn't got too much education [a labourer], then the next one has more, he has a matric pass, then the next one is a teacher, the next one is a doctor or a nurse, and the last one is a judge (GB/SG, 1998:22).



Plate 44, Sandile Goje, *I will pull up my socks for just one more time*, 1998



Plate 45, Sandile Goje, *Tomorrow is like living in a chewing-gum world*, 1998

While the labourer is rendered with a small head, possibly referring to the lack of education, the sizes of the heads increase as education levels grow larger, until the largest head belongs to that of the judge. Education, for Sandile, it seems, was tied in directly with social and economic position.

This reflects the conclusions that Nyquist drew on the culture of Grahamstown. While his studies were conducted in the early 1970s, it would seem that little in terms of cultural aspiration has changed. Although the new South Africa has heralded a democracy of equal opportunity and, as a result, the means of acquiring access to opportunity has opened, issues of cultural identity have changed little.

However, the significance of these prints by Edith and Sandile, lies in the way they express the actual cultural identity of Grahamstown East. Sandile's work can be regarded as a social commentary on the significant issues affecting the daily lives of many of these residents. His focus on the aspect of education, recurs through his work time and again, from *Building and Preparing for the Better Future* to further prints such as, *I need some School Fees Daddy* (Plate 47). Sandile, taking advantage of the knowledge and opportunity he had acquired at the Dakawa Project, between 1992 and 1996, finally, in his own way, achieved the status of the *abaphakamileyo*. As a result, the narrative images which had begun to emerge through his work, are authentic.

Edith, on the other hand, while also part of the culture of Grahamstown East, reflects a completely different understanding of cultural identity. With the knowledge that she has little chance for the development of her education through a university or technikon, owing to her low level of schooling, her aspiration is economic, which she shares with the majority of residents of the township. Further, her visual expression has found significance in the autobiographical documentation of her own life and the events and factors affecting her everyday reality. Finally the authentic expression of culture, as she came to understand it, has manifested itself in her work.

Each in their own way, Sandile and Edith succeeded in developing narratives of cultural experience, in spite of considerable pressure to depict the ANC DAC's notion of culture or the African ideals of the Swedish administrators. Whether implementation of these imposed notions adversely affected images made by other trainees to the printmaking workshops is debatable, because the trainees themselves added to the confusion regarding an understanding of culture.

Whichever the case, Edith and Sandile can be considered to be the successes of the Project. This had less to do with the Project's promoted concept of culture than with these individuals' search for meaning and identity regardless of prescribed subject matter and style.

CONCLUSION

In January 1998, the relaunch of the Dakawa Art and Craft Project, this time as the Dakawa Art and Craft Community Centre, took place in Grahamstown. With a grant-in-aid from the Eastern Cape Provincial Arts and Crafts Council, the newly opened Centre set out to redress imbalances in arts and culture development in the Eastern Cape, as well as in the national crafts arena. While the focus of the new Centre shifted from that of training to production, aimed at creating self-generating business opportunities for entrepreneurs, the implementation of this programme was not an easy task.

Problems facing the relaunched Centre were immediate and complex. These had their roots in the legacy of the earlier Dakawa Project, and were to include contentious issues such as those of cultural ownership, control over means of production, and the culture of entitlement of Grahamstown. With only seven of the estimated forty-eight former trainees to the Dakawa Project, over the years 1992 to 1996, returned, the Centre was faced with the reality of having to break free of the past in order to move forward. Before this could happen, however, inherited problematic issues had to be dealt with.

Thus, those issues, with which this writer has become familiar, led to the retracing of the history of Dakawa. At the outset, this research centred around a broad question, 'What happened at the Dakawa Art and Craft Project that it ended up having to close?' While commonly held reasons for the Project's closure focused on administrative and financial corruption, to this author such speculations seemed inadequate.

Complex polarities between posited reasons for failure on the one hand, and visible indicators of success, were striking. Between 1992 and 1996, the Project saw the emergence of stylistically powerful, and seemingly authentic, printmaking images from

this community-based art and craft project. These visible signs of success, however, were achieved against a backdrop of political, financial and foreign intervention, as well as neglect.

To this writer, questions began to arise: How had these images emerged? Whose reality and aspirations did they represent? How did they reflect the machinations taking place in the boardrooms of the Trust and management committees, far from the desks and printing presses of the workshops and from the artists? What were the reasons for the closure of the Dakawa Art and Craft Project in 1996, and why was so little documented about an initiative with so much potential, in a province with so much to express?

These questions, in turn, led to an investigation of cultural issues which might provide further insight into the dynamics of Dakawa's failures and successes.

In Part One of this thesis, the issues of implementation of cultural ideals was looked at with emphasis on the training which took place at the Project between 1992 and 1994. A brief account of the period following the Swedish administrator's departure in 1994 can be found in Part One. Here, the author picks this thread up again, in order to clarify some issues pertinent to Dakawa's closure.

In July 1994, Malin Sellman, the last of the Swedish administrators to the Project, returned to Sweden. She was replaced by Princess Ngcobo. Princess Ngcobo's ties with the Project had started in 1992 owing to Malin Sellman's reliance on the E.L.C. Rorke's Drift Project, where Princess Ngcobo had worked, for guidance. The E.L.C. Rorke's Drift Centre, also funded by Swedish donors, seemed to offer a solution for future direction at Dakawa. However, individual conceptions of cultural production and significance, were to have a further impact on the developments at the Project between 1994 and 1996.

While Malin Sellman's modus operandi had been one of training through production, her

real intent seemed to have been showcasing. On the one hand, this could be justified by the Project's constant battle for funding. However, the impact of this approach, which resulted in the establishment of idealistic notions of training and success, affected trainees on levels which were never to be resolved.

When Princess Ngcobo took over as Director to the Project, her focus shifted from production to training, as she wanted to rid the Project of its 'tourist' ethos. While this focus on training was needed, its implementation was to pose its own problems. Although South African teachers and administrators had been employed by the Project since 1993, the legacy which the first administrators to the Project had left, resulted in the failure of this focus. Trainees to the Project, who continued to see their positions more in terms of 'jobs' than of learning about the creative act necessary for artistic development, rebelled against both Director and teachers. Disruptive events followed. One such event occurred on the occasion of the graduation of trainees in 1995. Trainees, who had not been paid their salary, decided to strike, rather than attend their graduation.

The poor relations between trainees and the Project, however, was only one of the problems experienced. Relations between the Director, and the Trust, and the teachers, were riddled by problems as well. While trainees were opposed to the Director, because she was of Zulu origin and culture, problems between the teachers and the Director were rooted in the practical implementation of her ideals of culture in the Project's training component. The eventual breakdown in communication between all employed at the Project, became irreversible. This was to have a direct negative impact on the future of the Project.

In 1995, SIDA, in response to the request for further funding for the Project, evaluated the situation. Again, as in 1993, the same issues of problematic approaches to training and Project policy were noted. As the evaluators pointed out, Dakawa had never been able to solve these issues owing to the lack of direction and heavy reliance on Swedish financial

aid. However, underlying these problems were issues of cultural understanding which had set in at the initial establishment of the Project by the ANC DAC and the Swedish administrators. These issues were never taken into account, and, as a result, were carried over to the relaunched Centre in 1998.

From this basis, this author began the process of researching and analysing available data. While a multitude of possible reasons for failure came to the surface, an issue which seemed central to the 'failure', emerged. This issue seemed more feasible than the usual reasons given for the Project's closure, and these related to an understanding of arts and culture development in South Africa, applicable both then and now.

The focus of this thesis, therefore, shifted to the initial years of the establishment of the Project, when these problems took root. While the Dakawa Art and Craft Project was established by the ANC DAC at a crucial time in South Africa's transformation period, with intentions aimed at a broader South African cultural redress, which in itself aimed at 'building the nation', the effect of the misunderstanding of what culture is, what authentic culture refers to, and what cultural identity means, was to undermine the Project's chance of success. In addition, a foreign notion of 'African culture', developed in Europe, and brought by the Swedish administrators to the Project, further complicated these issues. Attempting to foster the creation of the authentic, within a norm relating to that of the ethnic and traditional, caused the pervasive cultural misunderstanding characterising the Project's activities from 1992 to 1996.

The complexity of this issue echoes what Clifford wrote:

Intervening in an interconnected world, one is always, to varying degrees, "inauthentic": caught between cultures, implicated in others. Because discourse in global power systems is elaborated vis-à-vis, a sense of difference or distinctness can never be located solely in the continuity of culture or tradition. Identity is conjunctural, not essential (Clifford,

1988:11).

As the research for this thesis progressed, the author gained better insight into the significance of the Project's history and of the broader narrative which it encompassed. While issues of cultural intervention, and at times, even imposition, determined by the administrators' foreign concept of culture, governed the approaches applied at the Project, similar issues are relevant to the development of arts and culture in South Africa, by South Africans, today.

This became clearer during the research undertaken for this thesis. While the prints produced in the printmaking workshop between 1992 and 1993 provide examples of failed cultural understanding, at the same time, there were prints which are successful examples of the individuals' search for cultural understanding despite the cultural misunderstandings prevailing at the Project. In addition, some prints also began to indicate a relevant approach to an arts and culture direction today.

From this, further questions were raised, most still in need of solutions. If culture is to be used as a tool for development, then what understanding of culture is necessary for this to be successful? Furthermore, for whom is this development meant? The issues which these questions point to, underlie many other arts and culture projects established in South Africa, which receive both foreign, as well as South African, donor funding.

Culture in Tanzania was politically specific, aimed at the visual documentation of a particular time and context. Yet, at the same time, it was also politically unspecific owing to the lack of real contact with social reality in South Africa. Mlama, writing on cultural developments in Tanzania following the Arusha Declaration, notes:

In most cases culture has been seen merely as the use of the cultural tools, especially the arts, to propagate socialist ideology as stipulated by the ruling class. Culture is often

regarded as synonymous with political propaganda. Whereas the majority of the people in these countries [socialist-oriented] may not be as economically exploited as those in capitalist-oriented countries, they are just as excluded from determining what is best for their livelihood (Mlama, 1991:19).

Duncan pointed out that the ANC decided to use culture towards 'nation building', and she pointed out the ANC's reasoning behind this. What was relevant to this research was the misappropriation of this understanding by those involved in the establishment of the Project, and the way in which the misguided understanding informed policy and implementation at the Project. In the process, the social reality of Grahamstown township culture was ignored. As Grundy noted, the issue of art and politics is more complex than was assumed at the Project:

It is a cliché to say that art is political. This holds true whether art is created and controlled by the state, its supporters or its opponents, or by individuals who think of themselves as politically neutral. As a form of expression art has the capacity to justify or challenge the legitimacy of a regime. Even when art seems superficially to serve no political intention it is political, in that it contributes to the overall sense of satisfaction and stability, or dulls one's sensibilities and one's awareness of social and political conditions. This is not to say that art is always consciously political or that art cannot also be entertaining, decorative, escapist or frivolous. But even in these capacities one can attribute political effect to the act of expression insofar as it is experienced by the public or segments of it. Of course, creative expression need not affect everyone in precisely the same ways (Grundy, 1993:1).

This raises a fundamental question: Whatever the role of political issues, what effect does development through culture have on the individual? Grundy's assumption of creative expression that 'need not affect everyone in the same way', points to another issue. The majority of trainees employed by the Project between 1992 to 1996 would seem to have

been adversely affected by the foreign notions of development and cultural identity, in that a base for the formation of their own identity was never achieved. For whom, then, was this development aimed?

Thomas and Potter outlined the fundamental question with regard to this:

... 'development' is a goal that virtually everybody believes in – the idea of the 'developed society' has effectively become a synonym for the 'good society'. All definitions of development contain the central notion of a process of change from a less desirable kind of society – in short, the notion of progress. Beyond this, however, lie some basic disagreements over questions such as: Development of what? How is what is desired defined, and by whom? How is progress achieved? What if progress for one group within a society is gained at the expense of other groups? (Allen, T and Thomas, A, 1992:116).

How did the notion of development at the Project come to terms with the actual Grahamstown culture? Was it, as the ANC policy outlined, to be economic before social, or was it the inverse? Issues of identity in the Grahamstown context in fact reflected needs not taken into account by the ANC DAC's or SIDA's policies. For example, it was unrealistic to assume that the Grahamstown township culture was simply traditional, yet this misconception played a significant role in subject matter generation at the Project.

As a means of understanding cultural development, Allen outlined several general approaches that can be taken on this issue. These include the 'generic', the 'expressive', the 'hierarchical', the 'superorganic', the 'holistic', the 'pluralistic' and the 'hegemonic' (344-6). While observing the importance of both anthropologists and sociologists to this field of study, Allen warned that:

...taking culture seriously means avoiding simple determinisms of whatever variety, and accepting the complexity of life...for [culture] is only a tool to get a handle on things.

Moreover, no model, or hypothesis, or theory of social change is worth much if it simply omits most aspects of human behaviour, and makes no reference at all to what people think and feel (346).

Failing to take 'aspects of human behaviour' into cognisance contributed significantly to the administrative collapse and eventual closure of the Project in 1996. However, despite this administrative collapse, the success of the prints produced shows that the Project was not a total failure. These undeniably powerful images reflect the private and social paradoxes of the artists, set against the history of the Project, in black and white. They represent the triumph of art over imposed systems. The Dakawa Project may, over time, be forgotten, but these images will remain as a testament to the struggle of individuals, and the dynamics of the social change affecting them, set within the paradigm of a particular example of foreign cultural intervention.

The reasons for the closure of the Dakawa Art and Craft Project would then seem to lie in the complexities which cultural understanding poses.

The research ends with a final question. When *The Meeting of Two Cultures* (Plate 1 & 28) takes place, should they shake hands and have the same address, or greet each other, shake hands and go their separate ways?

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Cultural Workers: People with political and cultural views which were termed progressive, in contrast to those with conservative, or reactionary views.

Deep Traditional Xhosa Practise: Hammond-Tooke's studies refers to these as held by Bantu living in the rural areas. He outlines the following: rural people and their environment, traditional economic systems, kinship and marriage, growing up in a traditional society, traditional rulers and their realms, law and justice, traditional world-views, which includes witchcraft and sorcery.

Material Culture: Margaret Shaw's definition of 'Material Culture' refers to settlement, transport, the bases of subsistence, dress and ornament, ritual life, music, dancing, toys and games, smoking and snuff-taking, war and weapons, crafts and tools and, exchange and trade. (Hammond-Tooke, 1974:85-131).

Proletcult: A Russian model of revolutionary art with a strong basis of grassroots support.

CHRONOLOGY

SOUTH AFRICA, GENERAL: 1948-1994

- 1948:** The National Party wins the elections and is voted into power. Apartheid, as official political legislation, begins in South Africa.
Grossert develops a curriculum for black arts and crafts in Natal.
- 1950:** The Polly Street Art Centre is established under Cecil Skotnes
- 1960:** The Evangelical Lutheran Church Rorke's Drift School of Art is established in Natal.
The African National Congress(ANC) is banned as a political organisation in South Africa.
- 1963:** The Rivonia Trials are held. Nelson Mandela and other political leaders are imprisoned.
- 1966:** Vorster becomes Prime Minister of South Africa following the assassination of Verwoerd.
- 1970:** The Black Consciousness Movement(BCM) is gaining strength.
- 1971:** The Black People's Convention(BPC) is formed.
The University of Fort Hare establishes a Fine Art department under Estelle Marais.
- 1973:** Widespread strikes by black workers occur. The formation of independent trade unions begins.
- 1975:** Mangosuthu Buthelezi refounds the Zulu cultural organisation known as Inkatha, later to become the Inkatha Freedom Party(IFP). Inkatha, some of whose activities are covertly funded by the South African government, is to clash with the ANC throughout the final years of apartheid.
The former Portuguese colonies of Angola and Mozambique gain independence.
- 1976-7:** On 16 June 1976, Soweto schoolchildren initiate a mass protest, primarily in reaction to the introduction of Afrikaans as the language of instruction in their schools. At least 575 people die as a result of police action in townships.
- 1976-81:** South Africa, following its policy of separate development, grants independence to the scattered territories of the Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda and the Ciskei, terming them 'homelands' and stripping their citizens of South African citizenship. The international community refuses to recognise these territories as independent.
- 1977:** In September, Steve Biko, BCM leader dies in detention. He is the forty-sixth person known to have died in detention that year, and his death is later proved to be the consequence of torture. The United Nations Security Council imposes an embargo on the supply of arms to South Africa. The BCM movement is banned.
- 1978-84:** P.W. Botha is Prime Minister, after Vorster's resignation due to financial scandal. Proclaims 'total onslaught' against the enemies of the apartheid state, including cross-border raids and invasion of Namibia.
- 1978:** The Azanian People's Organisation (AZAPO) is formed.
- 1979:** The Federation of South African Trade Unions is formed. Black trade unions are permitted to register, and gain the right to strike. Waves of strikes, community protests, and student upheavals erupt across the country.
- 1980:** After a decade of warfare, Rhodesia becomes independent and is renamed Zimbabwe.
- 1982:** The Black Local Authorities Act establishes puppet municipal governments, contributing to the conditions of township violence during the decade. The White right-wing Conservative Party, set up under Andries Treurnicht, is established.
- 1983:** Resistance organisations, drawn from a wide spectrum, combine their efforts in a movement known as the United Democratic Front. (UDF)
- 1984:** A new constitution establishes a tricameral parliament of separate houses for whites, Asians, and Coloureds. Asians and Coloureds have limited participation in government; Africans still have no participation. P.W. Botha gains the title of State

- President. Township insurrections provoke increased state brutality. South African Defence Force troops are sent to occupy townships. Anglican Archbishop Desmond Tutu wins the Nobel Peace Prize.
- 1985:** A State of Emergency is declared, instituting emergency powers such as detention without charges and curbs on press reporting. Thousands of detentions are made under emergency laws, which remain in effect until 1990. The foundation of the Congress of South African Trade Unions, (COSATU), becomes an important organisation for resistance among workers involved in heavy industries, such as mining. The government begins to make secret contact with resistance leaders in exile and in prison.
- 1986:** The United States Congress imposes federal economic sanctions against South Africa. The Commonwealth Eminent Persons group recommends sanctions against South Africa. Their visit to South Africa is halted as the South African Defence Force launches cross-border raids. The pass and influx control laws and the Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act are repealed.
- 1986-95:** Violent conflict occurs between ANC supporters and IFP members in KwaZulu-Natal and the Johannesburg area (over 10 000 deaths in this period).
- 1987:** 250 000 mine-workers initiate a three week strike. The Congress of South African Writers (COSAW) is established.
- 1988:** South Africa withdraws from the war against Angola and agrees with the United Nations to initiate the independence process for Namibia (formerly South West Africa). Intensive resistance erupts in KwaNdebele following the move to an independent homeland status. A meeting between the ANC and a group of Afrikaans writers takes place.
- 1989:** F.W. de Klerck becomes president after P.W. Botha suffers a stroke. The ANC presents terms for negotiation to the government (the Harare Declaration).
- 1990:** De Klerck unbans the ANC, the Pan-Africanist Congress (PAC), and the South African Communist Party (SACP), and releases political prisoners, including Nelson Mandela. Namibia becomes independent.
- 1990-91:** A series of apartheid laws are repealed, including the 1913 and 1936 Land Acts, the Group Areas Act, the Population Registration Act, and the Separate Amenities Act. The State of Emergency is revoked and the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA), involving all major political parties, is convened. Widespread violence continues. In October, the Goldstone Commission is established to investigate claims that government organisations are covertly fomenting conflict between the ANC and rival resistance groups.
- 1992:** Whites vote in favour of the negotiation process in a referendum. The Boipatong and Bisho massacres occur. The ANC breaks off negotiations as Inkatha participates in increasing violence.
- 1993:** Negotiations between the ANC and Inkatha resume. An interim constitution is endorsed. In April, Chris Hani, General Secretary of the South African Communist Party, is assassinated by an agent of the South African Conservative Party. Mandela and de Klerck are jointly awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.
- 1994:** On 27 to 30 April, the ANC wins the first nonracial election in South Africa. Nelson Mandela becomes President on 10 May and forms the Government of National Unity. International sanctions against South Africa are lifted. The system of homelands (Transkei and Ciskei) collapse. South Africa rejoins the Commonwealth. The elimination of remaining apartheid structures and institutions begins.

DAKAWA CULTURAL CENTRE, TANZANIA: 1960 - 1990

- 1960:** The ANC is banned in South Africa. Moves to establish the organisation in exile are made.
- 1976:** The Soweto School riots occur.
- 1977:** The Solomon Mahlangu Freedom College(SOMAFCO) is established in Mazimbu, Tanzania. The Centre aims to cater for the thousands of youth fleeing South Africa following the 1976 riots.
- 1982:** The Dakawa Development Centre is established at Dakawa in Tanzania, following the Tanzanian governments granting of land for further ANC exile camps to be established. The Centre is established as result of SOMAFCO college at Mazimbu needing provision of ancillary services for influx of youth from South Africa following the Soweto riots of 1976.
- 1986:** The Dakawa Cultural Centre textile-printing workshop is established under funding from the Swedish International Development Agency(SIDA).
- 1986-88:** Selected trainees are sent for training in textile printing in Sweden and Dar-es-Salaam.
- 1988:** 18 October: The Dakawa Cultural Centre is officially opened as a model for future cultural development in South Africa. Plans for the Cultural Centre include weaving, graphic printmaking, photography, film, dance etc. Only the textile workshop is ever in operation.
- 1990:** In February, the South African Government unbans the ANC. The decision is taken to move the Cultural Centre to South Africa. The Weekly Mail publishes Albie Sachs's speech entitled, 'Preparing Ourselves for Freedom'. The ANC's involvement in the cultural debate in South Africa begins.

DAKAWA ART AND CRAFT PROJECT, GRAHAMSTOWN: 1991 - 1994.

1991:

February & March:

A feasibility study is undertaken in South Africa by Malin Sellman and Tebogo Dithlakanyane (alias Bernard Thulo), both appointed by ANC DAC, in order to find a site for the relocation of the textile, weaving and graphics workshops from Tanzania to South Africa. An extensive tour of the whole of South Africa takes place. Following the consultants' findings, Grahamstown is chosen and approved of by the ANC DAC.

An Interim Committee (IC) comprising a majority of local ANC representatives is established in Grahamstown by the ANC DAC in order to implement further action for the Project's move.

1992:

February:

Dithlakanyane (first member of ANC DAC-appointed Management Committee (MC)) arrives in Grahamstown to arrange for containers from Sweden to be transported to Grahamstown.

A SIDA delegation, including the head of the Cultural Department, Anita Theorell, visits Grahamstown to meet the Interim Committee and see buildings.

29: Sellman and Vusi Khumalo arrive in Grahamstown to start the Project. They meet with the IC.

March:

The first week is spent in consultation between the MC and the IC.

2: A constitution is drafted, stating the aims and objectives of the Project, as compiled by the MC and the IC and accepted by the ANC DAC.

8: Khumalo and Dithlakanyane are requested by the ANC DAC to go to Johannesburg, with the report, for consultation with the ANC DAC.

Sellman remains in Grahamstown and begins measuring buildings, making plans and collecting quotations for basic renovation work.

Two workers are engaged and, together with Sellman, begin cleaning and clearing buildings.

No money is received from the ANC DAC as yet. Sellman uses her own money and money from exhibition sales in Sweden to buy necessary cleaning materials and equipment.

April:

20: Khumalo and Dithlakanyane arrive back in Grahamstown with the ANC DAC's promise for allocation of funds for Project.

25: Ann Giertz and Kristina Anshelm arrive in Grahamstown from Sweden to teach weaving and printmaking respectively. The weaving workshop is funded by the ABF and, the printmaking workshop is funded by the Swedish Artists Against Apartheid group.

27: A crisis MC meeting is held where the decision to recruit more local trainees is taken. Reasons given are: the ANC DAC has withheld funds, therefore more workers are needed to prepare buildings; the ANC DAC will not be able to send exiles to the Project for some time; accommodation problems for exiles will arise if they do arrive; lastly, the need to begin with training to secure any future funding from SIDA.

29: Wally Serote phones Malin and asks for short, medium and long term plans for the Project. He questions as to how the ANC DAC can help the Project.

Reparation work continues.

May:

5: A meeting is held by the MC and the IC to discuss Wally's questions. A decision is taken that the ANC DAC must allow the Project's administrators to decide how the money should be used. Short, medium and long term plans are worked out, a budget is compiled and sent to the ANC DAC. The ANC DAC puts through the first payment of funds (R150 000.00) to the Project. (The MC had asked for this money in March.) A decision is taken that the ANC DAC can help the

Project by assisting in the promotion of the ANC DAC's arts and culture ideals; suggesting names for a Trust and giving access to the ANC DAC's Apple Mac Computer.

25: Containers from Tanzania arrive at the Project.

24 hour security, consisting of two men with radio control is engaged. An insurance contract to the value of R1 million is signed for the contents of the containers.

Khumalo, Anshelm and Giertz go to Rorke's Drift on a study visit aimed at finding out how the Centre operated.

Application forms for recruitment are issued to organisations in Grahamstown. These include SACHED, FAMSA, Albany Council of Churches, ANC Women's League, the Masifunde Project, GADRA, SHACOP. The ANC, PAC and AZAPO are approached, but there are no applicants from these organisations.

June:

10: 40 applicants are interviewed for the 13 posts advertised as available at the Project. (4 in Graphics and Textile, 5 in Weaving)

12: At a MC meeting, concern is expressed over the fact that 'someone' is giving false information regarding the ANC's involvement in the Project. The low number of applicants received are attributed to this.

15, 16: Lena Johannsen of SIDA and Diki Dewar of the ANC DAC arrive at the Project for a visit. An IC meeting is held where the formation of the Trust, and an application for a budget is put forward. Concerns are put forward about the difficulties experienced in getting the Project off the ground with the ANC DAC withholding money, lack of formal structures and channels for negotiations not being in place. The Project is notified that SIDA's support of the ANC DAC will cease. The Project will need to find alternate funding in the future. It is realised that no South African body will provide certification for the present trainees. A decision to form a Trust as soon as possible is taken.

22: 13 Successful applicants are engaged in reparation work for the Project, including building work, unpacking of containers and setting up of workshops.

29: Graphics trainees print their first lino print. Textile trainees have joined the graphic trainees as their equipment does not arrive till October. Weaving trainees begin at same time as graphic trainees.

July:

7: Serote, head of the ANC DAC, visits the Project during the National Arts Festival. An IC meeting is held and a constitution and composition of the Trust is negotiated. Differences of opinion as to a majority ANC representation on the Trust occur. The ownership of buildings is discussed. The ANC wants this ownership. The MC feels that the Project should have ownership, in case something goes wrong for the ANC and the Project loses the buildings.

12: Sellman is nominated by Serote as Director of the Project.

15: Giertz's contract expires. She returns to Sweden. Anshelm agrees to extend her contract until September.

25: The IC is dissolved and induction takes place of Trust members. Lebona Mosia, ANC DAC representative, becomes the chairperson of the Trust. Other members include: Lindile Jela of the Albany Council of Churches, Hilde van Vlaenderen of the ANC Women's League, Charles Wessels of the ANC Eastern Cape Region, Prof. Robert Brooks of the Rhodes University Fine Art Department, Robert Berold of the Power Station Co-operative, Jonathon Berndt of the Community Arts Project in Cape Town, and Princess Ngcobo of the E.L.C. Rorke's Drift School. Natal. Lebona Mosia issues a press release to the Daily Dispatch stating the Project's history.

August:

13 - 16: Mosia and Khumalo leave on a study tour to Rorke's Drift and the African Art Centre in Durban.

13: Sellman is called to discussions in Sweden with SIDA, for funding. SIDA promises support in principle for 1 year, but decided on only a quarter of a year support, until the Trust has drawn up and produced an action, education and renovation plan.

September:

2: Sellman returns from Sweden with a SIDA architect, Thomas Melin, who spends a week at the Project surveying buildings for a SIDA report. He informally evaluates the trainees at the Project and recommends that future considerations such as educational levels be raised. He leaves on 7 September.

11: Cheryl Carolus, overseer of the ANC DAC, arrives for a visit to the Project after negotiations with the National Arts Festival.

17 - 19: A Trust and MC workshop over training is held at Project. A training programme is drawn up. It is decided to keep trainees in training for a further three months because of administrative and financial disruptions at Project and that, until proper establishment of the Project has taken place, only local trainees be employed. It is further decided that exiles will not receive preferential treatment or acceptance to the Project.

20: Giertz returns to the Project and Anshelm returns to Sweden.

30: Plans to make Swedish consultants more permanent as members of staff begin.

October:

7: Plans are made for the official opening of the Project. Walter Sisulu, Deputy President of ANC is invited to open it. It is decided not to advertise the event in the local newspaper. Representatives from the community will be invited by the Trust. Organisations invited include SIDA, the ANC DAC, and other funders of Project. Problems with regards to level of present trainees is noted. It is decided to establish a Youth Outreach Programme, which will help to recruit talented people from the community as well as provide better links with Grahamstown.

16: The Trust meets to discuss the problem of ownership of the buildings.

Matla Trust, an ANC affiliated organisation, has this ownership. The Trust, the MC and SIDA feel that the Project should own the buildings. The Norwegian People's Aid (NPA), is approached for funding to purchase additional buildings for an exhibition hall and shop. Sellman notes that Khumalo is in need of further training in Sweden. It is decided that he will attend Konstfack from September 1993 - September 1994.

21: At a Trust Meeting it is decided that Lebona must speak to the ANC DAC over continuing problems of ownership of buildings. Problems with regards to Dithlakanyane's teaching performance in the graphic printmaking workshop are noted.

November:

3: Dithlakanyane is offered the position of Maintenance Officer.

Sellman issues a press release to an anti-apartheid magazine in London.

Problems with regard to local trainers are noted. The possibility that present trainees could become teachers is suggested. Meanwhile, Sellman contacts Rorke's Drift to ask for teachers.

21: Dithlakanyane officially becomes the Maintenance Officer.

29: The Project sends out application forms and information for the recruitment of new trainees for 1993.

December:

The Project closes for the December vacation.

17: A fax is received from a SIDA consultant who visited the Project on behalf of Konstfack, stating problems she had noted at the Project during her visit in September. Included are observations regarding the lack of teaching plan, poor entrance criteria, and the lack of South African teachers.

1993:

January:

976 Applicants for new positions of trainees received.

7 January, ANC DAC buys the buildings for Project but keeps ownership for ANC.

No further funds from ANC DAC therefore no further reparation work to buildings possible.

10 January: The Project re-opens after the vacation. A Trust meeting is held. Ditlakanyane asks to be both Maintenance Officer and trainee in order to upgrade his skills. This is refused. Lebona is invited by SIDA to Sweden for consultations over future funding of the Project.

28 January: Lebona leaves for Sweden and visits the Norwegian People's Aid (NPA), NORAD, UNESCO, ANC offices and gives an interview to the left-wing newspaper, CLASS STRUGGLE over information of Project. He has consultations with the Swedish Regional Secretariat for South Africa, SIDA, the ANC, Konstfack, the Swedish Training Colleges. SIDA queries the lack of South African teachers and director, as well as sustainability of the Project. An agreement is made that bilateral negotiations between the Project and Sweden should be made for the exchange of teachers and the possibility of Swedish certification for trainees. SIDA agrees to fund the Project for 3 years. The requested 5 years would need Swedish government approval. The Project draws up Trainee contracts, including copyright of work produced at the Project.

February:

1: Giertz returns to the Project from Sweden with a new contract from 1 February - 31 July. Anshelm is to return to the Project in the middle of February on a contract from 15 February - 15 August.

12: An Outreach Programme workshop is held with invited representatives of the local community. The guest speaker is Joe Manana of Dorkay House, another ANC cultural centre in Johannesburg.

13: The 976 applicants are screened and 60 of these applicants are interviewed for positions as trainees in the Project. 22 local trainees are employed by the Project. 8 Outside trainees are accepted; 1 from Tanzania, 1 from the Methodist Church in Dundee, 1 from Windhoek, 1 from Rorke's Drift, others as individuals not representing organisations. The Project now has 45 trainees. The first phase of training is proposed to start from 8 March - 6 August.

March:

8: Phase 1 of the training programme begins.

10: Two trainees from the disbanded Dakawa Cultural Centre in Tanzania apply to the Project for acceptance: Mariana Pinny and Ephraim Ramodike. Although the Project had stated in 1992 that they would not be giving exiles preference, the ANC insists that the Project accept them. Although trained with Khumalo in textile printing in Tanzania and Sweden, they are accepted as trainees to the Project in May. Pinny eventually moving into the position of co-ordinator, when no textile teacher becomes available in December 1993.

17: Mosia meets with the ANC DAC over the ownership of the buildings. No agreement is reached. The ANC DAC notes that the Project should be evaluated by the ANC's Department of Education. Mosia insists on the Project rather being evaluated by SIDA, as it must maintain its International standing. Plans are made for this evaluation to occur in June. The ANC states that SIDA should not dictate to the Project, which is important for the ANC DAC as it enhances the image of the ANC.

20: Ingrid Radmark, the textile teacher from Konstfack in Sweden, arrives at the Project on a contract as consultant from 20 March - 20 May.

April:

7: 2/3 of the budget is received from the NPA and is used to buy an exhibition hall and shop. Plans are made for renovations.

The Festival Committee and community organisations meet with Dakawa over the use of buildings during the Festival, agreeing that it will be to Dakawa's best advantage if the exhibition hall is used for a national exhibition of community art, under the auspices of the South African National Gallery.

Posts for Weaving and Printmaking teachers, and administrative positions are advertised.

13: Applicants are interviewed, but none apply for the position of weaving teacher. The ABF states that present trainees should be taken to Sweden to be trained to fill the teaching positions.

May:

1: Eric Mbatha, an artist trained at Rorke's Drift and working in Soweto, is employed as the graphic Printmaking teacher, but his arrival is delayed for two weeks owing to a car accident.

13: Representatives from the Project attend Chris Hani's funeral. Mosia and Lindile Jela attend the Culture and Development Conference in Johannesburg. While there, they visit the Kathlehong Arts Centre to enquire about curricula. They also visit the FUBA Art Centre. Siphosiphile states that

FUBA has a curricula which the Project can use. General problems with arts and culture curricula are noted.

Mosia and Jela return. At the Trust and MC meeting, the importance for the Project to co-operate both with ANC DAC and the National Arts Initiative until the National Arts Council is formed is noted. The isolation of the Project must be brought to an end.

20: Ingrid Radmark leaves the Project to return to Sweden.

June:

10: Tanya Alyhr arrives at the Project from Konstfack to replace Ingrid as Textile teacher. She is contracted for the period 10 June - 15 September, the need to find a new teacher being urgent, as most sales from the Project are textile related.

20: The SIDA mission appraisers arrive at the Project to begin the evaluation for further funding. Interviews take place with trainees, the Management Committee, the Trust and relevant parties in Grahamstown.

July:

The SIDA evaluation team is still in the process of interviewing Project members. Contact is also made with the Curriculum Development Project (CDP) in Johannesburg.

13: Sellman returns to Sweden for a holiday. Alyhr is put in charge of the teaching programme.

The Artist's Against Apartheid group send containers of donated art to the Project. Plans are made to exhibit these works.

August:

Giertz leaves the Project to return to Sweden.

The SIDA evaluation report is published.

The CDP arrives at the Project for its own evaluation and interview all trainees, the Management and the Trust again. An initial report is published towards the end of the month.

19: SIDA money has not arrived at the Project.

23: Sellman returns to the Project. Contact is made with the CDP to set up dates for the CDP workshops.

September:

Anshelm leaves the Project to return to Sweden.

The CDP negotiates with the Project for a curriculum workshop.

1: Fiona Glencross is employed as the printmaking teacher.

Khumalo leaves for Sweden to continue his studies at the Konstfack Art School.

3: Tanya Alyhr returns to Sweden.

Problems arise concerning the arrangements for the CDP workshop. Negotiations between the Project and the CDP continue.

6: The Rorke's Drift and Tanzanian trainees leave the Project.

The CDP workshop with Project members takes place between 21 - 26 September.

The proposed course is to be ready for implementation by mid-December 1993.

Mbatha's probation period is extended till December 1993 as a result of his drinking problem.

The buildings are finally transferred to the ownership of the Project's Trust by the ANC.

October:

16: The Trust responds to SIDA and the CDP's questions.

It is agreed that the Project has problems, but that they will be relatively easy to work out. It is agreed that a training co-ordinator be employed.

21: Anne Bouwer, who had earlier applied for the weaving teacher position, is asked if she would become the training co-ordinator. She agrees to this.

It is decided that a new training course will begin in January 1994.

28: The CDP report is published. Hilde van Vlaenderen resigns as a Trustee over disagreement with Project operations. Glencross' contract is officially stated as being from September 1993 - March 1994.

The Trust agrees to implement a one year trial period of the CDP curriculum in 1994. It is noted that

trainees who started at the Project in 1992 and 1993, will graduate at the end of 1994. The ABF has offered a scholarship for one weaving trainee to study in Sweden. Sylvia Gora is willing to study in Sweden. She will leave in 1994 for one year's training in weaving in Sweden. The Anne Bryant Gallery in East London requests work from Dakawa for a joint exhibition with the Rorke's Drift Centre in February 1994.

November:

1: Ownership of buildings is transferred to the Project. Bouwer begins position as training co-ordinator.
21-25: A Swedish weaving consultant holds a training workshop for weavers.
Trainee evaluations begin. It is recorded that trainees have not made enough progress to be upgraded to the next salary scale.

December:

10: It is decided that all trainees salaries will be upgraded from the 1st of December.
15: A closing Christmas party takes place. The old trainees go on strike because they receive no bonus pay. A trainee grievance letter is handed to the MC.
17: 8 Trainees are called in for disciplinary hearings. 2 are dismissed.
However, disagreements between the MC and the Trust, over policy concerning this matter, arises.

1994:

January:

10: The Project re-opens.
11: The old trainees approach the MC with regard to their dissatisfaction of lack of bonus pay. Although the Project is in severe financial trouble, the MC agrees to pay the trainees their bonus from 1993.
13: A FAMSA councillor is called to Dakawa to assist trainees with their 'social' problems.
The Project is contacted by Bongi Dhlomo-Moutlau, a representative of the Johannesburg Biennale Committee, who invites the Project to submit work for selection.
14: The Trust send letters to the dismissed trainees stating that they are no longer dismissed. 1 trainee applies to return and is accepted back to the Project. Sellman strongly disapproves of the Trust's disregard for MC policy. It is decided that a new trainee committee needs to be formed.
24: The Swedish weaving consultant returns to implement a further weaving workshop aimed at skills developments. The Project is still unable to find a local weaving teacher.
Posts for South African weaving, textile and graphic printmaking teachers and the Directors post are advertised.

February:

1: A printmaking image is chosen for a Swedish postage stamp.
10: Engen commissions the printmaking workshop for linocut prints.
Charlotte Schaer sends art and culture books from England to the Project.
24: The first interviews for the Director and teachers are held at the Project.
The Triple Trust Business Game is introduced to the trainees. Many trainees do not attend the course. Trainees express their uncertainty over their futures. FAMSA is called in to counsel the trainees. SACHED is asked to run training programmes aimed at improvements in English and mathematics for trainees.
Ramodike resigns as a trainee stating that he does not feel part of the trainee group. He leaves the Project. Later in the year, Pinny leaves the Project to continue her studies in England.

March:

The Project submits work for the Biennale selection in Port Elizabeth.
10: Trainees are registered with ASECA(A Secondary Educational Curriculum for Adults) and SACHED for upliftment of educational standards.
11- 14: Second interviews for advertised posts of teachers and Director are held. Roxandra Dardagan is appointed as the printmaking teacher, Odette Allen as the textile printing teacher and, Princess

Ngcobo, formerly of the Rorke's Drift Art Centre, as the Director. No weaving teacher is appointed.

14: Odette Allen begins at the Project. No job specifications are laid out for her.

17: The Development Management Training Institute(DMTI) visits the Project. They note how the Project lacks basic Management policy. They make suggestions for improvement, however, these are never followed up on.

The Swedish weaving consultant returns for another weaving workshop.

April:

Dardagan begins as the printmaking teacher.

3-5: The head of SIDA visits the Project.

27-30: The Project closes over the election period.

May:

Plans are made for the establishment of the Dakawa Community Youth Programme.

19: Disciplinary procedure meeting is arranged for members of Management and Trust.

20: Concern over lack of training syllabus is expressed by new teachers.

June:

Ngcobo takes up position of Director of the Project.

The Youth Programme is formally established and advertised.

23: Tensions within the workshops, between South African teachers and trainees, first emerge. Trainees complain that they do not 'want to look at books for images, but to use their own ideas'. It was felt that teachers should refrain from giving trainees themes in order to allow the trainees freedom to express themselves. Further tensions between teachers and Director emerge.

July:

1-3: Tensions between teachers and trainees, and between teachers and Director reach a head. Lebona Mosia is called in to negotiate. He attempts to solve the problems by creating new job descriptions for all. Further, noting the racial tensions emerging, he calls for tolerance and understanding. Sellman leaves the Project to return to Sweden.

24: New plans for action are drawn up by Dakawa Management in response to SIDA's conditions and recommendations.

SPEECH BY THE DEPUTY PRESIDENT, COMRADE WALTER SISULU, AT THE HANDING OVER FUNCTION OF THE DAKAWA ART AND CRAFT PROJECT. GRAHAMSTOWN. 17 OCTOBER, 1992.

Master of Ceremonies; distinguished Claes Hammar, Counsellor of the legation of Sweden in South Africa; distinguished Inger Heldal, representative of the Norwegian Foreign Aid Department; Ladies and Gentlemen; Comrades and friends:

I feel very privileged and honoured to be here today on the occasion of handing over Dakawa Art and Craft Project to the community. For the past five years this project was based in Dakawa, Tanzania, where thousands of our people were granted temporary refuge by the government and people of that great land.

The transfer of this project to this corner of our country would have been impossible without the struggles and immense sacrifices of our people and the selfless support of our friends around the globe during the years of exile. That we are able today to hand over this project is testimony of the distance we have covered in our long march to freedom and democracy in South Africa. We are nonetheless acutely aware of the amount of work that remains to be done in our quest for genuine democracy in South Africa.

The presence of our friends here today is an inspiration to us to continue with our struggle until we achieve our cherished freedom. Your participation in this function speaks volumes about your commitment to our cause - a cause which has equally become yours too.

In this regard, Master of Ceremonies, I would like to seize this moment to express on behalf of the ANC and our people in general, our sincere thanks and profound gratitude to the government and people of Sweden for their unflinching support and solidarity with our struggle for freedom over the decades. We would like to single out for special thanks, the Swedish International Development Authority(SIDA), the Stockholm based Artists Against Apartheid and the A.B.F. in Ostergotland.

Our words of praise and thanks are also addressed to the government and people of Norway, who through the Norwegian Foreign Aid Department(NORAD), have also given generously of their expertise and financial resources for the success of this Project. In Xhosa we say: "Nangomso!". Freely translated into English this means that even tomorrow we shall come to you for more assistance.

The Dakawa Art and Craft Project is in its own right, therefore, a monument to the close ties of friendship and solidarity between the peoples of Sweden, Norway, Tanzania and South Africa. It is a symbol of our common hatred for the system of apartheid that stands condemned as a crime against humanity. At the same time this Project represents in microcosm, the triumph of the human spirit over evil and racial oppression.

As we hand over this Project to the independent Trust, we do so in the firm belief and hope that it will prosper and grow

into the type of cultural community centre that we would like to see develop in a post-apartheid South Africa. Besides providing badly needed skills in the arts and crafts, “Dakawa” should epitomise our burning desire to democratise our culture as well.

It is our fervent hope that this Project will contribute towards the reawakening in us of self esteem and the insatiable appetite to succeed even in the face of seemingly insurmountable obstacles. Accordingly, the choice of Grahamstown as the site of this Project could not have been more appropriate. At 85%, the unemployment rate in this city is the highest in South Africa. One can only hope that the location of this Project here will go some way towards alleviating this problem.

Certainly, this is a relatively small Project and thus one would not expect it to provide employment to all in need. Nevertheless, the power of example will contribute towards a situation whereby those affected will give up once and for all times the debilitating feeling of hopelessness. Unemployment and poverty are not natural nor inevitable. They are products of a socio-economic system based on greed, exploitation and injustice- evils that can and must be fought. This is the message that the mere presence of “Dakawa” will convey to the people of Grahamstown and South Africa as a whole.

As we move closer to our goal of liberation, it is becoming all the more evident that rebuilding South Africa into a peaceful and prosperous democracy will demand hard work from all of us. Apartheid mismanagement and corruption have almost decimated the economy of this country. Unilateral privatisation and restructuring of the economy has added to the burdensome load that ordinary South Africans already labour under. As a result, a future democratic government will be hard-pressed to meet the needs of the disadvantaged.

It is in this light therefore, that Projects such as “Dakawa” are of the utmost importance. By setting up community projects such as this one, we are not only economically empowering our people on the ground, but we are also giving meaning and substance to democracy. When people are in charge of their lives and do not have to look up to the central government for hand-outs, then you can safely say that you have in place a strong democracy.

In conclusion, Master of Ceremonies, I would like to thank the organisers of this function for a job well done. Let the spirit of “Dakawa”- the spirit of self reliance and people’s power forever guide us in our work.

I thank you all!

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