CHAPTER TWO

POLITICAL DIS-POSITIONING

2.1 INTRODUCTION

> Politics is at the center of everything we do as architects, which is as it has always been –spatial expressions of the surrounding ideologies, our own, our clients, those hidden imperatives in the architectural brief (Judin 2014:10).

This chapter:

- Interprets the socio-political ideologies that contributed to the early lifetime dispositions (habitus) of our agents.
- Considers socio-political dispositions as a lens through which we can later read the domestic architecture of the Silent Subversives.

2.2 SELECTED LITERATURE

This chapter references secondary sources to investigate the following sub question:

What were the socio-political ideologies that influenced the lifetime dispositions (habitus) of our agents?

Therefore, the literature is categorised into two bases: Political and Social.

2.2.1 Political base

Although, extended pre-colonial and post-1970 chapters are not entirely pertinent to this study, Hermann Giliomee and Bernard Mbenga's New *History of South Africa* (2007) provides us with the most comprehensive historiography that updates the "propagandist" and "distorted" outlooks so prevalent at the birth periods of our cohort. Since the book remedies historic biases during the lifetime of our agents, it is highly appropriate as a political background for this thesis. However, the authors did not attempt "to cover social and cultural history", which is important for this study (Giliomee 2007: x).

For the purposes of including a political historiography that coincides with the lifetime of our generation, this study refers to Daniel Wilhelmus' *The Making of a Nation: A History of the Union of South Africa, 1910-1961* (1969). Then, specifically to contextualise the time focus of this study (1950s to 1960s), Thomas Borstelmann's *Apartheid's Reluctant Uncle* (1993) delivers the most relevant account of the allies' post-world war two aspirations of "freedom" and stance towards the early Cold War, attainment of apartheid and consequences of racial discrimination affecting the dispositions of a young generation. However, by focusing on economics Borstelmann leaves the social repercussions thereof broad.

To align political accounts with local and international social subversive-ness during the agent's early careers, Simon Hall's *1956: The World in Revolt* (2016) redresses the neglect of the early post-war era's contribution to political and economic reforms that lead to counter-culture peaking in the late 1960s. By theming the book as major political revolts, the reading eliminates the importance of counter-cultural literary movements. For this reason, Michael Gardiner's *Time to Talk: Literary Magazines in the Pretoria-Johannesburg Region, 1956 to 1978* bridges the political and cultural gap as an introductory lead to social groupings during apartheid. In the same light, additional literature consulted is Farber's, *The Age of Great Dreams: America in the 1960s* (1994) and Jamison's *Seeds of the Sixties* (1995).

2.2.2   Social base

There is limited literature available with regards the collective childhood dispositions of the generation in question. Of the few sources available, journalist Peter Joyce's *South Africa's Yesterdays* (1981) allows a broad, albeit pictorial, insight. The quoted social narratives of South African post-war contemporaries, is the strength of the source and therefore useful.

Limited Africana that neatly covers the educational years of, unfortunately only the Transvaal agents, is Bot's *The Development of Education in the Transvaal* (1951). To complement any educational shortcomings, Professor Alta Steenkamp's invaluable interviews (2001) relay fragmented memories of educational influences on several of the Pretoria School. Although, Alta Steenkamp's 'Reminiscences: The Pretoria School of Architecture as remembered by early graduates, 1945-1953' in *Image & Text: A Journal for Design* (2003) summarises the interviews effectively, the literature is incomplete with regards proponents from other schools of architecture. To supplement this, Clive Chipkin's *Johannesburg Style: Architecture and Society 1880s-1960s* (1993), and Gilbert Herbert's *Martienssen and the International Style: the modern movement in South African architecture* covers dispositional aspects of at least the Witwatersrand School.

2.3   CHILDHOOD DISPOSITIONS: 1920s to 1930s

2.3.1   Great Depression

> The habitus is the result of a long process of inculcation, beginning in early childhood, which becomes a 'second sense' or a second nature (Bourdieu1993: 5).

This study is interested in a collective of South African agents generally born between the mid-1920s and the early 1930s[1]. Therefore, their childhood was in the Great Depression (1929 to 1939) when industrialized nations of the world, including South Africa, experienced their worst economic downturn.

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[1] See Appendix A

In short: after the unresolved First World War, America's Dawes Plan was in place to inject finance into Germany for war repairs creating the illusion of a boom in the United Sates[2]. However in 1929, the lack of repayments contributed to the crash of the American stock market. America's subsequent withdrawal of war reparation funding caused a deteriorating economic situation in Germany. In 1931, the collapsing of the German banks ushered the minority Nationalist Socialist Party into a majority position (Mallgrave 2005: 306).

For affected governments, the global priority was to introduce social programmes to alleviate dire economic circumstances. So for instance in the USA, Franklin Delano Roosevelt (1882-1945) implemented the New Deal (Fig. 2.1. Left). This social engineering programme aimed at an economic policy that would permit federal control and funding over financial institutions and more importantly over the public's welfare, issues of labour, and low-cost social housing programmes (Mallgrave 2005:317). As far as the welfare of American children affected by the Depression was concerned, Roosevelt put in place the Child Health Recovery Program (CHRP). However, the Secretary of the Interior Ray Lyman Wilbur, was of the opinion that the "Depression could actually be good for children" and that families as result "would be forced to depend upon each other and live a more wholesome home life" (Anon 2004).

Figure 2.1. Left: The New Deal. (https://lucid-being.com/2018/07/11/the-great-depression-and-roosevelts-new-deal-and-the-dust-bowl/). **Right**: Poor white-ism (Giliomee 2007: 281).

Nevertheless, in South Africa where poverty[3] and unemployment was already rampant, the 'capitalist crisis' worsened the situation (Giliomee 2007: 283) (Fig. 2.1. Right). Coinciding with the Great Drought and the Rinderpest viral disease affecting maize crops and sheep exports, the Depression threatened the closure of local commercial banks (Giliomee 2007: 283). In 1932, these adverse factors culminated in the 'Black Year' (Chipkin 1993:85). The economic Depression exacerbated a "structural crisis that effected every community and made all except artisans and the prosperous employers despair for the future" (Giliomee 2007:271). Despite disagreement about status, privileged over African, Indian and coloured communities, Whites consisted of three communities. Giliomee (2007:271-272) explains:

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[2] The architectural manifestation of the American boom was the 'Moderne', 'Art Deco' and 'Jazz Modern' skyscrapers (Curtis1987:223).
[3] See Giliomee (2003:315-320 and 2007:280-281) for background on the term 'poor whites' since the 1890s.

Jews were mainly in the professions and business; English speakers dominated the upper levels of the civil service, the ranks of skilled labour and business; Afrikaners were farmers, lower level civil servants and unskilled labourers.

Several women's organisations put relief schemes in place for the 'poor'. For example, the Dutch Reformed Church (DRC), the Christian Women's associations, *Afrikaanse Christelike Vrouevereniging* (ACVV) and *Suid-Afrikaanse Vroeufederasie* (SAVF) considered the urban poor white issue their welfare, but at the same time these efforts increased the gap between races (Giliomee 2003:343-348). The country's weakened gross domestic product (GDP) caused the necessity for frugal conditions for children, albeit relative to their socio- economic class. Joyce (1981:275) highlights the simple childhood toy improvisations of the time:

> The Depression of the 1930s brought a fresh crop of homemade amusements: 'A woer-woer was a wooden ruler you tied at one end to good strong fishing-line, then you spun it around your head: woer! woer!

> 'My granny made me lappie [rag] dolls with stocking faces – she embroidered the features and crocheted the hair'.

> 'When we had sheep's trotters my mother would boil up the bones for us to play with; we called them dolose ["play-oxen"]. The long bones were horses and cows, the small ones were sheep. Some children harnessed the small bones to the long ones to make wagons complete with spans of oxen'.

> 'You took a wooden cotton-reel and cut V's into its edges with a blade. Through the middle you put a piece of really strong red rubber, pinned on one side with a tack; on the other side you slit the rubber to stick a pencil through. You gave it about twenty twists till the pencil lifted its tail like a scorpion. Then you put it down and it climbed over everything in its way: handkerchiefs, socks, your school cap…Just like a real tank'.
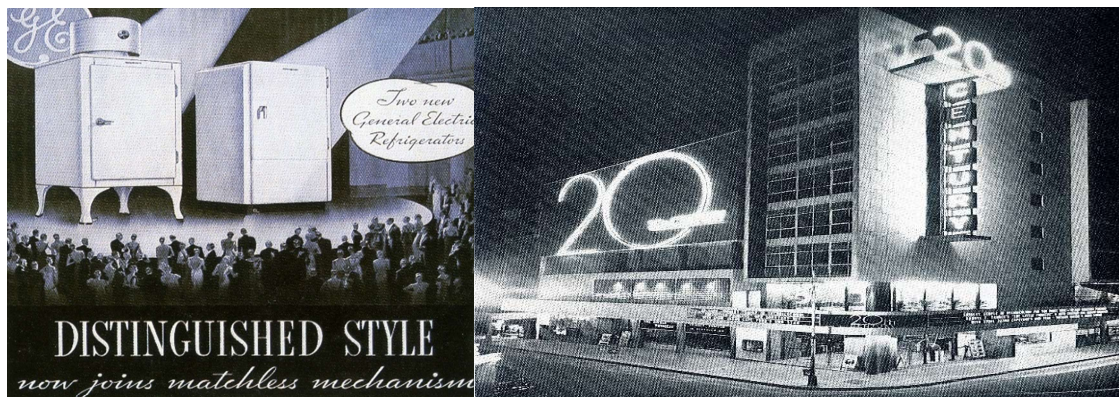
Figure 2.2. Left: General Electric refrigerators using steel stamping from the motor industry, (Sparke 1987: 111) **Right**: Armourplate doors to modernistic 'bioscope', Cowin and Ellis, Johannesburg,1930s (Hartdegen 1988: 206).

Some 1930s children would have been familiar with mass produced household goods such as the 'modernistic' wireless radio and refrigerator (Fig.2.2. Left). Furthermore, films like *King Kong* exposed

some children of the thirties to Art Deco bioscopes (cinema), which in turn screened images of Art Deco Gotham city (Fig.2.2. Right). Chipkin (1993:97) sets the scene:

> There was also a scattering of lower-middle-class café-bioscopes – a peculiar genre where milkshakes, tea and light refreshments were served during performances for errant schoolboys, sleepy tram conductors and clandestine lovers. The name "bioscope" was a distinctive South African term for the cinema, which persisted into the late sixties when its use began to pall.

2.3.2   Segregated groups

Descended from European immigrants, our child agents were a generation of small numbers[4]. In light of preserving a white privileged situation, the government feared that a decreasing white population were socially unable to uphold themselves against a black majority. In order to influence census numbers, they therefore promoted a white influx from the rest of the world (Gilliomee 2003:338). However, the concern was that white immigration was only for the benefit of cheap labour for English speaking capitalists and detrimental to the Afrikaner people. both in numbers and work opportunities. Therefore, the mine, steel industries (Iron and Steel Corporation: ISCOR) and Electricity Supply Commission (ESCOM), boosted employment for the mostly unskilled whites. For the sake of work preservation, the government by 1933 distinguished between white "civilized labour" and black "uncivilized labour" (Gilliomee 2003:341-342).

The bigger issue was in relation to urbanisation. Due to gender imbalances on the Witwatersrand, the Transvaal leader of the National Party (NP), Johannes Gerhardus Strijdom (1893-1958) feared inter-racial sex. Strijdom conveyed that, "his party's responsibility was to keep the white race white" and that, "by compulsory residential segregation and putting a stop to mixed marriages" could ensure poor whites 'live white'. The Slums Act of 1934 allowed the re-housing of whites and re-settling of blacks in peripheral townships. To complicate matters for bilingual families[5], the two white 'races' were split based on language (Giliomee 2003:344-354).

In reaction to unfair segregation, an All-African Convention (AAC) was established. In 1935, the Anglican and Catholic Church leaders joined civil society political groups in Johannesburg. It was particularly the educationist Davidson Don Tengo Jabavu (1885-1959) and the president of the African National Congress and first black South African lawyer (ANC) Pixley Ka Isaka Seme (1881-1951) that drove this association as a voice for African people. Since they too were caught up in the poor economic situation, their *resistance* was silent in the form of "moderation, prayer and discussions", with no indication of "mass action" by the communists amongst them. The only reaction they received from the white media was '*Naturelle stil*' or natives be quiet (Giliomee 2007: 286-287).

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[4] For further reading on the demographics of the 'Silent Generation', see Carlson, E. 2008. *The Lucky Few: Between the Greatest Generation and the Baby Boom*. (Springer Science + Business Media B.V).
[5] In this context, bilingual means the Afrikaans and English languages.

2.3.3   Universal ideology

In their attempt to deal with the economic crisis, the British Commonwealth decided to abandon the gold standard in 1932 and requested that the South African political parties form a unified government. The leader of the ruling National Party (NP) James Barry Munnik Hertzog's (1886-1942) initial refusal, to display independence, worsened the crisis (Giliomee 2007: 284). Yet, for Jan Christian Smuts (1870-1950) leader of the South African Party (SAP), a fusion would ensure 'the great experiment' of his ideas of universality for a "Society of Nations". In 1926, Smuts wrote about this in his book *Holism and Evolution.* Remembering the Boer War, Smuts junior (1952:287-288) citing his father wrote:

> We were left fragments out of which we were to make a whole, and it was the problem of South African statesmen to follow up the ideal in the solution of our political problems. We did so and I think not without some success. Gradually we have not yet really *united* South Africa, we have not yet attained to the unity which was an ideal. There is still too much of the old division and separation in our national elements, but still the effort has been made, and to-day you see in South Africa the biggest problem facing us being resolved along holistic lines.

Supported by the National Press (*Nasionale Pers*) and as editor of the newspaper *Die Burger*, the Afrikaner Nationalist, Daniel François Malan (1874-1959), rejected the fusion on grounds of "imperialism and capitalism". Notwithstanding, the new dispensation brought about a split in Afrikaner opinions: those ten years older than our 'Silent Generation' had professional ideals and were attracted to Hertzog's party; those from their parents 'Lost Generation'[6] were unforgiving about previous struggles for Afrikaner symbolic nationalism (Giliomee 2003:409).

Figure 2.3. Wings symbolizing 'two races'. Herbert Baker's original proposal of the Union Buildings, Pretoria, 1910 (Rencken 1989: 4).

Led by the 'theologian-philosopher' Malan and his Purified National Party (PNP) as official opposition, resisting Afrikaners drove nationalist campaigns. They were concerned with issues of cultural identity, which they felt the United Party was unable to address. Nevertheless, it was necessary for South Africa to maintain its Commonwealth links in relation to the totalitarian situations in Italy and Germany. Due to

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[6] The 'Lost Generation" was the generation that came of age during World War I. The term was popularised by Ernest Hemingway in his book *A Moveable Feast* (1964).

a significant increase in the gold price for the next forty years, the decision to unite resulted in good economic growth (Giliomee 2003:405-408).

Excellent economic repercussions persuaded Hertzog to leave the gold standard. In 1934, with Smuts as his deputy, Hertzog led a coalition government called the United Party (UP). "It was based on the common acceptance of an independent South Africa, equal language rights, 'civilised labour' and the need for a solution of the 'native question'. However, the 'equality' was restricted for the social well-being of only the Afrikaans and English speaking white communities, of which our child agents were part of (Giliomee 2007: 284). (Fig. 2.3.)

2.3.4 National ideology

Firstly, we need to remember that *Nationalism* is a modern historical concept that is "tied to the development of industrial capitalism" (Vale 2008:48-51). Incongruously, Nationalism was the very principle both our Afrikaner and African nationalists initially disliked in the 1930s[7]. A resurgent Afrikaner nationalist movement drew its dynamism mainly from three sources: the development of Afrikaans as high-culture language, the propagation of a nationalist history and the effort to promote Afrikaans business (Giliomee 2007: 288).

Therefore, for some of our child agents and their families the dispositions surrounding nationalism in the 1930s might have seemed confusing. For the international socialist, on one hand, a nationalist concept "became associated with chauvinist, imperialist, and xenophobic movements of the radical right – the precursors of twentieth-century Italian Fascism and German National Socialism". For some citizens, the flipside was a platform "to gain a broad-based political foothold" (Vale 2008:50-51). To exemplify the latter reasoning, a secretive political platform founded in 1918, the *Afrikaner Broederbond* ("Band of Brothers"), consisting of mainly farmers, educationists and elite Afrikaners, highlighted nationalist divisions of race and language with its fanatic stance that the "Afrikaner Broederbond shall rule South Africa" (Giliomee 2003:420, Borstellmann 1993:34).

In 1933, Adolf Hitler (1889-1945) the newly appointed chancellor of the Nationalist Socialist Party (*Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei:* NSDAP), introduced public works programs to alleviate the German humiliated situation. This included a Federal controlled Auto (mobile) track or motorway (*Bundesautobahn:* BAB) network, a "peoples car" (Volkswagen: VW) and a secret state police force (*Geheime Staatspolizei*: GS) (Mallgrave 2005:306) (Fig. 2.4. Left). Furthermore, the Party indoctrinated German children locally and abroad. Fox (1998:11) explains the extent of the situation for his father, the Silent Subversive Revel Fox:

> He [Revel Fox] was also exposed to German colonial life of the 1930s: there were clandestine
> meetings of the Nazi youth in the desert; during festivals and on public holidays the town was

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[7] The term 'nationalism' itself is a late eighteenth-century coinage. During 19th century in European links between state and individuals multiplied shifting toward secular rule and electoral representation. Hobsbawm observed this democratization of politics. One could argue that this definition from Ernest Gellner's book Nations and Nationalism, did not describe our Afrikaner nationalist minorities goals, but that "concepts such as nation and nationalism" are "even more difficult to define" in the first place. Moreover, its theories required not only "political legitimacy" but also, a "congruence with the national unit" (Vale 2008:48-51).

festooned with swastikas; and future Luftwaffe pilots trained in gliders on the dunes. Fox would visit Kolmanskop by bicycle and spend holidays with German friends on karakul farms in the Namib near Aus.

Sympathetic to Nazi ideology, the Broderbund and its cultural branch, the Federation of Afrikaans Cultural Associations (*Federasie van Afrikaanse Kultuurvereniginge*: FAK) organized by Dr Piet Meyer (1909-1984), set out to influence Afrikaans culture (including architecture), economics and education[8]. In 1934, the Economic 'Peoples' Congress *(Ekonomiese Volkskongres)*, actively contributed as a platform for the establishment of the 'peoples bank' (Volkskas) in Pretoria (Fig. 2.4. Right). These platforms provided the Dutch editor-in-chief of the nationalist newspaper *Die Transvaler* in Johannesburg, Dr. Hendrik Frensch Verwoerd (1901-1966) an opportunity from which to relay his "contentious and erroneous" speeches regarding "discrimination in favour of the white poor" (Giliomee 2003: 351-352).

Figure 2.4. Left: "Dictatorial kitsch" (Sparke 1987:101). **Right**: Sanlam and Volkskas (Gilliomee 2007:291)

2.4   TEEN-AGE DISPOSITIONS 1930s to 1940s

2.4.1   World War 2

Historians and social critics differ on the specifics of the timeline, but most cultural observers agree that the strange and fascinating creature known as the …teenager – as we understand the species – came into being sometime in the early 1940s. This is not to say that for millennia human beings had somehow passed from childhood to adulthood without enduring the squalls of adolescence. But the modern notion of the teen years as a recognized, quantifiable life stage, complete with own fashions, behaviour, vernacular and arcane rituals, simply did not exist until the post-Depression era (Cosgrove 2013).

When our Silent Generation were approximately fifteen years old and perhaps too young to be soldiers, they 'saw', in 1939, the Second World War break out in Europe. Historians have written much about the

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[8] See Giliomee (2003:416) for an account about the nationalist intellectuals Nico Diederichs and Piet Meyer who after studying in Germany pushed nationalist ideology sympathetic to Nazism.

war during the middle of the 1940s, but what is of interest for this study, are briefly the ideologies of the two sides and scholarly disposal on our teenage agents.

The one side: the Axis powers (Rome-Berlin-Tokyo) were interested in growing their nations on racial grounds of superiority challenging the hegemony of the West. The dominant Allies, Britain and the United States, on the other hand "declared their aims to be freedom, democracy, and human rights". This ideology they had hoped to impose on the entire world yet their own issues of colonizing and civil rights were unresolved. Therefore, the already divided South African had mixed opinions as to which side to choose (Borstellmann 1993:12, 33).

The most noticeable split now was in the United Party leadership concerning the Allied aims and neutral autonomy from the British Commonwealth. Based on an obligation to resist Hitler for the freedom of the entire human race, the mostly English and moderate Afrikaner vote in parliament favoured Smut's stance of joining the war (Giliomee 2003:439). In his defeat, Hertzog left the fusion for his official opposition the new *Herenigde Nasionale Party* (Reconstituted National Party), which leaned towards Hitler's ideas of a pure *volk*. The Afrikaner nationalists amalgamated to oppose the United Party, Western liberalism and the allied Soviet Union's communism (Borstellmann 1993: 33-34).

Motivated by the service wage, poor Afrikaners supported by black recruits (Native Military Corps) from poor rural areas, made up a large number of the voluntary army (Fig. 2.5. Left). Not only had the war exposed the black non-combatants to countries beyond the Union's borders but also their support raised local and international awareness for a "cause of freedom, democracy, and human decency" that the Allies professed (Borstellmann 1993:22-23).

Figure 2.5. Left: Black drivers in the Second World War (Giliomee 2007: 296). **Middle:** Bob Cole Bowen (Cole Bowen 1957: Frontispiece. **Right:** Rex Martienssen (Chipkin 1993: 163).

Most wounded South Africans from the infantry division based at Voortrekkerhoogte in Pretoria, surrendered at Tobruk. Thereafter, they defeated the German corps at El Alamein allowing entry into Rome (Giliomee 2007:295). For example, the Troop Commander of the Fourth South African Armoured Division Robert Edward Cole Bowen (1904-1976) (Fig.2.5. Middle) lost his leg in North Africa. He would return to South Africa to qualify as an architect and teach some of our Silent Subversives at the Pretoria

School of Architecture (Steenkamp 2003:4-5). Another, but different situated example related to war enlistment and lecturing at the Witwatersrand School of Architecture, was Second Lieutenant Rex Distin Martienssen (1905-1942) (Fig.2.5.Right). He died of an illness at the South African Military Hospital, Voortrekkerhoogte while on an Air Force Regimental Officer's course[9] (Herbert 1975:245). Both these 'GI Generation' recruits influenced, in some way or other, the architectural education of our Silent Subversives.

On the South African home front, the war changed circumstances for our agents and their families. Due to the war measures act, civilians were restricted in their purchasing of petrol, consumer items, building products (Joyce 1989:306). Despite a curb on private house construction, Slums Act and pass laws, the new Industrial Development Corporation stimulated labour for all races resulting in even more urbanised inter-racial shantytowns (Giliomee 2007:296). Describing the war situation from Europe, the Silent Subversive Sutton (2015:9) recounts:

> The family moving to England before the outbreak of Second World War because that was where the best schools for the deaf were…My father re-joined the RAF and my mother drove an ambulance during the London Blitz. We had all came together on school holidays an in spite of food rationing and bombers overhead, we had a wonderful time wherever my father was stationed with his squadron…The castles, grand country houses, delightful villages, gothic cathedrals we visited stirred my interest in architecture.

2.4.2 Pragmatic intellectuals

In order to escape fascist and Nazi ideologies, the expatriate American "intelligentsia" returned to the USA. Back in the "intellectual wasteland" of the United States, these "movement intellectuals" synthesised an earlier American academic tradition of pragmatist populist philosophies with the social ideologies they had imported from Europe. During the depression, this quest required a reunification with the populace to become "distinctive cognitive praxis" within the government's public works programmes (Jamison 1995:7-8).

As a model for South Africa, Roosevelt's new deal provided jobs for the now unemployed engineers and scientists of rational industrialization. The "intellectual worker" which included ethnic minorities, socialist and communists replaced the mass production of Fordism as a "new cultural hero". Intellectuals and masses, right and left wings were synthesised. New forms of radio and movie communications facilitated a "radical, even revolutionary transformation" for the purpose of social improvement (Jamison 1995:8-11).

> As with many, If not all, social movements, what was central to the movement of the 1930s was what we have called "cognitive praxis", the active relations to science, to technology, to nature, and to society that were articulated and practiced, often in innovative organizational forms" (Jamison 1995:10).

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[9] "By temperament Martienssen was a-political…he was appalled by the wastefulness of war…he was convinced that in becoming an officer he was filling a real need, and would play a useful role…he succumbed to his long-standing fascination with things mechanical – particularly aeroplanes – and chose the Air Force" (Herbert 1975-245).

Although, academics globally "were becoming more scientific and activist in their approach to social ills" the situation was slightly different in South Africa. Giliomee (2003:345) cites Lord Hailey's observation: "South Africa regards itself as USA in the making". Notwithstanding, the international myth of 'Poor Whiteism' reasoned their poverty to the pleasant South African climate, or their "intellectually backward" genetics. Alternatively, the *National Geographic* magazine and the American Film Industry would portray an image of whites as "big-game hunters" with dark skinned people as their "obedient, childlike servant" or "a practically native savage bent on cannibalism" (Borstelmann 1993: 8-9).

In the local magazine *De Huisgenoot*, or 'the people's university', the language poet and writer Nicolaas Petrus van Wyk Louw (1906-1970) defended the image of white Afrikaners (Fig. 2.6. Left). He attempted to debunk the myth of intellectual backwardness. Therein he acknowledges the urbanised white intellectual as on par with European counterparts with regards "class divisions". Therefore the aim for the Afrikaner, Louw emphasised, was to create own interpretations of "intellectual and cultural life". As editor of the *Huisgenoot,* the linguist Professor Johannes Jacobus Smith (1883-1949) did much in "reaching one-fifth of Afrikaner families" through book reviews and short tales (*kort verhale*).This reinforced the Afrikaner intellectual debate and political positioning (Giliomee 2003:429-430).
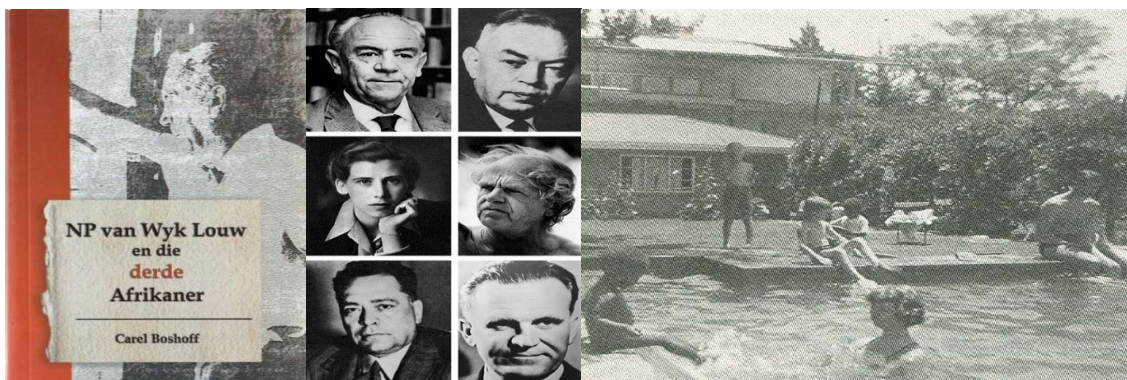
Figure 2.6. Left: Cover of Carel Boshoff's, *NP van Wyk Louw en die derde Afrikaner*, 2014 (https://www.npvanwyklouw.org.za/np-van-wyk-louw-en-die-derde-afrikaner/). **Middle:** Afrikaans language poets known as Die Dertigers or 'Writers of the thirties'. (https://www.namibiana.de/namibia-information/lexikon/begriff/die-dertigers-digter.html). Right: Sunday at Bram Fisher's 'Fringe Country' pool. (Gevisser 2014: 120).

Irrespective of the same national cause and rejection of "liberalism", the Afrikaner intelligentsia differed between the "provincialism" of the north (Transvaal) and the south (Western Cape). As noted in their newspaper *Die Burger* and their local insurance company *Sanlam,* the former had dealt with the unforgettable Anglo-Boer war loss and "mining capitalism", while the latter "Cape Town-Stellenbosch-Paarl triangle" was more familiar with "English financial and commercial capitalism" (Giliomee 2003:375,418). Independently, an intellectual Afrikaner group known as the *Dertigers* (Generation of the Thirties), "did not concentrate on the local and typical", but rather on "universal themes" suited to Cape thinking (Giliomee 2003:429) (Fig. 2.6. Middle).

In contrast to America's ignorant stance of the savage cannibal, were the urbanized youth wing of the South African Native National Congress (SANNC) and their membership of The Communist Party. They

were a small group of "African bourgeoisie" that while preserving their pre-eminent position, were dedicated to restraining the progressing suppression of South Africa blacks. Despite the Riotous Assemblies Act of 1932, they had risen in reputation due to their sympathetic stance of communism and contact with "white radicals" (Borstelmann 1993: 31-32).

Such a 'radical' communist[10] worth mentioning was the Afrikaner lawyer Abraham Fischer (1908-1975). For Fischer communists historically were not colour-prejudiced and their socialist system for "the eventual brotherhood of all men" was therefore appropriate for the South African migrant and unemployment question which the capitalist system was not addressing (Giliomee 2003:339). Chipkin (2008:376-377, 1993:210) describes the Fisher house in Oaklands, designed by Norman Eaton (1938) as a place of meeting for left wingers such as the author Nadine Gordimer, communist writers from *The Gaurdian* newspaper and black journalists from the *Drum* magazine[11] (Fig. 26. Right).

2.4.3   High School

> After the war there was a time of hope. It seemed then that the values which South Africans had helped fight for would begin to thrive here and Black people would be freed from discrimination. Surely our men who had gone 'up north', fought in the desert and in Italy, the men who had spent years in prisoner of war camps, would not tolerate anything less? Was not the defeat of fascism the triumph of democracy and humanism? So it seemed when I was in high school (Goldblatt 1998:7).

Our agents attended high school during the war period (1939-1945). In order for us to understand the dispositions of their secondary education, it is necessary to investigate the educational policies and types of schools that were in place by then. Since the 1900s the numbers of white pupils in the Cape had grown considerably, yet by 1910 the majority were not being educated. By increasing the budget for schooling, the Union of South Africa managed by 1930 to increase the number of schools and training colleges considerably. By the time, our agents were matriculating "South Africa's system of education – for all races – was probably more advanced than that of any other African country" (Joyce 1981:41).

To confirm the educational development in the Transvaal, Mr. A.K.Bot presented a brochure for the Van Riebeeck celebrations of 1952. Bot's illustrated account, based on his book *A Century of Education of the Transvaal*, which he exhibited at the 1936 Empire Exhibition, comprehensively traces simple teaching from 1836 during the Great Trek to the language medium debates of the Transvaal up to 1951. Of interest for this study is the description of the Sate Model School in Pretoria for preparing white male student teachers (Fig. 2.7. Left). For example, the later architects Gerhard Moerdijk and Gordon Leith along with their artist friend Hendrik Pierneef attended the Sate Gymnasium in Pretoria. The sculptor

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[10] Initially a Bloemfontein student nationalist in the 1920s, he had an affinity with the Communist Party due to both "personal contact" and as Rhodes Scholar in 1932.
[11] The magazine *The Classic*, named after a shebeen at the back of *The Classic Laundry* in central Johannesburg. Derived directly from journalism of the 1950s *Drum* magazine (Gardiner 2002:8).

Anton van Wouw taught 'Drawing and Modelling' and the artist Frans Oerder taught 'Painting' (Fisher 1998:127). Bot (1951:28) elaborates:

> Instruction was given in music, drawing, woodwork and gymnastics, as well as the usual school, subjects; there was a good library; sport was enthusiastically taken up; in a word, the school came as near to the ideal as was possible in those times.
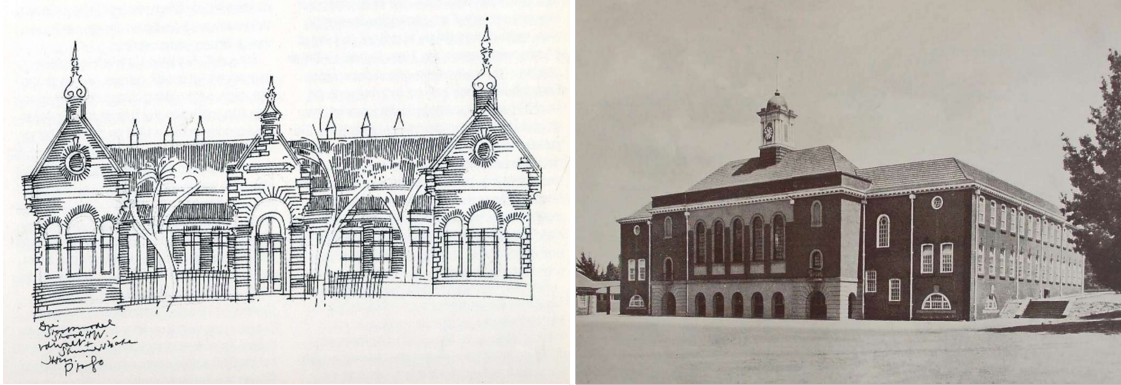
Figure 2.7. Left: Staats Model School, Sytze Wierda, Pretoria, 1895 (Meiring 1980: 47). **Right:** School complex designed in the Edwardian spirit by Gordon Leith in 1908. This is one of the six so-called Milner schools established in the Transvaal. 1900-1909 (http://www.heritageregister.org.za/node/807)

Other important schools Bot (1951:55-60) mentions, and which our agents attended[12], were Pretoria Boys and Girls High Schools (1902) [13] and the King Edward VII High School (1908-11) in Johannesburg (Fig. 2.7. Right). Sir Herbert Baker designed the former and his protégé Gordon Leith the latter. Of interest is the appointment of Leith, having attended the previously mentioned *Staatmodel* Dutch School (Fisher 1998:127), to design such an English speaking school as King Edward. Nevertheless, Chipkin (1993:58) gives us a hint of the educational approach:

> To the east of St.John's [school] on an adjacent portion of the Houghton Ridge, is an equally large school complex. Like St.John's, it reflects part of the ideology of Empire…This is King Edward VII School, which in its name, architecture and teaching methods is the embodiment of the very spirit of the Edwardian age.

Boer avoidance of English government schools led to the establishment of private schools based on *Christelik Nasionaal Onderwys* (Christian National Education: CNO). Despite these schools receiving funding from Holland, they relied on "self-sacrificing" commando teachers and political leaders that used the CNO "as instrument of political propaganda". Eventually they succumbed to the Smuts Education Act of 1907, which integrated them with the Government schools and thereby contributing to Smut's unity aims (Bot 1951:50-54, 73).

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[12] For instance, Jack van Rensburg and John Claassens attended Pretoria Boys High Scool. Shelagh Nation attended Pretoria Girls High School.
[13] A notable teacher at Pretoria Boys High School was Walter Battiss. See Carman, J. (ed.). *Walter Battiss: gentle anarchist* (2005).

Thereafter and despite language hitches, the Transvaal Department of Education established many new high schools particularly in the country towns. By 1930, English medium at schools lost ground due to a resurgence of Afrikaner nationalism and the founding of Christian National Schools such as Afrikaans Seuns Hoër and Afrikaans Meisies Hoër in Pretoria, which were options for our Afrikaans speaking agents[14].

For non-white education, the Governments of the South African Republics, the Crown Colony Period and the Union would refer to 'Native Education'. However, by 1930 the Department of Native Education raised the issue with regards instruction media. Following the initial 'scientific' research into Bantu language idioms and culture, "Afrikaans in Native Schools came to the forefront" (Bot 1951: 165-166). Nevertheless, the Second World War affected the progress of education for increasing numbers of all races of 'teenage' pupils in South Africa. Bot (1951:117-118) provides insight:

> Temporary replacements had to be found for nearly 400 teachers on military service. The Provincial Stores found it extremely hard to supply the materials needed for daily use in schools, and the provision of some articles had to be terminated. Import problems resulted in a shortage of building materials amongst other things, for the building of schools and hostels, so that essential works had to be delayed…Efforts to gain recruits for the teaching profession met with very little success…The shortage had become chronic..School feeding had now become general.

The desperate war situation necessitated a change in school curriculums and examinations. Moreover, the new Language Ordinance eliminated the choice of language medium and made 'dual-medium' the only option (Bot 1951:117-120). Whether their first or second languages, by the time our agents matriculated, they would be proficient in both English and Afrikaans. However, the memories of the Anglo-Boer war were never entirely eradicated "which periodically bedevilled relations between Afrikaans- and English-speaking South Africans (Joyce 1981:11).

2.4.4   Youth Culture

> The thunder of war in 1914 [and 1945] shattered…complacency, bringing new maturity, bringing irrevocable changes to people and their society…Its aftermath was a new, desperate gaiety. When the war ended, the formality and most of the reserve had disappeared. The music was livelier, attitudes to morals and etiquette had relaxed, and there was greater frankness and sophistication in the pursuit of enjoyment. Grandma was shocked by new courting customs and stared in disbelief at women who dared to smoke in public. We were introduced to peculiar dances and exotic drinks. Yet some things would never change (Joyce 1981:83)

Although, the Great Depression and the Second World War placed a damper on the changed society after the First World War, there was no chance of regression for the industrialised world's youth to the earlier Victorian attitudes. Similar to those after the first war, those returning from the second war had aspirations of the 'freedom' for which they had fought. In addition, service members had sampled "sights, smells and sounds – and the food and drink – of exotic places (Joyce 1981:318). For instance,

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[14] For instance, Jan van Wijk and Alwyn Burger attended the Afrikaans Boys high school.

the service member, Revel Fox believed the exposure to Egypt and Italy during the war, "established his interest in space, gardens, the urban environment and the human condition in built surroundings" (Fox 1998:12).

School going teenagers, who never fought in the war, consumed popular radio shows and film media[15] that painted ideas of the adolescent independent from adults. In 1941, an article in *Popular Science* introduced the word 'teenager' to describe the new youth culture. No longer were dating adolescents chaperoned by adults. Although racial divides continued, certain popular teenage cultural features (for example comics) were common. White English speaking children joined clubs and the Boy and Girl Scouts, while Afrikaners the Voortrekker youth groups (Fig. 2.8. Left). Despite economic limitations, children were encouraged to grow up independently. Trends at high schools exposed the many numbers of pupils to the rhythm of "swing music" (Farber 1994) (Fig. 2.8. Right).
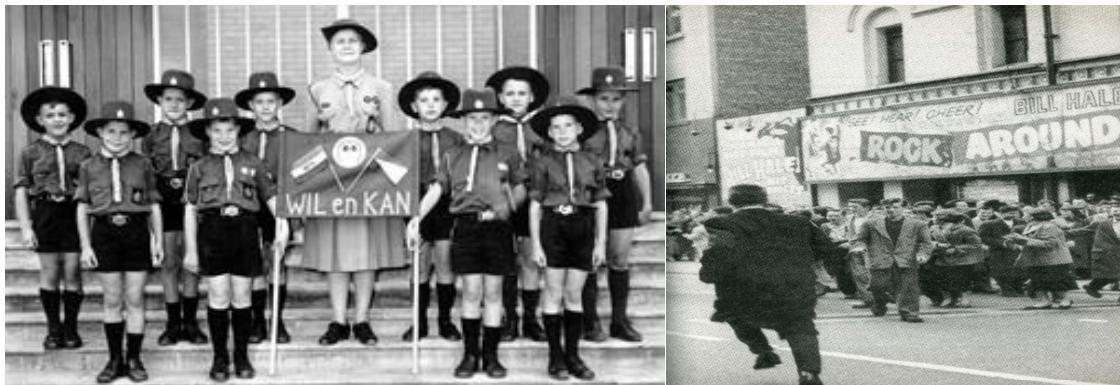
Figure 2.8. Left: *Voortrekker Beweging* as Afrikaner alternative to Boy Scouts. Dr. C.V. Visser was leader from 1940 – 1959 (https://www.sahistory.org.za/dated-event/voortrekker-beweging-afrikaans-youth-movement-founded-bloemfontein-dr-nj-van-der-merwe-f). **Right:** Street dancing teenagers after *Rock Around the Clock*, Gaiety Cinema, Manchester, 1950s (Hall 2016: 193).

2.5   STUDENT DISPOSITIONS: 1940s to 1950s

2.5.1   Economic effects

The end of the war (1945) marked the time that our Silent Subversive agents were entering universities that were expanding along with a growing 'mass society'[16]. In May 1945, shortly after Roosevelt died and Harry S. Truman (1884-1972) took over the presidency, the Nazis signed the 'instrument of surrender' in Berlin. The unconditional aim was to conclude the Second World War in favour of the ephemeral Allied Control Council of the United States, United Kingdom, the Union of Soviet Socialists and the French Republic (Mallgrave 2005:325).

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[15] Films featuring the "Our Gang" kids, and child stars such as Mickey Rooney, Judy Garland, and Shirley Temple depicted an idealized childhood.
[16] See Appendix A.

However, Japan remained the belligerent Axis member. Therefore, in August 1945, the war was only finalised later with the dropping of nuclear bombs legitimised by the Quebec Agreement on the Japanese cities, Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The Belgian Congo supplied the uranium ore from their Katanga Province for the powering of the atomic bombs "ushering in the atomic age" and heightening the role of the physicist (Borstellmann 1993:44-47).

> By 1945, the United States had established itself as the major purchaser of such important South African materials, as manganese, industrial diamonds, platinum and vanadium. But the mineral that would bind most closely the futures of South Africa and the United States throughout the tenure of the Truman administration was the same as in the Belgian Congo: uranium…South Africa had the world's largest undeveloped reserves of uranium ore capable of early commercial development. This news…dramatically raised the value of South Africa on the eve of the Cold War (Borstellmann 1993:50).

As one of the largest markets beyond the USA, the post-war South African Union met the economic criteria for the Truman administration's invested scientific-technical and capitalist expansion abroad. Irrespective of growing racial tensions in the USA and pro-Nazi Afrikaner nationalism in the Union, Truman prioritized the availability of minerals, capitalist economics, scientific culture and most of all anti-communism as common interest to both countries and thereby challenging the Smuts government (Borstellmann 1993:51-52). Notwithstanding, both American and British post-war increasing investment in South Africa motivated by reduced export tariff policies, the wartime measures and a high cost of living were still in place by 1948 (Borstellmann 1993:49). Giliomee (2007:310) relays the sentiments of the Afrikaners in this regard:

> Many Afrikaners felt victimized by the way in which wartime measures had been applied. Rumours were rife of Afrikaners who had been refused promotion merely on the say-so of informers. According to the analysis of the letter columns in the Afrikaans papers, *Die Burger* and *Die Transvaler*, the most salient matter was the belief that the UP government had discriminated against the Afrikaners in the previous eight years; next were food shortages and rationing and the treatment of ex-servicemen. Editorials, by contrast, frequently raised the race question.

Therefore, our agents would have felt the repercussions of wartime restrictions not only in their childhood but also extended into their student years. Their financial situations would have determined whether they enrolled in the part-time diploma course or full-time degree course. Those opting for the latter often changed to the former as finances dictated, also since the content of both courses were the same. The advantage of the diploma course was the option of working for supporting salaries in-etween programmes[17]. However, approximately half the students who enrolled at the same time as our agents did not complete the course and most studied over a long period of time due to limited finances (Steenkamp 2003:3-4, Herbert ?).

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[17] "Students were required to gain practical experience in the fourth year and Eaton was a popular choice as employer"(Steenkamp 2003: 6)

According to Steenkamp (2003:6), those at the Pretoria School managed with the limited availability of draughting instruments and that learning material was initially restricted to Bannister Fletcher's *Comparative History of Architecture* and Sigfried Giedeon's *Space Time and Architecture.* Following an interview with Van Rensburg, Steenkamp (2003:6) tells of how students were overjoyed when Schmikl shared his "consignment of good quality pens" replacing their "old style" expensive ones. Steenkamp (2003:5-6) describes the post-war situation for the Pretoria contingent of Silent Subversives students as follows:

> The character of the Pretoria School of Architecture, according to Shelagh Nation (2003) was greatly influenced by relief from stress following World War II and a tremendous optimism and excitement about the future amongst students. Encumbered by shortages during and after World War II, the students and staff learned to make do with what they had rather with what they would have liked to have.

2.5.2   Scientific education

Due to close links with both the commercial industries and the military during the Second World War, American technical- scientific intelligence challenged the intellectual pragmatists of the 1930s to become the American dominant academic model for the "Western" world, including South Africa. This "military-industrial complex" transformed the previously "intellectual" universities into "research" universities for "an industrialized and bureaucratic kind of knowledge production – so-called Big Science" (Jamison 1995:4-6).

For instance once it had managed to establish its own Chair in Architecture after honouring agreements with the University of the Witwatersrand, the Council of the University of Pretoria changed the Department of Architecture in 1942 from the already mathematical Department of Quantity Surveying to fall under the Faculty of Mathematics and Science (Steenkamp 2003:3) (Fig. 2.9. Left). The developmental history of the University College of Witwatersrand from the "staunch patroness of the arts" Lady Phillips to the hands of Geoffrey Eastcott Pearse (1885-) allying the autonomous Witwatersrand University School of Architecture with the Faculty of Engineering, indicates the evolution of 'cognitive praxis' towards scientific practice (Herbert 1975:9-10) (Fig. 2.9. Right).

> Thus a course was chartered, pragmatic in character, as was perhaps expected in a department whose links with Engineering were then very close; and it was firmly based on the concept of professional training. A curriculum for the degree course covering five years of study was published, whose subjects included mathematics, pure and applied, and the basic sciences; graphics; the nature and strength of materials; theory of structures; building construction; architectural design; history; history of the fine arts; professional practice; and ancillary subjects such as sanitation and hygiene, acoustics, mechanical plant of buildings (Herbert 1975:10).
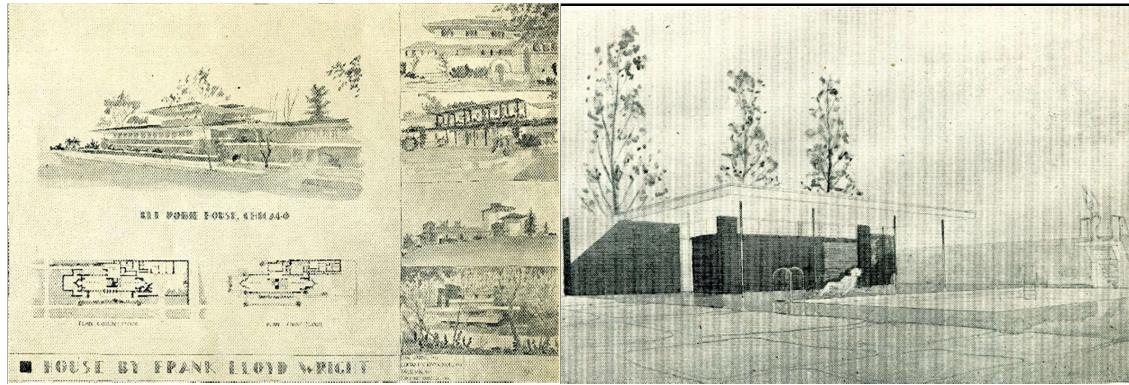
Figure 2.9. Left: 'Evolutionary' historical student study of Frank Lloyd Wright's Robie House. Jack van Rensburg, First Year, University of Pretoria, 1945 (*SAAR* November 1945: 243). **Right:** 'Revolutionary' student project for a private swimming pool, H. Vermeulen, Second Year, University of the Witwatersrand, 1943 (*SAAR* August 1943: 181).

Particularly in post war America, this new cult of scientism brought about an anti-intellectualism and anti-communism. In so doing, even those who were the "partisan intellectuals" (social individuals) of the 1930s now became the expert "white-collar workers" (capitalists) separated from popular culture. Moreover, the United States' desire to dominate the world with a "government of scientism" was apparent and propagated globally through new products, mass education, literature, and science fiction movies. The capitalist hegemonic system required a cultural aspect that would make commercialized science popular "to uphold the broader values of Western Civilization" but primarily for economic growth (Jamison 1995:12-21).

However, in South Africa the ANC presidency of the medical doctor Alfred Bitini Xuma (1883-1962) made socio-economic claims furthering reforms over and above those for 'Western Civilization' made during the war. For instance, blacks attended some white universities but "most black children were not at school by 1948". Impatient with the slow reforms the newly established pro-communist ANC Youth League criticized the ANC for failing to address "the modern intellectual, progressive, independent" young black consciousness (Giliomee 2007:299).

2.5.3   Language policy

> Back in South Africa after the war, after a struggle at matriculating (because of required Afrikaans)
> I was finally accepted at Witwatersrand University. (Sutton 2015:9).

Both the USA and Smuts faced two challenges in South Africa: the growing Afrikaner nationalist *Broederbond* and pro-Nazi *Ossewa-Brandwag* (OB) membership on one hand and the discontent of black South Africans with their deteriorating circumstances on the other hand. The former had managed to make inroads influencing cultural and educational fields by breaking away from the National Union of South African Students (Nusas) in favour of the radical *Afrikaanse Nasionale Studentebond* transforming the bilingual colleges in Pretoria and Bloemfontein to be Afrikaans universities (Giliomee 2003:421, Giliomee 2007:289, 300) (Fig. 2.10. Left).

Interestingly, it was the architect Gerhard Moerdijk (1935-1942), who coinciding with the autonomous Pretoria School of Architecture[18], promoted Afrikaans at the University Council gatherings resulting in "the first Afrikaans Medical Faculty in South Africa" (Steenkamp 2003: 3). According to Fisher (2003:70), the University of Pretoria became diligently associated with Nationalist governmental ambitions and that the "central campus complex of buildings –most bearing the name of (A L) Meiring (1904-1979) - illustrates this development".Notwithstanding, due to the lack of Afrikaans lecturers and Afrikaans architects, the Department of Architecture conducted the modules in English. For one of our Afrikaans agents Daan Kesting, an Afrikaner lecturing in English proved irritating (Steenkamp 2001). Based on interviews with some of our Afrikaans agents[19] Steenkamp (2003:4) relays:

> The three key personalities[20] who shaped the school were English speaking (Stauch's first language was German). Early graduates (fondly) relate their surprise at being taught mainly in English. Most students accepted this and did not make an issue of language.
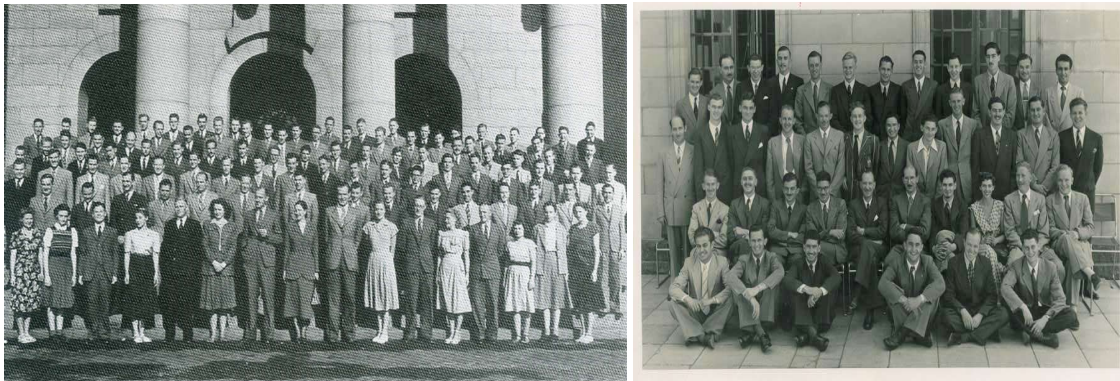
Figure 2.10. Left: 'Afrikaans' Pretoria School, 1949 (Steenkamp 2003: 3). **Right:** 'English' Witwatersrand School, 1950 (https://www.artefacts.co.za/main/Buildings/style_det.php?styleid=299).

We must remember that for most of our agents both the fusion government and the education language policies at high school would have bridged language differences. Due to a language dissimilarity our English-speaking war veteran lecturer, Cole Bowen left the School in 1953 (Steenkamp 2003:8). Nevertheless, the language sentiments may have differed. For instance, an Afrikaans agent Johan de Ridder (Steenkamp 2002) felt strongly opposed to "a profession that was traditionally perceived to be English speaking" and the need "to annotate drawings in English". In subversive-ness, de Ridder translated annotations and specifications into Afrikaans (Steenkamp 2003:4). In contrast, Steenkamp

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[18] Moerdijk's daughter, Irma Moerdijk (now Vermeulen), became one of the first graduates of the school when she obtained a diploma in 1948. Classes commenced [The year the war ended] in 1943 in the extramural building of the University of Pretoria in Vermeulen Street. (Steenkamp 2003: 3)

[19] For instance, Jan van Wijk. Daan Kesting and Johan de Ridder.

[20] Hellmut Stauch, Cole Bowen and Basil South were the most prominent lecturers at the Pretoria School of Architecture during the first decade (Steenkamp 2003: 4)

(2003:4) tells how "most students accepted English lecturers and lectures" as confirmed by Jan van Wijk (2001):

> Lectures were mainly in English, but you spoke Afrikaans to those that could. It did not bother us; we were there to make buildings. We were concerned with how to put a building together, how to place it on a site, how to build for different activities

2.5.4   Petty apartheid

> By reimagining the capacities, scope and entitlements of the state along more 'modern' lines, it became possible in turn to imagine a society in which constructs of race became the all-embracing, ubiquitous basis of the social order fashioned by the state. The apartheid version of a modern state was one which was sufficiently large, powerful and centrally coordinated to keep every race in its 'proper' place, economically, politically, socially and culturally (Posel 1998:238).

Any ideals of South Africa fulfilling the aims of the dominant Allies, Britain and the United States, for freedom, democracy and human rights were finally shattered in the 1948 all-white election with the small majority of Malan's Nationalist Party aligned with Nicolaas Christiaan Havenga's (1882-1957) Afrikaner Party. The victory for Afrikaners was threefold: firstly over Englishness; either that of the British or the South African English-speaking community; secondly over racial integration and thirdly over communism (Giliomee 2007:310 and Borstellmann 1993:83).

By the 1950s, same job competition between blacks and whites had ended. Blacks filled the previous white positions while the whites received improved training to elevate them to superior jobs to alleviate their poverty. Nevertheless, the apartheid campaigns pledged to rescue whites (Giliomee 2003:354). In August 1954, except for Natal, the National Party won the election in all provinces. The United Party defeat was not only obvious in the new circumstances, but also they as opposition "had little or nothing to offer as an alternative to apartheid" (Krüger 1969: 286). Meantime in the United States, the Truman administration rather focused on the crisis of the Cold War and its repercussions in the areas of Europe, Middle East and Asia than the 'third world'. Nevertheless, Washington was aware of the white 'control' in Pretoria, but "acted, in sum, as a reluctant uncle – or godparent – at the baptism of apartheid" (Borstelmann 1993:197).

2.6   CAREER DISPOSITIONS: 1950s to 1960s

2.6.1   Gentle resistance

> Any history of the 1960s must paint the brilliant colors of revolt and rupture, of people desperate to make history even as others fought fiercely to stop them. But if the 1960s seemed to many who lived through them a revolutionary time awash in unanticipated and inexplicable conflict, they are, too, very much the culmination of an era that began with the Great Depression and the New Deal and continued with World War II and its aftermath (Farber 1994:4).

By the mid-1950s, ant-imperialism with its policies of *Divide and Rule* was rife in many African and Asian countries that achieved their independence after the Second World War. The paradox of liberation against national systems is that the liberated "against conquerors, rulers and exploiters" would in turn themselves be a nationalist system enforcing the very obstacles they resented (Vale 2008:51).

> By the mid-1950s…large parts of the world were on the cusp of dramatic change, as simmering social, economic and political tensions and deepening frustration with the post-war order made for a potent mix. Ten years after the victory over Nazi Germany, the ideals fro which the Allied powers had supposedly fought the Second World War were, for many, ringing increasingly hollow…the reluctance of the European powers to fully relinquish their imperial ambitions, 'Communists' use of terror and coercion to establish the so-called 'peoples democracies' in Eastern Europe, and the determination of white supremacists in both the United States and South Africa to maintain systems of racial control, made a mockery of such lofty goals. Among the subjugated, the marginalised and the oppressed, a decade's worth of frustrated hopes and disappointments were ready to erupt (Hall 2016: xiii-xiv).

The United States and South Africa cemented their alliance with the Korean War and their common anti-communist stance. This relationship "led them to a series of agreements in late 1950 that firmly established American support for the apartheid regime" (Borstellman 1993:137). These two countries were in the same boat with regards systems supported by laws and customs of racial segregation. In America the Jim Crow laws that were pro white supremacy spoke the same language of 'separate but equal' of South Africa's apartheid's crystallised laws such as the Group Areas Act (Hall 2016:10-11).

In America, resistance came mainly from the American Communist Party, the Catholic Worker Movement and the "moral and religiously based" civil rights movements headed by Martin Luther King Jr. (1929 -1968) based on the radical theology of Karl Paul Reinhold Niebuhr (1892-1971) and the moral politics of Mahātmā Mohandas Karamchund Gandhi (1869-1948) (Jamison 1995: 180).

In South Africa resistance came from amongst others the war veterans (Torch Commando), the outraged white women organisation (The Black Sash), a resurgent mass organized ANC Youth League, and the nationwide Defiance Campaign based on Gandhi's passive resistant principles of *Satyagraha* (Giliomee 2007: 325-327). Perhaps the best example of a peaceful protest was when twenty thousand women from the Federation of South African Women (FEDSAW) marched in 1956 to present a petition against pass laws to the prime minister at the Union Buildings in Pretoria (Hall 2016:225-234, Giliomee 2007: 330) (Fig. 2.11. Left).

Therefore, the seeds for 'silent subversiveness' were sown. It was particularly in literary movements such as the *Sestigers* (Generation of the Sixties) where we see '"introspective and passive fringe figures" contrasting in mood to the older Afrikaans authors "firm in their convictions and prepared to use violence to subjugate the world to their will and to root out their enemies" (Giliomee 2003:554) (Fig. 2.11. Right). Unlike King, the *Sestigers* had alternative ideas to religion and morals for the purposes of *Volkskritiek* (People's Criticism). Giliomee (2003:554) confirms:

During the early 1960s a new literary movement, known as the Sestigers, or the Generation of the Sixties, embraced secularization, modernity, racial tolerance and sexual freedom, and used modern literary techniques and subject matter to explore these themes.
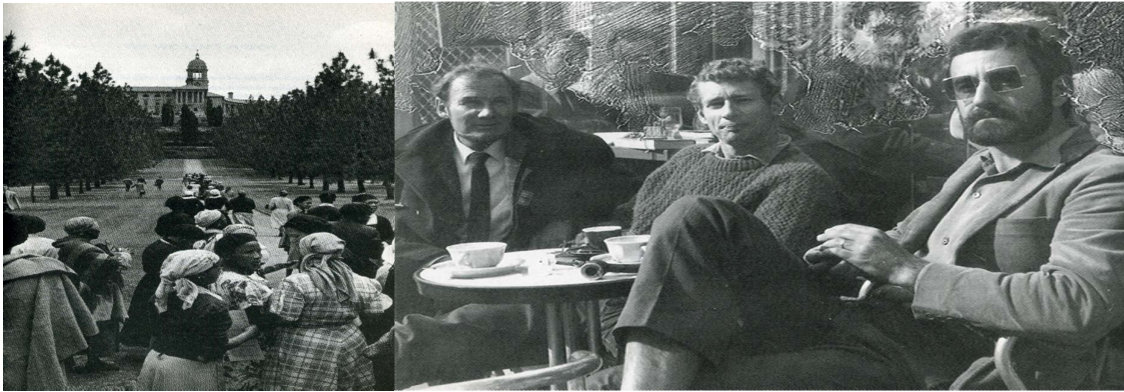
Figure 2.11. Left: Women's march to Union Buildings protesting pass laws, 9 August 1956 (Hall 2016: 223). **Right:** *Sestigers.* Andrè Brink, Breyten Breytenbach and Etienne Le Roux, Paris (Brink 2010: 136).

We have mentioned how the poet Van Wyk Louw defending the intellectual status of the Afrikaner, but he was concerned about the unchanging "narrow vision" of the Afrikaner *volk* and subsequent censorship of the Apartheid government in the zeitgeist of the Sixties (Giliomee 2003:554-555). To express his stance at the risk of censorship, Van Wyk Louw wrote the preface to the *Sestigers* little magazine *Kol* in satire (Gardiner 2002:20). Besides censorship and banning, subversiveness for one even if only by association, was at the risk of being 'named'[21] and thereby being silenced (Gardiner 2002:8). Notwithstanding the risk for our agents to be friends with prominent members of the new group of writers and artists[22], they supported their subversive-ness.

The architectural version of the *Sestigers* that needs mentioning was the radically outspoken young group of architects of the 1950s that included, amongst other Silent Subversives. Alan Lipman, Roy Kantorowich, Jack Barnett and Clive Chipkin. Although they were outspoken, the authorities silenced them. Le Roux (2007:72) credits this small group for their political dissent manifested rather in the *rebus* of what they did not build:

> These architects are not remembered for their designs but for the influence of their political positions on events. They were drawn to opposition politics as a way of achieving conditions of freedom and equality, conditions that would be necessary in order to implement the progressive modern architecture in foreign journals and books, including discreetly acquired copies of *Architektura CCCP*, that inspired them. However, these conditions were not to be met in their working careers, and political events – the Sharpeville Massacre in 1961 and the Treason Trial –

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[21] "In 1963, the year in which 102 South Africans were 'named', including Jack Cope, as editor of *Contrast* prohibited from preparing any material for publication" (Gardiner 2002:8).
[22] For example, Gabriel Fagan and Jack van Rensburg.

led them variously into exile, imprisonment, writing work and practice within the very limited circle
of private clients that shared their ideals.

2.6.2   Violent reactions

Already in the 1950s 'Defiance Campaigns' in the Eastern Cape and later in Germiston led by Gandhi's
son Manilal had met with civil disobedient imprisonment complete with floggings. Thereafter, white
English and black press, photojournalism in *Drum* and financial support from international anti-apartheid
resistance contributed to the opinion taken by the new ANC leaders, Chief Albert John Luthuli (1898-
1967) and Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela (1918-2013) that "civil obedience no longer seemed a practical
option" leading to the revolutionary Freedom Charter (Giliomee 2007:328).

However, due to "disputes over ideology and internal mismanagement", the African Nationalists or Black
Consciousness movement broke away to form the Pan-Africanist Congress (PAC) with the aim of a
"government of Africans, by Africans, for Africans". Regardless of a non-violent PAC countrywide
protest in 21 March 1960, spurred on by Robert Mangaliso Sobukwe (1924-1978) in defiance of pass
laws, nervous police gunshots killed 69 at the Sharpeville police station (Fig. 2.12. Left). Thereafter, for
nine days a mass stay-away of black labour from work caused a plummet in to the Stock Exchange
followed by a government call for a state of emergency, detaining of thousands of people and the
banning of both the ANC and the PAC (Giliomee 2007:334).

By the 1960s, colonisers had granted many African countries their independence, which not only
increased political tensions in South Africa (Gardiner 2002:2) but exposed American society to their own
cultural and racial problems which they could identify in South Africa. One cannot underestimate the
parallel development of African decolonization, American civil rights movements and American support
of white racist authorities in South Africa during the late 1950s and 1960s (Borstelmann 1993:299-201).

These parallel developments motivated the pragmatic British Prime Minister Maurice Harold McMillan
(1894-1986) to acknowledge and accept the "growth of national consciousness" and the call to act
against white hegemony in Africa in his 1960 'winds of change' speech to parliament (Fig. 2.12. Right).
Based on Verwoerd's argument that whites were also 'African' and that withdrawing from the
Commonwealth, as a republic would ensure a unity for all. Verwoerd's 'sleight of hand' presentation of
"apartheid as a form of decolonization" in the form of 'homelands' was confirmed in a 1961 referendum
for a republic (Giliomee 2003: 521-522, Giliomee 2007:336).

Following their dissatisfaction with a republic as expressed through suppressed strikes, the ANC
disillusioned with, in Mandela's words: "futility of passive resistance', and the SA Communist Party
founded the insurgent *Umkhonto weSizwe* (MK) to initially bomb property and train sabotage guerrilla
troops. Gardner (2002:2) writes:

> The following period, from about 1967 to 1978, had a different flavour altogether. After the ruthless
> rooting out and smashing of all forms of organised political opposition within the country to its
> policies by the government,cultural groups carried the burden of political opposition to the
> juggernaut state, followed by the rejection by young people of 'gutter education' in 1976, resulting

in the killing of hundreds and hundreds of young people as well as the movement of thousands of youth into African countries for military training in order to overthrow the apartheid state.
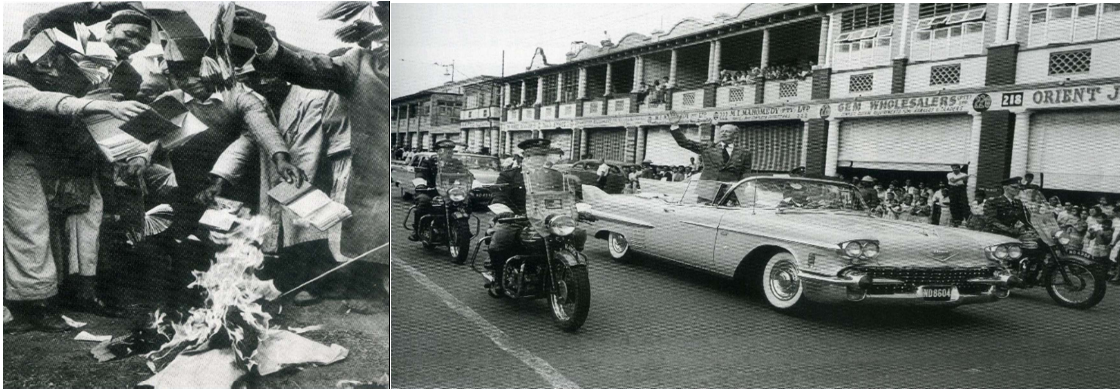
Figure 2.12. Left: Burning passbooks. Sharpeville, 21 March 1960 (Giliomee 2007: 335).   **Right**: Following pro-African Nationalism 'Winds of change' parliamentary speech. British prime minister, Harold MacMillan in an American flashy car in the streets of Durban, 3 February 1960 (Giliomee 2007: 333).

2.6.3   Isolated boom

Due to the tumultuous political dispositions of the beginning of the 1960s, our young practitioner agents experienced brief financial difficulties early in their careers. Whereas their counterparts in the United States were already by 1956 experiencing a post-war boom "driven by consumerism, military spending and technological advancement" with a subsequent rise in living standards (Hall 2016:9). We must however remember that the United States had an invested interest in the uranium in Pelindaba and thereby the Rand currency and that meant support for the violent status quo in South Africa (Borstelmann 1993:198) (Fig. 2.13. Left and right). Moreover and despite South Africa's growing isolation, immense quantities of private capital flowed into the country resulting in a surprise new economic boom. Giliomee (2007:340) highlights the contributing factors:

> During the 1950s the national Party government's conservative macro-economic policy, along with suppression of black labour, laid the foundations for steady growth. Budget surpluses were used to retire debt. The NP dropped its earlier plans to nationalise the mines. Excessive wage demands from white workers were resisted. Investors nevertheless remained wary. The question was whether the state could handle a major black challenge…The government had countered that [black resistance] by imposing strict controls on the repatriation of profits. Foreign firms had little option but to invest in South Africa, and local companies followed suit. All this resulted in a sudden, major economic boom.

Figure 2.13. Left: 'Atoms for Peace' at a science show. 1958 (Lantern December 1958: 138). **Right:** Brian Alan T. Sandrock, *Safari 1* Nuclear Reactor Building, Pelindaba, North West, 1965 (Sandrock 1969: 22).

For our Silent Subversives who had grown up in an economic Depression and World War II rationing, this would have been the first sense of 'good times'. The 1960s American stock market was twenty times higher than 1929 when it crashed making it the "first post-industrial economy" where professionals, administrators and managers ('white collar' workers) were more in numbers than manual labourers ('blue collar' workers) (Hall 2016:9).

Yet in order to maintain foreign investments and strive for an American economic situation, the NP government had to portray, to Western countries a successful 'Bantustan' (self-governing black homelands) strategy. Nevertheless, the homeland vision proved unsuccessful mainly due to more jobs with higher incomes for blacks in the cities than in the reserves. Nevertheless the lowered expenditure on the homelands, limited spending on poor black communities, cheap black labour and good returns on agriculture and mining ensured a rapid growth in the economy during South Africa's 'fabulous years'[23]. Ironically, the American *Time* magazine praised Verwoerd for the soaring "Production, consumption and demand for labour", the very factors that made America a 'superpower' (Giliomee 2007:343).

2.6.4   Silent subversive-ness

In the chaotic 1960s marketplace of new ideas, new products, and new responsibilities, a great many Americans – and not just radical protesters – were challenged to find new rules and understandings by which to live. Americans questioned the rule makers and rule enforcers who formally and informally governed their lives. Specific events in the 1960s – like those associated with the civil rights and liberation movements, the failed war in Vietnam, and the cagotic violence that engulfed America's cities – sprang from America's changing cultural values, national economic and political system, and international role. Such events also intensified many American's doubts about the legitimacy and responsibility of their leaders and the authority and wisdom of their cultural arbiters. And since Americans by the 1960s lived in an interconnected world, increasingly governed by national elites, challenges to the status quo were almost impossible to keep localized or out of

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[23] The *Financial Mail* described the period 1961 to 1966 as the 'fabulous years' (Giliomee 2007:343).

public view. Instead, every new shock and every new outburst ricocheted throughout the national system and became an issue of collective concern. In the 1960s, issues that at one time could have been treated as local or regional or even personal and private became objects of national scrutiny, judged by national standards (Farber 1994:5).

We had noticed earlier, how American 'intelligentsia' returned to the USA to escape totalitarian ideologies of Europe, but at the same how they synthesised their pragmatic populist ideas with the imported social ideologies they brought with them from Europe. However, after World War II, the European cultural focus was firmly on America (Jackson 1994: 73). That too was the case for some of our South African agents like *Monty Sacks who in the 1950s and 1960s was "strongly influenced by developments in North America" (Chipkin 1993:312).

Yet In light of the suburban television, the situation in South Africa differed considerably from America. The complexity of the various cultures and language was the reason the South African Broadcasting Corporation gave for the delay in television consumption. But, as the press argued, the actual reason was for the preservation of Afrikaans culture. These suspicions were sparked by Hertzog's opinion that owning a television was for the uneducated, caused eye-strain and cost too much. Verwoerd reinforced these 'fears' by claiming that television, as a new discovery was too dangerous to import (Joyce 1981:145).

In 1963, the government introduced the Publications Control Board to censor, pressurise and even ban undesirable media or left-wing press, that they considered were a threat to the security and morals of the society (Giliomee 2007:341). These Afrikaner institution canons muffled any free challenges of young investigational writers (Gardiner 2002:12). This included the previously mentioned Sestigers, Gawie Fagan's wife, Gwen Fagan (2016:93) writes:

> During our early years in Cape Town…we did not miss a party with…many artist and other writer friends, all of whom were strongly opposed to the political regime of the day. Together with friends like Bartho Smit, André Brink, Breyten [Breytenbach], Etienne Le Roux and Elsa Joubert, there was always a great deal of heated conversation about racial intolerance and censorship and a general disdain against the arrogant Christian Puritanism and Nationalism preached by the current political and religious leaders.

Often out of fear of detention as imposed by the Terrorism Act, the white middle class society of the 1950s and 1960s imposed "self-censorship and self-inhibition". The Group Areas Act ensured separate amenities for "community development provisions". For example in 1960, blacks were required to have permits to appear or attend Athol Fugard's *King Kong* show at Wits. Similarly, whites were compelled to acquire permits for black townships (Gardiner 2002:9). Notwithstanding, township blacks, subversive to the unyielding orthodoxies of apartheid, "penetrated the parties, living-rooms and beds of a similar white elite in Johannesburg" (Chipkin 1993:210).

> The use of the avant-garde became a form of escapism. Not the legitimate escapism of those under severe oppression, but an escapism that refused to recognise the ruinous price that people had to pay for remaining members of an oppressive elite and the price that those who were not members

of that elite had to pay. This is said with a sharp awareness how damaging it often is for someone to abandon or be abandoned by a culture or society, especially if there are no networks of support available (Gardiner 2002:12)

Figure 2.14. Left: Dancing in a Left Bank Jazz nightclub, Saint Germain des Pres, Paris, 1956. Photo by Ed van Elsken (Deutsch 1957: 8). **Right:** Romantically emulating Le Corbusier. The Silent Subversive Jack van Rensburg's pseudonym for his paintings was Le Mue, late 1950s (Author's private collection).

The biggest anxiety was to be 'named' and be 'read' as 'communists' and thereby "silencing them" (Gardiner 2002:2, 6). Any form of creative resistance was to be done subtly in and therefore many of our Silent Subversives were "as quite as mice" (Pienaar 2017:42). For instance in Pretoria, there was an "underground of writers, painters and creative people" that "regularly organized exhibitions protesting against symbols such as the Voortrekker Monument" (Bagley 1987:211). Similar to the 'Beats' in America[24] and the left bank of Paris[25], the "underlife" of South African artists and writers of all races took place in night and jazz clubs where "the deviants, criminals, drug addicts and sexually promiscuous" escaped from an "antiseptic scientific official culture" (Jamison 1995:19) (Fig. 2.14. Left).

> This was the quintessential environment for the new urban culture that was bubbling up in the post-war world, when the matric boys and girls of Madibane High and other location schools were coming of age – a post-war generation forming the milieu of brilliant talents working against the 'musical uproar' of the jazz bands (Chipkin 1993:208).

For post-war intellectuals, the 1960s was a time of rethinking hegemonic scientism. A "subjectivist mirror image of romantic anti-scientism" (Fig. 2.14. Right) was inspired by alienated sources such as Hannah Arendt's *The Human Condition* (1958), Herbert Marcuse's *Eros and Civilization* (1955), Erich Fromm's *The Sane Society* (1955) and Zen Buddhism. Sixties journalists filtered down American counter-culture themes of "civil rights, student activism, anti-war movement in Vietnam, environmentalism and feminism" in the *Esquire*, *Playboy*, *New Yorker* and *Time* (Jamison 1995:19-20). These and many others of the 'silent generation' were "living examples of intellectual engagement and dissent" imbedding the

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[24] "The Beats were not the first Americans to revolt against literary tradition, nor were they the first to entwine their lives and their art. Like their avant-garde forebears, who experimented in every arena from dress to drugs to politics and sex, the Beats conducted their lives in a state of countercultural experiment" (Watson 1995:6).
[25] See Deutsch, A. 1958. *Love on the Left Bank*. Haarlem: Verenigde Drukkerijen Planeta.

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"seeds" of the late 1960s and 1970s social movements and student protests internationally (Jamison 1995:1-2).

> It was more in their style than in the substance of their opposition that they had helped stimulate the questioning of dominant values and institutional norms that was so much part of 1960s social protest….the formative experience of our generation, were not primarily an outburst of emotional irrational behaviour, reducible to media happenings or political mobilizations. Nor did they represent the total break with previous critical traditions – the older generation – often accused them of being. We see in the 1960s, rather, as a creative period that carried new ideas… (Jamison 1995:2).

2.7   SUBCONCLUSIONS

This chapter has interpreted the dispositions or habitus of the agents against coinciding socio-political ideologies during their early lifetimes. What the investigation has demonstrated is the influence of the frugal conditions experienced during the Great Depression and the Second World War that would have exposed our cohort to the possibility of simple improvisations. Besides dichotomies of language and race, political ideologies would have positioned them between ideas of universality and nationality. Although, they were too young to be soldiers in the war, the dominant allies disseminated the aims of freedom, democracy and human rights to them regardless of the changed political, economic and educational circumstances on the South African home front. These 'progressive' ideals and 'universal themes', particularly those propagated by the USA, became the aspirations for youth culture after the war, which was very different from the conservative Victorian attitudes of their parents. On entering universities, a military-industrial approach exposed them to capitalist economics, scientific culture and most of all anti-communism. Furthermore, the victory of apartheid imposed not only ant-communism, but also language and racial segregation on them.

This chapter has considered the heyday of apartheid as the aftermath lens for reading the socio-political context in which our agents found themselves in their early architectural careers. The examination has revealed the similarities of their situation as South Africans with other parts of the world such as the USA, which too were experiencing frustrating and dramatic social, economic and political changes, which brought the lofty goals of the war into question particularly for the subjugated, marginalized and the oppressed. We noticed that having experienced economic hardships in their early dispositions, the Silent Subversives experienced an economic boom with America being the superpower model. Ironically, we saw that the American counter-culture themes filtered through the media, which influenced our agents' bohemian anti-scientism thinking imbedding seeds of subversiveness. One could conclude that their dispositions were a bridge carrying new ideas between previous critical traditions and the later social movements and protests.

The next chapter weighs up dichotomies revolving around the debates of 'internationalism' and 'regionalism' for the purposes of reading stylistic situations.