

founding a new modern architecture, and now saw that brick was more than a mere aid to regions poor in building-stone. He came to see that, on both aesthetic and structural grounds, it could fulfil the demands of the architecture of the time better than any other building material. By turning to brick, Schinkel showed the way to a modern architecture developed from the direct use of materials, and made brick for public commissions respectable.

John Kirkness, a Scottish immigrant, established himself in Pretoria in 1887 and started his brick-works on the southern side of Muckleneuk Hill. At any one time, the works had a million bricks and half a million decorative elements in production. Buildings as far south as Groote Schuur Hospital in Cape Town and as far north as the Post Office in Harare (then Salisbury) were built of Kirkness bricks and the name was once synonymous with the product. The diversity of bricks produced encouraged the use of prefabricated elements for embellishment and decorative innovation, and contributed greatly to the evolution of the tradition.

Without being fanciful, we might speculate that the material fitted comfortably within a Protestant ethos. It is plain material and it makes for honest expression. It is inexpensive and easy to come by, and its inherent geometry resonates with a severe, unfussy functionalism. In times of frugality it has served the regionalist practitioner well. In the years after the Second World War, over-fired and malformed bricks, which would otherwise have been discarded as useless, were taken up by cash-strapped builders looking to cut costs and the rough-brick, 'clinker' aesthetic even became fashionable.

The full stylistic range of Pretoria's brick architecture is represented on campus: the Agriculture Faculty building of the 1920s is a Cape Dutch revival by James Bowman Dey, a Baker school architect of the Public Works Department; the Weather Bureau building of the 1930s is a Public Works variant of modernism in red-brick by the Bauhaus-trained émigré, W. H. Fleischmann; Moerdyk's Chemistry and Botany buildings of the late 1940s and early '50s were inspired by Dudok and probably influenced by his employment of Dutch draughtsmen after the Second World War; the Theology Faculty of the early 1950s, the first deliberately retrospective styling of a building on campus, is by Burg and Lodge; and the Economic Sciences Faculty building is a postmodern block by Samuel Pauw.

The Department of Physical Education was established in 1946, when post-war shortages were still imposing restrictions on materials. The architects of the Physical Education building were Meiring and Naudé with Burg Lodge and Burg – the number of consulting architects was indicative of the shortage of commissions at the time – and the designer was Basil South.

Initially the brief included a swimming pool and changing-rooms, but these were omitted from the final contract. What was built was a simple, clearly articulated brown-yellow face-brick shed with an iron roof. Corrugated iron was in short supply because of the war, and its use attests to the prestige of the project. Although it has been insensitively altered, the core of the building is still there in all its simplicity: a monopitch roof cantilevered over high northern lighting, easily articulated junctions, standard steel windows. This architecture was almost idiomatic in the Pretoria of the 1950s and '60s, in domestic, commercial and retail structures. It created on an exaggerated scale a homogeneous place of brick-and-iron buildings with rural temperaments, alas now fast disappearing.

South, who studied with the leading lights of the Transvaal Group, became a studio master and teacher at the Pretoria School of Architecture. He did not have his own practice and worked in association with colleagues. The Hillcrest High School, done under the auspices of Vivian Rees-Poole's office, can be attributed to him. He designed stage sets for local repertory companies, and this made him particularly sensitive to the effects of light in architecture. This can be seen in his articulation of façades, modelled for sun control in emulation of South American architects like Niemeyer. Forms, shapes and groupings were handled in accordance with Hambidge's 'Dynamic Symmetry'.<sup>4</sup> South impressed these principles upon receptive students such as Karel Jooste and Gawie Fagan.

Basil South for Meiring and Naudé with Burg Lodge and Burg, Old Physical Education Block, 1948, north elevation and detail of north-east corner.