

Chapter 5: Between complicity and resistance: Assessing the university presses' shifting profiles

As this study has already pointed out, there are a variety of roles and perceptions of the university presses during the apartheid period. Indeed, it could be said that, like any publisher, the university presses have developed particular reputations – accumulated cultural and symbolic capital, to use Bourdieu's terms – as a result of their publishing lists. For instance, they have conferred prestige on their parent universities by publishing the work of distinguished academics and by bringing out award-winning scholarly books. The reputation of both individual titles and authors, and the overall 'brand' of the university press as the result of the accumulation of such titles and authors, have affected the acquisition of cultural distinction. The selection of these titles is influenced by a great many individuals and institutions, including the editorial staff of the press, the members of the Publications Committee or other advisors, and the academics used for the purposes of peer review. But how do these reputations and perceptions stand up to the actual, empirical evidence of the publishing output of the university presses? This chapter will focus on answering this question.

As described in Chapter 4, a debate has emerged in the literature, regarding the role of South African academics during the apartheid period. This debate is linked to the definition of the concept of academic freedom, but also touches on political affiliations and issues. This chapter is a contribution to that debate, as it too examines academic freedom and academic responses to apartheid – using the model of a continuum of intellectual responses, from complicity to resistance – on the basis of empirical evidence, i.e. the actual publishing output or knowledge production of the country's university presses during that period. This perspective, based on real publishing lists, provides a more concrete underpinning to perceptions of the activities of intellectuals and publishers during this era. Moreover, an examination of both knowledge production and intellectual responses brings together the social history and the intellectual history focus of this study, supporting Peter

Burke's argument that "the political history of knowledge may be viewed as a conflict between two principles, transparency versus opacity, the balance of these forces varying with regions and periods" (2007: 532).

In this chapter, attention will focus on the ideological attitudes and values transmitted by scholarly, university publishers as knowledge producers. There are two key elements to the chapter: a content analysis of the publishing lists, using the categories proposed in the continuum developed as a methodological tool for the study; and a profile of the authors who published their work through the university presses, which is a different means of analysing the publishing lists. These analyses are then placed in the context of the gatekeeping practices of the university presses, so as to provide intellectual 'clues' to the inclusion and potential exclusion to access of ideas, ideologies and individuals during a politically repressive era.

5.1 Publishing profiles: A content analysis

We turn now from the origins and missions of the South African university presses to questions of their actual publishing practice. The answers need to be rooted in real evidence, or they run the risk of becoming anecdotal and even inaccurate – and because of the dearth of studies and of available data so far, a number of possible misconceptions have already arisen. This section of the study is thus based on analysis of the publishing lists of the university presses, representing their actual knowledge production.

5.1.1 Methodology

As described in the Methodology section of Chapter 1, a significant step in the methods used in this study was the development of comprehensive bibliographies for the actual publishing lists of the local university presses, for the twentieth century period (up to the year 2000). The study relied on the methods of historical bibliography, which assumes that books themselves are a significant source of information on production, information exchange, and their social context and history.

The compilation of the bibliographies (which may be found on the accompanying CD) has created a new resource for the study and analysis of the university presses from various angles. In this study, the analysis of the titles and the development of a publishing profile was undertaken in order to place their publishing history within a wider historical context. Keeping in mind Murray's (2007: 6) criticism of the "larger failure of quantitative studies of the book to engage in dialogue with the key trends in qualitative humanities research over preceding decades", the study makes a deliberate attempt to contextualise the bibliographies, to analyse them, and to draw out their implications in a wider historical sense. Broad theoretical insights from both book history and political sociology have been called into play, to enhance the qualitative analysis of the bibliographies and the social histories they reveal.

As mentioned in Chapter 1 (Section 1.4), the key method used for engaging with the bibliographies was content analysis. This analysis was performed on the whole sample of publications produced under the auspices of the core university presses (Wits, Natal and Unisa), within a specific period (1960–1990). This produced a total of 2 024 titles for analysis. For the purposes of the content analysis, categories have been limited to those described by the model developed in the previous chapter: the continuum of intellectual responses of academics, based on the classifications of Adam, Hugo and Sanders (see Figures 4.1 and 4.2). Moreover, the content analysis is supplemented by an author profile of the three key presses, Wits, Natal and Unisa. This profile provides further context to the description and categorisation of the content and themes of publications. The focus thus falls on both the texts and their producers, as well as the intermediary channel of the publishers themselves.

Previous content analyses from a political angle have been carried out in just a few areas of South African academic output. For example, Pierre Hugo (1998: 51) examined the journal *Tydskrif vir Geesteswetenskappe* (Journal for Human Sciences), published by the Suid-Afrikaanse Akademie vir Kuns en Wetenskap (South African Academy for Art and Science), and observed an "absence of ... a critique of official race policy" by Afrikaner academics: "no single article or book review contained anything even remotely critical of any aspect of the government's racial policies". In contrast, he notes, a number of articles were in fact

sympathetic to and supportive of apartheid policies. He concludes that “Afrikaner academics cannot (with the partial exception of *Woord en Daad*) point to a significant body of literature that would affirm their allegiance to the ‘politics of truth’ by way of their critiques of official racial policies during the high tide of apartheid” (1998: 51–52).

Van Niekerk’s examination of law journals in South Africa revealed similar results: he concluded that South African law periodicals almost exclusively contained “laudatory, uncritical articles deferring to the judiciary” (quoted in Merrett, 1991: 9). His results revealed just four outspoken articles in respect of the judiciary that were published in the 1970s. The result is an imbalance of power and knowledge: “Consequently, the debate has been heavily tilted toward those wielding power rather than those attempting to keep the powerful in check” (Merrett, 1991: 9).

In the field of geography, Chris Rogerson and S.M. Parnell (1989: 13) found evidence of privatism rather than actual government support, finding that, “throughout much of the 1960s and even early 1970s, many spatial analysts busied themselves with legitimising South Africa’s heinous geography either by pursuing purposeless descriptive meanderings or, more dangerously, through the implicit or explicit endorsement of the language and praxis of apartheid”. However, in contrast to the situation noted above, they also found a “substantial literature of indigenous radical writings which was highly critical of apartheid” (not one of which, if we follow their bibliography’s listings, was published by a local university press). We should thus be cautious of generalising findings from one discipline – or one publisher – to all others.

A different form of content analysis has been conducted by Jonathan Jansen, of the corpus of research produced by a single institution, the University of the Western Cape. Jansen found, contrary to his expectation of what sort of research would be carried out at “the most progressive black university in South Africa”, that “most work was often conservative (working within the apartheid policy framework), sometimes liberal (mildly critical of the moral and discriminatory aspects of apartheid), but seldom radical” (1991: 3). While this finding went contrary to expectations, it fits in with the other content analyses conducted.

As a result, it is important not to approach a content analysis in an overly simplistic way. There are many nuances in terms of how people reacted to apartheid, as well as ambiguities, contradictions and shifts over time. Thus, it is clearly incorrect to equate scholarly publishing in Afrikaans with support for apartheid, or publishing in English with liberal or oppositional publishing. However, it remains true that the general tendencies did run in these directions: the university presses that published more in English (Wits and Natal) did tend to publish more liberal work, while the press that published to a greater extent in Afrikaans (Unisa) did tend to publish more conservative work, overall. Equally, it is overly simplistic to assume that any publication dealing with ‘black’ or ‘white’ issues is concerned with race relations; as will be shown, there was widespread usage of the apartheid race classifications, and not necessarily with any accompanying criticism or otherwise of these categories. This analysis will thus attempt both to sketch broad trends and tendencies, and to point out individual cases that may have stood out from the norm.

Moreover, all of the university presses also fulfilled their role and mission by publishing scholarly work that was entirely apolitical and in no way commented on apartheid – whether positively or negatively. The focus of this content analysis does not dwell on such studies, but such work, the “bread and butter” of the publishing list of any university press, must also be considered from the perspective of how it contributed (or not) to the ideal of a responsible academic. As discussed in Chapter 4, the notion that any scholarly work may be considered divorced from its wider political and social environment is a false one. As a result, for the purposes of this content analysis, such work may be considered apolitical, non-controversial scholarship, and may largely be classified under the category of privatism, or the negotiated code of apparent neutrality.

5.1.2 Publishing profiles

The bibliographies compiled for this study enable us to either verify or challenge perceptions of and beliefs about South African university presses and their publishing histories. One of these perceptions is that the university presses have published very little and thus contributed little to the wider knowledge generation cycle. For instance, Ebewo (2010: 30) states that, “[s]ince its inception in 1922, WUP has been able to publish only 102

titles – barely one volume per year. This paucity of production is equally true for other such presses.” Murray (1997: 166) describes the same publisher as “a small, under-funded operation”, which was “none the less responsible for a series of important publications” although it was “mainly concerned to publish works by members of the Wits staff”. Yet the reality is different: the bibliography now compiled for WUP lists nearly 2 000 individual items (not counting reprints and new editions of previously published work) between 1922 and 2000; this is much more than just a few internal titles and inaugural lectures. Moreover, the bibliographies list around 800 items for Natal University Press, and 750 items for Unisa Press. Even Fort Hare published more than 100 items in its erratic existence. The misperception that the scholarly output was so low may be due to a confusion between titles published and titles still in print, or it may be attributed to the distribution and readership of university press titles.

UNP may come off even worse in terms of perceptions around the quality of publications, if not quantity. Professor C.W. Abbott, while Chairman of the UNP Publications Committee, stated that “over the years it [UNP] had published a few very worthwhile books and some useless ones”, although it seems he believed “the former outweighed the latter” (AP&PC, 1972). The bibliographies do show a number of important works being published by UNP, and quite a large number at that – not just “a few”. In fact, all of the university presses developed decent backlists over the years, in contrast to perceptions in the literature – a 1977 document lists the number of in-print backlist titles at WUP as being 88, and at UNP as being 40, “not counting minor publications such as lectures” (see ‘Memorandum to the AP&PC’, 1977: 10).

In his study of African university presses, Darko-Ampem made some attempt to gauge the extent of publications per year from the university presses he surveyed, with the following conclusions: “[WUP] publishes on average 16 titles per year, has 159 titles in print, and a list ranging from the purely scholarly to the intelligently popular, encompassing history, theatre, physical anthropology, business studies and art” (2003: 128). These numbers are relatively accurate. But, as the bibliographies cited show, the figures cited for Unisa Press are not as accurate, as that press certainly did not publish an average of *68 new titles* a year (these were cited as: 1995 – 69; 1996 – 83; 1997 – 89; 1998 – 56; 1999 – 47) (Darko-Ampem, 2003:

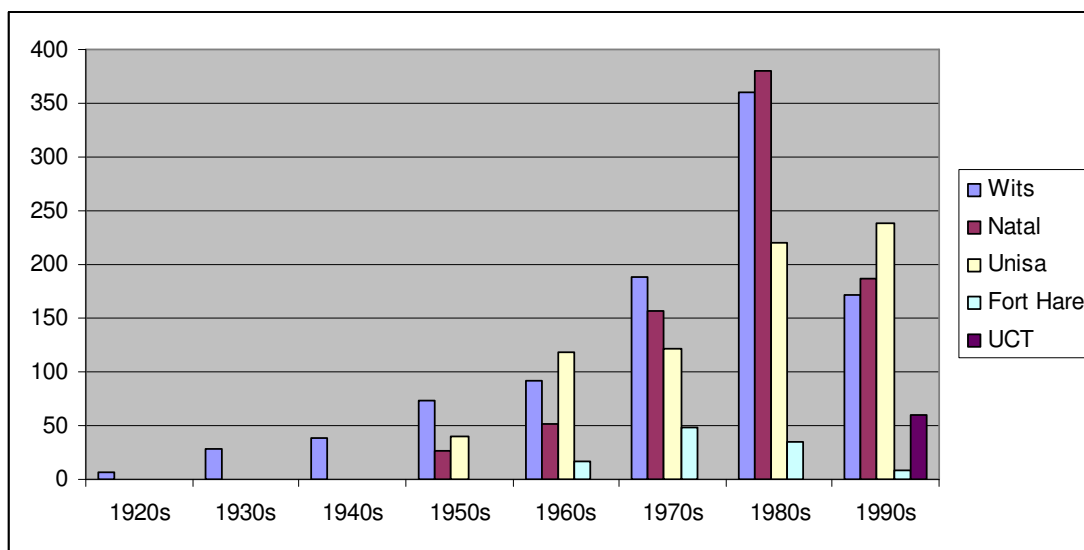
128, 164). The figures provided by Unisa Press probably included all categories of publications produced, including service publications such as readers and casebooks, but these are not original scholarly books and should not be counted as such. These shortcomings reveal the weakness of relying on the notoriously inaccurate record-keeping of the presses themselves.

Darko-Ampem also considered the areas of specialisation at the presses, noting that Unisa Press published “mainly textbooks, readers, journals and works of general scholarly interest. Its journals are in the areas of communication science, education, political science, development administration, music, law, art and fine arts, English studies, information science and psychology” (2003: 128). As will be seen, these may be the subject areas of certain journals, but are not the most prolific areas for publishing books. Moreover, Gray (2000: 177) describes the perception that “[t]he University of South Africa Press published little besides distance education materials for its own students”. Again, the bibliography reveals a different truth: that the university press in fact published little that was intended for students, and focused largely on journals, inaugural lectures, and a number of scholarly texts, although a small number of textbooks was produced. The misconception in this case may be due to the prevalent tendency to conflate the publishing function and the printing function of Unisa, although these have always remained separate departments with differing aims and missions.

While the figures are in fact more substantial than previously supposed, as may be seen from Figure 5.1, the overall output from the university presses has been rather low in terms of global averages. The figure has at times risen above the oft-quoted average of between ten and twenty new titles a year per press (SA Publishing, n.d.), but remains small when compared to international figures. Indeed, compared to other countries, South Africa’s research output (and published research, specifically) may seem thin. There was never a huge output from the university presses – even at its peak, it remained below 40 titles a year per publishing house. This is approximately the output of a medium-sized university press in the USA, the country with the largest number of university presses nowadays. In their early years, the presses published just a few titles, somewhat sporadically. In contrast, for instance, a large university press such as Yale issued as many as 125 books during its first

five years (Basbanes, 2008: 13). The fairly low numbers reflect factors such as the small author pool in South Africa, as well as the small market locally, and the limited resources and capacity of the university presses. David Welsh (1975: 27) offers a further explanation of the country’s limited research output: “Official reports published in 1938, 1939 and 1940 showed conclusively that university institutions were conducting only limited research, in all fields. They were under-staffed, starved of funds for research, and handicapped by inadequate libraries.” These remain areas of concern for local universities.

Figure 5.1: Numbers of titles published per decade



Source: Archival and bibliographical research.

Figure 5.1 reveals some interesting insights. For instance, it is significant to note that, in the 1980s and 1990s, Natal was to overtake Wits in terms of output, although the former was perceived as a smaller, more niche publisher – “[t]he University of Natal Press published a small but creditable list with a strong regional focus”, as Gray (2000: 177) puts it. This reflects the difficulties – financial and other – at WUP during this period, especially as a hangover from the 1970s. The graph also shows a marked decline in production in the 1990s, after a peak in the 1980s. The 1990s were to prove an even more trying decade for the university presses, as funding models changed, subsidies declined, and the university system was radically reconfigured. In general, publishing in South Africa underwent a slump in the 1990s. In fact, during the 1990s, only Unisa with the insulation of its relatively large subsidy continued to improve its output.

If we drill a level deeper than the overall number of titles produced, in terms of the key categories or themes of books published, it is clear for each of the presses that there has been only a limited attempt at list-building and at niche development. The strengths of the presses generally reflect the research strengths of the parent institutions, and their priorities. At WUP, the top five subjects during the twentieth century were: medical, geology, engineering, literature and history, followed by economics. These top five subject areas make up just over half (50.9%) of all titles. At UNP, the top subject areas were economics (including labour issues), history, medical, literature, political science, and agriculture, with these top six accounting for 56.2% of all titles. UNP would define its own niche areas in 1987 as history 'and related disciplines', natural sciences, and literature. The top subject area at Unisa, especially from the 1980s, was religion, followed by law, economics, history and literature, with linguistics and education narrowly behind. Again, the top five account for more than half (52.7%) of all titles, with this figure growing to a full two-thirds of all titles published if the top seven categories are included.

This summary thus reveals the extent of specialisation at the university presses. However, it should not be assumed that this dominance of a few subjects indicates an automatic attempt at list-building, as it may rather reflect the universities' general performance in certain specific disciplines, through the dominance of certain prolific departments at certain periods. In other words, we should be cautious when considering how much is self-initiated, and how much externally imposed. On the whole, in fact, the archives reveal that little attention was paid to list-building or commissioning at any of the university presses until the late 1980s.

Moreover, if we compare these areas of specialisation to those most commonly found at US university presses – the largest potential group for comparison, and one that has been studied in sufficient detail to allow for comparison – a more nuanced picture emerges. South Africa clearly has a different kind of academic market and readership to that of the US. Parsons (1990) has shown that at the US university presses, the top subject areas in the 1990s were history (93% of all presses surveyed listed this as a key publishing area), women's studies (75%), political science (71%), literary criticism (70%), and anthropology (67%). There was a definite preference for the social sciences and humanities. Religion was

found as a key area at 51% of the presses, economics at 41%, and medicine at just 40% – in contrast to the South African university presses, which have published widely in these latter fields. The potentially controversial field of women’s studies has hardly featured locally, until after 2000. It is interesting, too, that South Africa’s university presses have not only been active in the ‘traditional’ areas of the social sciences and humanities, which are considered the mainstay of university press lists.

Another interesting difference relates to the publishing of critical political works. While political science is a very significant publishing area at US university presses, this was found to be far less the case at South Africa’s presses. The difference can certainly be attributed, in part, to the constraints imposed by a repressive apartheid government on academic freedom generally and publications specifically. Another factor is the under-development of political science as a discipline at South African universities during the apartheid period (Adam, 1977). But there is also a difference in how politics is handled at the local presses – it was often regarded as “safer” to publish a text dealing with a historical topic rather than current events, although a historical work can still be critical, even if obliquely. However, while some historians saw history as “a social science with practical applicability” and used their historical studies “to make the transition from historical conclusion to current political comment” (Smith, 1988: 111), this was not the case for many academics and their publications. In the changing political environment, scholarly publishing in South Africa thus tended to steer clear of controversial (and politically dangerous) topics.

Another interesting trend worth mentioning, which has emerged strongly from the bibliographies as well as earlier research (Le Roux, 2007: 28), is the overlap between the niches or specialised fields of the university presses. As may be seen in Table 5.1, which summarises the editorial policies of the university presses, the impression given is that these presses have not really taken the opportunity to analyse their own lists, nor to consider their own niches. Rather, they appear to compete on a wide range of topics, and for a limited author pool.

Table 5.1: Editorial Policies of University Presses in South Africa, 1960–1990

Publisher	Production categories	Subject fields	Area focus	Number of titles p.a.
Wits University Press	Single-author books Co-authored books Edited books Textbooks Field guides	African studies Anthropology Archaeology Art Biography & memoirs Economics Engineering & geology History Literature & media Medicine & health Politics and law Science (esp. 'popular science')	Mostly SA Some Southern Africa & Africa	20 on average
Natal University Press	Single-author books Co-authored books Children's books	Agriculture Anthropology Art & photography Biography Economics History, especially regional Labour issues Literature & media Medicine & health Natural sciences Philosophy Political science	SA, especially KZN	Just under 20, on average
Unisa Press	Single-author books Co-authored books Edited books Textbooks Art books Festschriften Journals	Art & architecture Business & economics Education History Law Linguistics Literature & culture Politics Religion & theology	SA	15 on average
Fort Hare	Inaugural lectures Single-author books	Social sciences	SA	3 on average

Sources: Bibliographies compiled; Le Roux, 2007: 31-32.

Indeed, there is such a lack of specialisation and so much diversification and overlapping that it appears that the university presses have been driven more by unsolicited manuscripts than by a rational analysis of their own strengths. This problem has been recognised for some time, with a recommendation in 1972 that UNP should move away from its “miscellaneous collection of different subjects” towards specialisation, for instance in the early history of Natal (AP&PC, 1972). In the 1980s, too, various proposals were made

for WUP to pursue a more aggressive acquisitions policy. For instance, a Publications Committee Working Group was set up to consider changes in publishing philosophy, and it recommended a more active commissioning policy in three key areas: African studies, the research strengths of Wits University, and textbooks for both students and schools (S84/280, 1984: 421). Over time, a shift towards more commissioned work and a more focused acquisitions policy is visible, but this remains something of a weakness among the university presses.

From the broad overview, attention turns now to the specific: the publishing profiles of the individual university presses, with a content analysis of all titles published between 1960 and 1990, as measured against the continuum of intellectual responses.

5.1.3 Wits University Press

Wits University Press, as has been seen, is often associated in the literature with oppositional publishing. This is partly due to the university's own involvement in and reputation for promoting academic freedom. The production of such pamphlets as *The Open Universities in South Africa* (1957) is, at least in part, responsible for this reputation. Student and academic activism is another aspect. In its own records, WUP promoted this image: "The Press, over the years, had built up an enormous trust and confidence, particularly among the black population, because of the type of work it produced" ('Review of WUP', S87/415, 1987: 1). Another document looks to the future: "Post-apartheid, the Press would enjoy full credibility. It already had a reputation in the black community for publishing on merit" (Minutes of Senate, 15/06/1987, S87/956: 19). But if we examine the actual publications produced under the brand of the university press, then the record is less straightforward.

WUP's early titles could be placed in a political category – largely what Adam (1977) characterises as 'liberal retreat'. Both Wits and Natal published a number of 'liberal' commentaries (in the special sense in which 'liberal' is used in South Africa, as described in Chapter 1) by such stalwarts of the Liberal Party as Edgar Brookes, Hilda Kuper and J.D. Rheinallt Jones. In particular, at Wits University Press, under this banner, we can cite

authors such as W.G. Stafford (*Native Law as Practised in Natal*, 1935), Leo Marquard (*The Native in South Africa*, 1944), in philosophy, R.F.A. Hoernlé (*Race and Reason*, a tribute to Hoernlé, 1945), and in psychology, I.D. MacCrone (*Race Attitudes in South Africa*, 1957 and *Psychology in Perspective*, 1932) – although the liberal economist, S.F. Frankel, and the historians, William Macmillan and Margaret Ballinger, hardly published within South Africa. The key focus of WUP's early years was the publication of liberal studies on native law, as it was then known, and race relations (cf. *African Studies*, 5 December 1953). Some of the most significant of these studies may be found in a bibliography prepared by Beverley Kaplan in 1971: *Race Relations in South Africa, as illustrated by the writings of Mrs. A. W. Hoernlé, Professor R. F. A. Hoernlé and Mr. J. D. Rheinallt Jones*. Ally et al. (2003: 79) point out that “[t]he liberalism of this strand of South African sociology was decidedly opposed to racialism, but the paternalism, which underpinned their attitude, is clearly evident in their writings and research postures”.

A feature that emerges from the strong preoccupation with race and race relations is the general acceptance and use of apartheid categories of classification, such as ‘Bantu’, ‘the African’, ‘Coloured’ and so on, as well as the use of both ‘Bantustan’ and ‘homeland’. Indeed, a gradual shift in terminology from ‘Bantu’ (up to the early 1970s), to ‘Black’ (from the early 1970s), may be discerned. There is also a shift evident from the term ‘Hottentot’ (now considered pejorative) to ‘Khoisan’, during the course of the 1970s. An example of a very influential liberal text in this regard is *The Cape Coloured People 1652–1937* (J.M. Marais, 1957). This pioneering work, a study of white policy towards coloured people, was not originally published by WUP, but by Longmans. The story of how it came to WUP reveals how external events can have an impact of publishing, as well as the extent of Wits University's ties, world-wide: 400 copies of the 1939 Longmans edition had been sold, when the rest of the print run was destroyed as a result of a German bomber destroying the Longmans warehouse in London. Owing to their ongoing relationship, Longmans approached WUP to consider a reprint, but this was put off until the end of World War II, due to paper shortages. It was only some time after the war ended that the question of a reprint was taken up again, and the work finally re-appeared in 1957.

A review of the book from that period reveals Marais' liberal credentials, which appear to have been well-known internationally:

The fact that Dr. Marais was born at the Paarl is a reminder that the predominantly Afrikaner (sic) western districts of the Cape have produced some of the staunchest opponents of the official segregation policy. True, the author does not set out either to praise or to blame that policy; but his insistence that justice "does not allow the use of two measures, one for ourselves..., and another for those who differ from us in nationality, or race, or the colour of their skins", and, still more, the conclusions which he draws from the facts accumulated during nine years of devoted labour, show clearly enough that he has no love for it. (Walker, 1940: 323)

MacCrone's study, *Race Attitudes in South Africa: Historical, experimental and psychological studies*, also came out in a WUP edition in 1957, although the original of this classic work dates back to 1937, when it was published by OUP on behalf of Wits. This work has also frequently been described as "pioneering", and as "a mixture of psychology, sociology and history which acquired many imitators in later years" (Yudelman, 1975: 86). The reprinting of these classic liberal works reveals that WUP and its Publications Committee were eager to be associated with some of the university's most influential scholars, and with their liberal political stance. Just two years later, in 1959, the university would bring out its statement on academic freedom, in association with UCT.

1960s

The opening year of the content analysis, 1960, would see a modest publishing programme for Wits University Press: four inaugural lectures, one service publication for the library, two research studies (both emanating from the Ernest Oppenheimer Institute for Portuguese Studies), and one isiZulu play in the Bantu Treasury series. None of these publications can be said to make a political statement, except perhaps in terms of the author (a black male) of the Bantu Treasury title, Elliott Zondi. As with all of the authors published in that particular series (black males, writing original literature in their own languages), he did not fit the usual author profile of the university press.¹ The decade continued in this vein; the 1960s, generally speaking, saw few politically oriented publications.

¹ A case study of the Bantu Treasury Series would be too detailed for the purposes of this study. However, given its value and importance, further research has been carried out into this series. See Le Roux, 2012c.

If we look at key dates in the struggle against apartheid, we might expect to see some reflection in the publishing lists of the university presses. But, even allowing for a delay for research, peer review and the publication process, these events seem to pass with only minor comment. As Suttie (2005: 102–103) mentions with regard to the impact of the Sharpeville Massacre of 1960 on the Unisa Library, “since it did not have an immediate bearing on segregated higher education, the violence passed without comment”. Indeed, a reading of the minutes of Publications Committee meetings (from any of the local presses) elicits no commentary, discussion or even acknowledgement of wider political events; it was business as usual. The impression created is that the university presses considered themselves apart from and unaffected by politics.

However, the decade would see the publication of some rather outspoken lectures from the ‘Republic in a Changing World’ lecture series and the Richard Feetham Memorial Lecture series (established in 1959 to “support the university’s dedication to the ideals of academic freedom”, according to publicity material). These, and other similar academic freedom lecture series – such as the T.B. Davie lectures at UCT and the E.G. Malherbe and Edgar Brookes memorial lectures at UNP – are an interesting case study of knowledge production. Often highly critical of the government, and even of the university hosting the speaker, the lectures appear to have been subject to little censorship. The speakers were frequently based at international universities, and thus not subject to the constraints on locally based academics. The lectures were often published and widely circulated – but, and this is a key distinction, not always by the university presses and never at the instigation of the university presses. Rather, the Academic Freedom Committee and the Student Representative Council were responsible for the series. Their publication by the university presses, I would argue, may be seen more in the light of a service to the institution than as a form of oppositional publishing.

Sociological studies of race relations were an important part of the list for a number of years, although only a few were published by WUP after the 1960s as this area of study declined in favour. One of the last to be published was Henry Lever’s *Ethnic Attitudes of Johannesburg Youth* (1968), a revision of his PhD thesis on social distance, which owed a debt to MacCrone’s earlier work. Lever focused on race relations and ethnicity in his

sociological studies, and he later came to the conclusion that, “[i]n spite of their desire to present a moral countenance and reasoned arguments, an element of pure racism is evident in the writings of all those who espouse apartheid” (1981: 252). His published works were not necessarily anti-apartheid, but they were written from a subject position that called into question the basis of apartheid philosophy and policies, a position that he described as “pluralist” (Lever, 1981: 256). It has been noted that “the innovative study of white South Africans' attitudes” – such as that conducted by Lever – “was not matched by comparable research among black South Africans” (Seekings, 2001: 5).

Thus, WUP had a strong list of liberal authors from early on, although this became less visible in the 1960s and 1970s, as South African politics became more polarised and the position of liberalism generally weakened. Liberals in South Africa have come in for a great deal of criticism over the years, and a publication from the 1960s illustrates some of the contradictions inherent in the liberal position. In 1964, Gordon Lawrie, Director of the South African Institute of International Affairs, published a commentary on the Odendaal Report, titled *New Light on South West Africa*, at first in the journal *African Studies* and then as a stand-alone research report through WUP. The Odendaal Commission was set up to examine the situation of South West Africa (now Namibia), a territory falling under South African governance at the time. The report recommended the extension of the policy of homelands for each of the population groups; “it argues,” according to Lawrie’s summary, “that the provision of homelands for the different ethnic groups is the best, if not the only, way to ensure harmonious development” (1964: 1). Lawrie points out the implications of such a policy in some detail, but in carefully neutral language throughout. Focusing on the economic rather than political implications, he concludes: “The Report *for all its merits* seems at times to have forgotten the realities of the harsh and barren land that is South West Africa” (Lawrie, 1964: 11, emphasis added). Yet, while Lawrie was clearly aware of potential criticism of the report, as he included a section on the “International Setting of the Report”, and its reception in circles such as the United Nations, he himself was careful to remain as neutral as possible and to offer no overt criticism.

This liberal ‘balancing act’ can be seen continuing as a thread through the publishing list. More militant studies of politics and current affairs generally were not a significant area of publishing at WUP until the relatively ‘safe’ period of the late 1980s and early 1990s.

1970s

The 1970s were a period of decline for WUP, with the publishing output being cut due to declining sales and revenue (an external force that will be described in greater detail in Chapter 6). However, some titles do stand out in this regard; discussion of these shows that an ‘oppositional’ title could sometimes be considered critical simply for bringing attention to a problematic or sensitive area, even if the title did not provide critical comment: “Some would argue,” Taylor says, “that simply to reveal the injustices of apartheid and to morally reject it is to take a critical position” (1991: 30) – although he did not place himself in that category. One such instance is the series of bibliographies and digests of decisions made by the Publications Appeal Board produced by Louise Silver from the late 1970s, and her *Guide to Political Censorship in South Africa*. Her selections raised the significant issue of restrictions on free speech and the freedom to publish, without overtly judging the legislation involved. A review of the latter publication noted this, complaining that “[t]he reader is left, for the most part, to make up his or her own conclusions about the reasoning and jurisprudence of the Publications Appeal Board” (Choonoo, 1986: 417). The reviewer adds, “Silver may have arranged these decisions so as to let the contradictions speak for themselves” (Ibid.: 418). The conclusion is that this balancing act cannot (and should not) be sustained: “One yearns for more of Louise Silver’s own opinions apart from the brief interjections on the new reasonable tolerance of the board. In these days, maintaining a neutral stance on such a subject is difficult to comprehend especially when total censorship is already upon us” (Ibid.). This retreat into neutrality is on the one hand an example of ‘liberal retreat’, and on the other a regression into ‘privatism’.

More opinionated work – moving from the ‘liberal retreat’ category to the ‘political reform’ classification – arose from a focus on labour and law. By the 1970s, all black oppositional parties were either banned or underground, and “trade unions became the only legal way to secure political gains for blacks, and became substitutes for the political parties that had been banned” (Ally, 2005: 87). Similarly, studies of trade unions, labour and law served as

substitutes for direct studies of politics. Thus, “[p]artly in reaction to black consciousness and partly in response to wider intellectual trends, the early seventies saw the reorientation of significant sectors of white students and academics towards the labor movement” (Suttner, 1985: 74). For instance, in a few publications for the Centre for Business Studies, including *The Right to Strike*, Loet Douwes Dekker would explore the political role of trade unions and labour action. In later work, after the end of apartheid, Dekker – a former unionist himself – emphasised the significant role of civil society in contributing to the fall of the apartheid regime (see e.g. Dekker, 2010). This reflects the ‘political reform’ classification on the continuum, as such academics tend to be openly involved in political organisations and civil society, beyond the sphere of academic protest.

Some titles are somewhat more ambiguous in their political orientation. The Centre for Business Studies’ report on investment, *A Case against Disinvolvement in the South African Economy* (1978), for instance, argued that numerous changes had been made for the better in South African society, and that foreign investors should not disinvest from or boycott the country. This is not necessarily a pro-apartheid stance, as it was based on an economic and not a political rationale, but it can also not be described as oppositional. Such ambiguous titles tend to fall in the ‘change through association’ category of publications. They indicate a ready degree of compliance, and suggest that the authors and their publishers in fact supported the status quo at this point, perhaps with a few reforms.

1980s

Another significant liberal academic at Wits was the historian Phyllis Lewsen, a founder member of the Black Sash and member of the Liberal Party. Her critique of the South African political situation in 1981 (published by WUP in 1982) was made by way of a discussion of a much earlier constitution. This was a highly effective technique: “Her feeling for metaphor and irony made her Raymond Dart Lecture in 1981 on the South African Constitution of 1910, a subtle critique not only of that controversial charter, but also of P.W. Botha’s equally undemocratic ‘New Constitution’ proposals (introduced in 1983), and much debated at the time of her lecture” (Starfield & Krige, 2001: 189). Yet her major works went unpublished by the university press: these included a monumental biography of the politician John X. Merriman (Yale University Press and Ad Donker, 1982), and her

contributions to collections such as *Democratic Liberalism in South Africa* (David Philip, 1987) and *Voices of Protest: From segregation to apartheid, 1939–1948* (Ad Donker, 1988). In the latter work, Lewsen referred to segregation as racist and as a crime against humanity, and we can speculate that this work, in particular, was too politically outspoken to be published by the university press – she clearly favoured publication with the independent oppositional publishers. Lewsen’s memoirs were published in 1996 by the newly established UCT Press.

Still more critical material emerged from the Centre for Applied Legal Studies (CALs) at Wits University, which may possibly be classified as advocating ‘political reform’, or even a ‘militant-radical stance’. A sample of titles clearly reveals this ideological slant: *Outcasts from Justice: The consequences of banning orders under the Internal Security Act*, by Sarah Parry (1981); *Ruling with the Whip: A report on the violation of human rights in the Ciskei* (1983), and *Mabangalala: The rise of right-wing vigilantes in South Africa* (1986) by Nicholas Haysom (1983) and the edited proceedings, *Emergency Law* (edited by Nicholas Haysom and Laura Mangan, 1987); as well as *The Freedom Charter: A blueprint for a democratic South Africa*, by Gilbert Marcus (1985). Haysom’s work on violence and human rights violations in particular was considered cutting edge and falls within the category of academics “bearing witness” (i.e. the ‘militant’ category). The publicity material for the work highlighted the “harrowing picture of vicious, unbridled assault against anti-apartheid activists (sometimes with police compliance)”.

John Dugard, who was later to become a Special Rapporteur to the United Nations, produced reports on security legislation in South Africa (1982) and *The De-Nationalization of Black South Africans in Pursuance of Apartheid*, which he sub-titled *A Question for the International Court of Justice* (1984). It is not entirely clear whether such titles can be attributed to Wits University Press – the title pages read “Centre for Applied Legal Studies, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg”, which means that the imprint of the press itself was not used. But at the same time, the Press was providing a publishing service for such titles, including conferring an ISBN and assisting with production and distribution. The Publications Committee also played a role in approving all university publications.

Seminars held at the African Studies Institute were also regularly published by WUP, and their topics, too, were somewhat more politically oriented and critical than the average publication by that press. An example is *Food, Authority and Politics: Student riots in South African schools* by Jonathan Hyslop, published in 1986 (and later re-published by Ravan Press in 1991). Further seminar papers published included a Marxist critique of the South African economy (*Economic Crisis in South Africa: 1974–1986* by Stephen Gelb, 1986) and an examination of the links between industry and the state (*Manufacturing Capital and the Apartheid State* by Daryl Glaser, 1987). These are more theoretical than the ‘militant-radical’ publications of CALS, but no less critical. Although the press played at best a service role in producing and disseminating such works, it is perhaps from such titles that WUP received its reputation for publishing oppositional texts. Titles emanating from the Institute for Social Research and later the Centre for Applied Social Sciences at the University of Natal had a similar effect on the reputation of the university press there.

The response rate to key political events also appears to have been slower at the university presses than at other publishers, even where the latter published serious academic analyses – this genre may indeed benefit from a certain measure of distance. For example, WUP’s response to Sharpeville, *The Road to Sharpeville* by Matthew Chaskalson, appeared more than two decades later, in 1986. The same occurred with the Soweto Uprising in 1976, and the State of Emergency of 1986. Thus *Why was Soweto Different?* by Jeremy Seekings, appeared over a decade after the uprisings, in 1988, while the literary study, *Authorship, Authenticity and the Black Community: The novels of Soweto 1976* by Kelwyn Sole, was published in 1986. (To be fair, the latter title would not have been possible at an earlier time, given that it analyses novels that were published *about* Soweto, but inevitably sometime *after* the uprisings.) In contrast, a socialist analysis of the Soweto revolt was published internationally by 1979: *Year of Fire, Year of Ash. The Soweto Revolt: Roots of a Revolution?* by Baruch Hirson (Zed Press).

Moreover, in a reflection of the largely white author profile (to be described in more detail in the next section), there is little evidence of awareness of shifts in political thinking, such as the rise of Black Consciousness during the 1970s. Instead of explicit references to reform in South African society, a number of titles deal (somewhat more vaguely) with a “changing

southern Africa”, “changing South Africa”, and “changing society”, largely in the mid-1980s, when it had become clear that the Nationalist state’s hold on power was increasingly tenuous. There was greater concern over the effects of the academic boycott; a report at the end of 1985 argues that “[i]nadequate funds, a shortage of staff, and political boycotts continued to affect the Press’s operations” (‘Report on the Activities of the WUP in 1985’, 27/02/1986, 286/308: 1).

The results of this content analysis thus do not portray Wits University Press as an unambiguously oppositional publisher, although it certainly had liberal and even progressive leanings. Its early publications can often be classified as ‘liberal’ and ‘change through association’, but as has been shown there is a move over time to more ‘political reform’ and even a few ‘militant-radical’ titles, largely affiliated with research centres or institutes.

5.1.4 University of Natal Press

During the early years of the University of Natal Press, a number of titles dealing with current issues were produced, largely under the auspices of the Natal Regional Survey series. A sample title from this “great socio-economic survey” series (*Theoria*, 1953), which was produced by Oxford University Press for a few years before UNP was established, is *A Natal Indian Community: A socio-economic study in the Tongaat-Verulam Area* (Gavin Maasdorp, 1968). This kind of ‘socio-economic’ study drew attention to matters of race relations and demographics, but did not necessarily critique government policy.

1960s

UNP was responsible for producing the journal *Theoria*, and volume 15 of 1960 bears this comment in the Editorial, which reveals a wider awareness of the political situation while also situating the publishing programme as “non-political”:

Non-political as it is, *Theoria* 15 bears at least one mark of the unhappy situation in which our country finds itself at present. It was the ‘Emergency’ which (no doubt inadvertently) provided one of our contributors with the leisure to write a long article. We are happy to be able to publish a criticism of *Antony and Cleopatra* written by Mr D. R. C. Marsh during his sojourn in Pietermaritzburg gaol; and we hope it will serve as an example to others who may find themselves in the same box

in course of time, of how to make a virtue of necessity and dispel pleasantly and fruitfully at least some of the tedium of their plight. (*Theoria*, 1960: 1)

The opening year of the content analysis, 1960, was not a prolific one for the still small and emerging University of Natal Press, with just four publications produced during the year. One of these, however, was the work of celebrated liberal sociologist Hilda Kuper, on *Indian People in Natal*. The work was well received, especially internationally, with positive reviews in journals including the *International Journal of Comparative Sociology*, *American Anthropologist*, and the *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences*. With continuing popularity, it is unsurprising that more than ten years later, in 1974, a US edition would be produced by the Greenwood Press, having acquired the territorial rights from UNP.

The following year, 1961, saw just one publication being produced by UNP, and that the text of a lecture delivered at the university: *A Review of Zulu Literature* by C.L. Sibusiso Nyembezi. This publication is significant, however, in terms of UNP's author profile, because it represents the first publication by a black author at that press. Shortly afterwards, in 1962, the profile would be supplemented by Absalom Vilakazi's anthropological study, *Zulu Transformations: A Study of the Dynamics of Social Change*. Also in 1962, the Press was to publish the surprisingly critical proceedings of a conference on *Education and our Expanding Horizons* (with a gap of a few years after the conference itself was held). Reviewers at the time commented directly on the oppositional stance of the work: "Coming at a time in South Africa's history when politically and racially the days were full of tension – when, indeed, a State of Emergency had been declared by the Government only a few days before the Conference began – the very forthrightness and free expression of all participants in itself makes stimulating reading" (Review in *Race Relations News*, quoted in UNP book list, 1969: 4).

Like WUP, UNP would come to be associated with a tradition of liberal thinkers. Some were very eminent figures in South African politics, such as Francis Napier Broome, the retired Judge President of Natal, whose memoir *Not the Whole Truth* was published in 1962. Perhaps the most celebrated liberal author was Edgar Brookes, with such works as *A History*

of Natal (with Colin de B. Webb, 1965) and *A History of the University of Natal* (1967). These publications were very well received, as evidenced by advertisements and reviews of the time. Similarly, other historical works – notably the *James Stuart Archive of Recorded Oral Evidence Relating to the History of the Zulu and Neighbouring Peoples* (John Wright has written an interesting account of the compilation and publication of these volumes, see Wright, 1996), as well as others – were also well received by the local press and academic journals alike. The press thus began to develop a reputation for publishing high-quality scholarly research in the areas of regional history (Natal and Zululand, now KwaZulu-Natal) as well as military history.

The historical work of Edgar Brookes, and of titles such as Colin Tatz's *Shadow and Substance in South Africa: A Study in Land and Franchise Policies Affecting Africans, 1910-1960* (1962), also illustrates another trend. A tendency can be identified among South African academics during the apartheid period to examine politics from the distance of a historical study rather than through the medium of a current critique. A later example is that of Bill Guest and John Sellers' title on *Enterprise and Exploitation in a Victorian Colony* (1985), which delivered a critique of clashes between "the dominant White society and the Black and Indian communities, and their political repercussions" (*Theoria*, 65, 1985). This was an oblique means of commenting on the politics of the day, through the channel of a highly scholarly and extensively researched study. Grundlingh (1990: 21) points out that it was almost common practice to avoid "remarks in theses which had immediate political relevance, especially if the remarks contradicted their [academics'] own political views". De Baets notes that, "[i]n many countries, contemporary history is certainly the most dangerous field of study" (2002: 19). Thus, a historical study could be used to comment indirectly on current events. Moreover, in a sensitive political environment, much scholarly publishing in South Africa tended to steer clear of current, controversial (and politically dangerous) topics, but this does not imply an absence of commentary.

Several examples of apparently neutral, 'objective' scientific research may also be found in the publishing list of UNP. Not all of these may be considered political in the sense of commenting on or critiquing current government policies, but some nonetheless draw attention to ongoing matters of race relations and the "black problem" or "native problem",

as it was often known. These are not necessarily an example of the ‘privatism’ category, but can also fall under the ‘change through association’ or ‘liberal retreat’ banner. Over the years, a number of publications would show an awareness of race relations and racial issues. As at WUP, there are frequent references to the apartheid racial classifications of “the African”, “the Indian”, “whites”, and “Europeans”. Some titles also assume a paternalistic tone, as in *A Handbook to Aid in the Treatment of Zulu Patients* (1958), but there is little evidence of overt support for the apartheid government and its policies.

For instance, UNP published the PhD thesis of Basil Jones, a Senior Lecturer in Surveying, in 1965. The study, titled *Land Tenure in South Africa: Past, present and future*, examines “the apportionment, tenure, registration and survey of land in Southern Africa” and proposes the establishment of a cadastral system for the “Bantu areas of South Africa” (according to the back cover blurb). Jones is entirely uncritical of, for instance, the Native Land Act (1913), although he describes its features in some detail. He notes the implications of the Act: “The Natives Land Act and the Native Land and Trust Act had the effect of setting definite limits to the Bantu areas” (Jones, 1964: 73), and argues that one of the consequences is that “it will become necessary to remove a large portion of the rural [Bantu] population to urban areas where provision must be made for the establishment and development of residential townships and small holdings”. Such a study echoes Rogerson and Parnell’s (1989: 16) criticism of research that ignores “the racial partitioning of South African space” and “the political manipulation of space”. It also stands in marked contrast to Colin Tatz’s study of land and franchise policies, published just a few years before (1962). Thus seeming neutrality may work in support of the government’s policies, whether intended or not, by coming across as tacit acceptance.

1970s

An interesting example that deserves further comment is another text by Edgar Brookes, a history title that was more political than much of his other work. His study, *White Rule in South Africa, 1830–1910*, was published by UNP in 1974. This was a new and much revised edition of his celebrated *History of Native Policy in South Africa from 1830 to the present day*, originally published by Nasionale Pers in 1924. According to Rich (1993: 69), even the

original text was considered a “political hot potato” at the time of its publication, in spite of its support for segregationist principles:

None of the English publishers in South Africa at the time would publish his doctoral thesis entitled ‘History of Native Policy in South Africa’ and he was forced to turn to the Afrikaner Nationalist leader, General J.B.M. Hertzog, for assistance. The book came out in 1924 at an opportune time as a general election was pending. Hertzog saw in Brooke’s work historical justification for segregationism in South African “native policy” and agreed to get Die Nasionale Pers to publish it.

Brookes was later to renounce his support for segregation, and the new, revised edition of the book was submitted to OUP in the late 1960s. But – keeping in mind that this was around the time of the self-censorship controversy around the *Oxford History of South Africa* – the revised edition was rejected by OUP, in its new guise as an apolitical publisher focusing on schoolbooks, and it was then taken on by UNP. This was not much of a political risk in the eyes of UNP, given that it had for so long been associated with the work of Edgar Brookes, and the fact that it was a new edition of a work that had been available in the public domain for some time. Nonetheless, it may represent a shift towards cautious activism on the part of the press.

Another unusual publishing selection was made with the decision to publish an English translation of a classic isiZulu text, in 1978. Unlike WUP and its Bantu Treasury Series, UNP was not known for publishing such literature, but its association with the Killie Campbell Africana Library led to several classic works being revived. Moreover, the years 1977 to 1980 saw a flurry of books emerging from a number of publishers, not least UNP, to commemorate the centenary of the Anglo-Zulu War. Thus, in 1978 H.C. Lugg’s translation of *Abantu Abamnyama Lapa Bavela Ngakona* by Magema Fuze was published, as *The Black People and Whence they Came: A Zulu View*. First published in 1922 in isiZulu, the text was not available in English translation for more than 50 years and remained virtually unknown in scholarly and political circles, largely due to the constraints of language.

Fuze has since been studied in greater detail, in particular as a pioneer black intellectual (see, for instance, Mokoena, 2011). Hlonipha Mokoena has commented on the ways in which the translation repositioned the text in a certain light: for instance, as literature and

oral history rather than an authoritative history. She comments (Mokoena, 2009: 596–597) that the editor, A.T. Cope, “divided the text into categories not present in the original work: ethnography, history and Zulu history”, and that various excisions, alterations and judgements were made on the work by the translator and editor – editorial interventions that came about through the mediation of the publishing process. “Implicit in this approach,” comments Mokoena (2009: 597), “is the tendency of the translator, editor and other commentators to annotate the text with supplementary information and ‘corrections’, which emphasise the errors of the author”. The editor and translator also explicitly positioned the text historically and geographically, as the “first book ever written by an African of this Province [Natal]” (quoted in Mokoena, 2009: 597). In contrast to this view, a contemporary reviewer found that “[i]n Professor Cope, Fuze has a sympathetic and unobtrusive editor” (Edgecombe, 1980: 67), and this was generally supported by other reviews as well (e.g. *Journal of Religion in Africa, The Witness*). The work cannot be seen as dissenting, necessarily, but to publish the views of a black intellectual was to make a political comment of a different sort – a form of cautious activism.

However, there were also more openly critical studies of current events in the Natal region. As at Wits, some of the research emanating from centres at the university was more radical in criticising the government than the usual publications produced by the university press. These centres include the Institute for Social Research, Centre for Applied Social Sciences, Centre for Adult Education, and especially the Centre for Social and Development Studies and Indicator Project South Africa, under Professor Lawrence Schlemmer. Their impact was certainly felt, as this example shows: “As far as the low intensity conflict in Natal was concerned, the Centre for Adult Education at the University of Natal in Pietermaritzburg performed a magnificent job of data collection and analysis: its work had a profound effect on perceptions of the Natal conflict and is a model of international standing for repression monitoring” (Merrett, 2001: 56). Indeed, some of their work may have been considered too controversial (too ‘militant-radical’) for the university press, as they frequently were disseminated through independent publishers such as Ravan Press.

Examples of such research, which did end up being published by UNP, include a report on *Student Protest and the White Public in Durban* (the back cover blurb describes “a report on

a brief investigation of the responses of white citizens in Durban to a public protest organized by students of the University of Natal in June, 1972”) by Aubrey Smith, Lawrence Schlemmer and Patricia Croudace (1973), and one on *Reactions to Political Pressure in South Africa* (“an exploratory study among whites” by Foszia Fisher, Raphael de Kadt and Schlemmer, 1975). While a number of these studies focus on attitudes among white South Africans, given the racial make-up of KwaZulu-Natal there was also a corresponding interest, from the late 1970s at least, in Indian attitudes – and using Indian researchers. So we find, for instance, a study of *Urban Relocation and Racial Segregation: The case of Indian South Africans*, by Gavin Maasdorp and Nesen Pillay (1977), followed by *Indian Attitudes to the New Constitution and to Prospects for Change* by Yusuf S. Bhamjee (1985). Maasdorp and Pillay’s study was certainly aware of “the racial partitioning of South African space”, in contrast to the study cited above. In a similar way, a paper on *Industrial Decentralization under Apartheid* by Paul Wellings and Anthony Black (1984) examined decentralisation from a political perspective, as well as an economic one, concluding that industrial decentralisation was a “tool of apartheid”.

1980s

As can be seen by the latter example and its outspoken language, studies in the 1980s grew still more oppositional in approach, choosing topics that would previously have been considered too risky. This reflects a move away from privatism and tacit acceptance. Moreover, these studies expanded to include surveys of all population groups, for example, *Attitudes Towards Beach Integration: A comparative study of black and white reactions to multiracial beaches in Durban* (Valerie Moller and Schlemmer, 1982) and *Broken Promises and Lost Opportunities: A study of the reactions of white and coloured residents of Port St Johns to the control of the area by a black administration* (Clive Napier and Schlemmer, 1985). The economist Jill Nattrass’s 1983 study of poverty among black people, *The Dynamics of Black Rural Poverty in South Africa*, which emerged from the Development Studies Unit at the University of Natal, was both empirical and critical in approach. She suggested that poverty was not only or not primarily an economic issue, supported by political factors, but a political issue, with underlying economic causes as well. Her work had a wide impact, not least on scholars in her own department at the university. One of these, Julian May, produced *Differentiation and Inequality in the Bantustans: Evidence from*

KwaZulu in 1987. This quantitative study was intended as a corrective to the scanty government data available on the bantustans or homelands, and the author certainly saw it as a contribution to political reform.

The publication of conference proceedings could also at times be a channel for the dissemination of more outspoken work. UNP had published conference proceedings for some time, such as *Constitutional Change in South Africa* in 1978 (edited by John Benyon), albeit intended for a limited audience. But the 1980s saw much more openly critical work being published. Thus, Schlemmer's publication of conference proceedings, such as *Conflict in South Africa: Build-up to revolution or impasse?* (1983) and Alan Bell and Robin Mackie's *Detention and Security Legislation in South Africa* (1985) for the Indicator Project South Africa reflects an oppositional approach. Mervyn Frost's inaugural lecture as professor of political studies examined *Politics, Reform and Oppression* (1987), perhaps unsurprisingly given that his later studies tended to focus on political ethics. Douglas Booth (1987) would analyse political processes through the lens of *Black Liberation Politics* and *Desegregating South African Sport* (1988), perspectives that would not easily have been published ten years earlier. With their analysis of white right-wing political parties, *Vir Volk en Vaderland: A Guide to the White Right* (1989), the sociologists Janis Grobbelaar, Simon Bekker and Robert Evans revealed the fragmentation of the ruling party and of the ideologies still propping up apartheid.

However, it is only with the transition to a 'new' South Africa that key *current* events began to be reflected, and relatively quickly, within the publishing output of the local university presses. For instance, Monica Bot's analysis of *School Boycotts 1984: The Crisis in African Education* appeared in 1985, just a year after the boycotts; it was produced as part of the Indicator Project. Unusually, a book in the field of literature similarly appeared soon after the publication of a number of new 'struggle' poets (there tends to be a greater time lag in disciplines such as literary studies). Thus, *Black Mamba Rising: South African worker poets in struggle* edited by Ari Sitas and featuring Alfred Qabula, Mi Hlatshwayo and Nise Malange, appeared in 1986 (co-published with Cosatu's 'Worker Resistance and Culture Publications'), yet was able to include analysis of poetry published as recently as 1984, in the case of Mi Hlatshwayo's works published by FOSATU. This diminishing time lag reflects the waning

dangers associated with critique of the government, as well as the growing sense of urgency as political events came to a head.

In contrast, the far more radical student body had been responding to political events with much greater immediacy. For example, the Black Students Society at the University of Natal produced a title called *June 16* shortly after the Soweto Uprising. The title was banned, according to the Beacon for Freedom of Expression (n.d.). Similarly, several pamphlets produced by the Student Representative Council at the University of Cape Town tackled oppositional themes head-on, and were subsequently banned. A book published by the Wits Alternative Service Group, *The Nyanga Story*, was not banned, but “censored for political reasons” in 1982 (Beacon for Freedom of Expression, n.d.).

A shift in publishing strategies may thus be seen over the years, from a liberal tone and a focus on non-controversial topics (privatism), to more engaged, ‘militant-radical’ or ‘political reform’ publications. While there is not a great deal of evidence from the content analysis to show a marked change in editorial policy, the late apartheid period did signal a growing political awareness at both WUP and UNP. Indeed, in UNP’s Press Committee minutes, the item literally appears on the agenda in 1988: “Alternative publishing”. (The terse comment followed: “Agreed that nothing should be done in this regard at this stage” – see Minutes of the Press Committee, 23 March 1988.) In 1988, too, director Mobbs Moberly signed a statement from a group of South African publishers “affirming the freedom to publish” (Minutes of the Press Committee, 18 August 1988).

Into the 1990s: Progressive publishing

Both WUP and UNP joined the Independent Publishers’ Association of South Africa (IPASA) when it was established in 1989. The aim of this body was to promote freedom of speech and access to information, through lobbying for the repeal of repressive legislation and providing a platform for what became known as “progressive” publishers. As part of this platform, WUP and UNP were able to take part in a promotion at bookseller CNA of such “progressive” publishers’ books in 1990, under the banner “The New South Africa”. The other publishers included in this promotion were: David Philip Publishers, Skotaville, South African Institute of Race Relations, Taurus, Seriti sa Sechaba, Ravan Press, Ad Donker, Buchu

Books and Justified Press – all what are now grouped together as ‘oppositional’ publishers. UNP’s title *The Drum Decade*, edited by Michael Chapman (1989), was selected, as were WUP’s *Yours for the Union: Class and Community Struggles in South Africa* by Baruch Hirson (1990), and a selection of plays by Athol Fugard, *My children! My Africa!* (1990). Chapman’s title was a selection of more than thirty stories that had been published in *Drum* magazine in the 1950s, including some very significant figures in South African literature: Richard Rive, Es’kia Mphahlele, Can Themba, Nat Nakasa and James Matthews. Chapman would note in his introduction (and this would, too, be quoted in advertorial matter): “The writers were concerned with more than telling a story. They were concerned with what was happening to their people” (1989: i).

At this time, in the early 1990s, WUP’s advertising shows a shift to a new paratext, with a new corporate logo, and the slogans “Exciting and challenging publishing for a new South Africa” and “WUP looks to the future”. At the same time, however, UNP was bemoaning its “narrowness of list and its remoteness from the current debate in South Africa” (‘Response’, 1990: 3). They went on to describe an opportunity:

At this time in South Africa there is an acute need for enlightened publishers to take a lead in the publishing of research material, works that bridge the huge divides in our society, that compete with overseas publications in terms of price, that focus on local issues and problems and engage what has been termed ‘the current debate’, that challenge South Africans and begin the long haul to a post-apartheid society – any of these may be considered proper fields of activity for a University press. (Ibid.)

In an internal document titled ‘Reconsiderations, 1989’, the UNP position is explicitly laid out: “Not only does the Press help to publicise the University’s research, it also helps to make known its position as an anti-apartheid organization” (‘Reconsiderations’, 1989: 1). The document elaborates: “Most importantly this is through its contacts with overseas publishers and distributors through whom the Press is keeping open channels of communication with the outside world. Including in its list of publications books which deal directly with the contemporary debate would also be significant in this regard.” Thus, the shift in editorial policy, reflected in the publishing lists, was a deliberate one, based on discussion and agreement on the way forward – for both the Press and the country at large.

The transitional moment in South Africa was seen as an opportunity for the university presses, as this UNP discussion notes: “... there are particular publishing challenges in a changing South Africa. If we are allowed to look beyond mere survival I believe we can meet these challenges to make a significant contribution to the University’s efforts in the nineties” (Minutes of the Press Committee, 20 June 1990).

5.1.5 Unisa Press

In contrast to Wits and Natal, Unisa was far more conservative in approach and inclination, although this does not mean that everything published fell on a particular side of the political spectrum. Unisa was, at least theoretically, a bilingual institution (Afrikaans and English), but was perceived to toe the government line in a manner similar to the ‘pure’ Afrikaans universities. In light of the wider trend identified in the content analyses described briefly at the beginning of this chapter, Albert Grundlingh (2006: 133) notes that, “[o]n the whole ... the books and articles published by Unisa staff and the themes chosen by their students did not reflect much ‘radical’ influence”. This content analysis supports that contention. The analysis also reveals the limits of using the continuum of intellectual stances, as the model does not allow for all the shades of political response at an Afrikaner *volksuniversiteit* during the apartheid period. Nonetheless, it remains a useful methodological instrument, as we can certainly identify publications that fall into the ‘privatism’ and ‘change through association’ categories, if not the more liberal or militant ones. These are the categories Hugo labels ‘apprehensive’ and ‘cautious activism’, respectively.

1960s

In 1960, just a few years after being established, Unisa’s Publications Committee approved four inaugural lectures, four lectures, and nine research papers for publication. A sampling of the titles is somewhat representative of the political views of Unisa authors: the A series (inaugural lectures) included *Waarom die Groot Trek Geslaag Het* (‘Why the Great Trek Succeeded’) by History Professor C.F.J. Muller, the B series of lectures and conference proceedings included the papers from a symposium on *Kulturele Kontaksituasies* (‘Cultural Contact Situations’), and the C series of research work included a Festschrift for H.J. de

Vleeschauwer. As has been noted (in Chapter 3), the latter author was politically dubious, to say the least. Having been convicted as a Nazi collaborator in Belgium, his political views were ardently nationalist and racist (see Dick, 2002 for a wider discussion of his time at Unisa). The kinds of texts that were published in this opening year also indicate a number of trends that would be followed by Unisa in its publishing programme: a focus on history, often from a white and nationalist perspective; sociology, focusing on ‘cultural’ and ethnic issues; and apparently apolitical, non-controversial studies such as linguistics, which would often reveal certain political sympathies on deeper reading – or at the very least a tacit acceptance of the status quo.

History, in particular, was a key niche area for Unisa publishing, emerging from the strong History Department. Supplementing C.F.J. Muller, was the Afrikaner historiographer F.A. van Jaarsveld, as well as G.D. Scholtz, Jacob Brits, Ben Liebenberg and others. A sampling of historical titles reveals a preoccupation with historiography and nationalist themes (especially the Great Trek and Second Anglo-Boer War). The first of these themes appears regularly: *Ou en Nuwe Weë in die Suid-Afrikaanse Geskiedskrywing* (‘Old and New Paths in South African Historiography’, Van Jaarsveld’s inaugural lecture of 1961); *Die Hervertolking van ons Geskiedenis* (‘The Reinterpretation of our History’, edited by Van Jaarsveld, Muller and Scholtz, as well as Theo van Wijk, 1964 – note the use of the word ‘our’); and *A Select Bibliography of South African History* (1966 and many later reprints); as well as in titles from the 1970s, such as *Oor vertolkingsverskille in die geskiedskrywing* (‘On differences in interpretation in historiography’, Mathys van Zyl, 1971); and *Opstelle oor die Suid-Afrikaanse historiografie* (‘Essays on South African Historiography, edited by B.J. Liebenberg, 1974). These are just a few examples from a wider list focusing on historiography and approaches to the study of history.

The second key theme, equally, produced a large number of titles. Van Jaarsveld and other historians have pointed out that Afrikaner historical writing revolved around the themes of the Great Trek and the Second Anglo-Boer War: he explains, “it was a dynamic period and a peculiarly romantic one; it was the period of great epic achievements by the Afrikaner people” (quoted in Smith, 1988: 65). These histories were part of the trend in Afrikaner historiography of casting Afrikaner history in terms of nationalism and ideology (see Smith,

1988). It has been argued that such promotion of specific Afrikaner ideologies in itself constituted support for the apartheid regime and its ideologies. Thus, in addition to Muller's 1960 title, mentioned above, and his other titles on the experiences of other Voortrekkers, we find *Die Tydgenootlik Beoordeling van die Groot Trek, 1836–1842* ('The Contemporary Evaluation of the Great Trek, 1836–1842', Van Jaarsveld, 1962), *Die Beeld van die Groot Trek in die Suid-Afrikaanse Geskiedskrywing 1843–1899* ('The Image of the Great Trek in South African Historiography', Van Jaarsveld, 1963); *Nederland en die Voortrekkers van Natal* ('The Netherlands and the Natal Voortrekkers', Liebenberg, 1964); and a later reprint of Muller's important work, *Die Oorsprong van die Groot Trek* ('The Origins of the Great Trek', 1987). Again, this is but a sample of the numerous titles produced.

But Muller's important and prize-winning (he was awarded the Stals prize for History by the Suid-Afrikaanse Akademie vir Wetenskap en Kuns in 1977) work, was almost not published by Unisa Press at all. *Die Oorsprong van die Groot Trek* was first published by Tafelberg in 1974, and only by Unisa Press in 1987, when a second edition was required and the original publisher declined. Ken Smith (1988: 77) argues that Muller "could not be classified amongst those who wrote history from a specifically republican or nationalist standpoint", but much of his work did focus on the Great Trek and other nationalist events, and it was certainly not critical of apartheid policies or ideologies.

Van Jaarsveld's role as an Afrikaner historian is also a complicated one. While widely celebrated for his prolific studies of Afrikaner (and broader South African) history and historiography, he was also criticised for his approach to historiography, and especially for not mythologising Afrikaner history to a greater extent (as in Du Toit's "academic tarring and feathering" of him in 1984). His early years as a historian were characterised by a struggle for recognition, amidst an attempt to revive local historiography (cf. Mouton & Van Jaarsveld, 2004). Alex Mouton and Albert Van Jaarsveld (2004: 184) argue that these experiences influenced his political beliefs and coloured his own work: "The knocks Van Jaarsveld took, made him more conformist, culminating in his ultra-conservative and chauvinistic book, *Afrikaner quo vadis* [published by Voortrekkerpers] in 1971. It would take the shock of the collapse of the Portuguese empire in 1974 and the Soweto uprising of 1976 to return him to a more enlightened and realistic stance." On the whole, though, his

ideological approach has been described as being “very much in line with Afrikaner nationalist political thinking” (Smith, 1988: 84), and he was a close friend of the very conservative historian G.D. Scholtz. His political leanings are an important factor in considering his academic work because, as Mouton notes, “[f]or Van Jaarsveld, being an historian was not just a job; it was a calling to be a public intellectual” (2011: 153). As one of the most prolific and respected historians of his time, it is significant that he chose to publish only a handful of his works through Unisa Press.

In contrast, Van Jaarsveld’s friend, the historian and journalist G.D. Scholtz, who also published just a few items with Unisa Press, was unapologetically supportive of apartheid. In addition to his work with Unisa Press, which was not particularly controversial, he wrote some outspoken works: *’n Swart Suid-Afrika?* (‘A Black South Africa?’, Overberg Publishers, 1964) and *Die Bedreiging van die Liberalisme* (‘The Threat of Liberalism’, Voortrekkerpers, 1965) as warnings of the dangers of not following the path of separate development. These fall at the far left of the continuum, in support of apartheid.

Similarly, B.J. Liebenberg published a number of his historical studies at Unisa, where he was a professor, but not his controversial study of Andries Pretorius, based on his Unisa doctoral thesis. The latter study, *Andries Pretorius in Natal*, was published by Africana Books, and caused a stir because it portrayed the Voortrekker leader in a relatively unbiased – and thus partly unflattering – light. This reflects the wider tendency both among colleagues in the Department of History and the wider university, as well as within the ruling party and its adherents, to sustain internal debates about the ideological dimensions of apartheid. This also reflects Unisa’s adoption of N.P. van Wyk Louw’s concept of *lojale verset*. However, none of these debates, even when considered ‘reformist’, envisaged fundamental changes to the apartheid framework itself. In other words, it becomes clear that Unisa allowed a certain amount of dissent, but no direct challenge to the government of the day, a stance characterised as “repressive tolerance” (Marcum, 1981).

There is also a sub-set of publications from the 1960s, which aimed at making sources available in the area of race relations, but not necessarily from a particular political viewpoint. An example of these is A.E. du Toit’s publications of *The Earliest British Document*

on Education for the Coloured Races (1962) and *The Earliest South African Documents on the Education and Civilization of the Bantu* (1963). In this class, too, we could place the later *Bibliography of Official Publications of the Black South African Homelands* (Dirk Kotzé, 1979 ff.). These might be considered examples of privatism, but this kind of awareness creation, in the absence of political comment, was also found among the liberal tradition at WUP and UNP.

To some extent, a range of views emerges when examining the publishing list in terms of awareness of the apartheid categories of “population group”: black, white, coloured, and Indian. Many studies uncritically examine aspects of (racially differentiated) society, such as “die Blanke platteland” (‘the White rural areas’, Smit, 1973) and “die Naturelle-Administrasie” (‘Native Administration’, Van As, 1980). A host of linguistic and anthropological studies focus on the “Bantu”, the “Nguni” and the “Hottentot”. This use of the terminology of apartheid indicates little challenge to the status quo, and even a level of compliance with the system – the tacit acceptance implied by the category of privatism or ‘neutrality’.

1970s

The next decade shows a similar shift within the boundaries of “repressive tolerance”. At one end of the continuum, an overtly biased text is that of Jan Hendrik Moolman, *Ru-apartheid en afsonderlike ontwikkeling in Pretoria* (‘Pure apartheid and separate development in Pretoria’, 1972). Moolman, who was head of the Department of Geography at Unisa and later Director of the Africa Institute of South Africa, coined the concept of *ru-apartheid* (which could be translated as ‘pure apartheid’), which implied total segregation of the races in a geographic area. However, he argued that he did not support the imposition of *ru-apartheid* on South African cities, but rather (what he considered the watered-down version) the notion of separate development, with separate, duplicated facilities in two overlapping urban segments. This was an influential idea, with other academics applying the concept to urban settings around South Africa (cf. Nöthling, 1973). Moolman also produced population distribution maps of South Africa and a study of Bophuthatswana, one of the apartheid-era homelands or bantustans. He was a clear supporter of apartheid policies, as evidenced by his publications.

A similarly biased text was *The Marketing of the International Image of South Africa* (Cronjé and Lucas, 1978). Geoffrey Cronjé, in particular, was well known for his outspoken support for apartheid policies, which came through even in his scholarly work. However, this title is a more complicated example than the last, largely because of the diversity of contributors to the edited collection. On the one hand, this collection of conference proceedings speaks of the “success of the South African socio-cultural industry” (1978: 118) and of the importance of whites doing “what is best for Blacks” (Ibid.), but on the other hand, a black contributor to the conference argued in the same volume that “the first thing that must be done is to remove all apartheid legislation” (1978: 252). There is also a recognition of “the fact that we discriminate in law on the basis of colour and the need to demonstrate to the world at large that we are moving with will towards an accommodation that people of all colours in the Republic will accept” (1978: 238). Once again, this reflects the room for dissent at Unisa, and the support for the expression of differing viewpoints – the mindset of *lojale verset*.

Certain titles dealing with current affairs were not as supportive of government policy. One example is Willem Kleynhans and his comparative study of political parties, *Politieke Partye in Suid-Afrika: 'n Empiriese vergelykende beskouing* (‘Political parties in South Africa: An empirical comparative view’, 1974). While Kleynhans began his career as a political scientist in support of the National Party, from 1955 onwards he became steadily disenchanted – beginning with the disenfranchisement of Coloured voters in the Western Cape. As part of the ‘Group of 13’ lecturers from Unisa and the University of Pretoria, he took part in protests and petitions against the narrowing of the electorate. Like others in his position at the Afrikaans universities – *verligte* or progressive intellectuals – it appears that he was punished by delays in promotion. The acceptance of Kleynhans’s views by anti-apartheid activists is exemplified by approving quotations of his work in one of SPRO-CAS’s oppositional publications, *Directions of Change in South African Politics* (1971). But it is difficult to classify Kleynhans’s work according to the continuum’s categories of dissent; he may perhaps best be placed in the ‘change through association’ category.

Commentary on politics could also be made through the medium of labour studies, as at the other university presses. Thus studies of trade unions, black-white relations and “black

labour” (Bendix, 1976) emerged, especially from the Institute for Labour Relations. N.E. Wiehahn produced his inaugural lecture at Unisa, on *The Regulation of Labour Relations in a Changing South Africa* (1977), before going on to put his name to the government’s Wiehahn Commission on labour legislation in 1979. This report was then examined, in turn, by B.U. Lombard and others, in *The Challenge of the New Industrial Relations Dispensation in South Africa* (1979). Francine de Clerq (1979: 72) has suggested that this area of study, focusing on industrial relations and labour, was a reflection of significant internal debates within the ruling class “over the nature and scope of concessions necessary to buy over certain strata of the black population to act as a buffer between the white ruling minority and the black masses”. She adds that, after the implementation of the Wiehahn and Riekert Commissions’ recommendations, “[n]ew ways need[ed] to be found to organize relations between the State, the employers and the workers, and to coerce the black labour force into more effective institutions of labour control and discipline” (De Clerq, 1979: 72). Such studies thus tended to support the status quo, but not necessarily uncritically.

1980s

Going into the 1980s, we find a continuation of this theme, with an abundance of studies of industrial relations, which range across the political spectrum, reflecting “internal debates”. Some support apartheid openly, while others are examples of privatism, or withdrawal from political comment; still others are more liberal in orientation and some advocate reform from within – the ‘change through association’ category of academic dissent. The titles give a sense of the ongoing internal debates on these issues: *Swart Arbeid, Knelpunte in Arbeidsbetrekkinge* (‘Black labour, sticking points in labour relations’, by Jacobus Farrell, 1978); *Urban Blacks in Urban Space* (J.H. Lange & Retha van Wyk, 1980); *Free Enterprise, Political Democracy and Labour in South Africa* (D.W.F. Bendix, 1980); *Black and White Labour in One Common South African Industrial Relations System* (Mike Alfred & D.W.F. Bendix, 1980); *The Black Manager in a White World* (Linda Human, 1981); *Problems of Black Advancement in South Africa* (Karl B. Hofmeyr, 1981); *Black Advancement: The Reality and Challenge* (seminar proceedings, 1982); and *The Future of Residential Group Areas* (M. Rajah, 1986 – this being one of the first Indian authors at Unisa Press).

Another group of publications that is difficult to classify is the series of conference proceedings emanating from the Institute for Theological Research, after it was established in 1975. These are not necessarily more critical than other works from Unisa Press, but they expressed an openness to a wide spectrum of viewpoints. This may in part be attributed to the Director of the Institute, Willem S. Vorster, a New Testament scholar at Unisa who was as well-known for the quality of his work as for his openness to opposing views: “Vorster was a critical scholar: nothing was just accepted and no view propagated without critical scrutiny ... without fear he vented his critical thoughts and was always ready to explain the ‘critical faith’ he believed in” (Le Roux, quoted in Botha, 1998: x). He thus used the vehicle of the ITR conferences to explore areas beyond the traditional confines of religion, and especially to examine wider social issues. A selection of the titles published gives a sense of the wide scope of ideas examined:

- *Church and Industry* (no. 7, 1983)
- *Sexism and Feminism in Theological Perspective* (no. 8, 1984) – the first time feminist theology received academic attention in South Africa.
- *Views on Violence* (no. 9, 1985) – a text that paid attention to structural violence in society, and the inherent violence of apartheid: “It is the systematic denial of rightful options to certain people on whatever grounds, whether it be race or class, that does violence to their person” (1985: 45).
- *Reconciliation and Construction: Creative options for a rapidly changing South Africa* (no. 10, 1986).
- *The Right to Life: Issues in Bioethics* (no. 12, 1988).
- *The Morality of Censorship* (no. 13, 1989).
- *Building a New Nation: The Quest for a New South Africa* (1991) – a publication that “endorse[d] a rejection of anything that smacks of apartheid” (1991: 44).
- *Religious Freedom in South Africa* (no. 17, 1993).

Title number 13, *The Morality of Censorship*, illustrates the difficulties in attempting to categorise some of Unisa’s publications. On the one hand, continuing conservatism may be seen in the make-up of the contributors: seven authors, six white males, and one white female – including Prof J.C.W. van Rooyen, who was chairman of the Publications Appeal

Board at the time. But a growing liberalisation, and a commitment to ‘change through association’, was also reflected in some of the contributions themselves: “In our society we have a publicly unresponsive and unrepresentative government, which has a monopoly on instruments of coercion without being accountable to the large majority of the population it is supposed to serve, but instead dominates” (1989: 24). In this chapter, Venter went on to call on his fellow academics to change: “Let us not fiddle while Soweto burns” (1989: 33). It had taken a full thirteen years for the Soweto Uprising to be mentioned in a Unisa Press book. What is achieved in this collection is similar to what was attempted in the Unisa journals: the inclusion of a wider variety of viewpoints and contributors, at a point when these were considered low risk, as Gardiner (2002: 12) points out: “What was being attempted by *Unisa English Studies* was the inclusion of an inoffensive work by a black poet into an otherwise white collection with as little political risk as possible”.

Into the 1990s

Lingering conservatism may be seen in the debate over the title of a collection published in 1991: *White But Poor: Essays on the History of Poor Whites in Southern Africa 1880-1940* (edited by Maurice Boucher and Robert Morrell). Grundlingh (2012), in an interview, noted that Unisa Press was in many respects conservative in the late 1980s, and described the disagreements over the title of the work. The Press, and a number of other scholars, saw the title as objectionable, because it was felt that it reflected badly on white people. However, the Press went ahead with publication, and elected to keep the title after strong support from a group of academics at Unisa.

Another member of the History Department was Jacob P. Brits, who studied political history. His major work, *Op die Vooraand van Apartheid 1939–1948* (published by Unisa Press in 1994), looks at the historical trends leading up to 1948, the year the National Party was elected into power. It was considered very even-handed in approach, neither supporting nor condemning the National Party. In a review of the book for the *South African Historical Journal*, Furlong (1996: 216) remarks on this balanced approach: “Although strongly critical of the actions of white politicians, he [Brits] speaks from within the Afrikaner tradition, critically but sympathetically, rather than as an iconoclast”. Furlong goes on to commend Brits’s “careful concern to appear evenhanded” (ibid.). Similarly, Lubbe (1996: 227)

describes Brits as “‘n selfkritiese Afrikaner-historikus” (‘a self-critical Afrikaner historian’). Brits’s earlier work through Unisa Press examined the right-wing politician Tielman Roos, and was titled *Political Prophet or Opportunist?* (1987). This approach may be characterised as in keeping with *lojale verset*.

While never acting as a provocative or oppositional publisher, then, Unisa Press appears to have become more responsive to external events and influences during the 1980s and into the 1990s, and I posit a link with the wider opening up of South African society. For example, this period would see a text such as *Building a New Nation* published in 1991 – a text that would likely not have seen the light of day in the 1970s. In the 1990s, especially, there is a distinct editorial shift, to include a growing interest in post-apartheid politics. The number of black authors increased, at the same time as ‘black’ issues received renewed focus. Thus, the 1990s revealed titles like *Dilemmas of African Intellectuals in South Africa* (Themba Sono, 1994); *A Man with a Shadow: The Life and Times of Professor ZK Matthews* (Willem Saayman, 1996); *The ANC and the Negotiated Settlement in South Africa* (Isaac Rantete, 1996); *South Africa in Transition: Focus on the Bill of Rights* (Gretchen Carpenter, 1996); *From Protest to Challenge: A Documentary History of African Politics in South Africa* (Thomas G. Karis and Gail M. Gerhart, volume 5, 1997). This direct engagement with current events, and the new perspectives offered, represented a real shift in publishing philosophy.

The application of the continuum to the concrete evidence offered by the actual publishing output of the university presses thus reveals several interesting findings. Perhaps the most significant is the degree of flux in the intellectual responses of the presses over the years, showing more conservatism than anticipated among the so-called open universities, and more liberalism (or perhaps ‘repressive tolerance’) than expected at the more hegemonically aligned university. Moreover, results show that, over time, the positions and publishing strategies adopted by the South African university presses shifted, becoming increasingly liberal and even, to some degree, oppositional.

5.2 Author diversity

The model developed for assessing the contribution of the university presses is also concerned with issues of exclusion and gatekeeping. The aim of this section is to extend the analysis conducted this far, based on thematic content, and to examine and develop a profile of the authors who submitted their manuscripts for publication. Who was published, and, just as importantly, who was not? The literature on oppositional publishing suggests that oppositional publishers published both marginalised authors (such as first-time authors, women and black authors), as well as mainstream authors writing on oppositional topics. Moreover, the selection of authors implies an important gatekeeping role: “The publishing house determines who is ‘part of the scene’, who can call themselves a ‘writer’; the publishing house regulates the appearance of works on the market, coaches the author, decides who will continue to be published” (De Glas, 1998: 386).

There are few formal models in the literature for how to develop an authors’ profile for a publishing house. De Glas (1998: 387) has used a certain set of criteria to determine the distinctive character of a publisher’s list. The first attribute is the continuity or exclusiveness of attachment of an author to one publishing house rather than another; the second the number of titles produced by each author; the third, the profitability of an author; and the fourth, the author’s contribution to the prestige of the publishing house. It is difficult to use such measures to analyse a scholarly publishing list, however, in contrast to the trade fiction lists examined by De Glas. For one thing, few, if any, scholarly authors show any loyalty to a specific university press when publishing; as a result, there is little continuity of attachment of academic authors. The third measure, too, is not always relevant, in the context of non-profit or cost-recovery publishing, rather than a commercial enterprise built upon profit.

Rather than relying on such criteria for literary and commercial authors, then, demographic criteria might be used to help to establish the profile of who was publishing at the university presses: the racial classifications of black and white, the distinctions between male and female, the languages used, and the age of authors (e.g. established as opposed to young, emerging scholars). All of these demographics reflect the power dynamics at work within

the institutions themselves as well. This focus on power enables us to examine the unequal access to publishing platforms of different academics.

5.2.1 Author profiles

As Merrett (1994: 103) notes, “[p]erhaps unsurprisingly, the universities reflected the norms of the society which surrounded them”. It is immediately clear that most of the publications reflected their context in certain ways. For one thing, the vast majority of the early texts were in the language of teaching of the institutions (English at Wits, Natal and Fort Hare, and Afrikaans at Unisa), and the majority of the texts published by the university presses were written by white men, often professors at the parent universities hosting the presses (see Figures 5.1 to 5.4). This is similar to other sectors of academic publishing, where the majority of authors – Galloway & Venter (2006) put the figure at over 80% – for the greater part of the twentieth century were senior, white, male academics. This is unsurprising in the sense that the universities in South Africa were largely homogenous communities – overwhelmingly white, male, English-speaking and privileged. They formed the cultural and numerical majority within the sphere of the universities, in stark contrast to their position as minorities in South African society. Moreover, the society in which they functioned was extremely heterogeneous and, indeed, highly unequal. As a result, it may be possible to state that the university presses supported only a certain elite – not necessarily a political elite, but certainly a cultural and intellectual one – as authors in their publishing programmes. Indeed, the focus of this study may be seen as the output of elite groups, as those without access to university press publishing fall outside the scope of the research. Their voices are not carried through this channel.

An important aspect of the authorship, which both affects and is affected by the publishing philosophy of the presses, is that the publications were written by producers and for producers, i.e. for elite consumption, as is the case for scholarly publishing generally. In contrast, oppositional publications were written by producers for a wider, mass audience (which was politically defined rather than demographically or by class). As noted earlier, Bourdieu makes a distinction between those publishers that are willing to take a risk with new authors, for long-term gain, and those that prefer to publish established, best-seller

authors, for mass consumption and short-term gain (Bourdieu, 1985). The university presses fall on the side of long-term gains, because their missions emphasise lasting academic merit over short-term profits.

However, it should be noted that the gatekeeping practices of the university presses tend to work in favour of more established authors, and against the publication of young, untested authors. There is thus a definite leaning towards a conservative, cautious approach in selecting authors and their works. Thus, in contrast to the oppositional publishers, the university presses did not publish many new, untried authors, nor authors who may be considered marginalised. Where there is an overlap in the author profiles of the oppositional publishers and the university presses, this is usually a group of established scholars who have collaborated to produce outspoken, ‘militant-radical’ works with the oppositional publishers, while publishing their ‘safe’ research with the university presses. With time, there has been a gradual increase in the number of female authors, as well as black scholars, and a small but noticeable international contingent as well.

As a result, the author pool was very small, and remains under-developed even today. For literary publishing, it has been suggested that, “the imbalance due to a preponderance of older productive authors (who had long given the list its prestige) served to mask the fact that few young authors, who might introduce new idioms or stylistic influences, were being recruited” (De Glas, 1998: 391). There is a similar imbalance in terms of the university presses’ author pools, and more broadly concerns have been expressed about the ageing cohort of scholarly authors at South African universities (Mouton, Boshoff & Tijssen, 2006: 48–50). The most prolific authors, moreover, were not necessarily the same as the most prestigious authors.

White men, then, were seen as the norm among authors submitting manuscripts for consideration by the university presses. Even more broadly, in terms of other forms of publishing, the same effect pertained. Generally, in South African publishing, “Afrikaans, English and black authors [have] had very different publishing possibilities” (Deysel, 2007: 11):

The constraints imposed on them differed in terms of the regime of the day and their respective reader pools. English authors had few publishing opportunities within South Africa, and were mainly published by British and American publishers. They had to fight for South African English to be accepted as worthy publishing medium, and were struggling to create an indigenous literature in English. Through the apartheid state, black authors were especially repressed, and, out of necessity, they turned to literary magazines in order to be published. Afrikaans was published aggressively....

This is true also for scholarly publishing in South Africa, and may be seen in the demographic make-up of the author profiles of the university presses. Figures 5.2 to 5.4, which follow, depict the author profiles of the presses, according to the variables of race and gender based on information derived from the bibliographies compiled for the presses (see the accompanying CD for further information on the bibliographies).

Figure 5.2 Author profile by race and gender, WUP

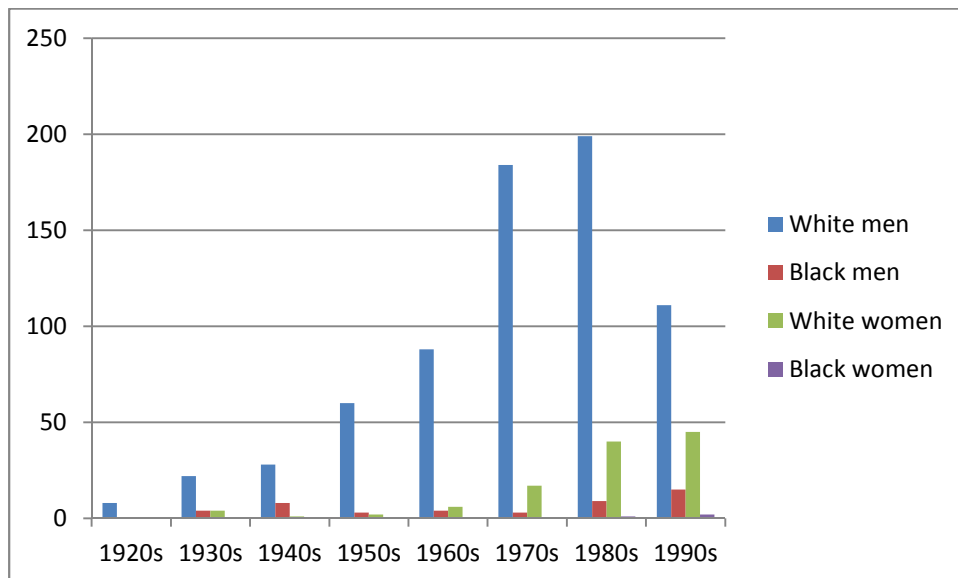


Figure 5.3 Author profile by race and gender, UNP

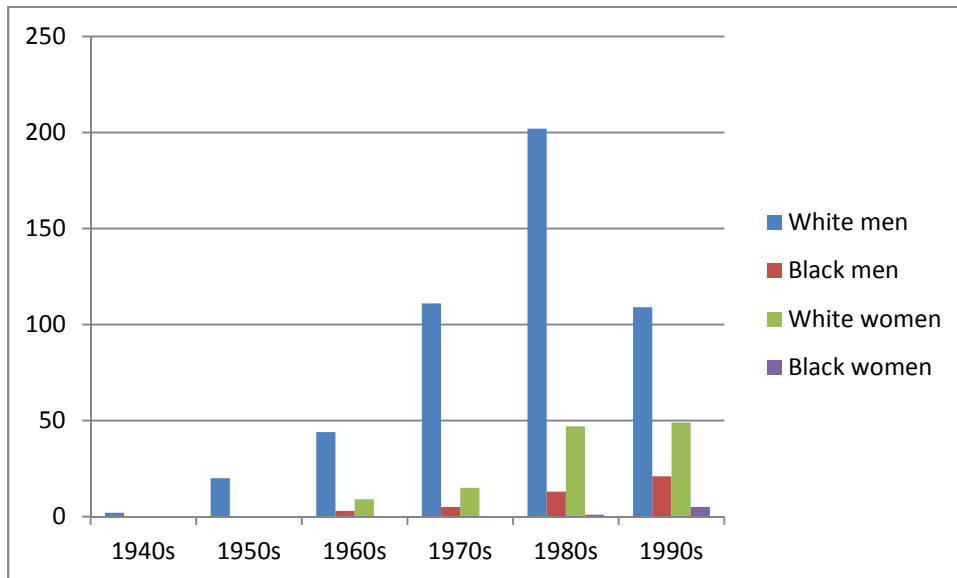
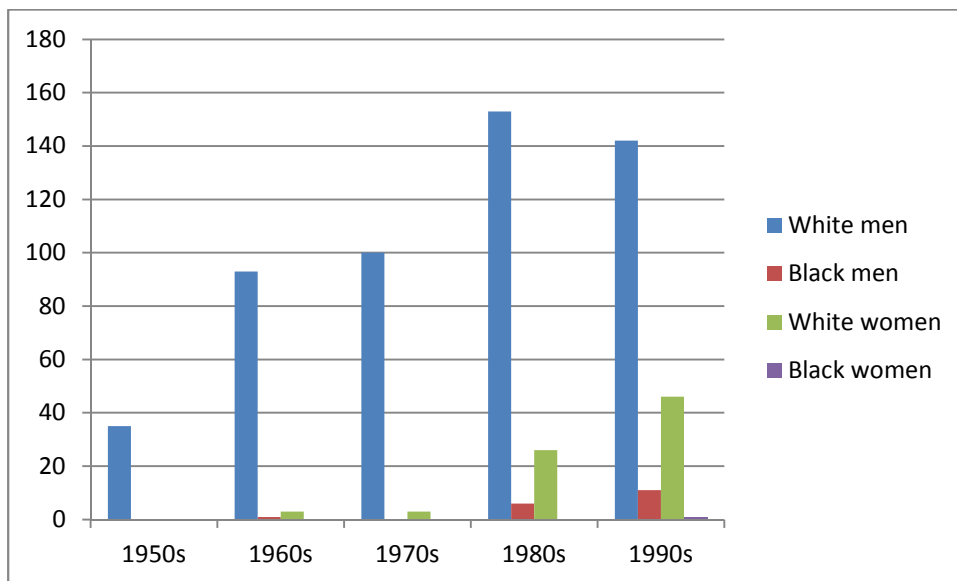


Figure 5.4 Author profile by race and gender, Unisa



The figures are remarkably consistent, given that they plot the producers of knowledge and the publications output at three very different institutions. Use a timescale to plot shifts in the author profiles over time, we see an overwhelming bias towards white male authors through the whole period. Thus, while the figures do show a distinct trend of growth in the numbers of white female authors, and some growth among black male authors as well towards the end of the period, they also show the continuing dominance of white men as

authors of South African scholarly books. It is only in the 1990s that black women academics really started to make an impact as a category, yet still on a very small scale and off a very low base.

The question of language highlights another angle of the publishing philosophy of the university presses. Language is a contested issue in South Africa, yet the language of the great majority of scholarly titles produced by the university presses is English. Because it is an international language, English is often considered the language of scholarship in South Africa, so this is hardly surprising. At South Africa's university presses, some attempt has been made to publish in Afrikaans and occasionally in other local languages, but this is no longer the norm, as scholarly publishing has increasingly moved towards English as the medium of communication. The decision to publish in English is "a deliberate marketing decision, as it increases the potential world-wide market for such books" (SA Publishing, n.d.). Bozzoli (1977: 192) noted in the 1970s that "except in the case of the departments for languages other than English, the papers and books published by English-university staff are written exclusively in English and many appear in journals in Great Britain and North America". At the same time, there have been increasing political and cultural pressures to publish in the other official languages of the country.

At Unisa, for instance, an attempt has been made to publish in Afrikaans and occasionally in other local languages, but this is no longer the norm there. The majority of the early titles were in Afrikaans, while there was a later policy of producing bilingual texts, i.e. a simultaneous English and Afrikaans edition of a work. The language policy at Unisa in fact strongly encouraged bilingualism, and the Press's output reflected this. The first English-language title came in the first year of publishing, with number four in the A series, *Linguistic and Literary Achievement in the Bantu Languages of South Africa*, by Dirk Ziervogel (1956). African-language titles were mainly published in service of the university's large African Languages Department, and of its students, in the form of textbooks. At the University of Natal Press, there were a few titles published in translation (e.g. Magera Fuze), and an isolated case of one or two Afrikaans-language publications, usually in the field of Afrikaans literature. But this does not appear to have been an important part of the editorial policy there.

In contrast, at Wits University Press, an important aspect of the editorial policy from the outset was the promotion of African language publishing, largely due to the influence of Clement Doke, professor in the Department of Bantu Studies. Maake (2000: 145) argues that, as a result, “[o]nly one university can be associated with publishing in African Languages.” Today, the situation has changed somewhat, but this was certainly true of the twentieth-century period.

5.2.2 Black authors

Attention will now specifically be focused on one demographic area, the publishing of black authors, a highly marginalised group within the academic sphere. As early as 1945, R.H.W. Shepherd of Lovedale was extolling the principle that “Bantu (sic) authors should be encouraged as much as possible” (1945: 17). As a result, the author profile of the Lovedale Press is impressive, including many of the greatest black authors in South Africa (almost entirely men, it should be mentioned). But Shepherd went further, convening meetings and workshops for black authors, sometimes in collaboration with academics at Wits, such as J.D. Rheinallt Jones and Clement Doke of the Department of Bantu Studies. The university presses have not had such an impressive record in respect of developing black authors.

At WUP, the first black author published was the Reverend John Henderson Soga, with an edited version of his anthropological text, *The South-Eastern Bantu*, in 1930. But by far the most black authors were published through the channel of the Bantu Treasury Series, such as Benedict Wallet Vilakazi, in 1935 (with a volume of isiZulu poetry) and James Jolobe in 1936 (with isiXhosa poetry). Other prominent authors also featured in the Bantu Treasury Series, among them S.E.K. Mqhayi, Sol T. Plaatje (with a translation of Julius Caesar) and Sophonia Mofokeng. However, it could be said that even through the publication of such authors in the Bantu Treasury Series, WUP was supporting a certain intellectual elite, as the authors largely came from a specific group of black intellectuals, who formed part of the New African Movement. Indeed, Masilela (2009: 5) suggests that the establishment of the series was an important aspect of “the hoped-for cultural revolution”, and was “fundamental in cultivating the intellectual and cultural space of the New African

Movement". It could also be argued that WUP, like other white-owned publishers in South Africa, was contributing to the white commodification of black literature.

However, going further than simply publishing their work, Clement Doke also supported the appointment of black academics at the University. Ten years before the Nationalists came to power, and twenty before the implementation of Bantu Education (or separate education for separate races), the appointment of Vilakazi as an academic provoked a great deal of criticism and controversy. But Vilakazi was not just a token appointment: he submitted his MA thesis in 1938 on 'The Conception and Development of Poetry in Zulu' (with Doke as supervisor), a portion of which was published in the journal *Bantu Studies*. Vilakazi later earned his doctorate in literature, in 1946, with 'The Oral and Written Literature in Nguni' (again under Doke's supervision) – the first D.Litt to be awarded to a black South African (Doke, 1949: 165). The year 1948 then saw the publication of Doke and Vilakazi's huge collaborative work, the *Zulu-English Dictionary*. (This was published posthumously, as Vilakazi died of meningitis in 1947.) The two volumes of "dictionaries remain among the most comprehensive and scholarly yet produced for any Bantu language" and are still in use, although updated (Murray, 1982: 139).

At the same time as these distinguished black authors were being published, Wits continued to publish a range of titles by white liberal authors. Black authors were mostly confined to the fields of either literature or linguistics. Indeed, it is only in the late 1980s that the list opens up to include black authors on a wider range of topics, including nursing, health policy studies, migrants, and education. (A similar trend may be identified at all of the university presses.) One example is that of Es'kia Mphahlele, who returned to South Africa from exile in 1977, and became the first professor of African literature at Wits in 1983. He was published by WUP in 1986, with a title on *Poetry and Humanism: Oral Beginnings*. This very short pamphlet was the published version of a lecture presented in the Raymond Dart lecture series, not a substantial original work. Mphahlele was not comfortable in his position as a black lecturer at a predominantly white university, and did not remain there for long.

The selection of texts was also gendered. As far as women are concerned, WUP published some very distinguished academics, such as Maria Breyer-Brandwijk (*On the Phytochemistry*

of *Some South African Poisonous and Medicinal Plants*, 1938), Hilda Kuper (*The Uniform of Colour*, 1947), and the coal scientist and palaeobotanist Edna Plumstead (*Coal in Southern Africa*, 1957). Edna Janisch first self-published her *Section Drawing from Simple Geological Maps* in 1933, but later editions were published by WUP in 1938 and 1946. In 1960, WUP published the work of the first woman professor at Wits, Prof. Heather Martienssen of the Department of Fine Arts. While the numbers of female professors and authors grew over the years, there remained a distinct imbalance throughout the apartheid period, with an inclination towards the publication of white men. There is thus a sexist element to selection as well.

The trend at Natal was similar: a pattern of publishing mostly white men and some women, while black authors (almost exclusively men) were published in literary fields. The first black author published by UNP was C.L. Sibusiso Nyembezi, with the text of a short lecture given at the university, published as *A Review of Zulu Literature*, in 1961. Cyril Nyembezi was a lecturer in African languages and literature at Wits University at this time (he had previously lectured at Fort Hare, but resigned his post in protest against the Extension of Education Act of 1959), and was also published by WUP (with *Zulu Proverbs*, in 1954).

UNP followed this publication with an anthropological work by Absalom Vilakazi, *Zulu Transformations: A Study of the Dynamics of Social Change* in 1962. The latter book was described in a 1969 catalogue (UNP book list, 1969: 3) as: “the first work by an African student in the field of Social Anthropology to be published in the Republic of South Africa. Written ‘from the inside’, the material has a reality about it which is frequently lacking in anthropological books.” A review by Hilda Kuper (1964: 183) similarly overtly mentions the author’s race and ethnicity (as a black, Zulu man), signalling just how unusual this publication was for the time. She notes, in an overt mention of the author rather than his work: “it is not usual to consider the background of a particular field worker pertinent to a review of his monograph”, before going on to add that “it is useful if not essential to know that, as he deliberately indicates, he himself is a Zulu and a Christian, as well as a trained anthropologist who presented *Zulu Transformation* (sic) for a doctoral thesis to the University of Natal, South Africa”. (Kuper herself, as shown in the content analysis above, was an established female academic, who was published by both WUP and UNP.)

UNP did not actively seek out black authors, perhaps in part because unlike WUP it did not support the publishing of local literature or African languages in its earlier years. But UNP is notable for the publication of Indian authors, and of publications dealing with Indian issues. This is largely related to its location in KwaZulu-Natal, and its enduring interest in regional matters, as shown in the content analysis.

At Unisa, the author profile is dramatically skewed towards white male authors. Indeed, by 1964, it had developed that the members of the Publications Committee also constituted the majority of authors published, including Profs D.R. Beeton, M.J. Posthumus, and H.J. de Vleeschauwer. The first black author to be published by Unisa Press was A.C. Nkabinde, with his linguistic study, *Some Aspects of Foreign Words in Zulu* (1968). Nkabinde was an important figure in the field of linguistics, as well as later becoming the first black rector of the University of Zululand. He was also chairperson of the Language Subcommittee of the SABC Board. This was followed in 1972, by the *Handbook of the Venda Language* (with the authors Dirk Ziervogel, P.J. Wentzel and T.N. Makuya), and in 1973, by *Xironga Folk-Tales* (compiled by Erdmann J.M. Baumbach and C.T.D. Marivate). It appears that black authors were seen as most acceptable when writing about their own languages, although at Unisa this was even tempered by the addition of white linguists. This patronising attitude remained firmly in place as late as 1984, when the next single-authored text by a black author was published – a theological text on *God's Creative Activity Through the Law: A constructive statement toward a theology of social transformation* by Simon Maimela. Nor was this an opening of the flood-gates; such authors remained few and far between until the early 1990s, a reflection of the slower rate of change at Unisa, perhaps.

This means, in effect, that even the liberal and oppositional texts published by the university presses were written by white authors (including some very distinguished academics). A case in point is a text published by David Philip in 1987, *Democratic Liberalism in South Africa* (Butler, Elphick & Welsh, 1987), and which was written by “the cream of the crop of South African white academia” (McDonald, 1988: 97). Kgwane (1977: 234) bemoaned the fact that “even research work at the Black universities is carried out by white academics”, a situation that many see as continuing into the post-apartheid era (cf. Jonathan Jansen,

2003: 11, who argues that “black intellectuals do not enjoy the same access to leading publishing houses and resources as do white intellectuals”). Raymond Suttner (1985: 73) has noted, especially of the 1960s, that, “[b]ecause state repression was primarily directed at black political activities, this was a period when (mainly white) liberal and university political activities achieved considerable prominence, more or less in isolation from blacks, but also, in a sense, as surrogates for black opposition”. He sees one of the consequences as the “artificial prominence” of white liberal academics (Ibid.).

This finding is not entirely surprising, given that the staff compositions of the universities consisted largely of white men, and access to various aspects of academia and knowledge production (including the university presses) was controlled by white men. In fact, “the open universities were overwhelmingly staffed, administratively and academically, by whites, the majority of whom had political views which were probably little different from those of the large body of white South Africans. Most would have deemed themselves committed to academic freedom; only a small minority, before the early 1990s, would have been committed to majority rule. Theirs was a liberalism which was qualified by their socialisation into, and location in, a situation of racial privilege. In short, theirs was a ‘racial liberalism’” (Southall & Cobbing, 2001: 5). This white domination of academia and its processes, Evans (1990: 23) argues, led to the “exclusion of blacks from shaping the intellectual life of South Africa”. However, Mahmood Mamdani has criticised the universities for not doing more to cultivate a black academic cohort, arguing that “[t]here was a native intelligentsia, but it was to be found mainly outside universities, in social movements or religious institutions” and that this intelligentsia “functioned without institutional support” (quoted in Sanders, 2002: 12).

As a result, there were perilously few potential black authors, given the presses’ inward-looking stance when soliciting manuscripts and their faculties’ being closed to staff from certain racial groups. Black academics were limited by the restrictions of the segregated higher education system. This restricted their access to education, and also their knowledge production and publishing opportunities. The legislated segregation of black and white academics into separate institutions in effect introduced an additional level of exclusion

when it came to publishing as well; the main barrier to the publication of marginalised groups was structural and systemic, as Taylor (1991: 31) points out:

The lack of critical black intellectual work is primarily related to the fact that blacks in South Africa, due to apartheid, lack adequate access to higher education and institutional bases from which critical work can be developed. Specifically at university level the structures of apartheid restrict the small number of black students who can benefit from higher education at the black 'universities', the type of education they receive at these institutions and access to the 'open' universities.

The structure of higher education thus contributed to the "patterning of the racial and ideological composition of academic staff", as Badat (2008: 72) notes. He provides figures to back this statement up:

In 1970, black academics represented only 19,1% (87) of total academic staff at black universities, and in 1974, 28.8% (161). White conservatives dominated top posts. At the African universities, in 1979 only nine out of 105 professors and 14 out of 146 senior lecturers were black. Only at junior level was there greater parity – 89 white and 73 African lecturers.

Margo Russell (1979: 137) provides similarly skewed figures, noting that "South African universities in 1950 were essentially white institutions", with just 47 black faculty out of a total of 2 000 (2.3% of the total). By the mid-1960s, the ratio had improved modestly to 8%. Even so, black academic staff were largely employed only on a temporary and junior basis.

The lack of black authors is not only due to the limited pool of black academics, but also to the marginalisation of black academics. Indeed, it has been argued that "...the normal structuring of the academic debate is affected by the way in which Black academics are excluded from the mainstream of (South) African life or at least from playing a major part in it ... while the Afrikaans universities excluded the Black academic from research altogether, the English-speaking universities used him in a subordinate role to collect data on projects conceived by his White masters" (Rex, 1981: 19). This role may certainly be seen in the historically black universities in South Africa, where a disproportionate teaching load was placed on the shoulders of black academics, while the (often white) professors were free to concentrate on research and publication.

Yet Wits University Press, at least, saw its role, by the 1980s (when there was both increased government crackdown and a policy of ‘repressive tolerance’), as “service to Black writers and students” (Wilson, 1983b: 1). Indeed, in the 1980s, WUP’s editorial policy began to change. There was a growing feeling that “service” to the University was over-emphasised and that it should be replaced with an aggressive and competitive policy of more commercial publishing. There was some disagreement, it seems, as to whether the Press required “a new role and a new policy” allowing it to “operate as a profit-earning trade publisher similar to Ravan, David Philip or Ad Donker” – significantly, all of the publishers named here were oppositional publishers – or whether “[t]he new policy should not be seen as an attempt to convert the Press into a profit-earning trade publisher, but rather as an attempt to wean academics at the University to the idea that there are advantages in publishing their scholarly work through the Press” (Ibid.: 4). At this late stage, an attempt was thus made to facilitate participation in the publishing process by groups other than the ‘norm’. The effects may be seen in the slow, but distinct, trend towards the great inclusion of black and female authors over time.

What this implies is that the legislated segregation of black and white academics into separate academic institutions in effect meant that a gatekeeping and selection function was applied even before peer review, and that the main barrier to the publication of marginalised groups was structural and systemic. In other words, the grossly inferior facilities for black academics at what are now known as the historically black universities included inferior and limited access to publication or dissemination outlets. Kgware (1977: 232) warns of one of the dangers of such a lack of publishing: “Unless we [black academics] engage more vigorously in research and publication we may find we have lost our freedom as academics not through restriction but through neglect”.

5.2.3 Publishing struggle activists

Another important group of academics, which will be highlighted for the purposes of the author profiles, is the radical dissidents. On the whole, these fall outside of the continuum, as they tended to be most active outside the academic sphere altogether. Moreover, a number of significant anti-apartheid and activist academics chose not to publish their work

at the university presses, turning instead to the independent oppositional presses. In other words, their contribution cannot be captured from an analysis of publishing lists. As precise reasons are unclear, speculations may only be made on the basis of observations. For example, as mentioned earlier, Richard Turner of Wits published his research titled *The Eye of the Needle: Towards Participatory Democracy in South Africa* at Spro-Cas / Ravan in 1972 (instead of at WUP). Similarly, Eddie Roux published only his most scholarly and apolitical work with WUP: the uncontroversial *Veld and the Future*, in 1963, as his PhD was in plant physiology. Similarly, WUP was able to publish some of the less controversial and more academically neutral works of Peter Randall, on the theme of education, after he had been banned and forced to leave Ravan Press and took up academic work at Wits.

A catalogue of scholarly books banned (listed in De Baets, 2002: 431) reveals some of the more common publishers for such radical academics: these included international university presses and commercial academic publishers. For instance, Leo Kuper's *An African Bourgeoisie* was published by an international university press (Yale) in 1964; Hans Kohn and Wallace Sokolsky published *African Nationalism in the Twentieth Century* with the US commercial academic publisher Van Nostrand in 1965; Shula Marks and Stanley Trapido edited *The Politics of Race, Class and Nationalism in Twentieth-Century South Africa* for Longman (London) in 1988; and in the same year, Harold Wolpe published *Race, Class and the Apartheid State* for James Currey (co-published with the Organisation of African Unity's InterAfrican Cultural Fund and Unesco Press, but not a South African publisher). The oppositional publishers, Ravan and David Philip in particular, were also seen as options. A senior academic remembers that, during the 1980s, radical academics from Wits and Natal tended to publish all of their work at Ravan (Grundlingh, 2012).

In fact, during a review of WUP in 1987, questions were asked as to why so many Wits academics were publishing at Ravan Press, specifically. The response from Nan Wilson was that the academics had become impatient with the Press's refereeing procedures, finding them too scholarly, too rigorous, and too drawn out in time. Moreover, she argued that there was a perception that Ravan had a more radical image and better distribution. It was thus found more acceptable internationally, at a time when there was an academic boycott,

for a local academic seeking a publishing outlet (Wilson, quoted in 'Review of WUP', S87/415, 1987: 2-3).

Thus, the radical academics tended to be published by the recognised oppositional publishers, such as Ravan Press and David Philip Publishers, or else turned to international publishing houses. Some academics were unsuccessful in having manuscripts accepted overseas during the academic boycott, and they sometimes turned to the local presses as an alternative. On the whole, though, where we do find them published by the local university presses, it is either in the form of uncontroversial academic work, or under the auspices of academic freedom lecture series. The latter series were commonly found at a number of universities – such as the T.B. Davie academic freedom series (UCT), the E.G. Malherbe academic freedom series (Natal) or the Edgar Brookes memorial lecture series (Natal) – and provided a channel for dissenting, or at least less compliant, voices. They were published by the university presses, however, more in the spirit of service to their parent institutions than as a channel for oppositional publishing. What this suggests is that the university presses did not have the standing – the cultural capital, to use Bourdieu's terms – to attract politically outspoken authors. This clearly would affect the placement of the university presses on the continuum, in contrast to the oppositional publishers, as the results do show a bias towards more conservative work, supporting the status quo. The 'political reform' and 'militant-radical' works tended to be published outside the academic sphere, with independent publishers.

Some academics chose to publish both at oppositional or international publishers, as well as at their university presses. Shula Marks, even while based overseas, tended to seek South African co-publishers wherever possible for her titles, including *Patriotism, Patriarchy and Purity: Natal and the Politics of Zulu Ethnic Consciousness* (WUP, 1986); *'Not either an experimental doll': The Separate Worlds of Three South African Women. Correspondence of Lily Moya, Mabel Palmer and Sibusisiwe Makhanya* (UNP, 1987); and *Divided Sisterhood: Race, Class and Gender in the South African Nursing Profession* (WUP, 1994). Similarly, Lawrence Schlemmer, a well-known liberal academic, published a number of titles with UNP, but also published regularly with SPRO-CAS and Ravan Press. The eminent Edgar Brookes also published a few titles with UNP, but his major study, *Apartheid: A*

Documentary Study of Modern Africa, was published by Routledge in London in 1968. The main aim for such scholars was the widespread dissemination, at an affordable price and through accessible channels, of their work in South Africa. By following such a strategy, they could produce both more rigorous scholarly work and more outspoken work, by using different channels. Texts falling within different categories on the continuum would thus deliberately be placed with different kinds of publishers.

However, it should not be assumed that only the radical academics elected not to publish their work with the university presses. Examples may also be provided of numerous other academics – from across the political spectrum – who published both at the university presses associated with their own institutions, and with other publishers. A significant example is the influential history textbook, *500 Years: A History of South Africa*, which was edited by C.F.J. Muller, Head of the Department of History at Unisa. The textbook was published by H&R Academica (in 1969 for the first English edition, and 1968 for the first Afrikaans edition), not at Unisa Press. Several of Muller's other works were also not published at Unisa, and one of his most important works, *Die Oorsprong van die Groot Trek*, was first published by Tafelberg in 1974, and only later by Unisa (1987). Even before the apartheid period, moreover, there was a common pattern of important academics publishing their work at international publishers. A good example is that of the prominent academic E.G. Malherbe, who had a series initiated in his name at the University of Natal, but chose to publish his own, often controversial, work overseas – e.g. *The Bilingual School* (Longmans, 1946). Similarly, and even earlier, E.J. Krige published *The Social System of the Zulus* with Longmans in 1936, with support from Wits.

In other words, the perceived political leaning of a publisher was certainly not the only factor for an academic making a publishing decision. More significantly, it has always been considered important to the career of a South African academic to publish overseas, so as to reach a wider audience. With the ongoing perception that the local university presses could not offer such distribution nor such prestige, the pool of titles offered to them would always be limited.

5.3 Gatekeeping practices

It has been established, then, that the local university presses did not, to a great extent, provide a publishing outlet either for black academics or for white anti-apartheid academics. Part of the reason lies in the structure of higher education, as discussed, and in the preferences of academics themselves, but it is important to ascertain whether the gatekeeping practices of the university presses – such as peer review, censorship and self-censorship – also played a role. The selection practices of the presses may reflect what Keenan (1981) has characterised as “open minds and closed systems” at the universities.

5.3.1 *Peer review*

There is a certain suspicion of peer review among black academics in South Africa, usually based on anecdotal evidence of bias and censorship. There may be good reason for such scepticism, as Biagioli points out: “While today it is said that peer review ensures the readers of the trustworthiness of the text in front of them, and assures taxpayers that their monies have been put to good use by scientists, its genealogy suggests that, at first, the interests protected by peer review were primarily those of the state and its academies, not those of the broader scientific or scholarly community” (2002: 17).

Peer review, like censorship, aims to delineate what may and may not be published. In countries where state censorship has persisted into the modern era, it is perhaps not surprising that a continuing link between review and censorship has been posited, with the reviewer acting as an unofficial ‘agent’ for the state censors, in a sense. It has been alleged that in South Africa, especially under the apartheid government, peer review was used as a tool and a pretext for advancing non-literary and non-academic agendas – what Sapiro (2003: 449) terms “extra-intellectual values”. To some extent, as with the early introduction of peer review, this could be ascribed to the circularity of funding: the state subsidisation of research conducted at the universities, and of the publishing of that research. Moreover, peer review is usually coordinated or overseen by a Publications Committee, which, like other managerial groups in a university, will be dominated by particular interest groups and based on certain values. Such a committee would also, for the majority of the apartheid

period, have been all-white and, for a long time, all-male, at the South African university presses. This was shown in the description of the composition of the Publications Committees at the various presses, in Chapter 3.

An examination of the peer review policies at the university presses shows that, while review was considered important from an early stage, it was unevenly applied in a closed system of inputs and outputs. The imperative of promoting research at the universities in South Africa, and of publishing the work of local academics, had clear implications for peer review. As Roberts (1999) points out, “[w]ithout some sort of rigorous mechanism for judging academic work on an international basis, the publication of scholarly articles and monographs can become a somewhat incestuous, sheltered process”. This was a common problem at university presses, especially in their early years, and may be seen replicated in the early works published and early practices followed by WUP, Unisa and Natal.

WUP early established a system of accepting or rejecting works on the basis of “academic merit”, using readers for their potential manuscripts from as early as 1931. As early as the 1930s, too, they were aware of the political potential of peer review, as evidenced by the Minutes of 4 June 1936: “Resolved. (a) to request Professors Maingard, Stammers and Van den Heever to read the book and report to the Principal whether it is likely to harm the University by exacerbating racial feeling and (b) if the reports under (a) are satisfactory to recommend that the University agree to sponsor the publication.” The book in question was Dr Ian MacCrone’s *Race Attitudes in South Africa*, later published by OUP with sponsorship from Wits.

The Wits Publications Committee also resolved to pay readers for their work, suggesting a £5 honorarium in 1938 (Minutes, 9 December 1938). Remarkably, this amount was not changed for more than twenty years, until 1960, when it was increased to £10 for readers not employed by the University (Minutes, 15 June 1960). In October 1968, the fee was extended to both internal and external readers, and in March 1969 was increased to a maximum of R50.²

² The currency having changed in 1961, with South Africa becoming a Republic.

During this period, the criteria for selection of books were based on both merit and the likely market for the books, especially for external authors. In 1959, the standards for accepting manuscripts were set out in the Minutes of the Publications Committee (7 August 1959), as follows: (i) two referee reports would be required; (ii) examiners' reports (in the case of PhD dissertations) would not be accepted in lieu of referee reports; and (iii) a book would, in general, not be accepted for publication until it was ready for the press. The evidence of reader reports in the WUP archives reveals close reading, based on questions of academic merit and relevance. On the whole, these standard peer review mechanisms have worked well as a quality control mechanism, but there have been complaints over the years of a lack of objectivity and the time taken to reach a decision (Wilson, 1983: 1). WUP would proudly record that, between 1976 and 1986, they considered applications for 121 "major works" (S87/414, 1987: 156). Of these, only 32 were accepted for publication. This indicates both their high standards of review and their high rejection rates.

The UNP standards for peer review also focused on academic merit, as well as considering commercial factors such as the probable market for a title and competing publications. The policy for peer review may be elicited from reader reports, as UNP, in contrast to Wits and Unisa, did not draw up a strict set of guidelines on peer review for a very long time, and relied to a large extent on the members of the Press Committee to serve as reviewers and to play a very active part in the selection process.

An example of the various factors making up peer review at UNP illustrates the interplay of academic and commercial factors. Phyllis Warner's manuscript *Ritual and Reality in Drama* was accepted for publication in the 1960s and even actually featured in the 1969 book list. However, it was later turned down and not produced, as the potential prescriptions at various universities did not materialise. In other words, in spite of its academic merit, the book could not be published as the market was deemed too small, and risky in the absence of firm orders from the universities.

The members of Unisa's early Publications Committees soon recognised the potential pitfalls of an unregulated system of acceptance and rejection, and raised the matter of a

formal peer review process, as may be seen in the following extract from the minutes of one of their meetings in 1967:

Discussion followed on the appointment of referees in general. Prof. van Rooy proposed that persons outside the University be approached in every instance. His view was that colleagues' complete objectivity could be hampered at times. The Chairman [Prof. J.H. van der Merwe] and Prof. Blignaut then raised an objection to Prof. van Rooy's proposal, pointing out that, in certain fields, the University's staff possessed the only experts. Prof. van Rooy rephrased his proposal and put it to the Committee that, as a general rule, MSS be referred to referees outside the University where such persons were available – otherwise expert opinion should be sought from among the University's staff. (Minutes of a meeting of the Publication Committee, 27 October 1967, my translation)

The extract reveals concerns with objectivity, tempered by a certain arrogance – did the “University's staff” *really* possess “the only experts” in any field? The peer review procedure was established at this time as choosing two referees for each manuscript, and paying an honorarium for their work (a key difference from procedures in journal review, which is almost always unremunerated, but which involves far shorter texts) (Van Jaarsveld, 1961: 71). This procedure remains the same to this day, but the innate differences in opinion were not yet resolved, as revealed by this 1970 report on the functions of the Publications Committee:

Each manuscript that is submitted for publication in the current series must be studied by each member of the Committee with a view to a motivated recommendation, otherwise selection becomes a sham. If one or more members – or even all the members – are not experts in the field of the manuscript, selection in any case becomes a sham. In such cases, the assistance of one or more experts is requested, but it is sometimes difficult, because this is all done on a voluntary basis. Sometimes experts outside of the University must even be approached. But even in the most ideal situation, namely that all of the members, or at least a good few, are experts in the discipline which the manuscript deals with, it is a heavy burden on the members to conscientiously go through the large number of manuscripts and make motivated recommendations. (Posthumus, 1970: 1, my translation)

Peer review would at times also be bypassed, in an informal manner. Prof. C.F.J. Muller recalls an instance: “I remember that when Van Jaarsveld submitted a historical

contribution to the Publications Committee, Van Wijk gave his critique not to the Committee, but very diplomatically, in private to Van Jaarsveld. The latter appreciated this, took the critique to heart, and declared to me that his colleague was a better historian than he was” (Muller, in Liebenberg, 1988: 16; my translation).

It was only later that external reviewers would be used on a regular basis, and that Unisa Press would take on the responsibility for correspondence with the reviewers. Indeed, as recently as 1989, Unisa Press would turn down co-publishing proposals and manuscripts, because “we usually only publish books by our own academics”, and “(w)e must advise you that the University of South Africa only publishes textbooks for its students as well as research manuscripts selected on grounds of a high academic standard” (Van der Walt, 1989a; 1989b). This situation soon changed to the more professional division between Unisa Press and the rest of the university, in that local academics were expected to compete, through the peer review process, in the same way as potential external authors.

The general shift from informal review to a more professional peer review system mirrors an international trend: “In sum, we have moved from a scenario in which publishers and producers were the same people, housed in the same ... institution, who met once or twice a week and took turns at reviewing each other’s work, to a situation in which a sharp division of labor (and often an institutional division too) has been introduced between producers, editors, reviewers, and publishers” (Biagioli, 2002: 33).

5.3.2 Censorship

The legislative apparatus associated with censorship in South Africa, and the increasingly repressive environment created by such legislation, is described in more detail in Chapter 4. In this section, attention will be paid to the effects of censorship and book bannings on the local university presses. As a result of the publications control legislation, various international university presses experienced the banning or censorship of their books in South Africa, usually due to the author being subject to a banning order rather than because the content was considered overtly political or explosive. For instance, the University of Texas Press published a volume of poetry by Dennis Brutus, who had been banned, and the

book in turn could not be circulated within South Africa. OUP, as shown in the case study described in Chapter 4, had a chequered record, with potentially controversial works by Athol Fugard (1974) and W.B. Ngakane (with a translation of Prester John, 1964) being passed for publication, but authors such as Lewis Nkosi (1964) being banned. Rhodes University was also able to publish work by the liberal writer Alan Paton in 1951 (McDonald, 2009), and indeed, none of Paton's works appear to have been banned – although his liberal critiques may at times have been uncomfortable, they were not considered dangerous.

The oppositional publishers, and particularly Ravan Press and David Philip, were more affected by censorship. Peter Randall (1974: 77) of Ravan describes the effects – both financial and otherwise – of one of the Spro-Cas publications being banned:

So far, one Spro-cas publication has been banned outright by the Publications Control Board. This is *Cry Rage*, a collection of poems by two black writers. No reasons were given by the PCB [Publications Control Board], nor did it bother to inform the publishers, who learned of the banning from the press. Fortunately, the first printing had been almost sold out, but about two hundred copies had to be withdrawn. If it had not been banned, *Cry Rage* would undoubtedly have been reprinted and the authors would have received considerable royalties. The fact that 4,000 copies were sold in less than four months indicates that the book was set to become a South African best-seller. Now not only has South Africa been deprived of an authentic expression of black feelings, but the poets have been denied their rightful financial return.

On the whole, publishers tried to avoid such consequences – and particularly the financial loss! – as well as self-censorship by submitting to the government's censorship regime. The OUP management, for instance, appears to have “welcomed the establishment of a censorship board because [Director Cannon] said it made life easier for a publisher than self-censorship” (James Currey, quoted in Davis, 2011: 89). At the same time, “avoidance of public debate about South Africa became the official management strategy” (Ibid.: 91). And OUP continued with self-censorship into the 1970s and 1980, in that “[Director] Gracie systematically rejected all political or controversial titles, and sent proposals instead to London or the Clarendon Press” (Davis, 2011: 95). Davis gives examples of texts rejected on this basis.

WUP admitted that it, like OUP, complied with the legal requirement to submit certain titles for permission to publish. The Publications Committee discussed the legislation relating to banned books and banned authors at a meeting in 1971, and obtained a legal opinion on the “duties and responsibilities” of WUP in this regard (Minutes of the Publications Committee, 1971, S71/620: 4) – there was certainly no question of dissent raised at this point. This acceptance of the rules continued into the 1980s: “On three separate occasions WUP successfully applied for Ministerial, and on a fourth for the Publication Board’s permission to publish for research purposes. Permission has never been withheld (sic)” (Wilson, 1983: 2). Wilson (Ibid.) saw the publisher in this situation as “a victim of a system of which it is also an opponent”, but WUP’s opposition was not explicit. Rather, their engagement with the Publications Control Board implies support for the system, unlike the independent oppositional publishers, who refused to acknowledge the legitimacy of the censorship apparatus in any way.

At Unisa, the question was not even raised. Unisa Press did not submit any texts for approval, perhaps because none of those selected for publication was considered controversial in any way. The University also tended to clamp down on more subversive work at an earlier stage, before it reached publication.

In 1984, a manuscript arrived at UNP that reveals the constraints on publishing in South Africa. David Rycroft and Bhekabantu Ngcobo’s translation of Zulu poems (*The Praises of Dingana: Izibongo zikaDingana*) which was submitted for the Killie Campbell Africana series, created potential problems, because Ngcobo was in exile and a banned person, and as such could not be published or even quoted. The Press Committee discussed the “troubling” matter, and made the decision to request an exemption to publish in spite of Ngcobo’s “disability”, as well as to request legal advice on the matter (Minutes of the KCAL, 4 July 1984). After consulting with the Attorney-General of Natal, it was found that special permission would likely not be needed, because of Ngcobo’s role as translator and transcriber, not as an author. As a result, prosecution was seen as an unlikely consequence of publishing. The decision was therefore made to proceed with publication: “It was established after discussion that the Security Act did not apply in this case as Mr Ngcobo’s

main contribution was as transcriber” (Minutes of the Press Committee, 29 August 1984). This legal recommendation had its precedents: a similar case, of W.B. Ngakane’s translation of *Prester John* for OUP, had been referred to the Ministry of Justice but passed by the censors in 1964 – Ngakane was a banned person, but ‘only’ the translator of the work in question, and, as such, was deemed ‘acceptable’.

The fact that the UNP Press Committee felt the need to discuss the potential sanctions at some length, and even to obtain legal opinion on the matter, shows the extent to which publishers felt they had to comply with the censorship legislation. It also reveals a tacit acceptance of the rule of law, as none of the comments recorded supports the notion of publishing based solely on the merit of the work; all appeared to accept Ngcobo’s status as a banned person and to consider the consequences from a pragmatic point of view: Would the Press be sued? Would booksellers be able to stock the book? Would people be able to buy it? Moreover, no hint of criticism of the system was raised during these discussions – or at least, recorded in the minutes for posterity.

A different form of censorship may be seen in the experiences of John Laband and his title *Fight us in the Open: The Anglo-Zulu War through Zulu Eyes*, published by the University of Natal Press in 1985. After Oscar Dhomo, a historian but also the Minister of Education and Culture of KwaZulu and secretary-general of Inkatha, had read it, Laband was forced to excise evidence that Mnyamana, grandfather of Buthelezi, had displayed poor generalship in the 1879 war (De Baets, 2002: 435). Any such comment, it was felt, would reflect badly on the Zulu royals and the Zulu nation generally. As this incident shows, censorship may also be related to sensibilities on other sides of the political spectrum. It also reveals the extent of Inkatha’s influence in KwaZulu-Natal.

While the number of titles banned by the apartheid government’s censorship apparatus numbered in the thousands (cf. McDonald, 2009), no local university press titles were ever banned. Rather, these publishers seem to have chosen a path of self-censorship amidst the repressive measures applied to their academics. Thus, the impact of censorship can mostly be felt in the rise of self-censorship.

5.3.3 Self-censorship

The literature relating to self-censorship, and its inevitable emergence as a result of the oppressive censorship regime, is described in Chapter 4. In this section, attention again turns to the local university presses, to ask the question: Were the university presses engaged in self-censorship of their titles? As difficult as this is to ascertain, this was certainly the perception at WUP. Nan Wilson (1983: 1) noted in a report in the mid-1980s that a common complaint from authors was that “[t]he WUP is not prepared to take the chance on publication of a work which may be banned”. Her response (1983: 1–2), in contrast, was that:

This statement has no foundation. To my knowledge, no works of this type have been submitted, and quite unequivocally academic merit, not the ‘authorities’ possible reaction to a work has remained the criterion for acceptance. *‘Self-censorship’ has never been part of WUP policy.* Indeed, it was a suspicion that self-censorship would be required that led the Committee and Editorial Boards to decline total subvention of our two journals which had been selected for ‘national research journal’ status by the Bureau for Scientific Publications in 1978. (Emphasis added)

In the surviving records for WUP, there is no documentation to provide evidence of self-censorship. However, there were some unusual decisions regarding selection and approval of certain manuscripts. For example, in the early 1990s Roger Southall’s manuscript on labour received glowing reader reports, but was later rejected. *Solidarity or Imperialism? International Labour and South African Trade Unions* was then published in 1995 by the newly formed University of Cape Town Press. Paul Rich’s work on liberalism, *Hope and Despair*, was similarly rejected, but went on to be published in 1993 by British Academic Press in the UK and IB Tauris in the USA. A work of historiography, *History from South Africa*, was published only in an international edition in 1991 by Radical History Review, after being rejected by the WUP Board. As there was little need for self-censorship during this period, and censorship generally was much less harsh, we can only speculate as to the reasons for the rejection of these apparently worthy publications. No reasons are given in the records.

Yet the perception or incidence of self-censorship is certainly not surprising, given the milieu. The university presses were in a still more precarious situation than other forms of publisher, given their funding: the state subsidisation of research conducted at the

universities, and of the publishing of that research: “... because of the pre-disciplining’ of academicians, the simple requirement that manuscripts had to be reviewed by the whole academy or by a committee made it almost impossible that anything controversial would go to press. The institutional contexts in which the texts were produced and the authors’ direct dependence on the sovereign for their employment further reduced the probability that the work would be seditious in any way” (Biagioli, 2002:15). Being reliant on funding from donors insulated the oppositional publishers to a greater extent from potential political interference or the threat of the withdrawal of funding.

Altbach (1989: 24) notes in the international context that the use of an academic board may also insulate a university press from political interference, referring to the Indian example:

Most Indian university presses are governed by academic boards composed of administrators and faculty members at the sponsoring institutions. This situation has to some extent insulated them from direct interference in their operations, although the pervasive academic politics evident in India has naturally affected the presses as well. Few university presses publish books by faculty members from outside their sponsoring institutions, and virtually none has attempted to build for itself a reputation of excellence in scholarly publishing.

In other words, a stance of virtuous neutrality may also be detrimental to the quality and relevance of the publishing programme of a university press. Moreover, the university presses would have learned from the cautionary experience of the OUP, as described in Chapter 4.

In all my sifting of the archival documentation, only a couple of instances could be found of the *potential* suppression of a title or an author at the university presses in South Africa. Of course, it is quite possible that further instances were not recorded, as the archival record is incomplete – as discussed in Chapter 1. It is also difficult to elicit what is *not* said in the surviving documents. A 1950 review of Hilda Kuper’s “depressing” study of interracial relationships in Swaziland, *The Uniform of Colour* (WUP, 1947), for example, noted that, “[d]espite the gruesome quality of the tale, the author has obviously pulled her punches in what must have been the vain hope of avoiding offense in South Africa” (Goldschmidt, 1950: 101). This indicates some self-censorship by the author, pre-publication.

There is also mention in the 1970s, for example, of the review reports for Unisa Press of a manuscript on *Russia and the South African War, 1899–1904* by Elisaveta Foxcroft. After mention that the Publications Committee was unsure of its “marketability”, although they were convinced of its academic merit, it fades from the records (Dagbestuur, 21 August 1974; Dagbestuur, 30 October 1974). Confusingly, the manuscript appears from the record to have been accepted: “the author points out that, given the international situation after the Angola crisis, this is now the psychological moment to publish the work” (Dagbestuur, 8 April 1976, my translation). Perhaps the international situation was considered too fiery for Unisa Press? In any case, the book was not published by the university, but went on to be published by the religious publisher, CUM Books, in 1981. This was not a case of self-censorship on political grounds, but it remains an interesting example.

Another example from Unisa Press is a manuscript that was submitted on the *Politieke Posisie van die Kleurling* (‘Political Position of the Coloured Person’).³ No author is mentioned in the records. It was reviewed by only a single referee – unusual in terms of Unisa Press’s peer review policy – and it is clear that it was considered too politically risky for the university to put its seal on it, as it was summarily rejected. Interestingly, OUP also rejected Pierre Hugo’s similar work on *Working within the System: A Study of Contemporary Coloured Politics in South Africa* in the 1970s (Davis, 2011: 95). The text was finally published as *Quislings or Realists? A Documentary Study of ‘Coloured’ politics in South Africa* – by Ravan Press, in 1978 – and was well received. This area of race-related politics was clearly a controversial field in which to publish at the time.

A third example at Unisa relates to self-censorship by the institution, prior to publication. In the late 1970s, historian Albert Grundlingh produced a study of treason and Boer collaboration during the second Anglo-Boer War, which he titled *Die Hendsoppers en Joiners: Die Rasionaal en Verskynsel van Verraad* (later published in English as *The Dynamics of Treason: Boer Collaboration in the South African War of 1899–1902*). The book emerged from his MA studies at Unisa, but he encountered opposition to the topic, as many Unisa

³ Note that, in the South African apartheid-era context, ‘coloured’ referred to a person of mixed blood, a separate classification from that of ‘black’.

academics felt that it reflected badly on Afrikaner history – and thus on the institution as well. The role of research should not be to denigrate one’s own people, it was argued. Unisa Press having rejected the book, it came out through HAUM in 1979, and in a second Afrikaans edition (1999) and then an English translation (2006) through Protea. The work is now considered pioneering in its field, but its non-conformist stance was unacceptable at Unisa during that period. The same went for Grundlingh’s PhD research, which was published as *Fighting their own War: South African Blacks and the First World War* by Ravan Press in 1987. This example shows the limits of “repressive tolerance” at Unisa Press.

At UNP, the record does not show that any controversial or politically oriented publications were rejected, but it is again difficult to tell. In the minutes of the Press Committee, only a one-line explanation is provided for any manuscripts rejected: “It was decided not to publish this manuscript” – without any justification or discussion being added. For instance, this single line may be found next to the manuscript for Jeff Opland’s *Xhosa Poets and Poetry* in 1985 (Minutes of the Press Committee, 31 October 1985). This acclaimed book would only be published much later, in 1998, by David Philip Publishers. Other examples may also be highlighted. For instance, the Minutes drily note that “Professor Duminy’s offer of a collection of political pamphlets met with little enthusiasm among committee members” (Minutes of the Press Committee, 18 August 1982) – once again showing the reluctance to publish on current politics.

A more difficult case to assess at UNP is that of Maurice Webb’s semi-autobiographical *The Colour of Your Skin: 35 Years of South African Race Relations*. The manuscript was found among his papers in the early 1980s, and was submitted and then accepted for publication after peer review. But the book was never actually published, and the reasons are difficult to ascertain from the records available. Was this a case of self-censorship? It is difficult to be completely sure.

Thus, in the absence of a more complete record and in the absence of corroborative evidence from other sources, it is difficult to say with any certainty whether the university presses actually practised self-censorship– but the signs are certainly there, to indicate that this was practised. Such self-censorship is an extreme form of privatism, and thus cannot

easily be reflected on the continuum itself, but the bias towards ‘safer’ topics and a more cautious or conservative approach is certainly reflected in the placement of the university presses on the continuum.

5.4 Conclusion

This chapter considers whether “[t]he university’s role in society is not to provide a platform for all shades of opinion, but rather to decide what will count as knowledge, and to exclude what does not count as knowledge” (White, quoted in Du Toit, 2000: 107). This may be seen in the unequal access to publishing platforms and resources among different groups of academics. The content analysis and author profiles of the university presses reveal a range of intellectual responses to apartheid, from the point of view of the authors, the content of their scholarly output, and the publishing philosophies of the presses themselves. While the university presses attempted to offer a diversity of opinions and viewpoints, they were not, strictly speaking, oppositional in approach. The adapted continuum of approaches was found useful as a framework for categorising works produced by the presses, and it was shown that the local university presses can largely be placed in the centrist negotiated code or position (to use Hall’s terminology), although at times they moved more towards supporting the dominant code, and at other times towards a more oppositional stance. Specifically, the university presses did not create a space for radical views or for the already marginalised voices of black and female academics. Instead, the university presses reflected their polarised society to a large extent.

From the 1970s, in particular, when OUP was to take a deliberate decision to ensure its publishing was not in opposition to mainstream politics in South Africa, the local university presses also followed a (largely unwritten and unspoken) policy of keeping out of politics – to the extent that the vast majority of publishing during this era could be said to be determinedly apolitical. They were at times liberal, but seldom oppositional. To assert that the presses were not oppositional should not be seen as a criticism of the scholarly work produced. Indeed – like university presses everywhere – the local university presses published important and high-quality scholarly studies over the years, which may have nothing to do with political engagement. To provide just one example, WUP’s work on *South*

African Frogs (Neville Passmore and Vincent Carruthers, 1979) won an award from Sappi and is still considered a standard reference in its field. It seems almost incidental that it does not contribute to the oppositional reputation of that press, since it makes such a contribution to the symbolic capitalism of prestige and academic reputation. In fact, under the continuum classification, such work, excellent though it may be from a scholarly point of view, could be classified as privatism because it does not engage with social issues. This shows the potential rigidity of the continuum, as there are times when the South African university presses simply behave like university presses, and times when the local context impinges to such an extent that it must be taken into account.

An attempt was made, in analysing the publication lists, to see if there was a response in titles produced after landmark dates, such as 1948 (the Nationalist Party coming to power), 1960 (the Sharpeville massacre) or 1976 (the Soweto riots). At OUP, in the 1970s, “[t]here was a sharp decline in historical, political and sociological texts, and those that were published had reduced print runs” (Davis, 2011: 95). However, at the local university presses there was hardly a similar decline, in part because they had remained at a distance from political interference all along. The landmark dates passed without comment or publication, until some years later. A reading of the official records of the local presses elicits no commentary, discussion or even acknowledgement of such events. As mentioned, the impression created is that the university presses considered themselves apart from and unaffected by politics. Thus, even if they were publishing books that may at times be classified as ‘militant-radical’ or ‘political reform’, their own stance appeared to be one of withdrawal. This holds true for most, but not all, of the apartheid period, as their editorial policies did shift to become more politically aware and more outspoken. The late 1970s and 1980s see an upswing in politically aware and critical texts. Thus, while intellectual historians have argued that the “[i]nfusion of new intellectual ideas from the early 1970s helped to open up space for political contestation” (Dubow, 2006: 268), this was not reflected at the university presses until a later date.

In addition, what this study also reveals is that the university presses were not the first port of call for most local academics. Thus, for instance, Henry Lever (1981) prepared an authoritative literature review of sociological works in the early 1980s, which included just

two works published by local university presses (one his own work, published by WUP in 1968, and the other by Colin Tatz, *Shadow and Substance in South Africa*, published by UNP in 1962). So, too, Jane Carruthers (2010), in a literature review of key historical texts, listed a number of significant historical studies from the 1970s and 1980s, all of which were published by Ravan Press, bar one – and the exception was published by Cambridge University Press.

Moreover, it is telling that, in Christopher Merrett's (2001) list of 'Organisations that documented, analysed and published information about the South African State of Emergency, 1986–1990', none of the university presses as such is listed. He does, however, list seven "commercial" publishers: David Philip, Indicator South Africa, Jonathan Ball, Madiba, Ravan, Southern, and Taurus. He also lists a few research institutes associated with the universities – Centre for Adult Education (CAE, linked to Natal), Centre for Applied Legal Studies (CALS, linked to Wits), and the Indicator Project – some of which published a proportion of their work through the university presses, in an example of service to the university. Thus, the most important oppositional work – even when scholarly in tone and audience – of the apartheid era was not published by the university presses.

In addition to avoiding more radical work, it seems that some publications may also have been toned down prior to publication. Thus, while little – indeed, no – evidence could be found of overt or direct censorship of titles published by any of the South African university presses, it seems clear that a degree of self-censorship was practised, coupled in some cases to the practice of peer review. As a result, the more activist or militant authors rather tended towards either publishing abroad or with the independent publishers, such as Ravan Press or David Philip – presses that did not depend on government funding and approval for their very existence. In other words, the review and selection processes may have extended to the extent of self-censorship of politically uncomfortable topics.

The result of this combination of factors was that oppositional academic publishing became the domain of a few independent presses in South Africa until the last years of the apartheid regime. Gray (2000: 176-177) is thus right to argue that the university pressed "failed to provide a voice for [their] radical academics".

The next chapter provides a wider contextual view of the university presses, in part to provide an explanation for this apparently damning assessment.