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Introduction

Discussions of South African university-based journalism education (Banda et al, 2007: 164-5, Steenveld, 2006; Jordaan, 2004; Fourie, 2005: 143-144) suggest that such teaching is increasingly informed by commercial imperatives. The aim has become that of turning out graduates who are easily absorbed into the current practices of media organisations. It is argued that in this context there is little room for journalism education that engages critically with social context. The literature suggests, in fact, that a critical approach to such education has never been realised in South Africa in any substantive way. Historical accounts (Tomaselli, 1991: 167; Steenveld, 2006) do refer to examples of critical teaching projects, particularly those occurring in the late 1970's and 80's. These are, however, perceived to be the exception to the rule. It may be that the political context existing at this time created a unique opportunity for such educational ventures. It is with such arguments in mind that I explore, in this paper, the historical construction of journalism as a subject of university education in South Africa. I argue that such construction has, indeed, been primarily informed by an interest, fundamental to the social function of South African higher education and journalism, in serving institutions of power. During the period identified above, of the late 1970's and 80's, journalism and academia nevertheless operated as key sites for the production of knowledge which directly challenged these institutions. I will argue that this made possible the temporary emergence of alternative approaches to journalism education.

The first two sections of the paper trace shifts in the social function of the kinds of knowledge produced by South African universities and journalism, respectively, over the last century. The remainder of the paper pieces together the institutional development of South African journalism education against this background. As I will show, the history that emerges suggests that the construction of journalism education has been profoundly shaped by struggles that have taken place, in South Africa, around the production of knowledge.

Universities and the politics of knowledge production in South Africa

By the 1960's, when journalism education first emerged in South Africa, three distinct university systems were in existence in this country. One was a liberal, English tradition which drew on the "Oxbridge" model as well as aspects of the Scottish university tradition. It was grounded in the western liberal concept of the university, and as such understood its own purpose as that of serving society through enlightened reason and the independent pursuit of universal truth. It defined itself according to a broadly conceived 'South Africanism' (Dubow, 2006) and, as part of its commitment to this identity, embraced racial inclusiveness and stood in opposition to dominant apartheid ideology (Vale, 2008: 121). As the National Party government consolidated their authority during the 1950's, this opposition had less and less influence. The marginalisation of English universities was exacerbated by the fact that, long after the establishment of South Africa as an independent nation, they saw as their primary function the transmission of 'metropolitan' knowledge and values. It has been argued that such self-definition encumbered them with a sense of inferiority and that because of this they failed to challenge the predetermined paradigms of knowledge from the 'metropole'. They reproduced, crucially, the discourses of modernity that informed much of this scholarship (Vale, 2008: 121). On one hand, then, English universities played a role in challenging the policies of the Apartheid state. On the other hand, they supported the principles of the modern nation state, and with this much of the social relations on which South African society depended. The early history of South African sociology, for example, was designed to turn out graduates and research that would serve the state and industry, and did so within a conservative ideology dedicated to expert knowledge and social efficiency (Jubber, 1983: 52; Vale, 2008:119).

The second tradition was that of Afrikaans-language universities, which were at first also framed by a British intellectual tradition. By the 1930' s they had, however, become

associated with Afrikaner Nationalism, and turned for their inspiration to other, European scholarly sources. With the establishment of the Apartheid state, this university system became more central than its English counterpart to the South African public sphere. As its authority increased, the notion of universities as serving universal ends was explicitly rejected. The intellectual project that resulted from this was that of a 'Volksuniversiteit', defined in relation to ethnic nationalism. Within this university tradition, academic knowledge was increasingly associated with the strengthening of racial ideology, functioning as an instrument of the apartheid state (Vale, 2008:122, Jubber, 1983: 58). An oft-cited instance is the anthropological discipline of 'Volkekunde', which became a centrepiece of Afrikaner-sanctioned scholarship (Gordon, 1988; Dubow, 2006: 266-7; Vale, 2008: 119).

The third tradition is that of black universities which were established as part of the infrastructures of the Apartheid state. These campuses were given very limited opportunity to develop independent identities. They were primarily staffed by academics drawn from the Afrikaner Nationalist universities, and were placed under tight administrative control (Vale, 2008: 123).

In the 1970's and 80's, all three university systems experienced dramatic changes, articulated as struggles around their approach to the production of knowledge. An important factor was the erosion in the authority of the apartheid state, and the growing pressure for reform. The movement of popular resistance to apartheid was growing rapidly in strength, and claimed campuses as one of its sites of struggle. At the same time, there was an infusion of new intellectual ideas into universities, which helped to open up spaces for political contestation. These ideas included concepts drawn from the theories of historical materialism, which began to inform radical challenges to traditional liberal conceptualisations of society. The ideas fostered by the Black Consciousness movement also increased the rift between liberalism and radicalism (Vale, 2008: 123). Student resistance politics was

intensifying within black universities. The focus of academic debate was, however, primarily on the development of a radical approach to social engagement in English-language universities (Dubow, 2006: 269). On these campuses the humanities, in particular, became central to public discussions of the future of South African society. The historian Charles Van Onselen describes this as the 'most exciting two decades in the social sciences' (quoted in Vale, 2008:117). In sociology, for example, academics revised the accepted liberal interpretations of South African history and proposed new, more radical approaches to the study of South African social reality. Such scholarship undermined the legitimacy of both the traditional liberal scholarship and that of Afrikaner nationalism. It eclipsed the importance of these traditions within public debate. The ideas that were articulated within materialist social science were of immediate relevance to the labour movement and to student politics, and became connected to the rising anti-apartheid movement (Hendricks, 2006: 86). Many Afrikaner intellectuals also abandoned the ideology of apartheid, and contributed to such critical scholarship (Vale, 2008:124).

In the final decades of the 20th century, the social function of these universities changed again. Judging from discussions of the contemporary academic landscape (Hendricks 2006; Vale 2008; Nash 2006) it would seem that the centrality of radical intellectual scholarship is now under threat. From the 1990's onwards, such scholarship has become relegated to the margins of public discourse and the social sciences, in particular, are no longer at the centre of critical intellectual debate. We are also told that the close engagement that existed in the 1970's and '80's between universities and South African communities has dissipated. Similarly, it is argued that there is no longer a commitment within the student movement to the role of higher education as a collective resource in the shaping of a new society (Naidoo 2006). Two factors are repeatedly identified as playing a role in such marginalisation. It is pointed out, firstly, that 'nation building' has made a deep

impact on South African public discourse since independence. University-based knowledge is understood, within this discourse, to be of value if it supports the developmental goals of the state (Vale, 2008: 117). Secondly, references are made to the rise of neo-liberalism within universities, both internationally and in South Africa (Vale, 2008: 117). There was, in particular, an increasing demand on higher education to be commercially viable, and for university education to serve the needs of 'industry'. The traditional knowledge responsibilities of universities (research, teaching and community service) was redefined in context of the need for economic competitiveness (Singh, 2001:8). Many social science disciplines redefined themselves in terms of professionalism. The argument put forward in the literature is that, in response to the environmental changes, the centrality of critical scholarship has been replaced by an 'instrumentalist' approach to knowledge (Hendricks, 2006:86). It would seem that South African universities are coming full circle to defining knowledge as being in service of dominant relations of power.

South African journalism as institutions of knowledge production

The journalistic landscape that existed at the time of the establishment of journalism education in the early 1960's shared many of the distinctions which characterised the university system. Amongst newspapers, it is again possible to identify three traditions; that of a white English press, a white Afrikaans press, and newspapers that target black audiences. Like its counterpart within the academy, white English journalism associated itself with humanitarian and liberal ideology, and opposed the policies of apartheid (Pinnock, 1991:123). This was, however, inevitably framed by the fact that the English press was owned by a monopoly of mining-finance capital. It is not surprising, in this context, that the opposition that they offered did not extend as far as direct challenges to the underlying

economic structuring of South African society. In this respect, too, the practices of this tradition of journalism were similar to those of the English-language university system.

Afrikaans newspapers, again in parallel to developments within the academy, operated to promote Afrikaner culture, often articulating this task explicitly as a struggle against British influence (Pollak, 1981:12). Initially, the Afrikaans press was highly partisan in nature but by the 1960's, with the National Party government firmly in place, it developed a greater sense of independence from the state. With this, journalists began to develop a more professionalised identity, and became committed to journalism as a career in its own right. This professionalism was articulated in terms of an increasing emphasis on a journalism of objectivity, with newspapers adopting a critical stance to government. This stance did not mean, however, that they criticised apartheid policy in any depth, only the details of its application. Journalistic independence remained limited, in the name of national security. Editors did not insist on freedom from the National Party, but saw themselves instead as 'equal partners' with government (Hachten & Giffard 1984:181).

Newspapers targeting black audiences formed part of the same ownership structures as those of the English liberal press. These newspapers that employed black journalists and addressed black audiences, but were owned by white publishing companies. They adopted an anti-apartheid stance, and through them the black middle classes were able to articulate some of their views (Tomaselli & Tomaselli, 1987:46). Nevertheless, the establishment of these papers were informed primarily by the recognition, within the publishing companies, of the economic benefits of targeting black markets (Switzer & Switzer, 1979:10).

The South African Broadcasting Company (SABC) also formed an important part of the journalistic landscape. Under the National party government, the broadcaster had moved away from the liberalism of its roots within the British broadcasting model. Principles of objective journalism were abandoned, supposedly in the interest of national security (Hayman

& Tomaselli, 1989: 63). By the 1960's, SABC journalism was structured as reflections of the ruling ideology, and operated primarily as propaganda (Tomaselli & Tomaselli, 1989: 91).

Again, as with universities, South African journalism experienced significant changes from the mid 1970's into the 1980's. Within broadcasting, these changes involved the introduction of television services (Tomaselli & Tomaselli, 1987: 109). This can be seen to represent an intensification of the government's investment in communication systems that could be centrally controlled and operate as vehicles for propaganda. It was, rather, in newspapers that spaces began to open up for the articulation of a critical approach to the representation of South African society. But again, as in the case of the academy, these approaches could not be sustained. In the mainstream press, there was a growth in critical, investigative journalism, exemplified by the approach taken by the *Rand Daily Mail.* Labour reporters played a key role within the development of such journalism, introducing in-depth, process-oriented approach to reporting. Such journalism began to decline, however, with the closure of papers in the mid 1980's (Tomaselli & Tomaselli, 1987:69).

During the same period, in the black press, black editors were granted more and more editorial control. Furthermore, white English and Afrikaans papers increasingly sought to employ black journalists. Both of these tendencies were informed by an awareness of the importance of accessing journalists who had knowledge of communities who were directly involved in the resistance struggle. It has been suggested that, in these papers, such journalists were defined as 'information gatherers' rather than 'journalistic professionals'. They provided, in other words, 'raw' knowledge that could be transformed into news products by subeditors (Maughan, 2004). There was, however, growing dissatisfaction amongst black journalists, who objected to the conciliatory policies of editors, and the compromises that the newspapers' management were prepared to make in their approach to critical journalism. They were becoming radicalised, influenced in particular by ideas drawn

from Black Consciousness (Tomaselli & Tomaselli, 1987: 52-53). Many joined the Media Workers Association of South Africa (MWASA), which became a platform for the articulation of new approaches to journalism. MWASA pledged themselves to producing journalism that "rejected ideological controls such as the principle of 'objectivity'" (Quoted in Tomaselli & Tomaselli, 1987:56). They criticised the rhetoric of neutrality of the mainstream press, which was seen as a smokescreen for the maintenance of news sanctioning an oppressive political order (Louw & Tomaselli, 1991:10). Through the activist work of MWASA, a left-wing community press movement emerged. The newspaper *Grassroots*, established in 1980, was a key example of such journalism. The content of this paper was put together in a participatory fashion in five- or six week cycles, through the facilitation of intensive debates within communities (Louw & Tomaselli,1991:7). It turned out, however, that such journalism was to be a 1980's phenomenon. It has been argued that these papers served primarily as vehicles for building popular support for the anti-apartheid struggle. When, at the beginning of the 1990's, the organisation of this struggle reached an advanced stage and reform became inevitable, the alternative press seemed to loose its purpose (Louw & Tomaselli, 1991:226). From the mid 1980's onwards, critical journalism took place in context of independent left-wing commercial papers such as the *Weekly Mail* and the *Vrye Weekblad*. However, unlike the community press, these papers were no longer connected to participative methods of production. Although they still formed part of the critical ferment of this period, they reverted to the mainstream model of a journalism of objectivity (Tomaselli & Tomaselli, 1987: 69).

Discussions of the contemporary media landscape (Duncan, 2001; Barnett, 1999; Steyn & de Beer, 2002) suggest that since the late 1980's a critical approach to journalism has been in decline. Again, as in the case of the universities, these discussions refer to the impact of discourses of nation building and the rise of neo-liberal ideology. These

discussions suggest that, within the current situation, journalism is losing much of its relevance within the public domain. One manifestation of this trend, within both print and broadcast organisations, has been the tendency to respond to economic pressures by 'outsourcing' content generation. By the beginning of the 1990's an environment that enabled a powerful critical journalism was under serious threat. One can identify, within this, a crisis of credibility within South African journalism.

An important manifestation of the decline in a critical approach to journalism can be identified in the decreasing authority of journalists within negotiations around the nature of South African journalism. One reason for this trend can be traced to the dramatic reduction of journalistic staff that has been taking place in newsrooms since the 1980's. As a result, newsrooms have experienced a process of 'juniorisation' (Interview: Louw). The authority of journalists has also been affected by the restructuring of the organisational bodies through which journalists were previously represented. MWASA was replaced by the non-racial South African Union of Journalists (SAUJ) in 1990, and this organisation no longer positioned itself as key to the discussions that were taking place around the future of journalism. Instead, this debate was by dominated by editors, senior journalists and academics within the forum offered by the South African Editor's Forum (SANEF) (Steenveld, 2006: 290). We saw that, in the late 1970's, there was a close interconnection between critical journalism and the labour movement. In the 1990's, this connection has effectively been severed.

It would seem, then, that shifts in the approach to knowledge production within South African universities and journalism parallel each other in important ways. In the discussion, below, I will explore the impact of these patterns on the history of journalism education.

The 1960's: The beginnings of journalism education

South African university-based journalism education established itself almost exclusively within Afrikaans-language institutions. The adherence within English-language universities to traditionalist academic models meant that, until quite recently, they expressed very little interest in the idea of journalism education. In contrast, as we saw, Afrikaans-language universities were less concerned with the traditional values of the Western university. They saw themselves as central to the intellectual infrastructure of the South African state, and understood their role explicitly in instrumental terms, as serving the interests of dominant social institutions. The Afrikaans press had adopted a similar role and combined this, as we saw earlier, with a growing sense of professionalism. One implication of this identity was that these papers prioritised the recruitment of university graduates. This was not true to the same extent for the English-language press (Hachten & Giffard,1984:181). English newspapers did take seriously the need for knowledge acquisition for journalists, but rather than a university education they favoured the idea of 'on-the-job' mentoring and apprenticeship. Given the existence of such attitudes, it made sense that it was the Afrikaans journalistic and academic community who established a partnership around the education of journalists.

The first two journalism education programmes were, indeed, established within Afrikaans institutions, in 1959 at the University of Potchefstroom (now North-West University) and in 1962 at UNISA. The third was launched in 1969 at Rhodes University, an English-language institution. The UNISA programme did not survive, and it suggested that this was because it faced serious challenges in sustaining the teaching of a subject that required a strong emphasis on practical skills. Such teaching necessarily posed challenges for a distance education programme such as UNISA. It would also have been difficult to integrate a practically oriented journalism course into a curriculum that attracted students who were primarily interested in achieving a degree-level education. By the end of the

decade, UNISA had phased out its diploma in Journalism (Fourie, 1990:3). As we will see below, journalism-related education was later re-introduced at UNISA in different terms, associated with a separate trajectory in the history of South African journalism education.

It seems curious, given the trends within the South African university system, that one Afrikaans and one English programme survived most successfully at Potchefstroom and Rhodes respectively. Furthermore, the early histories of these two programmes were surprisingly similar. Both were characterised by an instrumental approach to the teaching of journalism, linked to a commitment to producing graduates who could be assimilated into the existing practices of particular journalistic communities.

At Potchefstroom, Gert Pienaar and H. L Swanepoel were central in motivating for the establishment of a journalism education programme. Both had a background in journalism as well as the academy. The University was very resistant to their proposals and it is likely that it was only because of the substance that Swanepoel brought to the proposal that it was eventually accepted. The thrust of their motivation was that South African journalism was generally shallow, and that in order to raise its standards it ought to be taught and studied within the rigorous theoretical framework offered by a university. This promise of theoretical grounding was an important factor in the University's approval. The appeal to moral values resonated, furthermore, with the Calvinistic identity of Potchefstroom University, and this may be why the proposal was eventually accepted (Interview: de Beer; interview: Fourie).

Under the leadership of Pienaar, there was, however, little evidence that the Journalism Department would implement the commitment, in this proposal, to making a intervention into accepted journalistic practices. It may be that this was because the original motivation was informed more by Swanepoel's convictions than those of Pienaar. The teaching programme was designed, rather, to deliver students to the Afrikaans-language press. The curriculum drew heavily on texts that were standard in American journalism

education, and which reproduced, in uncritical terms, a mainstream understanding of journalism. Students were in fact not provided with detailed instruction in journalistic practice, focusing instead on technical skills such as typing and the translation of news copy from the South African Press Association (Sapa). It is possible to identify, in this approach, assumptions about university-based journalism education that mirror those identified, above, in the context of the journalistic community itself. The point was not for students to engage in any substantive way with knowledge about journalism, but rather to gain basic technical skills such as typing and translation. Acculturation into a particular approach to journalism must then take place in the context of the newspaper itself (Interview: de Beer).

The idea for the establishment of a journalism department at Rhodes University came from Guy Butler (Giffard, 1971: 29). His investment in the idea was informed by his interest in finding ways for Rhodes to break out of the rigid traditionalism of English-language universities. As such, it formed part of a broader struggle that was playing itself out within these universities between traditionalist academics and a more liberal group who did not want to be defined by conservatism (Interview: Louw). Although the journalism programme was to operate, at first, from within the Department of English where Butler was based, the plan was that it would become an independent department in its own right. English-language universities were by this stage prepared to integrate the study of journalism within departments of literature, but Butler very deliberately did not want to go this route. Teaching journalism as a subject in its own right meant that journalism studies could not simply be assimilated into the traditional structures of an English department, leaving intact its approach to a canon of accepted cultural texts (Interview: Switzer). Butler's idea was, furthermore, to establish a programme that offered a balance between the academic study of journalism and training in the production of journalism, and this was best achieved within the context of independent department (Interview: Giffard). There was, indeed, strong

opposition from many of the more traditionalist Rhodes academics to the idea of a subject that required so much practical teaching. (Giffard, 1971:29). Because of Butler's powerful personality and his standing within the university, the idea was nevertheless approved (Interview: Giffard). The university establishment remained suspicious, however, of the role played by journalism education at Rhodes. The general attitude was that the Journalism Department was a problem that needed to be 'managed' or 'controlled'. This may have had less to do with the status of journalism education within the academy, and more with the University administration's concerns about confrontational political identity that the Journalism Department would come to represent (Interview: Switzer).

Once the concept had been approved by the university, Butler expressed little interest in shaping the approach that would be adopted to the teaching of journalism, leaving such interpretation to teaching staff. Anthony Giffard was the first Head of Department, and then in 1972 Les Switzer was employed as a lecturer. As in the case of the founding staff at Potchefstroom, they had substantial knowledge both of the practices of journalism and the academy (Interview: Switzer). Both also started off by concerning themselves primarily with the teaching of practical skills (Interview: Switzer). The core curriculum focused on journalistic reporting skills, first those of print and later broadcast journalism, and also dealt with 'press management'. Students also attended more theoretical modules housed in other departments, such as a course in media law (Interview: Giffard). Like the Potchefstroom programme, teaching was influenced by American journalism education. Giffard saw the role of the programme as one of supporting independent media in South Africa, particularly the English-language press. His approach to such support was, however, different from Pienaar's commitment to delivery of students to Afrikaans newsrooms. He wanted to produce journalists who recognised, and aimed to contribute, to the role played by the liberal English press in challenging apartheid policies in South Africa (Interview: Giffard).

One could say, then, that at this early stage the English and Afrikaans histories of journalism education had much in common. Both operated in an academic context that tended to be either indifferent or openly hostile to their existence. They were also informed by similar approaches to journalistic knowledge, and to the role of universities in engaging with such knowledge. There were, however, two important factors that distinguished Potchefstroom and Rhodes. The first was the fact that they associated themselves with very different journalistic communities of practice. The second was that the Rhodes programme was established almost a decade after Potchefstroom, and matured in its approach to theoretical knowledge at a very different moment in South African history. This was to have profound implications for journalism education in this department.

The 1970's: The communications departments

At the beginning of the next decade, three more educational programmes were established, at UNISA, RAU and UOFS respectively. Although these programmes included some journalism education, their focus was more broadly on the teaching of communication science. They were influenced by American approaches to communication scholarship, such as the positivist tradition of 'effects' studies. It is likely that these programmes were established partly in response to a government campaign to convince educational institutions to integrate the teaching of communication into their curricula (Giffard 1971: 29). These developments took place in context of a general concern, within the Apartheid regime, about the role that the English-language press was playing in reporting on South African politics. Similarly, there was concern about the way that the international press was portraying events in South Africa. Because of these anxieties there was more support from the government and from universities that aligned themselves ideologically with the state for the need to educate

students about the media. Their aim was, firstly, to produce a generation of professionals who could resist the influence of anti-apartheid media. Secondly, the intension was to turn out graduates who could work in communications designed to counter such media, offering more positive images of South Africa to those which were coming out of the English and international press (interview: de Beer). As we will see, however, there remained a vast difference between these ideas about what communication science departments should be set up to achieve, and how they operated in practice.

The orientation of UNISA's Communication Department was never that of the professional preparation of media practitioners. It was felt that media organisations were much better suited to imparting such knowledge than a University-based distance education programme. Instead, the aim was to provide graduates who could pursue careers in communication with knowledge that would allow them to analyse and interpret their own practice (Fourie 1990:7). The emphasis was, however, not on a critical interrogation of such practice, but rather on turning out people who could work within the system (Interview: Louw; Interview: de Beer). There was, furthermore, of no conscious reference in these programmes to the application of such competencies to the agendas of the South African government. One can see, here, the disconnect between political intension and academic practice. It is instructive to note, in this respect, that an advisory council had been established at UNISA, to provide the Department of Communications with guidance, and its membership would suggest a close relationship with government. The council included Piet Meyer and Jan Swanepoel, who were members of the SABC management and associated with the broederbond, also Connie Mulder and Eschel Rhoodie as representatives of the Department of Information, and H J Van Dalsen from Foreign Affairs. It is, however, difficult to find evidence that this group made any real impact on the directions that were taken within the UNISA programme (Fourie, 1990:5).

At RAU, one can identify a similar disinterest in the critical interrogation of media practice. It is here, under the leadership of Tom de Koning, that one can find the most explicit example of a classically 'functionalist' approach to the teaching of communication science in South Africa. De Koning had a degree from Michigan in social psychology, and worked within the positivist epistemological paradigm of research that is typically associated with American social science of the post-war years. His approach included a strong emphasis on linguistics, psychological linguistics and cybernetics. Here, too, there seemed to be little connection between such teaching and the knowledge that required for the production of either journalism or communication campaigns. It was only in 1974, with the arrival of Arrie de Beer, that a greater emphasis was introduced on the practice of both journalism and other forms of communication. By the mid 1970's, the curriculum included public relations, advertising, and print-, television- and radio journalism. De Beer also introduced a form of structural functionalism at RAU, which he felt offered a valuable theoretical frame for the more production-oriented components of the curriculum. The theory illustrated that what students do as a media practitioners had consequences for society, and that they needed to take responsibility for this. One can observe, here, the potential for a very different journalistic orientation to that of the routines of objectivity in which the classic American model of journalism education is based. This was to remain the status quo within this programme throughout the 1970's (Interview: de Beer).

It is really only at UOFS that one can identify a more direct application of theoretical knowledge to the agendas of the state. Here, in the persona of D Herbst as Head of Department, it is possible to trace significant relationships with government stakeholders – with a strong connection to military intelligence. Herbst was, in fact, later appointed as a communications expert, working as a consultant for the military and developing a communications strategy for the Department of Defense. Under his headship, the courses at

UOFS came to include components designed to prepare students to work in propaganda-related communications. Some students went on to work for the military's Public Relations arm, and were involved in the production of propaganda films.

It seems, nevertheless, that although these departments may have been established as part of a deliberate government strategy to counter the impact of anti-apartheid media, the majority of programmes that resulted did not explicitly concern themselves with such goals.

1976 - 1990: Conflicting forces

The period between 1976 and the early eighties is identified as the beginning of a rapid transformation of the South African press into an industry that could operate within a highly competitive market. Before this, newspapers had been somewhat protected from economic realities (Jackson1993: 70). This may be one reason why, until the mid 1970's, Potchefstroom and Rhodes remained the only programmes that were centrally concerned with practical preparation of journalists and media producers. After this, the landscape began to change swiftly, with a dramatic expansion of a tertiary education aimed at the practical preparation of journalists and communications practitioners. .It is at this time that we see the beginnings of a technikon-based tradition in journalism and communication training. One explanation that has been offered for the increased popularity of these programmes is the growing demand, amongst the journalistic community, that graduates should be 'job ready' when they walk into newsrooms (Addison, 1995; Rhoodie 1995). It may be that this demand related to the increasing economic pressures experienced within these newspapers.

The establishment of a Department of Journalism at Stellenbosch University in 1978 can be similarly explained. It is of relevance that the Stellenbosch programme was, from its inception, closely associated with the Afrikaans-language publishing group Naspers, which had a well established relationship with the university. Naspers carried great influence with

academics at Stellenbosch, and this may be why the programme that resulted was fairly non-academic in its framing (interview: de Beer). When Stellenbosch decided to establish the programme, they approached the Naspers newspaper *Die Burger* for advice, and it was here that the proposal for a 'Columbia style' school was first put forward (Cillie 1979: 2) Piet Cillie, who at this point retired as the editor of *Die Burger*, was appointed as the first head of department. The programme that was subsequently developed resembled the Columbia model to the extent that it was offered as a post-graduate programme. The coursework that was offered was not, however, that of postgraduate study. The programme emphasis seems similar to those that were prioritised in the early days of the Potchefstroom programme. Here, too, the focus was primarily on reporting skills, on typing, short-hand and the translation of Sapa copy (Cillie 1997). One can conclude that, as in the case of Potchefstroom, the purpose was to establish the foundations that would allow the rapid assimilation of graduates into one particular newsroom culture.

As we have seen, the period from the mid 1970's into the 1980's was characterised by dramatic intensification in the contestation of the hegemony of apartheid ideology. On one hand, there was an increasingly confident and widespread public expression of resistance to the state. On the other hand, the South African government responded to expressions of dissent with increasing intolerance, and with a more and more elaborate strategies of social engineering, which included communication strategies. The expansion of communication science departments to the University of Zululand and Fort Hare University in the early 1980's may, for example have been informed by this strategy (interview: de Beer).

Within the existing programmes, it is possible to see the impact of this struggle between conservative and critical forces. In UNISA, for example, two conflicting traditions of thought emerged, represented respectively by the scholarly approaches adopted by Hennie Fourie and M B Van Schoor. Fourie was an empiricist, and was strongly influenced by the

American ‘effects’ tradition in communication studies and ideas drawn from American social psychology. A positivist emphasis was strongly present in the UNISA curriculum during his time as head of the department in the late 1970’s and early 80’s. There is evidence that his approach to the study of communication was informed by a more direct support of the political agendas of the South African government than those discussed earlier. The textbook that Fourie produced, *Communication by Objectives*, dealt centrally with communication campaigns, and as such could be said to teach the principles that are essential to propaganda. This book became a standard within many of the communication science courses taught at Afrikaans Universities at this time (Interview: Fourie).

Van Schoor, on the other hand, reacted against the tradition that he found at UNISA (Interview: Louw). His approach to the study of communication was informed by hermeneutics, and when he later took over as Head of Department, there was a shift towards a more interpretive approach within the curriculum. Whereas within Fourie’s approach, the study and teaching of communication was understood to be in service of current social institutions, Van Schoor’s emphasis was on independent research. It is of significance that the role played by the advisory board referred to above was a point of contention between Fourie and Van Schoor (Interview: Fourie). Van Schoor’s stance was, in fact, a critical one. He did not identify with National Party politics, and was generally uncomfortable with what was happening in South African society. He nevertheless remained conservative in his practice as an academic. He was openly hostile to the idea of engagement that informed leftist university politics at this time. The form of criticism that he stood for was that of the withdrawn philosopher, concerned with ethics in abstract. He taught his students to question, but it was a very disengaged kind of criticism that denied the possibility of agency and social change. Under Van Schoor’s leadership, this stance would come to permeate the UNISA school; a sense of observing what was happening not through

engagement, but by ‘standing above’ the world. Because of this deliberate disengagement, his approach did not challenge the conservative instrumentalism that informed teaching and research practices at UNISA – the practice of assimilating graduates into the prevailing social system remained unchanged (Interview: Louw).

At Rhodes, the impact of critical knowledge impacted very differently on journalism education. The transformation that occurred within this department must be understood in context of broader shifts that were taking place outside universities. In South Africa at this time, the English-speaking community was marginalized from the political sphere. The institutions of Afrikanerdom were engaged in a power struggle with the black majority, with English liberals locked out and looking on from the sidelines. Within the left-wing English speaking community, there was a growing interest in Marxist ideas. It has been argued that this was not a rigorous engagement with Marxist thought, but more of a ‘cut and paste’ populist Marxism. One response of English speakers who were influenced by these ideas was to colonise the English-language press (Interview: Louw; Interview: Giffard). Another, related response was the involvement of this constituency in the teaching of journalism production skills to people involved in the progressive movement, as a form of activism. White English liberal university students and staff, and the student press through the South African Students’ Press Union (SASPU) helped to organise and produce community papers (Tomaselli, 1991: 167). It was also such individuals who gravitated towards the Journalism Department at Rhodes University (Interview: Louw; Interview: Giffard).

At this time, Switzer experienced a dramatic transformation as an intellectual, which he connected with the learning that his own students were engaged in at Rhodes. He became increasingly convinced of the importance of melding the practical teaching of the fundamental competencies of journalism with a critical mindset. Teaching needed, therefore, to be grounded in critical theory. He began to read extensively, including literature within a

more critical paradigm than the approach that Rhodes curriculum up to this point. He became interested, for example, in the potential of literary journalism (or new journalism, as it was then called) as a vehicle for communicating the broader realities of popular culture, and created a course on this topic. He also began to reason that, if journalism educators were going to think critically, then the practical skills that they teach students should include the ability to work strategically with research methods, and the ability to analyse the media. Out of this argument came the idea of a course in research methods and also one in critical theory. Students responded positively to these developments in the curriculum, but were equally affected by other influences. Some of these were academic, in terms of new ideas being explored in other departments within the university. Some were social and political, in terms of their interactions with other, likeminded students, and their involvement with political activities off campus. The Department produced many students during this time who went on to make major contributions to critical journalism both overseas and in South Africa.

When Switzer took over as head of department in 1979, he took the opportunity to add the words "media studies" to the name of the department. In doing so, he intended to make the statement that the Department did not have a 'trade school' mindset in the teaching of journalism. He avoided the term "communication" because he saw in it a code word for the conservatism which, at that time, was dominant within American journalism education. The thrust of media studies scholarship that was then being generated by the Birmingham school made it an attractive alternative (Interview: Switzer).

The 'critical' approach to journalism education was sustained at Rhodes throughout the 1980's. It has been suggested that this was true more for the courses that dealt with television and film, and less so for print journalism. Lynette Steenveld, who started teaching in the Department in 1985, argues that this may have related to monolithic status of the SABC as a vehicle of propaganda for the apartheid state. It was therefore "politically easy"

to reject its practices within a journalism education programme; the application of critique to practice seemed straightforward. Students quickly recognized the relevance of concepts drawn from critical media studies and cultural studies for the production of broadcast journalism. Furthermore, the role they saw themselves adopting after graduating was that of the producers of alternative media which could be used by people engaged in the struggle against the apartheid state. Because of this, these courses did not prioritise knowledge of the conventions and norms of orthodox broadcast journalism. The emphasis was by definition on experimentation (Steenveld, 2006: 281). One could argue that, within print journalism courses, a very different dynamic existed. Such teaching needed to engage directly with mainstream practices, because students were being prepared to work within them.

In 1985 the approach developed at Rhodes migrated to the Centre for Cultural and Media Studies (CCMS) at the University of Natal, and found purchase there. Ironically, however, the initial establishment of this centre had very little to do with the adoption of a critical paradigm. The programme was, at first, hosted in the Department of English Studies. We saw, above, that the economic recession of the late seventies affected the journalistic community, and the same can be said for academic institutions. English was one of the disciplines that was increasingly in trouble. Literature and language departments were losing students, and needed to look for new ways to survive. By the mid 1980's, there was a growing openness in these departments to the introduction of the study of journalism and media. Such areas of study represented a way of drawing students back. This was what set in motion the study of media at Kwazulu Natal. However, as in the case of many of the other institutions discussed above, the programme may have been approved for one reason, but by accident of circumstance, the people who ended up putting flesh to concept had a different agenda. Keyan Tomaselli was appointed, and he brought with him from Rhodes University the critical approach to the study of media that had been developed there.

The 1990's onwards: A new landscape emerges

The influence of market forces has, since the 1990's, become a central point of reference within the development of journalism education. One indication of this can be seen in the increasing involvement of media companies in debates about the definition and role of such education. Whereas in the 'critical' moment of the late 1970's it was the journalists themselves who became involved in education, it is now the management of media companies. SANEF, in particular, has played a key role in setting the terms of such debates. One reason for this involvement of media managers has been that the requirements of transformation have created anxiety around the availability of skilled black journalists. Another has been a rising concern, amongst media managers, about the 'crisis of credibility' that, as we saw earlier, has come to characterise South African journalism. It is generally assumed that what is 'wrong' with journalism can be solved by attending to reporters' competencies through training (Steenveld context: 290).

It is suggested that it is also because of economic pressure that the study of journalism and media studies has been increasingly appropriated by new sections of the university community. We have already seen that departments of language and drama have been particularly involved in this process of colonisation, as a response to a drop in student numbers. It would seem that, from the late 1980's onwards, this trend intensified. It has been suggested that because such courses tend to detach the study of journalism from the teaching of practice, their contribution to the critical engagement with the practices of journalism remain limited (Tomaselli & Teer-Tomaselli, 2007: 180). In this context, ideas that had once formed the basis of critical approaches to journalistic knowledge have become commodified.

This appropriation and 'hollowing out' of critical approaches to the study of journalism can also be observed within many of the communication science departments at

Afrikaans-language universities. Such departments began to incorporate the cultural studies into their curriculum, but did in a way that assimilated these traditions without confronting their political implications (187). An example of such assimilation can be found in the contributions to South African communication studies made by Pieter Fourie, who became head of department at UNISA in 1987. His approach to the study of communication was highly inclusive; the aim was to look dispassionately at all paradigms of such study. As in the case of Van Schoor before him, this approach was framed by a disengagement from social context. Where Van Schoor was anti-political, Fourie was a-political. His description of the different paradigms disconnected them from their social history and significance. One can see how, as much as Van Schoor's disengagement, this approach did not allow for any confrontation with the basic functionalism of research and teaching practices in communications studies. This approach broadly amongst communication science departments. One reason for this was the vast number of students that passed through the UNISA programme. Through them, the UNISA approach to the study of communication spilled across to most of the Afrikaans institutions (Interview: Louw).

There is much evidence, then, that the concern expressed about the future of critical journalism education is well founded. The picture that emerges of the current context of South African journalism education does not bode well for such an approach.

Conclusion

It would seem, indeed, that conservative instrumentalism is the constant that runs through the history of South African journalism education. This approach to knowledge has, furthermore, always existed in context of the requirements of oppressive forces. During apartheid, the institutions of journalism and of the academy were expected to serve the needs

of an authoritarian state. In the post apartheid era, the pressure to conform remains, this time framed by the hegemony of neo-liberal economic context.

It is, I believe, important to remember that the 'critical' turn in the history of journalism education, as described in this paper, resulted because the contradictions that defined the South African social context had become too great, and hegemony could not be maintained. We saw that, at this time, a broad popular movement arose which challenged the authority of the apartheid state. It was because of their association with this movement that universities were able to develop radical approaches to journalism education. It may be that, within the current situation, it is again only in context of such broad contestation of the status quo that a critical journalism education can come into existence. It is, of course, important to draw on the knowledge resources of the university to open up a space for such education. Even more important, however, is the need for educators to engage with social forces outside the university which could form the foundation of a new critical turn.

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Primary research

Interview conduced with Arrie de Beer, May 27 2008

Interview conducted with Anthony Giffard, May 19 2008

Interview conducted with Eric Louw, May 29 2008

Interview conduced with Pieter Fourie, May 13 2008

Interview conducted with Les Switzer, May 17 2007

Interview conducted with Anton Harber, May 28 2008