

The establishment of the Rand Afrikaans University (RAU),
1955-1975:
A centrepiece in education of a modernising Afrikaner livelihood

J N KLEE

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Supervisor: Professor ES van Eeden

Co-supervisor: Professor JWN Tempelhoff

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Preface and acknowledgements

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Summary

RAU was established close to the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits) in 1968 to realise, among other goals, a white Afrikaans-speaking academic presence in the heart of Johannesburg. From the inception of the idea of the founding of the university till its establishment commenced in 1955 under the leadership of Dr PJ Meyer, the inspiring process was fuelled by the determination of influential Afrikaans-speaking leaders in educational, cultural and economic circles. However, bringing the idea of the new university to fruition presented numerous challenges. Some issues to contemplate included the possible relocation of the University of South Africa (UNISA) to Johannesburg; the finding of a suitable site for the RAU; and the institution's conscience clause. There were many more, but lessor complexity.

The history of the establishment of RAU explores the creation of a centrepiece in education for modernising the livelihoods of Afrikaners, especially on the Witwatersrand. This study specifically explores the modernisation and intellectualisation of mainstream, white Afrikaans-speakers in a predominantly English-speaking Johannesburg during the period of 1955 to 1975. In doing so the first topic under discussion features a historiographical exploration of trends in university establishment globally and locally. The discussion then moves on to interrogate the key role players in the creation of RAU which is followed by a discussion of the political and cultural obstacles encountered in the establishment of RAU. The study investigates modern trends of the time in teaching, and the impact of and the architectural design based on the philosophical and ideological visions of the founding fathers. There follows an investigation into the way in which instruction in the mother-tongue and Christian values informed the overall ideological and philosophical ideals of RAU's founders.

In Chapter Seven the construction of RAU as a centrepiece of education with regard to modernising the Afrikaner livelihood on the Witwatersrand is critically reviewed. In Chapter Eight the institution's role and function in the Afrikaner project is explored, and issues of contestation and debate that existed between RAU and the wider Afrikaner nationalist community identified. Lastly RAU as a centrepiece in education for a modernising Afrikaner livelihood is assessed, and the dream for doing so critically reviewed.

Table of contents

Preface and acknowledgements	(i)
Summary	(ii)
 Chapter 1	 1
The Rand Afrikaans University as a centrepiece in education for a modernising Afrikaner livelihood: Determining a research methodology	
1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 Research methodology	2
1.2.1 Orientation and background	2
1.2.2 Problem statement	6
1.2.3 Research questions	8
1.2.4 Research aims	9
1.2.5 Central theoretical statement	9
1.2.6 Methodology	10
1.2.6.1 Literature review	10
1.2.6.2 Archival data and approach	15
1.3 Research ethics	16
1.4 Contribution of the study	16
1.5 Delimitations of the study	17
 Chapter 2	 20
Historiographical reflections and trends in university establishment	
2.1 Introduction	20
2.2 A review of institutional historiography	21
2.2.1 Changing universities in changing societies	23
2.2.2 The diverse roles of the university in society	24

2.2.3 Corporate administration of modern universities	26
2.2.4 Motivations for the establishment of universities world-wide	28
2.2.4.1 Political, economic, and educational motives	29
2.2.4.2 Ideological and imperial driven motivations	30
2.2.4.3 National development and economic rationales	32
2.2.4.4 Cultural motivations and other economic considerations	34
2.2.4.5 Religious orientation and socio-political movements as motivations	35
2.3 Motivation for the founding of universities in South Africa	39
2.3.1 The influences of agendas and imperial motivations in the advancement of higher education	41
2.3.2 Universities in the former Boer republics: the role of regionalism, religion based education and Afrikaner nationalism in the founding of institutions	45
2.3.3 Economic, technological and skills development as motivational factors	47
2.3.4 Higher educational development as guided by Apartheid ideology and practice	48
2.4 Conclusion	49
Chapter 3	52
Key role players in the creation of RAU	
3.1 Introduction	52
3.2 The broader Afrikaner nationalist movement	55
3.2.1 Initiatives within the nationalist movement	55
3.2.2 NP sentiment and the party's gradual involvement in the establishment RAU	57
3.2.3 The role and impact of the Afrikaner Broederbond (AB) and the Federasie vir Afrikaanse Kultuurverenigings (FAK)	59
3.2.3.1 The AB	60

3.2.3.2 The FAK	62
3.2.4 Meyer's role	63
3.2.5 Government and the UNISA debate	68
3.3 RAU's character and role as a white-inspired Afrikaans university	71
3.4 Conclusion	74
 Chapter 4	 76
Political and cultural obstacles in the establishment of RAU	
4.1 Introduction	76
4.2 Encountering and overcoming obstacles, 1955-1968	79
4.2.1 English and Jewish business sentiments towards the establishment of RAU	83
4.2.1.1 Land loss – The Johannesburg Country Club	83
4.2.2 NP-government's reluctance to support the establishment of RAU	84
4.2.3 Political opposition of the Johannesburg municipality	86
4.2.4 Space as a point of contestation	87
4.2.4.1 The geographical location of RAU	87
4.2.4.2 A "Readymade university": relocating UNISA?	87
4.2.4.3 " <i>Brooma, Brooma</i> – forget about it", the location debate for the Construction of RAU	93
4.2.5 Personal and environmental sentiments	95
4.2.6 Conscience clause.	96
4.3 Conclusion	99
 Chapter 5	 102
Architecture and teaching as central aspects to understanding the philosophy of RAU's founders	
5.1 Introduction	102
5.2 Motives for RAU's modern design and innovative teaching outlook, measured	

	(vi)	
against the founding of universities generally		107
5.3 Motives for RAU's modern design and innovative teaching outlook		109
5.3.1 International perspective		109
5.3.2 "Universitas character" of the university		110
5.3.3 ' <i>Service through knowledge</i> '		111
5.3.3.1 Balancing "white identity" in a "healthy" way		114
5.3.3.2 Racial inclusiveness in the founding philosophy?		116
5.4 Implementing modern architectural design and innovative teaching methods		117
5.4.1 Innovative learning process		118
5.4.2 New administrative systems to compliment innovative teaching methods		120
5.4.3 Innovative teaching methods		121
5.4.3.1 Multi-semester system		121
5.4.3.2 Teaching methods		122
5.4.3.3 Small Group Classes/Tutorials		123
5.5 Innovative architectural design		124
5.5.1 Modern approach in construction		124
5.5.2 An urban university with a rural character		126
5.5.3 Centralisation framework and functionality		126
5.5.4 Concrete and symbolism		127
5.6 Conclusion		129
Chapter 6		131
The language and religion protocol at RAU		
6.1 Introduction		131
6.2 Mother-tongue education at RAU and the formation of a unique white Afrikaans-speaker identity		135
6.2.1 Introduction		135
6.2.2 The association between mother-tongue education and identity formation		137
6.2.3 Mother-tongue education at RAU as instrument of identity formation		140

6.3 Instilling Christian values at RAU based on CNE principles	144
6.3.1 Introduction	144
6.3.2 Imbedding Christian values through CNE principles	145
6.4 The impact of mother-tongue education and Christian values on ideals envisioned for RAU	150
6.5 Conclusion	153
Chapter 7	156
A critical review of RAU's central role in the Afrikaner identity formation and modernisation	
7.1 Introduction	156
7.2 Understanding modernisation under apartheid	159
7.2.1 Modernism and apartheid	159
7.3 RAU – advancing and modernising Afrikaner identity through education	164
7.3.1 ' <i>Diens deur kennis</i> ' / ' <i>Service through Knowledge</i> '	164
7.3.2 Viljoen's views – modern education and RAU's community involvement	167
7.4 Achieving modernising goals through active business engagement and development	170
7.4.1 Empowering white Afrikaans-speaking students	170
7.4.2 The intellectual development of the white Afrikaans-speaking students	171
7.4.3 RAU engaging with industry and business	171
7.5 RAU's achievements in modernising white Afrikaner identities and advancing livelihoods	173
7.5.1 Student registration and degrees awarded	173
7.5.2 Self-assessment and advancement	175
7.5.2.1 Bureau of Higher Education	175
7.5.2.2 Institute for Children and Adult Guidance	175
7.5.2.3 Research development	176
7.6 Conclusion	177

Chapter 8	179
Contestation and debate in the wider Afrikaner nationalist community over RAU's role and function as an Afrikaans university	
8.1 Introduction	179
8.2 Another university on the Witwatersrand	182
8.2.1 Contestation and debate on various issues	183
8.2.1.1 Need for another university?	183
8.2.1.2 Academically and culturally "winning over" the Rand to provide affordable tertiary education	185
8.2.1.3 From objection to establishment to naming the university	186
8.2.1.4 A "readymade institution" – Relocating UNISA?	188
8.3 Debate and contestation regarding the role and function of RAU	192
8.3.1 Addressing community needs through a particularistic approach	193
8.3.2 A future-oriented, functional urban university	195
8.4 Conclusion	197
Chapter 9	200
The realisation of a dream: Assessing RAU as a centrepiece in education for a modernising Afrikaner livelihood	
Bibliography	214
List of Photographs	
Annexure A: Ohlsson's Cape Breweries	106
Annexure B: RAU campus 1975	128

Chapter 1

The Rand Afrikaans University as a centrepiece in education for a modernising Afrikaner livelihood: Determining a research methodology

1.1 Introduction

The Rand Afrikaans University (RAU) – or the University of Johannesburg (UJ) as it has come to be known since 2005¹ – is situated in Auckland Park, Kingsway avenue, Johannesburg, adjacent to the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC).² UJ currently consists of four campuses, namely Auckland Park (the main campus), Bunting Road, Doornfontein and Soweto. Though the campuses vary in size, the university currently has approximately 55 000 registered students in total. Although it is a relatively young university (celebrating but its fiftieth year of existence, including its 2005 transformation from RAU to UJ), it has a rich history characterised by many struggles concerning its establishment and subsequent transformations.³

Erstwhile RAU was established close to the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits) in 1968, to realise, among other goals, a white Afrikaans-speaking academic presence in the heart of Johannesburg. From the inception of the idea of founding a university till its eventual establishment commenced in 1955 under the chairmanship of Dr PJ Meyer, the process was fuelled by the determination of influential Afrikaans-speaking leaders in educational, cultural and economic circles. Bringing the idea of a new university to fruition presented numerous challenges, including the possible relocation of the University of South Africa (UNISA) to Johannesburg, finding a suitable site for the establishment of RAU, and the “conscience clause”, to name but a few.⁴

This study on the rationale for and development of RAU explores the modernisation and intellectualisation of mainstream, white Afrikaans speakers in a predominantly English-oriented Johannesburg during the period 1955 to 1975. This time frame decided on is

¹ E. Brink, *University of Johannesburg; the University of a new generation* (Craft Print, Singapore, 2010).

² UJ library, *Gedenk-album van die opening van die R.A.U.* Johannesburg, 1968-02-24; Signum, *RAU 10 Jaar 1968-1978*, 1978, p. 6; P.J. Meyer, *Nog nie ver genoeg nie, 'n persoonlike rekenskap van vyftig jaar georganiseerde Afrikanerskap* (Perskor, Johannesburg, 1984), p. 181; <https://www.uj.ac.za/newandevents/Pages/RECORD-NUMBERS-GRADUATE-FROM-UJ-%E2%80%94-As-2016-Autumn-Ceremonies-get-under-way.-proving-that-everything-done-at-UJ-is-infused-wi.aspx>.

³ E. Brink, *University of Johannesburg...*, (Craft Print, Singapore, 2010).

⁴ J. Klee, “Die verwesenliking van 'n Afrikaner-droom: Die stigting van die Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit, 1955-1968”, *New Contree*, 60 (11), 2010, pp. 133-156.

significant since the year 1955 marked the beginning of efforts to establish the university,⁵ while 1975 signalled an important twenty-year landmark after the start of the initial process to establish the university. Moreover, 1975 was a year in which the full occupation of the modern, spacious architectural innovations of the new campus in Auckland Park started.⁶ The time frame is additionally important because statistical data relating to the growth of student numbers, degrees awarded and the expansion of degree course offerings were released during this time, in addition to data that reflected the positive growth and achievements of the university in its early years.⁷ Research into the history of RAU suggests that a study of the university will not only shed light on educational motives and growth patterns of the time, but also be informative on broader national and international issues: For example, on the conceptualisation, rationale and processes contributing to the establishment of universities.

The development of new universities, in addition to the ongoing role and function of each institution, is vitally important to society. University institutions have evolved over centuries and are fundamental to the advancement of humankind. As complex institutions, universities are shaped by political, economic and social factors, and are extremely influential in influencing and advancing societies.⁸ Globally universities have increased substantially since the 1960s due to an array of political, economic and social factors.⁹

Determining the motivations for the creation of universities and observing the changing role and function of universities in society are therefore fertile research areas.¹⁰ To progress towards a meaningful study in this field a solid research framework is required.

1.2 Research methodology

1.2.1 Orientation and background

For historians like D Welsh, D O'Meara and H Giliomee who are interested in the political history of South Africa,¹¹ trends in the 1960s and 1970s are extremely significant owing to

⁵ M.A. Beale, *Apartheid and university education, 1948-1970* (PhD University of the Witwatersrand, 1998), p. 289.

⁶ P.J. Meyer, *Nog nie ver genoeg nie ...*, p. 184.

⁷ Booklet – Growth of the Rand Afrikaans University, produced by the public relations department of the Rand Afrikaans University, 1969, pp. 3,5.

⁸ R. Barnett, *Being a university* (Routledge, London, 2011), p. 1, J. Currie and J. Newton, *Universities and globalization: critical perspectives* (SAGE, London, 1998).

⁹ A. Smith and F. Webster, *The postmodern university: contested visions of higher education in society* (SRHE and Open University Press, London, 1997), p. 2.

¹⁰ P.B. Waite, "Some recent university histories", *Acadiensis: Journal of the History of the Atlantic Region*, 19 (2), 1990, p. 226.

the heightened opposition to the apartheid state that prevailed during those decades.¹² A fierce struggle for freedom escalated into protest events like the uprising in Sharpeville (21 March 1960), and a growing black consciousness nationally that further boiled out in for example the 1976 school strikes in Soweto.¹³ The period is also significant when one traces the socio-political undercurrents in Afrikaner society.¹⁴ Generally, these years will be remembered as a period during which the political-racial ideology of apartheid flourished under the National Party (NP) government.¹⁵ The white Afrikaans-speaking¹⁶ demographic section of South Africa's population and its economic status by then stood in stark contrast with that of the "backward poor white", as Afrikaner identity was perceived in the 1920s and 1930s.¹⁷ As Giliomee observes: "...by 1974... Afrikaners had risen from a poor, underdeveloped population group to a prosperous bourgeoisie".¹⁸ This upliftment was the consequence of a resilient modernising drive of the white Afrikaans speaker.¹⁹

In this context, vast resources were deployed to establish the dominance of white Afrikaans speakers in the tertiary education sector. This was a slow process, however. The University Apartheid Legislation Act No. 23 of 1953, amended in Act No. 3 of 1959, was vigorously opposed – especially by liberals.²⁰ It was the exclusion of black students from "open" institutions that upset liberals the most.²¹ Also in the confines of the Afrikaner elite greater state control of universities was opposed, and the loss of academic and religious autonomy criticised. During the 1960s the notion that universities were institutions serving universal ends was gradually eroded and no longer tolerated by policy makers who pushed for the

¹¹ D. Welsh, *The rise and fall of apartheid* (Jonathan Ball Publishers, Cape Town, 2009), pp. 72-73, 100-101, 121-125, 269; D. O'Meara, *Forty lost years: The apartheid state and the politics of the National Party, 1948-1994* (Ravan Press, Johannesburg, 1996), Chapter 9; H. Giliomee, *The Afrikaners, biography of a people* (Tafelberg, Cape Town, 2004), Chapter 14.

¹² W. Beinart, *Twentieth century South Africa* (Oxford University Press, New York, 2001), pp. 165-169, 237-239, 245.

¹³ D. Welsh, *The rise and fall of apartheid*, pp. 72-73, 100-101, 121-125, 269, W. Beinart, *Twentieth century South Africa* (Oxford University Press, New York, 2001), pp. 237-239, 245.

¹⁴ D. O'Meara, *Forty lost years ...*, Chapter 9; H. Giliomee, *The Afrikaners, biography of a people*, Chapter 14.

¹⁵ H. Adam & H. Giliomee, *The rise and crisis of Afrikaner power* (David Phillip, Cape Town, 1979), pp. 143-145.

¹⁶ In all instances the concept Afrikaner refers especially to white Afrikaans-speaking South Africans.

¹⁷ *The poor white problem in South Africa*, Report of the Carnegie Commission, pp. 183-225; J. Hyslop, "The white poor at the end of apartheid; the collapse of the myth of Afrikaner community", *Itinerario*, 27(special issue 3-4) 2003, pp. 226-230; Also compare A. Grundlingh, "'Are we Afrikaners getting too rich?' Cornucopia and change in Afrikanerdom in the 1960s", *Journal of Historical Sociology*, 21 (3), 2008, pp. 143-153

¹⁸ H. Adam & H. Giliomee, *The rise and crisis of Afrikaner power*, p. 145.

¹⁹ Van der Merwe, W.M. and Welsh, D., *The future of the university in Southern Africa* (Martins Publishers, Johannesburg, 1977), compare pp. 172-187.

²⁰ C. Moodie, "The state and the liberal universities in South Africa: 1948-1990", *Higher Education*, 27 (1), 1994, pp. 4-10.

²¹ M.A. Beale, *Apartheid and university education ...*, pp. 1-9 and chapter 6; P. Kallaway, *The history of education under apartheid, 1948-1994* (Pearson Education South Africa, Cape Town, 2002), pp. 259-261.

Christian-Nationalist ideology in the education system.²² Among Nationalists, the emphasis gradually shifted from a general desire to “Afrikanerise” existing universities, to the more ambitious idea of creating entirely new institutions to serve the particular needs of white Afrikaans speakers.²³ The formal establishment of two new universities at the time, namely the University of Port Elizabeth²⁴ (UPE) in 1964, and the RAU in 1968 is viewed as having reflected the desire to cater for the educational and economic needs of the *Volk* or white Afrikaans speakers.²⁵ Working towards RAU’s establishment, started in May 1955 as an initiative by a group of educators, academics and politicians. They combined their visions to establish an Afrikaner inspired tertiary institution in Johannesburg,²⁶ the economic powerhouse of South Africa. The group believed that the “liberal influences” of Wits had an undesirable impact on the young Afrikaans-speaking students forced to study there because an Afrikaans university was non-existent on the Witwatersrand. To them, the creation of an Afrikaans university was a guaranteed way to eradicate the former deprived social and economic status of white Afrikaans speakers on the Witwatersrand.²⁷

From the perspective of its founders, RAU was a university established not only to serve the needs of a particular group, but²⁸ for many Afrikaner organisations and especially for the Afrikaner Broederbond (AB) (Brotherhood for Afrikaners), it became a centrepiece of

²² M.A. Beale, *Apartheid and university education...*, pp. 1-3; E.S. van Eeden & T.M. Vermeulen, “Christian National Education and People’s Education: Historical perspectives on some common grounds”, *New Contree*, 50, 2005, pp. 177-208.

²³ S. Dubow, *A Commonwealth of knowledge, science, sensibility and white South Africa 1820-2000* (Oxford University Press, New York, 2006), pp. 264-265, Van der Merwe, W.M. and Welsh, D., *The future of the university in Southern Africa* (Martins Publishers, Johannesburg, 1977), compare pp. 172-187.

²⁴ Currently known as the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University.

²⁵ M.A. Beale, *Apartheid and university education ...*, pp. 1-3.

²⁶ F.I.J. van Rensburg “Sy visie vir die nuwe universiteit” in B. Louw & F. van Rensburg, *Bestendige binnevuur; perspektiewe op Gerrit Viljoen by geleentheid van sy een en sewentigste verjaarsdag op 1997-09-11* (Tafelberg-uitgewers Beperk, Kaapstad, 1997), pp. 39-51.

²⁷ E.L.P. Stals, *Afrikaners in die Goudstad; Deel 2 – 1924-1961* (HAUM Opvoedkundige Uitgewery, Pretoria, 1986), pp. 133-159; J. R. Shorten, *Die verhaal van Johannesburg* (Voortrekkerpers Beperk, Johannesburg, 1970), pp. 350-447.

²⁸ J.G. Garbers, “Diens deur kennis” in B. Louw & F. van Rensburg, *Bestendige binnevuur ...*, pp. 78-90; University of Johannesburg Archive (hereafter) UJ/RAU Archive, Johannesburg, P.J. Meyer-collection, File C1/1, Versoekskrif insake die stigting van ‘n Afrikaanse Randse Universiteit voorgelê te word op 1963-11-25 aan Sy Edele J. de Klerk, Minister van Onderwys, Kuns en Wetenskap, p. 1; P.J. Meyer, *Nog nie ver genoeg nie ...*, pp. 160-184.

modernising Afrikanerdom.²⁹ Dubow uses strong wording to express himself on this educational exclusivity not welcomed by the majority of South Africans:³⁰

Sculpted in soaring concrete, and arranged in semi-circular form, the RAU campus resembled an urban laager in the midst of Johannesburg.

Dubow furthermore believed that RAU stood as “monumental proof that Afrikanerdom was securing its position in the country’s economic centre”, and that “knowledge was being politicised, institutionalised, and nationalised as never before”.³¹ Though these tempestuous impressions will not dominate the main discussion of this thesis, they will be occasionally weighed against insight gained from archival and published sources that informs the study. The intention is to scrutinise the research topic from a more diverse perspective.

In practical terms, the modernising vision of the time translated, among other things, into a university established in an economically vibrant and new environment, one adapting and combining innovative approaches to teaching, learning and research with modern architecturally-designed buildings in which urban and rural aesthetics were conjoined.³² The stage was set for the creation of a university wherein “traditional ways and new modern challenges could coexist” within an Afrikaner-Christian and national-cultural framework of values.³³ The university soon assumed the character of a typical tertiary educational institution in a rapidly modernising South Africa where there was an increasing demand for young white Afrikaans speaking graduates to contribute to the primarily white-controlled society. Above all, the university not only attested itself to be a tertiary institution maintaining high standards in various academic fields, but it also proved itself capable of adapting to the new challenges of the time.³⁴

To scientifically and meticulously record the history of the establishment and early growth of RAU required a thorough investigation into its socio-historical context. It was felt that a study of this nature would contribute to an inclusive and fresh understanding of the

²⁹ The word “modern” or “modernising” has been used since the 1960s by academics researching different themes relating to the university to describe the characteristics of new universities established during this time and subsequently. It refers to an institution that belongs to a new era of new approaches, beliefs, ideas and interpretations, an institution that changes with the demands of the time.

³⁰ As interpreted by S. Dubow, *A Commonwealth of knowledge* ..., p. 266.

³¹ S. Dubow, *A Commonwealth of knowledge* ..., pp. 264-266.

³² F.I.J. van Rensburg, “Sy visie vir die nuwe universiteit” in B. Louw & F. van Rensburg, *Bestendige binnevuur* ..., pp. 39-65, 69-103; Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit, *Die Taak van RAU as stadsuniversiteit – 1968-1973* (RAU, Johannesburg, 1973).

³³ W.O. Meyer, “Die idee agter die argitektuur” in B. Louw & F. van Rensburg, *Bestendige binnevuur* ..., pp. 69-77.

³⁴ F.I.J. van Rensburg, “Sy visie vir die nuwe universiteit” in B. Louw & F. van Rensburg, *Bestendige binnevuur* ..., pp. 39-51; H. Adam and H. Giliomee, *The rise and crisis of Afrikaner power*, p. 196.

predominantly, mostly top-down, modernising drive of an Afrikaner establishment at the time and in the context of South Africa – and especially that of the Witwatersrand between 1955 and 1976.

The study is also intended to add value to the existing literature and current understanding of the ways in which the former NP-controlled government was involved in RAU's founding and development to indirectly serve the government's political, economic and social aspirations by means of education in the heyday of apartheid.³⁵

Within the field of institutional corporate history, both locally and internationally, there is need for more research on the factors that have led to the establishment of tertiary educational institutions for specific (ethnic) groupings.³⁶ This is because universities count amongst the oldest societal/cultural institutions in the world. They play a pivotal role because of their altruistic sharing of knowledge with society. Unlike big business corporations that sometimes try to emulate universities, the drivers of universities are seated more in the realm of society and societal stakeholder engagement. RAU was and remains no exception. This study is important, moreover, to determine to what extent universities are established by groups in national power as vehicles to further self-empowerment. Another motive for said establishment may be to ensure that a group sustains and maintains its potential authority or dominance in an area or country, or even as a language group.³⁷ A study of the founding of RAU will, furthermore, provide insight into broader questions relating to the so-called new universities of the mid-twentieth century.³⁸ The aim of this thesis is thus to identify, describe and analyse the external and internal factors, despite constraints perceived, that contributed to the formation of RAU as an educational role player in the intellectual and socio-economic modernising process of white Afrikaans speakers on the Witwatersrand.

1.2.2 Problem statement

Within the field of institutional corporate history and corporate governance, there is a growing need for the incorporation of historical consciousness in research into corporates. Tempelhoff reasons that companies need to make increasing provision for reflection on the changes that have taken place in, for example, management styles or social responsibility in a

³⁵ See Chapters Three and Four.

³⁶ See also the discussion on the research gap in the Problem Statement and Literature Review sections.

³⁷ Compare G.M. Marsden, *The soul of the American university: From Protestant establishment to established nonbelief* (Oxford University Press, New York, 1994), p. 462.

³⁸ K. Minoque, *The concept of a university* (Transaction Publishers, New Brunswick, 2005), pp. 1-5.

changing South African society. The need to engage with the past and its effect on current identity and moral conscience has always been and will become increasingly urgent.³⁹ Thus, in the field of institutional corporate history, both locally and internationally, there is a growing tendency for research focusing on the motivational factors contributing to the establishment of tertiary institutions (particularly ethnic-, language- and/or religion-centred institutions).⁴⁰ A properly researched history of the former RAU, focusing on the educational intentions of the Afrikaans elite in the rapidly modernising and changing cosmopolitan context of mid-twentieth century Johannesburg, is therefore as timely and necessary.

Serious scholarship on the establishment of RAU is limited. Brink's *University of Johannesburg: The University of a new generation*⁴¹ is a work of popular history focusing predominantly on the amalgamation of RAU, Vista and the Technicon of the Witwatersrand to form the current University of Johannesburg. Prior to this, several earlier works of a celebratory and commemorative nature were published.⁴² Although these publications contain sections outlining the history of the university they, for the most part, lack serious objective analysis and are of a hagiographic nature. However, two sources of a biographical and autobiographical nature – Meyer's *Nog nie ver genoeg nie* and Louw and Van Rensburg's *Bestendige binnevuur*⁴³ – do in fact share impressions on the motives and mentalities of the founders and early administrators of the institution. Except for one text in which RAU is analysed in the context of tertiary education under apartheid (namely Beale's *Apartheid's goals in the 1960s: the creation of the University of Port Elizabeth and the Rand Afrikaans University*),⁴⁴ no exclusive study of RAU's founding history, including the motivational factors contributing to it, has been recorded to date. This study therefore aims to address this gap in knowledge and to not only contribute to the existing information regarding the history of RAU/UJ as a university, but to provide a thorough account of the founding of RAU. The study will also contribute to the existing information regarding motivational factors leading to

³⁹ J.W.N. Tempelhoff, "'Where were we again?' Corporate history and the South African Historian", *Historia*, 48 (2), 2003, p. 6.

⁴⁰ Compare P. Pierson, *Politics in time. History, institutions and social analysis*, pp. 196; G.M. Marsden, *The soul of the American university ...*, p. 462; B.A. Yu-xi, "Particularity of ideological and political education for students at universities of nationalities", *Journal of South-Central University for Nationalities*, 2007.

⁴¹ E. Brink, *University of Johannesburg: the University of a new generation*.

⁴² UJ library, *Gedenkalbum van die opening van die R.A.U., Taak van die RAU as stadsuniversiteit*. (Johannesburg, 1973); *Signum: RAU 10 Jaar, 1968-1978*, G. van N. Viljoen, *Aambeeld* (RAU, Johannesburg, 1986).

⁴³ P.J. Meyer, *Nog nie ver genoeg nie ...*, and B. Louw and F. van Rensburg, *Bestendige binnevuur ...*

⁴⁴ M. Beale, *"Apartheid's goals in the 1960's: the creation of the University of Port Elizabeth and the Rand Afrikaans University"* (Wits Institute for Advanced Social Research, Johannesburg, 1995).

the founding of universities in general. It will, moreover, provide an analysis of top-down drives – frequently embedded in government politics and government’s quests – to modernise in the effort to increase its political, economic and social powers.

1.2.3 Research questions

The primary research question of this study can be expounded as follows:

Did the establishment of a “modern” RAU contribute to the social, cultural, and economic self-empowerment of white Afrikaans-speaking South Africans in the context of the Witwatersrand in the period 1955 to 1975?

To address the primary research question, several secondary questions have been proposed and addressed in the chapters to follow:

- How does the historiography of university histories reflect the motivations (be they of a linguistic, religious or cultural nature) of specific groups’ establishment of universities, and can this study in respect of RAU benefit from a broader historiographical literature, and vice versa?;
- What role did the NP government, Afrikaner business and cultural organisations play in the establishment of RAU?;
- Did the early founders encounter political- and cultural-related obstacles during the establishment of RAU? How were these obstacles overcome?;
- In what way did RAU’s modern architectural design and, coupled with intentions to define innovative teaching methods complement the modernising ideological and philosophic ideals that RAU’s founders envisaged for a modern institution catering for the white Afrikaans speaker?;
- How important and successful were the implementation and maintenance of mother-tongue education and Christian values to the project of mobilising white Afrikaans speakers for the cause of nationalism and self-empowerment?;
- How successful was the creation of RAU in achieving the aim of modernising white Afrikaans speakers on the Witwatersrand?;
- What issues of contestation and debate developed between RAU and the wider Afrikaner nationalist community, as well as other communities, over the institution’s establishment, role and function in the “Afrikaner project”?

1.2.4 Research aims

The following aims are envisaged:

- To determine the way in which the historiography of university histories reflects the motivations (be it of a linguistic, religious or cultural nature) for the establishment of universities by specific groups, and whether this study of RAU can benefit from the broader historiographical literature and vice versa;
- To define the role of the NP government, Afrikaner business and cultural organisations in the establishment of RAU;
- To identify and outline the political- and cultural-related obstacles that the early founders encountered in RAU's establishment process.
- To expand on RAU's modern architectural design and innovative teaching methods and to deliberate on the effectiveness of the modernising ideological and philosophic ideals envisaged for RAU by the founders of a modern institution for white Afrikaans speakers;
- To evaluate the importance and success of the implementation and maintenance of mother-tongue education and Christian values in the project of mobilising Afrikaners in the cause of nationalism and self-empowerment;
- To assess RAU's success as a tertiary institution established to modernise white Afrikaans speakers on the Witwatersrand;
- To analyse issues of contestation and debate between RAU and the wider Afrikaner nationalist community, as well as other communities over the institution's role and function in the "Afrikaner project".

1.2.5 Central theoretical statement

The theoretical statement developed, prior to the research done for this study was articulated as follows:

Through politically empowered and financial contributions made by the former NP government, Afrikaner businesses, cultural organisations and specific educators, the establishment of RAU provided for the advancement and modernisation of white Afrikaans-speaking South Africans on the Witwatersrand. Contributions by all on a similar scale was

the implementation of an advanced centre of education to make accessible advanced teaching methods, applied and communicated in Afrikaans to enable and empower white Afrikaans-speaking South Africans on especially the Witwatersrand to access international and state-of-the-art educational and research opportunities.

Chapter Nine as a critical, analytical summary highlights reflections from the research done, and if the theoretical statement corresponds with the actual findings.

1.2.6 Methodology

This thesis is informed by a qualitative study based on the collection of data from both primary (archival) and secondary sources relating to the former RAU (The location of the sources used in the thesis is dealt with in more detail in section 1.2.6.2 – Archival data and approach). The research adheres to the established methodological requirements of History as a discipline. The study makes use of two types of literature: Firstly some theoretical and contextual literature regarding the establishment of academic institutions has been studied to contextualise and direct critical analysis regarding RAU and, secondly, studies that deal with RAU and its founding history in conjunction with the NP government's modernising project are referenced. Aspects of the historical method, embedded in secondary (or published) literature as well as in archival resources, are concisely outlined. However, in this study limitations were encountered with regard to the availability of secondary sources specifically dealing with matters such as the obstacles the founders of RAU were faced with. The role of architecture and substantial information on all key role players in the founding of RAU were not easily locatable. Though much effort has been pulled to ensure a generous presentation and completeness, it is believed that more extensive research in future related to these obstacles will be of immense value to ensure an extended understanding of RAU's development.

1.2.6.1 Literature review

In the context of studying institutional history some of the topics that arise, include the philosophical, theoretical, managerial, demographic and political aspects of universities. Researchers of universities such as Twigg,⁴⁵ Benum⁴⁶ and Russ⁴⁷ have identified difficulties

⁴⁵ J. Twigg, "Evolution, obstacles and aims: The writing of Oxford and Cambridge College histories", *History of Universities*, 8, 1989.

and problems experienced in writing institutional histories of higher education and have indicated important insights that may be gained by carefully assessing the significance of local and national circumstances in which universities have developed. Minoque, on the other hand, investigates the impact that student uprisings of the 1960s had on the global development of universities which raised new questions regarding the function and purpose of a university in a modern contemporary society.⁴⁸ Minoque's study is of exceptional value for investigating RAU's origins. The racial aspect visible in education has also been investigated by Gallagher, although only on secondary level not tertiary and slightly earlier than that of Minoque. Gallagher, for example, examines the role of ethnicity and race in educational institutions and studies the role of education in societies affected by ethnic conflict. Gallaghers findings show that factors such as ethnicity and race in education created enormous challenges as well as opportunities in education.⁴⁹

Although the challenges universities faced in the early years of apartheid in South Africa differ in several significant respects from their counterparts in the Northern Hemisphere, and specifically those that Minoque analysed, global debates during the 1960s about the value of the university sheds light, and had a profound impact on the founding and development of RAU especially – is specifically – in relation to issues connected to class and race.⁵⁰ The university was originally established in a disunited society with the aim of improving the economic and social position of one specific race group.

Authors like Currie and Newson,⁵¹ Smith and Langslow,⁵² Archer and Hutchings⁵³ as well as Zeleza and Olukoshi⁵⁴ have also examined various issues relating to universities, including challenges in terms of financial restraints, government policies regarding tertiary education, increasing student numbers, the relationship between universities, government and society and constraints experienced by African universities. An observation by these authors are that

⁴⁶ E. Benum, "On the challenge of writing university history: The University of Oslo". *Center for Studies in Higher Education* (October, 1999).

⁴⁷ W.A. Russ, "Problems in writing a college history", *Pennsylvania History*, 26 (2), 1959.

⁴⁸ K. Minoque, *The concept of a university*, pp.185-204.

⁴⁹ T. Gallagher, *Education in divided societies* (Palgrave Macmillan, London, 2004).

⁵⁰ K. Minoque, *The concept of a university*, pp. 205-219.

⁵¹ J. Currie and J. Newton, *Universities and globalization: critical perspectives* (SAGE, London, 1998).

⁵² D. Smith and A. K. Langslow, *The idea of a university: higher education policy series 51* (Jessica Kingsley Publishers, London, 1999).

⁵³ L. Archer and M. Hutchings, *Higher education and social class: Issues of exclusion and inclusion* (Routledge, London, 2003).

⁵⁴ P.T. Zeleza and A. Olukoshi, *African universities in the twenty-first century* (Unisa Press, Pretoria, 2004).

once universities are established they are under government and society's constant scrutiny regarding their ability to technologically adapt and justify their existence. These studies provide broader contexts of university development in which to investigate the establishment of RAU as a South African example. With RAU then as a "case study"⁵⁵ undertaken in this thesis, the research will, in turn, contribute to the historiography of university development and specific field of study produced by these authors and others, but also university development in South Africa by and large.

Elliott explores the topic of changing universities from a global perspective, including several case studies from South Africa.⁵⁶ These studies deal with issues specifically focused on a university and the community it serves. Elliott's insight has also been considered for historically observing RAU in this study because it examines ways in which universities as educational institutions contribute to the development of the society. The links between university, community and broader society have been addressed in some of the extensively researched literature dealing specifically with the founding of South African universities. These studies have been considered in this thesis as contributions that compliment contextual comparisons.⁵⁷

Scholarship regarding the history of RAU is limited. Almost all existing literature is of a celebratory and commemorative nature.⁵⁸ Although some of the texts refer to the history of the university, these works lack serious critical analysis and are rather of a hagiographic nature. Most, however, do serve a useful purpose in revealing the motives and mentalities of the founders and early administrators of the institution.

⁵⁵ Compare for example with the writings of J. Tosh, *The pursuit of history; aims, methods and new directions in the study of modern history* (Harlow, Longman, 2010); B. Flyvbjerg, "Case study", in N.K. Denzin and Y.S. Lincoln (ed.), *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research* (Thousand Oaks, 2011), p. 314.

⁵⁶ J. Elliott et al., *Communities and their universities: The challenges of lifelong learning* (Lawrence and Wishart Limited, London, 1996).

⁵⁷ Compare E.H. Brookes, *A history of the University of Natal* (University of Natal Press, Pietermaritzburg, 1966); R.F. Currey, *Rhodes University, 1904-1970: A chronicle* (Rustica Press, Grahamstown, 1970); A. Kerr, *Fort Hare 1915-1945: The evolution of an African college* (Billing and Sons, London, 1968); M. Shear, *Wits: A university in the Apartheid era* (Witwatersrand University Press, Johannesburg, 1996); B.K. Murray, *Wits the early years: A history of the University of the Witwatersrand Johannesburg and its precursors 1896-1939* (Witwatersrand University Press, Johannesburg, 1982); B.K. Murray, *Wits the "open" years: The history of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, 1939-1959* (Witwatersrand University Press, Johannesburg, 1982); P.F. van der Schyff, *Wonderdaad...! Die PUK tot 1951: Wording, vestiging en selfstandigheid* (Paarl Print, Potchefstroom, 2003); E.S. van Eeden, *In U Lig: Die PU vir CHO van selfstandigheid tot samesmelting 1951-2004* (DComm Design, Potchefstroom, 2005).

⁵⁸ Compare sources such as E. Brink, *University of Johannesburg ... Gedenkalbum van die opening van die R.A.U ...*; *Signum ...*; G. van N. Viljoen, *Aambeeld*.

RAU was founded and developed within the context of the establishment and growth of Afrikaner political power. There is a large collection of literature on various aspects of this development from which this study will draw and to which it will contribute as well. For example, Giliomee's *The Afrikaners: Biography of a people*⁵⁹ presents a synthesis of work on the history of Afrikaners and is particularly useful in providing a broad sweep of the political and economic rise of Afrikaners and for showing how this process was much more fractured and the concept "Afrikaner" much more contested, than has mostly been acknowledged. Likewise, Posel⁶⁰ has demonstrated how apartheid was not the result of a single grand plan, but rather the outcome of a series of contestations and compromises. Beavon's work⁶¹ is also of value for understanding the spatial dynamics of a rapidly growing Johannesburg during the twentieth century. Although none of these studies specifically address the role of higher education in the modernisation of Afrikanerdom, they are crucial for gaining insight in the broader historical events as detrimental in thoughts on Higher Education and Training.

The establishment of RAU was part of a process of Afrikaner modernisation on the Witwatersrand. From the 1920s, a series of projects run by the state, church and community helped to elevate the socioeconomic position of Afrikaners in the fastest-growing urban area in South Africa. The migration to and establishment of white Afrikaans speakers in Johannesburg, their professional, occupational and economic positions, in addition to their role in politics, religion and civic culture are extensively discussed in a major publication by Stals *et al.*,⁶² while Brink⁶³ provides an important corrective to the top-down approach of these authors by focusing on the role of gender and family in this modernising project. Although Stals *et al.* do, in fact, pay attention to education in this process, they focus primarily on schools. A study of the role of RAU will therefore serve as an important addition to gain insight on the modernisation of Afrikanerdom in the former Witwatersrand.

Some historians, writing on Afrikanerdom, have investigated the links between Afrikaner universities and the Afrikaner project during apartheid. Adam and Giliomee,⁶⁴ for example, analyse the role of Afrikaans universities in the advancement of the "Afrikaner ethnic movement" and the role these universities have played in modernising Afrikaners in the

⁵⁹ H. Giliomee, *The Afrikaners: Biography of a people*.

⁶⁰ D. Posel, *The making of apartheid, 1948-1961* (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1997).

⁶¹ K. Beavon, *Johannesburg: The making and shaping of the city* (Unisa Press, Pretoria, 2004).

⁶² E.L.P. Stals *et al.*, *Afrikaners in die Goudstad*.

⁶³ E. Brink, "'Maar net 'n klomp factory meide': Afrikaner family and community on the Witwatersrand", in B. Bozzoli (ed.), *Class, community and conflict: South African perspectives* (Ravan Press, Johannesburg, 1987).

⁶⁴ H. Adam and H. Giliomee, *The rise and crisis of Afrikaner power*, chapter 8.

1970s. In addition, Dubow extensively debates the relationship between literature, scientific institutions and South African society. In a description coined as “apartheid science”, he argues how the NP government intentionally used different institutions and organisations such as the Academy for Science and Arts and the Council of Science and Industrial Research (CSIR), as well as the newly established RAU to advance Afrikaner nationalism and power. By the end of the 1970s, Afrikaner science, technology and education supported the ideology of modernising techno-nationalism that ensured continued Afrikaner development and power – thus Dubow.⁶⁵

Beale’s PhD thesis⁶⁶ provides an in-depth discussion of tertiary education policy under the apartheid system, leading to the development of two new “white” universities in the 1960s. Beale’s study is useful in the light of its elucidation of the context of tertiary policy formulation under apartheid and, of the way in which this contributed to the establishment of universities like RAU. However, the thesis does not address the history of RAU’s founding in the context of the philosophical and ideological ideals envisaged by its founders, nor does it analyse the important role of mother-tongue education in the context of the educational and economic development of white Afrikaans-speaking students on the Witwatersrand. It is much rather a top-down study that does not concern itself with the grassroots issues (language, cultural and religious) that once led to the founding of the RAU.

More recently, Grundlingh⁶⁷ demonstrated the links between the material and economic advancement of Afrikanerdom by the 1960s with the establishment of new universities catering for the needs of up-and-coming Afrikaners. Grundlingh’s brief overview explains how the tertiary education system, as complemented and steered by the NP government, was used for the advancement of Afrikaners and how RAU contributed to this process in the early years up to the mid-1970s. In this study this process has also been explored from the years of establishment until the mid-1970s.

Also did several authors contribute to the histories of universities in South Africa and the way in which they contextualise or relate to the University historiography of the day has been

⁶⁵ S. Dubow, *A Commonwealth of knowledge ...*, pp. 252-278.

⁶⁶ M. Beale, “*Apartheid’s goals in the 1960s ...*”, pp. 293-298.

⁶⁷ A. Grundlingh. “Are we Afrikaners getting too rich ...”, *Journal of Historical Sociology*, 21 (2/3), 2008, pp. 143-145.

exposed in Chapter Two. Amongst others there is M Boucher, *Spes in arduis: A history of the University of South Africa*.⁶⁸

Unfortunately the publication by Prof Leo Barnard, titled *From grey to gold. The first 100 years of the University of the Orange Free State*⁶⁹ could not be retrieved to extensively explore its value for this study.

1.2.6.2 Archival data and approach

Primary archival sources for the study include an extensive collection of original documents relating to the establishment of RAU. The collection consists of early correspondence, newspaper clippings, memoranda, speeches and documents about tertiary education policies. These archival documents are curated in UJ's newly established archive located at the Doornfontein campus. J Cronjé (coordinator of the archival project of RAU, 1967-1981) conducted a series of recorded interviews with the founders of RAU. These recordings have served as valuable resources with a view to collecting information for this study. The source-critical approach applied to written documents in this study also applied to these recordings. The proven principles of historical research as defined in Tosh's⁷⁰ and Stanford's⁷¹ classic textbooks will guide the research methodology throughout.

To outline the establishment of RAU and the rationale and process behind it, manuscripts relating to advisory committees on tertiary education, planning committees and related reports have been used. In addition, documents relating to the financial aspects of RAU's establishment (outlining funding from corporate donors, ordinary people and even pledges from schools) cast light on the extent of interest in and support for the establishment of the new university. The rich collection of written source material from individuals – for example those of PJ Meyer, J de Klerk, JF Cronje, PMS von Staden, JBZ Louw and G van N Viljoen – underlines the immense role of individuals in the establishment of RAU, with determining the history of modernisation and development of white Afrikaans speakers. In addition to these archival resources published memoirs of the university founders were also consulted.⁷²

⁶⁸ M Boucher, *Spes in arduis: A history of the University of South Africa* (Pretoria, Wallachs Printing Co Pty Ltd, 1973), pp. 1-24, 80-111 and 333-349.

⁶⁹ L. Barnard, *From grey to gold. The first 100 years of the University of the Orange Free State* (University of the Free State Publishers, Bloemfontein, 2006).

⁷⁰ J. Tosh, *The pursuit of history*, pp. 30-52.

⁷¹ M. Stanford, *A companion to the study of history* (Blackwell, Oxford, 1997), pp. 133-165.

⁷² P.J. Meyer, *Nog nie vêr genoeg nie ...*; B. Louw en F. van Rensburg, *Bestendige binnevuur ...*

Furthermore periodical publications emanating from RAU, such as *Herout* and *RAU Rapport*, served as sources of information to fill historical silences.

The South African National Archives located in Pretoria were retrieved for documents relating to national policies regarding tertiary institutions and education. The Broederbond archive located at the Voortrekker monument in Pretoria was also accessed for documents concerning their involvement in tertiary policy planning and development, as well as NP ideology formulation and Afrikaner nationalism. These sources contributed to this study's investigation on if the pioneering of RAU formed part of an overall Afrikaner movement at the time to increase and develop Afrikaner power and sustainability on the Witwatersrand. The Johannesburg Jewish Board of Deputies and the Johannesburg municipality were also successfully consulted for sources that could in any way add value to inform the research focus. It was however the archives located at the Voortrekker monument, UJ, and INEG in Bloemfontein that proved to be of the most valuable in providing a variety of information for the purpose of this study.

1.3 Research ethics

The already recorded insights, memories and opinions of erstwhile role-players in the RAU's establishment have been used primarily for academic purposes. No extensive ethical permission was therefore required.

This study did however encounter a limitation with regard to the availability of secondary sources specifically dealing with matters such as the obstacles the founders encountered in the founding of RAU, the important role of architecture and key role players in the founding of RAU.

1.4 Contribution of the study

This study serves as a contribution to existing literature on the establishment histories of tertiary institutions locally and could inform research internationally. Moreover, it provides insight into the process of and rationale for the top-down modernising drive to develop the Afrikaner in the context of the erstwhile apartheid South Africa. The study sets out to contribute to a refreshed understanding of the NP government's political, economic and social motives during the 1950's to 1970's via existing tertiary institutions and, in the case of RAU, the establishment of new ones. As such, it aims to enrich the existing historiography of

Afrikaner education initiatives and to contribute to existing literature regarding the establishment of new universities in the twentieth century. The study adds to current knowledge on education in South Africa during apartheid.

The chapters that follow respond to the research questions outlined earlier. A brief review of the literature of institutional historiography and describes the features of the global establishment of universities is provided in Chapter Two. It foregrounds the trends and historiography of institutional writing as well as the shortfalls in this field of research. In Chapter Three the focus is on how government, business and cultural organisations contributed to the establishment of RAU. Obstacles encountered by RAU's pioneers for the founding of the new university are critically outlined in Chapter Four. Each of these chapters deals with the period in South African history from 1955 to 1975.

Since RAU was the first modern Afrikaans university to be recognised on the Witwatersrand, it had the opportunity to introduce new teaching methods just as its lectures commenced in equally impressive architecturally-designed buildings. In Chapter Five the new teaching approaches and design that complemented the university's modernising vision based on ideological and philosophical ideals, are investigated. The question of language and religion was an important factor from the very start of RAU's establishment. With regards to Chapter Six ways of how mother-tongue education and Christian values informed the overall ideological and philosophical ideals that the founders of RAU had envisaged for the university, are explored.

In Chapter Seven the establishment of RAU as a centrepiece of education on modernising Afrikaner livelihoods on the Witwatersrand is critically reviewed with the aim to determine whether it was possible to achieve this goal. In Chapter Eight RAU as institution's role and function in the Afrikaner project are explored and issues of contestation and debate that occurred between RAU and the broader nationalist community are identified. Finally, in Chapter Nine, the preceding chapters are critically reviewed and analysed while the research themes developed throughout the thesis are exposed to a concise reflection.

1.5 Delimitations of the study

As discussed in the research methodology and other applicable sections, a wide variety of secondary and primary sources were applied in the thesis under discussion. Sources, include, amongst others, transcribed archived oral interviews done some years ago on the RAU

leadership. These oral interviews conducted, contain informative information which has been utilised to explore the aims of this study. It was not possible for the researcher to have extended interviews with the founding leadership as they have already passed away. So whether some founding leadership like Meyer and Viljoen were for example fierce supporters of the Apartheid system and what their perceived apartheid motivated vision for RAU could have been and how it may have influenced RAU's vision for establishment, remain speculation and beyond the boundaries of the historical method that the researcher followed. In the aims developed the focus was RAU's development first, and so digging into the possible secondary personal intentions of the leaders were not a primary aim of the study, but yet not doing so may be viewed as a shortcoming in providing a well-rounded impression. If the emphasis would have mainly been the personal role and motivation of individuals towards the establishing of RAU, prominent people such as D de Villiers, R de la Bat, N Diederichs and even the erstwhile well known radio personality Jan Cronje, could queue to be critically reviewed.⁷³ If the question of leadership in a comparative sense would have been a prime focus sources that could have been of contextual value are that of ELP Stals, *Geskiedenis van die Afrikaner Broederbond, 1918-1994*,⁷⁴ P Kapp, *Nalatingskappe sonder einde – die verhaal van Jannie Marais en die Marais broers*.⁷⁵ The main focus of this study on RAU was to present the sources as truthful and as verbatim perceived as possible in order to measure and to place them within the context of the time and vision of the key establishers.

Another angle of possible discussion that has only been slightly brushed on is the white poverty question since 1910 and which prevailed in the 1950's. It is noted that in the context of RAU's establishment the poverty question, as part of the extensive history of the Afrikaner, could have been given more prominence. However, the contextuality of RAU's establishment that specifically relates to the Afrikaner's demographic and social profile was delimited to allow for more discussion on the creation, profile and external tribulations of the young and upcoming university on other levels.

A discussion of these points mentioned, related to the system of apartheid, the white poverty question and the inclusion of some individuals and sources could certainly have enriched this study. The focus however of this study remained with the leading figures in the establishment

⁷³ Further research on these personalities can be conducted in the UJ/RAU archive.

⁷⁴ E.L.P. Stals, *Geskiedenis van die Afrikaner Broederbond, 1918-1994* (Geen publiseerder, geen plek, 1998), pp. 541- 542.

⁷⁵ P.H. Kapp, *Nalatingskappe Sonder Einde – die verhaal van Jannie Marais en die Marais broers* (Xavier Nagel Agencies, Tip African Publishing, 2015), pp. 215.

of RAU, and within the context of the English dominated Witwatersrand in the period 1955 to 1975. An attempt therefore was made to contextualise the establishment of RAU within the apartheid years, especially highlighting the public and academic reaction as discussed in for example Chapters Two and Eight. Despite some delimitations as outlined, discussions in the study attempts to illustrate how key establishers envisioned an Afrikaans university in an effort to decolonise tertiary education on the Witwatersrand as an erstwhile educational system dominated by the English establishment in South Africa, at the time.

To provide a critical engagement and overview of literature on institutional historiography that highlights methodological trends and characteristics of institutional research and writing, as well as shortfalls in this field and the value for this study, Chapter Two will now follow.

Chapter 2

Historiographical reflections on trends in university establishment

2.1 Introduction

The global founding of universities globally results from a variety of factors. These factors, including political, economic and social ones, depend on the country in which the university was founded and the context of its establishment. This chapter therefore investigates and analyses international and local literature dealing with the reasons and motivations for the creation of universities. It does so with the aim of relating these general motives for the establishment of universities to the rationale behind the creation of RAU.

The establishment of universities has steadily increased since the late 1800s. Ilchman and Ilchman specifically identify a sharp increase in the growth of the number of universities since the beginning of the twentieth century and cite the following data to illustrate their claim:¹

...81 universities (existed) outside of Europe and North America. These include the 11 Spanish colonial universities founded in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries to provide for Spain's imperial civil service and the three Indian universities established in response to the social demands of the 1800s. By 1985, there were more than 1 500 universities in the Third World, over 600 having been (founded) in the period between 1961 and 1975 alone.

This increase in the number of universities rose sharply during the 1960s and 1970s in Europe when many new universities were established, with a notable 24 new ones in Germany alone² and a number in Britain, which brought the total of 33 to 44.³ In the USA, the number of higher education institutions grew from 1 800 in 1947 to 3 300 in 1986.⁴ As the discussion that follows will reveal, this increase resulted from rapid modernisation and the emergence of an increasing upwardly mobile society that required tertiary education.

Thus, since the 1960s, globally the number of universities has grown substantially due to political, social and economic influences. This development has led to increasing government

¹ W. Ilcham and A.S. Ilcham, "Academic exchange and the founding of new universities", *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 491, 1987, p. 49.

² M. Schramm and U. Fraunholz, "Between the ivory tower and the industrial laboratory: universities in the West German innovation system, 1945-1990", *Historical Social Research*, 37 (2), 1989/1990, p. 261.

³ K. Mauhew, C. Deer and M. Dua, "The move to mass higher education in the UK: many questions and some answers", *Oxford Review of Education*, 30 (1), 2004, p. 66.

⁴ M. Trow, "American higher education: past, present, and future", *Educational Researcher*, 17 (3), 1988, p. 13.

involvement in the form of government subsidies granted to universities, which in turn has led to an increase in the demand for available financial resources from governments.⁵ Technological advancement, especially after World War II, has also contributed substantially to the establishment of universities globally, leading to universities becoming more complex in their purpose and structure, as well as more specialised.⁶

The above discussion, pertaining to the world-wide escalation in the number of universities, necessitates the examination of literature dealing with universities as institutions. The section to follow identifies sources necessary for the ensuing discussion. It focuses specifically on literature related to university founding histories, especially literature that outlines the reasons and motivations for establishing such institutions. The transformation of the university locally and globally from institutions catering for elite minorities to those catering for the needs of the masses, especially since the 1960s, has contributed to this growing global research interest⁷ and has also contributed to changes in motivation for the formation of universities globally.⁸

2.2 A review of institutional historiography

A brief review of the literature of institutional historiography will highlight some trends and topics in the writing of university institutional history. This review includes references to American, African and European universities and focuses on trends and topics such as government policies regarding universities, the role of student numbers at universities, and the interrelationship between university, government and society.⁹ Other trends or themes discussed in this section include the topic of changing universities in changing societies, the diverse role of the university in society, and the corporate administration of modern universities. These trends and topics, as well as the constant demands on universities to legitimise their existence, roles and contributions towards society,¹⁰ are frequent departure points for researchers studying university institutional history.

⁵ A. Smith and F. Webster, *The postmodern university; contested visions of higher education in society* (SRHE and Open University Press, London, 1997), p. 2.

⁶ A. Smith and F. Webster, *The postmodern university ...*, pp. 2-4.

⁷ P.G. Nel, *Die universiteit; verlede, hede en toekoms* (Cum Books, Roodepoort, 1982), pp. 13-14.

⁸ T.R. McConnell, R.O. Berdahl and M.A. Fay, *From elite to mass university higher education: the British and American transformations* (Centre for research and development in Higher Education, University of California, 1973), pp. 1-16.

⁹ J. Currie and J. Newton, *Universities and globalization: critical perspectives* (SAGE, London, 1998).

¹⁰ P.T. Zeleza and A. Olukoshi, *African universities in the twenty-first century* (Unisa Press, Pretoria, 2004).

Racialism in education is another important focus point for research,¹¹ specifically the role of ethnicity in institutions and how societies are affected by ethnic differences. The topic of racialism is therefore particularly valuable for the study of RAU, since the university was created in a divided society with the aim of improving the economic and social position of one specific group that believed itself to have been disadvantaged previously. A further important theme in the study of university institutional history, and one that closely relates to the study of RAU, is the question of changing universities in a global context.¹² The focus of studies dealing with this topic involves the university, the community it serves and how the university as an institution contributes to the development of society.¹³ In the case of RAU, the vision was not only to advance but also to modernise the white Afrikaans speaker. This advancement became one of the prime objectives of the institution.

Other trends in the study of the institutional history of universities include topics such as the philosophical, theoretical, managerial, demographic and political characteristics of universities globally. Researchers such as Twigg,¹⁴ Benum¹⁵ and Russ¹⁶ focus not only on these topics, but also identify some difficulties and problems encountered while writing university institutional history. Their research emphasises the importance of carefully assessing the significance of the local and national environment within which universities have developed. Another important aspect in the study of university institutional history has been the international upsurge of student uprisings since the 1960s. Minoque's research focuses on the impact of student uprisings during this period on the global development of

¹¹ T. Gallegher, *Education in divided societies* (Palgrave Macmillan, London, 2004).

¹² J. Elliott *et al.*, *Communities and their universities; the challenges of lifelong learning* (Lawrence and Wishart Limited, London, 1996).

¹³ E.H. Brookes, *A History of the University of Natal* (University of Natal Press, Pietermaritzburg, 1966); R.F. Currey, *Rhodes University, 1904-1970: A Chronicle* (Rustica Press, Grahamstown, 1970); A. Kerr, *Fort Hare 1915-1945; the Evolution of an African College* (Billing and Sons, London, 1968); M. Shear, *Wits: A university in the apartheid era* (Witwatersrand University Press, Johannesburg, 1996); B.K. Murray, *Wits the early years: a history of the University of the Witwatersrand Johannesburg and its precursors 1896-1939* (Witwatersrand University Press, Johannesburg, 1982); B.K. Murray, *Wits the "open" years: the history of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, 1939-1959* (Witwatersrand University Press, Johannesburg, 1982); P.F. van der Schyff, *Wonderdaad...! Die PUK tot 1951: wording, vestiging en selfstandigheid* (Paarl Print, Potchefstroom, 2003); E. S. van Eeden, *In U Lig: Die PU vir CHO van selfstandigheid tot samesmelting 1951-2004* (DComm Design, Potchefstroom, 2005).

¹⁴ J. Twigg, "Evolution, obstacles and aims: the writing of Oxford and Cambridge college histories". *History of Universities*, 8, 1989.

¹⁵ E. Benum, "On the challenge of writing university history: The University of Oslo", *Center for Studies in Higher Education* (October, 1999).

¹⁶ W.A. Russ, "Problems in writing a college history", *Pennsylvania History*, 26 (2), 1959.

universities. It raises new questions regarding the function and purpose of universities in contemporary society.¹⁷

2.2.1 Changing universities in changing societies

The increasingly important role of universities in society has generated many questions relating to a university and its place in society, for example, in *The University and the New World* (1962), an early discussion of the university's place in society, Jones, Riesman and Ulich conclude that civil society has had a profound influence on universities and, in turn, their societal role. Published in the early 1960s, the text explores the notion of the university and society's increasing demands regarding what these institutions have on offer. It discusses the influence of an increase in population on student numbers. Moreover, it promotes the necessity for university job training in the context of the 1960s, focusing on the increasing need for expertise and research into defence and industry at the time. Jones, Riesman and Ulich discuss experiments in higher education, analyse the results and debate how change can be implemented to enhance the roles of universities in their respective societies.¹⁸

In 1998, Jeffrey and Manganiello focussed anew on the role of a university in society by asking the following questions: Where did we come from? Where are we now? Where are we going? They revisit the debate regarding the original purpose of a university by examining the Newman theology¹⁹ vs. the contemporary university. They question the consequences of the politicisation of a university and assess the future of a university in the context of a transition from a postmodern to a trans-modern state.²⁰

Barnett's *Being a University* (2011) is another example of literature focusing on the role of a university in society. Barnett raises questions relating to the changing nature of a university; for example, what is to be a university? What might such an institution become? Are there different kinds of universities? He argues that attempts to answer these questions will assist in bringing about an understanding not only of the changing nature but also of the changing role of a university in the society in which it functions.²¹ The questions also relate to motivations

¹⁷ K. Minoque, *The concept of a university* (Transaction Publishers, New Brunswick, 2005), pp. 1-5.

¹⁸ H.M. Jones, D. Riesman and R. Ulich, *The university and the new world* (University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 1962).

¹⁹ Newman Theology is based on the work of Cardinal Newman. Newman made several statements regarding the role and the function of a university in society but most controversial (at the time) was his idea that a university's primary purpose was to pursue intellectual and pedagogical goals, not moral or religious ones.

²⁰ D.L. Jeffrey and D. Manganiello, *Rethinking the future of the university* (University of Ottawa Press, U.S.A., 1998).

²¹ R. Barnett, *Being a university* (Routledge, London, 2011), p. 1.

for the establishment of new universities, especially after the 1960s, when a societal change in attitude towards the purpose and function of universities had a direct bearing on why these institutions were established in the first place. The changing nature of universities has also contributed to their taking on diverse roles in society.

2.2.2 The diverse roles of the university in society

In *The University and the Urban Crisis* (1974), Mitchell focuses on the university in society by paying specific attention to communities in Philadelphia. The role of the university in the community is analysed in relation to the development of the indigenous community, and the text discusses social change in terms of the position of the urban woman, off-campus involvement and psychological programmes in the community, to mention but a few. The focus is therefore on the university not only educating students but also being actively involved in the community by providing education and training. The university therefore cannot be perceived as an ivory tower institution removed from society, but instead must be conceptualised as an institution actively involved in the community. It therefore performs different roles in society.²²

In *The University and the City: From Medieval Origins to the Present* (1988), Bender discusses a modern university's role in the city with emphasis on its specific location. He analyses the evolving nature of universities from their medieval origins to the present, and their ever-changing role in society. Not only does he question a university's place in society, but he also discusses its development and transformation, as well as its contribution in terms of science, commerce and culture. Attention is also given to the characteristics of modern universities²³ in modern cities, and their subsequent changing roles in terms of their ideals versus their realities, their place in the world, the nature of their research, and their obligations towards individual societies.²⁴

²² H. Mitchell, *The university and the urban crisis* (Behavioural Publications, New York, 1974).

²³ The word "modern" or "modernising" has been used by academics researching different themes with the university as topic specifically since the 1960s to describe the characteristics of the new post-modern universities that have been created during this time and after. It would basically mean an institution that belongs to the new time which reflected new approaches, believes, ideas and interpretations, an institution that is changing with the demands of the time.

²⁴ T. Bender, *The university and the city; from Medieval origins to the present* (Oxford University Press, New York, 1988).

Smith and Langslow, in *The Idea of a University* (1999), explore the different roles and functions of universities. They analyse each university that they studied as an institution and explore its different functions and roles, as well as the various relationships between university, government, society, knowledge, economy and the concept of a global multiversity.²⁵ It is apparent that each university is constantly evolving and changing. They focus on the changing nature and role of a university in society, addressing this in conjunction with transforming attitudes and expectations in society, especially since the late 1960s. This changing attitude is reflected in a corresponding change in expectations brought about regarding any university: the university's becoming an institution for the masses: it is no longer simply catering for the rich upper classes, but opening itself up in addition to working-class citizens.

That universities have evolved into institutions for the masses is also reflected in Rotberg's *Balancing Change and Transformation in Global Education Reform* (2004).²⁶ Rotberg highlights ongoing changes in societal attitudes towards universities, especially during the 1960s and 1970s. These changes saw an increase in debates relating to the nature and function of a university, as well as to the role of universities as institutions funded by taxpayers. Rotberg also discusses the so-called "crisis" of universities since the early 1960s, a "crisis" determined by the growing necessity for the institution to move away from the "ivory tower syndrome". Consequently, university administrations have since had to take cognisance of the opinions of students and other role players at the university. Rotberg cites C Kerr, chairman of the Carnegie Commission, and speaker at a symposium in Geneva in October 1968, who began to outline this crisis while focusing on the role of universities in society. According to Kerr, the role, size and functions of universities in relation to given societies had changed so much that it was necessary to completely reevaluate each university as an institution in its society.²⁷ This contributed to the growing debate and interest in a university as an institution.

²⁵ D. Smith and K.A. Langslow, *The idea of a university; higher education policy series 51* (Jessica Kingsley Publishers, London, 1999), pp. 7-9.

²⁶ I.C. Rotberg, *Balancing change and transformation in global education reform* (scarecrow education (USA, 2004), pp. xi-xiv.

²⁷ P.A. Miescher, *et.al.*, *The modern university; structure, functions and its role in the new industrial state* (George Thieme Verlag, Germany, 1969), pp. 8-16.

2.2.3 Corporate administration of modern universities

Research on the nature of universities also foregrounds corporate governance and administration. Literature referring to aspects of corporate governance focuses on the ongoing evolution of universities as institutions and on the ways in which political, economic, social and technological advancements motivate change in university institutions. Some examples of texts dealing with these topics are: Van der Merwe and Welsh's *The Future of the University in South Africa*,²⁸ Hirsch and Weber's *Challenges Facing Higher Education at the Millennium*,²⁹ Currie and Newson's *Universities and Globalization: Critical Perspectives*,³⁰ Derek's *Beyond the Ivory Tower: Social Responsibilities of the Modern Universities*,³¹ Seabury's *Universities in the Western World*,³² Välimaa and Ylijoki's *Cultural Perspectives on Higher Education*³³ and Elliott's *Communities and their Universities and The Challenge of Lifelong Learning*.³⁴

These examples illustrate how universities as a topic of study have evolved into different fields of research. They also reveal the vast variety of research topics available when it comes to the study of a university as an institution. Rothblatt explains that an analysis of literature on the topic of universities reveals that it is not only an expansive field but that it is also a "restless genre",³⁵ suggesting that many researchers have contributed to a wide variety of topics relating to universities as institutions of tertiary education. He includes among these topics, to mention but a few: the normal house history; the general biography of the single university, or the so-called celebratory history; history concentrating on single figures such as the presidents of universities or colleges; the interpretation of university history within a history of ideas; and even history dealing with the ongoing relationship between the university and the state.³⁶ University institutions have therefore become a particularly valuable topic for analysis because they reflect the rhetoric that surrounds self-conscious

²⁸ H.W. van der Merwe and D. Welsh, *The future of the university in South Africa* (Martin's Press, New York, 1977).

²⁹ W.Z. Hirsch and L.E. Weber, *Challenges facing higher education at the Millennium* (IAU Press, USA, 1999).

³⁰ J. Currie and J. Newson, *Universities and globalization; critical perspectives*.

³¹ B. Derek, *Beyond the ivory tower; social responsibilities of the modern universities* (Harvard University Press, London, 1982).

³² P. Seabury, *Universities in the western world* (The Free Press, New York, 1975).

³³ J. Välimaa and O. Ylijoki, *Cultural perspectives on higher education* (Springer, Finland, 2008).

³⁴ J. Elliott et al, *Communities and their universities; the challenge of lifelong learning* (Lawrence and Wishart, London, 1996).

³⁵ S. Rothblatt, "The writing of university history at the end of another century", *Oxford Review of Education*, 23 (2), 1997, p. 151.

³⁶ S. Rothblatt, "The writing of university history ...", *Oxford Review of Education*, 23 (2), 1997, pp. 154-157.

social inventions, revealing much about culture³⁷ and society. Writing the history of universities has also presented many challenges for practising historians; for example, choosing and drawing distinctions between the general and the specific, the personal and the institutional, the social and the financial, and the informal and the administrative.³⁸

Scholars' growing interest in university history has contributed to much-needed reforms in curriculum revision, the use of resources, addressing student concerns, and improving the financial status of higher education,³⁹ among other things. Some researchers interested in institutional history therefore conclude that:⁴⁰

Genuine institutional research should be the nerve centre of the institution: it is an early-warning system of impending crises, it helps redefine the university, and it aligns the modes of operation so as best to avoid disaster and to achieve goals.

Furthermore, scholars with an interest in institutional history – whether university, state or corporate institutions – have begun to argue that there should be a close relationship between the existing research of a diversity of institutions and institutional history. To achieve this, scholars have had to acquaint themselves with the discipline of history, which has assisted them in their research into institutional history in general.⁴¹

Research into institutions in general has developed as a field of study and is closely related to corporate history as a new research area.⁴² Just as the histories of university institutions are becoming important in the revaluation of universities as institutions in society and their responsibility towards the societies that they serve, so corporate or business history⁴³ is becoming an important component in the evaluation of business corporations, according to Tempelhoff.⁴⁴ Corporate history provides a historical consciousness in which the “need to

³⁷ S.G. Kohlstedt, “Institutional history”, *Osiris*, 2 (1), 1985, pp. 19-23.

³⁸ P.B. Waite, “Some recent university histories”, *Acadiensis: Journal of the History of the Atlantic Region*, 19 (2), 1990, p. 225.

³⁹ F.D. Bolman, “University reform and institutional research”, *Journal of Higher Education*, 41 (2), 1970, pp.85-86, Also see T. Dyer, “Institutional research and institutional history”, *Research in Higher Education*, 8 (3), 1978, pp. 283-286, S G Kohlstedt, “Institutional history”, *Osiris*, 2 (1), 1985, pp. 17-24.

⁴⁰ F.D. Bolman, “University reform ...”, *Osiris*, 1, 1985, p. 90.

⁴¹ T. Dyer, “Institutional research ...”, *Research in Higher Education*, 8 (3), 1978, p. 283.,

J.W.N. Tempelhoff, “Where were we again?”, *Corporate history and the South African Historian*, *Historia*, 48 (2), 2003, p. 6.

⁴² K. Winkler, “Public relations or scholarship? Writing university histories”, *The Chronical of Higher Education*, 31 (2), 1983, p. 31.

⁴³ B. Childress, “University history, and photographic history: some considerations for research”, *The Journal of Library History*, 22 (1), 1987, p. 73.

⁴⁴ J.W.N. Tempelhoff, “Where were we again? ...”, *Historia*, 48 (2), 2003, p. 6.

recapture what transpired before the present’’⁴⁵ is of importance, especially when matters of identity and moral responsibility relating to the past are investigated. The question of identity and moral responsibility can also be directly related to the role of universities as institutions in society. Tempelhoff’s observations are important with a view to any study of universities funded by taxpayers.

In the light of the above discussion’s contextualisation of institutional university history and literature, what follows is a description of literature dealing with the rationale for the establishment of universities both internationally and locally. Notwithstanding the fact that this study concentrates on a period between the 1950s and the 1970s, examples of universities established as far back as the 1700s will be referred to. This is important to establish how motivation for the founding of universities has evolved over the decades and even throughout centuries. This is a mammoth task, taking into consideration the large number of universities established since the 1700s and especially since the early 1900s. Examples that do not fall inside the period being studied have been chosen because of a perceived timeless quality of universities that were established to serve society for decades and even centuries. However, the motivations for establishing these institutions have changed over time due to a variety of factors, including those of a political, social and cultural nature. The mere fact that universities as educational institutions have transformed over decades from elite institutions to ones for the masses has resulted in changing reasons as well for the establishment of such institutions – especially since the 1950s and 1960s.

2.2.4 Motivations for the establishment of universities world-wide

The discussion to follow provides the context of literature against which this study endeavours to understand the motivational factors for the establishment of RAU, as well as the mostly top-down modernising drive of the Afrikaner establishment in South Africa – and especially on the Witwatersrand – from the 1950s to the 1970s.

In the discussion that follows, attention will be given to the motivations behind the establishment of some examples of global universities.

⁴⁵ J.W.N. Tempelhoff, “Where were we again? ...”, *Historia*, 48 (2), 2003, p. 7.

2.2.4.1 Political, economic, and educational motives

Every university is established in a specific society by that society. While universities have common historical roots, they are all separately and deeply embedded in their respective societies, dictated by linguistic, cultural and religious values.⁴⁶ The university therefore reflects the culture of that specific society and will inevitably change as the society it serves transforms.⁴⁷ According to Waite, a university is not easily established, especially in the twentieth century. He argues that the creation of universities should therefore not be taken for granted, adding that a university only completely comes into its own after its 50th anniversary.⁴⁸ The first rector of RAU, Prof G van N Viljoen, seemed to have concurred with this sentiment when he suggested that universities as institutions of higher education were not like mushrooms appearing everywhere, only to disappear again. According to Viljoen, universities are intended to last for centuries.⁴⁹ Indeed, they are established not only because of political, social, economic or cultural motivations, but also to fulfil specific roles and tasks in society over time. It is therefore important that universities must be established with great care and responsibility, concomitant with careful research, planning and oversight. The first task of a university must be to expose students to new thoughts, knowledge and research. It is therefore always a vitally important institution in society and the entire country must benefit from it.

RAU and its transformation since its establishment in 1968 as a university exclusively for white Afrikaans-speaking students on the Witwatersrand to a current university (UJ) catering for a student community of substantial diversity, using English as the language of instruction in 2005, is an example of a significantly transformed institution. Its establishment and subsequent phases of transformation have been the result of comprehensive changes in political discourse that were, in turn, shaped by social factors prevalent in a rapidly transforming society.⁵⁰ As Altbach observes, “The university has by no means been a static

⁴⁶ P.G. Altbach, *et al.*, *American higher education in the twenty-first century; social, political and economic challenges* (The Johns Hopkins University press, London, 1999), p. 15.

⁴⁷ P.G. Nel, *Die universiteit: Verlede, hede en toekoms*, p. 18.

⁴⁸ P.B. Waite, “Some reason for university histories”, *Acadiensis: Journal of the History of the Atlantic Region*, 19 (2), 1990, p. 226.

⁴⁹ F.I.J. van Rensburg “Sy visie vir die nuwe universiteit” in B. Louw and F. van Rensburg, *Bestendige binnevuur; perspektiewe op Gerrit Viljoen by geleentheid van sy een en sewentigste verjaarsdag op 1997-9-11* (Tafelberg-uitgewers Beperk, Kaapstad, 1997), p. 40.

⁵⁰ In this regard see E. Brink, *University of Johannesburg ...*, pp. 24-104.

institution, but has changed and adapted to new circumstances”.⁵¹ The following discussion explores a variety of motivations leading to the establishment of universities.

2.2.4.2 Ideological and imperially driven motivations

Globally, universities have been established to respond to the ideological, economic and educational circumstances of a specific society at a particular point in time.

Nwauwa discusses the British establishment of universities in tropical Africa in the period 1920-1948, arguing that the British had more in mind than merely developing Africans. Although he focuses on the period before and after World War II, his article is still relevant to this study. It highlights the important role played by ideological and governmental (imperial) self-interest in the motivation for the establishment of universities in this context.

Nwauwa argues that the establishment of universities in tropical Africa between 1943 and 1948 did not happen suddenly and that it certainly did not take place because the British were concerned about the social and political welfare of Africans.⁵² In his view, ideological influence and political power played an important role in the establishment of these universities. Nwauwa therefore rejects the historiographical explanation of presenting the British establishment of universities in colonial Africa owing only to the exigencies of World War II and the resulting Colonial Development and Welfare Act of 1940.⁵³ He argues that the British established more universities due to American influence. He singles out specifically the African students who had studied at American universities and returned home with new liberal ideas of freedom and self-rule. According to Nwauwa, the British wanted to prevent the downfall of the empire, which they believed could happen because of the activities and education of American-educated Africans⁵⁴ who returned home with “radical” views on colonial reforms. He therefore argues that the British established universities to “address the increasing influence of the USA on the education of Africans, and to ensure that Africans were moulded “wisely” to reinforce the educated elite that was to become the class upon

⁵¹ P.G. Altbach *et al.*, *American higher education in the twenty-first century; social, political and economic challenges*, p. 16.

⁵² A.O. Nwauwa, “The British establishment of universities in tropical Africa, 1920-1948; a reaction against the spread of American ‘radical’ influence”, *Cahiers d’Études Africaines*, 33 (130), 1993, p. 248.

⁵³ A.O. Nwauwa, “The British establishment ...”, *Cahiers d’Études Africaines*, 33 (130), 1993, p. 247.

⁵⁴ A.O. Nwauwa, “The British establishment ...”, *Cahiers d’Études Africaines*, 33 (130), 1993, p. 248.

which the new British colonial reforms of the 1940s would have to rest”.⁵⁵ The British establishment of universities was therefore to ensure their empire’s political and economic survival and existence in the long run.

In Israel, however, long after the establishment of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem in 1925, plans were made for the establishment of a university in Tel Aviv. Cohen analyses the discourse preceding the establishment of a city university in Tel Aviv. He concludes that a combination of factors contributed to the establishment of the university. In 1952, the mayor of Tel Aviv, Haim Levanon, with the assistance of city officials, began the process of considering the possible establishment of a city university. This was not only a major step planned by the municipality, but it also sparked great public debate in terms of how funding would be generated for the new university, whether it was in fact needed, and how desirable the possible competition would be with the existing Hebrew University of Jerusalem.⁵⁶

The move to establish a university in Tel Aviv was bold in two respects: firstly, there was no national policy in existence that centred on the need for a university in Tel Aviv and, secondly, the Tel Aviv municipality had decided not to wait for financial assistance from either Jewish organisations abroad, or from local Jewish communities.⁵⁷ The establishment of the new university centred on political and economic motivations. The university, it was argued, would encourage and promote free enterprise in a capitalist economy and it would limit the government’s economic hold on the institution. The university was necessary because an increase in student numbers justified its establishment. It was also anticipated that the university would weaken the government’s centralist grip and contribute to the creation of a “healthy” liberal society.⁵⁸ Its existence would, according to the founders, also contribute to nation building.⁵⁹ Politically, moreover, the establishment of the university was regarded as an act to strengthen and glorify the coalitional municipality of Tel Aviv, held by the General Zionists in partnership with the Herut opposition.⁶⁰ The establishment of the university was

⁵⁵ A.O. Nwauwa, “The British establishment ...”, *Cahiers d’Études Africaines*, 33 (130), 1993, p. 249.

⁵⁶ U. Cohen, “Academia, media, and the city: civic discourse preceding the establishment of a City University in Tel-Aviv”, *Israel Studies*, 12 (2), 2007, p. 121.

⁵⁷ U. Cohen, “Academia, media, and the city ...”, p. 122, Also see S.I. Troen, “Higher education in Israel: An historical perspective”, *Higher education*, 23 (1), 1992, pp. 45-50.

⁵⁸ U. Cohen, “Academia, media, and the city ...”, *Higher education*, 23 (1), 1992, p. 123, Also see S.I. Troen, *Imagining Zion: Dreams, designs and realities in a century of Jewish settlement* (New Haven, 2003), pp. 233-258.

⁵⁹ U. Cohen, “Academia, media, and the city ...”, *Higher education*, 23 (1), 1992, p. 124.

⁶⁰ U. Cohen, “Academia, media, and the city ...”, *Higher education*, 23 (1), 1992, p. 123.

therefore motivated by a combination of factors that included economic considerations, political empowerment and social development.

In the People's Republic of China, the expansion as well as development of higher education institutions from the 1950s to the 1970s was, according to Levin and Xu, motivated by ideological considerations and subsequently by economic factors. By the beginning of the 1950s, higher education institutions comprised 60,4 percent public colleges, 29,8 percent private colleges and 9,7 percent missionary colleges.⁶¹ After 1952, these institutions were integrated into the public sector and a Soviet-type model of higher education was followed, one which integrated them into a highly centralised development scheme.⁶² Comprehensive universities were discouraged and the focus was rather on specialised institutions and responses to the demands of the industrialised and technological sectors.⁶³

2.2.4.3 National development and economic rationales

In 1987, W Ilchman and AS Ilchman analysed the establishment of universities in decolonised African countries – especially after the 1960s. They argued that universities in developing countries in Africa were mainly founded to address specific needs in areas of economic development, for example, engineering, agriculture and management.⁶⁴ African countries like Nigeria had a need for skills development, accompanied by an increase in potential student numbers. Ilchman and Ilchman conclude that the establishment of universities paralleled the development of national independent states. In some cases, this development encouraged the involvement of the state that foresaw and anticipated the need to intervene to develop economically and socially.⁶⁵ These developments could account for the dramatic increase in the establishment of universities in Africa after World War II.⁶⁶

⁶¹ H.M. Levin and Z. Xu, "Issues in the expansion of higher education in the People's Republic of China", *China Review*, 5 (1), 2005, p. 34.

⁶² H.M. Levin and Z. Xu, "Issues in the expansion of higher education ...", *China Review*, 5 (1), 2005, p. 34.

⁶³ H.M. Levin and Z. Xu, "Issues in the expansion of higher education ...", *China Review*, 5 (1), 2005, p. 35.

⁶⁴ W. Ilcham and A.S. Ilcham, "Academic exchange and the founding of new universities", *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 491, 1987, p. 54.

⁶⁵ W. Ilcham and A.S. Ilcham, "Academic exchange ...", *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 491, 1987, p. 54.

⁶⁶ W. Ilcham and A.S. Ilcham, "Academic exchange ...", *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 491, 1987, pp. 49-50.

Adejunmobi's article of 1978, describing higher education in Nigeria, supports the argument of the paragraph above. Adejunmobi investigated higher education in relation to Nigeria's national development. He wrote that Nigeria had six universities by 1972, namely the Universities of Ibadan, Lagos, Ife, Nigeria, Benin and Ahmadu Bello.⁶⁷ This rapid expansion regarding the establishment of Nigerian universities could be attributed not only to an increase in student numbers, but also to the way in which Nigerians viewed the importance of university education. In Nigeria, he argues, there was a profound feeling that the future of families, ethnic groups, villages and even that of the nation depended on education. The Nigerian government, after obtaining independence in the 1960s, focused on improving higher education for it to become more relevant to Nigeria's developmental needs, specifically in the areas of politics, economics and social engagement. An important element highlighted in his article is not only the development of higher education to advance and support socioeconomic growth, but also its capacity to facilitate modernisation. The development of higher education constituted a movement towards modernity in the form of contemporary ideas, beliefs and standards of living. Nigerian society was also counting on universities to become more research-oriented and to focus on the relevance of rigorous research to meet the needs of society, the role of academics and general ideology. One of the functions of the university in Nigeria is therefore problem-solving. Adejunmobi reckons that Nigerian society has assessed – via the establishment of universities in recent years – the role of the university as institution for solving, to some extent at least, national problems such as chronic unemployment, underdevelopment, tribalism and political difficulties.⁶⁸

The development of higher education in Iran and its existing eight universities must be viewed against the background of its colonial history. According to Pour-Moghaddas, the Iranian higher education and developmental university system was modelled on the French system for many decades. In the 1960s, economic reforms started to play an important role in transforming Iran from a mainly feudal into a conservative state. The implementation of social reforms driven by land reforms and the creation of a literacy-oriented society resulted in Iran moving rapidly from its former status as a characteristically agrarian society to

⁶⁷ S.A. Adejunmobi, "Higher education and national development in Nigeria", *Improving College and University Teaching*, 26 (1), 1978, p. 39.

⁶⁸ S.A. Adejunmobi, "Higher education and national development ...", *Improving College and University Teaching*, 26 (1), 1978, pp. 40-41. See also T.P. Zeleza and A. Olukoshi, *African universities in the twenty-first century*, pp. 595-604.

becoming a self-sufficient, modern state.⁶⁹ As Pour-Moghaddas observes: the motivation for the establishment of universities in Iran since 1855 was initially to merely train civil servants.⁷⁰ The changing economic character of Iran along with the growing number of students and advancements in the field of technology has played an increasingly important role in the establishment and development of more modern university institutions.⁷¹ Owing to developments in education, more skilled students have had to be produced to sustain the economic growth and development of Iran.

2.2.4.4 Cultural motivations and other economic considerations

Moving further West, economic considerations supported by cultural motivations played an important role in the establishment of the University of the West Indies. In an article published in 1944, Williams concluded that this establishment was motivated by a combination of factors consisting mainly of economic and cultural elements.⁷² Economically, the establishment of the university had to enable the West Indies to develop their own economic resources to establish themselves in a changing world economy and market. The university therefore had to serve the economic needs of the community through education. The fact that student numbers had increased also contributed to the need for the establishment of the university. The university, moreover, needed to be established as the centre for the cultural development of the Caribbean area, which strove to pursue the development of its own unique culture.⁷³ Although cultural preservation and development became important motivational factors for the establishment of the university, economic considerations were also high on the agenda.

The establishment of numerous universities in the USA from the 1870s to the 1920s was motivated by industrial challenges and changes. These included the challenges of reconstruction, the disjunction caused by the rapid transformation from an agrarian to an industrialised society, the development of corporations and the leading capitalists who

⁶⁹ A. Pour-Moghaddas, "Higher education and development in Iran", *Higher Education*, 4 (3), 1975, pp. 369-370.

⁷⁰ A. Pour-Moghaddas, "Higher education ...", *Higher Education*, 4 (3), 1975, p. 370.

⁷¹ A. Pour-Moghaddas, "Higher education ...", *Higher Education*, 4 (3), 1975, pp. 370-373.

⁷² E. Williams, "Establishment of a University of the West Indies", *The Journal of Negro Education*, 13 (4), 1944, pp. 565-568.

⁷³ E. Williams, "Establishment of a University of the West Indies", *The Journal of Negro Education*, 13 (4), 1944, p. 566.

controlled them, the adoption of science to enhance social and economic progress and the emergence of the progressive era.⁷⁴ The establishment of Tulane University in 1884 resulted from these developments and changes as well as the nineteenth-century debate at the time about the purpose of higher education.⁷⁵ The university was established to provide:⁷⁶

... practical instruction in the application of theoretical studies to the industrial pursuits of life.

The rationale for the university's establishment was therefore economically driven. However, the period after World War II presented different challenges, ones that included ideological challenges and the so-called "communist threat", increasing American involvement in countries outside its borders, the Cold War, the post-Cold War era, science and the internet.⁷⁷ These in turn would be instrumental in dictating the motivations for the establishment of new universities.

2.2.4.5 Religious orientation and socio-political movements as motivations

Moving to the USA: founding histories and general histories of universities are closely related to the history of American society itself. This is clear from the role universities played in forging a path for rebuilding the country after the Civil War (1860-1865).⁷⁸ Furthermore, the early establishment of American universities was mainly motivated by religion. In *History of American Higher Education*, McCarthy cites the following examples: In 1636, Harvard College was founded in Cambridge, Massachusetts, by the highly-educated Puritans. The religious mission was clear in that all students were required to study the Bible and to worship Jesus and God.⁷⁹ In 1693, The College of William and Mary was founded in Williamsburg, Virginia, by the Anglicans who also had a strong religious motivation for this enterprise. Yale College was founded in 1701 by the Congregationalists. In 1746, Princeton College was founded by the New Light Presbyterians after The Great Awakening movement

⁷⁴ T.W. Goodspeed, *A history of the University of Chicago; the first quarter-century* (The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1972), p. 46.

⁷⁵ M.G. McBride, "Senator Randall Lee Gibson and the establishment of Tulane University", *The Journal of the Louisiana Historical Association*, 28 (3), 1987, p. 245.

⁷⁶ M.G. McBride, "Senator Randall Lee Gibson and ...", *The Journal of the Louisiana Historical Association*, 28 (3), 1987, p. 254.

⁷⁷ M.G. McBride, "Senator Randall Lee Gibson and ...", *The Journal of the Louisiana Historical Association*, 28 (3), 1987, pp. 46-110.

⁷⁸ J.R. Cole, *The great American university; its rise to pre-eminence, its indispensable national role, why it must be protected*, p. 45.

⁷⁹ M.C. McCarthy, *History of American higher education* (Peter Lang, New York, 2011), p. 12.

in the 1730s gave birth to these “New Lights”. The college was subsequently relocated, becoming Princeton in New Jersey in 1756, and in 1896 the College of New Jersey changed its name to Princeton University. Finally, Columbia University was founded in 1754 by the Anglicans in New York City.⁸⁰ The establishment of the University of Chicago in 1891 also resulted from religious motivation, yet economic factors also played a major role. The university was established to assist with the economic development of the city of Chicago.⁸¹ Although the founding of each of these early universities in America was mainly motivated by religious beliefs, the institutions were also intended to educate and develop students culturally and socially. Well-balanced students were needed to assist with the political, social and economic development of the USA.

Expansion of the public higher education system in the USA after World War II was driven furthermore by an increase in student numbers and the findings of President Truman’s Commission on Higher Education report, which in no uncertain terms concluded that, firstly, half of the American population would benefit from at least two year-long post-secondary education and, secondly, a third of the population had the capacity to obtain a four-year college degree.⁸² The establishment as well as development of American universities during the 1960s and 1970s was also greatly influenced by social unrest and a crisis in the university system in general stemming, for example, from the Civil Rights Movement. The rapid expansion of universities in the USA during the 1950s and 1960s to meet increasing student numbers had contributed to the deterioration of academic conditions, which in turn also resulted in student unrest and a demand for reforms in higher education.⁸³ Many motivations for the establishment of universities in the USA can therefore be identified, but one central rationale was the increasing complexity of modern societies and economies, which necessitated a highly trained workforce to meet economic demands.⁸⁴ Although social and political factors dictated the motivations for the establishment and development of universities since the 1960s, an increase in student numbers and the USA’s great advancements in the field of science and technology played vital roles too.⁸⁵

⁸⁰ M.C. McCarthy, *History of American higher education*, p. 13.

⁸¹ T.W. Goodspeed, *A History of the University of Chicago; the first quarter-century*, pp. 2-8.

⁸² T.R. McConnell, *et al.*, *From elite to mass to universal higher education: the British and American transformations* (Centre for Research and Development in Higher Education, University of California, California), p 2.

⁸³ P.G. Altbach, *et al.*, *American higher education in the twenty-first century; social, political and economic challenges* (The Johns Hopkins University Press, London, 1999), pp. 23-25.

⁸⁴ P.G. Altbach *et al.*, *American higher education in the twenty-first century ...*, p. 21.

⁸⁵ P.G. Altbach *et al.*, *American higher education in the twenty-first century ...*, pp. 117-118.

Schramm and Fraunholz contend that the development of the higher education sector in West Germany after World War II, specifically during the 1950s and 1960s, was mainly motivated by the need for more skilled members of society and thus by economic need and the desire for international competitiveness.⁸⁶ This was in stark contrast to earlier rationales for the establishment of universities in West Germany. When the University of Berlin was established at the beginning of the nineteenth century, for example, the main rationale was to realise the ideal of a *Volkuniversität*; in other words, the creation of a new university built on the new model of the Humboldt-system of tertiary education, with four faculties: theology, medicine, law and philosophy. In this case, the unity between research and teaching was of major importance.

However, economic and technological realities after World War II profoundly influenced higher education and the traditional notion of universities underwent a remarkable metamorphosis. Thereafter, the establishment and development of the higher education system in West Germany focused increasingly on economic realities and on meeting the needs of a technologically advancing first-world country in the context of global competition.⁸⁷ Although the above-mentioned factors motivated the establishment of universities in West Germany, the rapid increase in student numbers, like those in other countries, contributed to the increase in the establishment of new universities.⁸⁸ The so-called “education emergency” of the 1960s also contributed to an increase in the establishment of new universities. The “education emergency” can be defined as the need to expand university degrees and courses to meet the demands of an expanding technologically-advanced economy. It required a continued unity of research and teaching, with an emphasis also on the need for specialisation and on unity within the sciences.⁸⁹

The development of higher education and the subsequent establishment of new universities in the United Kingdom increased markedly after the 1960s due to a combination of motivations,

⁸⁶ M. Schramm and U. Fraunholz, “Between the ivory tower and the industrial laboratory ...”, *Historical Social Research*, 37 (2), 1989/1990, pp. 257-262.

⁸⁷ M. Schramm and U. Fraunholz, “Between the ivory tower and the industrial laboratory ...”, *Historical Social Research*, 37 (2), 1989/1990, pp. 254-255.

⁸⁸ M. Schramm and U. Fraunholz, “Between the ivory tower and the industrial laboratory ...”, *Historical Social Research*, 37 (2), 1989/1990, p. 258.

⁸⁹ M. Schramm and U. Fraunholz, “Between the ivory tower and the industrial laboratory ...”, *Historical Social Research*, 37 (2), 1989/1990, pp. 261-262.

which in some respects were similar to those influencing the establishment of universities in the USA during the 1960s and subsequently.⁹⁰ According to Mathew, Deer and Dau, the expansion of higher education in Britain included the establishment of new universities in the 1960s and this occurred both before and after the Robbins Report of 1963. The number of universities increased from 33 in 1960-1961 to 44 in 1970-1971.⁹¹ Between 1958 and 1965 eight new universities were planned and founded. In all these developments, the University Grants Committee played an important role driven by an educational motive.

The universities founded or established in the 1960s were mainly of two types: the first type was the typical “new” university, for example, Sussex, York and East Anglia, while the second type was the so-called “technical” university that developed from the Colleges of Advanced Technology such as, for example, Loughborough, Bradford and Brunel.⁹² As was the case with the establishment of new universities during the 1960s in the USA, the government played a major role. The UK government decided to establish universities based on reports, needs, increasing student numbers and the need for economic development and international competitiveness. The main motivation for the government to establish new universities or to expand existing institutions, at that stage, was to be found in the question regarding the purpose of higher education. The British government was concerned about the purpose higher education had to serve. The Robbins Report of 1963 identified four major purposes:⁹³

Instruction in skills, promotion of general powers of the mind, the advancement of learning and the transmission of a common culture.

The period 1960-1972 also saw a major expansion of teaching-/training colleges. In accordance with the recommendations made by the Robbins committee, they were called Colleges of Education. The reasons for these expansions in higher education were directly linked to a drastic increase in student numbers and, along with this, the need for many more educated specialists and skilled individuals, not only because education was regarded as a

⁹⁰ W.R. Niblett, “Recent trends in British higher education”, *The School Review*, 86 (1), 1977, p. 82.

⁹¹ K. Mayhew, C. Deer and M. Dua, “The move to mass higher education in the UK ...”, *Oxford Review of Education*, 30 (1), 2004, p. 66.

⁹² W.R. Niblett, “Recent trends in British higher education ...”, *The School Review*, 86 (1), 1977, p. 87.

⁹³ W.R. Niblett, “Recent trends in British higher education ...”, *The School Review*, 86 (1), 1977, p. 68.

long-term investment, but also for the development and advancement of the economy in general.⁹⁴

From the discussion above, which cites some examples of literature dealing with the establishment of universities internationally, one can conclude that a variety of motivations usually drive the establishment of universities. These reasons are variously political, economic, socio-political, cultural and religious, and may also stem from the need for universities to be technologically and industrially competitive.

2.3 Motivation for the founding of universities in South Africa

The founding of universities in South Africa must be viewed in the context of the long histories of Dutch and British colonial rule and that of the Boer republics in the interior of what would by 1910 become the Union of South Africa. Although politics initially played a fundamental role in the creation of colleges in the British and Boer colonies, further motivation was also needed to develop higher education in South Africa and thus to develop the South African economy. This will become evident in the discussion to follow. It will also be noted that the founding of colleges, subsequently transformed into universities, was characterised by a strong regional element.

Public universities in South Africa may be divided into three basic categories of which the first is the traditional university. These universities generally offer degrees with a theoretical orientation. The second is the University of Technology (the Technicon) that offers vocationally-oriented diplomas and degrees. The third is the comprehensive university, one that offers both types of qualifications. Traditional and comprehensive universities in South Africa currently total 17. However the focus of this study will be on some examples of traditional universities and the motivations for their founding.

As indicated above, the creation of colleges preceded the creation of universities in South Africa during the time of South Africa as a Union of Britain. According to Oosthuizen *et al* most current universities started off as colleges under the University Act of 1916 sections 12,

⁹⁴ W.R. Niblett, "Recent trends in British higher education ...", *The School Review*, 86 (1), 1977, p. 88.

13 and 14.⁹⁵ The examples that we will refer to include the traditionally English universities in the Cape, Kwazulu-Natal, and on the Witwatersrand as universities that were founded with a strong English and colonial influence. Relevant literature on the topic includes Walker's *The South African College and the University of Cape Town*,⁹⁶ Brookes' *A History of the University of Natal*,⁹⁷ Boucher, *The University of South Africa, Spes in Ardius; a history of the university of South Africa*,⁹⁸ and Murray's *Wits, the early years*.⁹⁹ Other universities referred to are those founded with a Dutch and later Afrikaner-nationalist influence, for example, the University of Stellenbosch, the University of the Free State, University of Pretoria and today's North-West University in Potchefstroom. Relevant literature on these universities includes Bernardus's *Stellenbosch 1866-1966: Honderd jaar hoër onderwys*,¹⁰⁰ The University of the Free State's *Van sink tot sandsteen tot graniet: Die eerste 100 jaar van die Universiteit van die Vrystaat*,¹⁰¹ Universiteit van Pretoria, *AD Destinatum; gedenkboek van die Universiteit van Pretoria*,¹⁰² Van der Schyff's *Wonderdaad ...! Die PUK tot 1951: wording, vestiging en selfstandigheid*,¹⁰³ and the study edited by E Van Eeden, *In U Lig: die PU vir CHO van selfstandigheid tot samesmelting 1951-2004*.¹⁰⁴

Durban-Westville (University of the Western Cape – UWC) and UPE will also be referred to as examples of universities established under the apartheid education system. The founding histories and development of these universities, although established long before the period under discussion, inform this study because they relate to the political, social and economic factors informing the founding history of RAU. It must be noted that only some universities in South Africa have been selected for this discussion.

⁹⁵ G.C. Oosthuizen et al, *Challenge to a South African university: The University of Durban-Westville* (Oxford University Press, Cape Town, 1981), p. 11.

⁹⁶ E.A. Walker, *The South African College and the University of Cape Town* (UCT Press, Cape Town, 1929).

⁹⁷ E.H. Brookes, *A History of the University of Natal*, pp.178.

⁹⁸ M Boucher, *Spes in Ardius: A history of the University of South Africa* (Pretoria, Wallachs Printing Co Pty Ltd, 1973).

⁹⁹ B.K. Murray, *Wits the early years: a history of the University of the Witwatersrand Johannesburg and its precursors – 1896-1939*, pp. 380.

¹⁰⁰ H.B. Thom (ed.), *Stellenbosch 1866-1966: Honderd jaar hoër onderwys* (Nasionale Boekhandel, Stellenbosch, 1966), pp. 599.

¹⁰¹ Universiteit van die Vrystaat, *Van sink tot sandsteen tot graniet: die eerste 100 jaar van die Universiteit van die Vrystaat* (Paarl Print, Paarl, 2006), pp. 457.

¹⁰² Universiteit van Pretoria, *AD Destinatum; gedenkboek van die Universiteit van Pretoria* (Voortrekkerpers Beperk, Johannesburg, 1960), pp. 445.

¹⁰³ PF van der Schyff, *Wonderdaad ...! Die PUK tot 1951: wording, vestiging en selfstandigheid* (Paarl Print, Potchefstroom, 2003), pp. 709.

¹⁰⁴ E.S. van Eeden, (Red.), *In U Lig: Die PU vir CHO van selfstandigheid tot samesmelting 1951-2004* (DCom Design, Potchefstroom, 2005), pp. 449.

2.3.1 The influence of agendas and imperial motivations in the advancement of higher education

The University of Cape Town (UCT) is one of South Africa's oldest residential tertiary institutions, and located on the slopes of Table Mountain. Its old colonial buildings reflect the long history of and the colonial influence on the university. Walker's work, titled *The South African College and the University of Cape Town*, was commissioned for the university centenary celebrations and published in 1929. According to Walker, the motives for the founding of the college included the need for proper higher education in the Cape Colony during the early 1820s.¹⁰⁵ Sir John Truter was the first chair of the organising committee for the creation of The South African College in 1828. He was, to a large extent, involved in developing higher education in the Cape Colony, with the intention of promoting imperial ideas. During this time, reforms creating the ideal atmosphere for the founding of the new college were implemented in the Cape Colony. These reforms had profound political, social and economic implications that culminated, amongst other things, in steps taken to deflate the paper currency, the institution of the free press, the adoption of English as the official language and the relaxation of the control of the churches.¹⁰⁶ Church education¹⁰⁷ was no longer perceived as adequate due to the changing political, economic and social demands that made reforms in education extremely important. The establishment of the college therefore played a major role in the educational development of the Cape Colony. The growing number of public and private schools served as further motivation for the establishment of the college. The liberal reforms mentioned above were further embraced by the college and used to enhance the growth of imperial ideas in the Cape Colony.¹⁰⁸ The college was established on the 1st of October 1829 as a forerunner of the university.¹⁰⁹ Despite its Africana nature, the book by Walker remains a gem in the repertoire of university histories, and of high value to understand the early history of university development in the South Africa of today. A 150 centennial year publication of the history of UCT appeared in 1979 edited by Alan Lennox-Short and David Welsh. This publication titled *UCT at 150; Reflections* was a picture filled publication reflecting on the policies that moulded this university, people who played a

¹⁰⁵ E.A. Walker, *The South African College and the University of Cape Town*, p. 3.

¹⁰⁶ E.A. Walker, *The South African College and the University of Cape Town*, pp. 7-8.

¹⁰⁷ E.G. Pells, *300 years of education in South Africa* (Juta, Cape Town, 1954), pp. 9-10, A.L. Behr, *Education in South Africa; Origins, Issues and Trends: 1952-1988* (Academica, Cape Town, 1988), pp. 9-18.

¹⁰⁸ E.A. Walker, *The South African College and the University of Cape Town*, p. 7.

¹⁰⁹ E.A. Walker, *The South African College and the University of Cape Town*, p. 15.

fundamental role in the history of this university, planning of the complex over the years, the faculties of the university, worldly presence and general student life.¹¹⁰

Phillips, in *The University of Cape Town 1918-1948: The formative years*, describes this university as at the vanguard of higher education in South Africa. Phillips' narrative begins in 1918, when the old South African College became a university,¹¹¹ and ends in 1948 when the NP government came to power. Although the book is well researched and covers some aspects relating to the students, faculties, departments and administration, it does not say much about the early establishment history of UCT, perhaps because Walker has efficiently covered that part since the instituting thereof as The South African College in 1829.

The founding of another institution for higher education – the Victoria College in 1887 – was the first step towards the founding of the University of Stellenbosch (US) in 1918, and yet another example of the efforts to advance higher education in the Cape Colony. HB Thom *Stellenbosch 1866-1966: Honderd jaar hoër onderwys* identifies the main motivating factor for the creation of the US as the broader development of higher education in the Cape Colony and in South Africa in general. The task of Victoria College to train students at the time convinced individuals like John X Merriman and Advocate FS Malan, the editor of *Ons land*, that the Victoria College should be transformed into the University of Stellenbosch.¹¹² The initial findings of the *Inter Colonial Commission on University Reorganisation*, conducted by education leaders of the four colonies, influenced the Higher Commission on Education in 1908 to declare that the time was not right for the creation of more universities in South Africa.¹¹³

However, the indication that the government did not have the funds to create universities motivated individuals to become part of the drive to establish another university for the Cape Colony. This drive for a university in Cape Town resulted in two individuals, Julius Wernher and Sir Otto Beit, making a large financial donation to establish such. The fears of the Victoria College alumni and other concerned groups in Stellenbosch that the future of the Victoria College was threatened resulted in the formation of a strong pressure group to ensure that the stipulations laid down by the original donors for the establishment of a university at Stellenbosch be honoured. Ongoing pressure from civil society resulted in the appointment of

¹¹⁰ A. Lennox and D. Welsh, *UCT at 150: Reflections* (David Philip, Cape Town, 1979), pp. 173.

¹¹¹ H. Philips, *The University of Cape Town 1918-1948: the formative years* (UCT Press, Cape Town, 1993).

¹¹² H.B. Thom (ed.), *Stellenbosch 1866-1966; ...*, p. 63.

¹¹³ H.B. Thom (ed.), *Stellenbosch 1866-1966; ...*, p. 64.

the Laurence Commission in November 1913 to investigate higher education in the Union and to determine existing needs for an additional university, as well as the donors' stipulations.¹¹⁴ After much debate and consideration, the Commission's findings resulted in the establishment of the US in 1918.¹¹⁵

This creation of the US was thus motivated by the need to expand and improve higher education, especially in the Western Cape, to the greater benefit of the entire South Africa. It was also motivated by the need to effect higher education of superior quality. The history of the creation of the university also highlights the important role individuals and civil society played, as well as the influence that they had in forcing the government of the time to establish the US.¹¹⁶ No publication since the 1966's commemoration of 50 years had come out, but it must be noted that, in the time of writing this thesis, the historians at the US had been busy recording the US-history since 1966 regarding April the 2nd 1918 as the official foundation date for the founding of this university. A book launch on the history since 1966 is planned for April 2018.¹¹⁷ The University of the Witwatersrand is also commemorating its 100 years of existence this year, 2017.

On the 21st of July 1904, Grahamstown's Rhodes University College was created. This was another college of higher education founded at the turn of the post South African War (1899-1902) years in the Cape Colony, an establishment much further to the east. In Currey's *Rhodes University 1904-1970: A Chronicle*, the need for more higher education institutions in the Cape Colony was identified as the primary motivating factor for the establishment of the college.¹¹⁸ Although the organising committee had to contend with a government that was not willing to embark upon a venture of this nature due to a lack of funds, the idea was still open to public debate through the columns of the *Eastern Province Magazine*.¹¹⁹ To make the founding of the university a reality, hope was expressed that wealthy individuals, including the Rhodes Trustees, would donate funds. A college in Grahamstown was motivated as a non-negotiable requirement, and the need to extend and strengthen the imperial idea in South Africa appears to have impacted on pulling through with it.¹²⁰ Moreover, the growth of student numbers and the economic advantages of having a university in Grahamstown

¹¹⁴ H.B. Thom (ed.), *Stellenbosch 1866-1966*; ..., p. 66.

¹¹⁵ H.B. Thom (ed.), *Stellenbosch 1866-1966*; ..., p. 69.

¹¹⁶ H.B. Thom (ed.), *Stellenbosch 1866-1966*; ..., pp. 63-69.

¹¹⁷ E-mail communication: ES van Eeden/WP Visser, 2017-03-08.

¹¹⁸ R.F. Currey, *Rhodes University 1904-1970*: ..., p. 2.

¹¹⁹ R.F. Currey, *Rhodes University 1904-1970*: ..., pp. 3-6.

¹²⁰ R.F. Currey, *Rhodes University 1904-1970*: ..., p. 12.

contributed to the rationale for founding the Rhodes University College in 1904. In 1951, it would become Rhodes University.¹²¹

The University of South Africa (UNISA), formally the University of the Cape of Good Hope, is the oldest degree conferring institution in the Republic and was until 1918 the only university in South Africa. In 1817 Abraham Faure, a future Dutch Reformed Church minister, suggested that higher education in the homeland had to be developed and expanded. James Adamson, another prominent colonist joined him and they took the lead in founding the South African College in Cape Town. The founding of this college in 1829 saw the beginning of the establishing of the University of South Africa in later years. The English nature of this university and nationality hampered the expansion of this university into the Boer republics.¹²² The University of the Cape of Good Hope however later became an institution which represented all the colonies before 1910.¹²³ The university continued to expand rapidly especially since 1960 but its role as a distant educational institution in higher education at the time was briefly overshadowed by the possibility of becoming a contact educational institution with an Afrikaans character.¹²⁴ This was related to the early attempts to establish an Afrikaans university in Johannesburg which later became known as RAU (see Chapter Four in this regard). UNISA however continued to contributing to the social and economic development of South Africa by becoming a truly South African university. With skills and knowledge development, initially in mining, engineering and the professional civil society, this university aimed to contribute to the general economic advancement of South Africa.¹²⁵

In *A history of the University of Natal*, Brooks observed that the University of Natal had its origins in the Natal University College, which was founded in 1909.¹²⁶ As had been the case with the above-mentioned universities, a fundamental reason for the founding of the University of Natal was to improve general education in the area. A belief generally held at the time was that the Education Department did little to improve education in the colony.¹²⁷ Another important factor in the establishment history of the university was the role played by

¹²¹ R.F. Currey, *Rhodes University 1904-1970: ...*, pp. 8-13.

¹²² M Boucher, *Spes in Arduis: A history of the University of South Africa*, p. 85.

¹²³ M Boucher, *Spes in Ardius: A history of the University of South Africa*, p. 93.

¹²⁴ M Boucher, *Spes in Ardius: A history of the University of South Africa*, pp. 337-339.

¹²⁵ M Boucher, *Spes in Arduis: A history of the University of South Africa*, pp. 1-7, 95-102.

¹²⁶ E.H. Brookes, *A history of the University of Natal*, p. 8.

¹²⁷ E.H. Brookes, *A history of the University of Natal*, p. 6.

an individual who, faced with opposition in the form of government and academic rivalry,¹²⁸ persisted in his belief that a university had to be established to improve education in Natal. This individual was Dr SG Campbell, a prominent and dynamic Durban luminary. Dr Campbell refused to wait for decisions by ministers and departments regarding the founding of a university.¹²⁹ He called a meeting at his home on the 4th of April 1907 and, under the chairmanship of Sir Benjamin Greenacre and with twenty or more citizens in attendance, proposed that a Technical Institute be established in Durban, financed by private corporations and government and managed by a local committee.¹³⁰ This resolution resulted in the beginnings of the Natal Technical College, which subsequently became the University of Natal,¹³¹ based in Durban and Pietermaritzburg.

2.3.2 Universities in the former Boer Republics: The role of regionalism, religion based education and Afrikaner nationalism in the founding of institutions

The 1904 founding of the University of the Orange Free State had its origins in October 1855 when Grey University College was founded in Bloemfontein. In *Van Sink tot Sandsteen tot Graniet*,¹³² co-written by several researchers of the former University of the Orange Free State, it is pointed out that the first motivation for the founding of the college pertained to the need to have a religion based education. Grey College was founded when Sir George Grey, British High Commissioner and Governor of the Cape Colony, donated a sum of money towards the establishment of an institution of higher education. The college was initially established as a seminary under private control, but in 1882 it became a public state facility.¹³³

However, the character of the college would change, when it became a university. Just prior to the South African War, in 1899, President MT Steyn urged the Orange Free State Volksraad to transform the college into a fully-fledged university with Dutch and not English as its medium of instruction. The motivation for this, which could also be interpreted as motivation for the establishment of the university at large, was that Dutch Afrikaans students would not need to study via medium English at the South African College (later renamed UCT), but could have access to university training in their mother-tongue, Dutch/Afrikaans,

¹²⁸ E.H. Brookes, *A history of the University of Natal*, p. 7.

¹²⁹ E.H. Brookes, *A history of the University of Natal*, p. 6.

¹³⁰ E.H. Brookes, *A history of the University of Natal*, pp. 6-7.

¹³¹ E.H. Brookes, *A history of the University of Natal*, p. 7.

¹³² Universiteit van die Vrystaat, *Van sink tot sandsteen tot graniet ...*, pp. 7-13.

¹³³ Universiteit van die Vrystaat, *Van sink tot sandsteen tot graniet....*, pp. 7-8. Note is also taken here of the publication by Prof Leo Barnard, titled *From grey to gold. The first 100 years of the University of the Orange Free State*¹³³. This source could unfortunately not be retrieved to extensively explore its value for this study.

in the Orange Free State. However, due to the outbreak of the South African War, and because the language of instruction would remain English for some time, Steyn's wish would only be realised much later. The seeds for transformation were, however, sown and nurtured in the years to come by the growth of Afrikaner nationalism in the 1920s and 1930s. In conjunction with a growth in Afrikaans student numbers and the need for the economic development of the Orange Free State, Afrikaner nationalism led to the founding of this Afrikaans university, which broke away from Grey University College in 1909.¹³⁴

Van der Schyff's *Wonderdaad ...! Die PUK tot 1951: Wording, vestiging en selfstandigheid* is a thoroughly researched and chronologically detailed post modern-like history of the road towards starting a tertiary institution as college with its first beginnings in 1869, attached to a religious orientation: The Humansdorp Theological Seminary of the Reformed Church of South Africa. The college gradually progressed towards independence in 1951 as the University of Potchefstroom. As with the examples of universities, one of the reasons for establishing the PU for CHO was to improve higher education in South Africa, especially for people perceived to be the educationally needy in the Western Transvaal.¹³⁵ After the Van der Schyff publication in 2003 a multi-authored, and equally well researched publication followed in 2005, edited by Van Eeden and titled, *In U Lig: Die PU vir CHO van selfstandigheid tot samesmelting 1951-2004* in which the different fields and levels of university development, its external impact, criticism on the CHO-paradigm and voice of the university strongly features.¹³⁶

Considering the history of Afrikaner nationalism, Potchefstroom was an important town in the Boers' resistance to British influence. The local founding of an Afrikaans-medium university was therefore significant. The university after 1951 was also important for training the citizens of Transvaal rather than students from the Cape Province or immigrants from the Netherlands.¹³⁷ Furthermore, the university was created to guard against perceived destructive and negative influences regarding the Afrikaner culture and language. Supported by the development and growth of Afrikaner nationalism after the South African War 1899-1902,

¹³⁴ Universiteit van die Vrystaat, *Van sink tot sandsteen tot graniet: die eerste 100 jaar van die Universiteit van die Vrystaat*, pp. 9, 17.

¹³⁵ P.F. van der Schyff, *Wonderdaad ...! Die PUK tot 1951: wording, vestiging en selfstandigheid*, pp. xv; 6-8; 64-67.

¹³⁶ E.S. van Eeden (Red.), *In U Lig: Die PU vir CHO van selfstandigheid tot samesmelting 1951-2004* (DCom Design, Potchefstroom, 2005).

¹³⁷ P.F. van der Schyff, *Wonderdaad ...! pp. 86-87.*

the University of Potchefstroom, established with a specific Afrikaner-Christian National character, was founded in 1951.¹³⁸

2.3.3 Economic, technological and skills development as motivational factors

The founding of the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits) has a long history outlined in Murray's *Wits the early years: a history of the University of the Witwatersrand Johannesburg and its precursors – 1896-1939*. According to Murray, the origins of Wits can be traced back to the late 1800s – originating from the influences of imperial ideology and mining on the South African economy.¹³⁹ Murray notes that the opening of the Transvaal Technical Institute in 1904 marked the birth of the institution that was later to become Wits.¹⁴⁰ This institution developed out of the South African School of Mines established at Kimberley in the Cape Colony in 1896 and was populated with students from the South African College (University of Cape Town) and Victoria College (University of Stellenbosch).¹⁴¹ Another factor that played a fundamental role in the founding of Wits was the mining industry that depended on overseas institutions for the training of mining engineers. The introduction of deep-level mining on the Witwatersrand in 1892-1894 underscored the growing need for mining engineers in South Africa, and for a local university at which to train them.¹⁴²

The fact that education in the Transvaal and specifically in Johannesburg was inadequate also highlighted the need for the creation of a university that could assist in reforming education in Johannesburg. The founding of a university would promote economic growth and professional opportunities, which, in the context of the rich mining industry, would contribute to the stimulation not only of the economy in general, but specifically also of industry and agriculture.¹⁴³ As envisioned, the establishment of the university in the Transvaal would furthermore create unity and purpose for the education system, contain the exodus of students to the Cape and Europe, train the youth of the Transvaal in a number of professions, and contribute considerably to nation building and unity.¹⁴⁴

¹³⁸ P.F. van der Schyff, *Wonderdaad ...!* pp. 86-87, 152.

¹³⁹ B.K. Murray, *Wits the early years: a history of the University of the Witwatersrand Johannesburg and its precursors – 1896-1939*, pp. 3-11.

¹⁴⁰ B.K. Murray, *Wits the early years...*, p. 4.

¹⁴¹ B.K. Murray, *Wits the early years...*, p. 7.

¹⁴² B.K. Murray, *Wits the early years...*, p. 5.

¹⁴³ B.K. Murray, *Wits the early years...*, pp. 11-13.

¹⁴⁴ B.K. Murray, *Wits the early years...*, p. 23.

2.3.4 Higher educational development as guided by apartheid ideology and practice

The creation of the University College for the Asian population in Durban preceded the founding of the University of Durban-Westville (UDW), which occurred in 1969 after the Extension of the Universities Act of 1959. The rise in Indian student numbers was a primary motivating factor for the establishment of this university. Another motivation was the need, as perceived by the NP government, to provide extended training opportunities and post-graduate study and research facilities for Indian students specifically. The NP government, in line with the apartheid higher education policy, had to review all higher education for “non-whites” thus to provide higher education opportunities and development for all.¹⁴⁵

In 1965, the founding of the University of Port Elizabeth (UPE)¹⁴⁶ was also necessitated by an increase in student numbers. This university was established under the apartheid government of the day’s higher education policy. The economic and population growth of Port Elizabeth in the 1950s contributed to the general view that this coastal city should have its own university. Government had little to do with the university’s founding and local businessmen were the main driving force.¹⁴⁷ They emphasised that the apparent shortage of skills because of economic growth necessitated the establishment of the university.¹⁴⁸ The local community was also of the opinion that the growing number of local Afrikaans-speaking students had the right to access university education in their mother-tongue.¹⁴⁹

On the 10th of October 1930 the University of Pretoria was formally founded after the University of Pretoria Private Act, No. 13 of 1930 was promulgated.¹⁵⁰ This development was however preceded by the establishment in 1896 of the South African School of Mines in Kimberley which was relocated in 1904 to Johannesburg and was renamed the Transvaal Technical Institute. In 1906 the name of this Institute was again changed to the Transvaal University College. The main motivation for the founding and later establishment of the University of Pretoria was economic and language driven. The founding fathers were of opinion that local white Afrikaans speaking students had to be given the opportunity to study in their own university in their own language locally and not to have to travel to Europe in order to obtain university training. Although the tuition language used in the Transvaal

¹⁴⁵ G.C. Oosthuizen *et al.*, *Challenge to a South African University: The University of Durban-Westville*, p. 32.

¹⁴⁶ Currently known as the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NMMU).

¹⁴⁷ M. Beale, *Apartheid and university education, 1948-1970*, pp. 289-290.

¹⁴⁸ M. Beale, *Apartheid and university education...*, pp. 293-295.

¹⁴⁹ M. Beale, *Apartheid and university education...*, pp. 296-298.

¹⁵⁰ Universiteit van Pretoria, *AD Destinatum; gedenkboek van die Universiteit van Pretoria* (Voortrekkerpers Bepersk, Johannesburg, 1960), pp. 43-45.

University College was English, this later changed to a 50/50 use of English and Afrikaans in the 1920s and 1930s due to the increased registration of Afrikaans-speaking students.¹⁵¹ The increased use of Afrikaans as medium of instruction at the University of Pretoria contributed to an increase in Afrikaner nationalism and feeling of belonging in the university.¹⁵² During the 1940s the University of Pretoria continued to acquire an Afrikaans identity and profoundly served the interests of an Afrikaner civil service in the executive capital city of South Africa after 1948.¹⁵³

2.4 Conclusion

Since the 1960s, the number of universities has increased substantially globally. The subsequent shift of university institutions from institutions for the elite minority to institutions catering for the needs of the masses has contributed not only to an increase in the number of universities, but also to an increase in local and international research on the topic of the nature of universities. Literature about universities as distinctive institutions is a “restless genre” indeed. In recent decades, it has increased and expanded substantially to deal with all aspects of universities, including their founding histories. As institutions, universities have become an important topic in the field of institutional studies.

The discussion about the motivations for the founding of universities internationally has provided some interesting insight and indirect as well as direct connections to university establishments in specifically South Africa. Similar trends as identified internationally have also been observed in the process of the founding of South African universities. The founding of a city university in Tel Aviv for example has shown how local political agendas combined with increasing student numbers and nation-building efforts motivated the need for the founding of a university. The development of higher education in China, during the 1950s to 1970s, on the other hand was mainly politically driven with the focus on national development and advancement.

Examples of motivations for the founding of universities in the USA have varied. Early university development in the USA during the 1700s and 1800s was motivated mainly by

¹⁵¹ Universiteit van Pretoria, *AD Destinatum* ..., p. 2.

¹⁵² Universiteit van Pretoria, *AD Destinatum* ..., pp. 48-58.

¹⁵³ Universiteit van Pretoria, *AD Destinatum* ..., pp. 94-101, also see F. Van der Watt, *Tukkies oorskou sy eerste honderd jaar, 1908-2008* (Universiteit van Pretoria, Pretoria, 2008).

religious factors. By the late 1800s, the motivational factors for the founding of universities had shifted to economic and political factors and, by the 1960s, motivations for the founding of universities were driven primarily by an increase in student numbers, a crisis in university higher education, economic realities, technological advancement and global competitiveness. This was also largely the case in the motivations for the founding of universities in the UK and West Germany. From what has been discussed so far, one can conclude that the global population explosion, urbanisation, rapid economic development and modernisation were some of the prime common denominators for the founding of universities internationally.

From the examples cited on the African continent, it can be concluded that the founding of universities in the African colonies was directly positively complemented, or as a result of imperial policies and the need to train civil servants to advance and develop the colonies. In decolonised countries, after World War II (1939-1945), universities were mainly established to develop states economically, socially and politically. Universities in Nigeria such as the Universities of Ibadan, Lagos, Ife, Nigeria, Benin and Ahmadu Bello can serve as examples.¹⁵⁴ The founding of these universities was not only the result of an increase in student numbers, but also due to how Nigerians viewed the value of university education. In Nigeria there was a profound feeling that the future of families, ethnic groups, villages and even that of the nation depended on education to enhance its nation's future development. The Nigerian government furthermore focused on improving higher education to become more relevant to Nigeria's developmental needs, specifically in the areas of politics, economics and social engagement.¹⁵⁵ However, cultural motivations for the founding of universities, combined with the need for economic development, featured high on the agenda in the establishment of the University of the West Indies.

The motivation for the founding of universities locally has also revealed some interesting dynamics. Motivation for the creation of local universities – UCT, US, Natal, Orange Free State, Potchefstroom and Wits - all stemmed from the fact that higher education in South Africa had to be developed and improved. Imperial motives played a role in the creation of the traditionally English language universities, and Afrikaner nationalism contributed to the establishment and subsequent development of universities like the Orange Free State and

¹⁵⁴ S.A. Adejunmobi, "Higher education and national development in Nigeria", *Improving College and University Teaching*, 26 (1), 1978, p. 39.

¹⁵⁵ S.A. Adejunmobi, "Higher education and national development ...", *Improving College and University Teaching*, 26 (1), 1978, pp. 40-41. See also T.P. Zeleza and A. Olukoshi, *African universities in the twenty-first century*, pp. 595-604.

Potchefstroom. Sentiments pertaining to mother-tongue instruction and provincialism also featured. Although economic factors and the increase in student numbers were motivations for the creation of all the examples cited, economic development played a major role in the establishment of Wits. For example, deep-mining activities on the Witwatersrand and the need to train engineers and managers necessitated the establishment of a university. The cases of the University of Durban-Westville (UDW) and UPE, on the one hand, highlighted politics and policies combined with an increase in student numbers as motivational factors and, on the other hand, emphasised an increase in student numbers, local economic development and language sentiments as motivational factors in the establishment of these universities.

This thesis, dealing with the founding of RAU, is informed by literature cited above that discusses the motivations for the creation of universities both internationally and locally. The historiographical reflections that were discussed which highlighted the trends and motivations for the founding of universities have identified a number of characteristics associated with the establishment of institutions of higher learning internationally and locally. The discussions of universities founded during the 1950s and 1960s especially inform the study. Factors identified such as economic advancement, technological developments, religious and language considerations and increasing student numbers contributed to the establishment of many universities, including RAU. This will be clarified in the discussions in the chapters to follow. From what has been discussed so far, it is already clear that motivational factors pertaining to mother-tongue education, economic development, ideological sentiments, the modernising drive and increasing student numbers can be directly linked to the motivational factors regarding the founding of RAU. All these factors contribute substantially to the creation of universities generally during the 1960s, and have therefore also impacted on the early motivations for the founding of the RAU. What follows in Chapter Three is a discussion of the roles of the NP government, business and cultural organisations in the creation and ultimate founding of RAU.

Chapter 3

Key role players in the creation of RAU

3.1 Introduction

Former State President of South Africa, Dr N Diederichs, opened the new administrative office and lecture complex of RAU on the 24th of May 1975. Newspaper reports observed the event as a proud and emotional moment for those involved ever since the pioneering stages of the founding of RAU.¹ In the *RAU-Rapport*, the address of Diederichs at the opening event reflected on the new and impressive building as academic asset, its representation as a knowledge hub that would contribute to human advancement in future. For Rector Prof G van N Viljoen, the new university buildings and dedicated staff further embodied a sense of intellectual integrity.² The supporting white Afrikaans-speaking population saw in the newly created RAU an opportunity for prospective students from the areas closer to home to advance towards realising their future careers. Hope, pride and a sense of belonging spontaneously surfaced.³ Symbolically, RAU was representative of the achievements of white Afrikaans-speaking South Africans who had emerged from a difficult past on the Witwatersrand, particularly in terms of their educational and economic development.⁴

The seven-storey building complex, embedded in a firm foundation and rising in a circular shape with lawns flowing in terraces to a centrally located fountain, represented the bold yet subtle presence of the white Afrikaans speaker.⁵ Accordingly, it is argued in this thesis that, through the creation of RAU, white Afrikaans speakers' dream of assuming their rightful position at the economic centre of South Africa became a reality.⁶ What made this university unique in the economic hub of the Witwatersrand was the fact that Johannesburg was predominantly the domain of English and Jewish business communities, whose influence had

¹ UJ/RAU Archive, Johannesburg, *RAU-Rapport*, 8 (2), 1975, p. 2, *Die Transvaler*, 1975-05-24, INEG Archive, Bloemfontein, P.J. Meyer, File PV 720, Knipsels, June. 1987.

² UJ/RAU Archive, *RAU-Rapport*, p. 3.

³ P.J. Meyer, *Nog nie ver genoeg nie, 'n persoonlike rekenskap van vyftig jaar georganiseerde Afrikanerskap* (Perskor, Johannesburg, 1984), p. 184.

⁴ UJ library, *Gedenk-album van die opening van die R.A.U.*, 1968-02-24, Speech of the Chancellor Dr N. Diederichs, p. 22.

⁵ M.A. Beale, "Apartheid goals in the 1960's: the creation of the University of Port Elizabeth and the Rand Afrikaans University", Seminar paper delivered at the University of the Witwatersrand on the 1995-03-06, pp. 19-20.

⁶ See Chapters 3,4 and 5 in this regard.

been predominant in all spheres of the social, economic and political spectrum of society on the Witwatersrand since the nineteenth century.⁷

That white Afrikaans speakers had succeeded in gaining a foothold in this centre of educational activity signalled a great achievement. In his speech, Dr Diederichs referred to the founding of RAU as a momentous breakthrough in an area where, to his mind, everything had been “loaded against the white Afrikaans speaker”.⁸ By this he probably meant that educational, economic and political opportunities on the Witwatersrand at the time were limited for white Afrikaans mother-tongue speakers. For Diederichs, the location of the university was very important because he believed that its presence could, over time, alter the cosmopolitan character of the city.⁹

The pioneers of RAU envisioned that, through the university’s educational programmes, white Afrikaans-speaking students would not only improve themselves but also develop and modernise Afrikaner identity and communities. Dubow’s vision, as quoted in Beale, of the founding of RAU is that the founding fathers probably had in mind that the university would become a beacon of modernising Afrikanerdom,¹⁰ thus becoming part of the NP government’s vision to modernise white Afrikaans identity in South Africa.¹¹ Looking back some years later, it was obvious that the majority of the university’s prospective student population indeed consisted of first-generation Afrikaans students from working-class backgrounds on the Witwatersrand – students whose parents themselves had never been in a position to attend university.¹²

Contributing also to the university’s working-class character was its commitment to provide part-time students with an opportunity to study during the evenings. Working students could, through part-time courses, pursue tertiary education after hours. Having part-time courses

⁷ UJ library, *Gedenk-album van die opening van die R.A.U.*, 1968-02-24, Speech of the Chancellor Dr N. Diederichs, pp. 21-22, UJ/RAU Archive, P.J. Meyer-collection, File C1/1, Interview (transcribed) with Dr P.J. Meyer on 1983-07-04 on his plot “Halfpad” in Witpoortjie 81 by Mr Jan Cronjé, Leader of the archival project of RAU and from 1967-05-01 to the end of 1981 Communications Manager of RAU, pp. 66-70.

⁸ UJ library, *Gedenk-album van die opening van die R.A.U.*, 1968-02-24, Speech of the Chancellor Dr N. Diederichs, p. 20.

⁹ UJ library, *Gedenk-album van die opening van die R.A.U.*, 1968-02-24, Speech of the Chancellor Dr N. Diederichs, p. 22.

¹⁰ S. Dubow, *A Commonwealth of knowledge, science, sensibility and white South Africa 1820-2000* (Oxford University Press, New York, 2006), p. 265.

¹¹ M.A. Beale, *Apartheid and university education, 1948-1970* (PhD, University of the Witwatersrand, 1998), p. 3.

¹² C. Bolsmann and T. Uys, “The marketization and transformation of higher education in South Africa: a case study of the Rand Afrikaans University”, Paper presented at St. George College, University of Western Australia, Perth on 1999-11-26, p. 7.

was not a new phenomenon, but what made the system unique was that tertiary education for the first time ever became available to the students in their own first language, Afrikaans.¹³ Another goal for the founding of RAU by the key role-players entailed the importance of character formation, service and idealism; ensuring a profound Christian commitment, and providing a high standard of scientific endeavour as an essential educational service to white Afrikaners and their area of birth.¹⁴ The creation of RAU was therefore motivated by a range of educational, social and political factors, all geared to advance white Afrikaans speakers.

The founding of RAU involved various role players, namely individuals, the NP government, as well as Afrikaans cultural and business institutions. This participatory planning process revealed diverse views regarding the need for the creation of yet another Afrikaans university, and where it should be located.¹⁵

In the discussion to follow, it will be argued that the creation of RAU was not the exclusive brainchild of the NP government. Rather, it was the product of a local campaign initiated by influential individuals who were driven by racial economic, cultural and ideological motivations to establish a new Afrikaans university on the Witwatersrand.¹⁶ This chapter will therefore investigate the roles of particular influential individuals, cultural organisations, the NP government and the business world in the creation of RAU. The focus will particularly fall on how their involvement contributed to the vision and mission of the new Afrikaans university. The discussion will develop by investigating the broader Afrikaner nationalist movement and its involvement in the founding of RAU. The emphasis will be the ethnic white Afrikaans portion of civil society, the National Party (NP) government, influential cultural organisations such as the Federasie van Afrikaanse Kultuurvereniginge (FAK) and the Afrikaner Broederbond (AB), as well as several influential individuals. The UNISA debate – which at one point proposed that UNISA should move from Pretoria to Johannesburg to become an Afrikaans university on the Witwatersrand – will feature in the discourse as well. Finally, RAU's envisioned role as an Afrikaans university on the

¹³ C. Bolsmann and T. Uys, "The marketization and transformation of higher education in South Africa ...", p. 9.

¹⁴ UJ/RAU Archive, *RAU-Rapport*, p. 2.

¹⁵ The following two chapters will reveal how Afrikaans civic involvement significantly influenced and shaped the history of RAU. Its establishment was thus foreshadowed and notable for a variety of different elements and expectations.

¹⁶ D. Lavin, "The dilemma of Christian-National education in South Africa", *The World Today*, 21 (10), 1965, p. 430, J. Klee, "Die verwesenliking van 'n Afrikanerdroom: die stigting van die Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit, 1955-1968", *New Contree*, 60 (11), 2010, pp. 136-138.

Witwatersrand will be examined to come to an understanding of what the founders had in mind and how the broad mainstream Afrikaner nationalists envisioned the future university.

3.2 The broader Afrikaner nationalist movement

Political decision-making in the South Africa of the nineteen fifties and sixties favoured the white Afrikaans-speaking voter. Most public initiatives in the cultural field of Afrikaans society were aimed at complementing an Afrikaner nationalist movement. In the following subsections, the key contributors to this movement, contributing to the founding of the RAU, feature prominently in the following discourse.¹⁷

3.2.1 Initiatives within the nationalist movement

In 1962, a year after South Africa had become a white-controlled constitutional republic outside the realm of the British Commonwealth,¹⁸ the Minister of Education, Senator J de Klerk, dispatched commissioners to Johannesburg and Port Elizabeth. They were not part of an official commission, yet they functioned as a fact-finding mission. This was also to support the Stellenbosch physicist AC Cilliers who was the head of the University Advisory Committee at the time.¹⁹ The commissioners' responsibility was to investigate the nature of the local campaigns for the creation of new universities in these urban areas with a long and illustrious history of economic development. At the time, Cilliers was also conducting a quinquennial review of university finances in South Africa, primarily in terms of the Holloway formula.²⁰ This investigation focused primarily on reviewing the existing funding

¹⁷ I. Wilkens and H. Strydom, *The Super Afrikaners* (Jonathan Ball, Johannesburg, 1978), pp. 177-188, W. Beinart, *Twentieth-century South Africa* (Oxford University Press, New York, 2001), pp. 143-148.

¹⁸ I. Wilkens and H. Strydom, *The Super Afrikaners*, pp. 135-139, F. Pretorius, *Geskiedenis van Suid-Afrika: Van voortye tot vandag* (Tafelberg, Kaapstad, 2012), p. 339., H. Giliomee, and B. Mbenga, *Nuwe geskiedenis van Suid-Afrika* (Tafelberg, Kaapstad, 2007), pp. 334-344.

¹⁹ Cilliers was a 'restless genius' as described by the *Dictionary of South African Biography*. He was trained in Stellenbosch and in Germany. He adopted a variety of political positions, for example, promoting unity between Malan and Hertzog in the late 1930s and supported Smuts during the Second World War. He was a founder member of Sabra but opposed the NP after Coloureds had been removed from the Common Roll in the Cape. See C.J. Beyers, *Dictionary of South African Biography*, Volume V, Human Science Research Council, 1977, 1981 and 1987, Pretoria, pp. 129-131.

²⁰ This formula which was in use for a long time were used by the government to determine how funding for higher education institutions in South Africa would take place in accordance with student numbers, needs and projected growth. This formula furthermore emanating from the report of the Holloway Commission appointed by government in 1951 to investigate university financing. It was introduced in 1953 and was used as the State's funding instrument until the early 1970s. The discontinuance of the use of the Holloway formula followed an interim recommendation by the Van Wyk de Vries Commission of Enquiry into universities. Although this

model for universities at the time.²¹ Meanwhile, campaigns by white Afrikaans speaking local communities to have new universities established became more intense in the late 1950s and early 1960s because of the perceived growing need among white Afrikaans speakers for tertiary education in their mother tongue.

Campaigns were linked to the fulfilment of white Afrikaans speakers' ambitions – which was an important point on the agenda of the NP government, the AB and Afrikaans cultural organisations.²² At the core was the aim to preserve and enrich the Afrikaans language and culture through education. Moreover, improving Afrikaners' economic livelihoods, especially during the 1950s, was important. There was consensus in the mainstream leadership that economic improvement was a worthy objective. Special steps were required to address the lack of skills among Afrikaners. As a rule their average income was lower, in comparison with their peers amongst the English-speaking residents of the Witwatersrand.²³ Afrikaner ambition was also the product of an organic growth process.²⁴ It formed part of the increase in the number of primary and secondary Afrikaans schools that gave rise to the establishment of an Afrikaans teachers' training college – known as the *Goudstadse Onderwyskollege*.²⁵ The growth of the white Afrikaans-speaking schools on the Witwatersrand was phenomenal. In 1921, for example, 30 000 of Johannesburg's white population of 252 000 were white Afrikaans speakers. In 1936, this figure increased to 62 000. By 1951, 108 000 of the total white population of 359 000 were white Afrikaans speakers, and in 1963, 340 000 of 774 000 whites in Johannesburg were Afrikaans speakers.²⁶ The population growth had a direct impact on the increase in the establishment of additional primary and secondary schools.

The NP government familiarised itself with reasons for the justification of the campaigns to establish Afrikaans universities. De Klerk's investigation revealed that, up to the 1950s, the NP government did not primarily inspire the creation of new universities. Instead, government assumed that existing universities in South Africa were adequate and that, in

Commission was appointed by government in 1968 and completed its final report in 1974, the funding formula for universities that they proposed was only implemented in 1977. See <http://www.dhet.gov.za>.

²¹ M.A. Beale, *Apartheid and university education...*, p. 289.

²² INEG Archive, Bloemfontein, P.J. Meyer collection, File PV 720, Roeping en taak van die Afrikaanse kultuurorganisasie: 'n Studiestuk, pp. 1-4.

²³ S. Trapido, "Political institutions and Afrikaner social structures in the Republic of South Africa", *The American Political Science Review*, 57 (1), 1963, p. 78.

²⁴ UJ/RAU Archive, P.J. Meyer collection, File C1/1, Versoekskrif insake die stigting van 'n Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit voorgelê te word op 1963-11-25 aan sy Edele J. De Klerk, Minister van Onderwys, Kuns en Wetenskap, p. 1.

²⁵ UJ/RAU Archive, G. van N. Viljoen-collection, File C3/1, Die Stigtingsvergadering: 'n Afrikaanse Universiteit vir die Witwatersrand, 1963-11-05, Goudstadse Onderwyskollege, p. 6.

²⁶ UJ/RAU Archive, G. van N. Viljoen-collection, File C3/1, Die Stigtingsvergadering ..., p. 6.

accordance with the policy of separate development,²⁷ priority had to be given to investing in tertiary education opportunities for the black, coloured and Indian population groups in South Africa.²⁸ Moreover, the NP government considered the establishment of more white universities as too costly, and even articulated its reluctance to establish white Afrikaans universities.

Reporting, back to De Klerk, investigators confirmed that local campaigns to have new universities established were the initiatives of individuals and groups who believed that more white Afrikaans universities were essential because of a variety of economic, ideological and cultural requirements that they had identified in the urban catchment areas of Johannesburg and Port Elizabeth.²⁹

Ultimately, the insistence of the broader Afrikaner nationalist movement, notwithstanding the standpoint of the NP government, resulted in the founding of The University of Port Elizabeth (UPE) in 1965 and the Rand Afrikaans University (RAU) in 1968. The ongoing engagement between the government, Afrikaans organisations, the public and Afrikaner businesses regarding these universities was the product of a bottom-up (and not top-down) process. This will become evident from the discussion to follow. The initiative to have both these universities established came from the communities, individuals and organisations in pursuit of specific interests and not from the government at the time. In the case of RAU, these interests were directly related to the desire to modernise Afrikaner identity, especially on the Witwatersrand.³⁰

3.2.2 NP sentiment and the party's gradual involvement in the establishment of RAU

The eventual establishment of RAU once the NP government accepted its responsibility towards this institution can, in its broader sense, be linked to new priorities of the NP's university policy, which at the time aimed at implementing apartheid and general economic and social advancement. The policy resulted from changes and opportunities related to South Africa's drastic economic growth in the 1960s, as well as changes in the international and domestic political arena.³¹ The first changes in educational policy lasted from 1948 until the

²⁷ G.C. Oosthuizen *et al.*, *Challenge to a South African university: the University of Durban-Westville* (Oxford University Press, Cape Town, 1981), p. 32.

²⁸ M.A. Beale, *Apartheid and university education...*, p. 8., P. Kallaway, *The history of education under apartheid, 1948-1994* (Pearson Education South Africa, Cape Town, 2002), pp. 259-261.

²⁹ M.A. Beale, *Apartheid and university education...*, pp. 289-290.

³⁰ UJ/RAU Archive, G. van N. Viljoen-collection, File C3/1, Die Stigtingsvergadering..., pp. 3-9.

³¹ UJ/RAU Archive, G. van N. Viljoen-collection, File C3/1..., p. 287.

mid-1950s and was focused on ensuring a steady and stable expansion of the provision of higher education in South Africa. From the mid-1950s to 1959, there was a noticeably more aggressive approach in the government's plans for higher education³² in which ethnic university colleges were established in line with the NP's policy of separate development.³³ RAU's creation formed part of a third policy phase that focused on the notion of the "particularism" of universities. In other words, the university had an ethnic definition imposed upon it because it was closely related to the community in which it was located, and particularly focused on the needs of that community. RAU, as Beale argues, had to represent a specific language and culture, which, in this case, was that of the white Afrikaans speaker. For this reason, she concludes that RAU represented all the characteristics of a *volksuniversiteit*.³⁴

Government's involvement in RAU would, however, only come later – especially after it was decided that UNISA would not be moved from Pretoria to Johannesburg. It was, furthermore, spurred on by the disapproval of individuals involved in the process and their response to the government's attitude towards establishing the new Afrikaans university.

The context in which RAU and UPE were founded was furthermore characterised by economic advancement and political developments. In this regard, O'Meara examines the radical developments in Afrikaner finance and insurance companies, for example, Volkskas Bank and Sanlam as early as during the 1930s and 1940s and expanding drastically during the 1960s. In this regard, G Verhoef argues that Sanlam's involvement in improving the economic position of the white Afrikaans speaker in the economy generally served as a vehicle for ensuring that this group acquired a meaningful share in the mainstream economy.³⁵ The growth of Afrikaner financial capital from its dependence on agriculture during the 1930s and 1940s to an increase in cooperation with non-Afrikaner financial capital such as Anglo-American by the 1960s,³⁶ led to important shifts and struggles in nationalist politics, including the tension between the *verligtes* (enlightened or broadminded) and

³² M.A. Beale, "Apartheid goals in the 1960s...", Seminar paper delivered at the University of the Witwatersrand on 1995-03-06, pp. 1-2.

³³ M.A. Beale, "Apartheid goals in the 1960s...", Seminar paper delivered at the University of the Witwatersrand on 1995-03-06, pp. 1-2.

³⁴ M.A. Beale, *Apartheid and university education...*, p. 8, and also see chapter two in this regard.

³⁵ G. Verhoef, The South African economy in the twentieth century in F. Pretorius (ed.) *A history of South Africa; from the distant past to the present day* (Protea Book House, Pretoria, 2014), p. 460.

³⁶ G. Verhoef, *The South African economy in the twentieth century...*, pp. 461-468.

verkrampes (ultraconservatives).³⁷ Such struggles emphasised the importance ascribed to the white Afrikaans speaker's survival. The late 1950s up to the mid-1970s was therefore characterised by great cultural, ideological and political movements and developments in which RAU as the "Volksuniversiteit", as Beale would have it, was initiated. In this context, during the official opening of the newly created RAU, the university's role and the significance of knowledge acquisition was unreservedly emphasised. The university was described as the cradle of this power of knowledge. Diederichs was of the view that the RAU would strengthen white Afrikaans speakers' position in the country's economic life through acquired knowledge, and give them the opportunity to secure recognition and gain worldwide acceptance.³⁸ Knowledge thus represented power. It was to be used as a weapon in ensuring white Afrikaans speaker's political and economic dominance.³⁹

The knowledge acquired at the university would thus ensure the future of white Afrikaans speakers, and it was envisaged that RAU would become a monument to the language, culture and identity of the white Afrikaans speaker⁴⁰ on the Witwatersrand. It also became part of the NP government's educational vision in which the white Afrikaans speaker would be mobilised and modernised economically and socially. RAU was created to assist the white Afrikaans speaker to enter the realm of commercial and professional urban prosperity.⁴¹

From the above, one can conclude that RAU therefore had to contribute to the general advancement of the white Afrikaans speaker in the context of economic and educational realities of the time, thus also making the involvement of cultural organisations important.

3.2.3 The role and impact of the Afrikaner Broederbond (AB) and the Federasie vir Afrikaanse Kultuurverenigings (FAK)

The involvement of the AB and FAK in the establishment of RAU was mainly aimed at developing and advancing white Afrikaans speakers' identity through the development and enrichment of their religion, culture and language.

³⁷ D. O'Meara, *Volkskapitalisme: Class, capital and ideology in the development of Afrikaner Nationalism*, (Ravan Press, Johannesburg, 1996), pp. 248-252.

³⁸ UJ library, *Gedenk-album van die opening van die R.A.U.*, 1968-02-24, Speech by Prof G. van N. Viljoen – Welcoming of the parents of the students, p. 51.

³⁹ See the speech of Diederichs in M.A. Beale, "Apartheid goals in the 1960s...", pp. 19-20.

⁴⁰ M.A. Beale, "Apartheid goals in the 1960s...", Seminar paper delivered at the University of the Witwatersrand on 1995-03-06, p. 19.

⁴¹ M.A. Beale, *Apartheid and university education...*, p. 8.

3.2.3.1 The AB

The founding of the AB in 1918, and its development since the mid-1920s, resulted in an organisation whose main aim was to improve the general position of white Afrikaans speakers in South Africa, but especially of those on the Witwatersrand because it was in the economic hub of South Africa. The AB furthermore worked towards developing the language, culture and religion of the white Afrikaans speakers. The organisation not only comprised influential political, economic and social leaders, but also ordinary members of society such as teachers, religious leaders and government clerks. For the AB to improve the position of the white Afrikaans speaker, it had to pay attention to three areas of activity: the creation of a defined Afrikaner identity and a coherent ideology of Afrikaner nationalism; the elevation of the Afrikaner poor from their position of educational and economic disadvantage; and, the development of Afrikaner business.⁴² Through ideology and religion, a common organising destiny had to be forged, supported by strong Calvinist religious views embodied in the importance of a corporate identity.⁴³ This unity would assist in the social, educational and economic upliftment of white Afrikaans speakers.

In 1986, the AB reiterated its founding principles and aims regarding the white Afrikaans speaker in South Africa. In a document entitled: “Die grondslag en oogmerke van ons strewe” (the foundation and aims of our endeavours), the position of and task involving the advancement of the white Afrikaans speaker was emphasised. Importantly, the document referred to the white Afrikaans speaking population and its culture, language and education, all of which were elements that would feature in the founding of RAU.⁴⁴ Firstly, reference was made to the importance of the role of the Christian-national task in ensuring an exclusively white Afrikaans speaking group or community. In this respect, the central role of the Bible and Christian values were singled out as important elements in the lives of the white Afrikaans speaking group. According to the document, the Afrikaners’ language not only had to be preserved, but it also had to be developed further for the survival of the group. Moreover, Afrikaans culture had to be conserved and enriched and its education had to be based on Christian values to guide children and students to serve God, church, state,

⁴² M. Goldberg, “The nature of Afrikaner Nationalism”, *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 23 (1), 1985. p. 128.

⁴³ M. Goldberg, “The nature of ...”, *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 23 (1), 1985, p. 128.

⁴⁴ UJ library, *Gedenk-album van die opening van die R.A.U.*, 1968-02-24, Speech by Prof G. van N. Viljoen – Welcoming of the parents of the students, p. 51.

community and nation.⁴⁵ In this regard, RAU would play an important role in realising the development and enrichment of white Afrikaans speakers' culture, language and religion. This to a large extent summarises the involvement of the AB in the establishment of this university.

For Wilkins and Strydom, the establishment of the RAU⁴⁶ was a direct result of AB involvement.⁴⁷ They explain that the AB wanted, especially with the founding of RAU, to counteract the liberal influence of the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits).⁴⁸ However, Beale observes that the AB's involvement in the creation of UPE during the same period was limited. Many of the local leading individuals involved did not belong to the organisation. With RAU this was not the case.⁴⁹

Important to note, is that the creation of RAU was by no means a top-down decree involving the active participation of the NP government or the AB. Instead, it was the consequence of a process initiated by the broader Afrikaner nationalist movement.⁵⁰ Viljoen, as first rector of the RAU, emphasised that the institution's creation was a process springing from a cultural awakening amongst white Afrikaans speakers on the Witwatersrand.⁵¹ According to Viljoen in 1967, RAU right from the start had arisen as a university fully in spirit and character. Its character and identity, he suggested, did not evolve over time and through long struggles as was the case with many other Afrikaans universities.⁵² It was for this reason that he believed that RAU's character, vision and mission were intact from the start, because it was moulded by individuals such as Dr PJ Meyer himself who had made a strong intellectual commitment. It was as a result of the initiatives of Viljoen and Meyer who had the desire to create an ideal modern institution, that RAU was finally established to make a fundamental contribution to the upliftment and advancement of white Afrikaans speakers.

This upliftment included the cultural and language elements to which the FAK made an important contribution.

⁴⁵ Die Erfenisstigting Archive (HFA), Voortrekker Monument, Pretoria, File, AB 12/133-3/86/3 AB, AB: Grondslag en oogmerke van ons strewes, pp. 1-4.

⁴⁶ In most instances writers also referred to the UPE when discussing the initial developments of the RAU. For the sake of a proper focus to RAU's history, the UPE will not be always mentioned.

⁴⁷ I. Wilkins and H. Strydom, *The Super Afrikaners*, p. 422.

⁴⁸ I. Wilkins and H. Strydom, *The Super Afrikaners*, p. 423.

⁴⁹ M.A. Beale, *Apartheid and university education...*, p. 294.

⁵⁰ UJ/RAU Archive, P.J. Meyer-collection, File C1, Die Beplanning van die Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit, p. 3.

⁵¹ UJ/RAU Archive, G. van N. Viljoen-collection, File C3/15, Universiteit en Gemeenskap, Toespraak, G. van N. Viljoen voor Johannesburg se Afrikaanse Sakekamer, 1967-03-21, p. 1.

⁵² UJ/RAU Archive, G. van N. Viljoen-collection, File C3/15, Universiteit en Gemeenskap..., p. 1.

3.2.3.2 The FAK

Founded in 1929, the FAK's main aim was the establishment of Afrikaans as a national language through cultural associations and teachers.⁵³ The FAK also worked towards advancing the culture and identity of white Afrikaans speakers.⁵⁴ In this regard, individuals belonging to the AB – such as Meyer and Viljoen – formed a strong working relationship with the FAK because they shared the same ultimate aims. At the time, the FAK furthermore had branches in almost every town and city in South Africa. Each such branch would assist in achieving aims for the advancement of the culture and identity of white Afrikaans speakers. This culminated in the offering of cultural and language advancement activities and conferences organised by these branches in collaboration with RAU. Meyer and Viljoen in addition agreed with the policy aims and statements regarding the advancement of white Afrikaans speakers' culture, language and religion as advanced by both the AB and the FAK. These aims were furthermore consistent with those expressed in another document of the AB titled *Die AB in die hede*⁵⁵ (The AB now), published in October 1968 during the golden jubilee of the Bondsraad and at the time that RAU was founded. This document also concluded that education had to ensure the existence of the Afrikaans language, culture, religion and history. These aims, as first stated in 1968, were still the same in 1986 even though the white Afrikaans speaker during this time experienced deep soul-searching moments regarding the policy of separate development (apartheid). A good example of one of these moments would be the *verlig/verkramp* issue of the late 1960s. This moment in the history of white Afrikaans speakers caused great divisions within political, cultural and even religious circles as many “verligte” white Afrikaans speakers believed that the policy of separate development needed to be reformed as there was no place for it in the South Africa of the late 1960s and after. This point of view was however rejected by the more *verkramp* segment of white Afrikaans speakers who believed in upholding the *status quo*.⁵⁶ The consistency in the aims of the AB about the development of the white Afrikaans speakers' culture, language and religion from 1968 to 1986 remained the same and therefore demonstrated the stability of the AB aims during this period.⁵⁷

⁵³ M. Goldberg, “The nature of ...”, *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 23 (1), 1985, p. 129.

⁵⁴ HFA, FAK-versameling, Tydskrifte, Houer 4, *Handhaaf*, 1965-08, pp. 11-15.

⁵⁵ HFA, File, AB 12/1-3/68/AB, *Die AB in die hede*, held century feast – Bondsraad, 1968-10-01, pp. 2-4.

⁵⁶ J.H.P. Serfontein, *Die Verkrampde aanslag* (Human en Rousseau, Pretoria, 1970), pp. 14-17.

⁵⁷ HFA, FAK-versameling, Tydskrifte, Houer 4, *Handhaaf*, 1965-08, pp. 11-15; Die Erfenisstigting Archive, File, AB 12/1-3/68/AB, *Die AB in die hede*, held century feast – Bondsraad, 1968-10-01, pp. 2-4.

From the discussion it is observed that the AB and the FAK collectively played a vital role in the establishment of RAU. This was also the case with some individuals such as Meyer.

3.2.4 Meyer's role

Although the AB as an organisation did not take the lead in creating and establishing RAU, one of its important individual members did. This was Meyer (1909-1984), supported by a group of individuals in the Rand Afrikaans University Committee (R.A.U.C.), as will be detailed in Chapter Four. They were later assisted by Viljoen, also a member of the AB, in sculpting the character and spirit of RAU along the lines of Christian-Nationalist ideology, based on personal views of how the university should develop. Meyer, however, had a significant influence on the development of white Afrikaans ideology and was actively involved in organising the cultural life⁵⁸ of white Afrikaans speakers as a group.⁵⁹ His role in Afrikaner history led O'Meara to state that Diederichs, Meyer, HF Verwoerd and A Hertzog were all in some way responsible for, as he puts it, the "ideological redefinition" of Afrikaner nationalism.⁶⁰ In this regard, he implied that the redefining and clear defining of the white Afrikaans speakers' political, economic and social views and how to achieve them. As time passed, and even as early as 1952, Meyer's influence grew as he became a member of the executive board and served from 1960 to 1972 as the chairman of the AB.⁶¹

Meyer had a strong Calvinist approach to life and believed in the destiny of the white Afrikaans speaker in Africa. He was convinced that the presence of the white Afrikaans speaker in Africa was the will of God and part of His divine plan.⁶² He also believed that the white Afrikaans speaker's cultural life related to the Biblical task set for humans to rule over the earth and to increase in number to praise God, a praise that should be expressed not by isolated individuals but by members of a family, an entire nation, government and church.⁶³

⁵⁸ Meyer was actively involved in the AB and FAK occupying leading positions in both these organisations. He was furthermore active in organising the Volkskongres and Reddingsdaadbond of 1939 with the aim of improving the economic position of the white Afrikaans speakers. He was also very concerned about the position and rights of the white Afrikaans worker in industry and on the mines and became involved in improving their general position and rights. He published a number of books and articles which had as focus the past and future of the white Afrikaans speaker socially, economically and politically. He actively promoted the Afrikaans language and supported a Christian Nationalist Education. However, no specific record exist in which he actually and openly favoured Apartheid on a tertiary educational level.

⁵⁹ D. Prinsloo, "Dr Piet Meyer in Johannesburg, 1936-1984", *Historia*, 32 (1), 1987, p. 44.

⁶⁰ D. O'Meara, *Volkskapitalisme: Class, capital and ideology...*, p. 64.

⁶¹ D. Prinsloo, "Dr Piet Meyer in Johannesburg ...", *Historia*, 32 (1), 1987, p. 50.

⁶² J. Klee, "Thaba RAU, die bergspits-RAU is bereik": Dr PJ Meyer se aandeel in die stigting van RAU, 1955-1968", *Suid-Afrikaanse Tydskrif vir Kultuurgeskiedenis*, 28 (1), 2014, p. 71.

⁶³ J. Klee, "Thaba RAU, die bergspits-RAU is bereik" ..., *Suid-Afrikaanse Tydskrif vir Kultuurgeskiedenis*, 28 (1), 2014, p. 72.

For Meyer, culture was important because it contributed to identity – in this case, the white Afrikaans speaker's identity – providing meaning and a sense of belonging. All of this, together with Christian National Education (CNE), would ensure the completion of the task of white Afrikaans speakers.⁶⁴

There appears to be consensus amongst authors that, for Meyer, CNE became an important step in the development of the concept of white supremacy in Afrikaner nationalist thinking after 1939.⁶⁵ For Meyer, however, CNE would contribute immensely to the educational advancement of white Afrikaans speakers, thus motivating them to become part of the Afrikaners' national project under the leadership of the NP government since 1948.⁶⁶ According to Davies, this project, which had as its aim the development, formation and elevation of the white Afrikaans speaker, had in fact originated as early as the 1920s and 1930s when:⁶⁷

...[the] ... Afrikaner culture and business elites constructed a scheme with both materialist and ethnic appeal to raise an ethnic mobilisation capable of improving and securing the economic position of an Afrikaner grouping.

For Meyer – supported by influential individuals like Viljoen and JP van der Spuy (MP until 1961, Broederbond chief secretary and later Minister of Education) – language, cultural development and education were important elements in the long-term survival of the white Afrikaans speaker.⁶⁸

Meyer's involvement in RAU's creation started in 1955⁶⁹ – the year that saw the start of a long campaign on the Witwatersrand to establish a white Afrikaans teachers' college and later an Afrikaans university. During this period, a small subcommittee from the Afrikaans Committee of Afrikaans Cultural Organisations in Johannesburg was formed to investigate the establishment of an Afrikaans university on the Witwatersrand.⁷⁰ The committee was formed with Meyer as chairperson and H Roux, involved in education projects on the

⁶⁴ UJ/RAU Archive, P.J. Meyer collection, File C1/6 Speeches; Die uitdaging van die moderne maatskappy aan die jeug t.o.v. sy kultuur. Speech of Meyer during the congress of the youth in the Republic of South Africa at Potchefstroom on the 1963-04-13, pp. 1-4.

⁶⁵ M. Soni-Amin, cited by E.S. van Eeden and L.M. Vermeulen, "Christian National Education (CNE) and People's Education (PE): Historical perspectives and some broad common grounds", *New Contree*, 50, 2005, pp. 182-183.

⁶⁶ R. Davies, *Afrikaner in the New South Africa; identity politics in a global economy* (I.B. Tauris Publishers, London, 2009), p. 23.

⁶⁷ R. Davies, *Afrikaner in the New South Africa...*, p. 19.

⁶⁸ UJ/RAU Archive, P.J. Meyer-collection, File C1/1, Interview (transcribed) with Dr P.J. Meyer..., p. 3-4.

⁶⁹ I. Wilkins and H. Strydom, *The Super Afrikaners*, p.423.

⁷⁰ J. Klee, "Die verwesenliking van 'n Afrikanerdroom": Die stigting van die Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit, 1955-1968", *New Contree*, 60, 2010, pp. 141.

Witwatersrand, as secretary. The committee decided, moreover, to call a meeting of Afrikaans churches, cultural and educational institutions and other organisations in order to determine the level of support for the creation of an Afrikaans university. This meeting resulted in a conference held in Johannesburg at the Hoër Meisieskool Helpmekaar on the 12th of March 1965 where the following members were elected to serve: Meyer (chairman), JJ van Tonder, PJ Hattingh (Secretary of Transvaal Education), E Cuyler and P van Vuuren.⁷¹ From the outset it seemed as if white Afrikaans speakers, in an effort to make provision for their own higher educational needs, would have to do so without the help of other academic institutions of higher education—mainly because of the competition stemming from restricted financial resources during this time.⁷² This was evident from ongoing debates on whether there was a true need for the establishment of another Afrikaans university in the context of limited funding, student numbers at the time and the availability of professional lecturers.⁷³

Members of the AB were interspersed in all the committees and groups that for many years had reservations about the perceived ongoing anti-government and liberal influence at Wits. Their views were informed by the Wits' outspokenness on NP government policies and the fact that many Afrikaans students were forced to study at Wits due to the absence of an Afrikaans university in Johannesburg. For that reason they were of the opinion that white Afrikaans speakers were being unnecessarily exposed to the liberal views that Wits expressed during the 1960s and 1970s, and which were not, according to the committee, conducive to the preservation of the Afrikaans language and culture.⁷⁴ The formation of the committee and the subsequent meetings that were planned, immediately raised suspicions in English circles that RAU would be founded as an academic force against Wits.⁷⁵ This was evident in newspaper articles describing the establishment of the new Afrikaans university as an effort to level out the relevance and influence of Wits.⁷⁶ However, Meyer, in all his activities relating to the establishment of RAU, stressed that RAU was not created in opposition to Wits. In his efforts to secure support from several companies such as SA Breweries and OK Bazaars to make funds available for the establishment of RAU, Meyer in addition approached

⁷¹ UJ/RAU Archive, P.J. Meyer collection, File C1/1, Interview (transcribed) with Dr P.J. Meyer..., p. 1.

⁷² INEG Archive, P.J. Meyer collection, File PV 720/47, Die Taak en Opdrag van die Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit as Grootstadse Afrikaanse Universiteit in die volgende vyf jaar uit die oogpunt van die Afrikaanse gemeenskap van die Rand, Toespraak van P.J. Meyer tydens die akademiese openingsfunksie, 1973-02-26, p. 1.

⁷³ J. Klee, "Die verwesenliking van 'n Afrikanerdroom"..., *New Contree*, 60, 2010, p. 134.

⁷⁴ I. Wilkins and H. Strydom, *The Super Afrikaners*, p. 423.

⁷⁵ *Sunday Times*, 1963-11-10, *The Star*, 1963-11-06, *Die Transvaler*, 1963.10.17, *Dagbreek en Sondagnuus*, 1959-03-15.

⁷⁶ *Sunday Times*, 1963-11-10.

H Koch, the director of Anglo American, and convinced him to support the creation of RAU alongside Wits. He argued that the Chamber of Mines would soon need highly trained professional managers and production specialists skilled in local knowledge. Said professionals would only be trained at universities like RAU. The creation of RAU was therefore not only to promote white Afrikaans speakers' interests, but also in the interests of the economy of South Africa.⁷⁷ Ultimately, the view was that educated Afrikaners could make a substantial and meaningful contribution.

In March 1959, under Meyer's leadership, the committee engaged in discussions with the Transvaal executive committee and the Minister of Education, Arts and Science, JJ Serfontein,⁷⁸ regarding the possible creation of a new Afrikaans university on the Witwatersrand. Serfontein indicated that the project did not form part of the immediate plans of the NP government because provisions for higher education facilities had to be made for non-white communities, and because it would be too expensive.⁷⁹ At the time, Serfontein's reaction effectively nullified any possible government support for the establishment of RAU.

On 5 November 1963, another meeting was held in the *Goudstadse Onderwyskollege* (Goudstad Teachers' Training College) to discuss the possible establishment of an Afrikaans university on the Witwatersrand. This meeting was attended by representatives of Afrikaans business (Sanlam, for example), representatives of local governments including Brakpan, Alberton, Vanderbijlpark, Germiston, as well as representatives of local schools, churches and cultural groupings from the then Southern Transvaal.⁸⁰ The meeting was called to determine the level of support for the creation of an Afrikaans university on the Witwatersrand, and its outcome indicated widespread support. This support would be echoed in newspapers like *Die Transvaler* under the headline, "Burger meester van Stad verwelkom plan" (City Mayor welcomes plan),⁸¹ *The Rand Daily Mail* in an article entitled "Plans for

⁷⁷ UJ/RAU Archive, P.J. Meyer collection, File C1/1, Versoekskrif insake die stigting van 'n Afrikaanse Randse Universiteit, 1963, p. 1.

⁷⁸ Serfontein showed a lively interest in politics from an early age and was, among other things, secretary of the NP's sectional executive in Fauresmith. In 1932 he was elected member of the house of assembly for Edenburg. He was a zealous and competent worker within the NP and he assisted with drawing up the programme of principles for the Herstigte Nasionale Party or Volksparty in 1940. He also served uninterrupted on the Federal Council of the NP. After 1954 he had the following portfolios: Post and Telegraphs (1954-1958), Social Welfare (1954-58, Education, Arts and Science (1958-1961), and Social Welfare and Pensions (1958-1966). C.J. Beyers, *Dictionary of South African biography*, pp. 558-559.

⁷⁹ UJ/RAU Archive, G. van N. Viljoen collection, File C3/1/, Die Stigtingsvergadering..., pp. 1-32. M.A. Beale, "Apartheid goals in the 1960s...", p. 3.

⁸⁰ I. Wilkens and H. Strydom, *The Super Afrikaners*, p. 423.

⁸¹ *Die Transvaler*, 1963-10-19.

University”⁸² and *Dagbreek en Sondagnuus* as “’n Nuwe Universiteit” (A new university).⁸³

Media comments varied – from sceptical opinions in English newspapers regarding the real reason for the establishment of the university – to great optimism in Afrikaans newspapers regarding the possible founding of a long-awaited Afrikaans university in Johannesburg.

Those who took the lead in the university’s creation told the meeting of 5 November 1963 what they had in mind. Meyer, who chaired the meeting, explained that an Afrikaans university on the Witwatersrand was necessary to meet the demands of the time and to prepare white Afrikaans speakers to contribute to the development of South Africa. He argued that the proposed Afrikaans university needed to be a modern institution based on Christian values with the aim of providing Afrikaans tertiary education to white Afrikaans speakers in the context of an increasingly demanding modern world.⁸⁴ It would, moreover, be a university that would equip Afrikaans speakers with the skills to further themselves economically.⁸⁵ The minutes of the meeting reveal that all representatives attending the proceedings were in full support of the founding of an Afrikaans university on the Witwatersrand.⁸⁶

Following the meeting, schools, churches, cultural organisations and municipalities were encouraged to also show their solidarity for the establishment of an Afrikaans university by pledging financial donations.⁸⁷ From the minutes of 25 August 1967 of the Fundraising Committee for the founding of the new university, it is evident that great efforts were made to encourage big business and even government institutions to make donations. They included the SA Reserve Bank, Iscor, SA Breweries, United Tobacco Corporation, OK Bazaars and Rembrandt.⁸⁸ As for municipalities, at least five (Johannesburg, Roodepoort, Krugersdorp, Springs and Randfontein) made donations of more than R100 000.⁸⁹ In a letter addressed to

⁸² *The Rand Daily Mail*, 1963-10-31.

⁸³ *Dagbreek en Sondagnuus*, 1963-11-03.

⁸⁴ UJ/RAU Archive, G. van N. Viljoen collection, File C3/1, Die Stigtingsvergadering..., p. 9.

⁸⁵ UJ/RAU Archive, G. van N. Viljoen collection, File C3/1, Die Stigtingsvergadering..., p. 8.

⁸⁶ UJ/RAU Archive, G. van N. Viljoen collection, File C3/1, Die Stigtingsvergadering..., pp. 10-18.

⁸⁷ UJ/RAU Archive, Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit Ontstaansgeskiedenis, File A11, Brief van J.C. van Tonder, voorsitter van die skoolkomitee van die Randse Afrikaanse Universiteitskomitee aan skoolhoofde van Afrikaans sekondêre skole, 1965-09-30.

⁸⁸ UJ/RAU Archive, Randse Afrikaans Universiteit Versameling, File A34/1, Notule van vergadering van die fondsinsamelingskomitee van die Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit op Vrydag 1967-08-25 in die Rektor se kantoor, pp. 2-3.

⁸⁹ UJ/RAU Archive, RAU-Rapport, 7 (3), 1974, p. 9.

the principals of neighbouring secondary schools, clear guidelines were proposed for the way financial donations would be managed to make sure that the funds were used appropriately.⁹⁰

Private white-managed Afrikaans businesses also donated funds, thus expressing their support for the new university. Sanlam, for example, represented by AD Wassenaar and later by JF Scholtz, made a preliminary donation of R100 000.⁹¹ The managing director of Old Mutual, AFJ van Heerden, contributed, as did the South African Railroads, represented by the managing director, K Loubser.⁹² The Bank of Johannesburg made its first donation of R500 in early 1975. Rand Cold Storage, a company with a long association with RAU, had by early 1975 made a total donation of R12 000. The British multinational corporation Unilever had been supportive of the creation of the new university from 1966 onwards and made another donation of R2000 early in 1975. The French-owned TOTAL SA contributed in the form of literature to encourage the learning and understanding of the cultures of different nations.⁹³ The future university's city of domicile had the Johannesburg City Council making a pledge to the tune of R500 000, which would be paid over a period of five years. This pledge, however, became the centre of controversy when the City Council subsequently hesitated to pay because of the so-called conscience clause debate (see Chapter Four in this regard; an extensive discussion of the matter reveals how the Jewish Board of Deputies, through its influence in the Johannesburg City Council, tried to withhold funding should the founders of the new university fail to include an acceptable conscience clause in the university's constitution).⁹⁴

3.2.5 Government and the UNISA debate

The involvement of the NP government, and specifically that of Senator Jan de Klerk, began when he was approached by the RAU's founding committee with a memorandum outlining the plan for the new institution in the early 1960s.⁹⁵ In the memorandum, the historical need for founding the university was outlined and included statistical data regarding the population

⁹⁰ UJ/RAU Archive, Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit Ontstaansgeskiedenis, File A11, Brief van J.C. van Tonder, voorsitter van die skoolkomitee van die Randse Afrikaanse Universiteitskomitee aan skoolhoofde van Afrikaans sekondêre skole, 1965-09-30.

⁹¹ UJ/RAU Archive, *Die Herout*, 1969-05-02, p. 1.

⁹² UJ/RAU Archive, *RAU-Rapport*, 8 (2), 1975, p. 7.

⁹³ UJ/RAU Archive, *RAU-Rapport*, 8 (1), p. 13.

⁹⁴ P.J. Meyer, *Nog nie ver genoeg nie...*, p. 173.

⁹⁵ UJ/RAU Archive, P.J. Meyer collection, File C1/1, Versoekskrif insake die stigting van 'n Randse Afrikaanse universiteit voorgelê te word op 1963-11-25 aan sy Edele J. de Klerk, Minister van Onderwys, Kuns en Wetenskap, p. 1.

growth of white Afrikaans speakers on the Witwatersrand.⁹⁶ It described the educational potential of such a university and how it would provide in educational and training needs in the government, industrial, commercial and financial sectors of South Africa.⁹⁷ De Klerk's initial response to the memorandum was that, although there was adequate data accompanied by clear arguments supporting the establishment of such a university, the government could not agree to its establishment. The prime reason given was government's more pressing responsibilities in terms of its commitment to providing educational facilities for other population groups in terms of the policy of separate development.

De Klerk proposed that the matter be referred to the Scientific Advice Board for consideration. This board acted as an advisory entity for the government in matters of science and higher education. One of the functions of the board, among others, was to determine the tertiary educational needs of South Africa at the time. By making this proposal, De Klerk, also a member of the AB at the time, effectively sidestepped immediate pressure placed on him by AB members who had strong sentiments concerning the creation of RAU. They seemed to have bluntly refused to think for one moment that the NP government would not support the request.⁹⁸ De Klerk's action also exposed divisions within Afrikaner nationalist circles regarding the needs of white Afrikaans speakers versus the broader national needs as outlined in the policy of separate development.⁹⁹ These divisions were clarified in various newspaper articles published on the matter. In an Afrikaans newspaper article entitled, "Groot meningsverskille" (Major differences of opinion), it was obvious that the need for the establishment of another university in South Africa was at the core of these divisions.¹⁰⁰ The referral of the request for RAU's establishment to the Scientific Advice Board and its conclusions, which in short supported De Klerk's views regarding the policy of separate development and the need for the expansion of existing university facilities, resulted in such increased opposition that the Board decided to propose that the matter be taken up with UNISA. This proposal resulted in an extensive debate on the possible relocation of UNISA from Pretoria to Johannesburg to establish a university for white Afrikaans speakers on the

⁹⁶ UJ/RAU Archive, P.J. Meyer collection, File C1/1, Versoekskrif insake die stigting van 'n Afrikaanse Randse universiteit voorgelê te word op 1963-11-25 aan sy Edele J. de Klerk, Minister van Kuns en Wetenskap, pp. 1-4.

⁹⁷ UJ/RAU Archive, P.J. Meyer collection, File C1/1, Versoekskrif insake die stigting van 'n Afrikaanse Randse Universiteit..., pp. 9-12.

⁹⁸ UJ/RAU Archive, P.J. Meyer collection, File C1/1, Interview (transcribed) with Dr P.J. Meyer..., p. 57;

UJ/RAU University Archive, P.J. Meyer collection, File C1/1, Article in yearbook of RAU, 1970, p. 15.

⁹⁹ M.A. Beale, "Apartheid goals in the 1960s...", Seminar paper delivered at the University of the Witwatersrand on 1995-03-06, pp. 21-24.

¹⁰⁰ *Die Transvaler*, 1963-06-20, also see *Dagbreek en Sondagnuus*, 1963-11-03, *Rand Daily Mail*, 1963-11-07.

Witwatersrand.¹⁰¹ UNISA's decision to decline the suggestion that they move to Johannesburg to establish an Afrikaans university at long last resulted in the government's approval for the creation of a separate new white Afrikaans university on the Witwatersrand.¹⁰²

The AB members who supported the idea of another university in Johannesburg, even if this meant UNISA's relocation, did so because it would mean the establishment of a "ready-made university".¹⁰³ Although this would not be what they originally had in mind, namely a new white Afrikaans-medium university, it would be the next best thing. However, the disdain of the rector of UNISA, Prof SA Pauw for De Klerk's proposal and the way he had dealt with it was the reason why he, like many of his colleagues at UNISA, believed that De Klerk wanted to nullify everything the university had achieved in its illustrious history. According to Pauw, De Klerk simply wanted to respond favourably to Meyer and the committee members who wanted an Afrikaans university for white people on the Witwatersrand.¹⁰⁴ Thus, to Pauw, De Klerk was willing to transform a fully functional and internationally recognised university catering for white and black students into a university for white Afrikaans speakers only.¹⁰⁵ Internal unhappiness with UNISA and its character among members of the AB became evident in Pretoria, for example over the possible allocation of land to UNISA to expand its tertiary activities. It was evident how members of the AB in Johannesburg had mobilised "broeders" in Pretoria to object to the provision of land to UNISA for expansion. This was done to ensure that UNISA could not expand its activities in Pretoria, but should rather move to Johannesburg.¹⁰⁶ The government's subsequent decision to nevertheless establish a new Afrikaans university, after initially opposing the idea, was because there was clear evidence of public support for the university in the broad Afrikaner nationalist movement. They were institutionally supported by business, municipalities, schools and churches, to mention but a few examples. This support was not only reflected in terms of the emotional need to address

¹⁰¹ UJ/RAU Archive, P.J. Meyer collection, File C1/1, Interview (transcribed) with Dr P.J. Meyer..., p. 57, *The Star*, 1963-09-26. (Senator Jan de Klerk was the Minister of Education at the time and he was approached by the founding fathers of RAU in order to assist them in advancing the idea of establishing a new Afrikaans university. He however took a neutral stand on this matter because he believed that the NP government had to give priority to implementing the principles of apartheid in higher education which would mean that more funding had to be provided to the creation of black tertiary institutions).

¹⁰² National Archive (NA), Pretoria: Memo, 102, 40m, File E/23-27 Prime Minister 1910-1978 S114 vol. 1/353, Ref. H8/7A 1966: Departement van Onderwys, Kuns en Wetenskap: Kabinetsmemorie oor die vestiging en stigting van die Randse Afrikaans Universiteit, p. 1.

¹⁰³ *The Star*, 1963-09-26.

¹⁰⁴ UJ/RAU Archive, RAU Establishment history-collection, File A11/1: Interview Prof S.A. Pauw, rector of the University of South Africa by Dr G. Geyer at UNISA, 1983, pp. 1-8.

¹⁰⁵ UJ/RAU Archive, RAU Establishment history collection, File A11/1, Interview, Prof S.A. Pauw..., pp. 7-8.

¹⁰⁶ UJ/RAU Archive, RAU Establishment history collection, File A11/1: Interview, Prof S.A. Pauw..., pp. 9-11.

white Afrikaans ambitions; diverse donors also pledged substantial financial support to have the university created. Finally, the NP government also realised that RAU could play an effective role in the modernising drive and project on which it had embarked.

The creation and establishment history of RAU was characterised by an array of different opinions from a variety of role players. It was also characterised by the involvement of influential individuals, NP government and organisations such as the AB and the FAK. Some of these role players ultimately also influenced the eventual vision and mission statements of RAU.

3.3 RAU's character and role as a white-inspired Afrikaans university

From the discussion above, it is evident that RAU's establishment enjoyed the support of the broader community in the form of schools, churches, businesses and cultural organisations. Those who gave their support did so in terms of donations and participation in debates regarding the location or naming of the new Afrikaans institution.¹⁰⁷ Businesses like Sanlam and Old Mutual, municipalities, schools and churches who made donations insisted that the university should have an Afrikaans character and that it should be based on Christian values. For everyone in the community the establishment of the university was the achievement of a longstanding dream.¹⁰⁸

It was, however, the involvement of Meyer and Viljoen in the founding of RAU that contributed considerably to the university's vision and mission. In *Die Transvaler* of 24 May 1975, under the headline “'n Mylpaal kom môre vir RAU” (RAU to achieve a milestone tomorrow), a news report carried information on the ceremonial opening of the new building complex of RAU. Reference was made to the fact that Meyer would finally witness the realisation of the dream of white Afrikaans speakers on the Witwatersrand, a dream realised and one in which he had actively participated.¹⁰⁹ The editor of *Die Transvaler* emphasised Meyer's involvement as well as the role he had earlier played in the founding of the Goudstad Teachers' Training College.¹¹⁰

RAU's preamble/motto, '*Diens Deur Kennis*' (English version: 'Service Through Knowledge'), not only reflected what RAU stood for; it embodied its vision and mission as

¹⁰⁷ *The Star*, 1966-04-29, *Die Transvaler*, 1963-10-23, *Die Transvaler*, 1965-02-27.

¹⁰⁸ UJ/RAU Archive, RAU Establishment history collection, File A11/1: Letter, W.B. Jansen to P.J. Meyer, 1966-10-11.

¹⁰⁹ INEG Archive, P.J. Meyer collection, File PV 720, Newspaper clippings, *Die Transvaler*, 1975-05-24.

¹¹⁰ *Die Transvaler*, 1966-05-02.

conceptualised originally by Meyer and Viljoen. Viljoen's prime contribution was defining the academic mission and vision of RAU (see Chapter Five in this regard). Meyer, as chairman of the first committee established to create the university, tacitly stipulated what the university stood for¹¹¹ (also freely translated from Afrikaans to English):

Hierdie universiteit (moet) 'n egte Afrikaanse gees en karakter openbaar as hy aan die geskiedenis, tradisies en oogmerke waaruit hy voortgegroei het, getrou wil bly. 'n Eie Afrikaanse karakter is tegelyk 'n Christelik-historiese Afrikaanse karakter. Immers, die Afrikaanse volksgemeenskap se doen en late op alle lewensgebiede wortel sedert sy ontstaan diep in die Christelik-Protestantse geloof en word steeds beoordeel in die lig van die norme en voorskrifte van die heilige skrif as woord van God.

(This University must display a genuine Afrikaans spirit and character if it wants to remain true to the history and traditions from which it has evolved. A typical Afrikaans character is equivalent to a Christian-historical Afrikaans character. As you know, the Afrikaans community's activities on all levels of life and in all walks of life are deeply embedded in the Christian-Protestant faith and are still assessed in the light of the norms and instructions of the Holy Scriptures as the Word of God).

With these words, Meyer summarised the elements that would embody the functioning of the university and develop its academic ethos. These sentiments were echoed by various speakers at the formal opening of RAU in 1968, e.g. by both Viljoen and Diederichs.¹¹²

In planning the university, the first aim was to provide for the academic needs of the Afrikaans community it would serve. The academic quality of the institution had to be in line with local and international academic standards.¹¹³ RAU would be a city university that would cater for the urban white Afrikaans speaker who not so long ago had been rooted in the rural districts. The university would actively participate in the modernising drive to empower and train white Afrikaans speakers to take their place in South African society.¹¹⁴ RAU, according to Meyer, needed to be a “university from our land for our land, a university of our time for our time”.¹¹⁵ In keeping with its establishment history, it had to ensure that the white Afrikaans speakers' language, culture, identity and spirit were not only maintained but also promoted in a spirit of white Afrikaans unity.¹¹⁶ For this purpose, Meyer drafted a document entitled: ‘*Universitas – Op weg na die geheel as eenheid*’ (“Universitas – On the way to

¹¹¹ UJ library, *Gedenkalbum van die opening van die R.A.U.*, 1968-02-24, Speech by Dr P.J. Meyer, p. 13.

¹¹² UJ library, *Gedenkalbum van die opening van die R.A.U.*, 1968-02-24, Speech by Meyer, Viljoen and Diederichs, pp. 6-23.

¹¹³ UJ/RAU Archive, P.J. Meyer collection: File C1/1: Die beplanning van die Randse Afrikaans Universiteit, pp. 1-6.

¹¹⁴ UJ/RAU Archive, P.J. Meyer collection: File C1/1: Die beplanning van die Randse Afrikaans Universiteit, pp. 8-10.

¹¹⁵ UJ/RAU Archive, P.J. Meyer collection: File C1/1: Die beplanning van die Randse Afrikaans Universiteit, p. 6.

¹¹⁶ UJ/RAU Archive, P.J. Meyer collection: File C1/1: Die beplanning van die Randse Afrikaans Universiteit, pp. 10-14.

entirety as unity”). In this document, he analysed RAU’s role in realising the development into modernity of white Afrikaans-speaking students, incorporating their history, language, religion and culture into a unified identity. To Meyer’s mind, this could only be accomplished through the understanding of the unity between the students, researchers and lecturers representing the university. Through its different disciplines, RAU would develop white Afrikaans students, and their history, language, religion and culture, into unity of the *volk*.¹¹⁷

For Meyer, the new university, through its primary task of providing university education in Afrikaans, would produce an “ideal type of Afrikaner”,¹¹⁸ a white Afrikaans speaker who would not forget his or her roots, but who would be enriched in terms of his or her level of education, social mobility, skills and modern outlook.¹¹⁹ Similarly, as far as Viljoen was concerned, RAU would be a “volksgebonde en ’n streeksgerigte universiteit”¹²⁰ (a nation-bound and regional-oriented university). Another important element that would further enhance and develop the white Afrikaans student would be that the institution would provide a Christian-National educational environment to protect the white Afrikaans student from detrimental liberal forces, but at the same time enable him or her to survive in the developing modern world.¹²¹

Through its mission, of *Service Through Knowledge* as mentioned earlier, RAU had to give direction to white Afrikaans-speaking students. It had to prepare students for a specific career through proper career guidance and ongoing teaching. It not only had to prepare the white Afrikaans student but, through this preparation, had to provide a service to the broader community. It needed to make provision for the immediate needs of the student, community and country, yet it also had to invest in long-term planning and leadership.¹²² RAU, in the most important instance, had to academically and intellectually serve the country in

¹¹⁷ UJ/RAU Archive, P.J. Meyer collection, File C1/6: Universitas – op weg na die geheel as eenheid, pp. 1-4.

¹¹⁸ INEG Archive, P.J. Meyer collection, File PV 720/47: Die taak en opdrag van die Randse Afrikaans Universiteit as grootstadse Afrikaanse universiteit in die volgende vyf jaar uit die oogpunt van die Afrikaanse gemeenskap van die Rand, Akademiese openingsfunksie; 1973-02-26, p. 2.

¹¹⁹ INEG Archive, P.J. Meyer collection, File PV 720/47: Die taak en opdrag van die Randse Afrikaans Universiteit..., p. 2.

¹²⁰ UJ/RAU Archive, J. Cronje collection, File A36/4: Die relevantheid van die universiteit, Speech by Viljoen during the academic opening in the City hall on 1974-03-04, p. 2.

¹²¹ Die Erfenisstigting Archive, File AB 12/91-3/72/3 AB, AB: Die Grondslag van ons strewe, pp. 1-2.

¹²² J.G. Garbers, “Diens deur Kennis” in B. Louw and F. van Rensburg, *Bestendige binnevuur: Perspektiewe op Gerrit Viljoen by geleentheid van sy Een en Sewentigste Verjaarsdag op 1997-09-11*, p. 78.

addressing and researching national issues and provide professional expertise to encourage sustainable solutions.¹²³

3.4 Conclusion

RAU's creation and establishment occurred over an extended period and was characterised by the involvement of a broad Afrikaans movement. This movement included influential individuals like Meyer and Viljoen, who represented the views of the AB and the FAK, and the NP government as represented by De Klerk and Schoeman.¹²⁴ Businesses like Sanlam and Old Mutual were also active in the movement, and municipalities from especially the Witwatersrand area prominently featured. Schools and churches contributed by means of debates, donations and participation. The involvement of different role players became increasingly evident during various stages of the evolving history of RAU, a history characterised by differences amongst white Afrikaans speakers and nationalists over the need for the creation and establishment of yet another Afrikaans university, its financing and where it should be located.¹²⁵ RAU was created not only to enhance the white Afrikaans speaker's identity, but also to provide education with knowledge viewed as empowerment, and of significant importance for the survival of the white Afrikaans speaker in an ever-developing and ever-changing South Africa and modern world.

To the minds of the key role players, the educational needs of the white Afrikaans speaker in the context of the Witwatersrand, and against South Africa's broader history, provided adequate motivation for the establishment of the RAU, although not all stakeholders agreed with this view from the outset. However, the establishment of the AB and the creation of the FAK had instituted a national drive for the upliftment and development of the white Afrikaans speaker that would later become known as the national project, driven by the NP government that came to power in 1948.¹²⁶ They wanted to modernise the white Afrikaans speaker. In this regard Meyer – an influential individual who had links with the AB, NP government and cultural organisations such as the FAK – played a major role in the creation. For Meyer, the founding of RAU would be significant for raising the socio-economic status

¹²³ J.G. Garbers, "Diens deur Kennis" in B. Louw and F. van Rensburg, *Bestendige binnevuur ...*, p. 79.

¹²⁴ INEG Archive, Bloemfontein, P.J. Meyer collection, File PV 720, Roeping en taak van die Afrikaanse kultuurorganisasie: 'n Studiestuk, pp. 1-4.

¹²⁵ G. Verhoef, The South African Economy in the Twentieth Century in F. Pretorius (ed.) *A History of South Africa; from the distant past to the present day* (Protea Book House, Pretoria, 2014), p. 460.

¹²⁶ UJ/RAU Archive, P.J. Meyer-collection, File C1, Die Beplanning van die Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit, p. 3.

of the white Afrikaans speaker, specifically on the Witwatersrand. Through RAU, the white Afrikaans speaker's culture, language, religion and identity would not only be maintained, but would also be enhanced in the spirit of the modernising project of the NP government. Meyer was later assisted by Viljoen, who became the first rector of RAU and who developed its clear academic mission and vision based on the framework that Meyer had previously provided with a view to what RAU should represent. Though the NP aimed at uplifting the whites, they were initially reluctant to spearhead RAU's establishment, citing more important and pressing national projects dictated by the policy of separate development, revealed underlying differences among nationalists over the importance of local versus national issues. UNISA's hesitancy to become a white Afrikaans university in Johannesburg further revealed differences amongst nationalists regarding higher educational needs in the national context.¹²⁷

In conclusion, RAU's motto *Diens deur Kennis* (Service through Knowledge) presented what the founding members and role players had envisaged for the founding of the institution for which Meyer and Viljoen made considerable individual contributions. RAU eventually, due to their engagements, became a place of education for the working-class, created by the white Afrikaans speaker for the white Afrikaans speaker. It would be a monument representing the rich but also featuring a complex history of a group requiring the upliftment and development via sound education ensconced by culture, language and religion. Through knowledge, white Afrikaans speakers could empower themselves and maintain a strong identity while taking their enhanced place in South African society. What follows in Chapter Four is a discussion of the political and cultural obstacles the founders encountered in the founding of RAU.

¹²⁷ *Die Transvaler*, 1963-06-20, also see *Dagbreek en Sondagnuus*, 1963-11-03, *Rand Daily Mail*, 1963-11-07.

Chapter 4

Political and cultural obstacles to the establishment of RAU

4.1 Introduction

Internationally, as discussed in Chapter Two, the 1960s and early 1970s were notable for the proliferation of new universities.¹ This was mostly due to political, social and economic influences. Increased economic needs coupled with technological advancement, especially after World War II, contributed substantially to the establishment of universities globally.² In South Africa this decade also witnessed the founding of two universities, namely UPE and RAU.³ Though their founding histories differ, their origins share some commonalities: Firstly, both were established through the efforts of the broader white Afrikaans nationalist movement rather than the NP government. Secondly, both were characterised by obstacles that had to be overcome before they could be established as universities.⁴

In the case of RAU, these obstacles may be defined in terms of: the actions of ethnic English and Jewish business communities; the NP government's responses; the political opposition of the Johannesburg City Council to the plan; the geographical location of RAU; the reaction of the general public; and the issue of the so-called "conscience clause". A study of how the founding pioneers overcame these obstacles provides valuable insights into how differences of opinion among white Afrikaans speakers were dealt with and the determination the founders demonstrated by nevertheless going ahead with the establishment of the university. Furthermore, the study emphasises how those who supported the university's creation envisaged its role to improve tertiary education for the upliftment and equipping of specifically the white Afrikaans speakers on the Witwatersrand. While interviews with contemporary objectors to the establishment of the university would have been valuable, it was not possible. It transpired that most people directly involved with the plans for the

¹ W. Peters, "(Rand Afrikaans) University of Johannesburg, Kingsway Campus", *Journal of the South African Institute of Architects South Africa*, 2011, p. 2, also see Chapter 2 in this regard.

² A. Smith and F. Webster, *The postmodern university; contested visions of higher education in society* (SRHE and Open University Press, London, 1997), pp. 2-4.

³ UJ/RAU Archive, Johannesburg, P.J. Meyer collection, File C1/6, Speech by Dr P.J. Meyer during Republic day celebrations in Bloemfontein on 1965-05-07, p. 3.

⁴ UJ/RAU Archive, P.J. Meyer collection, File C1/1, Ons Suid-Afrikaanse Universiteit en Universiteitskolleges: 'n ontleding, author unknown, 1963-11., pp. 8-10. M.A. Beale, *Apartheid and university education, 1948-1970* (PhD, University of the Witwatersrand, 1998), pp. 289-299.

university were deceased. Nonetheless, a discussion of the obstacles to be overcome concerning the establishment of the university is necessary to help those involved to fully understand the project intended to modernise white Afrikaans-speaking students as spearheaded by the NP government from the 1960s onwards.

RAU's creation proved problematic from the outset. In a 1959 interview, the then minister of education, JJ Serfontein, described the creation of an Afrikaans university as unlikely because the NP government had prioritised the creation of black colleges and universities in line with its policy of separate development.⁵ Over and above the fact that there appeared to be unwillingness on the part of the NP government to have an Afrikaans university created, those in favour of the new university also had to deal with negative perceptions of the predominantly English-speaking portion of the white population on the Witwatersrand. They simply did not see the need for a new Afrikaans university. One perception, for example, was that RAU was a strategy to create a political front against the "liberal" influence of Wits. In the media this view was articulated as follows:⁶

It can now be disclosed that the decision to 'break Wits' was taken as far back as 1953 by an influential group of Broederbonders...the reason for the new university is mainly political (and) it is understood that the campaign against Wits will be fought on both political and financial grounds.

This sensationally charged *Sunday Times* article, appearing five years before RAU's official opening in 1968, sheds light on the opinion of but one English newspaper on the topic of the founding of RAU. It was a distinct negative response to the establishment of an Afrikaans university in Johannesburg. Similar opinions were also expressed by the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits), some Afrikaans academics and the public. In academic circles, some felt that yet another tertiary institution was unnecessary and would put a strain on the already limited financial resources allocated to South African universities. In another *Sunday Times* article, on 17 November 1963, the university's founding was the point of discussion yet again, and characterised by divergent views:⁷

The Broeders (are) sharply divided over the proposed new "anti-liberal" Afrikaans University for the Witwatersrand. While one section is pushing for its establishment, certain other

⁵ UJ library, *Gedenkalbum van die opening van die R.A.U. Johannesburg*, 1968-02-24, Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit, (1968) "Bekroning van 'n groeiproces: Historiese terugblik", pp. 35-36.

⁶ *Sunday Times*, 1963-11-10.

⁷ *Sunday Times*, 1963-11-17.

Broeders, most of whom are connected with Potchefstroom and Pretoria Universities, strongly opposed the whole idea.

It is apparent that there were certain forces at play in the English-speaking community trying to split pro-Afrikaans tertiary institutions and members of that academic fraternity. In this study, it is important to note these stated opinions. They enable the reader to come to a more comprehensive understanding of the obstacles that RAU's founders encountered. Research into obstacles and how they were overcome, demonstrates the RAU's founders' need and determination to ensure that white Afrikaans speakers succeeded in asserting themselves on the English- and Jewish-controlled Witwatersrand.

RAU was officially opened on 12 February 1968. At the first opening ceremony, the new students and parents and the first rector, Prof G van N Viljoen, proudly reflected on the symbolism of the temporary buildings used to accommodate the new university. He stated that the buildings, although old and in need of repair, nevertheless symbolised new beginnings. Moreover, they were built on strong foundations, like the foundations of the dream to establish the new university.⁸ In what was then called the Skilpaddop-saal of the Braamfontein campus, a building belonging to South African Breweries,⁹ Viljoen described the occasion as an important day for white Afrikaans speakers or, to use his term, 'Afrikaners'. The occasion heralded the beginnings of the first Afrikaans university on the Witwatersrand and therefore a new future. Viljoen described the difficult history of Afrikaners in Johannesburg and on the Witwatersrand and how they had struggled for many years to have their language recognised and to secure proper education for their children.¹⁰ The opening of the new university, he said, marked the end of the days in which Afrikaners were regarded as mere labourers, as only good enough to be hewers of wood and drawers of water. No longer would Afrikaners be ashamed to speak their own language openly for fear of being ridiculed by those unsympathetic to their hard-won position. According to Viljoen, the creation of RAU ensured that the Afrikaner would be able to take his or her rightful place on the Witwatersrand, not merely as labourers, but as fully qualified professionals.¹¹

⁸ UJ library, *Gedenkalbum van die opening van die R.A.U.*, 1968-02-24, "Verwelkoming van ouers van studente, toespraak deur Prof G. van N Viljoen", p. 45.

⁹ J.C. van der Walt, *Gerrit Viljoen se RAU: Toe en Vandag* in B. Louw and F. van Rensburg, *Bestendige binnevuur; perspektiewe op Gerrit Viljoen by geleentheid van sy een en sewentigste verjaarsdag op 1997-09-11* (Tafelberg-uitgewers Beperk, Kaapstad, 1997), p. 78.

¹⁰ UJ Library, *Gedenkalbum van die opening van die R.A.U.*, 1968-02-24, "Verwelkoming van ouers ...", p. 45.

¹¹ UJ library, *Gedenkalbum van die opening van die R.A.U.*, 1968-02-24, "Verwelkoming van ouers ...", p. 66.

It follows then that not only was the linguistic and cultural character of RAU of crucial importance, but it was equally essential that white Afrikaans students who attended the university could take their rightful place in the industrial heartland of South Africa and beyond. RAU was therefore conceived as more than just a new Afrikaans university. It symbolised the upliftment, development, rise and modernisation of white Afrikaans speakers on the Witwatersrand. It was also a manifestation of an urban Afrikaner cultural consciousness that stemmed from the political control of the country since 1948. The university, in South Africa's largest city, would indeed provide its Afrikaans students with a route out of a "backward and shameful" existence towards a bright new future in which the university would be a symbol of dignity and the vehicle for future success and high achievement standards. It also implied the emergence of a white Afrikaner urban middle class with a strong demand for higher educational opportunities.

Therefore, the founding history of RAU is significant because it developed within the framework of the concurrent growth and development of a white Afrikaner identity on the Witwatersrand. RAU was not established by the NP government to address the increasing numbers and needs of the white Afrikaans-speaking students *per se*; instead, it was established by a broad group of dedicated Afrikaans speakers to empower and modernise the community of which they formed an intrinsic part.

The section to follow analyses the major obstacles RAU's founders encountered and the strategies they adopted to find effective solutions for overcoming said obstacles.

4.2 Encountering and overcoming obstacles, 1955-1968

A major stumbling block in the creation of another tertiary institution on the Witwatersrand was initially the perception or fear that there might be an insufficient number of prospective students. This caused a debate on whether another university would in fact be feasible for the Witwatersrand. An article in *Die Transvaler* raised questions such as whether there would be a large enough number of students to justify yet another Afrikaans university, and how the creation of the university might negatively affect other universities' growth in, for example, Pretoria or Potchefstroom.¹² The debate intensified, resulting in disagreement on the matter, especially amongst white Afrikaans speakers themselves. The *Sunday Times* even reported on

¹² *Die Transvaler*, 1963-06-20.

rifts on the plan amongst the Afrikaner elite – specifically Boerderbond members.¹³ The focus of the debate soon shifted as it became evident that the population of white Afrikaans speakers was in a rapid upward spiral on the Rand. This upward spiral, which would summarily eliminate the fear of inadequate student numbers, is discussed in the next paragraph.

The growth and the accompanying disadvantaged position of the Afrikaners prompted many of their leaders on the Witwatersrand to address this disadvantage by focusing on the need for educational opportunities. Leaders began to engage in talks to take action by developing strategies for the benefit of prospective Afrikaans students.¹⁴ Memories were revived of disadvantaged political, economic and social circumstances of white Afrikaners since the 1910s on the Witwatersrand. It became a decisive argument in the favour of the establishment of RAU.¹⁵ Between the late 1910s and the early 1920s, increasing numbers of poor whites (mostly Afrikaners ruined and devastated by the South African War [1899-1902] and its aftermath) moved to the Witwatersrand in search of employment and for survival – a migration that further increased and escalated during the depression years (1930-1933).¹⁶ It is important to note that, at the start of the twentieth century, less than 10 percent of the Afrikaner population in South Africa lived in urban areas. This percentage increased for a variety of reasons – specifically economic ones – from 29 percent in 1911 to 41 percent in 1926.¹⁷ In 1960, the percentage of the white Afrikaner population living in the country's cities had increased to 75 percent. In a well-researched study by RAU historians, it was later pointed out that urban white Afrikaners's population increased 60 percent from 1936 to 1960, while their numbers on the Witwatersrand increased by 167 percent.¹⁸ Important to note is that the numbers of white Afrikaans speakers therefore not only increased because they moved to the Witwatersrand in search of employment, but also increased owing to a general increase in their birth rate.

¹³ *Sunday Times*, 1963-01-17.

¹⁴ UJ/RAU Archive, P.J. Meyer collection, File C 1/1, The planning of the Rand Afrikaans University, Johannesburg, 1968, p. 1.

¹⁵ UJ/RAU Archive, P.J. Meyer collection, File C1/1, The planning of the Rand Afrikaans University, Johannesburg, 1968, p. 3.

¹⁶ E.L.P. Stals *et al.*, *Afrikaners in die Goudstad, deel 2 1924-1961* (HAUM Opvoedkundige Uitgewery, Pretoria, 1986), pp. 4-5.

¹⁷ E.L.P. Stals *et al.*, *Afrikaners in die Goudstad, deel 2 1924-1961*, p. 10.

¹⁸ E.L.P. Stals *et al.*, *Afrikaners in die Goudstad, deel 2 1924-1961*, p. 11.

The population increase was a dynamic factor contributing to the increase of white Afrikaans-speaking pupils at primary school level, and the establishment of the first Afrikaans high schools such as the Hoërskool Voortrekker, Hoërskool Helpmekaar and Hoërskool Monument. By 1951, it was therefore clear that the need for education to white Afrikaans children and students on the Witwatersrand was gaining ground due to the rapid increase in Afrikaans primary and high schools. The number of white Afrikaans school children increased from 39 299 in 1941 to 54 821 in 1951.¹⁹ By the late 1950s, the increase in the establishment of Afrikaans schools in Johannesburg provided adequate student numbers for tertiary education. This was a powerful factor in favour of the establishment of tertiary Afrikaans educational facilities for white Afrikaans speakers on the Witwatersrand. The group's population growth was also reflected in an increase in the number of congregations of the Afrikaans Christian religious denominations. Afrikaans churches were instrumental in providing much needed support to this group living in the Witwatersrand in matters of social welfare and economic support from the state. Indeed, by the early 1960s, more than 330 000 white Afrikaans speakers had settled on the Witwatersrand. The Afrikaans media pointed out that the group's numerical increase in numbers was responsible for the establishment in February 1961 of the Goudstadse Onderwyskollege in Johannesburg and that it would most certainly also contribute to the demand for the establishment of an exclusively white Afrikaans university.²⁰ In 1951, the number of Afrikaans primary schools had increased to 97 and high schools to 15. By 1962, these numbers had increased even further to 105 primary and 29 high schools. By the 1960s, the available educational statistical profile convinced the Transvaal educational authorities to agree to the establishment of the Goudstadse Onderwyskollege, which opened its doors in the educational sphere of the city of Johannesburg. The college, however, only provided training for students to become teachers.²¹ White Afrikaans speakers were fully aware that they simply had to be trained in different professional fields to secure their social and economic position on the Witwatersrand.

The rapid implementation of plans to establish the Goudstadse Onderwyskollege strengthened the drive for the creation of a white Afrikaans university in the city. The original notion to create an Afrikaans university on the Rand began to strengthen when a

¹⁹ E.L.P. Stals *et al.*, *Afrikaners in die Goudstad, Deel 2 1924-1961*, p. 136.

²⁰ *Die Transvaler*, 1962-03-02.

²¹ UJ/RAU Archive, P.J. Meyer collection, File C 1/1, Request for the establishment of the Rand Afrikaans University, p. 1.

subcommittee of the coordinating committee for Afrikaans Cultural Organisations, responsible for education in Johannesburg, was formed in 1955. Under Meyer's chairmanship and H Roux as the secretary, the process of planning started for the establishment of an Afrikaans university on the Witwatersrand.²² From the outset it was clear that the new university would be created with the prime objective of improving the educational, social and economic position of white Afrikaans speakers on the Witwatersrand.²³ In a memorandum compiled by the committee and sent to the then minister of education, arts and culture, Senator J De Klerk on 12 March 1959, the plan was clearly outlined. According to the founders, the university had to contribute to the educational and economic development of white Afrikaans speakers on the Witwatersrand but it also had to train, mould and prepare future Afrikaans-speaking leaders to ensure the development and cultural autonomy of the group.²⁴

The creation of the new university was therefore more than the fulfilment of a longstanding dream of white Afrikaans speakers on the Witwatersrand; it was to also serve as Afrikaans speakers' first stepping stone towards making their mark at different levels of society, both in the local and international arena. The university would be created to symbolise white Afrikaans speakers' rise from (what was perceived as) the ashes of oppression (in the aftermath of the South African War, the British scorched-earth policy, and their subsequent struggle for survival) evident from their history in the 20th century. The objective was to elevate white Afrikaners to the status of being modern and an elevated group in society. Viljoen clearly envisaged the university as a monument for future generations, symbolising the advancement of the Afrikaans language, culture and identity and ensuring that white Afrikaans speakers would in future be able to fully contribute to the general development of South Africa.²⁵ To achieve this, however, the founders first had to overcome obstacles obstructing the way to the founding of the university.

²² Meyer, P.J., *Nog nie ver genoeg nie: 'n persoonlike rekenskap van vyftig jaar georganiseerde Afrikanerskap* (Perskor, Johannesburg, 1984), p. 166.

²³ HFA, File nr. AB 12/285 nr. 3/59: Education, a memorandum compiled by the investigation committee to be handed to the Honourable Minister of Education, Arts and Science on 1959-04-13 in Cape Town, p. 1.

²⁴ HFA, File nr. AB 12/285 nr. 3/59: Education, a memorandum compiled by the investigation committee to be handed to the Honourable Minister of Education, Arts and Science on 1959-04-13 in Cape Town, p. 1.

²⁵ UJ library, *Gedenkalbum van die opening van die R.A.U.*, 1968-02-24, "Verwelkoming van voltydse studente", p. 66.

4.2.1 English and Jewish business sentiments towards the establishment of RAU

The first obstacle to the creation and establishment of RAU was the resistance to the university expressed by influential members of the ethnic English and Jewish business communities. Their objections focused mainly on two aspects. Firstly, there were concerns about the loss of land belonging to the Johannesburg Country Club, land that would be incorporated along with existing land set aside as the development site of the university's campus and buildings. Secondly there were reservations about a so-called "conscience clause" (see section 4.2.6).

4.2.1.1 Land loss – The Johannesburg Country Club

The R.A.U.C. (Randse Afrikaanse University Committee) chose the upper-middle class Johannesburg suburb of Auckland Park as the ideal location for the planned university. This involved securing in addition part of the old golf course from the Johannesburg Country Club. The property belonged to the English Business and Jewish Business Chamber. There was a strong possibility of resistance to relinquishing land for a new white Afrikaans university. Many Auckland Park residents also feared that private properties would be expropriated and incorporated into the grounds of the new university.²⁶ The English and Jewish Business Chamber's ownership of the land did not initially raise concerns among the leadership of the planners of the future RAU. Yet, the plan created a conundrum that contributed to public resistance to the proposed university. The anti-RAU sentiments were prevalent in the city's English and Jewish Business Chamber. Press attention to the "question of terrain" furthermore contributed to the reluctance of the country club management to agree to make available land at the disposal of the new proposed university.

According to PJ Meyer, this publicity resulted in the chairman of the management council of the golf club inviting him to his office. The chairman informed him that, although they did not condone the creation of the university, the English and Jewish Business Chamber could no longer, on political grounds, refuse to make the land available for the construction of the university. They were, however, in an apparent predicament, because they were not able to openly make the land available or sell it to the R.A.U.C. They argued that if they did so, the

²⁶ *Dagbreek en Sondagnuus*, 1965-11-07.

press would interpret it as the Johannesburg Country Club's management being in favour of the construction of a new Afrikaans university on the Witwatersrand. Therefore, the management of the golf club proposed that the land be expropriated by the government. However, according to Meyer the land was never expropriated because the objections of the management committee were based on technicalities and because the R.A.U.C. ultimately had the support of the management committee to simply take the land.²⁷

In his autobiography, '*Nog nie ver genoeg nie*', Meyer indicated that the land in question belonged to the Johannesburg Country Club and was obtained through the process of expropriation. However, during an interview much later, he categorically stated that it never happened, because it would have upset the English and Jewish businessmen. Suspicion therefore arose that the land was obtained through an exchange transaction – the same way in which the SABC obtained land when it appropriated a piece of the old Auckland Park racetrack. This land was initially used by the South African Defence Force and the Police Service. Later it was handed over to RAU. The university's management, in turn, exchanged it with the SABC.²⁸ These behind-the-scene transactions meant that, although the English and the Jewish Business Chambers, supported by the English press, were against the university's construction, it participated in the transaction because it realised that the university's establishment was inevitable and that their chamber was unable to prevent the founding of RAU from taking place. With this obstacle removed, the founders had to face their next stumbling block.

4.2.2 NP-government's reluctance to support the establishment of RAU

In an interview on 4 July 1983, Meyer, one of the key role players in RAU's creation, made it clear that RAU founders' major obstacle in Johannesburg was the NP government. It is important to focus again on the role of the government due to its initial resistance to the creation of the university. At the time, the NP government had its focus on providing tertiary institutions for black, Indian and coloured students in accordance with the apartheid policy of

²⁷ UJ/RAU Archive, P.J. Meyer collection, File C1/1, Interview (transcribed) with Dr P.J. Meyer on 1983.7.4 on his plot "Halfpad" in Witpoortjie 81 by Mr. Jan Cronjé, Leader of the archival project of RAU and from 1967-05-01 to the end of 1981 Communications Manager of RAU, pp. 60-61.

²⁸ P.J. Meyer, *Nog nie ver genoeg nie*, p. 177.

separate development. The government also believed that, instead of building new institutions, existing white Afrikaans university facilities should instead be expanded.²⁹

The NP government's resistance was therefore an initial stumbling block to the founding of the university, and many white Afrikaans speaking nationalists were deeply disappointed. According to Meyer, it was difficult to understand why politicians like Dr HF Verwoerd and the minister, De Klerk, who was fully acquainted with the heart, mind and circumstances of the average white Afrikaans speaker, refrained from supporting the initiative right from the start. Meyer, however, understood that the final decision to establish the new university indeed rested with the government.³⁰ In this context and in the light of accepted government procedures, the matter was referred to the Scientific Advisory Council. The council expressed the opinion that there was neither adequate reason nor urgency to support the establishment of a new Afrikaans university when the government required resources to establish new black universities which, according to the council, the government considered to be its main priority.³¹ Meyer stated that the Scientific Advisory Council was moreover of the opinion that existing tertiary institutions should be adapted and extended to meet the needs of tertiary education in South Africa.³²

The council's decision was unacceptable to the founding committee members that included Meyer, H Roux, JJP du Toit, JJ van Tonder, PJ Hattingh, J De Bruyn, JP van der Spuy, GJF Visser, PG Carstens, E Cuyler and P van Vuuren. These men believed that the matter needed to be discussed further before re-submission for government approval. Owing to constant pressure from the founding committee, the Scientific Advisory Council proposed that the matter be taken up with the council of UNISA. This was proposed because the government planned to change the purely correspondence-function of UNISA and transform the institution into a residential university. Through opening negotiations with UNISA's council, it was hoped that the university could be moved to Johannesburg to establish a white Afrikaans university on the Witwatersrand. UNISA, it was proposed, would become the established university needed in Johannesburg to cancel out the "unhealthy influences of

²⁹ UJ/RAU Archive, P.J. Meyer collection, File C1/1, Interview (transcribed) with Dr P.J. Meyer, p. 57.

³⁰ UJ/RAU Archive, RAU - Establishment history - collection, File A11/1 letter of P.J. Meyer to Minister J de Klerk, 1965-01-18.

³¹ UJ/RAU Archive, P.J. Meyer collection, File C1/1, Interview (transcribed) with Dr P.J. Meyer, p. 57.

³² UJ/RAU University Archive, P.J. Meyer collection, File C1/1, Interview (transcribed) with Dr P.J. Meyer, p. 57.

Wits”.³³ For more see “Geographical location” (see section 4.2.4. page 84). The aforementioned actions of the government at the time represented a stumbling block in the establishment of RAU.

4.2.3. The political opposition of the Johannesburg municipality

The difficulties the founders of RAU experienced in securing the support of the NP government were aggravated by the Johannesburg controlled United Party municipality and some members of the opposition. The municipality but more specifically the city planners did not oppose the establishment of the university *per se*, but expressed concerns about large quantities of land actually required for housing; to some the physical location of the RAU was a matter of concern.³⁴ The municipality’s opposition was based primarily on two arguments, namely the proposal that the new university be built on land including, for example, a potential site at Bruma or at Jan van Riebeeck Park. (These sites were negotiated while discussions on the question of whether UNISA would be moved to Pretoria continued.) The Jan van Riebeeck Park site, for example, was problematic because many believed that the site should be preserved and developed as an open, green space (a rarity in the city of Johannesburg)³⁵ pointing to the environmental concerns that were often raised when the university’s setting was debated, especially by the residents’ associations of Auckland Park and Rossmore.³⁶ The second point of opposition related to the fact that the Johannesburg municipality’s officials (council members) were primarily UP (United Party) members.³⁷ Although they could not really object on political grounds³⁸ to the creation of a new white Afrikaans university they did, however, try to prolong the process by “withholding” promised financial support for its establishment. This strategy was evident in the debacle of a promised R500 000 donation towards the construction of the university and the inclusion of the

³³ *Sunday Times*, 1965-06-20.

³⁴ UJ/RAU Archive, J.B.Z. Louw collection, File A128/1, Copy of letter from Town Clerk, Johannesburg City Council – Mr B. Porter.

³⁵ UJ/RAU Archive, J.B.Z. Louw collection, File A128/1, Johannesburg City Council: Report of the Management Committee, Land for the University of South Africa, p. 1.

³⁶ UJ/RAU Archive, J.B.Z. Louw collection, File A128/1, Johannesburg City Council: Report of the Management Committee, Land for the University of South Africa, p. 1, *Dagbreek en Sondagnuus*, 1965-10-17.

³⁷ UJ/RAU Archive, P.J. Meyer-collection, File C1/1, Interview (transcribed) with Dr P.J. Meyer on 1983-07-04 on his plot “Halfpad” in Witpoortjie 81 by Mr Jan Cronjé, Leader of the archival project of RAU and from 1967-05-01 to the end of 1981 Communications Manager of RAU, pp. 60-62.

³⁸ UJ/RAU University Archive, J.B.Z. Louw collection, File A128/1, Copy of letter from Town Clerk, Johannesburg City Council – Mr B. Porter.

“conscience clause” in the legislation regarding the founding of the new university (See further discussion of this matter in the section entitled “Conscience clause”).

4.2.4 Space as a point of contestation

4.2.4.1 The geographical location of RAU

RAU’s geographical location presented numerous obstacles/objections because the setting of an Afrikaans university on the Rand was not only of political, economic and social importance, but also symbolically significant. The process of establishment was therefore characterised by the involvement of municipalities, businesses, communities and even individuals. This involvement, coupled with the prolonged negotiations between RAU’s founding fathers and the UNISA management regarding the relocation of UNISA, contributed to the drawn-out process regarding the final establishment of the university on the Witwatersrand. Many involved in the establishment of the proposed new institution believed that an Afrikaans university on the Rand could be realised through the relocation of UNISA. These negotiations failed, however, resulting in the need to identify and obtain suitable land for the actual physical construction of the university campus. This section discusses the events pertaining to the proposed relocation of UNISA from Pretoria to Johannesburg. It also examines the process of identifying adequate land for the physical location of the university, which took place once it became evident that UNISA would not be relocated.

4.2.4.2 A “Ready-made university”: Relocating UNISA?

After the establishment and opening of the *Goudstadse Onderwyskollege* in February 1961, aspirations for the establishment of a white Afrikaans university in Johannesburg gained momentum.³⁹ According to UNISA rector, Prof S Pauw, these aspirations were fuelled by his suggestion to Meyer in the mid-1950s that UNISA could assist in the creation of a new university. However, Pauw never anticipated UNISA’s relocation to Johannesburg. Instead, he imagined simply expanding UNISA. According to Pauw, Meyer was so enthusiastic about the prospect of the possible move of UNISA to Johannesburg that he even took the matter up with Advocate BJ Vorster, the then deputy-minister of education. Vorster, in stark contrast to

³⁹ D. Prinsloo, “Dr Piet Meyer in Johannesburg, 1936-1984”, *Historia*, 32 (1), 1987, p. 52.

Serfontein (the minister of education) and the NP government, expressed his support for the idea.⁴⁰ This suggests that there were divergent points of view within the NP cabinet of the day on the issue of establishing another white Afrikaans university.

In January 1962 Meyer took the matter further by requesting De Klerk to give his unofficial approval for the idea to move UNISA from Pretoria to Johannesburg.⁴¹ Meyer argued that it would be in line with the NP government policy on tertiary education at the time because it would not entail the establishment of an entirely new university, but rather the expansion of an existing university to meet the tertiary education needs of white Afrikaans speakers in Johannesburg and environs.⁴² According to Meyer, it would also address the deeply felt need of white Afrikaans speakers to have their own university on the Witwatersrand. As Meyer pointed out, Pauw initially supported the idea because he interpreted it as a plan for the extension of UNISA into Johannesburg.⁴³ Pauw, however, retracted his support in September 1962 after a confidential meeting with De Klerk, E Cuyler and P van Vuuren. At that stage it became evident that the move would change the firmly established character of UNISA from a dual-medium university, catering also for non-white students, to a purely white Afrikaans residential university in Johannesburg.⁴⁴

In October 1962, De Klerk requested a confidential investigation into the financial and infrastructural implications of moving UNISA from Pretoria to Johannesburg. Following this, a small committee was appointed, consisting of JA Erasmus, G Nieuwoudt and A Willemse. They were all attached to the Department of Education.⁴⁵ The committee had to investigate the feasibility of establishing another Afrikaans university, with particular attention to location, student numbers, and its possible effect on existing Afrikaans universities, specifically the University of Pretoria and the Potchefstroom University.⁴⁶ In December 1962, the committee reported that the establishment of a second university on the Witwatersrand

⁴⁰ UJ/RAU Archive, RAU – Establishment history collection, File A11/1, Interview (transcribed) with Prof S.A. Pauw by Dr O. Geyser in Pretoria – Unisa, 1983, pp. 2-3.

⁴¹ M.A. Beale, *Apartheid and university education, 1948-1970*, pp. 298-299.

⁴² M.A. Beale, *Apartheid and university education...*, pp. 298-299.

⁴³ UJ/RAU Archive, P.J. Meyer collection, File C1/1, Interview (transcribed) with Dr P.J. Meyer, pp. 57-58.

⁴⁴ UJ/RAU Archive, RAU – Establishment history collection, File A11/1, Interview (transcribed) with Prof S.A. Pauw by Dr Geyser in Pretoria – Unisa, 1983, pp. 4-6.

⁴⁵ UJ/RAU Archive, Establishment history collection, File A11/1, Interview (transcribed) with Prof S.A. Pauw by Dr O. Geyser in Pretoria, 1983, p. 17.

⁴⁶ M.A. Beale, *Apartheid and university education...*, pp. 306-313.

was justified and that it would not impact on the long-term growth of Pretoria and Potchefstroom in terms of student numbers.⁴⁷

The Minister of Education, Arts and Science, Senator J De Klerk's proposal in September 1962 that UNISA should relocate from Pretoria to Johannesburg was met, on the one hand, with Pauw's outright rejection⁴⁸ and, on the other hand, interpreted by the RAU founders as evidence of government support for establishing a white Afrikaans university in Johannesburg. The proposal also exposed deep divisions amongst the white Afrikaans academics regarding the establishment of more Afrikaans universities. Were it to occur, the move would have profound implications for UNISA in terms of its original mission and vision: it would fundamentally change UNISA's dual-medium status and its model of distance learning, and would transform the institution into an exclusively white Afrikaans university. According to *The Star*, De Klerk and the founding members regarded UNISA as a "ready-made university" because it enjoyed international recognition and had established academic and scientific standards. Over and above the logistical difficulties, financial expenses and administrative complications that a move would entail, UNISA staff members strongly objected to the proposal. According to UNISA staff members, it would be impractical to transform the institution into a residential university, which would hinder its task of providing distance education. According to Pauw, UNISA took its function seriously of being a distance education university, in the process of expanding its role in South Africa and the outside world.⁴⁹ The UNISA staff and rector's opposition also arose from a strong sense of academic pride and a conviction that UNISA belonged to all South Africans and not merely to white Afrikaans speakers.⁵⁰

Pauw did not want to be part of a plan that would see UNISA's transformation into an all-white Afrikaans university in reaction to Wits and its "liberal influences". Pauw made his position very clear that UNISA would remain a dual-medium university and that it would not become an institution for white Afrikaans-speakers alone.⁵¹ In response to this, Meyer expressed his disappointment in a letter to De Klerk. He stated his conviction that Pauw had

⁴⁷ M.A. Beale, *Apartheid and university education...*, pp. 307-310.

⁴⁸ UJ/RAU Archive, RAU – Establishment history collection, File A11/1, Interview (transcribed) with Prof S.A. Pauw by Dr O. Geyser in Pretoria – Unisa, 1983, p. 14.

⁴⁹ *The Star*, 1963-09-26.

⁵⁰ M.A. Beale, *Apartheid and university education...*, p. 331.

⁵¹ UJ/RAU Archive, RAU – Establishment history collection, File A11/1, Interview (transcribed) with Prof S.A. Pauw by Dr O. Geyser in Pretoria, 1983, pp. 7-8.

taken in a stance against white Afrikaans speakers' ideal to have an Afrikaans university on the Witwatersrand. Meyer, furthermore felt that because the rectors of other universities (Wits, Natal, Rhodes and Cape Town) served on the council of UNISA, the proposal that UNISA should become a white Afrikaans institution, had been opposed.⁵² Meyer's response revealed his and others' true intentions regarding the establishment of a new university: UNISA's dual-medium status was unacceptable, as was the presence of non-whites in the new university. Indeed, Meyer and the other founders potentially had in mind to transform UNISA into an all-white Afrikaans university in Johannesburg.⁵³ Thus the university that they envisioned would cater only for young white, Afrikaans-speaking students on the Witwatersrand, who would be moulded, trained and shaped into highly trained future leaders.

By 1965, it was estimated that moving UNISA from Pretoria to Johannesburg (with cabinet's approval) would cost R9, 5 million.⁵⁴ Newspaper clippings from early 1965 reveal that the move would not only be costly, but that it would also result in great sacrifices on the part of existing UNISA staff members. It was initially argued that all of this was necessary in South Africa's best interests.⁵⁵ In March 1965, however, UNISA's clear statement to the press that the institution would retain its dual/parallel-medium status and long-distance learning function exposed political tensions. According to a newspaper report, NP cabinet members agreed at a meeting in Cape Town to the establishment of an Afrikaans university on the Witwatersrand.⁵⁶ UNISA's position that it would keep its dual-medium status and retain non-white students was rejected because it was believed that the measure would defeat the objective a university solely for the white Afrikaans-speaking community. This tension once again highlighted the deep divisions between radical Afrikaner nationalists and those guided by the financial and ideological realities as stated by the NP government. It also reflected the depth of ideological thinking on the policy of separate development. RAU's establishment also demonstrated how the Broederbond influenced government policy and how Afrikaner-nationalist power concerning the state and its resources forced the government to mediate between conflicting interests and ideologies regarding the ideal allocation of resources.⁵⁷

⁵² UJ/RAU Archive, RAU – Establishment history collection, File A11/1: Letter from P.J. Meyer to Minister J. de Klerk, 1965-01-18.

⁵³ UJ/RAU Archive, P.J. Meyer collection, File C1/1, Interview (transcribed) with Dr P.J. Meyer, pp. 57-58.

⁵⁴ *Die Transvaler*, 1965-02-17.

⁵⁵ *Die Transvaler*, 1965-02-17; *The Star*, 1965-02-16.

⁵⁶ *Dagbreek en Sondagnuus*, 1965-03-14.

⁵⁷ M.A. Beale, *Apartheid and university education...*, p. 337.

In a letter to De Klerk in March 1965, Pauw again clarified UNISA's position. He stated that the university fully respected the fact that the decision to move UNISA and to change its dual-medium character resided with the government and the University Act. However, he re-emphasised his position that the government should respect the nature and character of UNISA and not go against the wishes of the university community. He stated that he had made UNISA's position clear regarding language policy, student demographics and teaching methods since the very first negotiations with the R.A.U.C. on 5 March 1964.⁵⁸ According to Pauw, the committee had not indicated that it would go against the wishes of UNISA and its policy principles, made clear in the reports to the Future Committee and the Planning Committee of the R.A.U.C.⁵⁹ In conclusion, Pauw pointed out that although there was a need to build a new Afrikaans university, this university should not be the product of a totally transformed UNISA. He requested De Klerk to table the matter before cabinet.⁶⁰

By April 1965 it became evident that resistance to UNISA's relocation to Johannesburg was mounting among UNISA staff members. In an article in *The Star*, an anonymous lecturer at the university expressed the opinion that such a move would create a dangerous precedent because the English-speaking community in Pretoria would also demand an English university in Pretoria. Moreover, moving UNISA would mean that the educational opportunities it afforded countrywide would come to an end.⁶¹ In his capacity as the registrar of UNISA, BFJ van Rensburg informed De Klerk, on behalf of Pauw, that in light of the cabinet's decision not to accept the dual-medium character of UNISA, the council of UNISA had decided to forward the matter to the university lecturers' council and senate.⁶²

On 20 June 1965, the *Sunday Times* reported that UNISA's staff had voted overwhelmingly against the relocation of the university. The decision was made during a staff committee meeting and, according to the decision, UNISA would agree to relocation only if the university kept its dual-medium character and retained non-white students. UNISA staff

⁵⁸ UJ/RAU Archive, RAU – Establishment history collection: File A11/1 Letter from Prof S.A. Pauw to His Honourable Minister of Education, Arts and Culture Mr J. De Klerk, 1965-03-19, pp. 1-2.

⁵⁹ UJ/RAU Archive, RAU – Establishment history collection: File A11/1 Letter from Prof S.A. Pauw to His Honourable Minister of Education, pp. 2-3.

⁶⁰ UJ/RAU Archive, RAU – Establishment history collection: File A11/1 Letter from Prof S.A. Pauw to His Honourable Minister of Education, pp. 3-5.

⁶¹ *The Star*, 1965-04-02.

⁶² UJ/RAU Archive, RAU – Establishment history collection: File A11/2 Letter from B.F.J. van Rensburg (Registrar on behalf of the rector of the university) to J. de Klerk, 1965-05-14.

members believed, however, that this would not be an acceptable offer to the new Afrikaans university's founders:⁶³

This does not conform to the vision of the Randse Komitee which seeks a "take over" of the University of South Africa and its transformation into an all-Afrikaans university, with the non-white students of the university of South Africa "transferred" to the non-white university colleges.

By June 1965, it was evident that the proposal to move UNISA to Johannesburg was extremely problematic: UNISA had resisted all demands for it to relinquish its dual-medium status to become an Afrikaans university registering only white Afrikaans students. On 4 August 1965, De Klerk informed Pauw in writing that the cabinet had decided against relocating UNISA to Johannesburg. This decision demonstrated that the government respected UNISA's autonomy and that the plan had shifted instead to the establishment of an entirely new white Afrikaans university in Johannesburg.⁶⁴ Thus, the long negotiations to relocate UNISA in an effort to establish an Afrikaans university in Johannesburg, were finally concluded.

The founders' ongoing efforts to create a university in Johannesburg were initially rewarded with the starting of the *Goudstadse Onderwyskollege* in Johannesburg in February 1961. Subsequently, negotiations with UNISA to relocate to Johannesburg formed part of a long detour along the road to the eventual achievement of the goal to establish a university solely for white Afrikaans speakers. The government decision against relocating UNISA resulted in Afrikaans speakers' increasing aspirations to establish an all-white Afrikaans university in Johannesburg. This aspiration was fuelled by the press and contributed directly to the government's eventual decision to sanction it support for the establishment of the new white Afrikaans university on the Witwatersrand.⁶⁵

According to Meyer, during an interview conducted with him, the entirely newly established university was precisely what the founders had wanted from the outset. Yet, because of the government's initial rejection of the plan, a longer route had to be followed. Meyer referred, for example, to the proposed negotiations between UNISA and the Scientific Advisory

⁶³ *The Sunday Times*, 1965-06-20.

⁶⁴ UJ/RAU Archive, Johannesburg, RAU – Establishment history – collection. File A11/2 Letter of J. de Klerk to S.A. Pauw, 1965-08-04.

⁶⁵ D. Prinsloo, "Dr Piet Meyer in Johannesburg, 1936-1984", *Historia*, 32 (1), 1987, p. 53.

Council. According to Meyer, the rector agreed to these negotiations with the following statement: '[K]om ons probeer dit 'n slag, net om die ding aan die gang te hou' ("Let us try this, just to keep the thing going"). Meyer revealed that Pauw had the conviction that the new Afrikaans university's founders would not be happy with a "halwe poging" (a half-baked effort) regarding the relocation of UNISA, and that they wanted a new and exclusively white Afrikaans university for the Witwatersrand. Meyer stated that the government's position regarding the matter at the time, and its support to establish UPE, reinforced the position of the founders on the Witwatersrand. He believed that, because of these developments, the government could no longer refuse the request for a new university outright.⁶⁶ What was to follow would therefore be to find an acceptable site for their proposed university's construction. This became another stumbling block for the university's founders, revealing how personal agendas, driven by ambition and economic gain, influenced the debate concerning where on the Witwatersrand the new university should be built.

4.2.4.3 "Brooma, Brooma – forget about it": The location debate for the construction of RAU

The geographical location of RAU was not only of political, economic and social importance, but also of symbolic significance. Little wonder, then, that municipalities, businesses, communities and even individuals were involved in the process of locating RAU, during which, as this section will describe, many strong opinions were voiced. Once the NP's long-awaited decision to take the lead in creating a new Afrikaans university on the Witwatersrand finally took place, a new stumbling block emerged: an appropriate site for building the university. From the outset, the identification of a suitable terrain became a point of heated discussions, especially in the newspapers. Many suggestions for the new terrain were influenced by considerations of an economic nature and by proposals regarding the future location of the campus as presented by business as well as political representatives.⁶⁷ In *Die Vaderland*, four possibilities for an ideal location on which to build the university were mentioned, namely Emmarentia, Kensington, Cottesloe or Vrededorp.⁶⁸ Meyer immediately rejected the terrain between the Gilooly farm and the old Bruma sewage farm known as Kensington. He could not accept the idea of his prized new university being built with its

⁶⁶ UJ/RAU Archive, P.J. Meyer collection, File C1/1, Interview (transcribed) with Dr P.J. Meyer, p. 58.

⁶⁷ *Die Transvaler*, 1965-02-27.

⁶⁸ *Die Vaderland*, 1965-08-05.

foundations on a sewage plant. During an interview with J Cronjé, he reacted as follows to the proposal emanating from the confines of Johannesburg City Council:⁶⁹

Brooma, Brooma [sic] 'n ou rioolplaas...wel soos die Engelse sê "forget about it", julle kan enige ander ding doen, maar ons gaan nie soontoe nie.

(Brooma, Brooma, an old sewage farm...as the English saying goes, "forget about it", you can do anything else, but we are not going there).

The terrain the city council identified was also not acceptable; because it was not situated close enough to the city centre. The Afrikaanse Sakekamer (Afrikaans business chamber) proposed to De Klerk that the new university should be constructed in Vrededorp-Fordsburg.⁷⁰ Rossmore and Auckland Park residents supported the plan because they feared that they would lose their properties to government expropriation if the decision was taken to construct the new university in Auckland Park.⁷¹ The RAUC objected to taking land around the *Goudstadse Onderwyskollege* and the *Hoërskool Helpmekaar*, and in the Parktown area. Still, Auckland Park residents' growing acrimony led to a protest meeting against the possible construction of the new university in Auckland Park and not Vrededorp.⁷² At a meeting, arranged by the ratepayers' associations of Auckland Park and Rossmore in the Moth Memorial Hall in Auckland Park, it was evident that residents were concerned about the impact the university would have on the value of their properties and on the environment in general. Residents argued that the construction of a new university in the area would negatively affect one of the oldest and most beautiful areas in Johannesburg. It would also result in residents' financial and personal loss of belonging, should government expropriate their properties.

The area proposed for the establishment of the university would be close to the *Goudstadse Onderwyskollege*, the military depot in Auckland Park, parts of the Johannesburg Country Club (the golf course), and private property in Westdene. The identified area was large, requiring government to extensively expropriate private property.⁷³ During the meeting, residents decided to send representatives to De Klerk to protest against the construction of the university in their residential areas. Two motions were carried during the meeting: residents

⁶⁹ UJ/RAU Archive, P.J. Meyer collection, File C1/1, Interview (transcribed) with Dr P.J. Meyer, p. 58.

⁷⁰ UJ/RAU Archive, P.J. Meyer collection, File C1/1, Interview (transcribed) with Dr P.J. Meyer, p. 58; *Die Transvaler*, 1965-06-03.

⁷¹ *Dagbreek en Sondagnuus*, 1965-10-17.

⁷² *The Star*, 1965-10-15.

⁷³ *Rand Daily Mail*, 1965-10-28.

were opposed to the construction of the new Afrikaans university in the identified residential areas, yet they were not against the construction and establishment of an Afrikaans university elsewhere in Johannesburg.⁷⁴

When the necessary land on which to build the new university in Auckland Park close to the city centre and almost next to Wits was obtained, yet another stumbling block thwarting the establishment of the university was overcome. Another obstacle did, however, arise and this time in the guise of public sentiment.

4.2.5 Personal and environmental sentiments

The discussion above highlighted the process involving the identification of a suitable terrain for the construction of the university in addition to the role of Auckland Park residents who objected to the university being built in their area. Their objections centred on the university's location and the impact this would have on property values and ownership. However, supporting the establishment of a university that would promote and advance the white Afrikaans speaker on the Witwatersrand was never an issue. The proposal that the new university should be constructed near Vrededorp-Fordsburg⁷⁵ was supported by residents of Rossmore and Auckland Park. They supported the plan because they were afraid that they would lose their properties if the NP government expropriated or bought them out to construct a university in Auckland Park.⁷⁶

The R.A.U.C. undertaking that private land would not be taken by the government around the Goudstad Onderwyskollege, the Hoërskool Helpmekaar or in the Parktown area did not at all serve to calm down emotions. The residents' growing discontent in Auckland Park contributed to their organising a protest meeting against the possible construction of the new university in their area and not in Vrededorp.⁷⁷ During this protest meeting arranged by the ratepayers of Auckland Park and Rossmore Residents, it became evident that residents did not object to the establishment and construction of the university *per se*, but that they did object to the possible implications and impact on the environment and properties. Many residents believed the construction of a new university in the area would devalue an old and

⁷⁴ *Die Transvaler*, 1965-10-23.

⁷⁵ *Die Transvaler*, 1965-06-03.

⁷⁶ *Dagbreek en Sondagnuus*, 1965-10-17.

⁷⁷ *The Star*, 1965-10-15.

beautiful part of Johannesburg because many established trees would have to be removed to make way for construction work.⁷⁸ Residents might also suffer financial and personal loss due to the possibility that the government might expropriate their properties.

A final perceived obstacle in the establishment and construction of the new university was the debate concerning the inclusion of a “conscience clause” in the university’s constitution. This clause related to the new found universities policy towards religious freedom specifically pertaining to those of students and the employment of prospective new personnel. This was considered to be important especially if considering the fact that the founders of this university made it quite clear that the new university would have a strong Christian nationalist character. The “conscience clause” could not be seen as discriminatory towards students or personnel with different religious orientations.

4.2.6 Conscience clause

In a newspaper report in *The Star* in August 1966, strong criticism was raised regarding the possible replacement of the traditional conscience clause in the proposed legislation of the new university. The new proposed clause based on the South African constitution was regarded as a “new kind of conscience clause”⁷⁹ because it was not the same as the traditional and acceptable conscience clauses of other South African universities. Viljoen viewed the ongoing debate on the matter as arising because the conscience clause was perceived as part of the English rather than the Dutch or German university tradition. Viljoen pointed out that other institutions included the clause to eliminate any discriminatory practices, but that RAU’s founders held the view that the clause was unnecessary since they would not discriminate on the basis of religion.⁸⁰ The new proposed clause would be borrowed from the South African constitution⁸¹ and would read as follows (also freely translated to English):⁸²

’n Student, navorser, dosent of lid van die administratiewe of biblioteekpersoneel word in die universiteit opgeneem op grond van akademiese en administratiewe kwalifikasies en bekwaamhede, en op grond daarvan dat hy die beginsels vervat in die aanhef van die Grondwet van die Republiek onderskryf.

⁷⁸ *Dagbreek en Sondagnuus*, 1965-10-17.

⁷⁹ *The Star*, 1966-09-11.

⁸⁰ M.A. Beale, *Apartheid and university education...*, p. 333.

⁸¹ *The Star*, 1966-08-11.

⁸² UJ/RAU Archive, P.M.S. Von Staden-versameling: Lêer C2/12/2/2: korrespondensie Mnr D. Malan en Dr P.J. Meyer – 1966-08-11.

(Students, researchers, lecturers or members of the administrative or library staff are taken up in the university on the basis of their academic and administrative qualifications and their abilities, and because they accept the principles reflected in the preamble of the Constitution of the Republic).

Meyer, supported by the establishment committee members, therefore wanted to include a conscience clause unique to the new university. It had to be a clause emphasizing the importance of merit and qualifications whilst underpinning the importance of a Christian character directing the terms under which students and staff members would be accepted into the institution.

The debacle over the conscience clause played out in conjunction with the money that the Johannesburg City Council had pledged for the establishment of the new university. By April 1966, the R.A.U.C. had raised approximately R1 640 000 for the new university. Those who supported the idea donated these funds. Prominent donors included business sector, municipalities and schools listed in Chapter Three. The government insisted that the committee raise R750 000 before steps could be taken towards the creation of the university. This resulted in negotiations with big business – specifically the Chamber of Mines – which, with the involvement of H Kock, who had good relations with the institution, managed to secure R200 000 in addition to the R750 000 required.⁸³

Securing the R500 000 the Johannesburg City Council had earlier pledged proved to be a major stumbling block for the establishment of the university. It was on this point where the exclusion of the traditional conscience clause proved an important issue for some of the role players. For the most part the UP majority in the Johannesburg City Council, the members of the Jewish Board of Deputies and several English business leaders with Progressive Party (PP) were responsible for the objection. According to Meyer, Mr P Roos (the representative of the UP and chairman of the Johannesburg city council's management committee) noted that the majority of the UP-controlled committee was Jewish. For this reason, the committee was concerned that if the clause was excluded from the university act, it could effectively mean that non-Christians would be barred from working or studying at the new Afrikaans university. To resolve the issue, Roos proposed that Meyer give the undertaking, in a letter to the city council, that the clause would not be excluded from the university act and that the

⁸³ P.J. Meyer, *Nog nie ver genoeg nie*, p. 173.

wording would be the same as that of the former conscience clause.⁸⁴ Should Meyer give this undertaking, the money would be made available for the construction of the new university.

These developments contributed to speculation in the Afrikaans press that the city council had used the promise of funds against the R.A.U.C. as a form of ransom in order to dictate to the committee what the nature and character of the new university should be.⁸⁵ The English press, in turn, expressed the opinion that the city council, including the other objectors, had the right to request this because the funds going towards an exclusively white Afrikaans university based on a specific race, culture, language and religion, belonged in fact to tax payers in general a factor which formed the basis of the role players objection to the exclusion of the conscience clause.⁸⁶ The R.A.U.C.'s position was that the new university would be Afrikaans and Christian in character; in Meyer's words, "dat geen persoon uitgesluit sou word wat aan die voorsienigheid van God glo nie"⁸⁷ (*no person who believes in the providence of God will be excluded*). The committee further believed that no group had the right to prescribe how the matter of the conscience clause should be dealt with by the university's founders. Meyer, moreover, made it clear that there was no room for 'atheists' or 'communists' at the university and that they were inevitably excluded in terms of the country's constitution.⁸⁸ He agreed, on Roos's advice, to meet with the Jewish Board of Deputies. His response to the Jewish representatives was that the conscience clause would be considered for inclusion, but that it would be made public that it was done so because of the pressure the Jewish Board of Deputies had exerted on the committee. The Jewish Board of Deputies did not agree to this and left it to the committee to deal with the matter in the way it saw fit.⁸⁹

It must however be noted that the Jewish opposition to the establishment of RAU was rooted not only in the planned exclusion of the traditional conscience clause from the constitution of the new found university. This objection most certainly stemmed from old animosities related to for example the Jewish people's experiences during the Second World War (1939-1945) in which they were forcefully scattered all over the world and the devastation of the

⁸⁴ UJ/RAU Archive, P.J. Meyer collection, File C1/1, Interview (transcribed) with Dr P.J. Meyer, pp. 63-64.

⁸⁵ *Dagbreek en Sondagnuus*, 1965-11-07.

⁸⁶ *The Star*, 1965-11-08.

⁸⁷ UJ/RAU Archive, RAU – Ontstaansgeskiedenis-versameling, Lêer A11/1, korrespondensie brief van P.J. Meyer aan Minister J. de Klerk, 1966-08-09.

⁸⁸ UJ/RAU Archive, RAU – Ontstaansgeskiedenis-versameling, Lêer A11/1, korrespondensie brief van P.J. Meyer aan Minister J. de Klerk, 1966-08-09.

⁸⁹ UJ/RAU Archive, JP.J. Meyer collection, File C1/1, Interview (transcribed) with Dr P.J. Meyer, p. 66.

Holocaust under the Nazis.⁹⁰ Their experiences of hatred, exclusion and discrimination resulted in them responding negatively towards any actions which could result in discrimination especially on the grounds of religion. The South African government's implementation of immigration quota legislation in the 1930s which effectively restricted Jewish immigration to South Africa and the NP assuming power in 1948, with some members openly expressing anti-Semitic sentiments, further exacerbated general unhappiness and mistrust among the Jewish community⁹¹ especially towards the NP government and AB members.

Jewish Board of Deputies decided to leave the matter in the hand of the establishers and therefore retracted from any further involvement in the conscience clause debate. The committee could at long last proceed with planning and establishing the new Afrikaans university. The final stumbling block had been removed and the new university could make headway. The Rand Afrikaans University was finally opened on 12 February 1968.

4.3 Conclusion

The discussion in Chapter Four reveals that the Afrikaner Broederbond (AB) did not solely plan RAU's establishment in reaction to Wits and its perceived liberal perspective or "influence". Although members of the planning committee also were members of the AB, the organisation did not mastermind the university's establishment. RAU was the result of the efforts of an influential Afrikaner elite grouping of people in the field of education and related areas whose aim it was to uplift white Afrikaans speakers on the Witwatersrand by enabling them to gain access to educational opportunities that would lead to them actively participating in the higher echelons in the economic heartland of South Africa. It was the realisation of a longstanding ideal for white Afrikaans speakers to uplift themselves from a disadvantaged past and to establish themselves as fully qualified and trained citizens to help build their country of birth.⁹²

Like other universities, RAU faced many obstacles before the university could be founded. There was, first and foremost, the fact that RAU was established for white Afrikaans

⁹⁰ Compare G. Saron, "The South African Jewish Board of Deputies: Its role and development", *World Congress of Jewish Studies*, Vol.2, 1973, p. 280.

⁹¹ O.B.Stier, "South Africa's Jewish complex", *Jewish Social Studies*, Vol. 10, No. 3, 2003, pp. 126-127.

⁹² UJ library, *Gedenkalbum van die opening van die R.A.U.*, 1968-02-24, "Verwelkoming van ouers ...", p. 66.

speaking students. Moreover, there was its Christian national character. Yet, these aspects and the fact that the growing white Afrikaner population figures contributed to the establishment of the university. Other stumbling blocks discussed above include UNISA's possible move from Pretoria to Johannesburg, finding the ideal location and last but not least, the much debated conscience clause.⁹³

As for UNISA's potential relocation to Johannesburg, although members of the founding committee appreciated the notion, it was not at all what they had envisaged as the realisation of their original ideal. They wanted a completely new university, not one that was "second hand" and to which certain conditions and obligations were attached before the move could even take place. Once the final decision was taken that it was not possible for UNISA to move to Johannesburg, the situation played out to the advantage of the members of the RAU founding committee. For a start, it was now anticipated that a white Afrikaans university would have to be established in Johannesburg after all, and there was, in addition, the resulting mounting pressure on the government that might ensure that this would indeed happen. Secondly, the new university would be established without conditions other than those set by the Afrikaans nationalist founders themselves.⁹⁴

The fact that Meyer and his fellow founders utterly rejected the city council of Johannesburg's proposal to construct the new university on the old Bruma sewage farm reveals the symbolic importance of the terrain to the university's founders. Consequently, with the help of the Johannesburg Country Club's silent management, Meyer arranged to attain a piece of its land. This, together with the other terrain in Auckland Park, became the setting for the new university. The fact that the management of the country club agreed to hand over the land clearly indicates that it was aware that the planned construction of the new university could no longer be politically opposed.⁹⁵

⁹³ UJ/RAU Archive, RAU – Ontstaansgeskiedenis-versameling, Lêer A11/1, korrespondensie brief van P.J. Meyer aan Minister J. de Klerk, 1966-08-09.

⁹⁴ UJ/RAU Archive, RAU – Establishment history collection, File A11/1, Interview (transcribed) with Prof S.A. Pauw by Dr Geyser in Pretoria – Unisa, 1983, pp. 4-6.

⁹⁵ UJ/RAU Archive, P.J. Meyer collection, File C1/1, Interview (transcribed) with Dr P.J. Meyer on 1983.7.4 on his plot "Halfpad" in Witpoortjie 81 by Mr. Jan Cronjé, Leader of the archival project of RAU and from 1967-05-01 to the end of 1981 Communications Manager of RAU, pp. 60-61.

Finally, Meyer's style of dealing with the conscience clause revealed that even the influential Jewish Board of Deputies could not prevent the realisation of this Afrikaner ideal. The English business chamber, UP-controlled city council and Jewish Board of Deputies realised that nothing would prevent the new university's construction. Their efforts to prevent this from happening through withholding financial assistance failed. Consequently, on 12 February 1968, RAU was finally established. In Chapter Five to follow will be a discussion on the relationship between architectural design and modern teaching methods in association to the ideological and philosophical ideals envisioned for RAU by the founders.

Chapter 5

Architecture and teaching as central aspects to understanding the philosophy of RAU's founders

5.1 Introduction

The discussion in Chapter Five closely relates to the discussions in Chapter Two which focuses on the motivations for the establishment on universities internationally and locally. Also Chapter Three, in which key role players in the establishment of the RAU were introduced, feature again, but with an emphasis on the focus of Chapter Five.

The pioneering history of RAU covers a period of 13 years. The founding fathers envisioned a university that would become a vehicle for driving the advancement and modernisation of an Afrikaner identity.¹ In material terms their thinking crystallised out in a unique modern architectural design which also impacted on their thoughts on new teaching methods. These would become valued reflexive intellectual statements contributing to the building blocks of the new modern university. Its physical appearance reflects the philosophy and ideology shared by its founders. Ultimately, the university represented the realisation of a dream also associated with by white Afrikaans speakers on the Witwatersrand.²

The realisation of this idea and dream, however, would entail overcoming the many obstacles as discussed in previous Chapters. As plans for developing a modern Afrikaans university started falling into place the founders gave careful thought to elements constituting a notional university.³ The process was characterised by thorough research, data gathering, debate and conversation based on existing and new ideas relating to universities, specifically what was planned and envisaged for the institution.

Consequently, the first rector, Prof G van N Viljoen, embarked on an overseas visit to conduct research into universities in other parts of the world. The trip was short with a full program. Viljoen left on 16 April and was back by 1 May 1967. In the brief time span he

¹ UJ/RAU Archive, P.J. Meyer collection, File C1/1, Die Beplanning van die Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit, p.1, also see UJ/RAU – collection: J. Cronje collection – File A36/4 of Prof G. van N. Viljoen titled Vestiging, geboubeplanning en ontstaansgeskiedenis, Speech by Viljoen at the Municipality of Brakpan on 1969-10-12. Titled Die Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit en die Munisipaliteit van Brakpan, p. 1.

² UJ/RAU Archive, Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit collection, File A34/1, Universiteit en Gemeenskap, Toespraak deur G. van N. Viljoen voor die Johannesburgse Afrikaanse Sakekamer, 1967-03-21., p. 1.

³ R. Barnett, *Being a university* (Routledge, London, 2011), p. 1.

visited Keulen University, Rijksuniversiteit Groningen, the universities of Caen in Normandy, as well as Sussex and Essex in the United Kingdom to mention a few. Viljoen's aim to gain knowledge regarding campus planning, the size of universities, interdisciplinary matters, study material, and general problems in tertiary education and administration. His focus was on the "inner-relationship" between physical buildings, academic programmes and students. Viljoen was very impressed by these findings and it enhanced his vision for RAU.⁴

Viljoen's initial research was followed up and complemented by another trip abroad undertaken by the appointed architects, WO Meyer and J van Wyk, who gathered information on planning and developing to create the RAU's architectural structure and its facilities. By visiting old and well-established and more modern universities in Europe, England, the USA and Canada they sought to gaining insight into developing a fresh architectural approach to representing the architectural impression of a modern university. The trip was planned thoroughly. The itinerary included visits to 30 universities from January to March 1968.⁵ The universities they visited, included: Germany's Free University of Berlin and the Ruhr University in Bochum; the University of Paris in France; in the United Kingdom they visited Essex, Cambridge, Leicester, Leeds, Birmingham, Lancaster, Sussex; the United States' universities on the list were Harvard, Illinois and California; and finally Canada's Simon Fraser University in Vancouver and Scarborough University in Toronto.⁶ It was evident that the idea of an Afrikaner tertiary institution did not exclude inspiration fountains of ideas of the British Commonwealth.

The planner's visit overseas was a concerted effort to meet with stakeholders representing different universities. The South African team engaged in meetings and functions to secure information on matters related to: the founding rationale of institutions; the aims and functions of the academic programmes; the roles of staff and students; and the physical planning of universities.⁷ Logistical information on features, such as location, transport to and from campuses, landscaping, student numbers, location in relation to the city, libraries and

⁴ UJ/RAU Archive, P.J. Meyer collection, File C1/1, Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit; Verslag van oorsese besoek, pp. 1-12.

⁵ UJ/RAU Archive, J.F. Cronje – collection, File A36/3, Interview by Mr J. Cronje on 1981-11-26 at RAU with appointed architects – Mes'rs W. Meyer and J. Van Wyk, pp. 9-10.

⁶ UJ/RAU Archive, P.M.S. von Staden collection, File C2, 12/3/1, Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit – Ontwikkelingsplan (Totaalplan) Aucklandpark, Johannesburg, Verslag van argitekte se besoek aan oorsese universiteite, pp. 1-2.

⁷ UJ/RAU Archive, P.M.S. von Staden collection, File C2, 12/3/1, Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit – Ontwikkelingsplan, pp. 3-6.

laboratories informed the work on planning the activities and physical layout of the RAU.⁸ The planners took special note of the changing nature, function and aims of universities in Western Europe after World War II.⁹ They were particularly interested in the process of democratisation of tertiary institutions that featured prominently in the international news on the 1960s ‘baby boomer’ generation of students who challenged the conservative and regulatory nature of universities.¹⁰

RAU’s founders were determined to ensure that the new university would be representative of the ultimate expression of their ideas. PJ Meyer, many years later recalled that it had to be based on the Western university tradition and, more specifically, on Dutch and German models.¹¹ This simply meant that the managerial, administrative and academic styles had to be similar to German and Dutch counterparts in terms of the role of a chancellor and rector (vice-chancellor), deans of faculties and heads of academic departments. Academic courses and degrees would also follow the salient principles of Western university tradition.¹² Furthermore, dreams visualised at the time for the new university were that it would be impressive, modern, and unique in its architectural design.

Internationally, the architectural development of universities during the 1960s witnessed a departure from traditionally fragmented study environments where buildings housed different departments and were scattered over a large area. Their modernist inclination favoured centralising the various educational facilities. The principle was embedded in the planning for all aspects of RAU’s establishment. (See below).¹³ After all, one of the leading objectives of

⁸ UJ/RAU Archive, P.M.S. von Staden collection, File C2, 12/3/1, Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit – Ontwikkelingsplan, pp. 7-19.

⁹ For the creators of RAU, it was very important to research how Western universities developed and how they dealt with the changing role of universities in society, the role of students in the management of the institution and the relationship between courses and degrees offered as well as the needs of the workplace and industry. Also, see I.C. Rotberg, *Balancing change and transformation in global education reform* (scarecrow education (USA, 2004), pp. xi-xiv. P.A. Miescher, *et al.*, *The modern university: structure, functions and its role in the new industrial state* (George Thieme Verlag, Germany, 1969), pp. 8-16.

¹⁰ UJ/RAU Archive, P.M.S. von Staden collection, File C2, 12/3/1, Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit – Ontwikkelingsplan, UJ/RAU A11: Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit collection, File A34/1, Universiteit en Gemeenskap, Toespraak deur G. van N. Viljoen, p. 1., K. Minoque, *The concept of a university* (Transaction Publishers, USA, 2005). W.R. Niblett, “Recent trends in British higher education”, *The School Review*, 86(1), 1977, pp. 87-89.

¹¹ UJ/RAU Archive, P.J. Meyer collection, File C1/1: Die Beplanning van die Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit, 1968, pp. 1; 6.

¹² UJ library, *Gedenkalbum van die opening van die R.A.U.*, 1968-02-24, pp. 12, 48-52.

¹³ UJ/RAU Archive, J.B.Z. Louw collection, File A 128/1: Memorandum insake Afrikaanse Universiteit, Johannesburg – Fisiese beplanning, p. 1.

the thinking underlying the new university was to assist in developing, educating and modernising the white Afrikaans speakers on the Witwatersrand.¹⁴

The original temporary buildings of the early RAU campus in Braamfontein in 1968 were a far cry from the envisioned impressive plans for the intellectual transmission of ideas of modernism and centrality. In fact, the old buildings did not even resemble in the least what was planned for the new university. RAU's teaching educational programmes started its educational activities temporarily in the old South African Breweries buildings in Ameshoff Street in Braamfontein when the institution was opened on 24 February 1968.

The initial venue did not provide magnanimous capacities for new lecture halls, laboratories, beautiful gardens, sports facilities or student housing.¹⁵ All were temporary. Buildings had either been rapidly converted to house temporary lecture venues or laboratories, or were at most temporary asbestos structures. Social student activities were non-existent. There was no evidence of a visible lively student community to speak of; nor were there any sports clubs, societies or cultural organisations.¹⁶ The new university's vision was still subject to conception, while academic activities were temporarily accommodated in an environment of temporary structures. There were only newly appointed staff members and first-year students. All were thankful for the old buildings that had been temporarily revamped. Viljoen addressed the handful of students and their parents in the Skilpaddop-saal in February 1968, an assembly facility and part of the temporary arrangement. Referring to the use of the temporary buildings on the old South African Breweries site, he promised that from the space of humble beginnings there would arise an institution that would truly be impressive.¹⁷ Although the initial beginnings could be construed by critics as the product of poor planning and destined for failure, the founders had an unblemished vision of what they had in mind for their new Afrikaans university.¹⁸

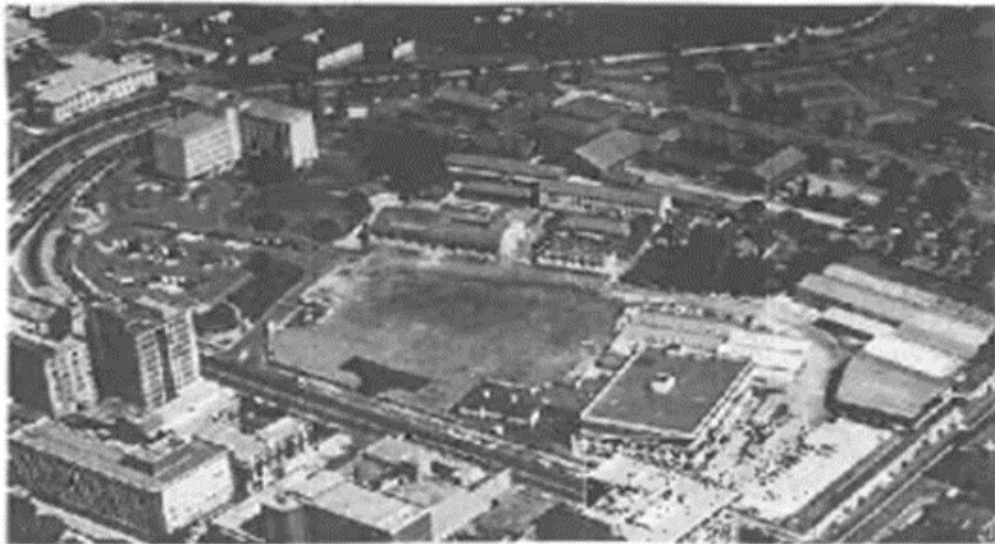
¹⁴ G. van N. Viljoen, *The Afrikaans universities and particularism* in H.M. Van der Merwe and D. Welsh, *The future of the university in Southern Africa* (Martins Publishers, Johannesburg, 1977), p. 172.

¹⁵ J.C. van der Walt, "Gerrit Viljoen se RAU: Toe en Vandag", in B. Louw and F. van Rensburg, *Bestendige binnevuur: perspektiewe op Gerrit Viljoen by geleentheid van sy een en sewentigste verjaarsdag op 1997-09-11* (Tafelberg-uitgewers Beperk, Kaapstad, 1997), p. 91.

¹⁶ J.C. van der Walt, *Gerrit Viljoen se RAU: Toe en Vandag* in B. Louw en F. van Rensburg, *Bestendige binnevuur*, p. 91.

¹⁷ UJ library, *Gedenkalbum van die opening van die R.A.U.*, 1968-2-24, Speech by Prof G. van N. Viljoen – Welcoming of the parents of the students, p. 45.

¹⁸ UJ/RAU Archive, Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit collection, File A34/1, Universiteit en Gemeenskap; Toespraak van G. van N. Viljoen, p. 1.



¹⁹ These two photographs are of the early RAU housed in the buildings used in the Ohlsson's Cape Breweries. The first was when the demolishing started to make room for the construction of temporary administrative buildings and lecture rooms. The second images the new temporary buildings that were constructed and which represented the first campus of RAU in Braamfontein.
Source: UJ library, *Gedenkalbum van die opening van die R.A.U.*, 1968-02-24, pp. 40-41.

In a speech made to the Afrikaans Chamber of Business community in Johannesburg in March 1967, Viljoen explained that the founders of the new university had in mind the creation of a strong spirit and character within a defined vision and orientation towards achieving academic goals.²⁰ As part of the dreams and considerations of the time, the founding fathers also expressed their wishes that the RAU would embody the educational and cultural redevelopment and modernisation of the community it would serve – the white Afrikaans speaking community on the Witwatersrand. RAU therefore had to become the central hub in education and modernisation of the Afrikaner identity. Eventually, the new university to be built in Auckland Park had to secure a key position for white Afrikaans speakers in South Africa's future economy.²¹

With the above introduction as background and the realisation that the founders of this new university envisioned the creation of a truly exceptional university, this chapter will now focus on the relationship between modern architecture coupled with innovative teaching methods as reflections of the philosophical and ideological ideals envisioned by the founders.

5.2 Motives for RAU's modern design and innovative teaching outlook, measured against the founding of universities generally

Earlier, Chapter Two's discussion on particularly elements, trends and motivations for the establishment of universities in general, very much apply to this part of Chapter Five. There were indications that global trends²² contributed to RAU's philosophical and ideological sculpting. The trends included: government policies regarding universities; as well as the role of student numbers and the interrelationship between university, government and society.²³ Other trends relating to RAU's establishment included the nature of universities in changing societies, the diverse roles of a university in society and the corporate administration of modern universities. The founders took note of all these elements to create and establish a truly remarkable university.

²⁰ UJ/RAU Archive, Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit collection, File A34/1, Universiteit en Gemeenskap; Toespraak van G. van N. Viljoen, p. 1.

²¹ S. Dubow, *A commonwealth of knowledge: science, sensibility and white South Africa, 1820-2000* (Oxford University Press, New York, 2006), p. 266.

²² J. Elliott et al., *Communities and their universities; the challenges of lifelong learning* (Lawrence and Wishart Limited, London, 1996).

²³ J. Currie and J. Newton, *Universities and Globalization, critical perspectives* (SAGE Publications, London, 1998).

Other elements of a more political nature included a focus on racial differentiation, ethnicity and identity in higher education. These were ideological themes and even motivations for the creation of a new university,²⁴ as was the case with RAU. The university was created in a divided society with the aim of improving the economic and social position of a single section of the population. In studies addressing the topic of motivations for the founding of universities, the focus is consequently on the university and the community it serves and how the university as an institution contributes to the development of society in general.²⁵ In the case of the founding vision of RAU, the intention was not only to have advanced state-of-the-art-infrastructure, but also a culture of teaching methods to educate and uplift white Afrikaans speakers.

Another important element featuring in the founding of universities, as discussed in Chapter Two, is their creation in the confines of a specific society. While universities may have common historical roots, they are deeply embedded in different societies.²⁶ The university therefore reflects the culture of the society in which it exists, and it will inevitably change along with the society it serves.²⁷ RAU, or the University of Johannesburg (UJ) as it is known today, is of course an example of the process of on-going change. The institution has been completely transformed since its establishment in 1968 as an exclusive university for white Afrikaans-speaking students on the Witwatersrand. In 2005, it became a non-racial university (the University of Johannesburg) catering for a highly diverse student community. English became the language of instruction, all owing to the changing political and social environment within which the university operated.²⁸

By keeping the dialogue earlier in mind, the attention now turns to the motives for RAU's modern design and innovative teaching outlook. This will be followed by a discussion on the

²⁴ T. Gallagher, *Education in divided societies* (Palgrave Macmillan, Houndsmills, 2004).

²⁵ E.H. Brookes, *A History of the University of Natal* (University of Natal Press, Pietermaritzburg, 1966), R.F. Currey, *Rhodes University, 1904-1970: a chronicle* (Rustica Press, Grahamstown, 1970), A. Kerr, *Fort Hare 1915-1945; the Evolution of an African College* (Billing & Sons Limited, London, 1968), M. Shear, *Wits: a university in the apartheid era* (Witwatersrand university press, Johannesburg, 1996), B.K. Murray, *Wits the early years: a history of the University of the Witwatersrand Johannesburg and its Precursors 1896-1939* (Witwatersrand University Press, Johannesburg, 1982), B.K. Murray, *Wits the "open" years: the history of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, 1939-1959* (Witwatersrand University Press, Johannesburg, 1997), P.F. van der Schyff, *Wonderdaad...! Die PUK tot 1951: wording, vestiging en selfstandigheid* (Paarl Print Potchefstroom, 2003), E.S. van Eeden, *In U Lig: Die PU vir CHO van selfstandigheid tot samesmelting 1951-2004* (DCom Design Print Signage, Potchefstroom, 2005).

²⁶ P.G. Altbach, *et al.*, *American higher education in the twenty-first century; social, political and economic challenges* (The Johns Hopkins University press, London, 1999), p. 15.

²⁷ P.G. Nel, *Die Universiteit: verlede, hede en toekoms* (Cum-boeke, Roodepoort, 1982), p. 18.

²⁸ E. Brink, *University of Johannesburg: the University for a New Generation* (Craft Print International Ltd., Singapore, 2010).

original philosophical and ideological ideals envisioned for RAU – ideals that highlight the founding fathers' efforts to create RAU in accordance with lessons learnt from global experiences, and in relation to motivations for the founding of universities.

5.3 Motives for RAU's modern design and innovative teaching outlook

5.3.1 International perspective

To determine how the innovative approach (new and creative) to teaching and modern design of RAU complemented its modernising role, it is important to outline the philosophical and ideological ideals envisioned for the university. In doing so, reference will be made to the state of tertiary education internationally and locally in the context of the 1960s, as it informed how the founders of RAU perceived the role of universities in society in general. RAU's founders had the opportunity to learn from the experiences of international universities in their endeavour to create, as they envisaged it, an excellent white Afrikaans university on the Witwatersrand. During the 1960s and 1970s, there were numerous debates, symposia and conferences focusing on the role of the university as an institution and this resulted in universities becoming more introspective regarding their roles in society.²⁹

C Kerr, chairman of the Carnegie Commission for higher education of the USA's Carnegie Foundation and a speaker at a symposium in Geneva in October 1968 that focused on the role of universities in society, reflected on these debates when he stated that the modern university was in crisis. According to him, the role, size and functions of the university in relation to society had changed so much that the need had arisen to completely re-evaluate the university as an institution.³⁰ Student hostility at universities was one manifestation of the crisis. Student disenchantment with the university as an institution, which during the 1960s primarily focused on the administrative and academic operations of universities, related to a demand for more functional teaching, improved relevance of the course material and training that would prepare students for the workplace and greater democratic student participation in the management of the university.³¹ These identified areas enabled RAU's founders to approach the establishment from a freshly informed perspective and with the aim of renewing and

²⁹ H.W. Van der Merwe and D. Welsh, *The future of the university in Southern Africa*, p. vii.

³⁰ P.A. Miescher, *et al.*, *The modern university...*, pp. 8-16.

³¹ UJ/RAU Archive, J. Cronje collection, File A 36/4, Prof G. van N. Viljoen – RAU vestiging, gebouekompleks en ontstaansgeskiedenis, Toespraak gehou deur Prof G. van N. Viljoen tydens die RAU Akademiese wydingsdiens in die Stadskouburg op 1974-03-04, p. 2.

refocusing the ways in which the institution functioned.³² These developments inevitably also informed the philosophical and ideological ideals envisioned for RAU by Viljoen and Meyer as will be seen from the discussion to follow.

5.3.2 The ‘*Universitas* character’ of the university

The first fundamental ideal in the founding of RAU, identified by Meyer and Viljoen, was coined the “*universitas* character” of the university.³³ This term was regularly used by Meyer in documents he wrote as early as the 1950s while dealing with the university’s functioning as a single unit, in which there was a close relationship between lecturer, student, research and university. In many ways, this ideal was informed by the lessons learned from universities internationally. In Viljoen’s mind-set, global neglect of this ideal of the university had contributed to many challenges that needed to be addressed. For Viljoen, the disintegration of the interrelated element or nature of different study fields and courses and, as he called it, “the disappearance of the cross-pollination” between different disciplines and courses contributed to many of the challenges that universities experienced internationally during the 1960s.³⁴

For this reason, according to Viljoen, two questions had to be asked in relation to the planning and establishment of RAU. In the first place, it was necessary to determine what being a university actually entailed. In the second place, it was important to establish what a university should not be. The founders therefore required a good understanding of the concept of the university before they could understand what they envisioned for RAU. It can therefore be concluded that Kerr’s statements during his address at the symposium in Geneva related closely to what the founders of RAU wanted to achieve and that their understanding of this matter formed part of their philosophical point of view. Kerr pointed out that a modern university had to define its position explicitly in society. It needed to evaluate its role, taking into consideration the different forces influencing the modern university as an institution in society in a temporal context. Kerr therefore highlighted the ten different functions of a university as: teaching, professional education, continuing education, research, community

³² F.I.J van Rensburg, “*Sy visie vir die nuwe universiteit*” in B. Louw and F. van Rensburg, *Bestendige binnevuur*, p. 41.

³³ UJ/RAU Archive, P.J. Meyer collection, File C1/2, *Universitas – op weg na die geheel as eenheid*, p. 2.

³⁴ F.I.J van Rensburg, “*Sy visie vir die nuwe universiteit*” in B. Louw and F. van Rensburg, *Bestendige binnevuur*, p. 42.

service, what he called a “talent hunt”, a “child- care” function for specific individuals, dissent or criticism of aspects of society, the university’s role as a cultural centre and the university as an establishment. Although he identified these ten seemingly separate functions, he emphasised the importance of the university’s functioning as a unit.³⁵

This view of unity by Kerr was closely related to the notion of the “universitas character” that Meyer and Viljoen proposed in their philosophical conception of a university that contributed to their vision for RAU. To them, the university was not simply a place where knowledge was merely transferred to students; neither was it a place where new knowledge alone was generated or where knowledge was only made applicable to prepare students for the workplace. Instead, Viljoen’s philosophy of what a university ought to be interwove these three elements of knowledge creation, namely transferal and implementation and emphasising their complementary nature.³⁶ However, simply realising and incorporating this philosophy of equal and interrelated elements into the philosophical foundation for RAU would not in itself make the newly established university innovative and modern.

5.3.3 ‘*Service through knowledge*’

What would indeed make the university innovative, new and modern would be instilling in staff and students the idea that the different elements of a university needed one another and that their potential could only be unlocked once closer “universitas” interaction was made possible. It was therefore important for the “universitas” interaction to become part of the functionality of RAU and especially of its academic operation, yet not excluding its administration. The administrative operation also had to require an active student input.³⁷ The “universitas” interaction would enhance and functionalise the university. Thus, the motto for RAU came about, phrased as ‘*Diens deur Kennis*’ (translated as “Service through Knowledge”). Service through knowledge firstly implies that the student was educated in adequate preparation for his or her service to a career of choice. Secondly, it suggests that this preparation coincides with the needs of the community and employers through the provision of in-house training that always focused on the long-term skills requirements in the country, and that the university training therefore had to be of service to the country as well. Lastly,

³⁵ P.A. Miescher, *et al.*, *The modern university...*, pp. 9-16.

³⁶ P.A. Miescher, *et al.*, *The modern university...*, p. 41.

³⁷ P.A. Miescher, *et al.*, *The modern university...*, pp. 42-45.

“service through knowledge” implied that RAU rendered a service to the country through ongoing research and teaching related to pressing and important issues.³⁸

In conceptualising the “universitas character”, Viljoen identified four important elements that embodied his vision of the foundation and character of the new university. He referred to these as the “four corner pillars” which, according to him, would guide the university on its mission and vision and form an integral part of the philosophy informing the task and role of the new university.³⁹

The first pillar was to ensure the achievement of ensuring the highest standards of academics, science and knowledge. It had to strive to be the best. Not only was RAU required to be acknowledged locally by universities; additionally, there also had to be international recognition.

The second task was to ensure effective character building. It was the university’s task to educate and develop successful students, but they also had to be properly moulded and trained to become future leaders. They therefore had to be equipped with idealism, the willingness to serve and the capacity to develop value systems that would help them cope in a changing country and world.⁴⁰ These students could then play a major role in developing and modernising the white Afrikaans speaker on the Witwatersrand and in the entire South Africa.

The third pillar or task of the new university would be the advancement of the “volksgebondenheid” (group belonging) – a characteristic attributable to its Afrikaans spirit, and sound cultural and religious foundations. This task was in line with the political context of the 1960s and supported by the political structures prominent at the time, because it was based on the principle of exclusivity. The establishers of RAU viewed “volksgebondenheid” as fundamentally vital to the existence and identity of the new university. RAU was thus a university created by white Afrikaans speakers for white Afrikaans speakers. However, Viljoen believed that this exclusivity did imply isolation. He hinted at the idea of the

³⁸ F.I.J. van Rensburg, “Sy visie vir die nuwe universiteit” in B. Louw and F. van Rensburg, *Bestendige binnevuur*, pp. 78-79.

³⁹ F.I.J. van Rensburg, “Sy visie...” in B. Louw and F. van Rensburg, *Bestendige binnevuur*, p. 123.

⁴⁰ F.I.J. van Rensburg, “Sy visie...” in B. Louw and F. van Rensburg, *Bestendige binnevuur*, pp. 123-124.

openness of the new university to all races and language groups in South Africa.⁴¹ In the context of formalised apartheid in the South Africa of the 1960s, this far-sighted view of Viljoen can be viewed as remarkable.

The final fundamental stronghold contributing to RAU's role in society was the promotion of Christian values on all its operational levels.⁴² The university had to function based on Christian values and, in its modern and architectural impressiveness, represent something of the greatness of God and the Christian faith. This was reflected in the "conscience clause" adopted by the founders, based on the then Constitution of South Africa.⁴³

Another philosophical foundation for RAU, formulated by Meyer and Viljoen, was closely related to the university's relationship to the community it served, namely the idea of "reserved participation" in community.⁴⁴ It was decided that the RAU had to serve the white Afrikaans community and be actively involved in solving identified problems and needs with the aim of uplifting that section of the community. Though, Viljoen added, it was necessary to maintain a fine balance between community involvement (the community it serves) and simply agreeing with the views of the community it served. RAU would strive to promote critical and objective thinking and encourage debate, even if the community did not agree with the views it presented.⁴⁵ The founders of RAU made it clear from the start that the university had to be independent in its reasoning and that it had to take the lead in developing new white Afrikaans-speaking leaders who would be critical and analytical in their engagement with the challenges that the modern world presented.⁴⁶

A last philosophical element of the "universitas character" of RAU, focused on the students. To Meyer, this element was important. He defined it as being "*op weg na die geheel as eenheid*" (loosely translated as "on the way to the whole as a unity"). In his document

⁴¹ F.I.J. van Rensburg, "Sy visie..." in B. Louw and F. van Rensburg, *Bestendige binnevuur*, pp. 125-126.

⁴² F.I.J. van Rensburg, "Sy visie..." in B. Louw and F. van Rensburg, *Bestendige binnevuur*, p. 127.

⁴³ UJ library, *Gedenkalbum van die opening van die R.A.U.*, 1968-02-24, Speech by Prof G. van N. Viljoen – Welcoming of the parents of the students, p. 50.

⁴⁴ UJ/RAU Archive, J. Cronje collection, File A 36/4, Prof G. van N. Viljoen – RAU vestiging, gebouekompleks en ontstaansgeskiedenis, Toespraak gehou deur Prof G. van N. Viljoen tydens die RAU Akademiese wydingsdiens in die Stadskouburg getiteld "Die relevantheid van die universiteit" op 1974-03-04, p. 3.

⁴⁵ UJ/RAU Archive, J. Cronje collection, File A 36/4, Prof G. van N. Viljoen – RAU vestiging, gebouekompleks en ontstaansgeskiedenis, p. 3.

⁴⁶ UJ/RAU Archive, J. Cronje collection, File A 36/4, Prof G. van N. Viljoen – RAU vestiging, gebouekompleks en ontstaansgeskiedenis, pp. 3-4.

entitled “Universitas – op weg na die geheel as eenheid”, Meyer identified the students as being at the centre of the university institution. He viewed the university, through all its disciplines and courses, as the way to knowledge, or as he put it “the way to the whole of knowledge as a unity”.⁴⁷ The university therefore not only had the task of educating or training students for specific professions, but also of developing each student in his or her totality. The students, as persons with a language, religious belief, culture, political perspective and a view regarding education, had to be moulded and prepared to be enabled to take control of their lives, professions and roles in the community, country and world. They had to be trained and educated to actively solve problems through study and research.⁴⁸ The university, through its unity in study, research and teaching, would prepare students in their totality, training them to engage with the world, and, moreover, to take the lead.⁴⁹

5.3.3.1 Balancing “white identity” in a “healthy” way

Meyer emphasised the importance of developing and training RAU students to keep up with the modern world, especially in the fields of industry, media and technology. Students had to be developed, trained and prepared for professions in which their adaptation to modernity was fundamental to their ability to cope with their context, both locally and globally.⁵⁰ According to Meyer, white Afrikaans students would only be able to fully take their place in society if the idea of being “on the way to the whole in unity” as embodied in the philosophical ideal envisaged for RAU, was realised.⁵¹

As discussed above, Viljoen and Meyer took the lead among the founders of RAU in determining its philosophical vision and mission, which was fundamentally focused on the university’s functioning as a unity to produce educated white Afrikaans students developed in their fullness. The philosophical vision and mission had to be supported by new and modern teaching methods accommodated in a modern and functional architectural structure that would further enhance and extend the ideological vision and mission envisaged for RAU.

⁴⁷ UJ/RAU Archive, P.J. Meyer collection, File C1/2; Piece written by Meyer – Universitas – op weg na die geheel as eenheid, p. 2.

⁴⁸ UJ/RAU Archive, P.J. Meyer collection, File C1/2; Piece written by Meyer – Universitas – op weg..., pp. 3-4.

⁴⁹ UJ/RAU Archive, P.J. Meyer collection, File C1/2; Piece written by Meyer – Universitas – op weg..., pp. 7-8.

⁵⁰ UJ/RAU Archive, P.J. Meyer collection, File C1/2; Piece written by Meyer – Universitas – op weg..., pp. 7-8; UJ library, *Gedenkalbum van die opening van die R.A.U.*, 1968-02-24. Chancellors’ speech by Dr N. Diederichs, pp. 18, 22-23.

⁵¹ UJ/RAU Archive, P.J. Meyer collection, File C1/2; Piece written by Meyer – Universitas – op weg..., p. 2.

According to this vision and mission, RAU had to be a university created by the white Afrikaans speaker for the white Afrikaans speaker. Ideologically, it had to be established to interpret Afrikaans culture and philosophy.⁵² The conclusion therefore can be drawn that it would promote the language, culture and belief system of the white Afrikaans speaker without blindly following the community's interpretation of this identity.

Since RAU focused so much on the modernising element of the institution and the importance of critical and analytical thinking within it and in South Africa, it was important that the thinking of Afrikaans speakers should keep up with evolving intellectual trends in social, political and economic matters. The university's academic staff did not want to produce, what Viljoen described as, "educated barbarians". With what Viljoen most probably meant not only producing educated professionals, but also professionals who were sensitive to more sophisticated trends and developments in society.⁵³

For this reason, the eventual urban location chosen for the RAU was significant and also linked up with its ideological vision because its creation was regarded as an achievement and breakthrough on the Witwatersrand – an area where the British influence, English language and Jewish traditionally dominated.⁵⁴ RAU was to contribute liberally to the creation of a new Afrikaans identity in this urban environment.⁵⁵ It would therefore be of an Afrikaans nature and to use its academic and scientific programmes to develop the white Afrikaans culture and language in a Christian Nationalist environment. It had to be a university that was Afrikaans in spirit and culture, and where the principles contained in the constitution would be upheld in its academic and scientific programmes and endeavours.⁵⁶ Thus, RAU had an important role to play in the process of modernising Afrikaner identity in the Witwatersrand region. Dr N Diederichs (Chancellor of RAU) also emphasised this important issue at the official opening of the university. He stated that RAU had to ensure, through its intellectual pursuits,

⁵² UJ library, *Gedenkalbum van die opening van die R.A.U.*, 1968-02-24, Chancellors speech by Dr N. Diederichs, p. 19.

⁵³ UJ library, *Gedenkalbum van die opening van die R.A.U.*, 1968-02-24, Chancellors speech by Dr N. Diederichs, p. 48.

⁵⁴ UJ/RAU Archive, Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit collection, File A11/1, Establishment history collection; Interview with Prof S.A. Pauw, rector of the University of South-Africa conducted by Dr O. Geyer, no date or place. (The results of the interview, on request by Pauw, only had to be made available to researchers and others five years after his death) p. 46.

⁵⁵ UJ library, *Gedenkalbum van die opening van die R.A.U.*, 1968-02-24, Chancellors speech by Dr N. Diederichs, p. 48.

⁵⁶ F.I.J. van Rensburg, "Sy visie vir die nuwe universiteit" in B. Louw and F. van Rensburg, *Bestendige binnevuur*, p. 46.

that students should be equipped with the armoury of knowledge to protect the white Afrikaans speaker's future in South Africa.⁵⁷

5.3.3.2 Racial inclusiveness in the founding philosophy?

Although RAU was originally established to mostly meet white Afrikaans speaker needs for higher education on the Witwatersrand and therefore expressed an exclusionary character in the context of the erstwhile apartheid tertiary education system in South Africa, RAU never excluded the possible incorporation of students of other races or language groups. It was in fact envisioned, specifically by Viljoen⁵⁸ that the RAU could also become a home for non-white Afrikaans speakers, black and coloured, if they wished to be associated with the cultural, religious and Afrikaans character of the new university.⁵⁹ Black and coloured student indeed did just that when they associated themselves with the English and the cultural character and colonial legacy attached to (and supported by) historical English universities such as Wits and the University of Cape Town.⁶⁰ Owing to government's persistence at the time to maintain formal apartheid, RAU was allowed to register its first black postgraduate students only in the 1970s. However, by the mid-1980s the first black undergraduate students could register.⁶¹ Although some of the elements of the founders' vision were not politically "acceptable" or "correct" for its time, RAU's creators did not shy away from visualising the possibility of a more open inclusivity in future.

For RAU to be truly modern logistically and infrastructural, it was important to ensure that the philosophical and ideological vision would be supported by new and improved teaching methods and systems. These teaching methods and systems needed to extend and put into practice the philosophical and ideological visions and mission. The impressive architectural design also needed to inculcate and extend new teaching methods to make them functional and meaningful. This would ensure that the university functioned as a single unit, modern for

⁵⁷ UJ library, *Gedenkalbum van die opening van die R.A.U.*, 1968.2.24, Chancellors speech by Dr N. Diederichs, p. 19.

⁵⁸ F.I.J. van Rensburg, "Sy visie..." in B. Louw and F. van Rensburg, *Bestendige binnevuur*, pp. 125-126.

⁵⁹ F.I.J. van Rensburg, "Sy visie..." in B. Louw and F. Van Rensburg, *Bestendige binnevuur*, pp. 47-48.

⁶⁰ H. Philips, *The University of Cape Town 1918-1948: The formative years* (UCT Press, Cape Town, 1993), E.A. Walker, *The South African College and the University of Cape Town* (UCT Press, Cape Town, 1929) and B.K. Murray, *Wits the early years: a history of the University of the Witwatersrand Johannesburg and its precursors 1896-1939* (Witwatersrand University Press, Johannesburg, 1982).

⁶¹ C. Bolsmann and T. Uys, "Pre-empting the challenges of transformation and marketisation of higher education: A case study of the Rand Afrikaans University", *Society in Transition*, 32 (2), 2012, p. 179.

its time. It was geared, first and foremost, to educate and develop the white Afrikaans speaker on the Witwatersrand. Secondly, the university had to be a vehicle for modernising white Afrikaans students and preparing them for the challenges South Africa faced, as well as the challenges presented by the increasingly modern international world.

5.4 Implementing modern architectural design and innovative teaching methods

As an urban university catering for students who, in most cases, would be first generation university students, RAU had to consider that many students would initially require special assistance. Most of them would be day students commuting between home and classes – not residing in student accommodation provided by the university. Many of these students would also have individual personal, economic, social and educational challenges of which the university had to take note. Consequently, student advisory services were put in place. Although not unique to a university, these services were available right from the start, thus implementing what had been learnt from universities overseas.

Furthermore, the university planners, in their efforts to successfully implement innovative teaching methods, did not want students to simply become statistics, disappearing within the student body and the university structures.⁶² All these elements mentioned therefore had to be carefully considered and taken seriously to successfully implement the planned study methods and programmes within the context of a city university right from the start. It was therefore evident from the outset that all the planning – from student assistance and needs, to study methods and programmes – had to take into consideration the urban character of RAU and its students.⁶³ The reality was that the university would not be in the quiet suburban environment associated with that of for example, the University of Stellenbosch or the University of Potchefstroom, or even in a setting like the quiet surroundings of the eastern suburbs where the University of Pretoria was located. RAU was to be situated right at the centre of the great city of Johannesburg, in an area characterised by a competitive environment of concrete and steel where people essentially operated in their own self-centred interest. The urban context contributed to the incorporation of a strong element of a rural

⁶² UJ/RAU Archive, Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit collection, File A34/1, Universiteit en Gemeenskap: Toespraak van G. van N. Viljoen voor die Johannesburgse Afrikaanse Sakekamer, 1967-03-21, p. 4.

⁶³ UJ/RAU Archive, Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit collection, File A34/1, Universiteit en Gemeenskap: Toespraak van G. van N. Viljoen voor die Johannesburgse Afrikaanse Sakekamer, 1967-03-21, p. 3.

layout of the campus grounds and its architectural planning. Here the modern and rural worlds would be juxtaposed, thus reflecting the historical rural heritage of the white Afrikaans speakers who now found themselves in the new urban and, in most cases, alien Witwatersrand.⁶⁴

5.4.1 Innovative learning process

For this urban university (RAU) to be successful and truly modern in its educational mission and vision, it had to ensure that it incorporated the teaching, research and practical elements outlined above into the inquiry-based learning process it envisaged for itself. This learning process also had to develop the total human being as outlined in the philosophical approach envisioned for RAU. It had to take cognisance of the student's educational background, cultural and language orientation, spiritual activities, historical background and engagement with the institution.⁶⁵ It had to ensure – considering the international and local knowledge explosion occurring during the 1960s and subsequently in the field of science and technology – that its programme offerings and teaching methods were always relevant.⁶⁶

Furthermore, RAU needed to ensure on an ongoing basis that students were taught, trained and equipped not only for their various study fields and professions, but were also encouraged and inspired to continue with independent research even after graduating.⁶⁷ For this reason, it was necessary to ensure that the important lecturing part of the study process was of excellent quality. The focus of the institution had to be on quality, functional training and outcomes and not on simply driving an agenda to increase student numbers.⁶⁸ To achieve this objective, the founding fathers envisaged a focus on research in order to acquire insight into knowledge itself.⁶⁹ RAU not only had to be a new white Afrikaans university, but it also aspired to take the lead in the process of renewing teaching methods and learning at

⁶⁴ UJ/RAU Archive, *RAU-Rapport*, 1975-06-08, p. 15.

⁶⁵ UJ/RAU Archive, P.J. Meyer collection, File C1/1, Die beplanning van die Randse Afrikaans Universiteit, p. 10.

⁶⁶ UJ/RAU Archive, Rand Afrikaans University collection, File A34/1, Toespraak van G. van N. Viljoen voor die Johannesburgse Afrikaanse Sakekamer, 1967-03-21, pp. 6-7.

⁶⁷ UJ/RAU Archive, P.J. Meyer collection, File C1/1, Die beplanning van die Randse Afrikaans Universiteit, pp. 6-7.

⁶⁸ UJ/RAU Archive, P.J. Meyer collection, File C1/1, Die beplanning van die Randse Afrikaans Universiteit, p. 8.

⁶⁹ UJ/RAU Archive, P.J. Meyer collection, File C1/6, Die struktuur van die universiteit, p. 1.

university institutions in South Africa.⁷⁰ Viljoen therefore formulated a new term, namely the “futurolological knowledge dimension”,⁷¹ in which the practical outcome would go hand-in-hand with new study and teaching methods. It was hoped that this would contribute to the envisaged renewal of teaching and study methods at universities in South Africa. The focus therefore had to be not only on what was studied and how it should be studied, but also on how that which was studied was determined, and the contribution it had to make to the learning process and to educational outcomes.⁷²

In a speech in which he referred to the relevance of the university in general, Meyer identified several elements required for a new university to be successful. These included: the need for the university to take note of the importance of the “universitas idea”; the relationship a university was to enjoy with the community it served; and the quality of its staff.⁷³ In this regard Viljoen’s, “futurolological knowledge dimension”,⁷⁴ was of vital importance and enhanced Meyer’s vision of the “universitas idea”. This reflected how the founders of RAU envisioned the role of the new institution, especially its modernising element. Over and above the normal elements of knowledge transfer, research and knowledge implementation, this element of “futurolological knowledge” development would occupy an important place in RAU’s functioning and teaching methods. In the context of the time, RAU’s elements were modern. It was modern because it was based on updated research findings as well as well researched teaching practices not only based on established practised methods but implemented with a futuristic vision. This vision allowed for a continuous adaptation and renewal of these teaching practices.

Viljoen considered it vitally important that students be taught to think, to employ scientific methods and to engage in research to solve problems. What was also of vital importance would be to develop the skills through which projections could be made of future knowledge capability and needs.⁷⁵ This would imply – it was hoped – that the student who studied at

⁷⁰ UJ/RAU Archive, *Anvil* (Aambeeld), *RAU: A Return Flight*, 31 (2), p. 6.

⁷¹ UJ/RAU Archive, J. Cronje collection, File A 36/4, Prof G. van N. Viljoen – RAU vestiging, gebouekompleks en ontstaansgeskiedenis, pp. 1-4.

⁷² UJ/RAU Archive, J. Cronje collection, File A 36/4, Prof G. van N. Viljoen – RAU vestiging..., pp. 5-7.

⁷³ UJ/RAU Archive, J. Cronje collection, File A 36/4, Prof G. van N. Viljoen – RAU vestiging..., pp. 1-4.

⁷⁴ UJ/RAU Archive, J. Cronje collection, File A 36/4, Prof G. van N. Viljoen – RAU vestiging..., p. 7.

⁷⁵ UJ/RAU Archive, JJ Cronje collection, File A 36/4, Prof G. van N. Viljoen – RAU vestiging..., p. 6.

RAU would be trained to always be a step ahead in the search for new knowledge and in the way this knowledge was acquired and applied.⁷⁶

It was therefore important for Viljoen to not only produce students who finished their studies, but students who would continue to be students in order to keep abreast of a demanding and advancing world,⁷⁷ an idea that Kerr earlier articulated in Geneva.⁷⁸ This had to enable white Afrikaans speakers to excel in their respective professions which, in turn, would contribute to the development and modernising of white Afrikaans speakers particularly on the Witwatersrand and in South Africa in general.

5.4.2 New administrative systems to complement innovative teaching methods

In the context of the scientific learning process under the leadership and guidance of Viljoen, the founders and new administrators introduced new administrative systems⁷⁹ that would directly support the new anticipated courses and teaching methods forming the basis of the scientific learning process and innovating teaching methods. New systems could be introduced because it was a new university – one at which it was easy to implement new systems right from the start, rather than to radically change traditional systems and teaching methods. That 45 percent of students at Afrikaans universities at the time could not complete their studies within the minimum prescribed time frame plus an additional two years, presented Viljoen with reason for concern.⁸⁰ He therefore expressed the view that there was a need to develop new systems and methods to attempt to address the issue.⁸¹

In the context of establishing of this new university, the possibility and need for introducing new administrative, teaching and learning methods, were of vital importance to not only ensure the success of RAU, but also to aim for a reduction in the 45 percent fallout figure. Furthermore, the process of rethinking and implementing new teaching methods had to take

⁷⁶ UJ/RAU Archive, Rand Afrikaans University collection, File A34/1, Talk by G. van N. Viljoen on the programme “Top Level” on Springbok Radio titled “There are challenges in planning a new university”, p. 6.

⁷⁷ UJ/RAU Archive, Rand Afrikaans University collection, File A34/1, Talk by G. van N. Viljoen on the programme “Top Level”, p. 6.

⁷⁸ P.A. Miescher, *et al.*, *The modern university...*, p. 11.

⁷⁹ These would for example include multiple semester system, two exam opportunities, lecturing methods such as creative and flexible teaching and learning styles.

⁸⁰ F.I.J. van Rensburg, “Sy visie vir die nuwe universiteit” in B. Louw and F. Van Rensburg, *Bestendige binnevuur*, pp. 47-48.

⁸¹ A.F. Steyn en P. Maree, *Akademiese vernuwing* in B. Louw and F. van Rensburg, *Bestendige binnevuur*, p. 54.

cognisance of two elements which always had to be taken into consideration. The first would be to ensure that academic excellence was achieved and the second was to ensure that the socio-cultural context of white Afrikaans speaker, who featured prominently in the high fall-out rate of students in their first years generally at Afrikaans universities, was always taken into consideration.⁸²

RAU's new systems and methods to address study and teaching methods, administrative processes and a reduction in the general fallout rate of students, were so innovative that members of staff were invited by other universities to address to talk on these new innovative initiatives.⁸³

5.4.3 Innovative teaching methods

5.4.3.1 Multi-semester system

The first administrative system introduced, and which formed part of the new study methods, was a multi-semester system. This system was introduced to avoid the traditional slow start of the academic year in February and the students' usual rude awakening at the end of the year in the form of a single final exam. Many students, imagining the year to be long, failed to work seriously right from the beginning of the year. Thus, in many cases, the old single semester system would determine the student's academic success. The new system, on the other hand, was introduced to ensure the optimum and economical use of the study period. The academic year would effectively be longer, and could therefore be used more productively.⁸⁴

During a normal calendar year, reality entailed that faculties could stand empty for at least three months and this equalled academic time wasted. With the new system, this fallow period was reduced by the introduction of a third semester at the beginning of the year before the first semester began.⁸⁵ This ensured that students who did not make progress or failed to

⁸² A.F. Steyn en P. Maree, *Akademiese vernuwing* in B. Louw and F. Van Rensburg, *Bestendige binnevuur*, pp. 54-55.

⁸³ F.I.J. Van Rensburg, 'n Universiteit gaan skep, in *Aambeeld – RAU*, 31 (2), p. 6.

⁸⁴ UJ library, *Gedenkalbum van die opening van die R.A.U.*, 1968-02-24, Speech by Prof G. van N. Viljoen – Welcoming of the parents of the students, p. 51.

⁸⁵ UJ/RAU Archive, *Anvil (Aambeeld)*, *RAU: A Return Flight*, 31 (2), p. 7.

apply themselves could be sent away in the early part of the year rather than only at the end.⁸⁶ The system also made provision for the implementation of two meaningful yet distinguishable semester units, allowing for a shift to a higher level of abstraction from the first to the second. Each semester would be characterised by two assessment opportunities and an exam at the end of that semester.⁸⁷

5.4.3.2 Teaching methods

From its beginnings, the planners and local universities considered RAU to have taken the lead in an innovative South African teaching system that was both modern and effective. Not only was the teaching system new, flexible and creative, but it placed a high premium on responsible teaching that simply implied that lecturers had to adhere to their lecturing plan, content and tutoring.⁸⁸ A standing teaching committee was established to provide support and was enriched by hosting regular symposia on the various facets of modern teaching.

The Standing Teaching Committee's establishment of high and modern teaching standards formed the bedrock of the modern teaching and learning process at RAU. The objectives of this committee were to ensure a high standard of teaching excellence through the delivery of quality teaching material. This process was based on the university's provision of a study document to each student containing core notes. This document was known as a study guide, which was revised every three years, to ensure that its content kept up with the most recent knowledge developments in the various fields of science. The study guide would, moreover, be used by the lecturer to develop the subject matter in a conversational way, a method ensuring the student's orientation with respect to the study material and that the student could enhance his or her study through additional material obtainable from the library and, subsequently, available on the internet.⁸⁹

In addition, students were required to attend all their classes because only then would it be possible for them to fully understand the subject matter. It was furthermore anticipated that

⁸⁶ UJ/RAU Archive, J. Cronje collection – File A36/4 of Prof G. van N. Viljoen titled Vestiging, geboubeplanning en ontstaansgeskiedenis, Speech by Viljoen in front of the Municipality of Brakpan on 1969-10-12, titled Die Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit en die Munisipaliteit van Brakpan, p. 1.

⁸⁷ UJ/RAU Archive, *Anvil* (Aambeeld), *RAU: A Return Flight*, 31 (2), p. 7.

⁸⁸ UJ/RAU Archive, J. Cronje collection – File A36/4 of Prof G. van N. Viljoen, titled Vestiging, geboubeplanning en ontstaansgeskiedenis, p. 2.

⁸⁹ UJ/RAU Archive, *Anvil* (Aambeeld), *RAU: A Return Flight*, 31 (2), p. 7.

the study process had to be characterised by a two-way conversation between the lecturer and the student. The learning process would not be characterised by the lecturer speaking and the student taking notes; rather, it had to be characterised by students preparing for lectures through the guidelines provided in the study guide and through required additional reading. The student would be able to engage with the content and the lecturer in an intellectual manner through a process of instruction, critical content analysis, questions and answers.⁹⁰ The modernisation of the study process in terms of the content could be found in the provision of study material that was based on carefully selected content material in which the overall aim was not just to provide fact after fact, but to focus on method and fundamental principles.⁹¹

5.4.3.3 Small Group Classes/Tutorials

An integral part of the innovative teaching and learning process contained in the modern approach⁹² at RAU was the introduction of small-group/tutorial classes, now known as tutorials. Central to these classes was a dialogical element in which a closer conversation between the student and lecturer or facilitator could be achieved. Communication involved not only topic-specific content, but also related to problems students might experience with the subject matter, its compilation or even its approach. It was believed that this structure (and its implementing to ensure state of the art venues) would improve the quality of the study content and the way it was applied in the teaching and learning process.⁹³ Group (tutorial) classes were not only introduced as a new method in the teaching process, but they were also intensively researched in symposiums dealing with group dynamics and studying the elements of group functioning. Its introduction and implementation was characterised by ongoing training for lecturers and especially student assistants.⁹⁴ The Bureau for Higher Education established at RAU played an important part in conducting research on university systems worldwide to enable RAU to keep up with what was happening internationally.⁹⁵

⁹⁰ UJ library, *Gedenkalbum van die opening van die R.A.U.*, 1968-02-24, Speech by Prof G. van N. Viljoen – Welcoming of the parents of the students, pp. 53-55.

⁹¹ UJ/RAU Archive, Rand Afrikaans University collection, File 34/1, Letter from Prof G. van N. Viljoen to Dr O. Geyer, 1967-06-22, pp. 4-5.

⁹² Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit: Die taak van die RAU as stadsuniversiteit. Enkele hoogtepunte uit die vyfjaarfees van die RAU, p. 23.

⁹³ UJ/RAU Archive, *Anvil* (Aambeeld), *RAU: A Return Flight*, 31 (2), p. 7.

⁹⁴ A.F. Steyn en P. Maree, *Akademie vernuwing* in B. Louw and F. van Rensburg, *Bestendige binnevuur*, pp. 60-61.

⁹⁵ UJ/RAU Archive, *Anvil* (Aambeeld), *RAU: A Return Flight*, 31 (2), p. 8.

This bureau was also intensely involved in ongoing training regarding the offering of tutorial classes.⁹⁶

RAU was also a leader in physical planning. The first main element discussed above that formed an integral part in the planning of RAU, namely the “universitas” idea, was given creative and material meaning through the concept of “centralisation” integral to the architectural planning. This ensured that the philosophical and ideological ideals, such as “Universitas character”, high academic standards, character formation and identity moulding, combined with new teaching and learning methods could be creatively realised through a modern and functional architectural environment.

5.5 Innovative architectural design

5.5.1 Modern approach in construction

The planning of universities after World War II reflected dramatic advancement and a deliberate moving away from traditional and outdated building patterns and principles. This shift was stimulated by the development of new technological advancements in building techniques and styles in conjunction with newly available and abundant modern building materials and techniques. The original design of RAU was based on the availability of new building materials and techniques as well as on thorough research that included obtaining information regarding the latest developments in university planning and a vision that took future projections into account,⁹⁷ including future expansion due to increases in student numbers and courses. Planning took into consideration these growths, but the major focus would always be on academic achievement. The physical planning and establishment of RAU would focus on “the expression of an idea”, an idea both big and impressive. Meyer, a leading architect appointed by the university senate, had the following in mind regarding this idea and the importance of the interrelationship between academic and architectural planning: he wanted the academic planning to take a physical form that had to resemble a glove fitted

⁹⁶ A.F. Steyn en P. Maree, *Akademiese vernuwing* in B. Louw and F. van Rensburg, *Bestendige binnevuur*, p. 61.

⁹⁷ UJ/RAU Archive, J.B.Z. Louw collection, File A128/1, Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit – Fisiese beplanning, p. 1.

to a hand.⁹⁸ RAU therefore had to be perfectly aligned in its planning and functionality. It needed to function as a single entity.

Modernising Afrikaner identity was the main driving force in the aims, planning and eventual establishment of RAU. The new university, moreover, would endeavour to expose white Afrikaans students to modern thought to achieve the modernising goal it envisioned.⁹⁹ It was also apparent from the start that the university's planning would be characterised by an intensive long-term business plan, an indication of the thorough research and professionalism that went into the planning.¹⁰⁰ To the creators of RAU, it was also important that the original planning would take into account future expansion and development to ensure that these could take place with minimal disruption of the academic programme and not interfere with the design or unity of the building, which was of both a classical and a modern nature.¹⁰¹

Important to the planning of RAU was the significance accorded to the interrelationship between academic and educational activities, and the functionality of the buildings in which these activities would take place.¹⁰² Indeed, the university's founders and planners attached great value to the close-knit relationship between the academic, philosophical and ideological ideals envisioned, and how the physical planning would complement and strengthen these ideals.¹⁰³ RAU's design was therefore not only the responsibility of appointed architects and founders like Meyer and Viljoen, since other stakeholders, specifically lecturers, also contributed. At several constructive meetings, lecturers were given the opportunity to express their views and needs regarding the physical layout of the university.¹⁰⁴ The planning process involved in RAU were characterised by three modern innovative elements. The first was that it would be an urban university with elements of a rural character. The second very important element was the centralisation framework which would embody the functionality and inner

⁹⁸ UJ/RAU Archive, J. Cronje collection, File A 36/3, Onderhoud argitekte op 1981-11-26, tussen mnr J. Cronje en die twee hoofargitekte van die RAU, nl. mnre W. Meyer en J. van Wyk te RAU in Johannesburg, p. 13.

⁹⁹ *SIGNUM*, RAU 10 Jaar 1968-1978, p. 5.

¹⁰⁰ *SIGNUM*, RAU 10 Jaar 1968-1978, p.7.

¹⁰¹ UJ/RAU Archive, P.J. Meyer collection, File C1/2, Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit – Gebouebeplanning – Oorwegings met die fisiese beplanning van die RAU, p. 1.

¹⁰² W. Peters, "(Rand Afrikaans) University of Johannesburg, Kingsway Campus", *Journal of the South African Institute of Architects South Africa*, May/June, 2011, pp. 2-3.

¹⁰³ UJ/RAU Archive, P.M.S. von Staden collection, File C2, 12/3/1, Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit – Ontwikkelingsplan (Totaalplan) Aucklandpark, Johannesburg, Verslag van argitekte se besoek aan oorsese universiteite, p. 3.

¹⁰⁴ UJ/RAU Archive, *Anvil* (Aambeeld), *RAU: A Return Flight*, 31 (2), 2006, p. 9.

working of this university and the third element was the concrete symbolism which would represent permanence. These elements will be discussed below.

5.5.2 An urban university with a rural character

As first element to be highlighted in a discussion of the architectural planning of RAU and its role in the university's modernising project was the decision to establish an urban university with a rural character. This was because it was believed that white Afrikaans students still had strong cultural links to their rural background and therefore had to feel at home in a university situated in the heart of Johannesburg. Rural characteristics combined with impressive monumental buildings in a semi-circular form, complemented by a rolling landscape centring around an amphitheatre and fountains, created a calming yet inspiring atmosphere.¹⁰⁵ There had to be a natural relationship between city, university and rural landscaping, bringing together the old and the new.¹⁰⁶

5.5.3 Centralisation framework and functionality

A second element was the framework within which the new university had to be realised. From the start, it was made clear that a fragmented campus with buildings housing different faculties and scattered over a large area, with a design like that of other South African university campuses at the time, would not be an option. Centralisation was the main concept informing RAU's planning. The architectural planning needed a framework that would accommodate an unknown future. It needed, moreover, to be of a revolutionary nature. The new campus would represent an integrated town in a broad, decentralised network of global intellectual contact.¹⁰⁷

For this reason, the ideogram for the RAU campus would make provision for immediate and planned long-term academic accommodation, which at that point was restricted to five types. These types included flat-floor spaces for seminars, tutorials and discussions, raked-floor lecture theatres, offices for academic staff, laboratories and service areas.¹⁰⁸ For Meyer and the other planners, the linear and orthogonal framework had severe drawbacks, one of which

¹⁰⁵ UJ/RAU Archive, *RAU-Rapport*, 1975-06-08, p. 15.

¹⁰⁶ UJ library, *Gedenkalbum van die opening van die R.A.U.*, 1968-02-24, Speech by Dr N. Diederichs, pp. 18-21.

¹⁰⁷ W.O. Meyer, *Die idee agter die argitektuur* in B. Louw and F. van Rensburg, *Bestendige binnevuur*, p. 71.

¹⁰⁸ W. Peters, "(Rand Afrikaans) University of Johannesburg, Kingsway Campus", *Journal of the South African Institute of Architects South Africa*, 2011, pp. 3-4.

was that with future expansion and developments the physical limits of the university would be progressively distanced from any central or symbolic space. This would mean that the functionality of the building would be affected because the time taken to move from point A to point B would progressively become longer, thus affecting functionality and efficiency. For this reason Van Wijk, one of the architects, suggested that the two ends of the building be turned towards each other to create a 'U' shape. Meyer drew up a 'U' shape plan, which gave birth to the horseshoe shape eventually characterised the RAU building.¹⁰⁹ This shape immediately improved the functionality of the architectural planning in that it increased the centralised activities. It also complemented the envisioned harmonious relationship between academic activities and architectural layout. In addition, the seven-floor construction increased the centralised functional character because it created the opportunity to bring departments and faculties closer together to enhance the cross-pollination envisioned in academic activities.¹¹⁰

5.5.4 Concrete and symbolism

The third element important to RAU's physical planning was the vision of a massive concrete building symbolising strength, permanence and modernity. The concrete building structure was complex yet functional in materialising the concept of a "university" based on a centralised philosophy in which contact, physical communication and togetherness were of great importance. The new and modern building was designed to enable contact to be achieved through minimal effort and time spent moving from one area to the next. The symbolic value of the massive buildings, unyieldingly strong and secure, furthermore reflected the presence of the white Afrikaans speaker on the Witwatersrand, who was not only there to stay but also to contribute to society in a manner based on modern approaches and thinking.¹¹¹ The massive walking areas, exhibition areas on the ground floor and impressive balconies, in addition to the impressive library, state-of-the-art laboratories, areas for student activities and learning, and recreational and shopping areas, also illustrated the modern approach taken in the establishment of RAU.¹¹² The horseshoe shape, according to Prof HS Pelser (senior member of staff), at the time of the official opening of the new

¹⁰⁹ W. Peters, "(Rand Afrikaans) University of Johannesburg, Kingsway Campus", p. 4.

¹¹⁰ UJ/RAU Archive, J.B.Z. Louw collection, File A128/1, Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit – Fisiese beplanning, pp. 1-2.

¹¹¹ UJ/RAU Archive, J.B.Z. Louw collection, File A128/1, Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit – Fisiese beplanning, p. 2.

¹¹² UJ/RAU Archive, J.B.Z. Louw collection, File A128/1, Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit – Fisiese beplanning, pp. 2;4;8; 12-13;14 and 19.

campus, was symbolic because it represented an invitation and openness to the outside community to partake in the activities of the university.¹¹³ This explanation stood in stark contrast to Dubow's recent uninformed observation that the RAU campus resembled an urban laager in the centre of Johannesburg,¹¹⁴ laagers being associated with keeping the outside world at bay and isolating and protecting the white Afrikaans speaker from its influence.

RAU's construction was indeed the expression of an idea, one shaped around six basic directives that the planners gave the architects regarding how this new and modern university would come to fruition. In the first place, the building had to resemble an Afrikaans Christian character. This had to be reflected in the greatness, strength and durability of the high-rise buildings. Secondly, it had to reflect new and improved ideas adapted to the needs of a new Afrikaans urban university that celebrated its community's heritage and yet was founded on modern initiatives drawn from around the world. Thirdly, it had to make provision for unrestricted architectural expansion and improvement. In the fourth instance, it had to be functional, displaying harmonious unity between the classical and the modern, and allowing the student to experience the "universitas" spirit envisioned for RAU. Fifthly, it would develop into an academic and cultural centre in which the Afrikaans artist would be given the opportunity to express and develop his or her talent. Finally, RAU had to keep up with modern developments academically and in architecture and construction to embody ongoing development and progress in a modern and evolving global village.¹¹⁵ Its architectural planning would ensure its centrality in the project of modernising Afrikaner identity.

RAU campus 1975¹¹⁶



¹¹³ UJ/RAU Archive, *RAU-Rapport*, 1975-06-08, p. 2.

¹¹⁴ S Dubow, *A commonwealth of knowledge*, pp. 264-265.

¹¹⁵ UJ/RAU Archive, P.J. Meyer collection, File C1/2, Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit – Geboubeplanning, p. 1.

¹¹⁶ UJ/RAU Archive, *RAU-Rapport*, 1975-06-08, p. 10.

5.6 Conclusion

From the discussions in this chapter, it is evident that the founders and planners of RAU wanted to establish a university that would function as the “expression of an idea”. This idea incorporated specific educational needs and expectations, including Christian religious values and ideological beliefs that would inform the education, development and modernisation of the white Afrikaans speaker on the Witwatersrand. The planning of the new, modern Afrikaans university was influenced by elements of Dutch and German university models that represented Western university tradition. This simply meant that the managerial, administrative and academic styles had to be the same as the German and Dutch counterparts in terms of the role of the chancellor and rector, deans of faculties and HODs of academic departments. Academic courses and degrees would also be like those of Western university tradition.¹¹⁷

Research conducted during visits to universities around the world furthermore ensured that the university idea was approached from a fresh angle and that common errors could be avoided in planning the creation of RAU. For the founders, the university needed to be impressive, new and modern. It would reflect a specific philosophical and ideological perspective that would also be visible in its architectural appearance, which would combine classical and modern elements.¹¹⁸ The centralization principal in construction and building would become the core element in planning the new university, thus moving away from the outdated way of scattering buildings to house departments and faculties over a large area. The “universitas” principle, along with the centralised principle used in the construction of RAU, would be developed to its full potential and would be pivotal to the way in which the university would function.

The philosophical and ideological vision and mission of the RAU focused fundamentally on producing white Afrikaans students who would be educated and moulded in their totality to serve their country. The founders furthermore viewed the “volksgebondenheid” character as fundamentally vital to the existence and identity of the new university. RAU was thus a

¹¹⁷ UJ library, *Gedenkalbum van die opening van die R.A.U.*, 1968-02-24, pp. 12, 48-52.

¹¹⁸ UJ/RAU Archive, P.M.S. von Staden collection, File C2, 12/3/1, Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit – Ontwikkelingsplan, UJ/RAU A11: Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit collection, File A34/1, Universiteit en Gemeenskap, Toespraak deur G. van N. Viljoen, p. 1., K. Minoque, *The concept of a university* (Transaction Publishers, New Brunswick, 2005). W.R. Niblett, “Recent trends in British higher education”, *The School Review*, 86 (1), 1977, pp. 87-89.

university created by white Afrikaans speakers for white Afrikaans speakers. However, Viljoen believed that this exclusivity did not mean isolation. He hinted on the idea of the openness of the new university to all races and language groups in the South Africa if they so wished to be associated with the cultural, religious and Afrikaans character of the new university. Within the context of a formalised apartheid South Africa in the 1960s, this far sighted view of Viljoen was, however only realised much later.¹¹⁹

New and modern teaching methods and systems became important elements of the new university, a university created by and for white Afrikaans speakers. RAU would be a university that would interpret and develop Afrikaans thought through critical and analytical thinking, and that would discourage the mentality of blind-following or herd-mentality. Furthermore, its educational focus would be on quality, functional training and on long-term outcomes. RAU's founders, working to create a new university among established universities, wanted to take the lead in developing and introducing new teaching methods and systems.¹²⁰ They also sought international recognition. Modernising Afrikaner identity would be both the short and long-term goal of this newly established university. What follows in Chapter Six is a discussion on language and religion at RAU. These two elements formed important characteristics of RAU.

¹¹⁹ F.I.J. van Rensburg, "Sy visie vir die nuwe universiteit" in B. Louw and F. Van Rensburg, *Bestendige binnevuur*, pp. 47-48.

¹²⁰ UJ/RAU Archive, P.J. Meyer collection, File C1/6, Die struktuur van die universiteit, p. 1.

Chapter 6

The language and religion protocol at RAU

6.1 Introduction

The motivation for the founding of RAU was mainly to provide a tertiary institution for white Afrikaans-speaking students in the Witwatersrand area, which included the West Rand that consisted of Krugersdorp, Randfontein and Roodepoort, as well as the East Rand with Benoni, Boksburg, Brakpan, Germiston, Kemptonpark and Springs and the Johannesburg area that included Randburg, Sandton, Braamfontein, Aucklandpark and Melville.¹ By the early 1960s, the total number of white Afrikaans speakers on the Rand was 333 280, on the West Rand 73 349, on the East Rand 136 328 and in the Johannesburg area 123 603.² During the same time the number of English speakers on the Rand was 417986, on the West Rand 37052, on the East Rand 96823 and in Johannesburg 284111. Percentage wise white Afrikaans speakers on the Rand represented an increase of a 100 percent, on the West Rand 22,0 percent, on the East Rand 40,9 percent and in the Johannesburg area they represented 37.1 percent of the total white population.³

Mother-tongue education was fundamental to the development of inculcating the proposed institution. This chapter investigates how mother-tongue education in the context of Christian values formed part of, and impacted on, the ideological and philosophical ideals envisaged for RAU. In previous chapters several dynamic aspects were discussed that inspired and contributed to the founding of RAU. Attention was also given to numerous achievements of the founders in the realisation of their objectives with the new university. A brief recapitulation is therefore necessary to contextualise the discussion of the role of mother-tongue education and the Christian values at RAU.

The first dynamic referred to was the need to establish an exclusive university to mainly advance the language, culture and religion of white Afrikaans speakers. It was based on the

¹ E.L.P. Stals, *et al.*, *Afrikaners in die Goudstad, deel 2 1924-1961* (HAUM Opvoedkundige Uitgewery, Pretoria, 1986), pp. 18-21.

² E.L.P. Stals, *et al.*, *Afrikaners in die Goudstad*, p. 20.

³ E.L.P. Stals, *et al.*, *Afrikaners in die Goudstad*, pp. 19-21.

perceived higher educational needs of this specific group. The apparently disadvantaged educational status of numerous white Afrikaans speakers on the Witwatersrand was fundamentally embedded in their economic, political and social history. This was a long history extending back to the suffering of Afrikaners associated with the South African War (1899-1902) and the social economic hardships that ensued in the post-cellum period.⁴

White Afrikaans speakers were literally compelled by poverty to move increasingly to the Witwatersrand in the hope of finding employment after the war, as a result of the endemic and persistent economic hardship prevailing in the rural environment. Sadly, this move merely worsened their precarious economic and social status, which was largely aggravated by the low level of education. They had been culturally marginalised by circumstances in the urban areas and it was up to their cultural leadership, the clergy and educationists, to make them aware of their educational need – one was the need for an Afrikaans university.⁵ The editor of the Afrikaans newspaper *Die Vaderland* described this awareness as a “hunkering na hierdie daad (wat) ... vêr (lê) in die hart van die Goudstad-Afrikaner.”⁶ (*a hankering for this action (that) ... (lies) deep in the heart of the Afrikaner in the City of Gold*). White Afrikaans speakers required access to higher education in their mother tongue, which, it was believed, could contribute to their advancement. The process of addressing that need was strongly driven by their desire and expectation to overcome their economic backwardness in relation to the social and economic status of English-speaking communities on the Witwatersrand. It was in this context and lack of higher education in their mother tongue that the need for an Afrikaans university grew. At this point in time it was mainly the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits) and the University of Cape Town (UCT) that provided tertiary education, but with English as the medium of instruction. This resulted in increasing pressure during the 1930s from Afrikaans students and subsequent governments to encourage Wits and the UCT to introduce bilingualism in their course offerings. A special committee was established to investigate this matter. The result was a limited parallel medium instruction which did not last for long. During the late 1940s the need for Afrikaans tertiary education continued supported by the increase in Afrikaans primary and secondary schools.⁷

⁴ See Chapter 4 pp. 74-75 for statistical information on population growth.

⁵ Heritage Foundation Archive (HFA), File, AB 12/256, Boks no. 3/1/7, Onderwys: die taak, p. 1.

⁶ *Die Vaderland*, 1966-05-02.

⁷ E.L.P. Stals, *et al.*, *Afrikaners in die Goudstad*, pp. 140-142.

However, the move to the Witwatersrand did bring an end to the so-called geographical isolation of the white Afrikaans speaker, or the isolation of their *Boerevolk* (farming folk) character.⁸ In the 1950s and early 1960s they were a socially, economically and politically disadvantaged grouping on the Witwatersrand. Their aspiration was to become modern and be uplifted through the availability of appropriate higher education in their mother tongue. RAU would play a crucial role in this regard. The new university boasted new educational and administrative methods, specifically aimed at addressing the difficulties experienced of the “backward *Boerevolk*” in securing a more sophisticated identity – that of an educated white Afrikaans speaker who was ready and willing to learn and subsequently lead. There was a vision to facilitate, through educational opportunities. They were in a phase of a “second Great Trek” from the rural areas to the city, and from farming to big business, with modernisation as the primary aim.⁹ To achieve this goal, attention had to be given to Afrikaans history, culture, religion and especially language, combined with high standards. In the process academic education would be an important instrument.

As of the 1950s there was a second dynamic factor driving the establishment of the RAU. This was the belief that white Afrikaans speaking students needed to be shielded from liberal views, thoughts and influences, especially those emanating from the Wits.¹⁰ The editor of *The Star*, pointing out that the new university would counteract the so-called “liberalism” of Wits, argued that this would be an intellectual rallying point for the founders.¹¹ In the conservative NP ideology of the time, liberal influences, even those of white Afrikaans speakers, were generally viewed as destructive to the unity and continued existence of white Afrikaans speakers in South Africa.¹² Fear of liberal influence therefore served as further motivation for establishing a white Afrikaans university that had to promote white Afrikaans cultural and Christian values.

A third dynamic factor influencing RAU’s establishment was the founders’ view that the university would form part of the NP’s educational vision in which white Afrikaans speakers would be uplifted, equipped, mobilised and modernised economically and socially. The university had to become a stronghold of knowledge to empower white Afrikaans speaking

⁸ H.W. van der Merwe, *et al.*, *Identiteit en verandering* (Tafelberg-uitgewers, Kaapstad, 1975), p. 45.

⁹ M.A. Beale, “Apartheid goals in the 1960s: the creation of the University of Port Elizabeth and the Rand Afrikaans University”, Seminar paper delivered at the University of the Witwatersrand on the 6th of March 1995, p. 20.

¹⁰ I. Wilkens and H. Strydom, *The Super Afrikaners* (Jonathan Ball, Johannesburg, 1978), p. 423.

¹¹ *The Star*, 1966-05-06.

¹² P.S. Dreyer, *Afrikaner-Liberalisme* (Boekenhout-uitgewers, Pretoria, 1977), pp. 1-23.

students on the Witwatersrand. Through access to knowledge, RAU had to inspire Afrikaans students with confidence and the need to make progress in the city with its characteristic modern environment. The university had to simultaneously empower them through the acknowledgment and acceptance, locally and internationally.¹³ Knowledge therefore had to become a tool to ensure a better future for white Afrikaans speakers.¹⁴

Knowledge – based on well-defined ideological and philosophical ideals – would be acquired in a secure environment of linguistic, cultural and religious development, where advancement and modernisation had to be the fundamental goal. RAU not only had to be an institution representing the language, culture and religion of white Afrikaans speakers, but a force creating their new and modern identity on the Witwatersrand, the economic heartland of South Africa.¹⁵ That RAU was conceptualised as an institution representing the language, culture and religion of white Afrikaans speakers. The institution would also contribute to the realisation of its founders' desire for it to represent an impressive modernising drive. This magnificence would be achieved by the architectural design as well as the academic and administrative planning, all of which were based on the “expression of an idea” rooted in the history of the group. The institution's splendour further had to signify the bold presence of the white Afrikaans speakers on the Witwatersrand, and especially in Johannesburg.

Afrikaner nationalist ideology, supported and promoted by the NP during the period in question, was fundamentally driven by the principle of unity. This principle was characterised by the unity of one race, one culture, one religion and, very importantly, one language.¹⁶ The unity principle became another factor in RAU's establishment and was specifically related to the centralising principle that characterised the planning and construction of the university. The unity principle further manifested itself in the “universitas” and centralised principle discussed in the previous chapter. This centralised and unified principle evolved and developed from the specific philosophical and ideological aims envisaged for RAU.

¹³ UJ library, *Gedenkalbum van die opening van die R.A.U.*, 1968-02-24, Speech by Prof G. van N. Viljoen – Welcoming of the parents of the students, p. 51.

¹⁴ M.A. Beale, “Apartheid goals in the 1960's”, pp. 19-20.

¹⁵ M.A. Beale, “Apartheid goals in the 1960's”, p. 19; UJ/RAU Archive, Johannesburg, P.M.S von Staden collection, File C2/12/1/2, Toespraak gelewer deur Dr C. de Wet, LV vir Vanderbijlpark voor die jaarlikse dinee van die Albertonse Rapportryerskorps in die stasierestaurant, Johannesburg, op 1963-11-07, p. 13.

¹⁶ D. Lavin, “The dilemma of Christian-National Education in South Africa”, *The World Today*, 21 (10), 1965, pp. 429-430.

After 1948, but specifically during the 1950s and 1960s, the emerging white Afrikaans speaker identity was an important driving force. It had to ensure the survival and future of the group, especially on the Witwatersrand. Upliftment and mother-tongue instruction were prerequisites for the advancement of this group from primary to tertiary education. The creation of an exclusive Afrikaans university that would function in accordance with “universitas” unity could act as a shield against liberalism. There would be modernisation and a modern Afrikaans identity could emerge. One mechanism to accomplish this was through mother-tongue education at secondary and tertiary education levels – based on Christian values. This chapter will now investigate the important role mother-tongue education played in the creation of RAU. Moreover, it will focus on mother-tongue education in the context of Christian values contributed to the ideological and philosophical ideals envisaged for RAU.

6.2 Mother-tongue education at RAU and the formation of a unique white Afrikaans speaker identity

6.2.1 Introduction

Johnson argues that education fulfils a core and most basic function in all civilised societies; for example, it transfers culture, trains people for specialised roles and is a force of change and continuity. He states:¹⁷

How these functions are fulfilled[,] varies from society to society and even at different times within the same society depending upon the character of the economy, the family, the political organisation, and the religion.

The discourse, thus far draws on Johnson’s conclusions. RAU’s establishment serves as an example of how a specific group in a given cultural environment endeavoured to realise these functions.

The founding of RAU was driven by the goal to meet the needs of white Afrikaners and to realise their ambitions, particularly those of urban white Afrikaans speakers on the Witwatersrand.¹⁸ The fulfilment of these ambitions would be achieved through the creation of

¹⁷ W.R. Johnson, “Education: keystone of apartheid”, *Anthropology and Education Quarterly*, 13 (3), 1982, p. 214.

¹⁸ M.A. Beale, “Apartheid goals in the 1960s”, p. 8.

a university founded, based and driven by an Afrikaans and Christian spirit and character. Meyer described this as follows (also freely translated into English):¹⁹

Die RAUK (Randse Afrikaans Universiteits Komitee) het vanaf die begin dit duidelik gestel dat die Randse Universiteit 'n egte Afrikaans gees en karakter moet openbaar as hy aan die Geskiedenis, tradisies en oogmerke waaruit hy voortgegroei het getrou wil bly. En as ons sê 'n Afrikaans(e) karakter, sê ons tegelyk 'n Christelik-historiese Afrikaanse karakter. Immers, die Afrikaanse volksgemeenskap se doen en late op alle lewensgebiede wortel diep in die Christelike geloofsoortuiging en word steeds gestel in die lig van die norme en voorskrifte van die Heilige skrif as die Woord van God.

(The RAUK [Rand Afrikaans University Committee] made it clear from the beginning that the Rand University had to reflect a true Afrikaans spirit and character if it wanted to remain loyal to the history, traditions and the aims from which it developed. And when we say an Afrikaans character, we imply a Christian-historical Afrikaans character. After all, the Afrikaans community's activities on all levels are deeply rooted in Christian beliefs and are still clearly stated in the light of the norms and prescriptions of the Holy Scriptures as the Word of God).

Dr PJ Meyer, one of the main protagonists for the creation of RAU, believed in a strong association between language and religion. This view was evident in statements he made during the 1940s on the importance of mother-tongue education, referring specifically to school children in relation to Christian values. He had the following to say of bilingualism and its effects on religious life:²⁰

... bilingual children show backwardness in development as compared to monolingual children ... Bilingualism leads to moral relativism which reaches right into the religious life of the individual. It is certain that Godlessness is more prevalent among bilingual people than among monolinguals.

This somewhat bullish and subjective statement strengthens the conclusion that Meyer strongly believed in the concept of mother-tongue education. He indeed believed that its absence negatively influenced Christian religious beliefs. It is therefore clear that, to him, as an important role player in RAU's creation, the university's emphasis on mother-tongue learning would not only contribute to the development of the Afrikaans language and culture but would also strengthen the Christian values of white Afrikaans-speaking students. White Afrikaans speakers on the Witwatersrand were exposed to a variety of "negative" influences associated with city life; RAU's creation would consequently play an important role in shaping a modern, yet religious, Afrikaans identity.

¹⁹ UJ/RAU Archive, Johannesburg, P.J. Meyer collection, File C1/6, Die Beplanning van die Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit, p. 52.

²⁰ T.G. Regan, "The politics of linguistic apartheid: language policies in black education in South Africa", *The Journal of Negro Education*, 56 (3), 1987, p. 303.

Equally important for the achievement of Afrikaner ambitions was the emphasis on preserving and enriching the white Afrikaans language and culture through education. Afrikaans as language became an important instrument in the process of advancing white Afrikaans speakers' economic livelihood, especially during the 1950s. To fully understand how and in what way the use of the mother tongue was instrumental in identity formation, it is necessary to briefly analyse the relationship between language and identity. This relationship is important to understand. The main aim in the creation of RAU was the formation of a new, modern identity for white Afrikaans speakers. Historical contextualisation, moreover, is essential for this discussion.

6.2.2 The association between mother-tongue education and identity formation

To fully understand why it was so necessary for RAU's founders to promote mother-tongue education, it is important to take note of the close relationship between language and identity. In his book *Language and Identity: National, Ethnic, Religious*, Joseph proposes that language gives rise to identity by abstracting the world of experience into words.²¹ He continues to argue that the encounter with language brings us to a higher understanding of experience which, in turn, enables us to conceptualise ourselves rather than simply being ourselves.²² He then concludes that identity is closely related to language and that the phenomenon of identity can be understood as a linguistic one.²³ Thornborrow, in turn, argues that the most fundamental way in which we establish our identity is through language. In his opinion, this can also become an important element in exercising power because language plays a fundamental role in the construction of individual and social identities. In this regard, he concludes, language can also be a powerful means of exercising social control.²⁴

In an article entitled "The nature of Afrikaner Nationalism", Goldberg presents a similar argument. He goes even further by stating that language and identity are important criteria by which a nation is recognised and by which it has the right to form a state on its own.²⁵

It can therefore be assumed that there is a close relationship between language and identity and that the development and use of language in education shapes identity. Moreover, it

²¹ J.E. Joseph, *Language and identity; national, ethnic, religious* (Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2004), p. 11.

²² J.E. Joseph, *Language and identity*, p. 11.

²³ J.E. Joseph, *Language and identity*, p. 12.

²⁴ J. Thornborrow, "Language and identity" in L. Thomas and S. Wareing, *Language, society and power; and introduction* (Routledge, London, 2000), p. 136.

²⁵ M. Goldberg, "The nature of Afrikaner nationalism", *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 23 (1), 1985, p. 129.

enables the possible extension of social control, for example, in the early 1800s, shortly after the British acquisition of the Cape of Good Hope the colonial authorities attempted, through a policy of education, to “anglicise” the early nascent Afrikaner community. These efforts were resumed in 1866 with the Cape Education Act, which compelled the use of English in all first- and second-class schools. This Act resulted in the “near extinction” of Dutch as a medium of instruction.²⁶ British efforts to control the language of education resulted in deep resentment on the part of white Afrikaans speakers and Afrikaner resistance to any attempts to reduce the importance of Afrikaans mother-tongue education. In years to come, specifically after the South African War, as well as the Second Afrikaans Language Movement, following Milner’s anti-Afrikaans policies, led to the adoption, after the formation of the Union of South Africa in 1910, of Afrikaans as a language of school instruction in 1915. There was a marked increase in the publication of Afrikaans books from the late 1910s, that paved the way for the recognition of Afrikaans as an official language in 1925, in preference of Dutch.²⁷ The historical resentment towards efforts to reduce the importance of the Afrikaans language resulted in increasing efforts by white Afrikaans speakers to establish autonomous Afrikaans schools,²⁸ colleges, universities and, in this case, RAU itself. The founding of RAU and the use of the mother-tongue as its medium of instruction would play a crucial role in the educational advancement of Afrikaans-speaking students. It would enhance identity formation to promote self-empowerment and to modernise the Afrikaner identity.²⁹

The efforts of white Afrikaans speakers to develop the Afrikaans language and to enhance its role in education are discussed in Van Wyk’s article “Afrikaans Language, Literature and Identity”. His argument concurs with the views of Joseph and Thornborrow on the relationship between language and identity. However, his discussion expands their findings by relating language and identity specifically to the position of white Afrikaans speakers in the mid-20th century. He argues, by looking back to the late nineteenth century, for a close interrelationship between Afrikaner identity, language (Afrikaans) and literature. In Van Wyk’s opinion, the first attempts to link the development of the Afrikaner’s national

²⁶ W.R. Johnson, “Education: keystone of apartheid”, *Anthropology and Education Quarterly*, 13 (3), 1982, p. 215.

²⁷ W.A.M. Carstens and N. Bosman, *Kontemporêre Afrikaanse Taalkunde* (Van Schaik uitgewers, Pretoria, 2014), pp. 51-56.

²⁸ W.R. Johnson, “Education: keystone of apartheid”, *Anthropology and Education Quarterly*, 13 (3), 1982, p. 216.

²⁹ J.C. Steyn, “*Ons gaan ’n taal maak*”: *Afrikaans sedert die patriot-jare* (Kraal-uitgewers, Pretoria, 2014), pp. 362-363.

consciousness with the Afrikaans language occurred in the late 1800s with the rise of the so-called First Afrikaans Language Movement (1875 to 1890s), with its aim of establishing Afrikaans as a written language, as well as in the founding of the Zuid-Afrikaansche Taalbond in 1890.³⁰

Since 1906, according to Van Wyk, authors like Du Toit and Preller,³¹ who were members of second Afrikaans language movement believed that Afrikaans literature had to be developed to assist in the shaping of Afrikaner identity.³² Preller, for example, felt so strongly about the relationship between language and identity that he described it as something that was not just a construction of grammatical rules and laws or a series of black markings on white paper, but something that represented the imagery of thoughts of people and the continuous changing inner consciousness of Humankind. To Preller, the Afrikaans language was synonymous with the existence, the thoughts and the “inner” being of the Afrikaner. For this reason, he and others, including Marais much later, viewed Afrikaans literature as the “symbiotic inter-text of language and identity”. Afrikaans language and literature, at the time, were regarded as important elements reflecting the character of the people; that is, of the *volk*.³³ The development of Afrikaans in the late 1800s and early 1900s proved that the language served to unite white Afrikaans speakers of all classes.³⁴ It thus became a powerful instrument in decades to come for uplifting, unifying, developing, advancing and modernising white Afrikaans speakers.

Decades later, in the context of the establishment of RAU and the fact that Afrikaans as language was well established as an official and academic language, Meyer must have indulged in the views of Preller³⁵ that basically shaped his world of thinking about the Afrikaners and their language. Preller’s views, dating back to the first half of the 20th Century so was made relevant for the future RAU. Meyer had the following to say about the

³⁰ J. van Wyk, “Afrikaans language, literature and identity”, *Theoria: A Journal of Social and Political Theory*, 77, 1991, pp. 79-80.

³¹ Both these individuals were actively involved in the development of the Afrikaans language. They both were involved in the founding of the Afrikaanse Taalgemeenskap (A.T.G.) and the founding of the Zuid-Afrikaanse Akademie voor Taal, Letterkunde en Kunste. See W.J. de Kock, *Dictionary of South African biography*, vol.1 (Nasionale Boekhandel Bpk., Cape Town), p. 645.

³² J. van Wyk, “Afrikaans language, literature and identity”, p. 80.

³³ J. van Wyk, “Afrikaans language, literature and identity”, pp. 79-80, also see J.C. Steyn, “*Ons gaan ’n taal maak*”: *Afrikaans sedert die patriot-jare*, pp. 362-368.

³⁴ INEG Archive, Bloemfontein, P.J. Meyer collection, File PV 720 – boks 25, Afrikaans, Ons Moedertaal, p. 84.

³⁵ The book of Preller was located in the PJ Meyer Collection of INEG.

importance of mother-tongue language and its relation to the ‘volk’ (Also freely translated to English).³⁶

Afrikaans, ons moedertaal, is nie net die draer, die uitdraer, die omlyner van ons eie onderskeidende kulturele Afrikanerskap nie; is nie net die omvattendste groeiende vorm waarin ons eie histories-geworde en histories-wordende Afrikanerskap sy neerslag vind nie; maar is die lewendige, gemeenskaplike geestesbesit waarin ons denke, ons skeppingsvermoë selfveredelend, selfverrykend werk en wershaf. Gee jou moedertaal prys; verknoei en vermin jou moedertaal, en jy verknoei en vermin jou volksiels; en andersom, as jy geen respek vir jou eie volk het nie, verloor jy jou selfrespek en eerbiedig jy nie jou moedertaal nie.

(Afrikaans, our mother tongue, is not only the carrier or delineator of our unique cultural Afrikaner identity; it is not only the most comprehensive way in which our own historic Afrikaner identity has developed historically, but is the living communal property in which our thoughts, our creative ability and being come to self-realisation. Give up your mother tongue; muddle up and neglect using your mother tongue and you will do the same regarding your national soul and, vice versa, if you disrespect your people, you will lose your self-respect and disrespect your mother tongue as well).

Thus, for Meyer, the Afrikaans language constituted the core characteristic of the existence of white Afrikaans speakers: It not only served to truly identify white Afrikaans speakers, but helped others to also understand them. Meyer firmly believed there was a close connection between people’s mother tongue and their identity. To him, language – in this case Afrikaans – was pivotal in shaping the identity of white Afrikaans speakers, especially in terms of how they viewed themselves and their relationship to communities, culture and religion.

The Afrikaans language was thus regarded as an important element of the character of the “volk” (Afrikaans people). Afrikaans as a language, especially in the cities on the Witwatersrand and in the context of the late 1800s and early 1900s, increasingly appeared to be the language of the “proletariat” or, at least, the language of a group rapidly becoming “proletarian”. In this period and especially in the light of the disadvantaged political and economic position of white Afrikaans speakers on the Witwatersrand, Afrikaans was a powerful instrument for communicating with and for mobilising the white Afrikaans-speaking working class. Preller regarded this as crucial to developing and uplifting the group of Afrikaans speakers through the medium of their own language.³⁷

6.2.3 Mother-tongue education at RAU as instrument of identity formation

Developments referred to above regarding Afrikaans and Afrikaans speakers are part and parcel (or should we say the heart and soul) of the identity moulding of white Afrikaans

³⁶ INEG Archive, P.J. Meyer collection, File PV 720 - boks 3, Die Taak van die Afrikaanse Kultuurorganisasie: nou en vorentoe, p.4.

³⁷ INEG Archive, P.J. Meyer collection, File PV 720 - boks 25, Afrikaans, Ons Moedertaal, pp. 2-3.

speakers, especially in tertiary education. It is in this context that the founding of RAU in 1968 and State President N Diederichs' subsequent inauguration of the new administrative offices and lecture buildings of this first Afrikaans university on the Witwatersrand in May 1975, provided such proud and emotional moments. It also coincided with the centenary of the establishment at Paarl of the Genootskap vir Regte Afrikaners in 1875, a date many Afrikaners at the time considered the birthdate of Afrikaans.³⁸ The university not only represented something momentous for white Afrikaans speakers and particularly students on the Witwatersrand, but it would also, as an Afrikaans mother-tongue institution of higher education, become a symbolic monument for the indigenous Afrikaans language.³⁹ The institution would fulfil its role in uplifting, moulding, advancing and modernising white Afrikaans speakers who had come a long way from being the struggling "Boer" – "proletarian" and working class – to becoming the emerging middle class. The symbolic presence of white Afrikaans speakers and their new ability to gain a foothold in this urban space signalled a great achievement locally and abroad. Diederichs therefore considered the creation of RAU to be the greatest breakthrough in an era where, as he reckoned, all the odds were still "loaded against the white Afrikaans speaker".⁴⁰

The official opening of the newly established university in 1968 emphasised not only the power of knowledge, but also the importance of the Afrikaans language.⁴¹ The use of Afrikaans, it was believed, would afford the Afrikaans discipline and subject specialist the opportunity to develop the language into a fully-fledged, legitimate scientific medium in which newly researched knowledge would be communicated. Afrikaans would not only be used to undertake research and communicate research findings, but it would also, in turn, be developed and refined.⁴² Viljoen identified this development as part of the vision of the new university (Also freely translated to English):⁴³

Die toekoms van Afrikaans vra van sy gebruikers 'n openheid en gewilligheid vir spontane vernuwing, maar ook 'n bewuste speelsheid en vindingrykheid in die gedurige aftas van nuwe ontplooiingsmoontlikhede om nuwe werklikhede "oop te sê".

³⁸ W.A.M. Carstens and N. Bosman, *Kontemporêre Afrikaanse Taalkunde* (Van Schaik Uitgewers, Pretoria, 2014), p. 53.

³⁹ UJ library, *RAU-Rapport*, 8 (3). 1975, pp.1-2.

⁴⁰ UJ library, *Gedenkalbum van die opening van die R.A.U.*, 1968-02-24, Speech of the Chancellor Dr N. Diederichs, p. 20.

⁴¹ UJ library, *Gedenkalbum van die opening van die R.A.U.*, 1968.-02-24, Speech by Prof G. van N. Viljoen – Welcoming of the parents of the students, p. 51.

⁴² F.I.J. van Rensburg, "Sy visie vir die nuwe universiteit" in B. Louw and F. van Rensburg, *Bestendige binnevuur: perspektiewe op Gerrit Viljoen by geleentheid van sy een en sewentigste verjaarsdag op 1997-09-11* (Tafelberg-uitgewers Beperk, Kaapstad, 1997), p. 47.

⁴³ F.I.J. van Rensburg, "Sy visie vir die nuwe universiteit" in B. Louw and F. van Rensburg, *Bestendige binnevuur*, p. 47.

(The future of Afrikaans asks of its users an openness and a willingness for spontaneous renewal, and a conscious playfulness and resourcefulness in the continuous scanning of new development possibilities to open new realities).

Mother-tongue education at RAU would not only be promoted and developed in and of itself; it would also promote Afrikaans as a scientific language contributing to different disciplines based on Christian values and closely related to the ideals of CNE, which the NP had promoted since 1948. This would become another factor determining RAU's founding: promoting a mother-tongue education based on Christian values to preserve what already existed but also to create, form and expand the Afrikaans culture, language and philosophy of life.⁴⁴ Closely related to this was tailoring teaching syllabi in the fields of anthropology, sociology, education and history to cater for the distinctive needs of the Christian-Nationalist ideology.⁴⁵

The knowledge obtained in Afrikaans at RAU would not only ensure a secure future for the white Afrikaans speaker,⁴⁶ but would also create an environment for the scientific development of the language. Knowledge acquired via the mother tongue, it was believed, would contribute to a better understanding of the modern world in which the white Afrikaans-speaking students found themselves. This, combined with the need to also acquire English to participate in the Global Village, would indeed, so it was believed, place the white Afrikaans speaker in an advantageous position.⁴⁷ Moreover, the founding of RAU became part of the NP's educational vision in which the white Afrikaans speaker would be mobilised and modernised economically and socially. The university had to assist white Afrikaans speakers to actively become part of commercial and professional urban prosperity.⁴⁸

It is therefore little wonder that Beale argues that the founding of RAU fitted into the NP's higher education policy and planning during the 1960s. She observes that the third phase of this policy applied specifically to the creation of RAU.⁴⁹ In Beale's opinion, the first phase

⁴⁴ UJ/RAU Archive, G. van N. Viljoen collection, File C3/1, Die Uitdaging van 'n nuwe universiteit, p. 1.

⁴⁵ S. Dubow, *A Commonwealth of knowledge: science, sensibility and white South Africa, 1820-2000* (Oxford University Press, New York, 2006), p. 266.

⁴⁶ F.I.J. van Rensburg, "Sy visie vir die nuwe universiteit" in B. Louw and F. van Rensburg, *Bestendige binnevuur*, p. 47.

⁴⁷ F.I. J. van Rensburg, "Sy visie vir die nuwe universiteit" in B. Louw and F. van Rensburg, *Bestendige binnevuur*, p. 47.

⁴⁸ M.A. Beale, *Apartheid and university education, 1948-1970*, PhD, University of the Witwatersrand, 1998, p. 8.

⁴⁹ M.A. Beale, "Apartheid goals in the 1960s", pp. 1-2.

(1948 to mid-1950s) focused on the steady and stable expansion of higher education in South Africa. The second phase (mid-1950s to 1959) characterised a more aggressive approach wherein the NP made rapid strides towards the establishment of ethnically-based university colleges in accordance with the policy of separate development.⁵⁰ Beale states that the establishment of RAU formed part of the NP's notion of the "particularism" of universities. This meant formalising and imposing an ethnic definition on the university, which would be closely related to the community in which it was located and would serve. The university would promote a specific language and culture and in this instance that of white Afrikaans speakers. For Beale, therefore, RAU would represent all the characteristics of a *volksuniversiteit*,⁵¹ one which would cater for the *volk* in the language of the *volk* to develop a modern identity for the *volk*.

These characteristics would be further advanced through the university's activities within the framework of Christian National Education (CNE) principles and its provision of mother-tongue education. CNE was based on the education manifesto outlining Christian Nationalist ideals that aimed to recognise and advance the white Afrikaans speaker in South Africa. This manifesto, which written by Van Rooy in 1939,⁵² formed the basis of the NP's educational policy as of 1948. The preface of the Manifesto clearly stipulated that:⁵³

... (no) mixing of languages, no mixing of cultures, no mixing of religions, no mixing of race...

would be tolerated in the education of the white Afrikaans speakers. This ideologically based approach focused on the exclusivity of the white Afrikaans-speaking identity and its advancement.

The creation of RAU was not only motivated by the desire to make the presence of white Afrikaans speakers known on the Witwatersrand. Through mother-tongue education the university would also, as mentioned earlier, contribute to the moulding of white Afrikaans speakers' identity. For this reason Diederichs stated on 24 May 1975 on occasion of the opening of the new administrative, office and lecture complex of RAU, that the founding of the new university would represent the true arrival of white Afrikaans speakers on the Witwatersrand and that it would symbolise the true advancement and identity formation of

⁵⁰ M.A. Beale, "Apartheid goals in the 1960s", pp. 1-2.

⁵¹ M.A. Beale, *Apartheid and university education...*, p. 8.

⁵² D. Lavin, "The dilemma of Christian-National Education in South Africa", *The World Today*, 21 (10), 1965, pp. 429-430.

⁵³ D. Lavin, "The dilemma of Christian-National Education...", *The World Today*, 21 (10), 1965, p. 430.

white Afrikaans speakers.⁵⁴ It was to be a university that would provide high standards of scientific endeavour, focus on the importance of character formation, and emphasise an inclination to service, idealism and a deep Christian commitment, as well as on the provision of a service to the white Afrikaans-speaking group as well as to the entire country.⁵⁵ It would promote the language and culture of white Afrikaans speakers.⁵⁶

The creation of an Afrikaans university on the Witwatersrand in 1968 was therefore not only important for advancing the Afrikaans language, but also for promoting Afrikaans culture and strengthening the religious beliefs of the group. It was thus considered important to ensure that the university functioned within the framework of the established CNE principles while endorsing a religious-based education system that would encourage as well as facilitate the promotion of the interests of and unity among white Afrikaans speakers in every sphere of their existence.

The importance afforded to the language and cultural character of RAU provided the opportunity for white Afrikaans speakers to take their rightful place in the premier industrial heartland and gold mining region of South Africa⁵⁷ – even internationally. RAU was so much more than just a new Afrikaans university. It realised the development, rise and modernisation of white Afrikaans speakers on the Witwatersrand, thus raising their identity from its former “backward” and humiliating existence into a bright new future in which the university was a symbol of dignity and the vehicle for future success and high standards of achievement. Mother-tongue education would play a pivotal role in the achievement of these goals but, according to the founders, all this had to occur within the context of Biblical Christian values.

6.3 Instilling Christian values at RAU based on CNE principles

6.3.1 Introduction

The founding of RAU was based on two important factors: education was to be conducted in the mother tongue; and it was necessary to instil Christian values. Here the principles of CNE

⁵⁴ UJ library, *Gedenkalbum van die opening van die R.A.U.*, 1968-02-24., Speech of the Chancellor, Dr N. Diederichs, p. 20.

⁵⁵ UJ library, *RAU-Rapport*, 8 (2), 1975, p. 2.

⁵⁶ UJ/RAU Archive, P.J. Meyer collection, File C1/1, *Die Beplanning van die Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit*, pp. 5-6.

⁵⁷ UJ library, *Gedenkalbum van die opening van die R.A.U.*, 1968-02-24, “Verwelkoming van ouers ...”, p. 66.

made their mark. The need for CNE in the arena of nationalist education had a long history that grew out of the deep needs of a white Afrikaans-speaking community who had experienced defeat, shame and oppression. In his article, “Christian National Education,” Macmillan sketches the broad historical background of this educational design. In his opinion, the ideas of Christian National Education originated in the Cape Colony during the 1800s in reaction to Anglicisation. It was further boosted after the South African War when the Dutch/Afrikaans-speaking people of the former Boer Republics feared the loss of their identity through the deprivation of their language and nationality.⁵⁸ CNE furthermore enhanced the Christian and National character of the (Afrikaner) nation and cemented its belief in promoting the idea of one country, one nation, one culture, one history and one language.⁵⁹

Research into CNE reveals a long history marked by debate and criticism. However, this turbulent history, will not be the focus of discussion here. Instead, it explores the origins of the belief that an education system based on religious principles was necessary to safeguard white Afrikaans speakers in South Africa in terms of language, religion, culture and history. Attention will be focused on instilling Christian values in higher education (with the emphasis on RAU), based on the principles of CNE.

6.3.2 Imbedding Christian values through CNE principles

The development and implementation of the CNE model emerged once white Afrikaans-speaking leaders in political and cultural organisations articulated the view that their Protestantism and nationalism were under threat from “foreign” influences, specifically liberalism.⁶⁰ Liberalism, it was believed, could have a negative effect on the *volk*, government, science, academic freedom, religion and language.⁶¹ CNE was conceptualised to counteract this negative influence. It was in this context that the Federasie vir Afrikaanse Kultuurvereniging (FAK) (Federation of Afrikaans Cultural Societies) held a conference in 1939, called the Christian-National Educational conference (*Volkskongres*). The intention

⁵⁸ R.G. Macmillan, “Christian National Education”, *Theoria: A Journal of Social and Political Theory*, 28, 1967, p. 43.

⁵⁹ R.G. Macmillan, “Christian National Education”, *Theoria: A Journal of Social and Political Theory*, 28, 1967, p. 44.

⁶⁰ HFA, File, AB 12/91-3/1/1, AB: Grondslag van ons strewe – Christelik Nasionaal, p. 1.

⁶¹ INEG Archive, P.J. Meyer collection, File AB 12/223, Boks 3/1/7, Weerbaarheid: Die wese en vrug van liberalisme, pp. 1-9.

was to establish a body that would embody the ideals of CNE. This body would become known as the Institute for Christian-National Education.⁶²

Influential individuals such as Van Rooy, Chairman of the FAK in the 1940s, Prof JG Meiring, superintendent-general of education in the 1950s and Dr TE Dönges, the minister of finance in the 1960s, believed that CNE was necessary and consequently supported the CNE manifesto of 1948.⁶³ Some white Afrikaans-speaking academics, like Prof J Coetzee, concluded that only one type of university existed at the start of the twentieth century in South Africa, namely the liberal university. He strongly believed that this state of affairs needed to change. According to Coetzee, liberal universities consisted of a grouping of people who did not share a common belief and life orientation, and who adopted a non-Christian approach to teaching and learning. He advocated that this non-Christian approach could not be tolerated by white Afrikaans-speaking parents who wanted to send their children to university; it would negatively affect their values and beliefs, and would inevitably have a negative effect on their religious and cultural development.⁶⁴ The perception that the Protestantism and nationalism of white Afrikaans speakers were under threat of weakening and being changed resulted in the CNE being supported and implemented across a broad spectrum of the South African education landscape since the mid-nineteenth century, and extended during the early and middle twentieth century, particularly after 1948. Inevitably, a CNE system was implemented at provincial level after 1954 and countrywide from 1967 after parliament approved the national education legislation on CNE.⁶⁵

This educational model, based on Christian values⁶⁶, was believed to be the only system in which the white Afrikaans speaker could be protected against perceived forces to destroy their language, religion, culture and history. This explains why, according to Macmillan, the educational approach had to be promoted as a model to mould the individual into a strong opponent of alien influences. Exposure to this model was believed to be important for white Afrikaans speakers. They had to be well-equipped to deal with everyday life and, most importantly, to develop the Christian and envisioned national character.⁶⁷ This ideal aim, with

⁶² C.M. Tatz, "Apartheid: Battle for the mind", *The Australian Quarterly*, 33 (2), 1961, p. 1.

⁶³ D Lavin, "The dilemma of Christian-National Education in South Africa", *The World Today*, 21 (10), 1965, p. 430.

⁶⁴ UJ/RAU Archive, J.B.Z. Louw collection, File A 128/5, Die Christelike Universiteit, p. 196.

⁶⁵ HFA, File, AB 12/91-3/1/1, AB: Grondslag van ons strewe – Christelik Nationaal, p. 2.

⁶⁶ Christian values referred to values based on the teachings of the Bible. This is extended to the teachings of Jesus and the Christians through the history of the religion.

⁶⁷ R.G. Macmillan, "Christian National Education", *A Journal of Social and Political Theory*, 10, 1967, p. 44.

its origins in the 1940s, was reaffirmed in a document by the Afrikaner Broederbond (AB) entitled *Grondslag van ons strewe – Christelik Nasionaal* (Basis of our aspirations – Christian National) that was drafted in May 1972. In view of this document, the model had to be further developed and implemented to protect white Afrikaans speakers.⁶⁸

Macmillan analyses and contextualises the origins of the CNE model, concluding that Christian Nationalism had developed from white Afrikaans speakers' negative experiences in former times related to the ill-treatment especially by the English with regard to education. The model was created to contribute to restoring Afrikaners' national pride and self-respect. It protected the Protestantism and nationalism of white Afrikaans speakers, yet also provided renewed trust and hope for the future. Macmillan analyses the main concepts of the ideology, namely "Christian" and "nationalism", drawing the conclusion that the word "Christian" in CNE is defined as being based on the Bible and expressed in the profound faith of the three Afrikaans Reformed Churches.⁶⁹

Macmillan argues that it was important for supporters of CNE that the Christian education of school children and students should be based on Calvinist and orthodox interpretations. In his opinion, this was the case because it was the only interpretation that reflected the true meaning of the Scriptures. The word "national" focused on the development of the national outlook in which a "love for everything which is our own" was most important. The focus was therefore on the country, language, history and culture with the overarching aim of establishing a general feeling of belonging within a national group.⁷⁰ This educational model, based on religious principles, was promoted by a small yet influential group of conservative, orthodox Calvinist Afrikaners. They worked on formulating the CNE educational model with the aim of not only protecting and "saving" white Afrikaans speakers, but also of unifying the group. A further long-term aim was to ensure political, social and economic power and to develop the Christian and national character of the nation.⁷¹

The CNE model also focused on university training. Article II of the manifesto provided clear and specific guidelines in terms of university teaching and approach. From the outset, it clearly emphasised that teaching content needed to be scientific, although founded on the

⁶⁸ HFA, File, AB 12/91-3/1/1, AB: *Grondslag van ons strewe – Christelik Nasionaal*, p. 2.

⁶⁹ R.G. Macmillan, "Christian National Education", *A Journal of Social and Political Theory*, 10, 1967, p. 43.

⁷⁰ R.G. Macmillan, "Christian National Education", *A Journal of Social and Political Theory*, 10, 1967, pp. 44-45.

⁷¹ R.G. Macmillan, "Christian National Education", *A Journal of Social and Political Theory*, 10, 1967, p. 44. Also, see E.S Van Eeden and T.M. Vermeulen, Christian National education and People's Education: Historical perspectives on some common grounds, *New Contree*, 50, 2005, pp. 179-183.

Christian faith. Important, was that specific attention had to be given to the teaching and practice of Christian doctrine and philosophy. It was, in addition, made clear that university instruction should be “thetic rather than antithetic, never purely eclectic and never reconciliatory”. The teaching of science had to be expounded in a positive Christian light and had to be contrasted with the non-Christian sciences. It was also important to ensure that the right staff members were employed, lecturers who were staunchly Christian nationalist scientists. Macmillan’s article makes it clear that tertiary education would be monitored and controlled in such a manner that the Christian nationalist view of life would be inculcated in students through their education.⁷²

It can thus be concluded that the general use of CNE principles became instrumental not only in protecting but also in unifying the white Afrikaans-speaking group who would in future, be privileged to study at a tertiary institution, RAU, undergirded by biblical and CNE principles. From the outset, it was clear that RAU had to be Christian in nature and that the institution had to assist in developing the Christian national character of the nation. From what has been discussed in this chapter thus far and in previous chapters as well, it can be concluded that RAU was created to be mainly exclusive in terms of the group for which it was created, based on its specific linguistic and religious foundations. This, however, did not imply that other cultural groupings would be prevented from becoming part of the RAU community. Viljoen made it clear on various occasions that it was important that RAU would have to function across cultural and racial divides in an effort not only to learn from others, but to make sure that others learned from RAU and from what the institution stood for.⁷³ RAU would therefore be an institution where other cultures would be welcome, as long as they were willing to associate themselves with the Afrikaans culture and language.⁷⁴ This exclusive character in terms of religious orientation was adopted not to exclude, but also to include those who had different religious orientations. Although the exclusive character remained intact, those who had different religious orientations were included to extend the specific beliefs that RAU supported.⁷⁵

⁷² D. Lavin, “The Dilemma of Christian-National Education in South Africa”, *The World Today*, 21 (10), 1965, p. 431.

⁷³ J.C. Garbers, “Diens deur Kennis”, in B. Louw and F. van Rensburg, *Bestendige binnevuur*, pp. 81-82.

⁷⁴ F.I.J. van Rensburg, “Sy visie vir die nuwe universiteit” in B. Louw and F. van Rensburg, *Bestendige binnevuur*, pp. 47-48.

⁷⁵ UJ library, *Gedenkalbum van die opening van die R.A.U.*, 1968-02-24, Speech of Prof G. van N. Viljoen welcoming the first students, p. 50.

As Viljoen explained, this goal was made practicable through the decision to exclude the “conscience clause” from RAU’s university legislation.⁷⁶ All universities in South Africa at that time, excluding the then Potchefstroom University (now North-West University), functioned in accordance with the statutes that stipulated the university would abstain from enquiring into the religious orientation of any person who applied for employment or who wished to study at the institution.⁷⁷ The exclusion of this clause in effect guaranteed that non-Christian white students would not be discriminated against studying at the university, and that white non-Christians who applied to be appointed as staff members would not be discriminated against on the basis of their religious beliefs.⁷⁸ No empirical information however could be found suggesting that the religious orientation of any person were fundamental in their employment or permission to study at RAU during the period under discussion.

Viljoen gave the assurance that RAU would consider any person who applied for employment or study based on his or her academic and administrative qualifications. It was to be a university that subscribed to Christian religious principles as described in its constitution and in line with the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa. RAU would accept students who accepted the Christian faith and what RAU stood for in this regard. Furthermore, the university would not allow the persecution of non-Christians.⁷⁹

Some believed that exclusion of the conscience clause in the university legislation could in effect mean that RAU would be able to refuse to admit non-Christian students or that it would not appoint non-Christian staff. The new proposed clause, borrowed from the South African constitution, and as discussed in Chapter Four, implied that only Christian students and staff would be welcome at the university.⁸⁰ This immediately resulted in criticism from outsiders and even from fellow white Afrikaans speakers. They feared the university would be so exclusive that it would only admit staff and students who believed in what the authorities believed in. The editor of *The Star*, for example, concluded that the founders of RAU were not only criticised for not allowing religious freedom, but also for not allowing freedom from

⁷⁶ P.J. Meyer, *Nog nie Ver Genoeg nie*, p. 172.

⁷⁷ UJ library, *Gedenkalbum van die opening van die R.A.U.*, 1968-02-24, Speech of Prof G. van N. Viljoen, p. 49.

⁷⁸ P.J. Meyer, *Nog nie Ver Genoeg nie*, p. 172.

⁷⁹ UJ library, *Gedenkalbum van die opening van die R.A.U.*, 1968-02-24, Speech of Prof G. van N. Viljoen, p. 50.

⁸⁰ UJ/RAU Archive, P.M.S. von Staden collection: File C2/12/2/2: Correspondence – Mr D. Malan and Dr P.J. Meyer – 1966-08-11.

religious persecution. He obviously exaggerated this point in order to show how important, in his view, the issue was.⁸¹ Among white Afrikaans speakers, especially members of the “Nederduitse Gereformeerde” (Dutch Reformed) Church (NGK), criticism to the effect that the decision of the founders of RAU not to include a conscience clause in the university’s statute, was the direct result of their unwillingness to take a stand for a purely Christian orientation at RAU.⁸² The exclusion of the conscience clause and its replacement with a new clause based on the South African constitution revealed the following in relation to the impact of the CNE ideology on RAU: Firstly, it implied that only those who subscribed to the constitution of the Republic would be welcome at RAU. However, even though this point of view highlighted RAU’s exclusive character, people of different religious orientations would not be excluded, provided they understood that RAU functioned in accordance with Christian values and a Christian way of life. Secondly, it reflected the profound influence of CNE thought on the philosophical and ideological vision of the university.

6.4 The impact of mother-tongue education and Christian values on ideals envisioned for RAU

Considering all of the above, it can be concluded that RAU was created to serve the educational needs of white Afrikaans speakers on the Witwatersrand. The university had to contribute to their total upliftment and advancement via the instrument of mother-tongue tertiary education. The medium of instruction had to be their Afrikaans mother tongue and learning would occur in a Christian context with the main purpose of the institution being the development of a modern Afrikaans identity and Afrikaner unity. Thus, two fundamental elements – mother tongue as instruction medium and its being ensconced in Christian values – formed the foundation of the university. These would also form an integral part of the philosophical foundation of RAU, which was also based on the institution’s “universitas character”.⁸³ This focused mainly on the unity principle in which the idea of “oneness” (unity?) characterised the overall functioning of the institution. RAU would therefore function as a single unit, a close-knit one, in which there were close relationships between lecturers, students, research and university. Just as the principle of a single cultural unity

⁸¹ *The Star*, 1966-08-11.

⁸² UJ/RAU Archive, RAU Establishment history: File A11/1: Correspondence – Mr W.B. Jansen, Dr P.J. Meyer – 1966-10-11.

⁸³ UJ/RAU Archive, P.J. Meyer collection, File C1/2, Universitas – op weg na die geheel as eenheid, p. 2.

informed the nation, the university too had to function as a unit.⁸⁴ Mother-tongue education based on Christian values was instrumental in establishing this unity.

As discussed in Chapter Five, Prof Viljoen identified four important elements that would be instrumental in realising the “universitas character” and essential to the philosophical vision and the functioning of RAU. He referred to these as the “four corner pillars” which, in his opinion, would guide the university in its mission and vision and had to be incorporated into the university’s philosophical views, thus informing the tasks it would execute.⁸⁵ The first pillar was the achievement of high standards of academia, science and knowledge. To Viljoen, it was crucially important that study material should focus on the contemporary and the relevant. Updating content material based on new and important research would form an integral part of curriculum design.⁸⁶ Mother-tongue teaching played a vital role because the subject content had to be taught in Afrikaans. This would make material more accessible to the students and afford them an advanced position in terms of knowledge acquirement. Coupled with this, however, there was the exposure to the English language, which would provide the white Afrikaans-speaking students with a better understanding of the world they lived in. The second pillar consisted of the development of good character, which had to contribute to identity moulding in which mother-tongue education based on Christian values would play a pivotal role. The university was tasked to educate and develop white Afrikaans-speaking students with a distinctive identity, training them to take their places in the modern world of the time so as to become dynamic future leaders.⁸⁷ As future leaders, they would have morals and values based on Christian beliefs, and responsibility toward the nation and what it stood for.⁸⁸ Thus, they needed to be equipped with idealism, willingness to serve and the capability to develop norm and value systems that would help them to adapt to an ever-changing society and world.⁸⁹

⁸⁴ P.A. Miescher, *et al.*, *The modern university: Structure, functions and its role in the new industrial state*, p.15.

⁸⁵ J.C. van der Walt, Gerrit Viljoen se RAU: toe en tans in B. Louw and F. van Rensburg, *Bestendige binnevuur*, p. 123.

⁸⁶ UJ/RAU Archive, The Rand Afrikaans University collection, File A34/1, Universiteit en gemeenskap, pp. 5-7.

⁸⁷ J.C. van der Walt, Gerrit Viljoen se RAU: toe en tans in B. Louw and F. van Rensburg, *Bestendige binnevuur*, pp. 123-124.

⁸⁸ UJ/RAU Archive, The Rand Afrikaans University collection, File A34/1, Universiteit en gemeenskap, p. 7.

⁸⁹ J.C. van der Walt, Gerrit Viljoen se “RAU: toe en tans”, in B. Louw and F. van Rensburg, *Bestendige binnevuur*, p. 124.

Volksgebondenheid (nation bondage) an important element in the forming of national unity among white Afrikaans speakers generally – yet especially among those on the Witwatersrand – became the third pillar or objective of RAU. It formed a vital part of the philosophical vision of the new university in terms of developing the Afrikaans spirit, culture and religion on the Witwatersrand.⁹⁰ Mother-tongue education based on Christian values further enhanced the development of the “Volksgebondenheid” principle, which strengthened the unified ideal of white Afrikaans speakers. Meyer stated the following:⁹¹

An independent language and cultural community is, according to our Christian Protestant belief, part of God’s creation with the function of connecting all the members of the nation through love, the development of our own language and spiritual belonging in order to work together in educating our youth to achieve our unified calling among the nations of the world to advance mankind.

The last pillar that became an important task of RAU was the promotion of Christian values on all levels of the institution’s functioning.⁹² This aspect of RAU, in addition to its modern architectural symbolism, had to help the institution realise its goal to display something of the greatness of God and the Christian faith. This was reflected in the new conscience clause it adopted and which was based on the then prevailing Constitution of South Africa.⁹³

The “universitas character” would focus on the unity concept embodied in the inter-relationship between lecturers, students, research and the university. It would also embody the scientific subjects grouped in the theological, cultural, social, business, educational and scientific sciences. These subject groupings served to develop students in their totality, a totality that included the development and acquisition of knowledge, critical thinking, analytic and interpretative skills.⁹⁴ This development of the student’s totality had furthermore to be based on Christian interpretation, a religious perception postulating that the reality of the world was given to man in order for man to rule over reality.⁹⁵ Teaching and training would occur in the mother tongue and would be based on Christian values in order to inculcate a value system contributing to the development of a modern Afrikaans speaker.

⁹⁰ J.C. van der Walt, Gerrit Viljoen se “RAU: toe en tans” in B. Louw and F. van Rensburg, *Bestendige binnevuur*, p. 125.

⁹¹ INEG Archive, P.J. Meyer collection, File PV 720, Die Taak van die Afrikaanse Kultuurorganisasie: nou en vorentoe, p. 1.

⁹² J.C. van der Walt, Gerrit Viljoen se “RAU: toe en tans” in B. Louw and F. van Rensburg, *Bestendige binnevuur*, p. 127.

⁹³ UJ library, Gedenkalbum van die opening van die R.A.U., 1968-02-24, Speech by Prof G. van N. Viljoen, p. 50.

⁹⁴ UJ/RAU Archive, P.J. Meyer collection, File C1/2, Universitas – op weg na die geheel as eenheid, pp. 2-3.

⁹⁵ UJ/RAU Archive, P.J. Meyer collection, File C1/2, Universitas – op weg na die geheel as eenheid, p. 3.

Elaborated on by Meyer, the “universitas character” identified the student as the centre of the university institution.⁹⁶ To Meyer’s mind, through all its disciplines and courses, the university had to lead the way to knowledge or, as he phrased it, “the way to the totality of knowledge as a unity”.⁹⁷ In Meyer’s view, the university had the task of training each student for a specific profession, yet also of moulding students in their totality. Each student’s identity as a person with a language, religious belief, culture, political and educational views had to be formed and moulded through medium mother tongue, enabling the student to take his or her place in his community, country and the world. Through mother-tongue teaching, the students had to be trained regarding their thoughts and skills to be actively involved in solving problems through study and research.⁹⁸ Through its unity in study, research and teaching based on mother-tongue instruction and Christian values, the university would prepare its students in their totality.⁹⁹

RAU’s philosophical vision and mission had as its main goal the moulding of white Afrikaans-speaking students firmly based on Christian values. This would be achieved via mother-tongue education and new and modern teaching methods and systems.¹⁰⁰ RAU therefore had to use its academic and scientific programmes to nurture white Afrikaans culture and language in a Christian nationalist environment. It would be a university in Afrikaans spirit and culture where the principles contained in the constitution would be upheld in all academic and scientific programmes and endeavours.¹⁰¹

6.5 Conclusion

In Chapter Six, it has been argued that RAU’s implementation of mother-tongue education based on Christian values was perceived by the founders as crucially important for mobilising and empowering white Afrikaans speakers and in fostering and advancing Afrikaner nationalism. Mother-tongue education and Christian values were an integral part of RAU’s

⁹⁶ UJ/RAU Archive, P.J. Meyer collection, File C1/2; Piece written by Meyer – Universitas – op weg na die geheel as eenheid, p. 2.

⁹⁷ UJ/RAU Archive, P.J. Meyer collection, File C1/2; Piece written by Meyer, p. 2.

⁹⁸ UJ/RAU Archive, P.J. Meyer collection, File C1/2; Piece written by Meyer, pp. 3-4.

⁹⁹ UJ/RAU Archive, P.J. Meyer – collection, File C1/2; Piece written by Meyer, pp. 7-8.

¹⁰⁰ UJ library, *Gedenkalbum van die opening van die R.A.U.*, 1968-02-24, Chancellor’s speech by Dr N. Diederichs, p. 19.

¹⁰¹ F.I.J. van Rensburg, “Sy visie vir die nuwe universiteit” in B. Louw and F. van Rensburg, *Bestendige binnevuur*, p. 46.

establishment and facilitated promotion of the university's Afrikaans spirit and character. Furthermore, the chapter has revealed RAU's aim to develop white Afrikaans-speaking identity via the use of language and Christian values based on the "universitas" principle. This had to not only serve as a shield against liberalism, but also had to provide an environment in which a modern Afrikaans identity could be sculpted. The close relationship between language and identity formation paved the way for social control, which played an important role in RAU by forming part of the NP's notion of the "particularism" of universities, as Beale noted.¹⁰² This meant that an ethnic definition of the university was formulated and formalised: the university had to be closely related to the community in which it was located and which it would serve. RAU would therefore embody a '*volksuniversiteit*',¹⁰³ catering for the *volk* in the language of the '*volk*' to develop a modern identity for the *volk*. RAU thus served as an example of how a specific population group in its specific society endeavoured to initiate and fulfil functions vitally important for its survival.

The founding of RAU was based on two important elements: Education in students' mother tongue and instilling of Christian values. Here the principles of CNE made their mark. The need for CNE in the arena of nationalist education had a long history: the CNE model was developed and implemented because of the belief of white Afrikaans-speaking leaders in political and cultural organisations that their Protestantism and nationalism were under threat, particularly from liberalism.¹⁰⁴ CNE was believed to be necessary for counteracting these perceived negative influences. CNE principles were adopted at RAU, but the institution's exclusivity in terms of religious orientation was adapted so that it would not *exclude* specific individuals, but would actually include in its ideology those with different religious orientations. Although the exclusive character remained intact, the inclusion of those who had different religious orientations was adopted to elucidate and explain the specific beliefs that RAU supported. This aim was made practicable by making the decision to exclude a conscience clause in RAU's university legislation. Making this decision would entail that non-Christian students would not be discriminated against by being prevented from studying at the university, or that non-Christians who applied to be appointed as staff members would not be discriminated against based on their religious beliefs.¹⁰⁵ Still, the decision led to criticism from within the white Afrikaans-speaking community as well as from liberal

¹⁰² M.A. Beale, "Apartheid goals in the 1960s", p. 8.

¹⁰³ M.A. Beale, *Apartheid and university education...*, p. 8.

¹⁰⁴ HFA, File, AB 12/91-3/1/1, AB: Grondslag van ons strewes – Christelik Nasionaal, p. 1.

¹⁰⁵ P.J. Meyer, *Nog nie ver genoeg nie*, p. 172.

groups. However, this did not influence the founders to retract their decision. Mother tongue as instruction medium in an atmosphere of Christian values impacted positively on the philosophical and ideological ideals envisaged for RAU.

RAU's philosophical vision and mission also had as main object the moulding of white Afrikaans-speaking students with an Afrikaans identity firmly based on Christian values. This identity had to be achieved via the use of mother-tongue education and new and modern teaching methods and systems. The ideological vision and mission was to become the interpreter of Afrikaans thought through the exclusive use of the mother tongue and in the context of Christian values.¹⁰⁶ The university with its Afrikaans character and through the use of its academic and scientific programmes unashamedly developed and promoted white Afrikaans culture and language in a Christian nationalist environment. It was to be an Afrikaans university in spirit and culture where the principles contained in the constitution was upheld in all academic and scientific programmes and endeavours.¹⁰⁷ Chapter Seven is an emphasis is a discussion on RAU's central role in the Afrikaner identity formation and modernisation.

¹⁰⁶ *Gedenkalbum van die opening van die R.A.U.*, 1968-02-24, Chancellor's speech by Dr N. Diederichs, p. 19.

¹⁰⁷ F.I.J. van Rensburg, "Sy visies vir die nuwe universiteit" in B. Louw and F. van Rensburg, *Bestendige binnevuur*, p. 46.

Chapter 7

A critical review of RAU's central role in the Afrikaner identity formation and modernisation

7.1 Introduction

Ever since the 1940s, white Afrikaans speakers on the Witwatersrand identified education as an important “survival tool” in what they experienced as a hostile and unfriendly world. As a mechanism for political, economic and social advancement, education subsequently indeed significantly shaped the history of white Afrikaans speakers.¹ Especially Afrikaans speakers strove for education based on Christian values and, even more importantly, instruction in the mother tongue.² Keeping these non-negotiable conditions in place provided the driving force behind reshaping education for the upliftment of white Afrikaans speakers. In this context, Christian values and mother-tongue education developed, becoming more specifically defined in the Christian National Policy for Education, which played a significant role in advancing Afrikaner nationalism.

Dr P.J. Meyer, chairman of the Broederbond at the time,³ reaffirmed the importance of education for white Afrikaans speakers at the 50th anniversary of the organisation. There were celebrations countrywide on the 5th of June 1968. In Meyer's opinion, white Afrikaans-speaking youth had always been a focal point of Broederbond activities. To Meyer, the Broederbond's participation in the Afrikanerisation of the universities in South Africa was also an important part of the AB's activities. In their activities, the Broederbond worked hard to formulate national education policy as a tool to advance the interests of white Afrikaans speakers.⁴

During the 1968 anniversary celebrations, the Broeders recommitted themselves to the development of a mother-tongue education system based on Christian national values.⁵ This system of education had to play a key role in not only providing good education, but in fomenting Afrikaner unity, as well as providing a different understanding of the history,

¹ HFA, File, AB 12/256, Boks no. 3/1/7, Onderwys: die taak, p. 1.

² E.S. Van Eeden and T. Vermeulen, “Christian National Education and People's Education: Historical perspectives on some common grounds”, *New Contree*, 50, 2005, pp. 177-208.

³ D. Prinsloo, “Dr Piet Meyer in Johannesburg, 1936-1984”, *Historia*, 32 (1), 1987, p. 44.

⁴ I. Wilkins and H. Strydom, *The Super Afrikaners* (Jonathan Ball, Johannesburg, 1978), p. 253.

⁵ I. Wilkins and H. Strydom, *The Super Afrikaners*, p. 263.

culture and identity of Afrikaans speakers. It would, moreover, oversee the creation of Afrikaans institutions like RAU, contributing to an enhanced system of education which, in the interests of white Afrikaans speakers – in the Broederbond's view – had to be a prestigious, modern, Afrikaans-medium university on the Witwatersrand.⁶

The prestigious and modern character of the university was variously embodied in its Christian and Afrikaans character, its conscience clause, its academic and scientifically based education, its employment of highly qualified lecturers, its administrative and architectural planning, its impressiveness and size, its physical location, and its financial sponsorship and backing.⁷ By having all of these aspects in place, RAU met the tertiary educational needs of white Afrikaans-speaking students by ensuring a high quality and standard of academic and scientifically based university training.⁸ This training had to ensure white Afrikaans-speaking students' independence and discipline while cultivating a career in which they could excel, thereby advancing their livelihood,⁹ with livelihood meaning "job" or "source of income".¹⁰ Their success had to be made possible in the operations of a university guided by a distinctly defined philosophical and ideological set of ideals.¹¹

As the chairperson of the RAU University council Meyer, in his speech delivered at the academic opening function on the 26th of February 1974 in the Johannesburg City Hall, was optimistic about the future of Afrikaner education; but he also had several concerns. He informed the audience of international and local developments regarding the interrelationship between the university, students and society that could influence the tertiary education provided to white Afrikaans-speaking students. RAU, he observed, needed to take note of these developments, which could either affect the white Afrikaans-speaking students' advancement negatively or play a positive role in ensuring the advancement required to improve their livelihoods.¹²

Meyer wanted RAU, in its pursuit of modernisation and advancement, to take note of various social and religious ideas that had gained momentum during the late 1960s and 1970s. These

⁶ I. Wilkins and H. Strydom, *The Super Afrikaners*, pp. 256-266.

⁷ I. Wilkins and H. Strydom, *The Super Afrikaners*, p. 266.

⁸ UJ/RAU Archive, Johannesburg, *RAU-Rapport*, 8 (1), p. 1.

⁹ UJ library, Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit (RAU), *Die taak van RAU as stadsuniversiteit, enkele hoogtepunte uit die vyfjaarfees van die RAU, 1968-1973*, Toespraak – P.J. Meyer, Voorsitter van die Universiteitsraad, tydens die akademiese openingsfunksie in die Stadskouburg, Johannesburg, op 1973-2-26, p. 7.

¹⁰ *Collins South African school dictionary* (Harper Collins Publishers, Great Britain, 2002), p. 498.

¹¹ See Chapter 5 pp. 101- 109.

¹² UJ library, RAU, *Die taak van RAU as stadsuniversiteit...*, Toespraak – P.J. Meyer, Voorsitter van die Universiteitsraad..., pp. 8-10.

would necessarily affect the role and position of especially Afrikaans universities in South African society. He discussed contemporary liberal influences related to human rights and equality. These ideas suggested that the white Afrikaans speaker needed to become more enlightened and therefore distanced from Afrikaner nationalist ideals concerning language, character and religion.¹³ Other ideas gaining ground were that lecturers and students were equal and needed to be jointly responsible for the administration of the university, and that black students should be allowed into white universities on postgraduate level. In the context of the time and in view of the firm Afrikaner nationalist beliefs that Meyer adhered to, he warned against these ideas because he reckoned they would have a negative effect on the educational process envisioned for white Afrikaans speakers in South Africa.¹⁴

Meyer desired not merely the RAU, but all institutions responsible for promoting Afrikaans interests to take cognisance of these growing trends aimed at reshaping the South African identity to ensure that they did not complicate the educational future and progress of white Afrikaans speakers and especially of the students, thus impinging on their livelihood.¹⁵ He noted, however, that RAU also had to take note of technological advancements, particularly in the field of electronic technologies (the computer, for example), which had to lead to a “television revolution”, as he termed it. While developing and planning its respective teaching courses, the university needed to take note of these global developments and to offer courses and degrees that had to be highly modern, competitive and advanced under the circumstances.¹⁶

RAU’s envisaged modernised and state-of-the-art character incorporating modern educational ideals and a focus on career and identity development for white Afrikaans speakers began to emerge in 1968. With this in mind, a critical analysis of whether and in what way RAU’s creation within the framework of the envisaged ideological and philosophical ideals discussed in Chapter Five (which included the “universitas” character, “service through knowledge”, maintaining high standards, character formation, promotion of esprit de corps, etc.) contributed to its being viewed as a bastion of the educational modernisation of the

¹³UJ library, RAU, *Die taak van RAU as stadsuniversiteit...*, Toespraak – P.J. Meyer, Voorsitter van die Universiteitsraad..., pp. 8-10.

¹⁴UJ library, RAU, *Die taak van RAU as stadsuniversiteit...*, Toespraak – P.J. Meyer, Voorsitter van die Universiteitsraad..., pp. 9-10, W. Beinart, *Twentieth-century South Africa* (Oxford University Press, New York, 2001), pp. 179-187.

¹⁵ HFA, FAK versameling, Tydskrifte, Bokshouer 4, Handhaaf, 1965-8., p. 16.

¹⁶ UJ library, RAU, *Die taak van RAU as stadsuniversiteit...*, Toespraak – P.J. Meyer, Voorsitter van die Universiteitsraad..., pp. 9-10.

Afrikaner, thus fulfilling its envisaged function of modernising Afrikaner identity and livelihood on the Witwatersrand. This thesis furthermore regards an investigation of the relationship between apartheid and modernism as necessary to determine whether RAU could indeed be viewed as being central to the educational modernisation of Afrikaner identity on the Witwatersrand. RAU's role in modernising Afrikaner identity on the Witwatersrand can be linked to this interrelationship – especially if one considers the efforts of RAU's creators to ensure that modernism would be reflected at all levels of RAU's functionality.

An informed understanding of the use of certain concepts within the context of their time is both inevitable and required to discuss possibilities of the educational modernisation of white Afrikaans-speaking South Africans (Afrikaners). One such a concept was apartheid.

7.2 Understanding modernisation under apartheid

7.2.1 Modernism and apartheid

This section, which focuses on the term “modernisation”, does not define and analyse concepts such as modernism and post-modernism or their interrelationship. Instead, it devotes itself to a discussion of educational modernisation by focusing on the way in which RAU's creators employed advanced (for their time) training methods coupled with innovative courses and degrees to enhance the standard of education provided at the institution. In addition, RAU's centrality to the project of the educational modernisation of white Afrikaans-speaking students on the Witwatersrand, as this thesis contends, requires a brief discussion of the relationship between modernism and apartheid, with a specific focus on architecture. This is necessary because RAU's creators designed the university both educationally and architecturally to increase its functionality and to ensure its alignment with the “universitas” aims.¹⁷

The interrelationship between apartheid and modernism originated in the early 1950s and was visible in NP government modernisation projects such as the creation of buildings, dams and other infrastructure that served to support the symbolism of the apartheid system and its principles.¹⁸ This becomes evident in Sparks's dissertation in which the relationship between apartheid and modernism is explored by focusing particularly on the founding of SASOL.

¹⁷ See Chapter 5, pp. 104-105.

¹⁸ D. Posel, “*A mania for measurement: statistics and statecraft in the transition to apartheid*” in S. Dubow, ed., *Science and society in Southern Africa* (Manchester University Press, Manchester, 2000), S. Dubow, *A Commonwealth of knowledge. Science, sensibility and white South Africa, 1820-2000* (Oxford University Press, New York, 2006).

According to Sparks, the founding of the company in Sasolburg exemplified the NP government's employment of large-scale techno scientific projects to prove to the world that South Africa could not be considered to be backwards, but that it was in fact a modern state capable of great technological advancements and thus had the ability to develop economically.¹⁹ According to Sparks, SASOL proved that the white Afrikaans speaker was not the viciously racist or even unsophisticated Afrikaner or "Boer" who was out of step with the post-World War II global world of decolonisation and modernisation.²⁰

Posel, also interested in the relationship between modernism and apartheid, distinguishes the apartheid regime from other segregationist eras in South Africa before 1948. The apartheid regime, for Posel who refers specifically to the infamous racial classification system, illustrates the extent of the "modernisation" of racially dominating practices.²¹ Sparks, Posel and Dubow,²² all scholars interested in the relationship between apartheid and modernism, thus argue that the NP government was fascinated by modernism. Sparks goes so far as to describe this fascination as follows:²³

... high-modernist fantasy, a hankering for totalizing order, positioning the eye of the state at the pinnacle of an orderly bureaucracy, with a panoramic view of the racial landscape and everything constructed upon it.

Moreover, he agrees with Posel when he describes the NP government as being possessed by a:²⁴

...mania for measurement, engaging in comprehensive and systematic information-gathering, coupled to modes of orderly regulation and surveillance.

Dubow concurs with this line of thought when he argues that the NP government used science and technology to support an "ideology of modernising techno-nationalism" that celebrated the white Afrikaans speakers' seemingly outstanding abilities. To Dubow, the massive construction of concrete dams, nuclear programmes, the use of reinforced concrete in the construction of massive grain silos, national roads and important military motorways, and the use of impressive and modern urban public architecture in the designing and construction

¹⁹ S.J. Sparks, *Apartheid: modern South Africa's oil from coal project and the history of a South African company town* (PhD, The University of Michigan, 2012), pp. 1-30.

²⁰ S.J. Sparks, *Apartheid: ...*, p. 1.

²¹ S.J. Sparks, *Apartheid: ...*, p. 4.

²² D. Posel, "A mania for measurement...", in S. Dubow, ed., *Science and society in Southern Africa* (Manchester University Press, Manchester, 2000); S. Dubow, *A Commonwealth of knowledge: science, sensibility and white South Africa, 1820-2000* (Oxford University Press, New York, 2006).

²³ S.J. Sparks, *Apartheid: ...*, p. 5.

²⁴ S.J. Sparks, *Apartheid: ...*, p. 5.

of banks, corporations, universities (RAU), public memorials, monuments and churches all served as monuments to Afrikaner identity and modernity.²⁵

Owen analyses RAU's architecture in the context of apartheid and the aims of the NP government. He concurs with Dubow's assertion, yet expands on it by focusing on RAU's architecture. Owen observes, firstly, the relationship between RAU and 1960s apartheid architecture and, secondly, between Afrikaner identity and modernism. His description of RAU's architectural plans coincides, moreover, with what the university's creators had in mind regarding the "universitas" character of RAU:²⁶

... the plan builds upon the general innovations prevalent in the new universities' movement during the late sixties ... communication, contact and connection are the main generators of the design ... Socially, the emphasis falls on openness to all the perceived activities of the community with an accent placed on in-between spaces for reflection, discovery or chance meeting.

Murray, in her dissertation focusing on architectural style, likewise proposes the relationship between apartheid and modernism. She argues, however, that modernism during the apartheid era was, as she puts it, "domesticated"; it was given its own character to become the architectural style of choice in serving Afrikaner nationalism and identity formation in the second part of the twentieth century.²⁷ Murray argues that this involved the local and specific application of modernist design ideas for towns, cities and individual buildings whereby international styles and variations of modernism were used in architectural projects in an effort to assert a special national identity.²⁸ Owen grapples with a similar argument when he states that the role of architecture in South Africa in achieving a particular identity could be ascribed to the fact that the practice of architecture in South Africa, according to him, did not succeed in maintaining a historic distance or objectivity.²⁹ Thence his conclusion that modernist planning and architecture contributed to identity formation and, in many cases, were used for this exact purpose.

Explaining the relationship between architectural projects and a special national identity, Murray refers to various examples of architectural style including Gerard Moerdyk's Art

²⁵ S. Dubow, *A Commonwealth of knowledge...*, pp. 258 - 260.

²⁶ G. Owen, "Forget Europe, forget America: architecture and apartheid", *Journal of Architectural Education*, 42 (3), 1989, pp. 10-12.

²⁷ N. Murray, "Architectural modernism and apartheid modernity in South Africa: A critical inquiry into the work of architect and urban designer Roelof Uytendogaardt 1960-2009", (PhD, University of Cape Town, 2010), p. 63.

²⁸ N. Murray, "Architectural modernism and apartheid modernity in South Africa...", p. 63.

²⁹ G. Owen, "Forget Europe, forget America: architecture and apartheid"..., p. 4.

Deco style for the Voortrekker Monument, the Corbusian planning for Cape Town's reclamation project, the fluid forms and expressionism of the Afrikaans Language Monument, the brutalism of the Pretoria State Theatre, the Regionalist Modernism of Fagan's Volkskas Bank buildings and the modern architectural style of RAU. Numerous examples thus illustrate the relationship between apartheid architectural style and modernism, guiding Murray to conclude that modern architecture and style became the visual language of the apartheid period, strongly distinguished from Victorian and other British imperial styles.³⁰

Against this background, it is no wonder that Beinart, in a general discussion of Afrikaner nationalism, concludes that the NP government (representing Afrikaner nationalism) in its preoccupation with modernisation viewed itself as a:³¹

Conservative but modern industrial, capitalist, Western-orientated nation 'preoccupied with their own nationhood and identity.

From the observations above, it is quite apparent that architectural design played an undeniable part in the formation of post-World War II Afrikaner national identity. This was the very group who was (in 1948) empowered to govern South Africa. Although identity formation started prior to World War II, South Africa's Afrikaans-speaking section of the population started to occupy positions and fill vacancies after 1948 that they were not reckoned to be educationally fit to fill previously.

The NP government deployed huge resources in the 1960s and subsequently to establish parity in the tertiary educational sector, resulting in the creation of two new universities, namely UPE in 1964 and RAU in 1968. As this dissertation argues, RAU was a university created as a bastion for educationally modernising the young and upcoming Afrikanerdom with a sense of belonging, pride and hope. Dubow observed RAU's impressive architectural design describing it as a university "sculpted in soaring concrete" and, although an academic institution, equal in grandeur to the majestic large dams constructed at the same time. The new campus, he observed, issued a powerful statement that Afrikanerdom was not only taking its place in the economic centre of the country, but was doing so on an impressive scale.³²

This "grand scale" appearance (to quote Dubow) was also noted by different speakers during the formal university opening of RAU's new campus in Auckland Park on the 24th of May

³⁰ N. Murray, "Architectural modernism and apartheid modernity in South Africa...", p. 63.

³¹ W. Beinart, *Twentieth-century South Africa*, Oxford University Press, New York, 2001, p. 145.

³² S. Dubow, *A Commonwealth of knowledge...*, pp. 265-266.

1975. The then State President, Dr Nico Diederichs, remarked that the building was so impressive that it imposed upon the visitor who was left marvelling at its modern and colossal appearance.³³ Prof HS Pelser, the chairperson of the Department of Semitic languages and a speaker at the function, described the new building as a symbol of the Afrikaners' claim to independence and of their deep-rooted perpetual presence on the Witwatersrand, specifically in Johannesburg.³⁴

At this point, it is worth referring again to Meyer's observations in the conclusion of his book, *Nog nie ver genoeg nie* and, more specifically, to his reference to the evolving nature of Johannesburg over the decades since its founding. He reflected on the city's changes and developments, citing as an example of their impressive nature the contribution of RAU's architectural design to the landscape of Johannesburg. To Meyer, RAU was so ultramodern and monumental that he believed it would outlast the mine dumps that would over time be blown away by the wind. This image encapsulates his vision of the valuable contribution RAU would make to the city for many decades to come. In an emotive statement, he explained the motivation for the creation of the educational stronghold (Also freely translated to English):³⁵

'Kyk, die stuwing van 'n geroepe volk sit daaragter'

(Look, the surge of a called nation is behind it).

This statement is important for two reasons when one critically reviews RAU's eventual success in gradually shaping and modernising white Afrikaans speakers' identity on the Witwatersrand. Firstly, it refers to the intonation of support while moving forward and, secondly, to an action performed by a group or a people who believe that they have been called upon to do so. In the context of the historical struggles of white Afrikaans speakers, specifically on the Witwatersrand and referred to in Chapters Three and Four, the statement is expressive of the determination and effort behind RAU's creation. RAU's establishment not only had as its goal the educational advancement of white Afrikaans speakers in their mother tongue, but also their modernisation and its contribution to their livelihoods. The focus was on a modernising character with the goal of advancement as a primary driving force.

³³ UJ/RAU Archive, *RAU-Rapport*, 8 (2), 1975, p. 3.

³⁴ UJ/RAU Archive, *RAU-Rapport*, 8 (2), 1975, p. 2.

³⁵ P.J. Meyer, *Nog nie ver genoeg nie: 'n persoonlike rekenskap van vyftig jaar georganiseerde Afrikanerskap* (Perskor, Johannesburg, 1984), p. 184.

7.3 RAU – advancing and modernising Afrikaner identity through education

In this section, the focus will fall on how RAU and its founders viewed education. For this purpose, a critical evaluation is essential of whether and how RAU's creation could be regarded as pivotal to modernising Afrikaner identity and improving Afrikaner livelihoods on the Witwatersrand. It is equally important to understand some dynamics (regarding knowledge application or implementation) that are crucial to any successful university. These dynamics are specifically significant in the context of this discussion concerning RAU. The founders of RAU firmly believed that the university's creation concurred with the principle of "seeking knowledge through knowledge".³⁶ The specific process of transferring knowledge to the student linked to RAU's ultimate object of providing a modern education was very important at the time, because both would determine the university's success in providing a high standard of education in line with its overall objectives.³⁷ Below follows comments on the RAU motto '*Diens deur Kennis*'/ "Service through Knowledge" – a motto that is important with a view to the discussion.

7.3.1 '*Diens deur Kennis*' / "Service through Knowledge"

To understand the dynamics of knowledge application or implementation at RAU, it is important firstly to understand the significance of the motto "Diens deur Kennis" that features on RAU's coat of arms. Secondly, it is necessary to note the descriptions of the university's first rector, Prof G van N Viljoen, specifically regarding RAU's role in the community for which it was founded and in white Afrikaans-speaking communities beyond the Witwatersrand. Viljoen made it clear that RAU was established to develop and modernise white Afrikaners through its commitment to "Service through Knowledge". The university would therefore actively involve itself in Afrikaner community development. Viljoen greatly valued community development. He stressed RAU's duty to establish and maintain liaison with other universities both locally and nationally. As he observed, the university was

³⁶ UJ/RAU Archive, P.J. Meyer collection, File C 1/6, Dr P.J. Meyer – Document to be used as a speech on the "Structure of the university", p. 1.

³⁷ UJ/RAU Archive, C1: P.J. Meyer collection, File C 1/6, Dr P.J. Meyer – Document to be used as a speech..., p. 1.

responsible for providing cultural leadership beyond the institution itself through forums such as conferences, newsletters and holiday courses.³⁸

During an appearance on *Top Talk* on the 10th of March 1967, Viljoen emphasised the interconnection between knowledge implementation and RAU's motto of "Service through Knowledge". He informatively summarised his belief in the need for theoretical and practical academic training:³⁹

Only the man who has been trained in the fundamentals and in the theory, who knows not only applications, formulae and recipes but also the proof and reasons for those formulae and recipes, only that man will be able to keep up with the exacting pace of change and development of new knowledge. To me it seems that theory and fundamentals, the ability to think and analyse basically, are increasingly becoming highly practical assets in our age of rapid technological change. In our planning of RAU our difficult task will be to combine sufficient training in fundamental principles with adequate training in the ability to apply such principles, and this while the quantum of knowledge is increasing daily.

Out of these fundamental principles for sound academic practice, namely to think, analyse, and interpret, Viljoen developed RAU's goals for academic training at the university.

These fundamental principles inevitably formed the basis of the knowledge application defined by the motto "Service through Knowledge". Viljoen delivered a speech at a graduation ceremony on the 14th of April 1973 in which he elaborated on the motto. He noted that it gave specific meaning and prominence to the third level of the functioning of a modern university in the twentieth century, namely⁴⁰ community service, in addition to career orientation and development. This level, moreover, comprised three different dimensions, each with its specific aims. Firstly, "Service through Knowledge" implied educating students with the aim of improving their career prospects. This implied that RAU would provide up-to-date career advice complemented by advanced teaching and curriculum development, thereby ensuring that students obtained the necessary knowledge and skills for their future workplace. Furthermore, RAU's education had to enable students to keep up with new developments in their fields of employment and encourage their willingness to undergo further training and education if required to do so.⁴¹ This level of knowledge application was

³⁸ UJ/RAU Archive, P.J. Meyer collection, File C 1/6, Dr P.J. Meyer – Document to be used as a speech..., pp. 5-7.

³⁹ UJ/RAU Archive, RAU collection, File A 34/1, Talk by Prof G. van N. Viljoen in the programme "Top Talk" on Springbok Radio on 1967-03-12, p. 6.

⁴⁰ J.G. Garbers, "Diens deur kennis" in B. Louw and F. van Rensburg, *Bestendige binnevure: perspektiewe op Gerrit Viljoen by geleentheid van sy een en sewentigste verjaarsdag op 1997-09-11* (Tafelberg-uitgewers Beperk, Kaapstad, 1997), p. 78.

⁴¹ UJ/RAU Archive, G. van N. Viljoen collection, File C 3/1, Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit, Beplanningsvergadering, p. 4.

aimed at establishing the basic theoretical training to enable the student to cope with the changing demands of the future.

Secondly, “Service through Knowledge” implied service to the community by producing academically well-trained and educated graduates to meet immediate and future societal needs. This required the establishment of open relationships between the university and employers that had to facilitate discussion regarding the employer’s needs, i.e. what had to be provided by the university, and the further training (the “in-service training”) that the employer would subsequently provide. This would require of the university a strategic and future-oriented course and degree offering based on local and national employment needs. RAU had to take the lead in this regard.⁴² Thirdly, “Service through Knowledge” implied providing knowledge in its totality, offered as a service by RAU to the nation. Moreover, it implied that RAU’s scholarship and research would focus on issues of national importance.⁴³

Aspects embodied in the motto “Service through Knowledge”, namely guiding and moulding or shaping the individual student, human resource development, community considerations and providing solutions to common challenges, formed the focus of programmes at RAU from its beginnings in 1968. These dimensions illustrate the significance accorded to knowledge application and to meeting the needs of industry with sound university education. They illustrate, moreover, that the balance of “provide versus require” was continuously researched to allow for long-term strategic planning. This approach contributed to creating ultramodern education for white Afrikaans-speaking students and thus contributed to the modernisation of Afrikaner identity. Just four years after RAU opened its doors, the university’s anticipation of future demands was demonstrated through its introduction of modern courses not generally offered by other South African universities at the time. These courses included, amongst others, Biochemistry, Electronics, Communications, Development Studies, Computer Science, Urban Studies and Transport Economics. Future planning also contributed to the ongoing development of the postgraduate Business School, to discussions concerning a possible Medical Faculty and to expanding the Engineering Faculty to meet societal needs and to cater for the ongoing increase in student numbers.⁴⁴ This kind of course planning illustrated RAU’s commitment to providing modern, contemporary and competitive training to students enrolled at the institution and to the community it served.

⁴² J.G. Garbers, “*Diens deur kennis*” in B. Louw and F. van Rensburg, *Bestendige binnevure...*, p. 79.

⁴³ UJ/RAU Archive, *RAU Rapport*, 8 (2), 1975, p. 3.

⁴⁴ Booklet – The RAU after four years, Produced by the Public Relations Department of the Rand Afrikaans University, 1972, p. 4.

7.3.2 Viljoen's views – modern education and RAU's community involvement

The motto “Service through Knowledge” played a constructive role in RAU's project to develop and modernise the community it served. To Viljoen, as his observations suggest, this was important because the university was established for white Afrikaans speakers who, at the time, desperately required modern education. In his farewell speech to RAU and its students on the 13th of August 1979, having taken the lead for more than a decade in the administration, development and expansion of RAU, Viljoen made the following statement (Also freely translated to English):⁴⁵

Hierdie universiteit is nie 'n blote universele, neutrale inrigting wat in die lug hang nie. Hy het gegroei uit 'n bepaalde gemeenskap en die meeste van sy studente gaan oorwegend na daardie gemeenskap toe terug, en dit is primêr die Afrikaanssprekendes en veral die Randse Afrikaners ... (dit is) 'n gemeenskap wat op opvoedkundige gebied in baie opsigte 'n onderontwikkelde, 'n agtergeblewe gemeenskap was, en 'n gemeenskap wat deur die bydrae van hierdie universiteit as studente en dosente reeds groot stappe vorentoe geneem het. Die feit dat ons vandag in hierdie universiteit en in hierdie stad as ontwikkelde en algemeen aanvaarde Afrikaners kan staan, is nie sommer iets wat vanself gebeur het nie.

(This university is not merely a universal, neutral institution removed from any context. It has grown from a specific community and most of its students will inevitably go back to that community, which consists primarily the Afrikaans speakers and mostly the Rand Afrikaners... It is a community that was educationally underdeveloped, a disadvantaged community, a community that, through the contributions of this university and its students and lecturers, has made great strides in its development. The fact that we can stand as developed and generally accepted Afrikaners at this university in this city today is not something that simply happened on its own).

From this statement, we can therefore conclude that RAU succeeded in advancing and developing the white Afrikaans-speaking community for which it was originally created.

In another observation, a few years earlier, during a speech on the 4th of March 1974 at the RAU academic consecration service in the Civic Theatre (‘Stadskouburg’), Viljoen articulated a number of observations on the modern university. A modern university, to his mind (and he included the RAU) had to fulfil three specific functions: knowledge transfer; knowledge broadening or renewal; and knowledge application.⁴⁶ Viljoen played a fundamental role in the development, advancement and modernisation of white Afrikaans-speaking students on the Witwatersrand. Through advanced education and knowledge transfers systems many students were trained to become teachers, lawyers, scientists, researchers, social workers, sociologists, psychologists, politicians, businessmen and leaders

⁴⁵ J.G. Garbers, “Diens deur kennis” in B. Louw and F. van Rensburg, *Bestendige binnevre...*, p. 80.

⁴⁶ UJ/RAU Archive, J. Cronje collection, File A 36/4, Prof. G. van N. Viljoen – RAU vestiging, geboukompleks en ontstaansgeskiedenis, Toespraak gehou deur Prof. G. van N. Viljoen tydens the RAU Akademiese wydingsdiens in die Stadskouburg getiteld “Die relevantheid van die universiteit” op 1974-03-04, p. 2.

in the industrial and commercial sectors. They were all products of RAU's aim to uplift, equip and modernise white Afrikaans identity and improve Afrikaner livelihood. Even in its early years, RAU had thus contributed to the social and economic upward mobility of the white Afrikaans-speaking community.⁴⁷

The modern approach in training was also evident in the community-focused development approach that RAU employed. This entailed, firstly, an ongoing exchange between the University's academic and management staff, with leaders of industry and the business world to determine the needs of the private sector, needs that influenced the modules taught at RAU. Secondly, the university council made funds available for specialists from industry, research centres and the private sector to lecture at RAU in order to expose students to the thoughts and practical experiences of leading experts in their respective fields of knowledge from outside the university.⁴⁸

Viljoen's observations referred to above and made at different stages in RAU's history reveal that RAU played a substantial role in the general advancement and modernisation of white Afrikaans speakers who studied at the modern institution.⁴⁹ Students in most cases went back to their communities and in turn contributed to those communities' upliftment and advancement.⁵⁰ Furthermore, RAU developed and modernised previously disadvantaged white Afrikaans speakers, especially on the Witwatersrand, to the extent that their presence in Johannesburg was accepted by both the English and the Jewish communities. At that point, these communities had well-established, deep roots in the economic, political and social structures of the Witwatersrand. Taking into consideration that several RAU students were drawn from areas outside the Witwatersrand indicated, moreover, that RAU had not only become the choice of university for many, but that it had made huge strides forward in the tertiary education sector between 1968 and 1974, thus extending its modernising influence beyond the Witwatersrand.⁵¹

⁴⁷ UJ/RAU Archive, J. Cronje collection, File A 36/4, Speech of Prof. G. van N. Viljoen before the South African Club, London, on 1975-04-08, pp. 10-13.

⁴⁸ UJ/RAU Archive, J. Cronje collection, File A 36/4, Prof. G. van N. Viljoen – RAU vestiging, geboukompleks..., p. 5.

⁴⁹ UJ library, RAU, *Die Taak van RAU as stadsuniversiteit, enkele hoogtepunte uit die vyfjaarfees van die RAU, 1968-1973*, Toespraak P J Meyer, Voorsitter van die Universiteitsraad..., pp. 11-12.

⁵⁰ UJ/RAU Archive, J. Cronje collection, File A 36/4, Prof. G. van N. Viljoen – RAU vestiging, geboukompleks en ontstaansgeskiedenis..., p. 5.

⁵¹ UJ/RAU Archive, J. Cronje collection, File A 36/4, Prof. G. van N. Viljoen – RAU vestiging, geboukompleks en ontstaansgeskiedenis..., p. 2.

In Viljoen's opinion, RAU's range of influence was made possible through the application of the three different functions of knowledge mentioned above, which were embedded in the courses offered at RAU and facilitated in the mother tongue in a Christian national value system. Its influence, moreover, could only be achieved through the dedication of a talented and qualified lecturing staff. Lecturers at RAU originated from various tertiary institutions from around the country and many had studied at other universities on the continent and even internationally. RAU's modern character and its aim to continually strive for excellence and top rankings in the latest research and knowledge was reflected in the more than R100 000 (a formidable amount at the time 1974) spent on research programmes, allowing lecturers to take long sabbaticals to study at international universities or research institutions.⁵² The end result was a highly professional lecturing staff component that not only delivered research papers at local conferences on a regular basis, but who also frequented international conferences. Viljoen believed that this contributed to the university's high standard of lecturing and to the fact that by 1974 between 20 percent and 26 percent of RAU's students were enrolled in postgraduate studies, thus ensuring a new generation and demographic of graduates and researchers.⁵³ The professional lecturing staff and their commitment to ensuring RAU's high quality of teaching and training provided for excellent statistical data reflecting the achievements of RAU even early on in its existence. Even at an early stage these achievements contributed to the growing modernising of the white Afrikaner identity, and the improvement of Afrikaner livelihoods. RAU's emphasis on modernity was purely educational with the aim of returning dignity to a group of people from an early postcolonial era through education.

The successful implementation of the concept "service through knowledge" required the active participation of business as well – as an important role player in the activities of the university.

⁵² UJ/RAU Archive, J. Cronje collection, File A 36/4, Prof. G. van N. Viljoen – RAU vestiging, geboukompleks en ontstaansgeskiedenis..., pp. 2-3.

⁵³ UJ/RAU Archive, J. Cronje collection, File A 36/4, Prof. G. van N. Viljoen – RAU vestiging, geboukompleks en ontstaansgeskiedenis..., p. 3.

7.4 Achieving modernising goals through active business engagement and development

The year 1973 marked RAU's fifth anniversary (1968-1973). It was labelled the "five-year festival year". A variety of activities, focused especially on the institution's achievements, marked the celebration of RAU's first five years. Not only were achievements celebrated, but different tasks for the next five years were selected, while goals were identified as well. One event was a symposium held at RAU on the 20th and 21st of February 1973, where a variety of papers were delivered followed by discussions reflecting on the university's achievements in its first five years. Prominent individuals either directly or indirectly involved with the university presented speeches on different occasions. Said speeches focused on RAU's role in the community and revealed aspects of RAU's active business and community engagement. All the symposium papers emphasised RAU's advancement of the identity of the white Afrikaans-speaking section of the population and rendered propositions regarding its role in improving white Afrikaner livelihood even further.

7.4.1 Empowering white Afrikaans-speaking students

As chairman of the university council during the academic opening function in the City Hall in Johannesburg on the 26th of February 1973, Meyer delivered a speech in which he focused on RAU's achievements in the first five years. He drew several conclusions. RAU, he observed, had not only developed academically in its own right, but had also contributed to developing the white Afrikaans speakers who studied at the university. It had, for example, equipped white Afrikaans-speaking students with a new and improved self-image, enabling them to confidently interact with other groups on the Witwatersrand. Moreover, RAU had not only played an active role in the white Afrikaans-speaking community through a range of activities, programmes and interactions,⁵⁴ but had empowered white Afrikaans-speaking students through professional and specialised training to deal with demanding challenges. This had contributed to white Afrikaans speakers' increasing professional presence in the private sector.⁵⁵

⁵⁴ UJ library, RAU, *Die Taak van RAU as stadsuniversiteit, enkele hoogtepunte uit die vyfjaarfees van die RAU, 1968-1973*, Toespraak P.J. Meyer, Voorsitter van die Universiteitsraad..., pp. 1-5.

⁵⁵ UJ library, RAU *Die Taak van RAU as stadsuniversiteit, enkele hoogtepunte uit die vyfjaarfees van die RAU, 1968-1973*, Toespraak P.J. Meyer, Voorsitter van die Universiteitsraad..., pp. 11-12.

7.4.2 The intellectual development of white Afrikaans-speaking students

These views were shared by Mr JP van der Spuy, the Minister of National Education, in a speech at a graduation ceremony in the City Hall in Johannesburg on the 14th of April 1973. The focus of his speech was on RAU's role in the South African university community. From the outset, he made the point that five years was a short time in which to determine whether RAU had indeed made a meaningful and constructive contribution as a university. He concluded, however, that RAU had indeed established its own specific character and identity and had undoubtedly succeeded in producing 778 South African graduates to date.⁵⁶ Through this achievement, RAU had proved that it could contribute to the intellectual development and thus the improvement of the livelihoods of the white Afrikaans-speaking youth of the Witwatersrand, a goal set by the institution's original founders. He was confident that RAU's reputation would be further promoted by its future graduates. However, the true test of the institution would lie in the contribution these graduates made in the communities and work places to which they returned.⁵⁷ He also expressed his confidence in the fact that these graduates would excel and contribute immensely to the communities whence they had originally come and that RAU's high standard of academic training based on modern educational methods would contribute to this. He pointed out, moreover, that RAU engaged actively with the high schools from which students would be drawn to determine their problems or needs long before these pupils even started their university studies as students.⁵⁸

7.4.3 RAU engaging with industry and business

During the symposium of the 20th and 21st of February 1973, important role players from mainly Afrikaans industry and business were invited to engage in a debate on the interrelationship between RAU, industry and business. From the outset, Viljoen reiterated the necessity for this engagement to firstly determine whether the university was on track with the training that provided in the needs of industry and business. Secondly, the point was made

⁵⁶ UJ library, RAU, *Die Taak van RAU as stadsuniversiteit, enkele hoogtepunte uit die vyfjaarfees van die RAU, 1968-1973*, Toespraak P.J. van der Spuy, Minister van Nasionale Opvoeding, tydens die gradeplegtigheid in die Stadskouburg, Johannesburg, op 1973-04-14, p. 42.

⁵⁷ UJ library, RAU, *Die Taak van RAU as stadsuniversiteit, enkele hoogtepunte uit die vyfjaarfees van die RAU, 1968-1973*, Toespraak P.J. van der Spuy, Minister van Nasionale Opvoeding..., p. 41.

⁵⁸ UJ library, RAU, *Die taak van RAU as stadsuniversiteit...*, Toespraak P.J. van der Spuy, Minister van Nasionale Opvoeding..., p. 44.

that because these role players had contributed in terms of funding to RAU's creation, they had a right to be involved in the direction the university took regarding its academic programmes. For RAU to be successful in the service it provided to these role players, cognisance needed to be taken of employment opportunities and needs, career guidance to be provided to students and employment opportunities developed in accordance with changes in knowledge since the 1960s.⁵⁹

During the panel discussion concerning the interrelationship between the university, industry and business, Mr J de Necker, the then President of the Afrikaans Handelsinstituut (Institute of commerce), pointed out a shortage in the availability of professional managers and operational leaders. He argued that the university had the task of producing these professionally trained individuals who would play an active role in advancing the secondary and tertiary production sectors. These sectors would, for example, include car and textile factories in the secondary sectors and the financial and trade components in the tertiary sector.⁶⁰ On the other hand, Dr WJ de Villiers, the managing director of the General Mining and Finance Corporation (one of the leading Afrikaans mining houses of the day) reiterated the important relationship between economic development and growth and noted a shortage of adequately trained professionals who could be employed in these positions. He observed that the task of the university – and specifically RAU – was to provide a high level of training to students interested in managerial careers and to provide courses involving continuous training for those individuals already employed.⁶¹

The managing director of Personnel Consultants Limited, Dr DJ Gouws, observed that RAU had, since its establishment, actively investigated what was needed in industry and business and how it could help to meet these needs (Also freely translated to English):⁶²

Dit was van die ontstaan van die RAU af 'n vreugde om te sien hoedat daar bewustelik beplan is om 'n onderskeidende rol vir RAU te vind waarin die universiteit 'n unieke bydrae tot ons samelewing sou kon lewer.

⁵⁹ UJ library, RAU, *Die taak van RAU as stadsuniversiteit*, ..., Toespraak Prof. G. van N. Viljoen – Die taak en opdrag van die RAU..., pp. 60-61.

⁶⁰ UJ library, RAU, *Die taak van RAU as stadsuniversiteit*..., Paneellid Mnr J. de Necker, President van die Afrikaanse Handelsinstituut, pp. 62-63.

⁶¹ UJ library, RAU, *Die taak van RAU as stadsuniversiteit*..., Paneellid Dr W.J. de Villiers, Besturende Direkteur van General Mining and Finance Corporation, pp. 66-67.

⁶² UJ library, RAU, *Die taak van RAU as stadsuniversiteit*..., Paneellid Dr D.J. Gouws, Besturende Direkteur, Personeelkonsultante, (Edms.) Beperk, p. 70.

(Ever since RAU's founding, it was sheer joy to see how the university actively planned to ensure its distinctive role in making a unique contribution to our society.)

In a similar vein, Prof. J Poolman (Department of Business Economy) remarked that businessmen on the Witwatersrand perceived RAU's creation as part of a "knowledge industry", something that they eagerly welcomed.⁶³

It can rightly be concluded that RAU actively sought to provide an up-to-date and excellent service. The university sought not only to produce skilled graduates to serve an economic needy and active work environment, but also to deliver qualified graduates for specific economic environments as required by a specific workplace. This can be observed through RAU's achievement regarding the advancement of the white Afrikaans speakers' livelihood.

7.5 RAU's achievements in modernising white Afrikaner identities and advancing livelihoods

7.5.1 Student registration and degrees awarded

Already in the early years of RAU's existence it became clear that RAU was making good strides in modernising Afrikaner identity. This became evident in a booklet published as early as 1969. In this booklet published by RAU's public relations division in 1969, much important statistical data, along with pictures and comments illustrated its achievements, a mere two years after its founding. RAU had a total of 77 academic staff members of whom 38 were professors.⁶⁴ In the first academic year in 1968, 780 students registered for their studies at RAU: 29 registered for doctorates, 134 for master's degrees and honours, and 617 were first-year students.⁶⁵ In a follow-up booklet also produced by the public relations division in 1972, the statistical data confirmed that RAU was growing not only in student numbers, but also in staff numbers. According to the statistics provided in this booklet, the number of academic staff members had increased to 157, of whom 100 were senior academic

⁶³ UJ library, RAU, *Die taak van RAU as stadsuniversiteit...*, Paneellid Prof. G. Poolman, Department Bedryfsekonomie, p. 75.

⁶⁴ Booklet – Growth of the Rand Afrikaans University, Produced by The Public Relations Department of the Rand Afrikaans University, 1969, p. 6.

⁶⁵ Booklet – The RAU after four years, Produced by the Public Relations Department of the Rand Afrikaans University, 1972, p. 5.

staff members.⁶⁶ This number would, in the years to follow, grow to around 400 academic staff members by 2004.⁶⁷

These booklets revealed statistical data that indicated that RAU had been expanding rapidly within a very short period. Releasing this information was significant, because the pamphlets publicised the university's importance, the growing support it received in the form of increased enrolment, the impact it had on the community it served and its modernising aims reflected in its teaching innovations and modern architecture. In the booklet compiled in 1969, Dr N Diederichs stressed the unprecedented developments South Africa had experienced during that time. In his opinion, these new developments created opportunities that necessitated new thinking, since new problems and demands had arisen requiring university-trained manpower. RAU had a crucial role to play in this regard, providing university-trained staff members in the fields of commerce and industry, research and numerous other sectors.⁶⁸ Modernising white Afrikaans speakers' identity was therefore of utmost importance.

In the same booklet, Viljoen also is quoted in 1972 that the white Afrikaans-speaking population had grown on the Witwatersrand in recent times. Figures at the time showed a growth of 167 percent as compared to 60 percent in the entire country. This implied that, at that time, one fifth of the white Afrikaans-speaking population in South Africa (420 000 people) lived on the Witwatersrand and its surrounding areas. Viljoen made it clear that this growth was indicative of the great untapped intellectual potential of young white Afrikaans speakers on the Witwatersrand.

Viljoen demonstrated that these statistics proved that RAU's establishment had been necessary because its registration of 780 students in its first year of operation did not have a notable impact on the growth rate of neighbouring universities. He projected that RAU would reach an annual enrolment of 4 500 by 1979 and that it would deliver 3 500 graduates during this period.⁶⁹ In 1974, it was predicted that the student numbers would increase to 12 000 by the year 2000 with between 4 000 and 5 000 students enrolling by 1980.⁷⁰ In the 1972 booklet, enrolled student numbers had increased to 1 500 students and 465 students

⁶⁶ Booklet – The RAU after four years, Produced by the Public Relations Department of the Rand Afrikaans University, 1972, p. 5.

⁶⁷ *Anvil* (Aambeeld), *RAU: A Return Flight*, 31 (2), p. 2.

⁶⁸ Booklet – Growth of the Rand Afrikaans University, 1969, p. 2.

⁶⁹ Booklet – Growth of the Rand Afrikaans University, 1969, p. 3.

⁷⁰ UJ/RAU Archive, *RAU-Rapport*, 7 (4), 1974, p. 1.

graduated. At the graduation ceremony of April 1973, 317 students received their degrees and diplomas; in April 1975, 347 degrees were awarded along with nine doctorate degrees. With 1 138 degrees awarded by 1975, RAU had, in a very short period, made great strides in advancing the tertiary education of white Afrikaans speakers.⁷¹

7.5.2 Self-assessment and advancement

Viljoen highlighted the important role that RAU had to play in addressing the educational backlog of the white Afrikaans-speaking community. To him, backlogs were not the only issues to address: modernisation and advancement through academic innovations – for example the extension of the academic year, the semester system and continuous assessment – were also considerations. RAU's continuous self-assessment and development in terms of its services and activities were therefore of the utmost importance.

7.5.2.1 Bureau of Higher Education

The Bureau of Higher Education at RAU was established in 1968 under the leadership of Prof JR Pauw to assist with this self-assessment and development. The objective was for the bureau to conduct research into aspects of the university and incorporate similar research undertaken at other institutions. The Bureau was established to actively engage with problems the university experienced in terms of student discontent, high failure rates, lecturers dealing with the difficulties of teaching and research, the relevance of courses and training programmes, the university's relationship with the state and university autonomy. So also was the Bureau was also responsible for organising conferences, symposia and offering short courses.⁷² In essence the Bureau served to improve educational standards at RAU with a view to benefiting the students and enhancing the university's modernisation initiatives.

7.5.2.2 Institute for Child and Adult Guidance

In 1975, the university announced that it was creating an “Instituut vir Kinder- en Volwasseleiding” (Institute for Child and Adult Guidance). The founder of the institute and its first chairperson was Prof SJL Gouws. He would be supported by a social worker and an educationalist. The institute was created when it became evident that there was a need for psychological and educational support in the white Afrikaans-speaking community on the

⁷¹ UJ/RAU Archive, *RAU- Rapport*, 8 (2), 1975, p. 22.

⁷² UJ/RAU Archive, *RAU-Rapport*, 5 (2), 1972, p. 1.

Witwatersrand. At that stage, support was provided by English speakers, but the language of instruction impacted rather negatively on the white Afrikaans-speaking community due to the language barrier. RAU could thus contribute significantly to the well-being and advancement of the community it served by providing these essential services. Various forms of assistance were needed: remedial support for children with learning difficulties, determining children's readiness for school, assistance with subject and career choices, therapy for behavioural problems, general social work and marriage counselling.⁷³ RAU's support in this regard not only provided specific assistance to individuals but, more generally, helped in the development and advancement of the white Afrikaans-speaking community.

7.5.2.3 Research development

To Viljoen, it was important to:⁷⁴

...assist the white Afrikaans speaker to better understand and adapt himself to the complexities of the large city and to contribute towards a city culture worthy of our country and its traditions.

To achieve this goal, RAU prioritised research. Alongside its teaching, the university produced cutting-edge knowledge through original research and creative thinking.

In 1971, for example, RAU made R140 000 available to academic staff and postgraduate students for research provided by research bodies such as the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), the Human Science Research Council (HSRC) and the Atomic Energy Board (AEB).⁷⁵ By 1972, research projects included: the Unit for Magnetism and Semiconductor Physics; biological studies of freshwater fish, in the Department of Zoology; the study of synthesis and structure of natural products in the Department of Chemistry; studies of tissue senescence in deciduous fruit in the Department of Botany; research aimed at improving public transport in South Africa; a study of the history of the Afrikaner on the Witwatersrand; and research on children with learning problems.⁷⁶ Furthermore, within the first five years of the institution's existence, RAU spent R850 000 on acquiring state-of-the-art laboratory equipment in the interest of promoting advanced research and a high standard of scientific education. Similarly serving this aim, the library's collection was significantly

⁷³ UJ/RAU Archive, *RAU-Rapport*, 8 (1), 1975, p. 4.

⁷⁴ Booklet – Growth of the Rand Afrikaans University, 1969, pp. 3-4.

⁷⁵ Booklet – Growth of the Rand Afrikaans University, 1969, p. 7.

⁷⁶ Booklet – The RAU after four years, 1972, p. 7.

expanded. Considered the heart of the university, this collection increased from 30 000 volumes in 1967 to 165 000 by 1972, at a cost of R840 000.⁷⁷

The above-mentioned projects actively involved RAU in the community it served and promoted the university's wider goal of promoting, developing and modernising white Afrikaans identity on the Witwatersrand.

7.6 Conclusion

Critically reviewing RAU's central role in modernising the Afrikaner identity and improving Afrikaner livelihoods on the Witwatersrand revealed a number of relevant development factors. Firstly, it was pointed out in this chapter that throughout the history of white Afrikaans speakers, education was regarded as an important "survival tool" in a hostile and unfriendly world. Against this background, RAU was established to serve the tertiary educational needs of white Afrikaans-speaking students through ensuring academic training of excellent quality.⁷⁸

The training provided at RAU had to ensure that white Afrikaans-speaking students would be empowered to become independent and disciplined cultivators of careers in which they would excel, thereby improving their livelihoods.⁷⁹ This thesis furthermore pointed out that, by referring to some scholars, there was a close relationship between modernism and apartheid. This relationship enabled RAU and its founding fathers to achieve their modernising aims within the framework of apartheid. It was furthermore found that this relationship was important, especially if one takes into consideration efforts of RAU's founders to ensure that the university reflected modernism at all levels of its functioning. This is firstly evident in the way in which knowledge application or implementation at RAU was embodied in the University motto '*Diens deur Kennis*' ("Service through Knowledge") as it appears on the university's coat of arms. Secondly, it was evident in the way in which the first rector Viljoen perceived the university, specifically in terms of its role in the community in and for which it was established. Viljoen's observations reveal that the university was created to develop and modernise through the concept of "Service through Knowledge". To achieve these goals, it

⁷⁷ Booklet – The RAU after four years, 1972, pp. 7-8, Handhaaf, 11.1967, p.24.

⁷⁸ UJ/RAU Archive, *RAU-Rapport*, 8 (1), p. 1.

⁷⁹ UJ library, RAU, *Die Taak van RAU as stadsuniversiteit, enkele hoogtepunte uit die vyfjaarfees van die RAU, 1968-1973*, Toespraak P.J. Meyer, Voorsitter van die Universiteitsraad ..., p. 7.

needed to be active in the community that it served⁸⁰ and to communicate on an ongoing basis with industry and business. This was important to ensure that the services the university provided in terms of programmes, courses and research fitted in with the needs of the broader community.

In conclusion, it also became evident that RAU contributed to the upliftment, intellectual development and modernisation of the white Afrikaans-speaking community. This could be achieved through innovative course development, new teaching methods, focused research programmes, self-assessment and advancement (through the Bureau of Higher Education), broader community involvement (through the Institute for Child and Adult Guidance) and continuous interaction with industry and business. By 1975 RAU had achieved its goals of increasing student registration and graduates, which substantially contributed to modernising white Afrikaans speaker's identity and vastly improving Afrikaner livelihoods on the Witwatersrand. Yet the debate remained on whether the RAU should indeed exercise a specific role and function as an Afrikaans university *per se*. In Chapter Eight a discussion on this debate in the wider Afrikaner nationalist community is more closely viewed.

⁸⁰ UJ/RAU Archive, Johannesburg, P.J. Meyer - collection, File C 1/6, Dr P.J. Meyer – Document to be used as a speech on the 'Structure of the university', pp. 5-7.

Chapter 8

Contestation and debate in the wider Afrikaner nationalist community over RAU's role and function as an Afrikaans university

8.1 Introduction

The creation and founding of universities globally has been characterised by forms of regular controversy and disputes on issues ranging from motivations for establishment to overall role and function. In Chapter Two some light has been shed on this topic. In that chapter, for example, the 1952 establishment of the University of Tel-Aviv provides a starting point for a discussion of the kinds of debates involved in founding a university. In this case, discussion was around funding and the institution's proposed role and function. The university's establishment was debated in a context not unlike that of RAU's establishment close to the University of the Witwatersrand: the Hebrew University already existed in Jerusalem.¹

Debate regarding the establishment of RAU among the wider Afrikaner nationalist community was fuelled by two very specific factors. Firstly, its creators were so eager to establish the university that they pushed ahead with the process even though there was no national policy in place regarding the establishment of more universities in the country. Secondly, the founders of the university, unusually, did not wait for overseas organisations to provide funding.² As was discussed in Chapter Two no conflict over founding universities seems to have been over the proposed role and function of the university. Topics debated varied from the university's role in promoting free enterprise to its function as an institution endorsing capitalism to limit the government's hold on the economy and to create a more liberal society.³

Closer to home, UPE's establishment in 1965 was also contentious. In the case of UPE, debate largely centred on the economic need for the university. Port Elizabeth had undergone major economic growth since the 1950s, fuelled by a substantial population increase.⁴

¹ U. Cohen, "Academia, media, and the city: civic discourse preceding the establishment of a city university in Tel-Aviv", *Israel Studies*, 12 (2), 2007, p. 121.

² U. Cohen, "Academia, media, and the city...", p. 122.

³ U. Cohen, "Academia, media, and the city...", p. 123.

⁴ M. Beale, "Apartheid and university education, 1948-1970", (PhD, University of the Witwatersrand, 1998), pp. 289-290.

Although Afrikaner nationalist sentiments featured in debates about the university's establishment, the skills shortage in Port Elizabeth, due to rapid economic development, weighed heavier in the debate concerning the university's role and function.⁵ Similar debates occurred as well in the early histories of both the University of the Free State and the University of Pretoria,⁶ although in those instances discussions also centred on language policies and on the fact that certain groups wanted the universities to reflect an Afrikaans character and to play an active role in promoting Afrikaans history and culture.⁷ Moreover, the founders of those universities focused on how contact education and functional research could advance white Afrikaans speakers.

RAU's planning and ultimate founding also proved to be a challenging and daunting task characterised by contestation. After an arduous process of debate and setbacks, its eventual founding was in fact the realisation of an impossible dream.⁸ The project was so difficult and time-consuming that, once its founding had been achieved, it was even described as reaching the peak of a mountain. In his book, *Nog nie ver genoeg nie*, Dr PJ Meyer wrote: '*Thaba RAU, die bergspits RAU, is bereik*' ("Thaba RAU, the mountain peak of RAU has been reached"). Meyer expressed this sentiment in the context of what he viewed as the many struggles white Afrikaans speakers had encountered and had to endure on the Witwatersrand to secure their rightful place in the economic heartland of South Africa. These struggles or "mountain peaks", he observed, were numerous while the time allocated to reach them was extremely limited. As he commented: '*Laat in die aand, nog nie ver genoeg nie*'.⁹ (Late in the evening, still not far enough).

RAU was therefore a long-term dream that realised through the hard and sustained efforts and the contributions of many organisations, businesses and individuals in the broader white Afrikaans-speaking community. Overcoming many obstacles also characterised its establishment. Once these obstacles they were overcome, RAU would afford many white Afrikaans speakers on the Witwatersrand the opportunity to attain tertiary education via medium Afrikaans in an environment in which their culture and religion would be nurtured – an opportunity that they had not had before. It would, moreover, be a university that would

⁵ M. Beale, *Apartheid and university education...*, pp. 293-295.

⁶ UJ/RAU Archive, Johannesburg, Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit collection, File A34/1, Universiteit en Gemeenskap; Toespraak, G. van N. Viljoen voor die Johannesburgse Afrikaanse Sakekamer, 1967-03-21, p. 1.

⁷ UJ/RAU Archive, Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit collection, File A34/1, Universiteit en Gemeenskap..., p. 1.

⁸ P.J. Meyer, *Nog nie ver genoeg nie: 'n persoonlike rekenskap van vyftig jaar georganiseerde Afrikanerskap* (Perskor, Johannesburg, 1984), p. 160.

⁹ P.J. Meyer, *Nog nie ver genoeg nie...*, p. 185.

do more than educate: it would uplift and modernise white Afrikaans speakers. It would therefore fulfil an important role in the broader Afrikaner project of development and advancement.

From the outset, RAU was the topic of many opinionated debates concerning issues pertaining to its creation and establishment as well as its role and function. These debates raged, for example, over the need for not only another university in South Africa but another university in Johannesburg so close to the existing University of the Witwatersrand¹⁰ and whether it would be established as a counteractive force against the “liberal” influence of Wits.¹¹ Questions raised included RAU’s role in the economic heartland,¹² whilst other debates would follow concerning its physical location on the Rand. Still, others argued emotionally and outrageously that RAU was created to enrage the English and Jewish communities by “trampling on their rights” and dispossessing them of land – land belonging to the Johannesburg Country Club and private residences.¹³

Opinions were also expressed regarding RAU’s identity as an Afrikaans university, the first of its kind for the Witwatersrand, thus reiterating the important stature of the university for white Afrikaans speakers.¹⁴ Opinionated groups believed that RAU was to be established and run merely as a successful university to challenge non-Afrikaner opinions – insinuating that it would simply be a “sectional venture” or a home of narrow-mindedness.¹⁵ Effort needed to go into ensuring that the university did not develop into a glorified tribal college for the Afrikaner. For this reason, dedication and efficiency supported by a specific vision and mission characterised RAU’s planning and development from the start.¹⁶

This chapter highlights the contestation and debates between RAU and the broader Afrikaner nationalist community over the institution’s role and function in the Afrikaner project. Although this contestation will be the chapter’s major focus, attention will be paid also to

¹⁰ *Die Transvaler*, 1963-06-20.

¹¹ *The Star*, 1963-09-26.

¹² *Die Transvaler*, 1966-05-02.

¹³ UJ/RAU Archive, Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit collection, File A11/1, Establishment history collection; Interview with Prof. S.A. Pauw, rector of the University of South-Africa, conducted by Dr O. Geyer, no date or place. (The results of the interview, on request by Pauw, only had to be made available to researchers and others five years after his death) p. 46.

¹⁴ *Die Vaderland*, 1963-07-16.

¹⁵ UJ library, Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit (RAU), *Die Taak van RAU as stadsuniversiteit, enkele hoogtepunte...*, Toespraak P.J. van der Spuy, Minister van Nasionale Opvoeding, tydens die gradeplegtigheid in die Stadskouburg, Johannesburg, op 1973-04-14, p. 40.

¹⁶ UJ/RAU Archive, Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit collection, File A11/2, Establishment history collection; Newspaper clipping, newspaper not known, date unknown.

other issues pertaining and contributing to the debate concerning the university's creation and eventual establishment.

8.2 Another university on the Witwatersrand

Newspaper articles that focused on the possible establishment of a new Afrikaans university on the Witwatersrand reported in fine detail and consequently evoked much debate. Newspaper reports reflecting on readers' views regarding the discussion pertaining to the establishment of a new Afrikaans university began long before the general meeting scheduled for the 5th of November 1963, at which an action committee was formed to investigate the creation and establishment of such a new university.¹⁷ Initially, debates focused on UNISA's possible relocation to Johannesburg to fulfil the plan to establish another university on the Rand.¹⁸ However, the government's eventual decision not to move UNISA from Pretoria to Johannesburg but, instead, to establish a completely new Afrikaans university instead soon gave way to renewed debates and contestations. Discussion next centred on the location of the new university, the implications of the site selected for the community and the institution's proposed character, role and function.¹⁹ These issues received extensive attention and encouraged intense and contentious debates.

In a speech delivered to the Johannesburg Business Chamber on the establishment of universities in the West and of RAU in particular, Prof G van N Viljoen reflected on the debates that characterised RAU's establishment. He continued to focus on the importance attributed to the functions and aims of universities since the Second World War. To his mind, the aims and functions of universities had been challenged on a continuous basis, something that was evident from the number of books written and articles published, as well as the number of symposiums held during the previous few years – all on the topic of the establishment of RAU. Viljoen believed that RAU was obliged to take note of these new developments. He furthermore indicated that the role and function of universities had been central to global debates and that universities, including RAU, needed to adapt to their

¹⁷ UJ/RAU Archive, G. van N. Viljoen-collection, File C3/1, Die stigtingsvergadering: 'n Afrikaanse Universiteit vir die Witwatersrand, 1963-11-05, Goudstadse Onderwyskollege, pp. 1-5.

¹⁸ *The Star*, 1963-09-26.

¹⁹ *Die Transvaler*, 1963-06-20; *Die Vaderland*, 1965-04-02; *The Sunday Times*, 1965-06-20.

changing role and function in society. He also intimated the active role of public debate in contributing to the ultimate site, role and function of universities in society.²⁰

8.2.1 Contestation and debate on various issues

8.2.1.1 Need for another university?

Numerous newspaper articles articulated the debates on this matter. In a newspaper article, for example in *Die Transvaler* of the 20th of June 1963 entitled ‘*Kan Rand tweede universiteit benut?*’ (Can the Rand use a second university?), the topic of the need for another university was raised – especially another university on the Witwatersrand, a stone’s throw away from Wits – and the opinions of various individuals in tertiary education were considered. The article revealed the many diverse opinions on the subject.

The rector of the University of Pretoria, Prof CH Rautenbach, for example, expressed the view that South Africa already had nine universities and that these were sufficient. This was after he too had been approached to get the views of different academics on the matter. He believed that the existing universities should rather be expanded to accommodate any increased need for tertiary education in South Africa. He referred specifically to the need for increased funding to enable universities to expand their infrastructure and staff, which he believed would allow them to provide higher quality tertiary education.

Prof WG Sutton was another academic approached for his view on this matter. As the former head of Wits, he agreed with Rautenbach that there were certainly enough universities in South Africa at that stage. He also supported the view that increased funding for existing universities was essential to raise their functionality and standards and to enable an increase in postgraduate programmes. For Sutton and Rautenbach, the creation of yet another university was unnecessary as there were, as they believed, too many already.²¹

The rector of UNISA, Prof S Pauw, on the other hand, believed that there was in fact a need for another university on the Witwatersrand. This, he felt, was due to an increase in the population of white Afrikaans speakers. He argued that another university was necessary to harness the intellectual capacity of this group. Pauw argued that many existing universities

²⁰ UJ/RAU Archive, Rand Afrikaans University collection, File A34/1, Randse Afrikaans Universiteit versameling; Universiteit en gemeenskap, toespraak van G. van N. Viljoen voor die Johannesburgse Afrikaans Sakekamer, 1967-03-21, p. 1.

²¹ *Die Vaderland*, 1963-06-20.

had satellite campuses, proving that existing universities were expanding due to an ever growing number of students and need for tertiary education in the country.²²

The ASB (*Afrikaanse Studentebond*/Afrikaans Students' Union) also emphasised the growing need for additional tertiary institutions in South Africa in its support of the establishment of another university. This sentiment was expressed during a congress held in Pretoria in which Afrikaner nationalist sentiments and opinions concerning the need to establish another university were strongly evident. The head of the ASB, Mr HJS Stone, fully supported the need for an exclusively Afrikaans university. He pointed out the increasing number of white Afrikaans speakers on the Witwatersrand where no such Afrikaans institution existed.²³ According to Stone, each year there was an increase of 2 250 Afrikaans pupils in secondary schools, implying that existing universities would not, in the near future, be able to accommodate these students. Stone observed that a new university had to be cost effective, providing low-cost university education because it would be located close to the homes of its prospective students.²⁴ He therefore proposed that it had primarily to be a university for the white Afrikaans-speaking working classes on the Witwatersrand.

From the above-mentioned opinions, it is clear enough that much debate occurred concerning the need for another university in South Africa. There were those who argued that money used to establish another university could instead be used to expand existing universities and improve their functionality. Others felt that another university was necessary – one based on the increase in white Afrikaans-speaking student numbers and to provide affordable tertiary education for students from this working-class group. Furthermore, debates ensued regarding the proposed university's broader vision and, to some extent, the possible politically driven motives of winning over the Rand by establishing this new university.

The “need for another university” debate that mainly focused on student numbers and the funding of a new university was soon to be followed by a debate characterised by political underpinnings. In this debate, the view was held that the establishment of the proposed new university had to enable white Afrikaans-speaking students to assume their rightful position on the Witwatersrand both academically and culturally.²⁵

²² *Die Vaderland*, 1963-06-20.

²³ *Die Transvaler*, 1963-07-10.

²⁴ *Dagbreek en Sondagnuus*, 1963-11-03.

²⁵ *Die Transvaler*, 1963-10-10.

8.2.1.2 Academically and culturally “winning over” the Rand to providing affordable tertiary education

On the 19th of October 1963, an article featured in *Die Transvaler* under the headline *’n Afrikaanse universiteit vir die Rand moet kom, Burgermeester van Stad verwelkom plan* (An Afrikaans university for the Rand must come, Mayor of City welcomes plan). In this report, everyone interviewed welcomed the idea of a new university. However, since politicians were involved, one had to be aware of their different motivations for agreeing to the founding of RAU. The motivations would eventually contribute to the overall role and function of the university. Dr CP Muller, for example, Member of Parliament for Randfontein, expressed the political opinion that the white Afrikaans speaker had the moral responsibility to “overwhelm/conquer” the Witwatersrand academically, not only for the sake of existing white Afrikaans speakers, but also for their children’s children.²⁶ He also stated that the new university would be able to introduce new contact courses relating to the development of municipalities and railroads as these were only available through correspondence education provided mostly by UNISA. Senator JC Brink, the first principal of the all-Afrikaans Helpmekaar High School, also agreed that the new university could introduce new degree courses, especially ones for which there was a need in the natural sciences, and which were only available through correspondence courses at the time. The new university, he further argued, would make tertiary education financially viable for many white Afrikaans-speaking students due to its proximity to their homes. Mr PJJ van Rensburg, a parent and teacher, and Mr JA van Tonder, another parent, agreed with this point, namely that their children would soon be going to university far away from home resulting in great expenses.

Other interviewees representing Afrikaner nationalist organisations expressed the necessity of the new university from the point of view of the need to advance and promote white Afrikaans culture. Dr P Koornhof, the Director of Cultural Guidance at the Federasie van Afrikaanse Kultuurverenigings (FAK), maintained that a new university would address the dire need for the cultural development of white Afrikaans speakers on the Witwatersrand. Mr WSJ Grobler, Principle Secretary of the FAK, also agreed, expressing the opinion that a new university could become a centre for cultural development unlike any other.²⁷

It can therefore be concluded that many believed that the university would enable white Afrikaans speakers to “overwhelm” the Witwatersrand academically and culturally.

²⁷ *Die Transvaler*, 1963-10-10.

Regarding the offering of new contact courses, these were only available via UNISA's distance education. It was understandably hoped that the university would expand the employment horizons of white Afrikaners on the Witwatersrand. Moreover, the university would, it was hoped, develop white Afrikaans culture in an environment of affordable tertiary education because many white Afrikaans-speaking students would come from a working-class background.

Following the debates regarding the need of this new university and its role in the advancement of white Afrikaans speakers on the Witwatersrand, a debate ensued on what to name this new university.

8.2.1.3 From objections to establishment to naming the university

The planning and eventual founding of a new university was not only met with support, but also a fair amount of objection. This too was evident in numerous newspaper articles. One example was an article in the *Sunday Times* describing the RAU's founding as a means of undermining Wits and therefore as politically motivated. The establishment of RAU was described as a plan of the Afrikaner Broederbond dating as far back as 1953 and conceived with the aim of providing Afrikaans university education as an alternative to the English at Wits.²⁸ This represented a classic English liberal view.

This perception was also created in *The Star* in an article entitled "A new university for the Rand" in which the main driving force behind the establishment of the university was posited as "the desire to counteract the 'liberalism' of the University of the Witwatersrand". According to the article this was the "intellectual rallying point".²⁹ in RAU's founding process. Others were of the opinion that the proposed institution could never be a "real" university because this Afrikaans-speaking university with its Christian character would be in complete denial of what a university should actually be.³⁰ From this perspective, the university would be a second-rate institution devoid of critical thinking and narrow-minded, conservative and limited in its academic endeavours.³¹ From these views the conclusion can be drawn that these were efforts to downplay the establishment of the envisaged new university and to belittle the envisioned aims of the founding fathers.

²⁸ *Sunday Times*, 1963-11-10; *The Star*, 1963-09-26.

²⁹ *The Star*, 1966-05-06.

³⁰ *Rand Daily Mail*, 1965-11-07.

³¹ UJ/RAU Archive, Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit collection, File A11/2, Establishment history collection; Newspaper clipping, newspaper not known, date unknown.

From another article in the *Sunday Times*, it was clear that there were differences concerning RAU's founding even among nationalists, especially those affiliated with other universities. In an article entitled "Broeders split over Rand varsity plan", Mr JP Duvenhage, a senior lecturer in the Department of Geography at Potchefstroom University stated that there was no need for another university and that the establishment of an additional one would merely drain already scarce resources. Duvenhage mentioned that existing universities already experienced acute shortages of experienced staff.³² Although Duvenhage's views could have been valid, one is also left with the impression that they might have been inspired by motives of self-interest. Duvenhage, undoubtedly was fully aware of the geographical advantages of RAU being located in Auckland Park, Johannesburg.

Even individuals not affiliated to any existing university had deep concerns regarding the establishment of new universities, specifically RAU and UPE. One anonymous individual stated his concern that South Africa already had too many universities and that the international community would perceive the establishment of yet another as ridiculous and the impression would be created that South Africans did not take their existing universities seriously. He felt that this could negatively impact on the international standing of South African academics. Like so many others, he raised the concern that existing universities suffered owing to inadequate funding, which in turn had an influence on, for example, equipment, library services and salaries. The establishment of yet another two new universities (UPE and RAU), he argued, would further drain the available funds.³³

Whilst the need for and feasibility of RAU's founding was debated in different quarters, others began to contemplate a name for the new university. In an article in *Die Vaderland* entitled "Beoogde Afrikaans universiteit aan Rand soek naam" (Planned Afrikaans university on Rand seeks name), the newspaper's readers were encouraged to make suggestions. A flood of various proposed names resulted including "Goudrifse Universiteit", "Uraan Universiteit", "Witwits", "Goudrandse Afrikaanse Universiteit" and Witwatersrand Afrikaanse Volksuniversiteit".³⁴ The search for a name continued until it was eventually decided on the 18th of October 1966 to name the new university the Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit (RAU) in accordance with Act no. 51 of 1966.³⁵

³² *Sunday Times*, 1963-11-17.

³³ *Dagbreek en Sondagnuus*, 1965-10-31.

³⁴ *Die Transvaler*, 1963-10-26.

³⁵ *Gedenkalbum van die opening van die R.A.U.*, 1968-02-24, p. 1.

From the above discussion one can conclude that contestations and debates of issues relating to RAU's founding were varied. These debates ranged from "overwhelming" the Witwatersrand academically, to the affordability of education, to the provision of courses that would empower white Afrikaans speakers in the employment fields, among others, of the municipality and railroad management. The choice of the institution's name further reflected white Afrikaans speakers' need to take proud ownership of the university and what it would eventually stand for.

As these debates related to the founding of the new university were taking place, yet another debate started to gain momentum. This was regarding the possible relocation of UNISA from Pretoria to Johannesburg, thus to realise the establishment of a university for white Afrikaans speakers on the Witwatersrand.

8.2.1.4 A "ready-made institution" – Relocating UNISA?

As the debate about the founding of a university on the Witwatersrand started to gain momentum, some – especially on the Witwatersrand – believed that UNISA's relocation would be the ideal way to achieve this objective as an alternative to the founding of a totally new university. This belief sparked the debate on UNISA's possible relocation from Pretoria to Johannesburg. Decisions in this regard would require parliamentary sanction that would result in some ill feeling among policy makers closely involved in the process, affecting especially the relationship between Prof. S Pauw, rector of UNISA, and Senator J. de Klerk, the Minister of Education.³⁶ The debate became highly contentious when it became apparent that those supporting the move wanted to change UNISA's existing character as well. The discussion of UNISA's possible relocation to the Witwatersrand in this chapter is not an attempt to revisit what has already been discussed in Chapter Four. Instead, the discussion here focuses on newspaper articles reporting on the matter with the purpose of shedding light on these contestations and debates in the context of the founding of the RAU. These matters ultimately contributed to discussions concerning RAU's role and function in the white Afrikaans community and its being the product of Afrikaner nationalist sentiments.

As stated above, those who supported UNISA's move from Pretoria to Johannesburg wanted to change that institution's existing character. They specifically wanted to change it from a distance education university to one providing contact education. Moreover, they wanted to

³⁶ UJ/RAU Archive, Establishment history collection, File A11/1, Interview (transcribed) with Prof. S.A. Pauw by Dr O. Geyer in Pretoria, 1983, p. 13.

move students of colour to correspondence colleges. These students, in their opinion, would be replaced by an all-white Afrikaans-speaking student population. This would mean that the dual medium language status of the university would be replaced with a single medium status. The university's ethos, moreover, would be based purely on Christian values.³⁷

The NP government viewed UNISA's potential move from Pretoria to Johannesburg as an ideal way of realising the goal of establishing an Afrikaans university on the Witwatersrand. This was evident in an article in *The Star* entitled "De Klerk wants shift to Rand: 'Ready-made' for Afrikaans institution".³⁸ The mostly harsh and confrontational negotiations to have UNISA moved to Johannesburg were initially shrouded in confidentiality, but as soon as they became known to UNISA staff members and the public in general, a raging debate followed (see Chapter Four). Newspaper articles such as "No support for De Klerk; Staff stops university move to the Rand", which appeared in *The Star*, reveal this conflict.³⁹ As late as 1965, resistance to the move was evident. In *The Star* of 16 February 1965, Pauw was quoted as saying that UNISA's possible relocation should not be dictated by political and local disputes, but that it should be guided by what would be best for the university and the country.⁴⁰ His views were therefore not the result of an anti-Afrikaner sentiment but rather stemmed from academic considerations. He furthermore spoke of support in Pretoria from people who had wanted UNISA moved to Johannesburg in the early 1960s because they did not agree with UNISA's distance education or its function of serving non-white students. This group was led by A. Hertzog, a member of parliament at the time.⁴¹ In Johannesburg, another group under Meyer's leadership wanted to change UNISA's character to form a fully-fledged Afrikaans university.⁴² In both these scenarios, regional politics and Afrikaner nationalist sentiments played roles, despite the different agendas.

In the atmosphere sketched above, one thing was certain: there was a sense of urgency and an escalating debate on the Witwatersrand's white Afrikaans-speaking community and an Afrikaans university. This was evident in a newspaper article entitled "Ongeduld en haas vir

³⁷ UJ/RAU Archive, Establishment history collection, File A11/1, Interview (transcribed) with Prof. S.A. Pauw by Dr O. Geyer in Pretoria, 1983, p. 13, *The Star*, 1963-09-26.

³⁸ *The Star*, 1963-09-26.

³⁹ *The Star*, 1963-09-27.

⁴⁰ *The Star*, 1965-02-16.

⁴¹ UJ/RAU Archive, Establishment history collection, File A11/1, Interview (transcribed) with Prof. S.A. Pauw by Dr O. Geyer in Pretoria, 1983, pp. 12-13.

⁴² UJ/RAU Archive, Establishment history collection, File A11/1, Interview (transcribed) with Prof. S.A. Pauw by Dr O. Geyer in Pretoria, 1983, pp. 13-18.

Afrikaanse universiteit”⁴³(Impatience and haste for Afrikaans university). Despite the urgency, it was acknowledged that UNISA’s move to the Witwatersrand would be very expensive, as a newspaper article entitled “Kabinet moet eers besluit; R9 en ’n half miljoen om UNISA na Rand te skuif” (Cabinet must first decide; R9,5 million to relocate UNISA to the Rand) attests. In the debate regarding whether UNISA should be relocated or not, a UNISA lecturer expressed the opinion that such a move could create a precedent because the English-speaking community in Pretoria could easily demand an English university for themselves if the NP government gave in to the demands of the Afrikaans community to have a university established exclusively for them in Johannesburg.⁴⁴

However, once the decision was made by parliament in August 1965 not to move UNISA from Pretoria to Johannesburg, but rather to found a completely new Afrikaans university on the Witwatersrand, a new debate ensued – one riddled with contestation. A newspaper article in *Die Transvaler* entitled “Afr. Universiteit nou vrae oor terrein en taalmedium” (Afr. University now raises questions over terrain and language medium) gave momentum to this debate. It advanced that the question of location was important, not only to ensure the university’s centrality, but also to reflect its symbolic stance, namely that the Afrikaner was claiming his rightful place in Johannesburg.⁴⁵

The importance of the location for the university’s construction was furthermore reflected in the following statement once it was decided that Auckland Park would prove an ideal site:⁴⁶

The particular commercial and industrial surrounding in which RAU is situated, the need for specialised manpower on the Witwatersrand, the modern and sophisticated standards of this world-city and the presence of a large and influential sister-university in the same city, all make it imperative that RAU does not plan in a small or hesitant way.

The statement acknowledged that the university’s founders were supported in their approach of planning on a grand scale in their attempt to ensure that the university would grow into an outstanding tertiary institution both locally and internationally. The debate over the university’s location occurred within the wider Witwatersrand community and within the white Afrikaans-speaking community, exposing the contrasting arguments contributing to the debate.

⁴³ *Die Transvaler*, 1963-11-07.

⁴⁴ *The Star*, 1965-04-02.

⁴⁵ *Die Transvaler*, 1965-02-27.

⁴⁶ UJ/RAU Archive, Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit collection, File A11/2, Establishment history collection; Newspaper clipping, newspaper not known, date unknown.

Moreover, a range of political and economic agendas pertaining to specific neighbourhoods and even municipalities characterised the process of finding a location for the new university. This was evident in newspaper articles such as “All-Afrikaans University drive, Nat. group pressing for Emmarentia site”,⁴⁷ “Sakekamer picks Vrededorp for Afrikaans varsity”,⁴⁸ “Vrededorp totaal ongeskik as kampus; politiek agter protes teen Afr. Universiteit”.⁴⁹ Whilst some wanted the university to be in Vrededorp, others believed that Auckland Park would be ideal because of its centrality in Johannesburg. Residents in Auckland Park and Rossmore objected to this, however, as is evident in a newspaper article entitled “Why not Vrededorp, Suburb says ‘no’ to Afrikaans university”.⁵⁰

Still others wanted the site to be easily accessible from Vereeniging, Vanderbijlpark and even Heidelberg.⁵¹ There were even those who argued for the new university to be built in Germiston.⁵² They felt this was important to ensure that white Afrikaans speakers from these areas would have easy access to the institution. As the debate on the exact location dragged on without any indication given as to where the university would eventually be located, increasing numbers of community members felt that the question of location was unnecessarily cloaked in mystery⁵³, thus “snowballing” the debate even further.

It is clear that much contentious debate and even stirrings characterised the discussion of issues pertaining to the founding of RAU. This was due to the overwhelming enthusiasm for the project. These debates varied from the question of whether another university was indeed necessary to whether relocating UNISA to Johannesburg could meet the need for another university on the Rand. Subsequently, debates occurred regarding the naming of the institution and where its physical location should be. The debate on the consciousness clause, discussed in Chapter Four, also gave rise to complex discussions pertaining to questions of religious affiliation and accessibility. All these issues and the discussions that were raised affected eventual debates on the ultimate role and function of the university.

⁴⁷ *The Star*, 1965-03-18.

⁴⁸ *The Sunday Times*, 1965-06-20.

⁴⁹ *Dagbreek en Sondagnuus*, 1965-10-17.

⁵⁰ *The Star*, 1965-10-15.

⁵¹ *Die Transvaler*, 1965-02-22.

⁵² *Dagbreek en Sondagstem*, 1963-02-17.

⁵³ *The Rand Daily Mail*, 1965-09-27.

8.3 Debate and contestation regarding the role and function of RAU

The debates and contestation over issues such as educational need, cost, funding, physical location and naming, amongst others, characterised the founding of RAU. From these debates emerged general views regarding the envisioned role and function of the new university. From the outset, the university's envisioned contact learning function and the decision to offer new courses which, at that stage, were available only at UNISA received approval. RAU would also offer affordable tertiary education close to the homes of white Afrikaans students and in their home language. It would develop this group's culture in an atmosphere in which the Afrikaners' religion and history would be nurtured.⁵⁴

Because RAU (as referred to in previous chapters) was the product of an "organic growth process" characterised by a long history of struggle preceding its eventual founding and realisation of the dream of an Afrikaans university that would advance white Afrikaans speakers on the Witwatersrand,⁵⁵ no major debate or contestation occurred regarding its actual role and function. There was unanimous understanding from the outset of the university's planning regarding its role and function. There was no doubt that RAU would be an Afrikaans-medium university.⁵⁶ This was clearly formulated right from the first memorandum addressed to the NP government regarding the founding of a new university.

The new university had to be Afrikaans-medium in order to promote the language in different professions and to provide employment opportunities to white Afrikaans speakers in the economic powerhouse of the Witwatersrand.⁵⁷ This was communicated to the general public at the meeting held in the hall of the *Goudstadse Onderwyskollege* on the 5th of November 1963.⁵⁸ According to the minutes of the meeting, Meyer, acting as chairman, communicated that the idea of the proposed university had developed out of a long history and that it would

⁵⁴ *Dagbreek en Sondagnuus*, 1963-11-03; *Die Transvaler*, 1963-10-10.

⁵⁵ *Suid-Afrikaanse Akademie: Die taak van die Universiteit in Suidelike Afrika, Referate gelewer op Algemene Vergadering van die Suid-Afrikaanse Akademie vir Wetenskap en Kuns - 29 Junie tot 1 Julie 1967, UOVS, Bloemfontein*, 1967, pp. 50-51.

⁵⁶ National State Archive, Pretoria, Prime Ministers collection 1910-1978, S114 vol. 1/354, Ref. H8/7A 1966, p. 1.

⁵⁷ UJ/RAU Archive, P.J. Meyer-collection, File C1/1, Versoekskrif in sake die stigting van 'n Afrikaanse Randse Universiteit voorgelê te word op 1973-11-25 aan sy Edele J. de Klerk, Minister van Onderwys, Kuns en Wetenskap, p. 3.

⁵⁸ UJ/RAU Archive, G. van N. Viljoen collection, File C3/1, Die stigtingsvergadering 'n Afrikaanse Universiteit vir die Witwatersrand, 1963-11-05, Goudstadse Onderwyserskollege, pp. 1-5.

be an Afrikaans university for the white Afrikaans-speaking group on the Witwatersrand. Moreover, it had to develop the Afrikaans language and culture and would nurture the Afrikaans community's religion and history.⁵⁹ As the concept and idea of the new university developed, so the finer detail regarding its role and function evolved as well.

8.3.1 Addressing community needs through a particularistic approach

The social and economic realities that white Afrikaans speakers faced on the Witwatersrand during the 1950s and 1960s resulted in the group's specific educational and economic needs. The group specifically required an improvement in education to better their professional standing and employment prospects in Johannesburg. Following a meeting with school principals on the 25th of September 1965 during which the founding of RAU was discussed,⁶⁰ a letter was sent to principals of Afrikaans schools highlighting their role in the founding of RAU. The letter urged all Afrikaans schools and pupils to take ownership of the new university because it would be theirs. It also defined the university's role and purpose as a university that had to be and had to remain focused on promoting the independence of Afrikaans speakers on the Witwatersrand – a place where many Afrikaners were lost by the wayside due to a lack of tertiary education and job opportunities.⁶¹

The need to improve their professional standing and employment prospects was based, moreover, on statistics supporting the founding of the university. Population figures for whites in the whole of South Africa increased by 53,7 percent in the period 1936-1960. On the Witwatersrand alone, there was a 90,5 percent increase. White Afrikaans speakers increased by 59,6 percent countrywide and by 166,9 percent on the Witwatersrand alone. This meant that white Afrikaans-speaking figures for the Rand increased from 31,5 percent to 44,2 percent, an increase of 12,7 percent.⁶²

The increase in the Afrikaans population figures coupled with a lack of Afrikaans tertiary education on the Witwatersrand gave rise to severe educational disadvantages and poor professional employment prospects for this group. Statistics showed that, by 1960, white

⁵⁹ UJ/RAU Archive, G. van N. Viljoen-collection, File C3/1, Die Stigtingsvergadering: 'n Afrikaanse Universiteit vir die Witwatersrand, 1963-11-05, Goudstadse Onderwyserskollege, pp. 6-8.

⁶⁰ UJ/RAU Archive, Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit collection, File A11/1, Establishment history collection; Letter from Mr J.C. van Tonder, chairperson of the school committee of the Rand Afrikaans University committee to principals of Afrikaans schools, 1965-09-30.

⁶¹ UJ/RAU Archive, Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit collection, File A11/1, Establishment history collection; Letter from Mr J.C. van Tonder...

⁶² UJ/RAU Archive, Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit collection, File A34/1, Universiteit en Gemeenskap, Toespraak deur G. van N. Viljoen voor die Johannesburgse Afrikaanse Sakekamer, 1967-03-21, p. 2.

Afrikaans speakers' employment in commerce and industry was merely 30 percent, in financial institutions 14 percent, in manufacturing 9 percent and in mining 11 percent. By 1963, the statistics for white Afrikaans speakers in study fields such as law was 42,5 percent, engineering 33,6 percent and medicine 27,4 percent.⁶³ The role of RAU in the greater Afrikaner project was therefore to focus on providing for the academic needs of mainly disadvantaged white Afrikaans speakers on the Witwatersrand, and thus to uplift them socially and economically by providing them with professional training and the creation of employment opportunities.

This advancement, it was believed, would be the only way for working-class white Afrikaans speakers to achieve class mobility.⁶⁴ Moreover, the institution would strive to achieve high standards of scientific and academic research within the broader aim of social and community responsibility.⁶⁵ It would be a “volksuniversiteit” focused on critical thinking, yet guarding against becoming too egocentric.⁶⁶ Viljoen wrote about this in a paper on the role of Afrikaans universities in South Africa. He accentuated “own interest (meaning Afrikaner interest) above that of the general interest” (particularism) in the upliftment or advancement process.

In the paper referred to above, “The Afrikaans Universities and Particularism”, published in the book *The Future of the University in Southern Africa*, Viljoen responded to the question concerning the role of Afrikaans universities in contemporary South Africa. He answered in the context of a mid-1970s South Africa with a specific focus on the role of “particularism” in the functioning of Afrikaans universities. His response was twofold: he firstly argued that Afrikaans universities needed to be universities characterised by excellence. They needed, he explained, to adhere to universally accepted standards of what a university should be. D. Welsh and M. Savage supported this statement in an essay published in the same book and entitled “The University in Divided Societies: The Case of South Africa”. Welsh and Savage

⁶³ UJ/RAU Archive, Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit collection, File A34/1, Universiteit en Gemeenskap, Toespraak deur G. van N. Viljoen..., p. 2.

⁶⁴ UJ/RAU Archive, G. van N. Viljoen collection, File C3/1, Die Stigtingsvergadering: 'n Afrikaanse Universiteit vir die Witwatersrand, 1963-11-05, Goudstadse Onderwyserskollege, pp. 6-8.

⁶⁵ J.G. Garbers, “*Diens deur Kennis*” in B. Louw and F. van Rensburg, *Bestendige binnevure: perspektiewe op Gerrit Viljoen by geleentheid van sy een en sewentigste verjaarsdag op 1997-09-11* (Tafelberg-uitgewers Beperk, Kaapstad, 1997), p. 80.

⁶⁶ J.G. Garbers, “*Diens deur Kennis*” in B. Louw and F. van Rensburg, *Bestendige binnevure...*, p. 82.

reasoned that the primary role of a university was the “commitment to the pursuit of truth and the dissemination of knowledge” amongst other roles⁶⁷ – ideals envisioned for RAU.

Secondly, Viljoen envisaged that the role of the university was to be one of service to all South Africans, yet more specifically to the Afrikaans speakers. Afrikaans universities, in his opinion, had an obligation to ensure the spiritual and cultural well-being of these previously academically deprived people.⁶⁸

The founding of RAU therefore had to meet the need for this very role and function. From the outset, as mentioned before, it was evident that RAU was not only founded to develop the intellectual capacity of the increasing number of white Afrikaans speakers on the Witwatersrand, but also to see to the sociocultural and economic advancement of the group:⁶⁹

... the Witwatersrand, and especially Johannesburg, was a region where the Afrikaner, of rural background and mostly insufficiently trained for the more rewarding urban professions, had the hardest struggle in maintaining his identity, self-respect and an acceptable economic status while becoming urbanised in a cosmopolitan, English dominated industrial and commercial context.

Viljoen envisaged the role of RAU in celebrating culture and enhancing livelihoods to boost the community’s confidence and to provide it with a sense of identity and security.⁷⁰

Meyer took this a step further: to him, the role of RAU was to enhance and sustain the Afrikaans spirit embodied in the history, traditions, language and religious beliefs of white Afrikaans speakers on the Witwatersrand.⁷¹ The function of the university was therefore intended to be an academic institution of the highest academic and scientific standards that would produce students who could function independently and achieve ambitious goals.⁷² The university would not only focus on achieving high academic standards, but would focus on encouraging the development of close relationships between the community, lecturers and students.

8.3.2 A future-oriented, functional urban university

⁶⁷ H.W. van der Merwe and D. Welsh, *The future of the University in Southern Africa* (Martins Publishers, Johannesburg, 1977), pp. 172, 130.

⁶⁸ H.W. van der Merwe and D. Welsh, *The future of the University...*, p. 172.

⁶⁹ H.W. van der Merwe and D. Welsh, *The future of the University...*, p. 182.

⁷⁰ H.W. van der Merwe and D. Welsh, *The future of the University...*, p. 183.

⁷¹ UJ library, RAU, *Die Taak van RAU as stadsuniversiteit, enkele hoogtepunte uit die vyfjaarfees van die RAU, 1968-1973*, Toespraak van P.J. Meyer, Voorsitter van die Universiteitsraad, tydens die akademiese openingsfunksie in die Stadskouburg, Johannesburg, op 1973-02-26, p. 6.

⁷² UJ library, RAU, *Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit, Die taak van RAU as stadsuniversiteit, enkele hoogtepunte uit die vyfjaarfees van die RAU, 1968-1973*, Toespraak van P.J. Meyer, Voorsitter van die Universiteitsraad..., p.7.

Apart from the fact that RAU would strive to excel in its academic service delivery by utilising new administrative systems, innovative teaching methods and quality course content,⁷³ it would also strive for research excellence. By means of excellent research the university had to be able to provide high quality future-oriented instruction and training. Viljoen stated that the university needed to ensure that it kept up with tremendous advances in knowledge and the ongoing production thereof. New and changing knowledge needed to be introduced into course material in a way that enhanced the quality of academic teaching at RAU.⁷⁴

To be a future-oriented university, RAU had to determine new knowledge needs.⁷⁵ Viljoen explained (Also freely translated to English):⁷⁶

Ons doel moet wees om ons studente te leer dink, om hulle wetenskaplike metodes en houdings by te bring...(deur) 'n sterk fundamentele en metodologiese opleiding... metodologies ... dat die studente aan die hand van bepaalde, aktuele vraagstukke van ons tyd geleer word hoe om hulle teoretiese, fundamentele insigte toe te pas en te aktualiseer... Die studente moet ook die ingesteldheid en toerusting hê om te kan voorbly by môre, oormôre wanneer onverwagte nuwe vraagsukke opduik en om 'n oplossing roep.

(Our aim should be to teach our students to think, to enhance their scientific methods and attitudes through a strong fundamental and methodological training ... methodologically ... that enables the students, in the light of actual problems of our time, to learn how to apply their theoretical and fundamental knowledge to deal with problems. The students must also be equipped to stay ahead of tomorrow, the day after, when unexpected new issues arise and require solutions.)

Moreover, RAU would bridge the gap between science and the community. The ivory tower syndrome characterising universities to date needed to make way for community engagement. Scientific research would be focused on providing solutions for community challenges.⁷⁷

The discussion above relates to another function of RAU – one directly related to its teaching/instruction/learning function, namely to prepare students for their future professions.

⁷³ UJ/RAU Archive, P.J. Meyer collection, File C1/1, Die beplanning van die Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit, pp. 6-10.

⁷⁴ UJ/RAU Archive, Rand Afrikaans University collection, File 34/1, Talk by G. van N. Viljoen on the programme “Top Level” on Springbok Radio titled “There are challenges in planning a new university”, p. 5.

⁷⁵ UJ/RAU Archive, J. Cronje collection, File A 36/4, Prof G. van N. Viljoen – RAU vestiging, geboukompleks en ontstaan geskiedenis, Speech by Viljoen in front of the Municipality of Brakpan on 1969-10-12 titled Die Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit en die Munisipaliteit van Brakpan, pp. 6-7.

⁷⁶ UJ/RAU Archive, J. Cronje collection, File A 36/4, Prof G. van N. Viljoen – RAU vestiging, geboukompleks en ontstaan geskiedenis..., p. 6.

⁷⁷ UJ library, RAU, *Die taak van RAU as stadsuniversiteit...* Toespraak van P.J. Meyer, Voorsitter van die Universiteitsraad..., p. 6.

Meyer had the following to say about the community orientation of the university and the training it would provide:⁷⁸

What professional men should carry away from a university is not professional knowledge, but that which should direct the use of their professional knowledge and bring the light of general culture to illuminate the technicalities of a special pursuit.

Whilst the role and function of RAU was focused on research and professional preparation and orientation, the university also had a formative function. At university, students are moulded to be independent and scientifically engaged and to wield the skills necessary to make them more dynamic in their engagement with the world, application of knowledge and profession.⁷⁹ At RAU, education was also formative in relation to religious and spiritual development, which went hand in hand with students' critical and analytical training shaped in a community of lecturers and students in the teaching and learning environment.⁸⁰

It is evident, therefore, that RAU was founded with the primary or exclusive role and function of advancing the interests and creating training facilities and opportunities for white Afrikaans-speaking students and white Afrikaans communities, thus to ensure that they would be fully equipped to take their rightful place in the economic heartland of the Witwatersrand.

8.4 Conclusion

In this chapter, the focus has been on the contestations and debates that informed the creation and founding of RAU. These debates inevitably contributed to the conception of the role and function of the university. The lengthy debate, for example, over the need for another university on the Witwatersrand, specifically an Afrikaans university in addition to the existing Wits, ensured that the broader nationalist community as well as the general Witwatersrand community understood the need to have the university established. This was communicated through references to the long struggle of white Afrikaans speakers on the Rand and their educational disadvantage and lack of competitiveness in the economic heartland of the Witwatersrand. Statistical data showing the increasing numbers of Afrikaners on the Witwatersrand and their lowly professional and economic status provided further

⁷⁸ UJ/RAU Archive, P.J. Meyer collection, File C1/6, Toesprake: Die stuktuur van die universiteit, p. 5.

⁷⁹ UJ/RAU Archive, P.J. Meyer collection, File C1/6, Toesprake: Die stuktuur van die universiteit, p. 6.

⁸⁰ UJ/RAU Archive, A11: Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit collection, File A11/1, Establishment history collection; Letter from Prof. C.H. Rautenbach, Rector of the University of Pretoria to Dr P.J. Meyer, 1966-06-30.

motivation for the founding of the university. The choice of name, moreover, reflected the group's general need to take proud ownership of the university and what it would eventually stand for.

Raging debates regarding the university's location contributed to ensuring its contact educational function whereby affordable tertiary education would be made possible for many white Afrikaans-speaking students close to their homes. Debates over the language medium and Christian-nationalist character of the institution combined with the planners' striving to establish a high-quality university focused on academic and research excellence further contributed to its educational function. RAU therefore not only had to function as a "volksuniversiteit"⁸¹ focused on advancing, modernising and uplifting the educationally and economically disadvantaged white Afrikaans speakers on the Rand, but it also had to develop and nurture the culture, language and history of the group in an academic environment. The founding of the university would further ensure that white Afrikaans speakers would "concur with" the Witwatersrand academically and culturally. New contact courses, for example, in railroad and municipality management, as well as a variety of postgraduate course offerings had to ensure the expansion of white Afrikaans-speakers' employment horizons on the Witwatersrand.

RAU furthermore, in its role and function, would ensure that white Afrikaans speakers attained confidence and self-realisation⁸² and that community needs were addressed through a "particularistic" approach. Focus had to fall on educating and developing white Afrikaans-speaking students who, through fundamental and methodological training, would be able to find solutions for current and future problems. The university therefore not only had to focus on achieving high academic standards in education, but also to focus on developing a close relationship between the university and the community.

To conclude: RAU needed to be a future-oriented, functional urban university. This would be realised through projecting new knowledge or determining new knowledge needs.⁸³ Whilst the role and function of RAU was to focus on a futurological knowledge orientation, the

⁸¹ J.G. Garbers, "*Diens deur kennis*" in B. Louw and F. van Rensburg, *Bestendige binnevure...*, p. 82.

⁸² UJ/RAU Archive, Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit collection, File A11/1, Establishment history collection; Letter from Mr J.C. van Tonder, chairperson of the school committee of the Rand Afrikaans University committee to principals of Afrikaans schools, 1965-09-30.

⁸³ UJ/RAU Archive, J. Cronje collection, File A 36/4, Prof. G. van N. Viljoen – RAU vestiging, geboukompleks en ontstaansgeskiedenis, Toespraak gehou deur Prof. G. van N. Viljoen tydens the RAU Akademiese wydingsdiens in die Stadskouburg getiteld – Die relevantheid van die universiteit – op 1974-03-04, pp. 6-7.

university also had a formative function. Students would be moulded to use new skills enabling them to engage independently and scientifically.⁸⁴

⁸⁴ UJ/RAU Archive, P.J. Meyer collection, File C1/6, Toesprake; Die stuktuur van die universiteit, p. 6.

Chapter 9

The realisation of a dream:

Assessing RAU as a centrepiece in education for a modernising Afrikaner livelihood

The Rand Afrikaans University (RAU), formally established in 1968 and progressing with a modernised vision echoed the dream of an Afrikaans university, to be developed in an economically vibrant and new environment where modern, architecturally designed buildings, with joined urban and rural elements came together in the heart of Johannesburg.¹ Through the years the institution has, transformed into a university characterised as one able to adapt and combine innovative teaching, learning and research practices to address local economic and developmental challenges. The dream further was to see to a university evolving to address modern challenges in Afrikaans, and by means of a Christian and national cultural framework of values.

With this as background Chapter One introduces the study under the title: The Rand Afrikaans University as a centrepiece in education for a modernising Afrikaner livelihood. In this chapter a research methodology is determined in which an orientation and background is given accompanied by a problem statement, research questions and aims. The methodology includes a literature review and general approach. This chapter concludes with a discussion on the contribution of this study. To follow is a critical assessment on the chapters in which the research questions have been analysed in particular.

RAU, by the end of 1975, assumed the character of a typical tertiary educational institution in a rapidly modernising South Africa, one with an increasing demand for young graduates to contribute to its political, economic and social development. The main research question of this study was to determine whether the establishment of the RAU, for its time, has contributed to the social, cultural, and economic self-empowerment of white Afrikaans-speaking South Africans on the Witwatersrand in the period 1955 to 1975. To do so the external and internal factors that contributed to the establishment of the institution had been

¹ F.I.J. van Rensburg “Sy visie vir die nuwe universiteit” in B. Louw & F. van Rensburg, *Bestendige binnevuur: perspektiewe op Gerrit Viljoen by geleentheid van sy een en sewentigste verjaarsdag op 1997-09-11* (Tafelberg-uitgewers Beperk, Kaapstad, 1997), pp. 39-65, 69-103, UJ library, *Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit (RAU); Die Taak van RAU as stadsuniversiteit – 1968-1973* (RAU, Johannesburg, 1973), pp. 1-10.

identified, described and analysed against international and national contexts and trends in education, with an emphasis on the intellectual and socioeconomic modernisation process involving white Afrikaans speakers on the Witwatersrand. To achieve the main research question, several research questions were addressed in the previous chapters.

The first was identifying and analysing general trends in the founding of universities internationally and locally. This was deemed to be important because more research had to be done regarding factors that had led to the establishment of tertiary educational institutions for specific (ethnic) groupings. Universities are firmly seated in the realm of society and societal stakeholder engagement, a facet reviewed in this research of the founding of RAU. A contribution of this study is that it sheds light on the multiple contributions that RAU has made since its inauguration. It also serves as an example of a university that was founded by an influential group in power and used as a vehicle for the further self-empowerment of that group – in this case, white Afrikaans speakers on the Witwatersrand. The research also unequivocally hinted at the realisation that this university was established to ensure that this white Afrikaans-speaking group would be able to continue to expand its influence and authority on the Witwatersrand. The study also offers insight into broader questions related to typically new universities founded in the mid-twentieth century.

For obvious reasons Chapter Two forms the intellectual core of this study. By focussing on the founding of universities internationally and locally the discussion deliberates historiographical reflections and trends in the founding of universities in general, and more specifically motives and motivations for the founding of universities internationally and locally. These have yielded some informative insight. Insights uncovered in the process related to trends and topics regarding the writing of university institutional history as especially related to American, African, Asian and European universities. Trends and topics identified included government policies towards universities; the role of student numbers at universities; the interrelationship between university, government and society;² characteristics of evolving universities in changing societies; the diverse roles of universities in their respective societies; the corporate administration of modern universities and racialism in higher education. All these discussions present important focal points for additional research.³

² J. Currie and J. Newton, *Universities and globalization: critical perspectives* (SAGE, London, 1998).

³ T. Gallagher, *Education in divided societies* (Palgrave Macmillan, Houndsmills, 2004).

Topics related to ethnicity and racialism at universities, and how ethnic differences affects societies, were found to be of particular value in this study of RAU, because the university was founded in a divided society with the aim of improving the economic and social position of one specific group that was believed to be fundamentally disadvantaged at the time. The former RAU also closely relates to the discussion of changing universities in a global context. The focus of international studies⁴ also point out communities served, and on how the university as an institution contributed to the development of society.⁵ In the case of RAU, the vision was not only to advance but also to uplift and modernise white Afrikaans speakers via tertiary education and learning in their mother tongue. This objective became one of the prime objectives of the institution.

In topics examined by researchers such as Twigg,⁶ Benum⁷ and Russ⁸ attention is given to the philosophical, theoretical, managerial, demographic and political characteristics of universities globally. Research on these topics emphasises the importance of carefully assessing the significance of the local and national environment within which universities have been founded and developed. This is of particular importance in a study of RAU because this institution was founded with in the political and philosophical environment of apartheid which had a profound influence on its character as discussed in *Chapters Four and Five*.

Demographically RAU had to be established, as decided by the founders, in the economic environment of the Witwatersrand because it had to contribute to the general development of the white Afrikaans speaker on the Witwatersrand. This study also found that the positioning of RAU in Johannesburg on the Witwatersrand had a symbolic value in that it represented the Afrikaner taking its permanent place in the English perceived economic hub of South Africa.⁹ The upsurge of student uprisings since the 1960s as topic researched by Monique furthermore

⁴ See Chapter Two, also compare - J. Elliott, *et al.*, *Communities and their universities; the challenges of lifelong learning* (Lawrence and Wishart Limited, London, 1996).

⁵ See Chapter Two, also compare - E.H. Brookes, *A History of the University of Natal* (University of Natal Press, Pietermaritzburg, 1966); R.F. Currey, *Rhodes University, 1904-1970: A Chronicle* (Rustica Press, Grahamstown, 1970); A. Kerr, *Fort Hare 1915-1945; the Evolution of an African College* (Billing and Sons, London, 1968); M. Shear, *Wits: A university in the apartheid era* (Witwatersrand University Press, Johannesburg, 1996) to name but a few examples.

⁶ J. Twigg, "Evolution, obstacles and aims: the writing of Oxford and Cambridge college histories". *History of Universities*, 8, 1989.

⁷ E. Benum, "On the challenge of writing university history: The University of Oslo". *Center for Studies in Higher Education* (October, 1999).

⁸ W.A. Russ, "Problems in writing a college history". *Pennsylvania History*, 26 (2), 1959.

⁹ UJ/RAU Archive, P.J. Meyer collection, File C1/2, Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit – Geboubeplanning, p. 1.

highlighted new questions on the function and purpose of universities in contemporary society.¹⁰ Questions that were taken seriously by early founders such as Meyer and Viljoen in their formalisation of ideological and philosophical ideals which they envisioned for RAU as discussed in **Chapter Five**.¹¹ Gallagher's focus on racialism in education in general in South Africa has also been found to be of importance in the study of RAU because of the ethnic character of RAU with the specific focus on the white Afrikaans speaker. Although Galagher mainly focusses on secondary educational policy he highlights the importance of education to enhance and ensure the existence of separate education especially under the policy of apartheid. Separate education to nurture ethnic differences.¹²

The societal change in attitude towards the purpose and function of a university as it related to the motivations for the founding of new universities had a direct bearing on why universities were established in the first place. This also ties in with Elliott's insight on how universities contribute to the development of society. Here links between the university, community and broader society in the study of RAU is important because it compliments contextual comparisons,¹³ and it highlights the changing character of universities. This furthermore reflected on the change in expectations brought about by universities becoming institutions for the masses. It was determined in this study that this factor was particularly important in the case of RAU, because this university was established for the white Afrikaans speaking working-class citizens from the outset.¹⁴ It became a university that not only proved itself to be a tertiary institution maintaining high standards in different academic fields, but it also demonstrated itself as capable of blooming into a respected institution of higher learning locally and internationally. RAU has also demonstrated itself as being capable of reflecting the culture of its society and willingness to change as the society it serves transformed.¹⁵

The motivations for the founding of universities in South Africa before and since 1910 as discussed in **Chapter Two**, has found that it varied from politically driven imperial motivations and agendas, the need to develop higher education to the general development of the economy of South Africa. The establishment of UCT, US, Natal, Orange Free State,

¹⁰ K. Minoque, *The concept of a university* (Transaction Publishers, New Brunswick, 2005), pp. 1-5.

¹¹ See Chapter Five.

¹² T. Gallagher, *Education in divided societies...*

¹³ J. Elliott *et al.*, *Communities and their universities: The challenges of lifelong learning* (Lawrence and Wishart Limited, London, 1996).

¹⁴ H. Mitchell, *The university and the urban crisis* (USA, 1974).

¹⁵ See E. Brink, *University of Johannesburg: the University of a new generation* (Craft Print, Singapore, 2010) in this regard pp. 24-104.

Potchefstroom, Pretoria and Wits could serve as valid examples in this regard. The University of Durban-Westville and the UPE had politics and policies combined with an increase in student numbers as motivational factors. The role of regionalism, sentiments pertaining to mother-tongue instruction and provincialism, religion and Afrikaner nationalism in the founding of institutions, especially in the old Boer Republics, were also identified as well as economic, technological and skills development as motivational factors. Since the 1960s, higher education development in South Africa was furthermore particularly guided by apartheid ideology and policy. This study has, however, determined that the motivational factors for the founding of RAU were mother-tongue education, ideological sentiments, economic development, the modernising drive and increasing student numbers. To give meaning to these motivations a number of role players participated in the founding of this university.

In Chapter Three the key role players involved in the founding of this working class university were subsequently identified and analysed. RAU's impressive architectural design represents the bold yet subtle presence of the white Afrikaans speakers of its early years¹⁶ which was made possible by the relentless work of role players such as prominent individuals, the contributions of Afrikaner business and cultural organisations. This study therefore argues that the founding of RAU not only realised white Afrikaans speakers' dream of taking their place in the economic hub of South Africa, but moreover became a reality as they were increasingly gaining a foothold at the centre of educational activity, namely the Witwatersrand.¹⁷ RAU's founding pioneers envisioned that, through the university's education programme, white Afrikaans-speaking students would not only improve their own situation in various ways, but also develop and modernise their Afrikaner identity, which they succeeded in doing most effectively. The founding of RAU as a working-class university for the white Afrikaans speakers not only purposed to modernise but to uplift and advance this group on various levels which they had not been privileged to occupy before.

¹⁶ M.A. Beale, "Apartheid goals in the 1960s: the creation of the University of Port Elizabeth and the Rand Afrikaans University", Seminar paper delivered at the University of the Witwatersrand on the 6th of March 1995. pp. 19-20.

¹⁷ UJ library, *Gedenkalbum van die opening van die R.A.U.* RAU, Johannesburg, 1968-02-24, Speech of the Chancellor, Dr N. Diederichs, pp. 21-22, UJ/RAU Archive, Johannesburg, P.J. Meyer collection, File C1/1, Interview (transcribed) with Dr P.J. Meyer on 1983-07-04 on his plot "Halfpad" in Witpoortjie 81 by Mr Jan Cronjé, leader of the archival project of RAU from 1967-05-01 till the end of 1981, Communications Manager of RAU, pp. 66-70.

It was furthermore established in this study that RAU's founding was not the brainchild of the NP government. It was rather the product of a local campaign initiated by influential individuals who were driven by economic, cultural and ideological motivations to establish a new Afrikaans university on the Witwatersrand. The involvement of these various role players in the broader nationalist movement were, amongst others, the Federasie van Afrikaanse Kultuurvereniginge (FAK) and the Afrikaner Broederbond (AB), individuals like Dr PJ Meyer and Prof G van N Viljoen, the National Party (NP) and Afrikaner business institutions such as SANLAM and Old Mutual that contributed to the vision and mission of the new Afrikaans university as well. Through their involvement, they did not only want to create a new Afrikaans university, but they moreover wished to ensure that this university would contribute to the development of the South African economy. White Afrikaans speakers' ambitions also had to be addressed. The ambitions included the preservation and enrichment of the Afrikaans language, culture and religion through education. Important to note is that the creation of RAU was therefore not a top-down decree involving the active participation of the NP government or the AB. In this regard Viljoen, as first rector of the RAU, emphasised that the institution's creation was a process springing from the awakening of white Afrikaans speakers on the Witwatersrand.¹⁸

Furthermore it is revealed in this study that the NP government only became involved after it had become clear that UNISA would not be moved from Pretoria to Johannesburg as a solution to the establishment of a white Afrikaans university on the Witwatersrand. It was only after this decision that the NP government decided to agree to the founding of a totally new university. From the sources it seems clear that the founding of RAU was also not the direct result of the AB as erroneously claimed by Wilkens and Strydom. What is quite evident is the fact that RAU was founded by prominent individuals who were members of the AB namely Meyer and Viljoen. Meyer played the most prominent role in the founding of RAU, because he had a significant influence on the development of white Afrikaans ideology and was actively involved in organising the cultural life of white Afrikaans speakers as a group.¹⁹ Meyer was later assisted by Viljoen, who became the first rector of RAU and who developed its clear academic mission and vision based on the framework that Meyer had previously provided for what RAU should represent. So it can be stated that the different role players either played a direct or in-direct role in the founding of RAU. With this background

¹⁸ UJ/RAU Archive, G. van N. Viljoen collection, File C3/15, Universiteit en Gemeenskap, Toespraak, G. van N. Viljoen voor Johannesburg se Afrikaanse Sakekamer, 1967-03-21, p. 1.

¹⁹ D. Prinsloo, "Dr Piet Meyer in Johannesburg, 1936-1984", *Historia*, 32 (1), 1987, p. 44.

and in the context of the time RAU started to fulfil an important role in the advancing and developing of white Afrikaans speakers on the Witwatersrand. The white Afrikaans speakers' culture, language, religion and identity would through the assistance of RAU not only be maintained, but would also be enhanced in the spirit of the modernising drive. However, the process to finally establish RAU was nevertheless characterised by many obstacles.

It is for this reason that *Chapter Four* focusses not only on the obstacles for university establishment but also on how these obstacles were overcome. In the research it was revealed that the founding of RAU was subjected to numerous cultural and political obstacles, such as the actions of the English and Jewish business communities, the NP government, the political agenda of the Johannesburg municipality, the proposed geographical location of RAU, the reaction of the public in general and the content of the conscience clause. These sources uncovered²⁰ differences of opinion among white Afrikaans speakers regarding the founding of this university and where it had to be situated. Secondly, regardless of the differences experienced, the founders nevertheless demonstrated persistence in eventually establishing the university. It is emphasised in the study how those who supported the university's creation envisioned its role in improving the tertiary education of white Afrikaans speakers on the Witwatersrand. The project of modernising white Afrikaans speakers as spearheaded by the NP government from the 1960s onwards,²¹ brought forth informed insight.

The founding of RAU was not a smooth sailing at all because of the NP government's commitment to prioritising the creation of black colleges and universities in line with its policy of separate development (apartheid),²² which meant that the RAU was not prioritised in particular. The founding of RAU furthermore infuriated the English-speaking population on the Witwatersrand. This was because it was viewed as an effort to compete with Wits and to resist the so-called liberal influences of this university. Another concern, linked to the founding of RAU so close to Wits, was the perceived possible lack of student numbers at the time and the possibility that this new institution could lure students away from the universities of Pretoria and Potchefstroom.²³ This debate was however averted when it became evident that the population of white Afrikaans speakers was growing rapidly on the Rand, thus eliminating the fear of inadequate student numbers. The study also uncovered that

²⁰ See Chapter Four.

²¹ See Chapter Four.

²² UJ library, *Gedenkalbum van die opening van die R.A.U. Johannesburg*, 1968-02-24, Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit, (1968) "Bekroning van 'n groeiproses: Historiese terugblik", pp. 35-36.

²³ *Die Transvaler*, 1963-06-20.

the negative English and Jewish sentiments towards the establishment of RAU initially proved to be a major stumbling block. This was due to their objections related to the possible loss of land belonging to the Johannesburg Country Club and their concerns related to the so-called “conscience clause”. The possible loss of land proved to be minimal and was overcome by confidential mutual agreements between the founders and the English and Jewish Business Chambers.²⁴ The matter of the traditional conscience clause as a tool to eliminate discretionary practices was resolved by Meyer and Viljoen on the basis that it was not necessary because RAU’s founders did not intend to discriminate on religious grounds.

Another obstacle, namely the political opposition of the Johannesburg municipality to the founding of RAU was likewise based on two aspects of which the first was the proposal that the new university be built on land such as the site at Bruma or the Jan van Riebeeck Park. These sites had been earmarked for the development of open green spaces. Environmental concerns were often raised whenever the university’s location was debated. The second point of opposition related to the fact that the Johannesburg municipality’s officials (council) were primarily UP (United Party) members. Although they could not really object on political grounds to the creation of a new white Afrikaans university, they did, however, try to prolong the process by withholding promised financial support for its establishment.²⁵ Debate on the location of RAU ceased once it was decided that RAU would be located in Auckland Park. This location was of political, economic and social importance as well as symbolic significance because it celebrated the permanence of the white Afrikaans speaker in Johannesburg and on the Witwatersrand. The successful overcoming of a number of obstacles made the physical founding of RAU a reality. For the new university however to be successful, it was important to combine the modern architecture and teaching methods with the envisioned ideological and philosophical ideals.

The expression of an idea in the form of RAU had to be realised through the combination of new architectural and teaching methods embodied in modernising ideological and philosophical ideas. This is explored in *Chapter Five*. The discussion of this relationship in this study concluded that the modern architectural design and innovative teaching/learning methods complemented the modernising ideological and philosophical ideals envisioned for

²⁴ UJ/RAU Archive, P.J. Meyer collection, File C1/1, Interview (transcribed) with Dr P.J. Meyer on 1983-07-04 on his plot “Halfpad” in “Witpoortjie”, pp. 60-61.

²⁵ See Chapter Four.

RAU in various ways. This is evident from the *universitas character* of the university²⁶ as identified by Meyer and Viljoen. In many ways, this ideal was informed by the lessons learned from universities internationally and, in Viljoen's opinion, needed to be addressed to ensure that "cross-pollination" between different disciplines and courses was revived. This, to him, was pivotal for a university to function at its full potential. Instead, Viljoen's philosophy of what a university ought to be interwove these three elements of knowledge creation, knowledge transferral and knowledge implementation, emphasising their complementary nature. The *universitas* interaction had to become part of the functionality of RAU; especially its academic and administrative aspects. The *universitas* interaction would enhance and functionalise the university, thus giving meaning to the motto for RAU phrased *Service through Knowledge*.²⁷

In conceptualising the *universitas character*, Viljoen identified four important elements that embodied his vision of the foundation and character of the new university. He referred to these as the *four corner pillars* which, to his mind, would guide the university in its mission and vision and form an integral part of the philosophy informing the tasks and role of the new university.²⁸ These pillars were the achievement of the highest academic standards, science and knowledge, to ensure the development of character formation, the advancement of the *volksgebondenheid* (devotion to the nation) characteristic in terms of its Afrikaans spirit, cultural and religious foundations and the promotion of Christian values on all levels of its functioning.²⁹

In addition, the university had to function in the light of Christian values and, in its modern and architectural impressiveness, reflect something of the greatness of God and the Christian faith. This was symbolised in the *conscience clause* adopted by the founders and based on the then Constitution of South Africa.³⁰ To the founders of RAU, it was furthermore important to ensure that a balance of *white identity* was maintained in a healthy way in which RAU take the lead in encouraging and forming different point of views. This was also applicable in terms of its racial inclusiveness as a founding philosophy supported by Viljoen.

²⁶ UJ/RAU Archive, P.J. Meyer - collection, File C1/2, Universitas – op weg na die geheel as eenheid, p. 2.

²⁷ F.I.J. van Rensburg, "Sy visie vir die nuwe universiteit" in B. Louw en F. van Rensburg, *Bestendige binnevuur* ..., pp. 78-79.

²⁸ F.I.J. van Rensburg, "Sy visie vir die nuwe universiteit" in B. Louw en F. van Rensburg, *Bestendige binnevuur* ..., p. 123.

²⁹ F.I.J. van Rensburg, "Sy visie vir die nuwe universiteit" in B. Louw and F. van Rensburg, *Bestendige binnevuur* ..., p. 127.

³⁰ *Gedenkalbum van die opening van die R.A.U.*, 1968-02-24, Speech by Prof G. van N. Viljoen – Welcoming of the parents of the students, p. 50.

The planning of RAU with its modern architectural design and innovative teaching methods coupled with the universitas character and Viljoen's four corner pillars therefore complemented the modernising ideological and philosophical ideals envisioned for RAU. This was done in the first place with its combining of the urban university with a rural character thus to create a natural relationship between the city, university and rural landscaping. It also attempted to bring together the old and the new. The central framework and functionality informed RAU's planning and it had to be of a revolutionary nature. The new campus had to represent an integrated town in a broad decentralised network of global intellectual contact.³¹ For this reason, the ideogram for the RAU campus would make provision for immediate and planned long-term academic accommodation. For Meyer and the other planners, the linear and orthogonal framework had to be replaced with a U-shaped plan, which gave rise to the horseshoe shape eventually characterising the RAU building.³²

The architectural shape of RAU improved the functionality of the architectural planning in that it increased the centralised activities. In addition, the seven-storey construction increased the centralised functional character as it created the opportunity to bring departments and faculties closer together to enhance the cross-pollination envisioned for academic activities.³³ The concrete building symbolised strength, permanence and modernity and was functional in materialising the concept of a *university* based on a centralised philosophy in which contact, physical communication and togetherness were of major importance. These elements furthermore enhance and complemented the founders' vision and mission of mother-tongue education in the context of Christian values.

In **Chapter Six** this relationship between mother-tongue education and Christian values is analysed. Mother-tongue education in the context of Christian values formed an integral part of, and impacted on, the ideological and philosophical ideals envisaged for RAU. Its founding impressively has made a meaningful contribution to the implementation and maintenance of mother-tongue education and Christian values in the project of mobilising Afrikaners in the cause of nationalism and self-empowerment. This was eventually

³¹ W.O. Meyer, *Die idee agter die argitektuur* in B. Louw and F. Van Rensburg, *Bestendige binnevuur...*, p. 71.

³² W. Peters, "(Rand Afrikaans) University of Johannesburg, Kingsway Campus", p. 4.

³³ UJ/RAU Archive, J.B.Z. Louw collection, File A128/1, Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit – Fisiese beplanning, pp. 1-2.

supported, as identified in this study, by the NP government promoting Afrikaner nationalist ideology driven by the principle of unity; a principle characterised by the unity of one race, one culture, one religion and, very importantly, one language. The principle of unity became an important characteristic in the founding and functioning of RAU that further manifested itself in the *universitas* and centralised principle that evolved and developed from the specific philosophical and ideological aims envisaged for RAU.³⁴

After 1948, but specifically during the 1950s and 1960s, the evolving white Afrikaans-speaking identity was a major driving force to ensure the future of the group, especially on the Witwatersrand. Group interests were accomplished through effective education. Through access to knowledge, RAU gave white Afrikaans-speaking students the confidence they need to make progress in the modern urban environment, and it simultaneously empower them through the acknowledgment and acceptance they receive in the international community. Knowledge, based on well-defined ideological and philosophical ideals, was passed on in a secure environment of linguistic, cultural and religious development, where advancement and modernisation became the fundamental goals. Erstwhile RAU not only became an institution representing the language, culture and religion of white Afrikaans speakers, but an institution that created, and embodied, a new, modern identity on the Witwatersrand.³⁵

In Chapter Seven the role of RAU in the Afrikaner identity formation through language and modernisation is deliberated on. The discussion demonstrates the close relationship that existed between language and identity with regard to white Afrikaans speakers and confirms its functionality in the creation of RAU. It was therefore essential that this institution had, to through this relationship, evolve into a new, modern educational centre for this specific group on the Witwatersrand. For Meyer, the Afrikaans language constituted the core existence of white Afrikaans speakers as it gave meaning, understanding and credence to who white Afrikaans speakers in truth were. To him language – and in this case Afrikaans – played a pivotal role in shaping the identity of white Afrikaans speakers, especially in terms of how they viewed themselves and their relation to community, culture and religion. The Afrikaans language was thus regarded as an important element of the *volk* or of being a white Afrikaans speaker.³⁶

³⁴ See Chapter Six.

³⁵ See Chapter Six.

³⁶ See Chapter Seven.

RAU, on the basis of its specific language and religious character, according to this study, was furthermore created to be mainly exclusive in terms of the group for which it was established. This did not mean, however, that other cultural groupings would be barred from becoming part of the RAU community. Viljoen made it clear on various occasions that it was important that RAU would have to function across cultural and racial borders in an effort not only to learn from others, but to make sure that others learned from RAU and from what the institution stood for.³⁷

The close relationship between language and identity formation paved the way for social control, which played an important role in RAU by forming part of the NP's notion of the *particularism* of universities. RAU was closely related to the community in which it was located and which it ultimately served. RAU therefore embodied a *volksuniversiteit*, catering for the *volk* in the language of the *volk* to develop a modern identity for the *volk*. This embodiment however was also the result of ongoing contestation and debates between RAU and the wider Afrikaner nationalist community over the institutions role and function.

In **Chapter Eight** the contestation and debate on RAU's role and functionality is pointed out. In this chapter, the question that remained to be answered was how successful RAU proved to be at achieving its aim of modernising and uplifting white Afrikaans speakers by becoming a bastion of the educational modernisation of Afrikaner identity and livelihood. A close interrelationship existed between apartheid and modernism. This interrelationship already had its origins in the early 1950s and was visible in NP government modernisation projects such as the creation of buildings, dams, and infrastructure that served to augment the development and expedite the implementation of the apartheid system and its principles. An examination of this relationship in **Chapter Eight** consequently exposed that the planners of the RAU envisioned that this modernisation had to in fact become part of RAU's functionality on all levels. This was evident in RAU's physical planning and architectural design combined with its innovative teaching methods.

The 1973 five-year festival year furthermore revealed in what way RAU had achieved its goal of advancing and modernising white Afrikaans speakers on the Witwatersrand. This was done through equipping and thus empowering white Afrikaans-speaking students through

³⁷ J.C. Garbers, "Diens deur Kennis" in B. Louw & F. van Rensburg, *Bestendige binnevuur...*, pp. 81-82.

development of their intellect and equipping them with skills they would need in industry and business. Future employers were regularly consulted regarding the needs and requirements to be included in courses that prepared students for their careers after concluding their studies.

RAU's achievements in modernising identity and advancing livelihood became apparent through its increased student registration numbers as well as the increase in degrees awarded. The creation of the Bureau of Higher Education, Institute for Child and Adult Guidance and research development furthermore demonstrated RAU's commitment to the intellectual development of the Afrikaans-speaking community. All these achievements contributed to the process of improved Afrikaner livelihoods on the Witwatersrand.

It was observed that many different issues of contestation and debating developed between RAU and the wider Afrikaner nationalist community over the institution's role and function in the Afrikaner project. The closeness to the University of the Witwatersrand was already debated in the early pioneering days. That debate varied from contemplation of RAU's actual role in the economic heartland to concerns over its physical location on the Rand and even what it would be called. Strong opinions were also expressed regarding RAU's identity as an Afrikaans university, its projected successes and the fact that it would not be reduced to a *sectional venture* or become a bastion of narrow-mindedness. The envisaged role of RAU was to provide affordable tertiary education close to the homes of white Afrikaans students and in their own language. It had to be an institution that developed this group's culture in an atmosphere in which its religion and history would be nurtured simultaneously. The role and function of RAU would also be to ensure that white Afrikaans speakers attained confidence and self-realisation and that community needs were duly addressed. The focus of RAU therefore had to be and remain that of a future-oriented, functional urban university.

From the research it can be concluded that the establishment of RAU in the period 1955-1975 indeed has progressed towards, and represented a centrepiece in, the education of a modernising Afrikaner livelihood. RAU in more than one way contributed to the social, cultural, and economic self-empowerment of white Afrikaans-speaking South Africans on the Witwatersrand, but certainly so to economy in general despite its narrow cultural agenda. Its dream and realisation cannot be said of to differ from other similar initiatives internationally and even nationally. It seems as if a trend among cultures and groups is to first secure education and a future among people they regard as part of their own. By looking back at the

past from the present, the view seems to always be clearer, but also less thoughtful with regards to the diversity of peoples in South Africa.

Further studies in the field are encouraged. Areas of value to further explore are a more comprehensive look into the contributions made by Afrikaans cultural organisations such as the FAK in the advancement of the Afrikaans language at RAU, and an in-depth analysis of the architectural design of RAU in relation to the concrete symbolism as promoted by the NP government with regard to apartheid and Afrikaner nationalism.

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