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Translation in the South African popular media: A case study of YOU and Huisgenoot

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Chapter 1: The History of *You* and *Huisgenoot* Magazines

Dit [die publikasie van *Huisgenoot*] word gedoen teen die breë agtergrond van twintigste-eeuse Suid-Afrikaanse geskiedenis met name die politieke, ekonomiese, sosiale en kulturele geskiedenis van die Afrikaner.

Muller (1990: 19 – 118), cited in Froneman (2003)

[It (the publication of *Huisgenoot*) takes place against the background of 20th century South African history, in terms of the political, economic, social and cultural history of the Afrikaner[4].]

Looking at *You* and *Huisgenoot* today, it is very easy to assume that they are both frivolous magazines, with no real purpose other than satisfying the public's infinite desire for celebrity gossip, 'sob-stories' and a comprehensive TV schedule for that particular week. However, *Huisgenoot* arrived (*Huisgenoot* started in 1916, while *You* only followed in 1987 – www.naspers.co.za, accessed 2005-07-05) in a period when the Afrikaners were strengthening themselves and their language so that they could provide a viable alternative to British rule. *Huisgenoot* played an integral part in this Afrikaner Nationalist Movement by promoting the Afrikaans culture and language, for example, when Afrikaans was declared one of South Africa's official languages in early 1918, the Volksraad did not make Afrikaans an official language in Parliament as they felt that Afrikaans was "nog te onvas en te weinig vormelik" (Muller: 1990, 259) [still too unstable and not well-formed]. To this end, *Huisgenoot* published examples on how Afrikaans should be spelled, used, and so on (Muller: 1990, 260 – 261).

This chapter investigates the situation in South Africa at the beginning of the 20th century, how this situation led to the establishment of the *Huisgenoot* magazine, the early years of the *Huisgenoot* and what prompted the decision to publish the *You* magazine.

[4] - Translation my own, unless otherwise indicated.

Boer anger towards the British existed as far back as the 18th and 19th centuries, when the Voortrekkers moved north from the Cape Colony in search of land and freedom from British rule (Afrikaner Nationalism Captures the State. – accessed 2005-05-15). However, with the discovery of diamonds in Kimberley and gold on the Witwatersrand, the British and the Boers fought for control over South Africa's mineral rights in the so-called First and Second Anglo Boer Wars (Afrikaner Nationalism Captures the State – accessed 2005-05-15). The Second Anglo Boer War and the scorched earth policy employed by the British during the war, where Boer farms were burnt and Boer women and children were put into overcrowded concentration camps, further ignited Boer anger against the British.

After British victory over the Boers in 1902 (Conan-Doyle: 1976) Milner, the Governor of the Cape and an arch-imperialist (Muller: 1990, 19 - 22), instituted an aggressive Anglicisation policy, in terms of which public servants, teachers and clerks were forced to use English at work or otherwise they would lose their jobs (Afrikaner Nationalism Captures the State - accessed 2005-05-15). They had to live with the reminder of their defeat, the humiliation of using the conqueror's language; it was as if the British were defeating them every time they spoke English.

The Afrikaners were not defeated for long. Although they had lost on the battlefield, the war was taken up on the economic, cultural and political fronts. On the economic front, the *Boerevriende* in the Cape Colony organised a boycott of British goods: Afrikaner firms, that only stocked Afrikaner products, were established and Afrikaner consumers were encouraged not to buy from anti-Afrikaner firms (Muller: 1990, 19 – 20). The Cape Afrikaners organised their own national organisations that had to remain independent from British organisations, for example, *ZA Onderwijzers Unie (ZAOU)* (The South African Teachers' Union).

The war between the Afrikaners and the British was also fought in the publishing world.

Early in January 1912, *Die Afrikaanse Koerant* (The Afrikaans Newspaper), held by the *Afrikaanse Koerant Maatskappy*, was established (Muller: 1990, 20). The newspaper wanted, amongst other things, to:

> "'n suiwer nasionale gees" aanwakker, "'n gevoel van respekt vir ons volkstaal en trots op alles wat verdienstelik is in ons volksaard en geskiedenis ... bevorder ..." Gelyke taalregte, in teorie en praktyk, sal nagestreef word.
>
> Muller (1990: 20 – 21)

> [encourage "a pure national spirit", promote a feeling of respect for our nation's tongue and be proud of all that is worthy in our national character and history" Equal language rights will be pursued in theory and practice.]

Milner was an experienced journalist and saw that an imperialist publishing concern, stretching across South Africa, would maintain British superiority in South Africa (Muller: 1990, 22). Milner established publications which competed with those started by Botha and Smuts and these publications ran articles and reports that furthered the relevant group's concerns and tried to diminish the other side.

Smuts and Botha started *De Volksstem* (The Voice of the People), *Het Westen, Krugersdorp Herald, The Highveld Herald, Ons Land* (Our Country), *De Goede Hoop* (The Good Hope), *The Friend, De Afrikaner* (The Afrikaner) and *De Vriend des Volks* (The Friend of the People), while Milner started *The Pretoria News, The Bloemfontein Post, The Daily Mail, The Rand Daily Mail, The Leader, The Star* and *The Cape Times* (Muller: 1990, 22 – 25).

After a while, it was the Afrikaners who won the cultural and social wars and even Milner's associates, such as Geoffrey Robinson, editor of the *Cape Times* and Vere Stent, editor of the *Pretoria News*, realised that the Afrikaners had 'won'. To this end, Stent said on 20 January 1909:

> The Dutch are 'top dog' to-day in South Africa ... The worst of it all is that the Boers seem to have captured our own leaders. They have thrown a spell over

> Fitzpatrick, who is now referred to by de la Rey and Botha as 'Ou Fitzie', and who writes to me that Hull is a good comrade, Steyn is a giant among men, and Botha transparently sincere ... I am full of fears and suspicions ... The 'Pretoria News' has never faltered in its allegiance not only to the Imperial idea but to the interests of the British in South Africa, but it is to-day, a voice crying in a wilderness of sentimental reconciliation, prompted by ulterior motives. The 'Star' is still faithful as far as circumstances will allow. The 'Leader', edited by Cartwright, persists in hailing Botha as the Saviour of the Country and praising with sycophantic hyperbole, Indians, Natives, Boers, Coloured People, everything that is not British. The 'Daily Mail' pursues its absurd 'all-white' policy, and the 'Pretoria Chronicle's a reincarnation of the old 'Advertiser', is subsidized and supported by Het Volk, though it appears in the guise of a British newspaper.
>
> Muller (1990: 26 – 27)

Now the Afrikaans language needed to be 'civilised' – in other words a "middle class variant of Afrikaans" needed to be standardised (Hofmeyer: 1987, 105), and to do this, it was necessary to replace Coloured and English influences with Dutch. Pre-1910, support for the 'Afrikaans clean-up' did not generate much support but after 1910, many bodies joined the ATV (*Afrikaanse Taalvereniging*) (Afrikaans Language Union) and the ATG (*Afrikaanse Taalgenootskap*) (Afrikaans Language Union)[5] in the promotion of the Afrikaans language (Hofmeyer: 1987, 105 – 106). This civilisation of Afrikaans found a significant support base amongst the rural Afrikaner women: as they were the ones who had been put into the concentration camps by the British in the Second Anglo Boer War, they were very keen to see the Afrikaners divest themselves of any British influences and in this case it was the English language.

The First World War also fuelled the Afrikaans language issue. South Africa entered the war on behalf of Britain and certain sections of rural Afrikaners rebelled against this (Hofmeyer: 1987, 107). Instead of the rebellion being a success, it ended in mass imprisonment and fines for the Afrikaners and their leaders. Here, there was a

[5] - Translations done by Hofmeyer (1987: 105 – 106)

heightened sense of nationalism as the Afrikaners felt that they were fighting for a cause. The *Helpmekaar* (Cooperation)[6] movement was started and donations were received by this organisation in order to pay the rebels' fines and reward them for being good Afrikaners (Hofmeyer: 1987: 107). The *Nasionale Pers*, the National Party's publishing house, was started during World War I with the help of donations from this movement (Hofmeyer: 1987, 107). Thus the Nasionale Pers sprang directly from the Afrikaner Nationalist Movement and the *Huisgenoot*, one of its first publications, was instrumental in furthering its cause.

Froneman (2003) outlines a number of motivations for publishing a magazine, among which are idealism, ideology and market alignment. He says that if the objectives behind a magazine are 'idealistic', then the magazine will undertake "om die volk op te bou, te bewaar en te verdedig" (to build up the nation as well as to preserve and defend it). If the magazine is 'ideological', then "die doel is om die (politieke) ideologie te bou, te bewaar en te verdedig" (the aim is to build up (political) ideologies as well as to preserve and defend them). If a magazine's objectives are market-oriented then it will publish information that will ensure that the magazine has a large circulation (Froneman: 2003).

During *Huisgenoot's* long history, the objectives of idealism, ideology and market-orientation have co-existed, although market-orientation seems to have predominated since the late 70s (see quote from Neil Hamman on page 20). Froneman (2003) states that when the magazine started, its objective was two-fold: "to financially support the struggling political mouthpiece of the Cape National Party, De Burger, and to provide the Afrikaner people (volk) with the inspiration, information and light entertainment it desperately needed". I believe that *Huisgenoot* was predominantly nationalistic in nature when it started and Hofmeyer (1987) shares my opinion. She says that in order to ensure the 'construction' of such young people, the leaders of the Afrikaner Nationalist Movement would have to convince the mothers to instil a strong sense of Afrikaner national pride in their children (Hofmeyer: 1987: 113). Consequently, a significant portion of the magazine was directed towards women (Hofmeyer: 1987, 113). For example, Hofmeyer (1987: 113) says that a typical question that the author

[6] - Translation done by Hofmeyer (1987: 107)

of an article appearing in *Huisgenoot* may have put to mothers was: "Does the child know that he is an Afrikaans child and because he is Afrikaans that he must speak his own language, know the history of his *volk*, be familiar with his Bible …"

As mentioned earlier, there was a significant drive to 'civilise' the Afrikaner language in order to make it a viable alternative to English. In order to do this, it would have a sufficient, formal vocabulary to be able to be used in Government and similar environments. Preller, cited in Hofmeyer (1987, 112), sums up the situation as follows:

> Our nation is deteriorating to the level of an ignorant proletariat – and it is to these people that we wish to speak through books, newspapers and magazines.

Thus in order for the people to be taken seriously and be seen as a force to be reckoned with, the uneducated needed to be educated and 'civilised', along with their language. Hofmeyer (1987: 113) states that many used the educational material that the *Huisgenoot* published to "improve themselves" as being educated was coming to be seen as "the key to advancement". Consequently, the magazine came to be known as the "poor man's university".

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Muller (1990: 246 - 247) states that the Anglo Boer War, the Rebellion (where the Afrikaners boycotted anything to do with the British after the Second-Anglo Boer War) and the fight for Afrikaner independence formed the basis for *Huisgenoot's* first few issues. Afrikaner bravery was highlighted in order to arouse patriotism, to the exclusion of all else. It almost seemed as if *Huisgenoot*'s editorial team were so passionate about furthering the cause of the Afrikaner that they felt that if they were to publish information regarding world events, for example World War I, this would distract its support base and cause them not to vote for an Afrikaner government. Muller (1990: 257) sums up the nationalistic objectives espoused by *Huisgenoot* and its editorial team:

> *Die Huisgenoot* wou vertolk wat daar leef en werk in die Afrikaanse hoof en hart en weergee wat daar groei en bloei op die Afrikaanse veld. Maar 'n volk moet hom op alle gebiede ontwikkel. Dit is nie genoeg dat ons vir ons

> taalregte stry nie; dit is ook nie genoeg om na politieke mag te streef nie. Daar is ook die kuns, regspleging, onderwys, geskiedenis, handel en nywerheid.
>
> [*The Huisgenoot* wants to translate what lives and works in the Afrikaner head and heart, and reproduce what grows and blooms on the African veld. But a people must develop themselves on all levels. It is not enough that we fight for our language rights, it is also not enough to strive for political power. There is also art, administration of justice, education, history, trade and industry.]

Olwagen (1991: 42) states that the *Huisgenoot* has continued to reflect the Afrikaner life throughout its long history:

> Deur die jare het die blad die Afrikanerlewe bly weelspiëel, tot vandag toe waar die Afrikaner ‘n heeltemal ander wese is as doer net ná die eeuwisseling.
>
> [Throughout the years, up until the present day where the Afrikaner is an entirely different being to what he was at the turn of the century, the magazine has continued to reflect Afrikaner life.]

The *Huisgenoot* was established in 1916 and first appeared as a monthly magazine. It was originally to be called *De Huisvriend* (The House Friend) but this changed to *De Huisgenoot* as a church magazine was called *De Huisvriend*. The monthly magazine *Ons Moedertaal* (Our Mother Tongue) was set to be amalgamated with the *Huisgenoot* (Muller: 1990, 30) in the sense that *Ons Moedertaal*’s aims of teaching the Afrikaner to read and write in his own language (Muller: 1990, 559) were to become fundamental aims of the *Huisgenoot.* One of the editors of *Ons Moedertaal*, Prof JJ Smith, became the first editor of *Huisgenoot*. Dutch and Afrikaans were to be used side-by-side in order not to alienate the Dutch-speaking readership (as it was a new magazine, with a small start-up budget, it could not afford to estrange any potential readers) (Muller: 1990, 251). Another important aspect of the *Huisgenoot’s* initial make-up was that it specifically did not deal with party politics, which however did not mean that they were unsympathetic to the Afrikaner’s interests. This merely

meant that *Huisgenoot*'s editorial team did not choose for their magazine to be political in nature (Muller: 1990, 253). In other words, the magazine:

> ... het met die politiek niks uit te staan nie, maar beoog iets anders wat veel beter is: namelik, die ontwikkeling van ons volk op letterkunding en wetenskappelik gebied op nasionale wijse.
>
> (Muller: 1990, 255)

> [... does not have anything to do with politics, but has something much better in mind, namely the development of our people in a literary and scientific arena, on a national level.]

Olwagen (1991: 42) puts the early objectives of *Huisgenoot* more succinctly:

> Die "gangbare voedesel" wat die eerste *Huisgenoot* op 20 Mei 1916 aangebied het was nog gesetel in patriotisme, in die landelike en die landbou.
>
> [The "current fodder" that the first *Huisgenoot* presented on 20 May 1916 was still seated in patriotism, the rural (lifestyle) and agriculture.]

Prof Smith attempted, and succeeded, in carrying out the objectives of *Huisgenoot*. He addressed language rights with the "taalvrae" (language questions) column, he kept the readership up-to-date with what was happening in the Afrikaner's struggle for political freedom in the "verenigingsnuus" (council news) and he educated the Afrikaner on his history and what his ancestors gave up for him in "lewenskets van 'n volksfiguur" (life story of a community leader). Smith also addressed the educational objective of the magazine, with the "oor boeke ... die vrou en die huis ... kinderrubriek ... 'n artiket of twee oor wetenskap en kuns" columns (on books ... the woman and the house ... children's column ... an article or two on science and art) (Muller: 1990: 270). The *Kinderrubriek* was used as part of the National Party's wish to ensure that their ideals were continued in the Afrikaner community long after the original leaders were gone. Here, they published 'appropriate' material in the children's column, which translated into stories that would instil a love of the Afrikaner volk in children

and inspire them to fight for the Afrikaner state when they were old enough. The "verhaal, vertelling of skets ... korsies van pasteie" (story, narrative or sketch ... jokes) (Muller: 1990, 270) were included for the readership's entertainment.

Although *Huisgenoot* did not deal with party politics specifically, it did make its views on certain issues known through certain of its regular columns. The editorial team of the magazine did not feel that the emancipation of women and their getting the vote (Muller: 1990, 271), would aid the cause of the Afrikaner state. If the women were to start thinking of themselves and not putting their men's needs first, the ideal of the Afrikaner state would not be achieved. To this end, in the woman's column, details on how to be the 'perfect' woman were published, for example how to dress beautifully (for your husband), how to get the house spotlessly clean, how to cook magnificently, and so on. (July 1916)

By December 1919, *Huisgenoot* had seen one of its major objectives realised, namely that Afrikaans was recognised as a legitimate language worthy of use in official forums, for example Afrikaans was legally admitted as a medium of education and as an official language in the NG Kerk (Muller: 1990, 273). The achievement of this goal was mainly due to the leadership of Prof Smith who was "idealisties, ywerig, met 'n visie van Afrikaans as die taal van die Afrikaners, het ook 'n stewige realisme geopenbaar" (idealistic, industrious, with a vision of Afrikaans as the language of the Afrikaners and also revealed a firm realism" (Muller: 1990, 254). Smith always emphasised that *Huisgenoot* had to be a magazine of quality and to this end it was maintained as a literary magazine: the reading material was always of a certain predetermined standard, authors were encouraged to produce creative work; continuous efforts were made to search for new talent; and the magazine would always provide a market for such creative and new work (Muller: 1990, 263). Prof Smith created a magazine which the Afrikaners used to learn to read and he standardised Afrikaans as a written and spoken language (Muller: 1990, 274 & 562).

In September 1923, the Nasionale Pers's management decided to make the *Huisgenoot* a weekly magazine (Muller: 1990, 560). Muller (1990: 560) does not precisely state what the reasons for this change were, but he does say that the magazine was an important source of income for the Nasionale Pers. Thus, if the

magazine brought in a certain amount of profit as a monthly magazine, the Nasionale Pers would be very keen to increase profits generated by *Huisgenoot* and the logical way to do this would be to make *Huisgenoot* a weekly magazine. As Prof Smith wanted to pursue other career opportunities, Dr Markus Viljoen took over when *Huisgenoot* started appearing weekly.

Froneman (2003) shows that during the period 1916 – 2003, the objectives of the *Huisgenoot* fluctuated between idealism and being market-oriented. The predominance of one of these ideals usually depended on the editor and his particular affiliations. For example, Smith had a vision of Afrikaans as the language of the Afrikaner, thus during his term as editor, *Huisgenoot* was aimed at standardising the Afrikaans language and teaching the Afrikaner people to read it (Muller: 1990, 254 & 267). Viljoen had an M.A. in history and thus had a strong interest in the subject (Steyn: 1999). He wanted to inject the Afrikaner people with faith in the Afrikaner Nationalist Movement so as to get them through the political and economic turbulence of the 1930's. He did this by publishing stories of bravery that occurred during the Anglo Boer War.

Specifically, Markus Viljoen tried to give *Huisgenoot* an 'Afrikaner' character by publishing articles on subjects that the Afrikaners were interested in, for example hunting adventures (*jagavonture*), animal and veld plant life as well as historical reminiscences (Muller: 1990, 565). Another reason for this interest in reinforcing *Huisgenoot*'s "boere karakter" (Boer character) (Muller: 1990, 565) was that many cultured Afrikaners feared the loss of their culture due to Anglicisation (Steyn: 1999). This cultured section of the Afrikaner population had money and formed a great deal of the publication's buying public (Hofmeyer: 1987, 95 – 115). Thus, if Markus Viljoen wanted to increase *Huisgenoot*'s circulation, one of the ways to do this would be to appeal to the feelings of this section of the population. On 25 February 1938, Viljoen said on this subject:

> Die feit dat so baie Afrikaners in die stad verengels het, of darem Afrikaners gebly, maar kultuurloos geword, het kerklike bandverbreek en die Afrikaans vereigingslewe vaarwel gesê het en verder algeheel in gebreke gebly het om

> hul taal te handhaaf, was ongetwyfeld genoegsame rede vir besorgheid by ons kultuurleiers.
>
> (Steyn: 1999)

> [The fact that so many Afrikaners in the city have become anglicised, or alternatively have remained Afrikaners but have lost their culture, have broken all ties with the church, have bid farewell to the Afrikaner way of life and further do not make the effort to maintain their language, is undoubtedly sufficient reason for concern on the part of our cultural leaders.]

Thus from 1923 to 1949, Markus and Hendrik Viljoen (the latter being the editor who Markus succeeded) attempted to make the magazine a "popular" magazine publishing items of interest to the general public (Muller: 1990, 565).

All major changes that have occurred in *Huisgenoot*'s makeup have been the result of a change in perspective of the readership following major world events, for example, World War II. Thus, in order to retain its support base, the magazine had to change its format in order to remain appealing to potential buyers. Spies, cited in Muller (1990: 570 – 571) states that Markus Viljoen wanted to keep *Huisgenoot*'s literary flavour that had existed under Smith's editorship. However, the readership was not the same as it had been from 1916 – 1923; they had been changed by World War I, industrialisation and the post-industrialisation urbanisation. For example, in the past, the magazine avoided party politics but now the editorial subtly alluded to politics via the choices of illustrations and photographs that displayed where there sympathies lay (Muller: 1990, 573).

Under Markus Viljoen, *Huisgenoot* enjoyed its first "golden era" (Spies: 1992a, 360). Where Smith had 'civilised' the Afrikaner by teaching him how to read, Viljoen had civilised him by promoting Afrikaans culture and showing the Afrikaner that he should be proud to be who he was (Muller: 1990, 575).

World War II changed the public's perceptions, its likes, dislikes, and so on, and this 'new public' found the old *Huisgenoot* formula too exclusive and out of touch with what they needed (Spies: 1992a, 353). If the Nasionale Pers wanted to keep the

magazine in circulation, *Huisgenoot* would have to appeal to a broader audience or, as seen from another perspective:

> Hoe meer mense geleer het om te lees, hoe meer het die menigte geword wat bepaal het waaroor geskryf word en hoe meer moes die standaarde daal.
>
> (Spies: 1992a, 355)

> [The more people that learned to read, the greater were the number who determined what was written about and the more standards had to drop.]

From the early 1950s, *Huisgenoot* started to make its first forays into the world of popular culture and thus started on the road to becoming a popular magazine. With the advent of television and the urbanisation its readership, *Huisgenoot* began to feature articles on celebrities in the popular media, for example The Beatles and Elvis Presley. Many urban Afrikaners became avid readers of British and American mass magazines. Thus, to compete with its English counterparts *Huisgenoot* was re-modelled on the American *Saturday Evening Post* (Spies: 1992a, 355 – 356).

Despite these changes, as well as the change of the magazine's name to the current *Huisgenoot* in 1959, "... die opflikkering in die sirkulasie was minder as die verwagtings." (Spies: 1992a, 357) [... the slight increase in circulation was less than expected]. The second 'new *Huisgenoot*', which appeared in 1963, was printed in colour and had magnificent illustrations. It was uncertain if the massive financial outlay on the improved format would increase sales but the risk paid off. In October 1963, the magazine made a profit for the first time since 1957 and maintained this position for the following fourteen years.

During the period 1949 – 1977, the editors were still very much of the 'old school', that is they still wanted to preserve the grand tradition that the *Huisgenoot* had set in previous years but they realised that a change was necessary in order to ensure the publication's survival as competition was entering the market. This competition took the form of magazines such *Sarie Marais* (the first dedicated woman's magazine), *Die Landbouweekblad* (a magazine dedicated to agriculture) that targeted *Huisgenoot*'s

consumers, that is women and the rural community (Spies: 1992a, 358 - 378). T.P. Boshoff took over as editor in 1977 and he saw that it was necessary to make a definitive break with the old *Huisgenoot* and he saw his new job as being similar to that of an editor at a Sunday newspaper, that is *Huisgenoot* would report on the same types of specialised issues that the Sunday newspapers handled. As most *Huisgenoot* readers were television consumers (television had come to South Africa in 1975 – SA Mining Website, accessed 2005-10-21), the magazine adopted a strategy of having more pictures and illustrations and less reading material (Spies: 1992a, 360). Much attention was given to personalities from the entertainment industry as well as other celebrities. A double-page poster of pop stars appeared in the centre of the magazine (as it still does today) and, in one year, Princess Diana appeared on the cover eight times, which increased sales five times over (Spies: 1992a, 362).

The days of *Huisgenoot* having a purely educational function were over. Boshoff's *Huisgenoot* contained stories that ran over a few weeks and these included love stories, which enticed readers to buy the magazine every week. Established columns were done away with, which included the woman's column that had been in existence since 1916. The publication still contained woman's interest articles but they had to compete with other articles for space in the magazine. A recipe column and a children's column were also started, the latter consisting of educational material that children could use for school projects (Spies: 1992a, 362).

One of the 'old' *Huisgenoot*'s main 'rules' was that it was to avoid all party politics. This changed substantially when a well-known political commentator, Schalk Pienaar, was taken onboard to air his political opinions in a weekly column (this idea has not been totally discarded in the present-day *You* and *Huisgenoot* as journalists do still write opinion pieces on current political issues, for example issues surrounding the construction of the Gautrain: *Huisgenoot*, 26 Julie 2005). In response to the political column, the South African Teachers' Union complained that *Huisgenoot* was being used as a 'political forum' (Spies: 1992a, 363). Unfortunately, this complaint did cause circulation figures to drop: on 19 August 1977, *Huisgenoot* reached its lowest circulation figures of 129 514 (Spies: 1992a, 394).

Neil Hamman, who became assistant editor in 1977 and took over from Boshoff in 1978 undertook, on instruction from the Nasionale Pers, to make the magazine 'friendlier'(Spies: 1992a, 364). He kept in touch with what women wanted to read in the magazine as he realised that women formed a significant part of the magazine's readership. Thus, anything that he knew would be read by women, which he termed as "honderd persent" [hundred percent] (Spies: 1992a, 366) would definitely be published. Anything that was not deemed to be one hundred percent was not published. Hamman's 'recipe' for *Huisgenoot*, which still seems to be in place today, can be summed up as follows:-

> Jy moet mense 'n bietjie skok. Ons mik na die regte vermenging van sensasie en stylvolheid, en bied 'n verskeidenheid waarin daar vir elke lid van die gesin iets is om te lees: 'n bietjie glans, 'n paar nuttige wenke, 'n blokraaisel, 'n artikel oor motors vir pa en iets vir die kinders (Anon., 1990a)
>
> (Froneman: 2003)

> [You must shock slightly. We aim for the right mix of sensation and stylishness and offer a variety of material where each member of the family has something to read: a bit of glamour, a few handy tips, a crossword puzzle, an article on cars for Dad and something for the children.]

Before World War II, the English magazine industry in South Africa was non-existent as the South African magazine-buying population preferred to get their magazines from London, which were of superior quality and the fact that the news in magazines did not age as quickly as the news in newspapers did made the foreign magazines appealing to English-speaking South Africans (Spies: 1991b, 405). As *Huisgenoot*'s format was based on the American weekly *Saturday Evening Post* (Hofmeyer: 1987, 112), the magazine not only appealed to Afrikaans speakers – it also appealed to English-speaking South Africans. For example, in the 3 March 1978 issue, Boshoff published a tribute to A.G. Visser, as it was the hundredth anniversary of his birth. Hamman, who was assistant editor at the time, published a twelve-page colour insert on the stars of the TV-hit *Rich Man, poor man*. Sales for that issue reached 195 801, which was a record (Spies: 1992a, 366). Non-Afrikaans speakers, who couldn't even

pronounce the publication's name, wanted to get hold of the issue. It was obvious that the *Huisgenoot* team had hit on a winning recipe for a general-interest magazine (Spies: 1992b, 422).

The choice of magazines for English-speaking South Africans was limited to *Fair Lady* (which was started in 1965), *Woman's Value* (which was started in 1978), *Modern Woman* (November 1971 – June 1974), *Farming Digest* (1980 – 1982) and *Cosmopolitan* (which was started in 1984) (Spies: 1992b, 405 – 425). However, these English magazines had a select market. *Fair Lady* was geared towards general women's entertainment, as was *Modern Woman, Woman's Value* was directed at the housewife, *Farming Digest* was directed towards the agricultural community and *Cosmopolitan* was directed at the younger generation of woman. Market research in 1987 showed that there was a gap in the market for an English magazine with the identical format to that of *Huisgenoot*, that is a general interest magazine, and thus *You* was born (Spies: 1992b, 423).

In the beginning, there was some concern as to how the Afrikaans culture published in *Huisgenoot* would be of interest to English-speaking readers. Andries van Wyk, managing editor of *You*, allayed all fears with the statement that:-

> ... *Huisgenoot* se sukses niks met kultuur te doen het nie. Dit is die formule wat tel ... 'n volkeurtydskrif met aktuele stof wat veral vroulike lesers trek, met genoeg klemverskille om ook mans en kinders se belanstelling te wek.
>
> (Spies: 1992b, 423)

> [... *Huisgenoot*'s success has nothing to do with culture. It's the formula that counts ... a full-colour magazine with up-to-date material that primarily attracts female readers, with enough variety in material also to hold the interest of men and children.]

Van Wyk was correct in his opinion that the *Huisgenoot*-formula would appeal to an English-speaking audience. In three years, the *You* became the largest English magazine in the country (Spies: 1992b, 424), an honour that it still holds today (De

Wet: 2005), with circulation figures of 229 750 (Naspers Website – accessed 2005-10-14). Although the formula remains the same in both magazines, subtle differences do exist. *You* and *Huisgenoot* both have their own fiction, letters, humour and advice columns (Spies: 1992b, 424) and culturally non-appropriate aspects of copy are changed for the *You/Huisgenoot*'s audiences (see chapter 2 of this report).

Huisgenoot has come a long way from its auspicious beginnings as a tool in the Afrikaner Nationalist Movement. Some are quite critical of the format that the magazine had adopted while others find *Huisgenoot* to be an essential part of their daily lives. Whatever one's personal feelings are about *You* and *Huisgenoot*, it is undeniable that they respond to a need in the lives of South Africans.