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‘How open are our doors? A comparison of academic staff transformation at the University of Cape Town and the University of the Witwatersrand’.

Lewins, Kezia

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CHAPTER TWO: THE HISTORY OF ACADEMIC STAFFING AT UCT AND WITS

In order to evaluate contemporary transformation, it is necessary to first examine the institutions' historical approach to issues of race, gender, and class. Such an examination reveals five distinctive historical periods in relation to institutional transformation, which are: i) early institutional practice, ii) 'open universities', iii) academic apartheid, iv) anti-apartheid struggle, and iv) consolidated institutional change.

Whilst these phases shaped each institution as a whole, the focus here is exclusively on academics and the academic workplace. A discussion on each stage will briefly highlight major demographic trends, staffing policy and procedure, staff experiences, and government involvement with higher education.

Early institutional practice: 1918 – 1938

From inception, UCT and Wits have been grounded in contestation over institutional inclusivity versus institutional exclusivity. This debate has not only been about student admissions but has extended to the universities' labour market, and in particular the academic labour market.

The universities' collective labour market is made up of three segmented labour markets: the academic, administrative, and support staff labour market. Initially, UCT and Wits drew primarily on British men academics, mostly Scots in the case of UCT (Phillips, 1993: 12). Between 1918 and 1929, only 16 percent of UCT's professors were South African (Phillips, 1993: 11 - 12).

However, several women academics were also employed. In 1929, 17 percent of UCT's academics were women, whilst Wits employed considerably less, only nine percent in 1924 (Phillips, 1993: 141 and Murray, 1982: 93 & 329). UCT also employed several Coloured laboratory assistants, whilst Wits employed its first African language assistant in 1935 (Phillips, 1993: 192 and Murray, 1982: 280). This slight diversification of academic staff was also accompanied by a 'South Africanisation' of academic posts,

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which resulted in the second generation of academics increasingly being South African born and South African (although mainly UCT and Wits) graduates (Murray, 1982: 152).

The top administrative posts came with considerable power and were typically filled by academics. For example, during the twenties and thirties the 'Upper Ten'[1] at UCT was dominated by Scottish men (Phillips, 1993: 217), and the first two principals were both Scottish. At Wits, all prestigious administrative posts were filled with white men. However, more of these incumbents had South African roots, and in fact the university's first principal was South African and also an Afrikaner (Murray, 1982: 65).

UCT and Wits also followed the norms of the time by employing black men as support staff, mainly in maintenance positions. Coloured men predominated at UCT, whilst at Wits, such staff were almost exclusively African (Phillips, 1993: 141 and Murray, 1982: 101).

The academic policies of the time exhibited tensions around inclusivity and exclusivity, and universities aimed to encapsulate 'Broad South Africanism', otherwise referred to as 'non-racialism' (Murray, 1982: 298). In practice however, this translated to no more than an attempt to integrate both English and Afrikaans speaking people (Murray, 1982: 298). The universities increasingly began to 'South Africanise' academic posts, although these were typically junior posts (Phillips, 1993: 12).

UCT, in particular, had a fair proportion of women academics, but they were by no means employed on equal status to men. Both universities had marriage clauses which dictated that women left university employment upon marriage, early retirement set at 55 for women, and unequal remuneration (Phillips, 1993: 142 and Murray, 1982: 327). Neither university had established policies for black academic staff, but both tried throughout the twenties and thirties to instate exclusive admissions policies that would deny access to black students (Murray, 1982: 298 and Louw, 1969: 145). In fact, it was this action that led Shear to describe these institutions as being "in advance of government [segregationist] policy" (Shear, 1996: 2).

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The functioning of each university can also be deduced from institutional practice by examining procedure and experience. The selection of senior academic and administrative staff was a particularly guarded process. British-based selection committees and advisors continued to be used for senior academic posts well into the thirties (Phillips, 1993: 177 and Murray, 1982: 93), whilst the position of principal was typically filled by a favourite internal candidate. At Wits, the selection of vice chancellor was initially a nominated position and was typically filled by the ex-principal. The position of chancellor, in accordance with tradition, was a historically important figure. UCT's first chancellor was the Prince of Wales (Phillips, 1993: 138).

The power-base of the institution was located within senate and council. At UCT, a 'Caledonian core' ruled senate, and council was predominantly English-speaking men, although three women were a part of council in the early days (Phillips, 1993: 134). Wits' professors, whilst having considerable power in the day-to-day running of the institution, were overrun by a heavy-handed council of government and mining magnates (Murray, 1982: 74).

Women academics were typically employed in non-core and temporary positions at both institutions (Phillips, 1993: 36, 51 & 83 and Louw, 1969: 303 - 307). However, UCT women academics (with the support of external women's groups) were able to secure the equalisation of salaries in the early twenties, the repeal of the marriage clause in the thirties, and the introduction of unpaid maternity leave in the thirties (Phillips, 1993: 142). Wits' women academics were not so fortunate and received stiff opposition from a conservative council that refused to equalise salaries in the twenties (eventually conceding in the thirties) and that only introduced the marriage clause during the twenties (Murray, 1982: 328).

Furthermore, the Ballinger incident illustrates the nature of sexism within the institution, when Miss Hodgson (later Ballinger) was passed over for a head of department position and later lost her job altogether, at the principal's unilateral decision, after learning of her

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marriage (Murray, 1982: 333). Furthermore, the Lecturers' Association proved ineffective in defending women academics' rights (Murray, 1982: 334).

In addition to this, five Jewish physicians resigned from Medical School when an external non-Jewish candidate was selected over internal Jewish candidates for the position of professor of medicine, in a move that was widely regarded as anti-Semitic (Murray, 1982: 318 – 319). Furthermore, the few black students that there were had particularly telling experiences of the institution as the following quote about UCT illustrates:

> 'a number [of Coloured and Indian students] accepted the hospitality of a "Coloured" laboratory attendant and had their lunch in the basement of the Zoology building "amidst skeletons and formalin" ' (Heneke in Phillips, 1993: 192).

Staff and students complained of an expectation of assimilation into both 'British' institutions and throughout the thirties, increased polarisation between English and Afrikaans people was evident, to such an extent that Malan (Minister of Education) threatened to intervene in the appointment of academics to ensure that the national policy of bilingualism was implemented (Phillips, 1993: 177 and Murray, 1982: 322).

Moreover, these institutions were thought to have lost an opportunity for reconciliation and nation building, as is evident from the following quote:

> "[Wits] lost the chance of becoming a common and generous meeting ground where the equal intercourse of eager youth could end the estrangements of the past and seek to dissolve the prejudices of race and colour" (de Kiewiet in Murray, 1982: 327).

Lastly, it is important to trace the relationship between government and these institutions. During this phase, UCT generally received government support (particularly from Smuts, who had helped UCT secure the Beit–bequest), whilst Wits felt continually snubbed by the government (Murray, 1982: 28 & 66), although, in fairness, neither institution was particularly liked by Malan. Legislated parallel salaries for men and women gave Wits an excuse not to change its own policies. Otherwise, universities had considerable

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freedom and autonomy. The government did, however, intervene to block the appointment of de Kiewiet at UCT, as he was considered a radical (Phillips, 1993:33).

As the above demonstrates, UCT and Wits did employ a segmented labour force in which the characteristics of white men were highly valued, whilst women and black people were undervalued and excluded from the well paying, high status, and power-laden jobs. Furthermore, the institutions battled to engage effectively with their policy of 'broad South Africanism'.

The 'open' universities: 1939 – 1956[2]

The concept of the 'open' university usually refers to student admissions at the English-speaking universities during apartheid, and their claim not to academically discriminate against students on the grounds of race. The policy of the 'open' universities was 'academic non-segregation but with social segregation' (Murray, 1997: 47)[3]. However, it is used here to trace the extent to which academic non-segregation can be said to apply to the issue of staffing, immediately prior to academic apartheid. The reason for this is to explore each institutions' own 'organic' modus operandi before the interference of exclusive and racialised government policy.

During this period, both institutions underwent considerable growth in academic staff numbers and significant change in the nationality of academic staff. During the first half of this period, the number of Scots at UCT fell by more than 12 percent, to merely 20 percent of the total professoriate (Phillips, 1993: 216). In addition, between 1945 and 1948, 57 percent of new professors were local candidates and academic staff in general increasingly held a local first degree (Phillips, 1993: 216). In 1948, the first South African principal was appointed at UCT (Phillips, 1993: 217 & 367). However, Phillips notes that although numerically on the decline, the so-called Scottish culture prevailed proving resistant to change (Phillips, 1993: 250).

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Positive change was also evident in the increasing number of black academic staff appointed. During the forties, both Wits and UCT employed several black academics. UCT employed two African graduates as demonstrators in 1940 and 1944 (Phillips, 1993: 271 & 390) and by 1946, the first African academic was appointed to a permanent position in Bantu languages (Phillips, 1993: 390). Wits also employed several black language assistants and laboratory assistants[4] during this period (Murray, 1982: 36 & 240 – 241).

What is interesting about all of these appointments is that they were either in Bantu languages (an area where, even under colonialism, black people would legitimately have a claim as specialists) or in laboratories (where they were less visible). Furthermore, in almost all cases, they were employed as assistants - where their employment did not challenge the predominant white racialised power structures of the time.

During this period, the number of women academics was variable. What is abundantly clear however, is that whilst both institutions experienced significant growth in the number of academics, there was by no means a proportional growth rate of women academics. At Wits, the growth rate for women was less than two women academics a year. In addition, many temporary women academics who had contributed to the war years bulge left once the war was over (Murray, 1997: 160 and Murray, 1982: 332) thereby confirming that at this stage, women were only used as a reserve army of labour. At UCT, women academics accounted for only 12 percent in 1948, indicating a drop of five percent since 1929 (Phillips, 1993: 141 & 389).

In 1952, the first woman professor was appointed at UCT, breaking the all male composition of senate (Phillips, 1993: 387), whilst at Wits, the first woman to sit on senate was a librarian, who was selected in 1954 in a very controversial and very close secret ballot (Murray, 1997: 164). At UCT, women had sat on council from the early days, however at Wits it was only in 1950 when the statute governing council's composition was changed, that a woman representative for convocation sat on council

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(Murray, 1997: 141). Also during this time, the first black person, a coloured government councillor sat on UCT's council (Phillips, 1993: 216).

It is interesting to note that the faculties of Arts, Science, and Medicine were the predominant employers of women academics at both institutions, and accordingly it was within these faculties that women attained their highest position for the time. It is of importance to acknowledge the advancement of both women and black academics, but to also note the very different levels of their glass ceilings.

The experiential dimension to women and black academics' story illuminates their marginality. At Wits, women continued to be employed on continuous temporary appointment as the institution refused to grant them permanent positions, thereby reinforcing their position as insignificant and insecure (Murray, 1997: 141). Women and black academics (see below) were often in possession of higher degrees but employed in junior academic positions. Not only were they unfairly suppressed, but white men were also catapulted via a barrage of powerful network connections. For instance, Wimple was appointed to the chair of accountancy at Wits in 1945 without himself having ever obtained any tertiary qualifications (Murray, 1997: 141).

During this period, the glass ceiling for women was that of senior lecturer, whilst black academics did not even reach the level of lecturer. Wits of the forties and fifties provides us with some of the most explicit forms of racial discrimination within academia, and the clear application of job reservation through the implementation of a colour bar. Vilakazi worked at Wits for 12 years as a language assistant, eventually gaining a DLitt. Despite this, a conservative member of council stalled the promotion committee's decision by questioning whether such an appointment could be made in a country with legalised colour bars. Unfortunately, Vilakazi died in 1947 before a final decision was taken (Murray, 1997: 239 - 240).

Mofokeng, who had a PhD, gained minimally more recognition and was appointed to senior language assistant but also died early in his career (Murray, 1997: 240). A third

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language assistant, Nyembezi, left Wits in 1954 for Fort Hare, where he was appointed as Professor of Bantu languages, a sign that he was also not adequately positioned at Wits (Murray, 1997: 241). This deliberate stalling of decisions and the lack of institutional willpower to take a positive stance on the employment of black staff in more senior positions, illustrates that the institution practiced job reservation. Since job reservation was never a formal government policy for academia, Wits was, as Shear has commented, clearly in advance of the government when it came to racially exclusive practices (Shear, 1996: 11).

However, having stated so, it is important to realise that Wits was not a homogenous institution. Since the institution lacked a set policy on black academic appointments and promotions, departments were forced to use their own discretion and criteria to approve or deny the appointment of junior black staff. For example, black students were ineligible for admission into certain departments (such as dentistry, logopedics, and mining). Black students were also ineligible to become demonstrators in zoology, whilst departments at Medical School did appoint black students to such positions (Murray, 1997:47 – 48 & 57). Furthermore, such appointments reveal some of the ironies in the policy of social segregation, for example: black students were not allowed to view white cadavers and yet it was black assistants who were employed to stitch and cover up all cadavers (Murray, 1997: 36).

Another interesting reflection is the act of solidarity exhibited by anatomy student demonstrators in 1944. They threatened to resign if the appointment of a black demonstrator, Conco, was reversed because of opposition to an African person demonstrating to white people (Murray, 1997: 36). The end result was that Conco remained, with the official specification that he was employed to demonstrate to black students only (Murray, 1997: 36). Again, this illustrates Wits' complacency and inability to take a firm stance against labour discrimination. During this time, women and black students (and staff) also experienced considerable racism and sexism from academics[5].

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In terms of the experience of other ethnic groups, although both institutions became increasingly South African, Afrikaans students felt increasingly marginalised and that the institutions had become Anti-Afrikaner. With the development of Afrikaans-medium universities, Afrikaans students (and possibly Afrikaans academics) increasingly moved to where they were politically and culturally welcome, and where English assimilation was not the order of the day (Phillips, 1993: 225).

In terms of where power was located within these institutions, there was little change from the previous period. Although both institutions modified the statutes of their councils and senates, power remained concentrated within the professoriate in senate, and particularly at Wits, council remained a "self-perpetuating oligarchy" (Murray, 1997: 5 - 6). The Wits' council employed non-consultative leadership by appointing senior staff, even professors and the principal, without consultating senate or in direct opposition to senate's recommendation (Murray, 1997: 5 - 7, 141, 150 – 151).

Lastly, with regard to their relationship with the government, these institutions began to act out of appeasement. Particularly after 1948, when institutions were dissuaded from accepting significant numbers of black students, pressurised to develop separate or parallel facilities for black students, and to enforce social segregation more rigorously (Murray, 1997: 37 - 46). Furthermore, government representatives on council were ardent nationalists tasked to oversee what the institutions were doing (Murray, 1997: 140). Whilst the institutions themselves did not take a progressive stance in terms of staffing or student admissions, individual staff members (and students) belonged to a wide variety of political persuasions, including the Labour Party, Liberal Party, Communist Party, Ossewabrandwag Afrikaner Broederbond, and the African National Congress (Murray, 1997).

Academic Apartheid: 1957 – 1975[6]

The apartheid government's intention to implement a racialised agenda in education was evident in 1953 with the policy of Bantu Education. This was extended to tertiary

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education with the Separate Universities Bill of 1957 and the Extension of University Education Act of 1959. These policies were a direct threat to universities' autonomy over the right to select whom to admit (Murray, 1997: 295). This government intervention led to widespread protests (between 1957 and 1959), which Murray describes as "corporate protests", including "council, senate, convocation, lecturers and students" (Murray, 1997: 298). It also led to the launch of the 'Open' Universities Campaign, in which the English-medium universities began a collective protest and action against the government (Murray, 1997: 307)[7].

Despite protest, the Extension of University Education Act was passed. This legislated the establishment of "separate ethnic university colleges for 'non-white' students and prohibited blacks from registering at the 'white' universities, except with ministerial permission" (Murray, 1997: 113)[8]. The following university colleges were in existence, or planned for, in 1960:

Table 1: Ethnic designation of the new university colleges in 1960

University College	**Designated group**
University College of the Western Cape	Coloured
University College of the North	Mainly Sotho
University College of Zululand	Zulu and Swazi
Fort Hare[9]	Xhosa
University College in Durban (planning)	Indian

(SAIRR, 1961: 228 – 229).

This act immediately began to infringe on academics of the new university colleges, as it gave the minister (of the relevant 'ethnic' affairs) the power to appoint and dismiss academic staff and senates (Murray, 1997: 292)[10]. For instance, eight academics at Fort Hare were dismissed and there was also one resignation (Murray, 1997: 320). There was, however, a lack of solidarity across the academic sector. A Wits' academic who had considered resigning in protest aptly summed up the apathy: "we would make headlines on one day and be forgotten the next" (Hirson in Murray, 1997: 320).

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Academic apartheid, once installed, evoked apathy from the majority of academics in 'white' universities, who failed to mount effective resistance (Taylor in Larsen, 2004: 58). In keeping with government policies of social segregation, legislation was passed in 1962 that required both professional and scientific organisations to give effect to the colour bar within their organisations (SAIRR, 1964: 78). This piece of legislation is important in that it sought to directly limit interaction between professionals, scientists, and academics on the grounds of race. The legislation was received with mixed response, on the one hand opposition, partly due to its social injustice and impracticality; and on the other hand was eagerly applied (SAIRR, 1964: 79).

Fort Hare and the newly created university colleges became the employers of emergent black academia. Although the 'open' universities employed a very limited number of black academics, their poor labour practices meant that the university colleges and Fort Hare became more favourable options for black academics. A survey in 1959 found that there were 19 African lecturers in South Africa (Vegter in SAIRR, 1961: 209). By 1969, there were 39 African academics employed within the African university colleges and an estimated national total of 74 black academics (SAIRR, 1970: 215)[11].

In the early years however, white academics at the university colleges were the vast majority, amounting to 78 percent in 1966 (SAIRR. 1967: 272). Even within these university colleges, employment practices were far from fair. Parallel salary scales existed for academics of different races, thereby entrenching racial discrimination within the workplace. For example, in 1969, black lecturers could earn between 48 and 68 percent of what a white lecturer could earn, whilst a black professor could only earn between 29 and 36 percent of what a white professor could earn (derived from SAIRR, 1970: 211)[12].

This discussion illustrates the nature and extent of academic apartheid. It served to concentrate black academics within 'black' universities, thereby enforcing the segmentation of the academic labour market. Black academics were not formally prevented from ascending the academic ladder within 'black' institutions. In fact, in

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1970, 21 percent of all black academics in black institutions were in senior posts: six professors and twelve senior lecturers (SAIRR, 1971: 244). However, the presence of parallel salary scales and the limited salary improvement between lecturer and professor were likely to have acted as a deterrent.

Academic apartheid at UCT and Wits

The discussion has centred on academic apartheid within the university colleges, as a means of fully appreciating the extent of academic apartheid. However, it is also crucial to examine how this period was experienced within 'white' institutions, particularly as these are the targets of this research.

The cumulative effect of over 30 years of institutional existence was clearly evident in the staff demographics. In 1959, both UCT and Wits' academic staff were 60 percent South African (Murray, 1997: 160). The proportion of women academics was on a slow but steady incline and at Wits, women academics amounted to 15 percent in 1959 (Murray, 1997: 160). Furthermore, Wits had finally promoted its first two women professors, in 1957 and 1972 respectively (Murray, 1997: 262). Women academics at Wits were finally deemed eligible for full-time, permanent status in 1966 (Murray, 1997: 160). However, procedural inequities continued to be evident. For example, Martienssen, the first woman professor, complained that the standard procedure of the deanship rotating amongst senior professors was abandoned in favour of an election, when it was her time to fill the position (Murray, 1997: 262).

Very little appeared to change with regard to race, particularly at Wits, where it was not until 1961 (26 years after the first black academic was employed) that Wits accorded the full status of lecturer to a black academic (Murray, 1997: 288). This clearly demonstrates that Wits' own procedural inequities contributed to black academics experience of academic apartheid and informally kept black academics away from Wits.

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UCT appears to have progressed a little more. In 1968, UCT offered the position of senior lecturer in social anthropology to Mr Mafeje (SAIRR, 1970: 220). However, the government intervened and forced the university to withdraw its offer, or face the introduction of job reservation legislation in academia. Despite protests internally and at other campuses (in support of Mafeje and the university's right to determine who they employ), the offer of employment at UCT was retracted (SAIRR, 1970: 220). At this juncture, UCT appears to demonstrate progressive intention in trying to hire Mafeje. However, in retracting the offer of employment, perhaps not enough was done.

During this period, other aspects of government paranoia and increasing anti-apartheid resistance also impacted upon academic staffing and university employment relations. The Suppression of Communism Act led to (at least) two senior academics, Professor Roux at Wits and Dr Hoffenburg at UCT, losing their posts as a result of banning orders (Shear, 1996: 38). Furthermore, students and staff were also detained for acts of sabotage. Wits, again, demonstrated its fear of the government by firing two academics implicated in acts of sabotage, one before his trial and the other who was never tried (Murray, 1997: 326). Lastly, Murray also explains how the 'brain drain' had begun to significantly impact upon academic staff at the 'white' universities.

The period of academic apartheid definitely structured and bifurcated the academic labour market according to race. This was both reinforced by apartheid legislation and by institutional practice, particularly at Wits. However, the period is also characterised by continuities such as the academic staff increasingly becoming South African, increasing numbers of women academics being employed, and minimal numbers of women and black academics breaking through the glass ceiling. Furthermore, serious critical engagement with social issues and the apartheid government remained the project of the few, within these institutions.

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Anti-apartheid Struggle: 1976 –1989

By 1976, there had been what Taylor describes as a 'radicalisation of academics' with increasing pressure for the open universities to reopen their admissions to black students (Taylor in Larsen, 2004: 58 & SAIRR, 1977: 367). 1976 was a pivotal year in terms of staffing at 'black' universities. The number of African academics had steadily grown to 23 percent of all academic staff at 'black' universities, which included nine professors and 14 senior lecturers (SAIRR, 1977: 367).

A wave of protests, particularly at the University of the North, led to the 'Africanising' of academic and executive posts, increased representation for black people on governing bodies, the abolition of parallel salary scales, and the de-ethnicisation of the 'black' universities (SAIRR, 1977: 371). This represents the first substantial and effective challenge to the racial exclusivity of universities, as both centres of learning and as employers. Furthermore, the Ford Foundation also set up a Black Universities Fellowship Programme enabling academics at 'black' universities to study in Europe or the United States (SAIRR, 1977: 378).

Universities nationwide began to strengthen their support of the anti-apartheid struggle. Student activism and the increasing presence of police and police spies forced the 'white' universities to become more political in their everyday business.

Universities (especially UCT and Wits) had always relied on being able to compete in the global academic labour market. During the seventies however, it became increasingly difficult to employ foreign academics because of government paranoia over the 'threat of communism' (Bozzoli, 1997: 213). Bozzoli explains how communism, Roman Catholicism, atheism, and even being divorced, arose suspicion and could lead to the denial of a work permit to potential foreign academics (Bozzoli, 1997: 213 – 214).

During the eighties, apartheid labour legislation began to be repealed. In 1981, minimum wage had been equalised and formal wage discrimination on the grounds of gender had

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been made illegal (SAIRR, 1984: 124). Furthermore, in 1983, job reservation was also outlawed (SAIRR, 1984: 132). Whilst UCT and Wits did not have these as explicit policies (gender inequality policies had been repealed almost 20 years prior at Wits and 50 to 60 years earlier at UCT), their practice illustrated the presence of informal colour and gender bars, and discriminatory labour relations . Thus, their functioning clearly reflected the norms and values of the times. It is interesting, therefore, to explore whether the dismantling of apartheid labour legislation impacted on universities' employment practice.

Anti-apartheid struggle at UCT and Wits

The eighties represents a period of increased 'openness' in these universities' employment of both black and women academics in particular. From 1983 to 1988, the percentage of women academics at UCT rose substantially, from 18 to 27 percent (Mabokela, 2000: 122). At Wits, the proportion of women professors in senate had grown from two to seven percent, and in 1986, women accounted for 24 percent of all academics at Wits (Bethlehem, 1993: 215). This reflects significant change in universities' employment policies and practice, at least in terms of hiring.

In 1983, there were 676 Black academics nationwide (a total of seven percent), consisting of 94 Coloured academics, 268 Indian academics, and 314 African academics (SAIRR, 1984: 460)[13]. However, the proportion of black academics at all the 'white' universities was much lower. Collectively, black academics amounted to 178 members, or just under 2.5 percent, and individually there were only 13 Coloured academics, 123 Indian academics and 42 African academics (SAIRR, 1984: 460). Of this total, UCT only employed five African, eight Coloured and six Indian academics, together representing just over 3.59 percent of UCT's total academic staff (Mabokela, 2000: 120).

By 1987, there had been considerable growth in the number of black academics, and national academic statistics were as follows: 90.9 percent White, 4.6 percent African, 2.7 percent Indian, and 1.8 percent Coloured (Moulder, 1991: 113). However, the former

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'open universities' had failed to keep apace with this change as their academic staff were still more than 95 percent White (Mabokela, 2000: 120). None-the-less, some change was occurring, albeit at a slow pace.

In the eighties, the anti-apartheid struggle greatly intensified, with many campuses becoming political hotbeds. The government proposed racial quotas in 1983, as a way to curtail the increasing numbers of black students. However, quotas were severely rejected by institutions, and as a result were not implemented (SAIRR, 1984: 462 - 463). The government continued to use the threat of funding cuts to force universities into line, and hence their relationship with the government remained effectively strained (Shear, 1996: 54). University officials took an increasingly active role in opposing academic apartheid. For example, in his minority report of the van Wyk de Vries Commission, Bozzoli stressed the importance of a university's freedom to select students, staff, and academic works – all of which had been curtailed by academic apartheid. However, these points were not recognised by the majority report (Shear, 1996: 56).

During the late eighties, Wits and UCT reaffirmed their opposition to state interference, the erosion of their autonomy, discrimination, and social injustice (Johnson, 2005: 89 - 90). However, criticism about university policy and practice with regard to staff, students, and the wider community, became increasingly vocal (Johnson, 2005: 90 – 92). Students lent their support to the academic boycott by protesting vigourously against the speaking of both foreign academic O'Brien at UCT and Wits, and political candidate Suzman at Wits (Shear, 1996: 105 – 108).

Along with the intensification of the anti-apartheid struggle, there were an increasing number of arrests and detentions of university students and staff. Universities offered both academic and legal support to detainees (Shear, 1996: 217), two of whom were Wits SRC leader Chris Ngcobo and Wits academic Raymond Suttner, who were both held for more that two years without trial (Shear, 1996: 217). In 1989, Wits academic David Webster was amongst those assassinated by the apartheid machinery (Shear, 1996: 246).

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As change was on the horizon, university executives increasingly met with African National Congress (ANC) officials to discuss the future and to shape an agenda for university transformation. Along with key student issues, academic staff transformation (in terms of both equity and institutional culture) was planted firmly on the agenda (Shear, 1996: 229). Universities began to think more seriously about staff equity and programmatic responses began to emerge. In 1987, Wits instituted its first programme to increase the number of black academics. Larsen (2005) reports that in its twelve years of existence, the Equal Opportunity Fund afforded 40 black graduates junior academic positions (Larsen, 2005: 77).

In terms of academic staffing, this period was characterised by the increased employment of both women and black academics. Women academics exceeded the 20 percent mark, whilst black academics remained statistically very low, at below five percent. Under the leadership of vice chancellors Stuart Saunders (UCT) and Karl Tober (Wits) amongst others, these universities began to play an active role in the transformation of their universities by meeting with the ANC to determine the future role of universities in South Africa's post-apartheid transformation.

Consolidated institutional change: 1990 – present?

The nineties represented a period of consolidated institutional change[14], as institutional focus shifted from state opposition to internal adjustment and modification (Johnson, 2004: 87). Governance (including representation and responsiveness), participation (including equity), and finances became the driving forces of change during this period.

Governance was a key issue involving the modification of institutions' statutes, mission statements, composition of council, and team-based leadership through senior executive teams (Johnson, 2004: 98 –117)[15]. Staff associations such as the Black Staff Forum (Wits), the Black Staff Association (UCT), and the National Education and Health Workers Union (NEHAWU) played a pivotal role in the transformation debate through necessary critique, in addition to working on/with structures such as the Forum for

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Further Accelerated Comprehensive Transformation (FFACT at Wits), Wits Transformation Front, and the University Transformation Forum (UCT). This gave black academics, students, and employees in general an opportunity to be recognised as stakeholders, and to actively participate in institutional change (SAS, 1997: 233 & 237). However, criticism over the nature and extent of power sharing has been raised (Johnson, 2005: 104).

Other significant changes in terms of raising the profile of transformation were the establishment of a Deputy Vice Chancellor portfolio for Transformation and Equity (Wits and later also UCT) and the Equal Opportunity Portfolio (UCT). In addition, Affirmative Action (and then Transformation and Employment Equity) officers were appointed, who were responsible for driving transformation and later, conducting equity audits, developing equity plans, and managing both equity and transformation (as these became part of the state's directive[16]).

Although this general overview characterises the whole period, it is important to note three points of differentiation: the early, mid, and late nineties. The early nineties are characterised by a boldness of approach which echoed the radical rhetoric of the time. For example, the Mission Statement Group at Wits in 1993 declared:

> "Wits must be a *vigorous affirmative action employer*. Its policies for the *recruitment, development and promotion* of its staff must be adjusted and managed in pursuit of *demonstrable progress* in redressing racial and gender imbalances without compromising standards" (Mission Statement Group quoted in Shear, 1996: 280, emphasis mine).

However, by the mid-nineties, it became apparent that this institutional speak did not accord with institutional practice. Although Wits and UCT began to hire black staff in increasing numbers, and although the number of African academics took a considerable upswing[17] (relative to Coloured and Indian academics), the total number of black academics remained low – collectively comprising less than ten percent of all UCT academics (Mabokela, 2000: 121). Furthermore, internal contestation over the meaning of transformation and allegations of racism within the academic sector reached a public

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audience. The Makgoba Affair (Wits) and the Mamdani Incident (UCT) proved to be critical junctures in the institutions' ability to transform.

The Makgoba Affair consisted of allegations by 13 senior academics (including eight deans) that Professor Makgoba, then one of the deputy vice chancellors (DVC), had falsified his CV. This sparked counter-allegations and effectively polarised the Wits community into what were seen as 'white' and 'black' interests (Webster in Makgoba, 1997: 69). Due to the public nature and volatility of the situation that had developed at Wits, the Minister of Education, Bengu, intervened (Makgoba, 1997: 126). An independent commission of inquiry subsequently cleared Makgoba. None-the-less, Makgoba did not remain in the position of DVC and Wits remained scarred by its experience (Johnson, 2005: 106 –111 & Makgoba, 1997). Johnson describes how the Makgoba Affair was interpreted as racial conflict, conflict over succession, conflict over transformation ideologies, and adds that it was ultimately a conflict over whether Wits would be transformed or not (Johnson, 2005: 107 & 110).

The Mamdani Incident called into question UCT's understanding and practice of transformation. Essentially it was based on curriculum review - how UCT's Mission Statement (which prioritises UCT as a university both in and of Africa) should be translated into how 'Africa' is taught to students, and the role of African Studies in post-apartheid South Africa (Mamdani, 1996 and Muller, 1998). However, the implications of this debate and the assumptions that were articulated raised further questions about the institution's view of transformation[18].

In addition to conflict over the meaning of transformation, increased criticism was raised about the stagnant or slow pace of transformation of academic demographics. The proportion of women academics at both institutions stagnated, with some backward slippage at UCT, and the proportion of senior women academics at Wits remained static (Mabokela, 2000: 121 & 122 and Bethlehem, 1993: 215). In addition, black academics remained at below ten percent (Mabokela, 2000: 121)[19]. Furthermore, the 'revolving-door syndrome' and 'glass ceiling' became popular speak, as the institutions' junior ranks

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began to swell with, white women, and black academics left almost as quickly as they had arrived. At Wits this was most notable in 1997/1998 when the institution experienced a huge loss of staff:

> "six hundred staff members left Wits between May last year and April this year. Two hundred of them are black employees, the majority of whom are academics" (See appendix B).

By the late nineties, institutional rhetoric had become somewhat watered down, with institutions focusing more on 'actual deliverables' as opposed to 'grand but unattainable claims'. Johnson (2005) explains that at Wits, the appointment of Bundy shifted the focus from transformation per se (after the Makgoba Affair) to restructuring, but with concrete effects that were not seen in earlier periods (Johnson, 2005: 120 –121). As a result, the late nineties witnessed the translation of transformation-speak into actual policy, and then practice, with the emergence of both equity plans and equity staff programmes (that were largely donor-funded by sponsors such as Mellon and Atlantic Philanthropies).

By the early 2000s, significant change was noticeable in academic staff demographics, with women academics surpassing the 40 percent mark and black academics surpassing the 20 percent mark[20]. The nineties and early 2000s also witnessed a change at the helm of these institutions, with the emergence of senior executive teams, increasingly staffed by black and women academics/executives. At UCT, the position of vice chancellor was filled by Mamphela Ramphele (the first black woman to hold such a position nationally) in 1996, and afterwards would be filled for three consecutive terms by Njabulo Ndebele.

Senior executive appointments had always been skilled, influential people with political connections, and this continued with the appointment of Mamphela Ramphele to vice chancellor[21] (UCT), Graça Machel to chancellor (UCT), Makaziwe Mandela to affirmative action officer (Wits), and the selection of Sam Nolutshungu as vice chancellor (Wits). Compared to UCT, Wits experienced a much slower and tumultuous path to its first black vice chancellor. After Robert Charlton's retirement, Sam Nolutshungu was selected as Wits' first black vice chancellor, but terminal ill health prevented him from taking up the position. Rather than choosing one of the other short-

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listed candidates, which included other black candidates, Wits opted for a second round of selection from which Colin Bundy emerged as the vice chancellor. Upon Bundy's departure, black women candidates were sidestepped in favour of Norma Reid-Birley (an English woman), who then also left the institution in a very public and controversial episode. Some stability to the leadership crisis finally came with the appointment of Loyiso Nongxa in 2003[22].

In the late nineties, considerable developments in national legislation would impact upon academic staff transformation. The most relevant pieces of legislation in terms of UCT and Wits are the: Education White Paper 3 (1997), Higher Education Act (1997), Employment Equity Act (1998), and the Skills Development Act (1998)[23]. These sought to undo the segmentation of the academic labour market on the grounds of race, gender, and disability. In addition, they would require the development, implementation, and monitoring of academic staff transformation. Most of the changes discussed above, particularly in relation to governance and the increased status of employment equity, are a direct result of this legislation.

In summary, the nineties was a period of consolidated institutional change during which the fundamental structures of governance of universities changed. Governance was altered through the modification of statutes, mission statements, council, and the opening up of official spaces through which institutional power could be challenged, as well as through restructuring for financial and efficiency purposes. Furthermore, equity became an institutional priority through government directive with the establishment of institutional forums, equity officers, equity plans, and the transformation of the very top echelons of the institutions[24].

Chapter Summary

This historical comparison of UCT and Wits, and their institutional practice of academic staffing, illustrates that there are many similarities between the institutions, including their academic staff demographics, policies, procedures, institutional culture, and the role

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of government intervention. However, there have also been important differences, such as the extent to which governing bodies have been dictatorial about institutional functioning, and the extent to which each institution has maintained exclusivity and practiced discrimination and procedural inequity within its academic staff.

At each historical juncture there has been a particular institutional ideology around race and racialised interaction. The early institutional practice and the 'open' university years were characterised by a need to 'encapsulate broad South Africanism'. In practice, this meant increasing inclusivity for English, Afrikaans, and Jewish populations, but with racial exclusivity for white people. During academic apartheid, the institutions strove for minimal racial inclusivity, operating within the narrow confines of national legislation by promoting what they described as 'academic non-segregation and social segregation'. Towards the end of this period, institutions began to challenge the segmented academic labour market, as with UCT's offer of senior employment to Mafeje.

However, it was really only during the anti-apartheid period that academic staff transformation was actually put on the agenda and that fair progress began to be made. With transformation driven by the national government and specific institutional directives aimed toward academic staff transformation, the nineties and 2000s are periods of consolidated institutional change. Significant changes to governance, the development of equity policies and programmes, and significant progress in academic staff demographic change was made. However, this process has not been without resistance, contestation, and opposition. Chapters five, six, and seven will explore the nature and extent of academic staff transformation in the contemporary period.

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Chapter Two Endnotes

[1] The 'Upper Ten' consists of: Principal, Chairman of Council, Chairman of the Finance Committee, Senate representatives on Council, and Registrar (Phillips, 1993: 217).

[2] The dating of this period differs slightly to Murray's, as the implementation of segregationist legislation is taken as signalling the beginning of academic apartheid when UCT and Wits, despite their efforts, can no longer be taken as being 'open'.

[3] Historical accounts show that the universities, despite their reticience, were actually encouraged by the government to take on black students during World War II, and nervously watched numbers of black students rise throughout the forties and fifties. However, once academic apartheid loomed the institutions took on a more genuine interest in the admission of black students (Murray, 1997: 27 - 47).

[4] The experience of these black academics is detailed later in the chapter.

[5] For example: white academics refusing to share cups and towels with black staff and students, men academics describing (women) physiotherapists and occupational therapists as the "slap and tickle girls" or the "basket and bunny girls", and men academics asking their women students "why don't you go away and get married and have some babies?" (Murray, 1997: 220 & 246). See Murray (1997) and Shear (1996) for more.

[6] Beale notes that the first phase of academic apartheid began during the late forties with a less ideologically driven intention (Beale in Murray, 1997: 295). However, 1957 was chosen as the relevant date here, given that this was when academic apartheid legislation was being tabled and that this legislation would directly impact on academic staff. Furthermore, the mass resistance of 1976 indicates that a new historical phase was then underway.

[7] Although this was ostensibly an anti-apartheid campaign, it was more about university autonomy than university freedom and anti-discrimination (See Murray, 1997: 295).

[8] 'White' universities were already divided into English or Afrikaans-medium institutions and future 'white' institutions would also follow this trend.

[9] Fort Hare had already been long in existence (connected to Rhodes) but the new legislation sought to mould it into an ethnic university college

[10] This discussion explores key events nationally, as this period is crucial to academic staffing.

[11] This is an under estimate as the SAIRR does not report on the number of black academics at 'white' institutions.

[12] The amount varied according to the black academics designated racial category.

[13] Statistics do not include UNISA.

[14] I have deliberately named this period a time of 'change' to capture the extensive range of changes embarked on by institutions, without giving the illusion that these were all transformative, either in intention or effect.

[15] Although concrete results of these changes only appeared in the late nineties, their roots can be traced to the early nineties – hence this periodisation.

[16] Government directive and the post-apartheid legislative context is discussed below.

[17] The number of black academics at UCT increased three-fold from 19 to 62 between 1983 and 1995, whilst the number of African academics rose from 5 to 31 (Mabokela, 2000: 121). Also see appendix B for further details.

[18] See: Social Dynamics, Vol. 22, No. 2 and Social Dynamics, Vol.24, No.2 for more on the Mamdani Incident.

[19] See appendix B for a more thorough illustration of the race and gender composition of academic staff.

[20] See Appendix B for a comparison of race and gender growth rates.

[21] Ramphele was an academic in social anthropology, holding the post of Equal Opportunity Policy Portfolio and Deputy Vice Chancellor, before succeeding Saunders as Vice Chancellor.

[22] Recollections of recent history from interviews and discussions with Supervisor.

[23] These pieces of legislation are discussed more fully in chapter three.

[24] Contemporary academic demographics and institutional responses are discussed in chapters five and six.

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