

**The Influence of Early Apartheid Intellectualisation
on Twentieth-Century Afrikaans Music
Historiography**

by

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Declaration

By submitting this dissertation electronically, I declare that the entirety of the work contained therein is my own, original work, that I am the owner of the copyright thereof (unless to the extent explicitly otherwise stated) and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it for obtaining any qualification.

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I have come to the end of one road and the beginning of another. As I pause at the juncture of these two roads, I reflect with an immense sense of gratitude on the past two years of my life. So many individuals have played decisive roles, not only in the research that constitutes this thesis, but also in the fostering of my intellectual development, ethical sensibilities and spiritual well-being. In many different ways, each of these individuals and their views matter and have become important to me. While I am sure that the work presented here is imperfect in many ways, the generous contributions of those who accompanied me on this road have made it better than it would have been without them.

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Abstract

This thesis attempts to understand questions of our past in the present. It is broadly premised on the assumption of complicity as an interpretive frame in which the relationship between Apartheid intellectualisation and Afrikaans music historiography can be elucidated. Its protagonists are Gerrie Eloff, Geoffrey Cronjé, H.F. Verwoerd, Piet Meyer, Jan Bouws, Rosa Nepgen and Jacques Philip Malan. In each of the four chapters, I attempt to construct metaphors, points of intersection or articulation between Apartheid intellectualisation and Afrikaans music historiography. Music is never entirely absent: for Apartheid ideologues such as Geoffrey Cronjé and Gerrie Eloff musical metaphors become ways of enunciating racial theories, for the Dutch musicologist Jan Bouws music provides entry into South Africa and its discourses, for J.P. Malan music becomes a conduit that could facilitate national goals and for Rosa Nepgen music constitutes the perfect domain for and the gestating impulse of her own often ornate national devotions. Some of the themes addressed in this thesis include the language and metaphors of Apartheid intellectualisation, discourses of paranoia, struggle, purity, contamination, the 'Afrikanermoeder' ('Afrikaner mother'), the cultural language of Afrikaner nationalism and the reciprocity between cultural fecundity and dominance of the land. The final denouement comprises a positing of the Afrikaans art song 'O Boereplaas' and the singing soprano Afrikanermoeder who emerges as the keeper of Afrikaner blood purity, guardian of her race and prophet of its fate and future.

Opsomming

Hierdie tesis probeer om vrae uit ons verlede in die hede te verstaan. Die aanname van komplisiteit verskaf 'n premis en interpreterende raamwerk waarbinne die verhouding tussen Apartheid-intellektualisering en Afrikaanse musiekhistoriografie belig kan word. Die protagoniste van hierdie tesis is Gerrie Eloff, Geoffrey Cronjé, H.F. Verwoerd, Piet Meyer, Jan Bouws, Rosa Nepgen en Jacques Philip Malan. In elk van die vier hoofstukke poog ek om metafore, punte van kruising of artikulasie tussen Apartheid-intellektualisering en Afrikaanse musiekhistoriografie te konstrueer. Musiek word nooit buite rekening gelaat nie: vir Apartheid-ideoloë soos Geoffrey Cronjé en Gerrie Eloff word musikale metafore maniere hoe teorieë oor ras geformuleer kan word, vir die Nederlandse musikoloog Jan Bouws verleen musiek toegang tot Suid-Afrikaanse kulturele diskoerse, vir J.P. Malan word musiek 'n kanaal waardeur nasionale doelstellings vloei en vir Rosa Nepgen verteenwoordig musiek die ideale omgewing en teelaarde vir haar eie en gereeld oordadige nasionale lofuiting. Sommige van die temas wat in hierdie tesis aangespreek word sluit in die taal en metafore van Apartheid intellektualisering, diskoerse van paranoia, stryd, suiwerheid, kontaminasie, die Afrikanermoeder, die kulturele taal van Afrikanernasionalisme en die wederkerigheid tussen kulturele oplewing en oorheersing van Suid-Afrika. Die tesis word tot slot gevoer deur 'n besinning oor die Afrikaanse kunslied 'O Boereplaas' en die singende sopraan, die Afrikanermoeder, wat na vore tree as die bewaarder van Afrikaner-bloedsuiwerheid, oppasser van haar ras en die profetes van die volk se lot en toekoms.

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Introduction

[I] listen to Themba and scan the room again. I see that I had missed an important detail.

Themba's bags are packed. Next to the bed, ready for travel, are two suitcases and three plastic packets. He watches as I make a note.

'I'm threatened, I'm not settled,' he says. I write down these words. I stare at them on the page. In the last ten months there have been a few moments like this. Since April 16th 2006, when Richard was abducted by a group of men from the Cape Flats and shot in the back of the head, there has been something new and uncomfortable about the way I live in my country. Sometimes it takes a sentence, a small thing somebody else says, to explain to me what's different (Bloom, 2009: 7).

Meshed in this non-fictional account are various elements of what historian R. W. Johnson called *South Africa's Brave New World*.¹ Themba Jacky Koketi is a citified South African with a rural upbringing. He is in his twenties and lives in a room in an old carpet factory in Johannesburg. Water, electricity and proper sanitation are not part of his residential luxuries. Themba, without any of the social and economic securities taken for granted by South Africa's privileged classes (still mostly white South Africans), has completed a degree in arts with a major in psychology at the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits), afterwards going on to two honours degrees in psychology and social work respectively. This remarkable achievement makes of Themba an exemplar of success in the brave new South Africa that came into being after the formal abrogation of Apartheid. Yet he is threatened. The reason for his unsettledness (it seems that his bags are always packed) is recorded one page earlier in the chapter:

Last Monday, says Themba, there was a police raid. It was four o'clock in the morning and he was woken by shouts and banging. He went outside and found the residents kneeling on the pavement in rows. He was ordered by a large policeman to join them, and so the broken glass cut into his knees too. The policemen demanded identity books. A man with no documents was pushed into the back of a van. Two men who tried to run were shot with rubber bullets. The senior superintendent, an Afrikaner with close-cropped hair, called everyone a bastard. He stood on the pavement and shouted, 'You fucking bastards! You're all fucking bastards!' (2009: 6).

¹ Johnson called his book *South Africa's Brave New World*. Published in 2009, the book was received with ambivalence. It details a long litany of infrastructural collapse, corruption, and compromised legislative, policing and social institutions, chiefly during the presidency of Thabo Mbeki.

This event as narrated by Themba is more at home in the reportage of Antjie Krog on the proceedings of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission or Rian Malan's confessions of a treacherous heart. But this particular incident originates from another, more recent, source. It is a description of the present reality of Themba and South Africa and is documented in Kevin Bloom's *Ways of Staying*, published in 2009. After reading Themba's account of that brutal Monday morning, I was reminded of a remark by the writer Christopher Hope: 'It is always yesterday in South Africa' (Johnson, 2009: 314).

Reflecting on the conduct of the Afrikaner superintendent and also the remark of Hope, it is clear that 'post-Apartheid', just like 'postcolonial', can denote a double meaning.² South Africa is post-Apartheid while still infused with many corollaries of its practice. While Themba's account of the raid signifies the South Africa where it is always yesterday, another South Africa is also invoked in the opening quotation. The first-person narrator is Kevin Bloom. He is also threatened and unsettled just like Themba. But he is white and English. His fear is clothed in tragedy, one that is not unusual for South Africa: his cousin, Richard Bloom, was murdered in the Cape by gangsters. It was murder without any motivation, bloodshed simply for the sake of shedding blood. In the aftermath of this tragedy, Kevin Bloom is looking for ways of staying in South Africa, and hence the title of his book, *Ways of Staying*. To the paradigm drawn in this introduction still needs to be added the effects of HIV/AIDS in South Africa, rising unemployment coupled with ever diminishing skills, visceral applications of policies such as BEE (Black Economic Empowerment) and land distribution, the global economic meltdown, and the collapse of neighbouring Zimbabwe amplified by the dubious 'quiet diplomacy' of former President Thabo Mbeki. And this list is by no means exhaustive. Indeed, the fabric of the 'rainbow' has come apart and chaos is often ineluctable. For many, the choice of staying in this brave new South Africa is an unstable balancing act between a moral and heartfelt commitment to a beloved country, and fear of a demoralising and bloody future.

Considering this background, writing a thesis in 2009 on the relationship between Afrikaans music historiography and Apartheid intellectualisation might appear

² The double meaning implied is similar to the double meaning of postcolonialism, discussed by Vijay Mishra and Bob Hodges. For this discussion see the chapter by Mishra and Hodges, 'What is Post(-)colonialism?' in *Colonial Discourse and Post-colonial Theory*, 1993.

disturbingly trivial an undertaking. In many ways I share this concern. To be sure, this thesis cannot directly address any of the dire circumstances pointed out in the previous paragraphs. Yet I would maintain that its scholarly and civic importance lies elsewhere. A starting point to unravelling the avenues of contribution and reconciliation locked up in music practice and musicology is given in the following question: 'How do we hear one another in a country where the past is still so present?' (Krog et al, 2009: 42).³ Music performance and research could attempt productive responses to this question. Narratives and voices of the past are re-imagined through scholarly endeavours that could continue to shape the past in the present. Such narratives cannot be rewritten so as to place uncomfortable truths under erasure in the current South Africa. Critical vigilance remain important if we are not to succumb to new ideologies. But the efforts of musicians and researchers will be futile if they isolate the past from the present. Recognising complicit voices, or closer to the project at hand, the traces of Apartheid intellectualisation in Afrikaans music historiography, can only ever be the point of origin for understanding and engagement (perhaps even reconciliation) in the present South Africa. As Mark Sanders has demonstrated in his work on the intellectual and Apartheid, responsibility requires a motivated acknowledgement of complicity (Sanders, 2002: 8). This is no less true of the past than of the present. I would argue that the recognition of present complicity and responsibility can only happen after a motivated account of past complicities.

The research that culminated in this thesis represents the first efforts of a young musicologist to understand and unveil complicity amongst Afrikaner intellectuals and serious music in ways that veer from the established currencies of current musicological discourse in South Africa. In chapter two I show how current musicological discourse has often reverted to monetary markers to prove excessive government support for art music. This approach is avoided here for at least two reasons. First, it has been employed (mostly only in passing) by a number of musicologists. Restating that case here would be somewhat obsolescent. But more important still, gaining an understanding of the relationship between art music and

³ This question was appropriately echoed by the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Stellenbosch on the occasion of the transfer of the EOAN Archive to the Documentation Centre for Music (DOMUS). The presentation of the archive and the related scholarly projects constitute an important example of one of the ways in which musicology could contribute to an ongoing conversation about our shared past in a manner that engages with the divides of that past.

Apartheid requires a methodological approach that allows for complexity and various degrees of complicity. It is in this regard that the probing of an *intellectual* economy between Afrikaans music historiography and Apartheid intellectualisation emerges as a useful strategy. The work offered here also constitutes the attempts of the present writer to find a critical, yet constructive scholarly voice in a discourse that is still largely hampered by the racial and class prejudices of the past. The question that engages me is not only how we hear our past in the present, but how we write about that past in the present. There has been an ongoing negotiation between the past and the present and between various registers of writing about the past in the present while I researched and wrote about Afrikaans music historiography and Apartheid intellectualisation. Yet the conundrum remains unsolved. W. G. Sebald has opened up a register that allows us to re-construct narratives of an atrocious past on a canvas that also portrays the mundane peripheries of society. By evoking the familiar in shared human experiences, Sebald creates a space where the reader could experience empathy for the humanity of inhumaneness. Like Sebald, I am probing remote and often personally discomfoting places for seemingly insignificant details that open up huge swathes of historical understanding into our present. R.W. Johnson sounds a timely warning against another, different kind of narrative construction:

Thus history can be constantly revised in the light of community pressure or political convenience. But this is a cul-de-sac — and imaginary history is a dangerous thing. It always has its political purposes, typically purposes that cannot be supported by reason (Johnson, 2009: 578).

Much of present-day writing on South Africa follow the route described by Johnson. Community pressures and political convenience weigh heavily in South African discourses and writing that deviates from the imperatives thus imposed, risk politically-inspired paroxysms. The mode of writing applied in the current thesis heeds Johnson's timely warning of imagined histories while it also draws on the work of Sebald as a model for probing uncomfortable and seemingly trivial spaces. It is my wish that this thesis will be admittent of my own shortcomings, ideologies and assumptions as I recognise both the importance to write about the past and my inability to offer an objective meta-narrative. Like so many others, this project is compromised by personal preferences, reckonings with my own past and a means to find ways of staying in our brave new world.

In the first chapter, Apartheid intellectualisation will be the main focus. After a cursory glance at Afrikaner history in the opening decades of the twentieth century, three developmental stages of Apartheid theorised by N.J. Rhoodie and H.J. Venter will be pointed out. It will be followed by a more extensive reading of specific texts written by Gerrie Eloff, Geoffrey Cronjé, Hendrik Verwoerd and Piet Meyer. Drawing on W.A. de Klerk, I argue that these writers exemplify an Afrikaner intellectual elite instrumental in paving the way to the 1948 triumph of the National Party in South Africa and the subsequent instalment of statutory Apartheid. Throughout this chapter, I highlight the way in which these authors drew on metaphoric meanings of music to elaborate and explain their shared ideology. Although Gerrie Eloff's articles and single book predate those of Geoffrey Cronjé, they share common topoi and terminology. Both authors protested at length and with obsessive detail against the so-called mixing of the races. Both introduced musical concepts or metaphors in their discourses. Eloff often wrote of the 'disharmony' resulting from miscegenation, while Cronjé was interested in the 'otherness' of the Bantu as exemplified in his (sic) preferences for certain 'pacifying' rhythms. The 'Afrikanermoeder' is also an important symbolic figure in the writings of Cronjé and she emerges again in the final chapter of this thesis. H.F. Verwoerd was at the helm of *Die Transvaler* in the critical decade leading up to 1948. His incessant propaganda in favour of Afrikaner nationalism and an Afrikaner republic did much to influence his fellow Afrikaners. I show how his writings are infused with a fear of 'Englishness' often denoted by snide anti-British sentiments. For Verwoerd there was only one desirable outcome for Afrikaner nationalism: the severance of all imperial ties and an independent Afrikaner republic of which he would be the stellar ruler. Verwoerd became the chief preacher and early martyr of his own republican dream when he was assassinated in front of the first republican parliament in 1966. Finally I turn to the writings of Piet Meyer. Meyer operated in the productive interstice between politics and Afrikaner culture. He was a personal friend of Verwoerd and B.J. Vorster (Verwoerd's successor) while he occupied important positions in the Broederbond, the FAK (Federation of Afrikaans Cultural Organisations) and the South African Broadcasting Corporation. His writings, if anything, mirror these diverse roles and positions. I demonstrate how Meyer often revised his ideas on Afrikaner origins to fit particular purposes, while I include a discussion of his ideas on language, in particular Afrikaans, and on art and the role of the artist in the community.

Against the background of Apartheid intellectualisation in the first chapter, the second chapter centres on Afrikaans music historiography. The chapter opens with an exploration of Afrikaner culture and its ability/inability to seek amnesty for its endorsement of Apartheid and its promotion of Apartheid policies. Drawing on the work of Mark Sanders, I suggest that a constructive engagement with Afrikaner culture in the past and its request for amnesty in the present could be found in positing degrees of complicity. To understand complicities of Afrikaans intellectuals (both musicologists and Apartheid ideologues), I focus my readings on an intellectual economy that existed between Afrikaans music historiography and Apartheid intellectualisation. Before turning to the writings of Jan Bouws, I draw on an article by Stefans Grové to delineate a particular topos that was invariably shared by almost every scribe of Afrikaans music historiography: the search for a national music idiom. I also point out how Grové's predilections for the type of programmes featured at so-called 'volksfeeste' differed from those of Piet Meyer presented in the previous chapter. Against the background of an ever-present search for national music, and with the intention to uncover traces of Apartheid intellectualisation, I read certain writings by Jan Bouws in three sections, derived from the ways Bouws constructs historical narratives. First, he casts his narratives around Afrikaner cultural monuments such as Dutch settlement at the Cape, the Groot Trek and the Second Afrikaans language movement. His early discourse carries undertones of Apartheid thinking, not so much in the texts themselves as in their silences and omissions. I attempt to show how national symbols such as the veld, soil and land are present both in the Afrikaans art song and in the writings of Bouws. A second manner in which Bouws organises historical narratives is to deploy composers or musicians as important markers of particular narratives. Here I point out how J.S. de Villiers is imagined in ways that remind of the typical nineteenth-century Afrikaner who travels the outstretched land on horseback. In a reading of a chapter on folk music, I draw on Benedict Anderson to state a case for specific racial metaphors and meanings when Bouws writes about Afrikaans folk songs. In a later chapter, Bouws explores the possibilities of folk music as germinal to national music. In my subsequent reading I show how 'national music', just like the notion of 'natural Apartheid', remained an unattained Afrikaner ideal. I also point out how the same circular process that would eventually end in 'natural Apartheid' was theorised, albeit in somewhat different guise, incrementally to map the way to national Afrikaans music. In a reading of a

next chapter, I show how Bouws asserts the Afrikanerness of Hubert du Plessis simply because the latter composed a great deal of vocal music. Bouws declares vocal music as the only Afrikaner music tradition. Because Du Plessis subscribed to this tradition, he could be nothing but a real Afrikaner. Finally, I show how Bouws organised his narratives around ‘vocal vehicles’ by using the song as the pivotal element in this particular discourse. I underline a topos that has been noted before in the writings of Bouws: the use of the Afrikaans song in a national struggle against Englishness. I also supply two readings where Bouws uses the metaphor of purity and I read these instances against the grain. In each the racial other is present in the text or the scenery. Purity is displaced by Bouws so that it inheres in an adjectival function closely associated with the racial other but in a separate space that is not inhibited by that other. Instead of metaphors of purity, the racial other, in each instance, inherits the playful world of a carefree child. Finally, in a chapter on the folk music of ‘bruinmense’ (‘brown people’), I show how Bouws writes in metaphors similar to those of Gerrie Eloff, and how his music-historical narratives always serve Afrikaner interests.

The third chapter reviews some of the writings by Jacques Philip Malan and Rosa Nepgen. The national struggle of the Afrikaner, sonically scripted into the Afrikaans song, is here supplemented with another Afrikaner essential: what I term ‘Christianism’. Afrikaner nationalism cannot be understood outside the ambit of Christianity and it is these two ‘isms’ that direct the readings in this chapter. Before surveying some of the writings of Rosa Nepgen, I discuss various textual representations of the composer and show how these became specific ways of ‘Being Rosa’. Put differently, I show how textual representations created by male composers sculpted the life of a female composer in a society where power and access to power were controlled by males. I also theorise the position of the Afrikaans composer in a society where occupations had strong gender associations. It is followed by a reading of Nepgen’s concert reviews for *Die Burger*. Here I draw attention to an important media polemic between Nepgen and the conductor Erik Chisholm and point out how traces of Afrikanerness and Englishness are in conflict throughout the discourse. Under this (apparently more acceptable) epithet of Christianity, I review Nepgen’s ideas on sacred music. For her, the preservation and practice of sixteenth-century Calvinistic congregational music was an imperative for the Afrikaners. So strong did she believe in this cause that she reworked the Afrikaans psalm melodies to restore

earlier Calvinist practices such as modal writing and rhythmic variation. After I discuss her contribution to the Afrikaans psalms, I supply a brief account of a polemic carried on the pages of *Die Kerkbode* between Nepgen and one Mr. Gradus Wendt, who did not share her passion for modal singing and unequal note values. Both Nepgen and Wendt wrote on Afrikaans church music in highly charged language. After demonstrating the emotional vehemence of their language, I explore the psychological importance of Afrikaans congregational music for the Afrikaners. I posit the notion that, for Afrikaners, the unison singing of church music was an affirmation of 'volkseenheid'. Singing 'in one voice' also separated them from other races in South Africa who routinely performed sacred music in more than one voice. Jacques Philip Malan is the second Afrikaans music historiographer to be discussed in this chapter and like Nepgen, his discourse is also characterised by nationalism and Christianity. I posit Malan as an Afrikaner reformer with grand plans for national reform in every sphere of music practice and performance. However, it should also be noted that Malan is an astute scholar who is in control of his craft. Often his discourse can be interpreted on more than one level and it is this principle that I apply in his writings. His four articles on the Afrikaans psalms and hymns represent the notion of Christianity in his oeuvre. They contain harsh criticisms of musical practices in Afrikaans churches of his time. For Malan, the Afrikaans churches had to replicate Calvinist practices that could be traced back to John Calvin and the earliest reformers. I discuss the four articles and draw attention to certain themes such as Afrikaner unity and notions of separateness and segregation. I suggest that Malan's discourse on Afrikaans songs serves as a mere mask for another discourse. This second meaning could be uncovered by interpreting racial metaphors present in Malan's language in the light of similar metaphors present in Apartheid intellectualisation. I show how the psalms for Malan became 'documents of human life' and more specifically, documents of Afrikaner triumph in Africa. Finally I offer detailed readings of four Malan texts, two published lectures and a chapter in a book (edited by Geoffrey Cronjé) and an article published in the *South African Journal of Musicology*. Each of these texts is littered with Malan's favourite topoi: national goals, unity, integration, order and racial segregation. Malan's position on ethnomusicology and his plans to employ it in service of national goals (such as separate development) is informative of his ideals for music in service of the nationalist body politic. In this separation Malan designed a brand of musicology in which the entire Afrikaner volk could participate

and I show how he devised types of research that would, according to him, involve the entire volk. The chapter concludes with a discussion of Malan's blueprint for a national arts policy which he published in 1981.

In the final chapter I deliberately avoid the opening of a Eurocentric epistemological window through which Afrikaner serious culture could be observed and critiqued. Instead, I frame important Afrikaner topoi such as the 'Afrikaner Boereplaas' and the notion of a 'bodem' within an understanding propelled by the discourses of Apartheid intellectualisation and Afrikaans music historiography. Drawing on these indigenous discourses, I elucidate a phenomenon which I call 'the cultural language of Apartheid' and pause over the cultural implications in the twentieth century of such adopted Afrikaner historical fantasies such as a volk that came into being in 1652. I show how the 'Afrikaner Boereplaas' became, for the Afrikaners, their first cultural artefact and also the justification for the stunted development of high culture during the first 250 years of colonisation. The notion of a 'bodem' that required 'taming' and that usurped all the time and energy of colonists are present in Apartheid intellectualisation and Afrikaans music historiography and are used in the twentieth century in retrospect by various authors to justify the paucity of serious culture in South Africa. But the twentieth century seems to emerge as an artistic watershed; both H.M. Van der Westhuysen and Anton Hartman expect it to be an era of rapid growth for Afrikaner high culture. An investigation of music practice and appreciation suggests that these writers were overly optimistic. Their positivistic narratives are subverted by a fellow volksman, Arnold van Wyk, who operated close to the fulcrum of Afrikaans art music and who espoused a bleak view of its development in South Africa. Amidst such prevailing discrepancies, I suggest that, in the twentieth century, a superior Afrikaner culture became an inflated symbolic legitimisation for an unworkable and ideologically flawed system, Apartheid. We see a reciprocity between culture and country: cultural lack or absence in the first three centuries of South African colonisation are explicated and justified by the 'wildness' of the country; in the twentieth century this argument is reversed and the cultural refinedness of the Afrikaners become the exculpating factor in their physical dominance of the land. I continue to demonstrate how Afrikaner nationalist narratives entertained two levels of confusion (historical time and class) in its deployment of culture. Drawing on the ideas of Nico Diederichs, I show how the national spirit or nationalism and the cultural artefact or Afrikaner culture inhibited a shared

metaphysical space. Against this background, I introduce a discussion of the Afrikaans art song. After embarking on a short historical excursus into the nineteenth century, I point out that art song composition in twentieth-century South Africa was a favoured if anachronistic practice. I also show how the salon culture of nineteenth-century Europe was replaced with a racial elite in South Africa one century later and how the 'home' of the art song shifted to the Afrikaner 'moederhuis'. I further posit the position of the Afrikaans art song in twentieth-century South Africa as a weapon in the cultural struggle against 'Englishness'. My interest includes the modes of opposition opened up by the Afrikaans song texts and the music and attempts to situate Afrikaner resistance in a reciprocity between text and music. I conclude the chapter with a brief discussion of the Afrikaans art song and cultural artefact, 'O Boereplaas', as an exemplary case where Afrikaans music-historical narratives, the narratives of Apartheid intellectualisation and the cultural narratives of Afrikaner nationalism metaphorically meet and merge. I introduce 'O Boereplaas' with a discussion of Afrikaner imaginings on the figure of the 'Afrikanermoeder' ('Afrikaner mother'). I consider the symbolic spaces of the Afrikaner house and the Afrikaner 'moedertaal' ('mother tongue') and show how the prefixing of 'mother' in these concepts suggest notions of blood purity. The 'Boereplaas' is identified as a space occupied by only the purest of Afrikaner ideals. But the 'Boereplaas' also connects the Afrikaner with another topos encountered in Afrikaans discourse: 'separateness'. In the writings of Meyer, the 'Boereplaas' emerges as the place where the Afrikaner received his 'separate' and God-ordained calling of guardianship over the races of South Africa and even those of Africa. After a final consideration of notions such as 'purity', 'contamination' and 'bodem' I supply a short reading of 'O Boereplaas'. Theory and practice, discourse and reality intersect and amalgamate in a passage taken from the biography of a singing 'Afrikanermoeder': Mimi Coertse.

Chapter 1

In March 1707, the small town of Stellenbosch provided the setting for an incident that signified the birth of a new force in Africa. On a Sunday afternoon, the sixteen-year-old youth one Hendrik Biebouw and three of his friends rioted on a number of properties in the newly-found town. While the Landdrost lambasted him for his misconduct, Biebouw shouted: 'Ik ben een Afrikaner' ('I am an Afrikaner') (Giliomee, 2003: 22).⁴ In spite of Biebouw's inebriated condition, the incident testifies to a nascent identity on the remote tip of Africa. Symbolically, the public proclamation of allegiance to a new people was also the birth of 'the Afrikaner'. Stellenbosch would become the place whence this new entity would build and maintain an intellectual stronghold during the next three centuries, while the loutishness and moral turpitude associated with the Biebouw uprising also informed a stereotypical portrayal of Afrikaners among their enemies.

In mid-1987, the exact equivalent of the words spoken by Biebouw was once again heard. This time it was a leading African struggle figure, politician and intellectual who enunciated them to a small audience of mainly white Afrikaners. He opened his address made to a number of delegates at the Idasa conference in Dakar, with the following words: 'my name is Thabo Mbeki. I am an Afrikaner' (Gevisser, 2008: 510).⁵ The contrast between Biebouw and Mbeki could not have been starker. On the one hand, a hysterical and belligerent youth, loudly proclaiming his Afrikaner identity, and on the other, an eloquent and diplomatic politician who was to charm his audience of Afrikaner academics, politicians and businessmen into believing that their future under an ANC government was secure. Indeed, the only similarity is the semantic equivalence of these two statements that reverberated across historical time.

The two statements, two hundred and eighty years apart, frame a period in South African history marked by a change in the meaning of being an Afrikaner. For neither Biebouw in 1707, nor Mbeki in 1987, the word 'Afrikaner' represented what is understood by it today. The political underclass represented by Biebouw could scarcely be called a coherent political or national entity, whereas Mbeki's use of the

⁴ For additional information on Hendrik Biebouw see vryeafrikaan.co.za/lees.php?id=783.

⁵ Mbeki spoke these words in his opening address in front of more or less 61 Afrikaners who had come to meet with 16 ANC delegates to discuss the future of South Africa. The Afrikaners in attendance included Hermann Giliomee, Frederik van Zyl Slabbert and Breyten Breytenbach.

word was at the same time the literal translation of ‘African’ into Afrikaans – calculated to make an impact on his audience – and the signal of the African nationalist politics that he would introduce to South Africa more than a decade later. The Afrikaners historically and symbolically represented by Biebouw eventually gained control of the land in the twentieth century, and in a short time turned from the oppressed to the oppressor. The brunt of this oppression was born by the ‘Afrikaners’ represented by Mbeki, who, in the next decade, would take formal control of South Africa not as Afrikaners, but as Africans.

The main concern in this chapter is not the diacritics of Afrikaner identity before and after a ‘new’ South Africa. Rather, it is the South Africa prior to and during Nationalist reign, polarised between white and black and the identities represented by Biebouw and Mbeki. In the two hundred and eighty years elapsing between their statements, the country and its people were subjected to Dutch and British rule and finally to Apartheid. Apartheid was no mere accidental cataclysm. It was the fruit of collusive intellectual labour and carefully calculated political planning that, in time, disowned non-whites from their land and sovereignty. The policy received its intellectual scaffolding in the twentieth century when especially Afrikaans politicians, academics and clergy all began to theorise with alacrity to supply their solutions to local racial and political questions. A platform for new ideas became available to Afrikaners in 1915 when D.F. Malan assumed editorship of *De Burger*. The newspaper became an effective mouth piece for the nationalist ideas of the Cape Afrikaners. Similarly, H.F. Verwoerd would become the editor of *Die Transvaler* just over 20 years later, effectively extending the Afrikaner media empire to the northern parts of the country.

However, the intellectualisation of political and racial perspectives was not restricted to the Afrikaner media. W.A. de Klerk, referring to the 1930s, writes that the Afrikaner Nationalists incessantly gathered in the coffee houses of Cape Town to listen to the ideas of D.F. Malan (De Klerk, 1975: 116). These coffee house discussions centred on a new political order for South Africa and the coming of an Afrikaner republic. It was in fact a public manifestation of similar intellectual activities conducted in secrecy by the Afrikaner Broederbond (1975: 117). Ideas on race and politics became freely available to Afrikaners with the establishment of an intellectual exchange between South Africa and Europe. Many young, aspiring

Afrikaner academics in the 1920s and 1930s left the country to further their studies, notably in Germany and the Netherlands. As will become clear in this chapter, returning to South Africa was ordinarily followed by appointments at local universities which provided them with platforms for academic publications on racial and political questions.

In this chapter I will attempt to construct a thematic trail from these and other publications to revive certain moments that paved the road to Apartheid. I will follow the writing and theorising on an Afrikaner state that was erected through weapons of war, legislation, racial identification and separation. Crucially, I will argue, it was a state made possible by the intellectualisation provided to its core tenets by Afrikaner intellectuals. It is this intellectualisation of Apartheid, as will be argued in subsequent chapters, that made possible the cultural (and specifically musical) discourses that characterised the Afrikaner in power.

In 1959, two Apartheid exponents published a volume on this policy. N.J. Rhoodie and H.J. Venter write in the preface to their book that the separation of races in South Africa had been underway for the previous three centuries (Rhoodie & Venter, 1959: vii). Furthermore they lay claim to a kind of ‘natural Apartheid’ that existed in the early Cape colonies, stating that this apparent ‘natural’ state of affairs is replicated by the outcomes of present processes aimed at the facilitation of racial separation (1959: vii). In other words, the reader is told, what started out as ‘natural Apartheid’ should once again culminate in ‘natural Apartheid’. Before this final state of affairs can be attained, the writers note the necessity of three stages of development (1959: pp. vii-viii). The first phase supposedly occurred in the early years of European settlement and was marked by wars and clashes. This was to be followed by a second phase of guardianship that would eventually culminate in a third phase of emancipation for the black man. The first and violent phase is justified by Rhoodie and Venter when compared to the ‘magnitude, the murderous bloodthirstiness and the destructiveness of the wars which civilised White nations have waged against one another through the centuries’ (1959: vii). Hence, for the authors, the comparatively *small scale* of local settlement wars absolve these military conquerors of any ethical or moral obligation to account for their use of violence. The intellectual premise underlying their thinking is based on privileging numeric value above principle: local military expansion and the atrocities against indigenous peoples of the country are

rationalised and acceptable due to its numeric insignificance when compared with wars and resulting casualties across Europe.

Although not identified by Rhodie and Venter as such, a pivotal moment in ‘the first phase towards natural Apartheid’ occurred in the late 1830s. It was an event that, for the Afrikaner, carried mythical overtones of the exodus of Israel from Egypt (and slavery) into the Promised Land (and freedom). This event, during which numerous Afrikaner families deserted the Cape colonies to seek self-governance in the unknown, became known as the Great Trek. The manifesto to this Exodus was supplied by Piet Retief, who exchanged the hammer, nail and Wittenberg church doors for the more convenient ink, paper and Grahamstown Journal to give vent and motivation to the Protestant indignation of the Trekkers. With their radicalism explicated by the manifesto, and justified by their status as God’s elect people, a number of Afrikaners left the Cape colonies to seek out their promised land beyond the horizon. They were armed with their two indispensables, the Bible and the gun. What followed was the systematic misrepresentation of the former, culminating in destruction wrought by the latter. The remainder of the nineteenth century is marked by a bloody trail as Boer, Brit and Black tribes fought, in ever-changing alliances, over land and grazing for their animals.

The Great Trek is central in the first phase of Apartheid pointed out by Rhodie and Venter, namely that of military expansion. By 1910, the Afrikaner had conquered the English in the first Anglo-Boer war, surrendered to them in the second, and was steadily recovering from the military, economic and psychological devastation wrought by this latter catastrophe. The Union of South Africa was formed and, presumably, the second phase on the road to ‘natural’ Apartheid, that of guardianship, in onset (1959: pp. Vii-viii). The intellectual trail that would lead to the practical implementation of Apartheid begins around this time in history, with the advent of the union of South Africa and with the notion of European guardianship for all other races gaining prominence. It was the closure of the first era (as identified by Rhodie and Venter), punctuated by conventional wars and clashes. After Union the way to statutory Apartheid had to be prepared, and it was done through the exchange of artillery for ‘sophisticated’ Afrikaner voices that would supply an intellectual premise to Apartheid. In the years between the turn of the nineteenth century and the creation of the Union of South Africa, four of the voices that would become the new intellectual protégés of the future National Party policy were born. They were

Hendrik French Verwoerd (1901-1966), Nico Diederichs (1903-1978), Geoffrey Cronjé (1907-1992) and Piet Meyer (1909-1984).

The South African political landscape underwent rapid change during the formative years of these men. The imperial yoke was partly broken with the Union of 1910 whereby the Afrikaner dream of self-governance became conceivable. But there was also the formidable and trenchant Boer-general, Jan Christiaan Smuts, to be reckoned with. He held a degree from Cambridge University, was intellectually in favour of cooperation between the vanquished Boers and Britain (ideas worked out in his notion of 'holism') and was seen by many Afrikaners as too closely allied with London. In 1914 an alternative to Smuts's South African Party became available when the National Party was founded in Bloemfontein under J.B.M. Hertzog. 1914 was also the year that marked the outbreak of the First World War. Smuts, prime minister and leader of the South African Party, aligned himself to England to the dismay of many Afrikaners. The wounds inflicted by more than a century of British colonisation would not heal so rapidly. The majority of Afrikaners were unprepared to side with Britain in 1914, only twelve years after their surrender in the Anglo-Boer war. The German sympathies displayed by many Afrikaners and followers of Hertzog were possibly more a reaction against British imperialism than a complete allegiance to the German cause. However, the anti-British sentiments of many Afrikaners were sufficient to strengthen ties with Germany. It resulted in a number of important future Afrikaner leaders receiving tertiary education at German universities in the time that coincided with the rise of National Socialism or Nazism. Piet Meyer declined a Rhodes scholarship in the early 1930s to further his studies in Amsterdam from where he attended occasional courses in Germany, and learnt skiing in the Alps from Rudolf Hess, Hitler's Chief of Staff (Furlong, 1991: 79-80). Apart from Meyer, Nico Diederichs, Geoffrey Cronjé and Hendrik Verwoerd all furthered their studies in Germany, or at least attended holiday courses there while studying in The Netherlands. (1991: 80). These men would later be styled the new Afrikaner intellectual elite by W.A. de Klerk, and their political and intellectual prominence established them as primary intellectual exponents for racial and biological theories into the South African context (De Klerk, 1975: 219). They also happened to be tenacious nationalists and fervent Broederbonders. Cronjé in particular became well-published on the subjects of race, separate development and a solution to the so-called race question ('rassevraagstuk'). To this elite group one could add the name of Gerrie

Eloff – another racial ideologue who took it upon himself to theorise the racial and biological superiority of the Afrikaners and who was the source of many of Cronjé’s ideas. It is to the writings by and about certain of these men that I will turn in order to establish a published intellectual trail that ineluctably informed the institution of official Apartheid. The claim is not being made here that these writings constitute a comprehensive or even the most representative account of the intellectualisation of Apartheid. Such a view would be flawed: it is clear upon reading the work of Giliomee, De Klerk and Rhodie and Venter, that the models for Apartheid were numerous. In their own strange ways these origins resemble the ethnic melting pot feared and simultaneously embodied by the Afrikaner. However, the specific moments presented below are of particular interest for establishing a broader discursive space in which music, race and nationalism coalesced and interacted.

Gerrie Eloff and the disharmony of prominent noses

During the 1920s, race and sociological questions of racial orientation became the subject matter for a discourse of biological and cultural difference in some South African academic journals.⁶ This was a discourse that favoured racial and cultural differences above similarities. In the 1940s Geoffrey Cronjé would often support his arguments by citing the discourse of the twenties. The discourse of the 1920s was conducted in English, with Afrikaans-speaking academics as yet without a significant profile. The 1930s marked a definite expansion of this discourse as Afrikaners publicly began to theorise about race. The earliest exponent of Afrikaner ideas on such matters was Gerrie Eloff, who published a number of articles as early as 1933 and a book dedicated to biological questions of race in 1942. The present writer first came across the name of Gerrie Eloff in an article written by Saul Dubow and published in 1992. Eloff is not mentioned in either W.A. de Klerk’s 1975 publication on the Afrikaners, or in Giliomee’s more recent book on the Afrikaner. In spite of his omission from these important historical sources, the importance and influence of Eloff on Apartheid thinkers such as Cronjé, Rhodie and Venter is evident from the frequency of citations to his research in texts by these authors.

⁶ The *South African Journal of Science* published articles dealing with race and race-biology in the 1920s. H.B. Fantham and Annie Porter both made substantial contributions to this racial discourse of the 1920s.

Biographical information on Eloff is scanty. He studied at the University of Potchefstroom and later in The Netherlands. Part of his research was done through the University of the Witwatersrand before he later moved to Bloemfontein to become head of the Department for Genetics and Breeding Studies at the University of the Free State (Dubow, 1992: 226). He was an active member of the pro-Nazi Ossewabrandwag and his departmental headship at an Afrikaans university was very likely contingent upon membership of the Broederbond. In actual fact, it was the Bond, through special intervention by H.F. Verwoerd, who assisted Eloff in procuring a position at the University of the Free State. Eloff failed to find a position suitable to his academic ambitions, upon which Verwoerd intervened at an executive meeting of the Broederbond. In doing so he breached standard Bond procedures by raising the matter at such a high level. However, Verwoerd's advocacy of Eloff's scientific prowess paid off. After the matter was raised at the executive meeting, Eloff was appointed to the University of the Free State (Furlong, 1991: 228-229). Eloff spent part of 1942 as a prisoner in Koffiefontein together with the future Prime Minister John Vorster. Here Eloff freely preached his biological construction of race and white racial superiority to the internees.

In 1933 he published an article in the Potchefstroom-based journal *Koers*, entitled 'Rasverbetering deur uitskakeling van minderwaardige individue' ('Racial betterment through omission of inferior individuals'). In this article, Eloff theorised that the church and the state could and should ensure 'positive eugenics' through encouraging marriages between appropriate individuals, thus gradually eliminating the 'weaker' individuals in society (Eloff, 1933: 33).⁷ Later in the article, he lists the 'weak' in society as those who suffer from epilepsy, alcohol abuse, and also individuals identified as criminals, idiots or demented (1933: 31-32). He strongly disapproved of miscegenation and blood mixing, subjects that would, in the next decade, become the focus of Geoffrey Cronjé's writing. Another article by Eloff appeared in *Koers* five years later, in the same year of the momentous symbolic Ox Wagon Trek across South Africa. The article was entitled 'Drie gedagtes oor rasbiologie veral met betrekking tot Suid-Afrika' ('Three thoughts on race biology with special reference to South Africa'). Here Eloff states that humanity consists of three main 'geographical races' namely white, black and yellow (Eloff, 1938: 18).

⁷ See also Dubow, 1992, p. 226.

Skin colour, hair colour and texture, eye colour, body size and shape of nose, blood group and other physiological differences, and psychological differences distinguish these races from one another (1938: 18). After expanding on some of the physiological differences that make one race suitable for a certain climate and another not, Eloff assesses the effects of blood mixing. He asks whether mixing between a 'natuurvolk' ('nature volk') and a 'kultuurvolk' ('culture volk') should be encouraged (1938: 21) and appends that this question is of particular importance to South Africa. Eloff proceeds to answer his own question by means of a case study performed in Rehoboth (or 'Basterland' – 'Bastard Land' as Eloff dubs it elsewhere) in the then South West Africa by one Professor Eugene Fischer (Eloff, 1942: 76). The study confirms the negative outcomes of racial intermixture between Europeans and non-Europeans, in this case Hottentots. According to Fischer (and by implication Eloff), such intermixture yields vacillating temperament, lack of self-control and determination, deficient spiritual energy, irresponsibility and slothfulness with secondary effects such as alcohol abuse and promiscuity (Eloff, 1938: 24). Eloff concludes that the Afrikaner Trekboer was long aware of what biological scientists had only recently demonstrated: intermixture between white and black is not desirable (1938: 25). This is not, according to Eloff, so much a colour preference as an insight into human nature acquired by the Afrikaner through what he describes as 'costly experience' (1938: 25).

Eloff's only book was published as part of a series in 1942 and was entitled *Rasse en Rassevermenging: die Boerevolk gesien van die standpunt van die Rasseleer* ('Race and Racial intermixture: the Boer volk as seen from the perspective of Race science') with none other than Diederichs, Cronjé and Meyer on the editorial board of the series. It was published by the National Press (Naspers) as part of the Tweede Trek Reeks in commemoration of the Great Trek a century earlier, an indication that Eloff's views were not only propagated in Ossewabrandwag circles but also by the Nationalists who would rule South Africa from 1948. The opening chapters deal with the concept and origins of race. It is followed by an investigation into the racial composition of the Boer volk. However, the largest section in the book is dedicated to the theme of racial intermixture. His conclusions on the negative effects of blood mixing correlates with those expressed in his two earlier articles and he once again draws on the Rehoboth community as a case in point. In a final section entitled 'Segregasie met voogdyskap' ('Segregation with guardianship'), Eloff supplements

his earlier arguments with certain imperatives to curb the mixing of different races. Class differences between races should be kept intact, in other words, the white race should remain superior in all aspects (1942: 103) and 'erflikheidsleer & rassekunde' ('inheritance and race science') must be an integral part of school and tertiary education (1942: 104).

Unlike some of the publications that would appear in the years directly leading up to the official adoption of Apartheid, Eloff's book does not provide solutions to the so-called racial question. Instead, his discourse centres on racial differences and the abrasive effects of miscegenation. Eloff's crude insights on racial differences and the obsessive detail he supplies to his readers, invariably invites a similar reading to that of J.M. Coetzee on Geoffrey Cronjé (Coetzee, 1996: 169-170). However, where madness for Coetzee has to be gleaned by unmasking euphemism for its implied hostility, we encounter in Eloff naked hostility stripped of all attempts at euphemism. In the chapter on miscegenation, he fills page after page with meticulous particularities detailing the physiological features of 'bastards' ('bastards'). He records and expands on body length, body weight, gait, shape and size of the head, shape and colour of eyes, shape and size of nose (Eloff informs us, for instance, that the broadness of the nose is directly proportional to the degree of blood mixing), thickness of lips (also directly proportional to the degree of blood mixing), shape of ears, skin colour, colour of lips and finger nails, texture, colour and length of hair, beard, and eye-lashes and eye-brows (Eloff, 1942: 79-87). He concludes that, as a matter of understatement, the general appearance of the bastard can only be described as 'pathetic' and then further opines that of all the portraits taken by Fischer of the Rehoboth people, only one, that of a particular woman, could be described as 'rather beautiful' (1942: 87).

This obsessive discourse about the bastard physique subverts and undermines the over-arching idea of the elimination of bastard presence from white society. Seen differently, Eloff's discourse is only possible when the bastard is present in his physical and/or mental world as an object to be analysed, discussed and theorised. The language he uses to shape this discourse, too, is dependant on the presence of the bastard. But it is also the language of madness identified by Coetzee in the writings of Cronjé (Coetzee, 1996: 164-165). Coetzee demonstrates how words such as 'insypel' ('seeping in') 'inluip' ('stealing in') and 'mengelmoes' ('mishmash') point to the madness in Cronjé's theorising and ultimately the madness embedded in Apartheid

thinking (1996: 171). All these terms are present in Eloff's discourse.⁸ A few examples should suffice as illustrations. In the introduction to his book, Eloff writes that:

Dit [ons erflike samestelling] moet rein bewaar en beskerm word soos 'n heilige pand ons toevertrou, sodat ons nooit selfs ook maar die geringste vergiftigende insypeling sal toelaat nie (Eloff, 1942: 3)

This [our inherited constitution] must be kept pure and defended like a holy token entrusted to our care, meaning that we cannot ever allow even the smallest poisonous inseeeping (Eloff, 1942: 3).

Eloff uses a word that he would frequently return to in describing the mixing of races: 'insypel' ('the act of seeping in' or 'infiltration'). He adds an adjective to his notion of 'seeping in', namely 'poisoning', making doubly sure that his reader clearly comprehends the sacrilegious consequences and menacing effects of racial mixing. A homophone for 'insypel' is repeatedly employed by Eloff to describe, in less pedantic manner, the mixing of the races. He refers to 'insluipe' ('insurgents') as bastards who pose a threat to the blood purity of the Boerevolk (Eloff, 1942: 87). He writes that these 'insluipe' might be the offspring of 'Tommies' (pejorative colloquialism referring to the British) from the time of the Second Anglo-Boer war, and yet others the progeny of 'shameless whites' who frequent black residential areas ('lokasies') under cover of night (1942: 87). 'Insluipe', he concludes, are not part of the Boerevolk (1942: 87). Physical, spiritual and moral 'disharmony' is the result of 'seeping in' brought about by these 'sluipers' who contaminate the white race (1942: 75).

Eloff here draws on a term related to music to describe a set of dispositions yielded by the act of blood mixing. A type of physical, spiritual and moral dissonance characterises the off-spring of 'insluipe' intercourse. It is a description that shifts his racial discourse to the cultural sphere, resonating ominously with a question posed in his 1938 article and quoted earlier in this chapter: Should mixture between a nature volk and a culture volk be encouraged? (Eloff, 1938: 21). By this time, Eloff's answer comes as no surprise. However, of interest here is the normative symbolism associated by Eloff with the generic categories 'white' and 'black': 'white' signifies a 'culture volk' and 'black' a 'nature volk'. The mixture of white and black, culture and

⁸ In his chapter on Geoffrey Cronjé, J.M. Coetzee mentions Gerrie Eloff but does not demonstrate the identical discourses and uses of language of the two authors.

nature, generates disharmony. Extending his notion of disharmony to include all art, Eloff writes that racial intermixture between the races precludes the possibility of 'true art' (1938: 25). Blood purity hence becomes a prerogative for and an enabler of 'true art', while blood mixing yields the opposite, disharmony. By linking the above terms employed by Eloff, one can argue that his discourse expanded from a biological understanding of race to one that encompasses the realm of culture and hence also music. Eloff seems to be constructing two separate genealogies, enmeshing both the cultural and the biological spheres. What originates from racial purity/mixing results in true art/the impossibility of true art. Hence, on the one hand, purity = culture volk = harmony = the creation of true art while blood mixing = Nature volk = disharmony = the absence of true art.

Before turning to the writing of Geoffrey Cronjé, it is necessary to gauge the importance and influence of Eloff's work on his contemporaries. While it is true that he is ignored or mentioned only in passing in most South African historiographies, his influence cannot be under-estimated. As has been pointed out, he was important enough to deserve the intervention of a future prime minister of South Africa to procure university tenure and also a platform for the espousal of his racial theories. Furthermore, he had direct contact with another future prime minister in 1942 when they were interned together. But perhaps most significantly, as will become even clearer in the following section, he was the main source for Geoffrey Cronjé's biological understanding of race and blood mixture. The madness that Coetzee identified as lurking behind the euphemisms in Cronjé's writing, is indeed the madness of Gerrie Eloff. Phrased differently, it is as much Cronjé's madness as it is a sanitised replication of Eloff's madness. It is thus Eloff's discourse that lies at the heart of the Afrikaner fear of darkness as it is embodied in the notions of 'insluipers', 'seeping in' and racial bastardy. Cronjé would, in the space of three years after Eloff's book, shape such demons into regulations that resembled the new legislation that swept through the land from 1948.

Geoffrey Cronjé's phantasies of rhythm and the pure 'Afrikanermoeder'

Geoffrey Cronjé (1907-1992) received his education at the University of Stellenbosch before continuing his studies in Amsterdam. After his return, he occupied various positions, chaired committees, and became a member of the Broederbond and the Ossewabrandwag. His name appears frequently on author lists of academic publications: Cronjé wrote or edited 36 books and 129 articles covering vast discursive distances including racial and social problems, literary, artistic and cultural discussions and almost everything in between. He received Honorary Doctorates from the University of South Africa, the then University of the Orange Free State and the University of Pretoria. In 1987 he received a presidential award for outstanding service. Culturally, Cronjé was a well-connected and important Afrikaner figure. He served on the management of the FAK for ten years and was also a long-standing member of the National Cultural Council and later of the Performing Arts Council of the Transvaal.⁹ To cover his entire output falls outside the scope of the present research. J.M. Coetzee draws attention to four seminal works, all published in the years directly leading up to the National Party victory of 1948: *'n Tuiste vir die nageslag* ('A home for posterity') (1945), *Afrika sonder die Asiaat* ('Africa without the Asian') (1946), *Regverdige Rasse-Apartheid* ('Just Race Apartheid') (1947) and *Voogdeskap en Apartheid* ('Guardianship and Apartheid') (1948)¹⁰ (Coetzee, 1996: 166). The 1945 publication constitutes Cronjé's key ideas on Apartheid and the various racial questions of South Africa. The later publications serve merely to restate and elaborate on the ideas set out in *'n Tuiste vir die nageslag*. For this reason, the present author will supply a detailed reading of the latter publication with reference to the key themes addressed in the other volumes.

'n Tuiste vir die nageslag was published under the auspices of the University of Pretoria where Cronjé was Professor of Sociology and Dean of Humanities. From the outset of this volume, Cronjé stresses the existence of Apartheid in the earliest European settlements at the Cape of Good Hope (Cronjé, 1945: 20). But in a somewhat contradictory manner he also states that Apartheid policy is legitimated by the imperative of Afrikaner survival (1945: 3). Apartheid, as Cronjé imagined it, was

⁹ See J. E. Pieterse in the *South African Journal of Sociology*, 24:2, 1993, 33-34.

¹⁰ English translation by J.M. Coetzee as used in his chapter on Geoffrey Cronjé.

the choice and policy of each consecutive Afrikaner generation from the earliest colonial settlers. The unique race policies of the Afrikaner became part of his *Weltanschauung* and, finally, Apartheid was also Biblically justified after which it became a moral imperative (Cronjé, 1945: 9, 21). Cronje disarms his former argument by noting (albeit only in passing) that the Afrikaner was sometimes guilty of racial intermixture (1945: 21). On the latter count, it is widely accepted that far from prescribing moral imperatives of separate races, the Bible was distorted by Afrikaner churches to legitimize Afrikaner prejudices.¹¹

Cronjé precedes his argument by pointing out a number of differences that exist between the races in South Africa. But first he identifies five different races in the country: European, Black, Asian, Jewish and Coloured (1945: 8). His solution to the Asian question would be discussed in detail in a later publication, but he nevertheless supplies a condensed version here: Asians do not belong in Africa but in Asia because of differences in race, religion and spiritual constitution. Hence, it follows that they should be ‘expatriated’ to Asia. If such a process does not take place, Cronjé writes, they will have to be segregated completely (1945: 39-40). Cronjé gives no attention to the racial question of the Jews. There are a number of possible explanations for his silence on the matter. In 1945 (the year of publication of this volume) the Second World War drew to an end. It was the fall of the Third Reich and the start of a world-wide outcry against the savageries of the Holocaust. Cronjé would most certainly have evoked uncomfortable comparisons and unnecessary hostility if his solution to the Jewish question resembled any of the other racial solutions proposed by him. Or, in a more pessimistic reading, one could postulate that he did not deem it necessary to address the Jewish question because the final solution had just been enacted by the Nazis on the global stage. Whatever the case might be, it is reasonable to believe that Cronjé would have had expatriation or segregation or both in mind. The remaining three races, Black, Brown and White are Cronjé’s main concern in this first publication. Precisely because these races differ from one another, Cronjé argues, they should not be allowed to assimilate. They must develop separately, each to their fullest potential. Cronjé makes mention of biological, spiritual and intellectual differences between these races. In the case of biological differences, he almost exclusively draws on the work of Eloff who stated that black

¹¹ Afrikaner church denominations such as the Dutch Reformed Church have, from the 1980s, admitted to the heresy of Apartheid and their Biblically-motivated support of this policy.

tribes were better suited to warm and tropic climates due to their dark skins, broad and flat noses and abundance of sweat glands (1945: 28). Cronjé then writes that these differences should be taken into account when addressing the racial question in South Africa. Each race should reside in an area with a climate most suitable to their biological adaptation (1945: 30). However, Cronjé, unlike Eloff, was no biologist. His discourse regarding biological differences relies on Eloff's findings, but he accords far more space to a discussion of intellectual and spiritual differences. These, he tells his readers, are worthy of preservation (1945: 10-11). He expands his treatise by drawing on certain research findings (all of the projects conducted by whites) to demonstrate the intellectual superiority of white races over black races and expects his (intellectually superior) white readership to believe him (1945: 11-17). History indicates that they believed Cronjé and his white intellectual colleagues. And why would they not have done so? These theories elevated them as a collectivity to an intellectually superior position supported by the church that proclaimed them God's elect people. In this self-described world Whites were self-proclaimed gods, ordained to a separate calling of guardianship over the racial pariahs of the land.

With regard to spiritual or cultural differences, Cronjé writes that their existence is clear enough, but the nature of these differences remained unknown (1945: 12). In the context of my own research, however, his use of music attempts to point up these spiritual differences:

Die geestelike toerusting van 'n ras omvat egter ook sy temperamentele, emosionele e.a. geestelike hoedanighede. Ons weet uit ervaring dat die wit en swart rasse t.o.v. hierdie geestelike hoedanighede verskil. So weet ons b.v. dat die Bantoe 'n goeie musikale aanleg het. Ons weet egter ook dat sy musiek baie anders is as dié van die witman. Dit is o.a. sterk gekenmerk deur herhalende ritme wat vir ons as 'eentonig' voorkom maar vir hom nie. Dit is baie waarskynlik dat die naturel 'n ander musikale aanleg as die witman het. Na alle waarskynlikheid het hy op dieselfde wyse 'n ander geestelike toerusting as die witman (1945: 18).

The spiritual apparatus of a race also entails his temperamental, emotional and other spiritual properties. We know from experience that white and black races differ with respect to these spiritual properties. Thus we know, for example, that the Bantu has fine musical talent. However, we also know that his music is very different to that of the white man. Amongst others, it is strongly characterised by the repetitive rhythms that we, unlike the Bantu, find tedious. It is very probable that the native has a different musicality to the white man. In all probability this is similar to the way in which he has a different spiritual apparatus to the white man (1945: 18).

This quotation can be unpacked on a number of different levels. First, it is worth noting that Cronjé draws on music to argue for the existence of spiritual differences between the races. By arguing for spiritual differences, he is, in the broader scheme of things, drawing on music to argue for separate development and racial segregation. Second, Cronjé accepts and employs the exoticising views of white musicologists that Black music is all rhythm and by implication lacking in lyricism. This uniform view of African music has only relatively recently been discredited by Kofi Agawu and counts as one of the numerous and even racist misrepresentations of an ‘other’ who is always imagined outside the paradigms of the dominant discourse.¹² An even more extraordinary ideological use of musical difference flows from another Cronjé passage:

Die naturel se geskiktheid is blykbaar veral in die rigting van die konkreetaanskoulike geleë en met name in die verrigting van die herhaalde arbeid waardeur hy as’t ware ’n soort ‘eentonige’ ritme beleef wat op die witman ’n vervelende en selfs sussende uitwerking het (1945: 18).

The native’s suitability is apparently particularly focussed in the area of the concretely empirical, in particular in the performance of the repetitive work through which he experiences, as it were, a kind of ‘monotonous’ rhythm that would have a tedious and even pacifying effect on the white man (1945: 18).

We find here that Cronjé employs a misinformed musical argument (general to Western conceptions of African music) to underline the nature of *work* best performed by the black man. Clearly, according to Cronjé, blacks were not best capable of anything as complicated (the opposite of ‘concretely empirical’) as governing a country. Upon reading these words it is impossible not to recall the hundreds of thousands of black labourers who farmed, constructed and mined to generate the extraordinary wealth enjoyed by white South Africans. According to Cronjé’s musical metaphor, they were all happily wielding shovels, hammers and axes in rhythmic synchrony in the presence of the lethargised watching white master. It is the presence of these ‘rhythmically disciplined’ black bodies that, on the one hand, ensures the production of labour indispensable to white industrial society. They perform the kind of labour too menial to the aspirations of – to invoke Eloff’s term – a ‘culture volk’. But on the other hand, it is the physical presence of black bodies that, for Cronjé,

¹² See Kofi Agawu, The Invention of ‘African Rhythm’, *The Journal of the American Musicological Society*, 48:3, 1995, 380-395. Agawu opens the article with a historic excursus demonstrating how African rhythmicity has been imagined as ‘different’ and/or ‘other’.

contaminates white South Africa (Coetzee, 1996: 167). This physical presence of other races in white South Africa endangers the purity and ultimate existence of the white race.

At the centre of Cronjé's discourse lurks an obsession with blood purity, a fear for miscegenation, or paradoxically, an unspoken desire for that to which his mind returns time and again: mixing (Coetzee, 1996: 176). As has been noted before, his writing on this subject resembles that of Eloff in topoi and terminology. But Cronjé goes beyond Eloff by decisively articulating a number of solutions to the problem of mixing. In actual fact, his 'lasting solution' ('blywende oplossing')¹³ is simple enough: the causes of 'mixing' must be removed for only then will 'mixing' disappear (1945: 48). Here he has social factors in mind, and consequently expands on the upliftment of poor whites. Elsewhere, in a section entitled 'Die Bloedvermengers' ('The Bloodmixers'), he identifies the type of white responsible for blood mixing. A 'certain type of European immigrant' mostly from the lower and Eastern parts of Europe is often guilty of blood mixing. They are not assimilated into the 'fatsoenlike' ('refined') social and cultural life of the European and both they and their kin are likely to cross the racial divide (1945: 62-63). There is also a certain kind of 'degenerate' white that has lost his self-respect, sense of morality and racial pride (1945: 62). Cronjé describes these blood mixers as treacherous 'sluipers':¹⁴

Snags, onder die mantel van die nag, sluip hulle na die lokasies. Daar pleeg hulle verraad teen die blanke ras. En as dit dag is, sien ons hulle weer in hulle winkels, beroepe, ens. waar hulle meestal 'n deftige houding aanslaan (1945: 62).

At night, under cover of darkness, they steal off to the locations. There they commit treason to the white race. And the next dae we see them again in their shops, professions, etc. where they mostly adopt a pompous attitude (1945: 62).

At the time of writing, those most known for owning shops and practicing professions (as opposed to just holding lowly jobs) would have been English and/or Jewish South Africans¹⁵ The accusation of 'mixing' therefore points to the 'volksvreemdes'

¹³ The subtitle of Cronjé's book reads 'Die blywende oplossing van Suid-Afrika se rassevraagstukke' ('The lasting solution of South Africa's racial questions'), an unmistakable link to Nazi racial ideologies.

¹⁴ Note here also the discussion of the term 'sluipers' or 'insluip' by J.M. Coetzee, 1996, p.171.

¹⁵ Hermann Giliomee, for example, argues that British and Jewish South Africans, beginning in the nineteenth century, had better access to capital and education and hence acquired jobs more readily in business and commerce (Giliomee, 2003: 285).

(foreigners) among the white race. For Cronjé these individuals are criminals and should be brought to justice by the 'volksgemeenskap' ('volk society') (1945: 47). In an earlier passage, Cronjé departs from all attempts at refined scientific explanations and simply states that mixed residential areas leads to mixed marriages (1945: 58). To the problem of mixing, a solution is required. Cronjé describes this as a 'blywende oplossing' ('enduring solution') in the subtitle and introduction to his book. The term 'enduring solution' or 'blywende oplossing' conceptually reminds of the 'final solution' ('Die Endlösung') introduced by the Nazi regime to refer to the process by which Jews would be exterminated. Cronjé replaces 'final' with 'enduring' and under this (more acceptable) epithet introduces his reader to the inside machinery of Apartheid. To him, Apartheid means the 'physical draining away' ('wegdreinerig') of blacks from white-occupied land (Coetzee, 1996: 167). This could only be achieved through total racial Apartheid (Cronjé, 1945: 200). For this to take place, whites would have to relinquish the comfort of the employment of cheap black labour – an act of abnegation that was never realised by the majority of Afrikaners (1945: 200-201). Cronjé seems to forget that, in the opening chapters of his book, he explained at great length the propensity of whites/blacks for certain higher/lower forms of labour and now he tells his white readers that the volksgemeenskap should assume responsibility for their own labour. The result of this would be positive to say the least:

Dan sal volksgenote as arbeidsgenote ook leer om meer waardering vir mekaar se arbeid te hê en dan sal in die besonder ook die stille en onbaatsugtige arbeid van die huisvrou geëer en vereer word soos dit behoort te wees (1945: 193).

Then the members of the volk as fellow labourers will learn appreciation for one another's labour and then, in particular, the silent and selfless labour of the house wife will be honoured and recognised as it should be (1945: 193).

Thus we read how, first, Cronjé wishes for class differences amongst Afrikaners to disappear. All labour, regardless of its nature, is worthy of respect. In the latter part of the above quotation, Cronjé pays honour to the Afrikaner wife who performs her 'silent' and 'unselfish' duty with diligence. To him, she is more than an iconic embodiment of the idealised and contented Afrikaner labourer. Paradoxically, in an attempt to establish egalitarian principles for labour amongst his volk, Cronjé sets the Afrikaner housewife apart from other Afrikaner labourers. Not only is she singled out as a labour icon, but her importance and worth is perhaps best mirrored in the fact that

Cronjé dedicates his entire thesis of Apartheid thinking as it is constituted in this volume to her. He dedicates the book to his own wife and to all ‘Afrikanermoeders’ (‘Afrikaner mothers’) for it is they who are the protectors of the blood purity of the Boer nation.¹⁶ In the Afrikaner house, she performs her domestic and maternal duties in silence and with diligence. But far more important, in the home for Afrikaner posterity, as echoed in the title of this book, the ‘Afrikanermoeder’ is the one who again labours quietly to ensure the future of her posterity. Her sexual chastity ensures her role as the keeper of the ‘tuiste vir ons nageslag’ (‘home for our posterity’) and the guardian to the purity of Afrikaner blood.

The ‘Afrikanermoeder’, who will make a musical reappearance later in this thesis, is a pivotal idea in Cronjé’s theorising. Among the themes of biological, intellectual and spiritual differences between races, blood mixing and its human and social causes, and labour division, his favourite theme remains the ‘Afrikanermoeder’. However, the existence of a permanent home for the Afrikaner posterity so carefully guarded by the ‘Afrikanermoeder’ was, according to Cronjé, threatened by another and powerful force. Unlike the blacks, it was an outside force: Britain. In actual fact, the Afrikaners were waging an ideological war on two fronts. At home, academics such as Cronjé and Eloff fought for what they saw as the survival of the white Afrikaner nation. Their ideological weapons included racial purity at any cost, and complete racial segregation. On the global stage, Boer and Brit engaged in a diplomatic struggle that hinged upon the Union’s association with Britain. For Afrikaner Nationalists, there was only one satisfactory outcome to this struggle. All ties with the English ‘Motherland’ had to be severed and an Afrikaner Republic had to be instated. This cause was spearheaded by Hendrik Verwoerd, who would not only pave the intellectual path to an Afrikaner-ruled Republic, but who would also bring his megalomaniacal dream to fruition through the establishment of a republic in 1961.

Hendrik French Verwoerd and the fear of ‘Englishness’

Like Geoffrey Cronjé, Hendrik French Verwoerd graduated at the University of Stellenbosch and furthered his studies abroad – notably in Hamburg, Leipzig and Berlin. Upon his return, he took up a Professorship from the University of

¹⁶ See Coetzee, 1996, p.168 for a discussion of this dedication.

Stellenbosch while still in his twenties. Verwoerd had his first prominent brush with politics in the 1930s when he became an influential voice in the plight for the alleviation of poverty amongst whites. His first strategic political appointment came in 1937 as editor of *Die Transvaler*, the official mouthpiece of the National Party in the North. Verwoerd would be at the helm of the newspaper for the next 11 years, helping to steer the National Party into power with his regular articles on important political matters. Verwoerd differs from the other intellectuals discussed in this chapter in that the main arena for his ideas was not text books and academic journals, but instead the pages of an official party paper in the Transvaal. It was a suitable platform from where he could intellectually legitimise Nationalist ideas, but simultaneously be the practical politician in the making. His discourse always had a binary function: to report and to comment. And it was by commenting that he supplied the intellectual premises to central notions of Apartheid. Importantly, through *Die Transvaler*, his ideas gained entry into the public sphere. Whereas Cronjé and Eloff wrote for an academic audience, Verwoerd was the academic and politician who inculcated his ideas into the consciousness of the urban Afrikaner. Central to his ideology was the realisation of an independent Afrikaner republic. With that goal always in sight, his invective targeted the United Party government and imperial Britain. His dream of an Afrikaner republic would be the victorious outcome of an Afrikaner struggle against Englishness. Below, I will supply a critical reading of the main themes identified in Verwoerd's writings. The main source is the articles he wrote as editor of *Die Transvaler* between 1937 and 1948.¹⁷ The articles will not be followed chronologically but instead, Verwoerd's discourse will be constructed around certain themes, commencing with his account of Afrikaner origins in the Cape.¹⁸

Verwoerd re-invented an account of the origin of the Afrikaners in South Africa so that it centred on the ideology of an Afrikaner republic. He writes that the earliest 'volksplanting' ('settlement', but literally 'planting of the volk') at the Cape marked the starting point of a process that would inevitably culminate in the establishment of a free Afrikaner Republic. In the beginning, 'our' Afrikaner descendents were wholly

¹⁷ All the articles that will be discussed comes from a volume published in 1972 with 52 selected articles written by Verwoerd between 1937 and 1948.

¹⁸ This approach was deliberately chosen by the present author above a chronological approach because the source, a number of newspaper articles, was not originally intended as an organised thesis around a number of main arguments.

unaware that they were part of a God-ordained plan to establish a 'eie aparte nasie' ('own separate nation') with its own language and culture. Only later did some of the Afrikaners recognise this divine plan and became its champions (Geyser, 1972: 59). Verwoerd, above all, imagines Afrikaner origins so that they would propagate the 'naturalness' of an Afrikaner republic. He would have his reader believe that the Afrikaner republic was the telos and final destination from the beginning. It was 'the natural way' along which the Afrikaner would develop, and perhaps, for Verwoerd and his Afrikaners, precisely because of its naturalness the republic was attainable. Verwoerd admits to certain 'side-streams' in the history of the Afrikaner that seemed to steer the 'central growth' of the Afrikaner volk away from the Republican ideal. He mentions the British annexation of the Cape, the Boer surrender in the second Anglo-Boer war, and jingoism amongst some Afrikaners after 1910 (1972: 59). But each of these side-streams was followed by an Afrikaner revival:

Op kulturele, politieke en ekonomiese gebied het na elke teenslag 'n veel kragtiger herlewing gevolg wat gewys het dat die groeiende Afrikanerdom, wat die land sou beërwe, nie verswak het nie, maar in teenspoed sterker vir sy toekomstaak geword het (1972: 60).

On cultural, political and economic terrains a much more powerful awakening followed each adversity. This showed that the growing Afrikaner nation, who would inherit the land, did not become weaker but in adversity was made stronger for his future task (1972: 60).

Added to the notion of a 'natural' Afrikaner republic, we read here a belief in the organic growth of culture, politics and the economy. Verwoerd firmly frames his discourse in the language of nationalism: the destination was 'natural' and the way it would be reached was the organic growth of a volk.

However, Verwoerd's narrative is not solely confined to the metaphysical realm of the Nationalist imagination. Only on rare occasions similar to the passage quoted above, does his discourse lapse into the rhetoric of nationalistic fervour. In most of his *Transvaler* main articles he is purposefully labouring towards the advent of a republic. The republic was an ideal that would remain beyond Nationalist reach as long as the United Party of Hertzog and Smuts was in government. Part of Verwoerd's polemics was thus to garner support for the National Party so that the United Party and Smuts could be removed from power. Apart from snide comments on the Smuts administration, his primary strategy in this regard would be to strike a

number of sensitive chords at the heart of his Afrikaners. Amongst these was the Union's subservience to Britain and its alignment to the 'Motherland' in time of war. In the case of the former, Verwoerd theorised that the empire kept South Africa only as its economic 'milk cow' and 'maidservant' and seriously impeded the growth of Afrikaner trade (1972: 34-35 and 38). At home, the United Party Government treated British interests as superior to that of the Union. With regard to the latter, Verwoerd merely reasoned that the government could have little interest in international matters that did not directly affect the nation (1972: 23). According to him, the Second World War was precisely such a matter that did not merit the interest of the Afrikaner. The Afrikaner agenda remained intact regardless of the outcome of the war. As we have seen, this agenda was unambiguously a republic and neither Britain nor Germany would thwart Afrikaner aspirations.

While Smuts declared war on Germany on 4 September 1939, Verwoerd sounded a different call to arms on the pages of the *Transvaler*: 'Volkseenheid' ('unity of the people')¹⁹ and 'bymekaar kom wat bymekaar behoort' ('bring together what belongs together') (1972: 32). This 'Volkseenheid', is explained in Verwoerdian terms. Importantly, it did not mean the bringing together of 'foreign elements' ('vreemde elemente') into a single volk (1972: 30). Its antithesis was a type of unity of the different races in South Africa that would result in the end of the Afrikaner, his language and his cultural goods (1972: 30). 'Volkseenheid' of the Nationalist (and by implication of Verwoerd) meant the establishment of an 'own Afrikaans-speaking nation' (1972: 31). An early attempt at greater Afrikaner unity was made in 1937 when the Cape National Party entered into negotiations with the South African Nazi Party. It was hoped by both parties that they could strengthen their voter base in future elections through some kind of agreement. Verwoerd reports on the negotiations which turned out to be unsuccessful. According to him, the Nationalists and the Greyshirts agreed on many aspects, such as the importance of the 'Jewish question' (1972: 13). In spite of the fact that most of Greyshirt policy held promising prospects for the Afrikaner, general consensus could not be reached. The point of contestation was the Afrikaner republic. For the Nationalists, this remained the ultimate goal and no one, not even ideological allies (for the greatest part) such as the Greyshirts, would impinge on this national ideal. The Greyshirts aspired to a fascist dictator-state.

¹⁹ This compound word is present throughout Verwoerd's discourse, almost as a mantra.

Verwoerd writes that the Afrikaner Nationalist could not betray his democratic principles for such a vision and the negotiations ultimately stalled (1972: 13-14). However, 'volksseenheid' as theorised by Verwoerd was eventually attained at a 'volkskongres' masterminded by him and held in 1941 in Bloemfontein (1972: 67-69). At this occasion, more than a thousand delegates from Afrikaner political parties, churches and cultural organisations, including the Greyshirts, united under a single National Party cause: the bringing about of an independent Afrikaner republic.

The establishment of unity amongst the majority of Afrikaner institutions was used by Verwoerd to hail a new era of optimism. Two months after reporting on the Bloemfontein congress in *Die Transvaler*, he wrote an article entitled 'Alles kan bereik word' ('Anything can be achieved') (70-71). He reflects on how an Afrikaner inferiority complex now made way for a sense of pre-ordained purpose. This purpose, in the words of D.F. Malan, was the attainment of a republic (1972: 71). Verwoerd further writes that the Afrikaner is already familiar with the organisation of his future republic, and that he knows the principles by which it shall be governed.

Throughout his *Transvaler* articles, Verwoerd constructs these governing fundamentals for the republic. He supplies a number of grounding principles on which all Afrikaners agree. The establishment of the republic of South Africa is the wish of all Afrikaners. It is envisioned as a republic with a powerful government that can bring social and economic transformation (1972: 50). Elsewhere he adds another imperative that is certainly intended as far more than just a footnote: guardianship of whites over non-whites must be a primary principle of the Republic (1972: 66). Apart from these fundamentals, the republic and its leaders would turn away from the 'British sham democracy and plutocracy' presently in power in South Africa (1972: 51). Instead they will return to a form of 'true democracy' that Verwoerd prefers to call 'volksregering' ('volk government'), harking back to the Boer republics of the previous century (1972: 51). The volk wants a strong-willed statesman (Verwoerd here mentions Paul Kruger as example) as their ruler but, he says, they have no dictator in mind. However, he qualifies this statement in an interesting passage where he writes that a type of interim government would be needed (Verwoerd is referring to an interim government when the National Party comes into power). For a limited time, this interim government should be granted unlimited power and Verwoerd suggests that such a government should be known as a 'tydelike groepdiktoraat' ('temporary group dictatorship') (1972: 52). This interregnum government would

focus on the destruction of capitalism and liberalism, a correct approach to the 'kleurvraagstukke' ('colour/race questions') and the Jewish question, the establishment of a state bank, industrial state control, state control of the entertainment industry, poverty relief, eradication of unemployment, a set of requirements for republican citizenship, and a Boer-industry in full bloom (1972: 55). The interim process would be a time of purification ('suiweringstydperk') in which British dictatorship and British-Jewish capitalism and sham-democracy will be expunged from the land (1972: 57). Then only can a 'volksregering' as the ultimate end of Afrikaner aspirations be installed. Verwoerd does not elaborate much on this government of the volk. However, it would function according to the apothegm 'regering deur die volk en vir die volk' ('government through the volk and for the volk') (1972: 57). The system of government would be erected on the fundamental principle that power remains with the volk to elect and replace leaders who are not accountable to the volk and its ideals (1972: 57). As we have seen, unity of the volk would be the key to this republic, and Verwoerd then concludes that, once the republic has been attained, no organisation or party would be able to ruin the unity of the volk (1972: 67). In a more banal article, Verwoerd also suggests that a Boer parliament should return to the traditions of the earlier Boer republics. Verwoerd regards the opening ceremony of the Union parliament as a solecism of the proper etiquette of a Boer parliament. Certain changes should accompany the official opening of a Boer Parliament each year. The pompous display of the military, better suited to London, should be replaced by the most solemn portrayal of Boer religious convictions. Instead of canon fire and the British anthem, Verwoerd suggests that parliament should be opened by a pastor ('predikant') followed by the presidential address with the president arriving by coach (1972: 21). All in all, anglophilia had to be replaced with Afrikaner political haute couture.

How serious was Verwoerd with all his rhetoric of returning to the organisational principles and the traditional practices of the Transvaal and Free State Boer republics and his seemingly erudite excogitations about dictatorship and democracy? To be sure, Verwoerd and his top Afrikaner men modelled the group dictatorship he had once propagated on the pages of *Die Transvaler*. However, it should also be stated that democratic principles were not completely foreign to Verwoerd's South Africa. He was accountable to a republican parliament and a white electorate in a system that could perhaps be described as a minority democracy. But

what had become of the aspiration to model the Afrikaner republic on the earlier Boer republics? The question remains open to dispute. However, a clue emerges in a memorial lecture delivered by Piet Meyer a number of years after Verwoerd's assassination. Meyer reports on their last conversation where he asked Verwoerd whether the time has not come for the present Afrikaner government to develop closer to the structure and style of the earlier Boer republics. A long discussion on this and other matters ensued without Verwoerd giving any indication that the present form of government should be reformed to the earlier model. However, in all fairness to the older Verwoerd, it seems that he was not completely hostile to a type of government reform. Verwoerd's final words on the matter carries the strange overtones of prescience of the fate that would befall him a week later: 'Op my vraag wat die volgende stap moes wees, was sy antwoord: "Bespreek dit met John Vorster"' (Meyer, 15) 'To my question of what the next step would be his answer was "discuss it with John Vorster"' (Meyer, 15).

A number of recurring themes in Verwoerd's discourse has been identified in the above section: unity amongst the volk, the Afrikaner Republic, organisational principles for the Republic, denunciation of imperialism, capitalism and liberalism and the severing of ties with Britain. In closing, I would like to suggest that all these themes centre on a single topos ever present in Verwoerd's writing: the notion of an Afrikaner 'stryd' ('struggle') against Englishness. A few examples can serve to uphold this interpretation. On 1 January 1938, Verwoerd contemplated the year that lay ahead. He identified three local struggles: the struggle of rural Afrikaners to adjust to urbanisation, the political struggle for the National Party against the opposition and, of particular interest to the present argument, a 'bestaanstryd' ('existential struggle') of the Afrikaner (1972: 16-18). Elsewhere, he describes the opposing positions that constitute this struggle:

Hier is immers net twee alternatiewe: jy is vir behoud van die Britse konneksie of vir 'n republiek. Iemand wat nie vir 'n republiek is nie ('n 'nie-republikein') is teen 'n republiek (dus 'n anti-republikein), d.w.s. vir die Britse verband ... Ons stryd is Nasionalisme, wat in Suid-Afrika Republikaanisme is, teen Imperialisme – reguit, sonder doekies omdraai (1972: 50).

There are clearly only two alternatives: you are in favour of maintaining the British connection or of the republic. Someone who is not in favour of a republic (a 'non-republican') is against a republic (and therefore an anti-republican), i.e. in favour of the British connection ... Our struggle is

Nationalism, which in South Africa is Republicanism, against Imperialism – straight, without mincing words (1972: 50).

For Verwoerd there are but two possibilities: the Union could remain part of the British Commonwealth, or it could become an independent republic. Opposition to both the republican ideal and the British connection was inconceivable and impossible. In Verwoerd's mind, all roads had to lead to a republic, and all positions could only be pitted against imperial Britain. The struggle completely to dissociate with Britain became the struggle for an Afrikaner republic. The struggle for a republic was theorised by Verwoerd as a struggle for Afrikaner existence which was threatened by Englishness. Hence, contrary to Verwoerd's earlier suggestions of a 'natural' and 'growing' republican ideal always accompanying the Afrikaner, this reading allows a different account to emerge. In this account the fear of Englishness emerges as the original, pivotal, and final stimulus for the Afrikaner republican dream. The finding of a republic originated out of a fear of Englishness and a necessity to sever ties with Britain. The achievement of the republic would be the only possible victory and means of survival for the Afrikaner. Verwoerd would be the man to bring this achievement to fruition on 31 May 1961 with the creation of the Republic of South Africa. Verwoerd became an early victim of his own creation when he was assassinated in 1966 in front of his Republican parliament.

Piet Meyer and the temptations of philosophy

The final Apartheid ideologue that will be discussed in this chapter is Piet J. Meyer. As noted earlier, Piet Meyer (like his intellectual counterparts) studied abroad and had particularly close connections with Nazi Germany, a fact none to subtly hinted at by the 1942 photograph below.

Figure 1: Photograph of Piet Meyer from *Die Afrikaner Personeregister*, 1942.



Meyer was an important intellectual and academic and, like Verwoerd, he also had a prominent hand in the oiling of the machines of the Apartheid State. Not only did he chair the executive committee of the Broederbond, but he was the head of the local broadcaster and also chaired its board that controlled radio broadcasts. Upon his return from studies in Europe, he became a full-time organiser for the FAK (Federation of Afrikaans cultural organisations) in Johannesburg (Giliomee, 2003: 416). Meyer was therefore an important Afrikaner figure in both the spheres of politics and culture. His literary oeuvre testifies to this duality. Meyer published from around 1940 onwards on political and cultural subjects. He was also equipped with a sound philosophical knowledge that enabled him to publish a book in 1950, *Tussen iets en niks: inleiding tot die eksistensialisme* (*Between Something and Nothing: Introduction to Existentialism*), in which he theorised about questions of existentialism. Here, Meyer discusses thinkers such as Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Heidegger, Sartre and others. In most of his other publications, political and cultural ideologies intertwine and overlap to imagine the Afrikaner anew. Meyer's writing is

often endowed with a philosophical context in which he grafts a historiography of the Afrikaner. This confluence of the cultural, the philosophical and the political made him one of the richest voices involved in weaving the Apartheid narrative. His recondite prose does not strike as sophomoric. It evinces a distinct writing talent and an impressive mind at work. But Meyer was not only a gifted writer. His oratorical skills are confirmed by W.A. de Klerk who remarks on Meyer's popularity as a speaker in the early 1940s (de Klerk: 1975, 214).

Meyer also wrote about some of the ideas encountered in the writings of Apartheid ideologues already discussed in this chapter. Amongst these are Afrikaner guardianship of the land, the continent and the indigenous people (Meyer, 1940: 65-66). Furthermore, he subscribes to the type of racial discourse present in the writings of Eloff and Cronjé. He does, for instance, briefly mention blood mixing and other aspects of race (1940: 122-125). However, it is not primarily in the conceptual categories of race that Meyer expends his intellectual energies and deploys his most effective prose. One way to read Meyer would be to demonstrate how his ideas co-existed and intersected with those of Eloff, Cronjé and Verwoerd. This is not the path followed here. Instead, a number of ideas and themes central to his oeuvre are presented. This becomes a reading, it is hoped, that can better expand our understanding of the intellectualisation of Apartheid as it has emerged up to this point in the chapter.

In an introduction to one of his books, Meyer quotes Paul Kruger's slogan of 'Africa for the Afrikaners' (Meyer, 1959: IX). In his next remark, Meyer enlightens his reader as to precisely who is included in his Afrikaner taxonomy. He acknowledges Paul Kruger as the arch-enemy of imperialism and recognises his own brand of Afrikaners as the only self-reliant Christian Western-European volk in Africa. Not surprisingly, Meyer was referring to white and probably Afrikaans-speaking people as comprising his Afrikaner collective. Once the meaning of 'Afrikaner' is fixed, Meyer proceeds to the following passage:

In Afrika: wees vrugbaar en vermeerder en vul die aarde, onderwerp dit; dra die lig en gees van die Christendom Afrika binne, van die suide na die noorde. Nie in eie krag nie: meteens was die berg vol perde en waens van vuur rondom; 'n Leër van God; Mahanáim. Hy sluit 'n volksverbond met God: Danskraal-Bloedrivier Wonderfontein-Paardekraal. Hy skep en smee 'n taal van Afrika: Afrikaans. Hy tem Afrika: die land van vlaktes en berge, van droogtes en oorstromings, van woestyne en valleie, van siektes en traagheid, van rykdom

en armoede. Hy skep vaste en ordelike verhoudings tussen die volke van Afrika met wie hy te doen kry en help hulle om die eie hoogste ontwikkeling langs eie weg te verwesenlik. Hy put ryklik uit sy Europese erfenis (1959: IX).

In Africa: be fertile and multiply and fill the earth, subjugate it; carry the light and the spirit of Christendom into Africa, from the South to the North. Not in own strength: at once the mountain was filled with horses and chariots of fire all around; an army of God; Mahanáim. He makes a covenant with God: Danskraal-Blood River-Wonderfontein-Paardekraal. He creates and forges a language of Africa: Afrikaans. He tames Africa: the land of plains and mountains, of droughts and floods, of deserts and valleys, of sickness and sloth, of riches and poverty. He creates firm and orderly relationships between nations in Africa which he encounters and helps them to reach their own highest development along their own roads. He is richly nourished by his European heritage (1959: IX).

This passage is worth pausing over for its kaleidoscopic conjuncture of Biblical events with Afrikaner historiography, all couched in delirious images of war and land. Meyer starts by transposing a section of the Genesis account of Eden to Africa and replaces Adam with the Afrikaner as the great executor of God's will. The Afrikaner was to be fruitful, multiply, subdue the country, and spread Christianity from the South to the North. That would be his God-ordained calling in dark Africa. This, the author continues to tell us, the Afrikaner was not to achieve in his own power. Following the colon in the above passage is an almost sectarian vision of heavenly injunctions and a *deus ex machina* intervention. Meyer writes about an army of God, horses and chariots, replete with a reference to Mahanáim.²⁰ Just like the Israelites of Biblical times, Meyer seems to suggest, the Afrikaners would not have to conquer the dark continent in own strength. The message is clear: the Afrikaners are empowered and approved by God and their military forays in the land cannot but bear evidence of etherial interventions. Meyer then syntactically enlists these Afrikaner military forays (Blood River and Paardekraal) into a Biblical and specifically Old Testament Israel narrative. At this point Afrikaner history enters a different realm. Blood River and Paardekraal become tangible and memorable examples of divine intervention.

Throughout this passage, it is almost as if Meyer's prose lapses into a type of delirium. He speaks of a mountain, horses, wagons, fire and an army of God. Then, in what seems like a sobering moment, all holy masquerading is set aside, all Biblical references vanish and the Afrikaner emerges as the central character. The Afrikaner

²⁰ This is a particularly interesting reference. 'Manaháim' is the name given in Genesis 32 by Jacob to refer to a specific geographic location where, as related in the New International Version, he 'met with the angels of God'. The word, a deliberate reference to divine appointment, can be translated as 'two camps'.

‘creates’ a language of Africa, ‘tames’²¹ not only the country but the continent, and establishes the notion of guardianship over indigenous peoples. Finally, the Afrikaner draws on his European heritage and reaches his ordained destination: an independent Christian and Western volk in Africa. The entire passage can be constituted as Meyer’s microcosm of the Afrikaner origin, calling and fulfilment in Africa. The passage also entertains a kind of sectarian conflation of religion, history and philosophy.

Meyer was writing with the aim to intellectualise and even exculpate Apartheid. For all the hybridity and beauty of his prose, the extraordinary metaphysics deployed in the above passage would not fully attain that goal. He had to solve another existential issue to imagine the Afrikaner as simultaneously independent and Western. On the one hand, all ties with Europe had to be severed for the Afrikaner to be an own (‘eie’) volk belonging to the African soil. On the other hand, in what could perhaps be best described as an Afrikaner-European commensalism, the Afrikaner had to remain ‘European’ to negate racial equality through the instalment of Apartheid.

In another section written in an earlier volume, Meyer gives a slightly altered account of Afrikaner origin than the one quoted above. It is not only an account of the Afrikaner’s existence, but also provides the hermeneutic tool through which to interpret this account. This earlier passage lacks the richness of imagery – both Biblical and military – to conceive of the Afrikaner as an autonomous volk. In this earlier passage, Meyer writes that the Afrikaner world-view (‘wêreldbeeld’), lifestyle (‘lewensvorm’) and language were not simply further developments of its Dutch antecedents (Meyer, 1940: 81). Instead, it was a ‘new and original spiritual creation’ drawn from an ‘own’ Afrikaans spiritual approach (‘geestesinstelling’) (1940: 81). However, it does not preclude all German, French and Dutch influences. In actual fact, the Afrikaner world-view and lifestyle derived from its Dutch counterparts. But, he tells us, the ‘original newness’ is not merely derivative from its precedents (1940: 81). What Meyer does not state, but tacitly implies and hints at, is that the ‘original’ and ‘new’ Afrikanerdom should be understood as deriving from metaphysical origins while recognising certain ‘European’ characteristics in the Afrikaner lifestyle,

²¹ This particular verb and the description of ‘taming a country’ can be singled out as a topos in the discourses of Apartheid intellectualisation and Afrikaans music historiography. In later chapters I will again draw attention to this specific metaphor.

language and world-view. History suggests that the Afrikaner was at least partly descended from European settlers and mainly from intermixture with and between some of the local tribes. Meyer rewrites this history to imbue the Afrikaner with a God-ordained origin and calling. But he retains the European heritage of the Afrikaner, not to explain Afrikaner beginnings, but to separate the Afrikaner from other indigenous South African peoples. As will become clear, Meyer kept the 'Europeanness' of the Afrikaner ever-ready at his disposal.

Meyer's prose certainly does not lack variation on the recurring theme of Afrikaner origins. Apart from the two passages referenced above, Meyer revised the origins and historiography of the Afrikaner in the opening chapters of his book *Trek verder* ('Trek onwards'). Here, in full intellectual flight, Meyer theoretically frames Afrikaner history within a discourse of European intellectuals such as Kant, Hegel, Marx and Freud, all the while retaining and stressing the Afrikaner link to Europe.

Meyer did not only write with frequency about the origins of the Afrikaner. Often his literary project focussed on the Afrikaner character, nature and essence. Hence, in his 1940 publication aptly entitled *Die Afrikaner*, Meyer explains the nature of his research by stating that the study would attempt to determine the 'content' ('inhoud') and 'essence' ('wese') implied by the phenomenon of the Afrikaner (Meyer, 1940: 8). Later, he refines his approach by identifying specific topoi that would guide his enquiry into the essence of the Afrikaner. He writes that we cannot fully comprehend the essence of a volk by studying its cultural creations alone. Although such a study will lead to great insight, the essence of a volk is not fully revealed in its cultural creations. The researcher should also consider the 'spiritual mentality' ('geestesinstelling') of the volk towards its experienced reality ('werklikheid') (Meyer, 1940: 19). This in turn is mediated through the 'volkstaal', Afrikaans (1940: 19). Meyer tells us that both the cultural creations of a volk, and its experience of reality as mediated in the language of the volk, should be considered when construing the essence of the volk. Meyer then lists three types of spiritual orderings that a volk could adopt: idealism, realism or totalism ('totalisme') (1940: 20). Realism constitutes a position from which the experienced reality of the volk ('werklikheid') is observed through the senses, in other words through empirical observations (1940: 20). Idealism implies that the experienced reality of the volk exists as an idea or ideology. The empirical is reality if it embodies timeless ideas or values (1940: 21). Totalism combines realism and idealism into an experienced reality

by the volk. Meyer suggests that it is this latter approach that characterises the Afrikaner (1940: 21). Thus the essence of the Afrikaner requires a diligent study of cultural creations and spiritual mentality, both mediated through language. Meyer seems to employ his methodology throughout his intellectual work. In the section where Meyer sets out his approach, he also writes that the researcher should approach his work without any preconceived partiality (1940: 19). He is thus advocating an objective research position and quietly staking his own claim to such a position in relation to his writing.

When Meyer theorised on language and in particular on Afrikaans, he conveniently dispensed with the notion of 'Europeanness'. Hence, he writes in the first passage quoted above that the language of the Afrikaner is 'a language of Africa'. Language, and in particular the mother tongue of the Afrikaner, is a topos often present in his oeuvre. Meyer writes that language was the only 'cultural weapon' available to the Afrikaner (Meyer, 1940: 96). Maintaining and developing Afrikaans was the only way in which the Afrikaner could exist as a separate volk. On the same page, he purports a 'cultural struggle' ('kultuurstryd') against the British. Within the context of this struggle, the Afrikaner would realise his separate calling through a type of language consciousness. It is chiefly a calling of a cultural nature ('kultuurroeping') that required the development of Afrikaans into a language for writing and the translation of the Bible into Afrikaans (1940: 96). Here, Meyer is thus not writing about the separate calling of the Afrikaner as guardian of Africa. It is a calling that is epitomised by culture and embodied in the development of Afrikaans into a language in which the nuances of literature and the solemnity of the sacred could be expressed. This Afrikaner calling resonated within a cultural battle in which the Afrikaner had his language, Afrikaans, as the only weapon to wield against the enemy, which was British.

Meyer raises the stakes of language even higher when he writes that the only way in which the individual can contribute to the 'spiritual inheritance' ('geestelike besit') of the Afrikaner, is in his mother tongue (1940: 18). In a later publication he seems to broaden his definition of language to include a number of art forms:

Ook in sy stille swygende aanbidding, met verfkwas en beitel, met klanke en liggaamsbewegings gee hy verbeeldend-mededelend uitdrukking aan sy volledige aangespreektheid. Maar ook dit is taal in sy diepste wese. In hierdie sin is kuns en stille aanbidding ook taal (Meyer, 1959: 28).

Also in his silent worship, with paint brush and chisel, with tones and body movements, he gives imagined-sympathetic expression to his total involvement. But this is also language in its deepest essence. In this sense art and quiet worship is also language (Meyer, 1959: 28).

Music, dance and painting could all be constituted as language. Any contribution made by an individual in one of these art forms is then also a direct spiritual/cultural contribution to the volk. If we follow his reasoning, it would be possible to include these art forms with Afrikaans in the cultural struggle against Britain. From the previous quotations on language, it is clear that Meyer theorised Afrikaans to be the most important sphere of contestation in the cultural struggle against Englishness. Now it also becomes clear that Meyer includes art as a manifestation of language.

Throughout his writing Meyer takes up art as a subject. In what could perhaps be described as a form of communal artistic expression by the Afrikaner volk, Meyer describes the essence of Afrikaner art that usually accompanied folk festivals ('volksfeeste'). He writes that these festivities of the volk are occasions for expression of communal joy and gratitude through folk songs, music, particular attire and dance ('spele') (Meyer, 1940: 46). Meyer is here writing about folk art ('volkskuns') as Afrikaner art containing the essence of the Afrikaner. It is important to note that he does not imagine the essence of the Afrikaner as ensconced within high or serious art. Yet he intellectualises Afrikaner art (albeit the art encountered at 'volksfeeste') by drawing on the ideas of Immanuel Kant:

Die wesensinhoud van die skoonheid wat in die Afrikaanse wêreldbeeld gegee is, in die Afrikaanse skoonheidshouding geopenbaar word en in die Afrikaanse kunswerke gekonkretiseer is, is nie dit wat op 'n onomlynde massa van mense of 'n belangelose toeskouer 'pakkend', 'aangrypend', 'oorweldigend' of 'meevoerend' inwerk nie, maar juis dit wat sinduidend, simboliserend die Afrikaanse volksproses verdiep en verinnig, vormend daarop inwerk. In elke kunswerk kom 'n bepaalde lewenshouding, 'n bepaalde funksie tot uiting. Hoewel die kunswerk nie bloot prestasie is nie, is die wesensinhoud van sy vorm geleë in dit wat die kunswerk in laaste instansie wil (1940: 46).

The essential content of the beauty contained in the Afrikaans world view, that is revealed in the Afrikaans attitude to beauty and that is concretised in the Afrikaans works of art, is not that which would impact on an amorphous mass of people or a disinterested viewer as 'interesting', but exactly that which gives meaning to and symbolises the Afrikaans volk process, deepening and interiorising it and exerting formative influences on it. In each work of art a certain attitude to living, a certain function is expressed. Although the work of art is not just achievement, the essential content of its form consists in that which the work of art fundamentally wants (1940: 46).

In the first sentence, Meyer refers to Kant's theory of aesthetics in which the disinterested observer succumbs to a notion of beauty which does not generate desire or interest in the artistic object. Further, Kant theorised that the observer of art and the art critic was not guided by his subjective impressions but instead formed his impressions along objective and timeless values. This Kant referred to as 'taste'. Meyer, implicitly, implies that Afrikaner art does not lay claim to the Kantian model, i.e. the object of art is not that which impresses itself on the subjectively disinterested observer and beauty is not a disinterested aesthetic in Afrikaner art. The value, and perhaps we could state beauty, of Afrikaner art is captured in its deep intimations of the being and process of the Afrikaner volk ('volksproses'). Each work of art reveals a particular aspect of Afrikanerness. The essence of art has less to do with artistic achievement than with what is *willed* through the art work (1940: 46). Kantian taste is hence replaced in Afrikaner art with the notion of will. Elsewhere Meyer writes that the will of the God-obeying volk is representative of the will of God himself (1940: 42). For Meyer, the portrayal of the divine will of the volk is what endows the art work with beauty. He confirms this when he writes that the Afrikaner does not detect beauty in the subjective impression on the disinterested observer. Instead, beauty is encountered in the objective content of his life and his God-assigned task (1940: 46-47).

While Meyer theorises that Afrikaans and Afrikaners were constantly engaged in a struggle against Englishness and Britain, he also suggests that culture (and by implication art) was negatively affected by South Africa's subjection to British sovereignty and an Anglo-Jewish local economy (1940: 127-128). Meyer writes that these two factors impacted negatively on the Afrikaner: the 'cultural moment' ('kultuurmoment') of the Afrikaner volk became 'over-emphasised' and 'decontextualised', the 'cultural moment' became 'narrowly aestheticised', and the Afrikaner communal structure became an 'atomised socialisation' (1940: 128). These processes, again the result of Anglo-Jewish influences, led to a bifurcation in the Afrikaner spiritual personality: the sophisticated Afrikaner individual and the poor Afrikaner worker (1940: 128). Meyer does not subscribe to a society polarised between sophistication and culturedness, and poverty and proletariats. Instead he advocates an Afrikaner society in which the artist is shorn of sophistication. It is a society of which the work of the artist forms part of a communal deed of the volk. Part of this deed of the volk ('volksdaad') is where 'the artist creates clumsily

and worriedly without recognition' ('die kunstenaar moeisaam en kommervol sonder erkenning skep') (1940: 129).

Meyer is here strafing against a view of an exalted or high art. The artist for him is no romanticised genius who stands apart from society. The artist should create with the greatest sense of responsibility, we can even say duty, without ever expecting veneration. If this is the ideal artist for Meyer, he has already supplied a clue of what he would consider the ideal Afrikaner artefacts. The ideal artefacts appealed to the will of the volk rather than a universal taste. Meyer's Afrikaner encountered beauty in the expression of the highest and God-ordained values of the volk. The occasions for such artefacts were festivals of the Afrikanervolk which provided public displays of joy and gratitude.

In closing, it might profit to emphasise a number of points in Meyer's intellectualisation of Apartheid. Three themes have been critically evaluated in his work: Afrikaner beginnings, language and art. Within each of these themes, Meyer worked out related ideas such as the calling of the Afrikaner, Afrikaans as the mother tongue of the Afrikaner and a cultural struggle against Britain. I would suggest that Meyer's thematics inhabited an intellectual world bordered by the notion of struggle. Each theme was worked out within a context of a struggle. Sometimes it was a struggle against the British and sometimes a struggle against the Bantu. When Meyer chaired the Broederbond or the SABC, he was practically participating in this struggle. When he was writing, it was an intellectual struggle of ideas that ideologically unfolded across the pages of his books. One of his chief weapons in this struggle of ideas was the Europeanness of the Afrikaner. He would draw on it and dispose thereof with only one constant always present: the Afrikaner had to be the benefactor at all times. When he wrote about the origins of the Afrikaner, he linked the Afrikaner in his narratives to Europe. However, the 'new creation' that came to exist as the Afrikaner, should not be construed according to its Europeanness. We see here that Meyer retains the Europeanness of the Afrikaner because locally, the existence of the volk was threatened by a majority of indigenous peoples who were suppressed by the Afrikaner. The Afrikaner had to be European and different and superior to the indigenous inhabitants to be their guardian and oppressor. Simply stated, when engaged in an internal struggle for land and power against the coloured races of Africa, Meyer's Afrikaner was European and divinely appointed to the continent. When the struggle was a cultural one, the indigenous people of Africa

disappear from Meyer's equation. The cultural struggle took place in the realm of language and also art. The intellectual enemy was England and Englishness. Here, Meyer would not freely draw on the European link of the Afrikaner. In the context of a struggle against Englishness, the Afrikaner could not be European. The Afrikaner had to be the only white volk in Africa, with an own language which is also an African language. While Meyer's prose is often set within a context of a struggle against another entity or people, his prose paradoxically displays an obsession with the idea of separateness. The Afrikaner was a separate volk (1940: 81) with a separate calling and culture (1940: 7) and a separate godly destination (1940: 99). However, this separateness is couched in a struggle for culture and country and hence was never attained. It is a separateness that remains physically deferred and only present in his prose. This separateness could only be realised when Apartheid would complete a full circle to that state of 'natural Apartheid' as imagined by Rhodie and Venter. Like 'natural Apartheid', this state was never anything but an ideology and an ever-elusive Afrikaner Utopia.

Conclusion

The first three centuries of colonial history in South Africa saw the Afrikaner and sometimes the British expanding their influence geographically. It was an expansion accomplished by negotiations, but more often by military measures. While the twentieth century was the era of international wars, local organised wars was brought to a close in 1902 with the Peace Treaty of Vereniging. The end of warfare with weapons hailed the beginning of a warfare of ideas in which the Afrikaner would carefully and systematically intellectualise the core tenets of Apartheid. Gerrie Eloff became the earliest voice in a discourse that centred on spiritual, intellectual and biological differences amongst the various races in South Africa. For him, race purity of the Afrikaner had to be protected and preserved. Blood mixing weakened the race and resulted in a regressive bastard race. Geoffrey Cronjé took over much of Eloff's racial ideas and wrote with the same vehemence against racial mixing. In 1945, Cronjé provided a book that, in hindsight, reads like the practical and intellectual guide to the policy that would become official in 1948 – that of Apartheid. H.F. Verwoerd, known as the architect of this policy, was also an important figure in the intellectualising of Apartheid. Whereas a fear for blood mixing always lurks beneath

the surface of the writing of Eloff and Cronjé, a fear of Englishness is constantly haunting Verwoerd's discourse. Piet Meyer, a close confidant of Verwoerd and the author of a memorial lecture for Verwoerd, was also an intellectualiser of Apartheid. While Verwoerd's writings display a fear for Englishness, Meyer is ever cognisant of a cultural struggle against Anglicisation and a power struggle where the prize was control of South Africa. The one word present in the discourses of Eloff, Cronjé, Verwoerd and Meyer is 'suiwerheid' ('purity'). It meant jointly a process of and a struggle for Afrikaner purity from the contaminating agents embodied in black, brown and Briton. Throughout, we have encountered how musical terminology (such as 'disharmony') is included in the greater discourse of Apartheid thinking. The biological discourse of race was seen to merge into the cultural sphere in a process where physical differences acquired cultural meanings and applications. This collapsing of several discourses into one another allows for an interplay of ideological forces between them. This interplay of forces between the political, the cultural (and by implication the musical) will direct the critical reading of the cultural and musical discourses that are the focus of the next chapter.

Chapter 2

In *Country of my skull*, Antjie Krog reports the testimonies of the notorious Vlakplaas Five before the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC). In her narrative she interrupts the testimonies unfolding before the TRC to wonder about her own connection with these Afrikaner men:

What I have in common with them is a culture and part of that culture over decades hatched the abominations for which they are responsible. In a sense it is not these men but a culture that is asking for amnesty (Krog, 1998: 90).

An entire culture in need of amnesty is a notion not familiar to our understanding of reconciliation. Yet, accepting the notion of a shared cultural heritage amongst Afrikaners *could* conceivably shift responsibility for the crimes perpetrated in the name of Apartheid from individual perpetrators to such a collective culture. Afrikaner culture as shared culture implicates Krog and the five men as guilty, or at least complicit in the workings of Apartheid. Naturally, a description of the culture that ‘requires amnesty’ in post-1994 South Africa is not possible. Afrikaner culture, like Afrikaner identity, was and remains unstable and fluid. It was (and remains) a dynamic construct of ideologies informed by different people at different times and in varying locations. The particular manifestations of Afrikaner culture of interest to this study concern those cultural expressions that could be described as sophisticated, serious or even superior by its advocates and practitioners. Evidence of ‘serious’ or ‘high’ Afrikaner culture is present in the discourse on South African art music throughout the previous century. Its existence is affirmed in the writings of musicologists, composers and performers who all theorised about the creation of a home-grown sound for local art music in writings that probed the possibility of a national musical idiom signifying Afrikaner culture. Following on from Krog’s statement, Afrikaner ‘high’ culture is as implicated in Apartheid discourse as any other markers of Afrikaner culture.

In a paper delivered at a colloquium hosted by the music department of the University of Stellenbosch in 2009, the South African-born composer John Simon voiced his disapproval and frustration with the position of art music in the current political dispensation. Such utterances of dissatisfaction are not exceptional in South Africa today, and are also not without justification. Dwindling financial support has

resulted in the closing down of a number of symphony orchestras, arts councils and other structural bodies responsible for the organisation of 'high art' throughout the country. Composers like Simon count themselves lucky if their compositions receive a single performance by a local orchestra. Simon's position is an instructive one for Krog's notion of 'cultural amnesty'. In Apartheid South Africa his music was not popular, especially when indulging in political gestures like paying homage to Black Consciousness leader Steve Biko. But for Simon, whatever his personal and artistic expectations for a new South Africa might have been, they have been thwarted. His music is still not heard in the country and in the 'rainbow nation' he remains an outsider. If moral objections drove him from the country pre-1994, it is now disillusionment with the current dismal opportunities for composers of art music that sees him returned to Britain. Simon's case gives rise to a number of questions. Was art music (so much a part of Afrikaner culture) always in service of Apartheid? Are composers and performers complicit to such an extent that art music should be anathematised in the present South Africa? Is Simon, who has lived in voluntary exile for a great deal of his life (both now and prior to 1994), part of the group that should be requesting amnesty as Krog suggests?

Recent musicological writings on South African art music have identified this music with extreme positions of inclusion and exclusion under Apartheid. Complex figures like Simon have not gained entry into this discourse of extreme polarisation. Mostly, art music has been closely allied to Apartheid through a positing of (white) musicians and composers mostly as beneficiaries of a white hegemonic system. One example is the *Musical Times* article written by Chris Walton on Anton Hartman, where this 'leading musical administrator in South Africa' is designated a place with those 'broeders' ('brothers') who perpetuated every-day Apartheid and partook of its spoils meant for white Afrikaners.²² Hartman emerges from this article as a mediocre conductor and musician catapulted to power and prominence through his favourable connections with the Afrikaner Broederbond and individuals such as Piet Meyer. Another example is the following remark by Christine Lucia in the introduction to her single-volume reader of South African music:

²² The article appeared in *The Musical Times* vol. 145, no. 1887 (summer 2004) pp. 63-74.

The monolithic Europe-driven cultural institutions of twentieth-century South Africa so clouded the view of this plurality for the past 100 years that, until 1994, Western music seemed indeed to constitute a homogenous block, supporting the Nationalist edifice both metaphorically (through legislation) and literally (the State Theatre in Pretoria for example) (Lucia, 2005: XXII).

In a final example of how art music has been aligned to Apartheid, South African-born composer David Höningsberg gave an account of art music and Afrikaners under an Apartheid government seemingly distributing largesse to all forms of Afrikaner ‘high’ culture.²³ While the views of Walton, Lucia and Höningsberg raise legitimate questions that merit deeper investigation, and while the existence of Apartheid-era organising bodies that benefited the arts cannot be denied, I should like to suggest that most assumptions of the mutually beneficial relationship between art music and Apartheid are simplistic and under-researched. Not one of the authors quoted above mentions any statement by a composer/performer that might intimate even the slightest disillusion with the Apartheid powers. However, such critical voices during Apartheid are not too difficult to find. Throughout this and the following chapter, such examples will be encountered. The Schutte commission of 1981, appointed to investigate government funding of the arts in South Africa, also poses the possibility of a more complicated narrative. The then minister of national education, Gerrit Viljoen, requested the president to appoint a commission of enquiry into the ‘progress’ of the creative arts in South Africa. Some of the concerns that led to the appointment of the commission were the ‘lukewarm’ and ‘disinterested’ public attitudes towards art as well as the ‘relatively low’ state expenditure on arts and humanities (Werth, 1986: 56). As will be demonstrated later, leading Afrikaner composers like Arnold van Wyk and Stefans Grové shared this concern.

The often hyperbolic statements of government largesse for white composers and musicians have overshadowed other, perhaps more important, connections between Apartheid and high art. While monetary support might or might not have been lavish for local art music and white composers during Apartheid, there is another economy – an intellectual economy – which became a discursive channel of ideology and metaphor between art music discourse and Afrikaner Apartheid intellectualisation. The often inconspicuous ways through which Apartheid thinking influenced writing on Afrikaans music are harder to locate and theorise than broad generalisations of structural support. However, what makes this relationship between

²³ The article appeared in *Current Musicology* no. 67-68, 1999: 139-56.

Apartheid and high art of even greater interest is the fact that shared metaphors and common intellectual premises of these discourses do not necessarily derive from a conscious decision to adopt modalities of Apartheid thinking into musical discourse and vice versa. The final depiction of the relationship between Afrikaans art music historiography and Apartheid thinking might result in a construction where none of the political or musical forces are expediently de-emphasised or exaggerated. It might also delineate more clearly the relationship between those who intellectualised Apartheid and those who theorised about music. Mark Sanders writes as follows about a similar kind of relationship – in this case the relationship between Apartheid and the intellectual:

The history of the intellectual and apartheid – whether of support, accommodation, or resistance – can, ... be deciphered, not by fixing on apartness alone, but by tracking interventions, marked by degrees of affirmation and disavowal, in a continuum of foldedness or responsibility-in-complicity (Sanders, 2002: 11).

It is these interventions of affirmation and disavowal that will become evident in the reading of Afrikaans music historiography against the backdrop of a discourse of Apartheid intellectualisation. This chapter will critically review sections of Afrikaans music historiography by drawing on selected writings of three individuals: Jan Bouws (1902-1978), Jacques P. Malan (born in 1917) and Rosa Nepgen (1909-2001). Before focusing on the writing of each of these individuals, the cultural and music-historical contexts in which these narratives participated and came into existence will be explored. As part of this contextualisation of the texts of Bouws, Malan and Nepgen, I will briefly pause to consider Afrikaans culture and give a reading of an article published in the 1950s by Stefans Grové. Grové is the single most important Afrikaner composer of the twentieth century who supplemented composition with musical prose. He was well-established as music critic and a visionary of the local music landscape.

Krog's call for cultural amnesty can only be considered seriously if post-Apartheid narratives make room for complexity, complicity, consonance and dissonance between culture and Apartheid. Arguing a case of complicity based primarily on the interconnectedness of high art, race and financial structures, results in misrepresentations. Investigating the *intellectual economy* between music and politics, it is argued here, constructs narratives enabling complex positions of complicity.

Whether such narratives might make Afrikaner culture 'eligible for amnesty' in Krog's sense is not clear. Nor is the process by which amnesty could be granted to an entire culture immediately evident. However, as Mark Sanders reminds us: 'To have any meaning, responsibility requires a motivated acknowledgement of ... complicity' (Sanders, 2002: 7). It is in search of such a 'motivated acknowledgement' that this chapter and the next will at least attempt to eschew simplistic connections in favour of the richer flow characterising the intellectual exchange between Apartheid and Afrikaans music historiography.

Cultural contexts

Afrikaner culture was not always the monolith Apartheid thinking made it out to be. Only seventeen years before the instalment of the National Party government, Jan Jordaan, principal of the first Afrikaans high school in Cape Town, recorded the following words in his diary:

How small and puny and insignificant is our volk in actual fact! Not yet a million Afrikaners and virtually all unskilled agriculturalists; we have a language that is not standardised, a literature that is still in its infancy. We are poor, materially and spiritually. Who are we to stand up to the entire world? (Giliomee, 2006: 401).

Absent in these words are the pompous national ideals paraded by authors such as Nico Diederichs and the republican ravings advocated in the writings of H.F. Verwoerd. Instead, they seem to be closer to the views of an eminent Afrikaner literary figure of the time, W.E.G. Louw. The younger Louw wrote from Europe to his brother, N.P. van Wyk Louw, of his removal from the 'place of struggle' (referring to South Africa) where a 'new civilisation' was still awakening. Whereas Jordaan admits to the 'insignificance' of the Afrikaner volk, Louw writes of a nascent Afrikaner civilisation:

Ek voel my soms so ledig hier, ver weg van die strydplek, waar nuwe dinge nog aan't groei is, en waar 'n nuwe beskawing in wording is, maar ek self sou ook nog niks kan gee nie, tenminste op die oomblik nog nie (Kannemeyer, 2006: 63).

Sometimes I feel so bored here, so far removed from the place of struggle, where new things are growing, and where a new civilisation is coming into being, but I myself would not be able to give anything, at least not at the present time (Kannemeyer, 2006: 63).

For Louw, writing in the 1930s, Afrikaner culture was still 'growing'. But there is also something that makes his sentiments different from those of Jordaan. Louw articulates the notion of a struggle or more specifically in this case, a place of struggle. South Africa was to be home to 'a new civilisation' that was coming into being, a civilisation with its own cultural and political autonomy. Thus a cultural struggle was waged by these new and cultured Afrikaners that would lead to the establishment of their 'new' culture. It was a struggle that was waged in different ways by different Afrikaners. For some, the establishment of cultural councils and also various festivals to commemorate the culture of the Afrikaner mapped the way ahead. The establishment of the Federasie van Afrikaanse Kultuurverenigings (FAK) as the cultural arm of the Broederbond, and the importance of cultural festivals (such as the symbolic Ox Wagon Trek of 1938, the FAK Conference of 1944, the Van Riebeeck Festival of 1952 and the Afrikaans folk music festival of 1957) were, for many Afrikaners, markers of their maturing volk in South Africa. The Louw brothers chose to participate in the creation of Afrikaner culture primarily through writing. From the 1930s, they would urge and support the publication of Afrikaans literature that represented a new generation of poets and writers dubbed the generation of the 1930s by the Afrikaans poet and playwright, D.J. Opperman. They were also instrumental in the creation of *Standpunte*, a journal that contained articles on literature, philosophy and also music.

Standpunte is a good example of most of the Afrikaans journals of its time. It was not a subject-specific journal, but instead treated a wide range of topics. Writing on music was distributed between journals like *Standpunte*, magazines like *Die Huisgenoot* and newspapers like *Die Burger*. Some of the leading Afrikaans musical figures provided a steady flow of musical prose in the 1950s and 1960s on the pages of the Louw brothers' *Standpunte*. Jan Bouws, J. P. Malan, Rosa Nepgen, Stefans Grové, Hubert du Plessis and Anton Hartman all contributed to the journal. While Bouws, Malan and Nepgen will receive special attention later in this thesis, it is the composer Stefans Grové who wrote one of the most important music articles in *Standpunte*. In this article, Grové voices some of the main ideas with which composers and musicologists of the time grappled. He also unseats the one-sided account of Afrikaans composers and their relation to governing structures that has become popular in the present day with exiguous substantiation.

In his 1952 article entitled 'Probleme van die Suid-Afrikaanse komponis' ('Problems of the South African composer'), Grové addresses the subject of a national art music idiom for South Africa. He states that such an idiom does not exist in South Africa and identifies a number of factors that impede its development. First, Grové is of the opinion that the South African composer of art music cannot draw on indigenous music to forge a national idiom. He regards both Bantu and Afrikaner music as unsuitable in this regard. Grové points to the efforts of Bosman di Ravelli who combined so-called Bantu elements into his orchestral dances and describes the result as too 'raw' and 'primitive' (Grové, 1952: 74). He does not regard Afrikaner folk music as any more promising for the composition of national art music. This music, Grové writes, does not display enough coherent characteristics and is in any case too 'menial' ('platvloers') for incorporation into serious music (1952: 74). A second problem identified by Grové is that Afrikaans composers have no musical predecessors to whose music they can refer in the creation of a national sound-scape. This is because the previous generation of South African composers wrote simple and patriotic songs (1952: 75).

Grové also identifies institutional difficulties for composers of serious music. The work of composers in South Africa are generally regarded with disinterest and a lack of enthusiasm. Commissions for new works are scarce, and when they are made, there is usually a penchant for music that can be described as 'tendency art' – in other words, music that is utilitarian in some or other way (1952: 77). Grové also criticises the lack of interest and funding from the government and the national broadcaster. Similarly, the public and music critics do not escape his invective: these groups are not sufficiently educated, and usually overlook exceptional composers in favour of 'weaker' talent (1952: 78).

From 'Probleme van die Suid-Afrikaanse komponis' we can deduce that any and every Afrikaans composer could not be counted a peremptory protagonist of the Apartheid body politic. Further, the kind of discourse encountered in this article is telling of the subjects that gained importance amongst certain composers and musicologists in the 1950s. There was a search for national music and Grové, although he recognises that South African art music is still in its infancy, accords great importance to the attainment of a national sound.

Another subject addressed by Grové in his article has been mentioned previously in the writings of Piet Meyer: that of folk festivals. As seen in the previous

chapter, for Meyer these festivals were occasions for folk art that would exhibit the essence of the Afrikaner volk – hence a national art. Meyer did not imagine folk art as serious art. For him a conception of national or folk art was reified in the music, dances and attire of the volk. Grové views such festivals of the volk and the artistic expressions so adored by Meyer with critical indifference. He writes as follows regarding these festivals and the concerts favoured on such occasions:

Die verskeidenheidskanker wat hom in ons volksfeeste en ons Afrikaanse konsertwese openbaar, beklemtoon weereens in watter mate die verderflike invloed van die verskeidenheidskonsert hom reeds laat geld het ... Hoewel daar op sulke volksfeeste veel op kultuur Prestasies gewys word, skyn niemand daaraan te dink om, veral in die stede, by sulke geleenthede ook aan die Suid-Afrikaanse ernstige musiek ereplek af te staan nie. Afgesien van sangsolo of koorwerk wat as 'item'- of 'nommer' in son en wind, vasgeknel tussen twee lywige toesprake by wyse van afwisseling gelewer word, tree die musiek op die agtergrond. Skep die volksfees nie die beste geleentheid om die aandag op die Suid Afrikaanse kunstenaar te vestig en sy werk en belangstelling daarvoor deur middel van 'n simfoniekonsert in 'n behoorlike saal (sonder die bediening van koffie of pannekoek tussen die verskillende werke) of 'n toneelfees of uitstalling te stimuleer nie? (Grové, 1952: 78).

The variety cancer revealed in our volksfeeste and concerts, once more emphasises the extent to which the pernicious effects of variety concerts is felt ... Although cultural accomplishments are acknowledged at these volksfeeste, it seems that no one considers, particularly in urban centres, assigning a place of honour to South African serious music. Apart from vocal solos or choral works delivered as 'item' or 'number' in sun and wind, wedged between two alternating weighty speeches, music occupies the background. Does the volksfees not create the perfect opportunity to draw attention to the work of the South African composer and to stimulate his work and interest with a symphony concert in a decent hall (without serving pancakes and coffee between the works) or with a theatre festival or exhibition? (Grové, 1952: 78).

It is clear enough that Grové does not subscribe to the ideas of national art espoused by intellectualisers of Apartheid like Meyer. His slightly comical description of Afrikaner festivities characterised by 'tannies met pannekoek en lywige toesprake' ('aunties baking pancakes and heavy speeches'), supplies a revealing account of the disregard for high art amongst the volk. If we take Grové seriously, we must conclude that there were little traces of a burgeoning Boer art that could interest the composer of serious music in the 1950s when Grové wrote this article. We find here a clear disparity between the ideas of Meyer (who wielded power and intellectualised Apartheid) and a leading Afrikaans composer in search of a national idiom. It is such disparities and the lack of state interest in local art music that are often disregarded by authors such as Hönigsberg, who seemingly have an interest in constructing a

homogeneous history for Afrikaans composers with ‘all for Apartheid’ and the ‘lekker lewe’ (‘nice life’) writ large over it.

Jan Bouws: an Afrikaner after Hartman’s heart

In 1957 Stellenbosch was no longer the small town on the outskirts of a Dutch settlement where Hendrik Biebouw had caused an uproar 250 years before. It was now a flourishing Afrikaner town with a university that supplied higher education of international standing in Afrikaans and for whites only. The university boasted a music department that had recently celebrated a half-century of existence and was the foremost faculty of its kind in the country. In 1957, the Konservatorium hosted the first Congress on Afrikaans folk music organised by the FAK. One of the speakers on this occasion, Jan Bouws, was on his first visit to South Africa from his native Holland. The conference paper he delivered on Afrikaans folk music inspired the creation of an Institute for Folk Music at the University of Stellenbosch, and Bouws was subsequently offered the leadership of this institute. It would eventually result in his permanent immigration to the country whose music he advanced with missionary zeal.

Jan Bouws is the first prolific music historian to write about South African art music and South African folk music. He was born on 28 July 1902 in Holland, where he received his school education, after which he went on to study musicology in Amsterdam. Bouws and his family immigrated to South Africa in 1960 – fourteen years after his first publication *Musiek in Suid-Afrika* (‘Music in South Africa’) which was a history of music at this most southern tip of Africa. He obtained a DPhil degree from the University of Stellenbosch in 1965 with his dissertation on music and musical life in the Cape between 1800 and 1850 and was subsequently appointed as a lecturer at that institution. Although Bouws made his largest contribution in the field of musicology, he composed a small number of Afrikaans folk songs and provided piano accompaniments to some of the existing ones. In 1959, he received an honorary medal for music from the Suid-Afrikaanse Akademie vir Wetenskap en Kuns (SAWK). This award was followed by another from the SAWK in 1967, and also awards by the FAK, and the N.Z.A.V. (Nederlandsch Zuid-Afrikaansche Vereeniging). Bouws died in Parow on 26 January 1978 at the age of 75.

Little is known about the political affiliations and sympathies of Bouws. The most insightful perspective in this regard (save what might be gleaned from a critical reading of his works), is found in an obituary written in his memory in 1979 by Anton Hartman. Hartman, a staunch Afrikaner nationalist, described Bouws as someone who became an Afrikaner long before his first visit to the country (Hartman, 1979: 62). The exact meaning Hartman attaches to the word 'Afrikaner' is not clarified by him. However, one can assume that Hartman would not use the term lightly; he was, after all, himself a true Afrikaner and a member of the Broederbond. Hartman relates that Bouws grew up with strong sympathies for the Afrikaner and his struggles with imperial Britain. One of his earliest encounters with South Africa was when he learned about the 1914 Afrikaner rebellion – an event that inspired him to write a history of South Africa. The importance Hartman ascribed to Bouws was not restricted to his work as historian of Afrikaans music; he was a *Dutch historian* in the early days of South African art music who emphasised and strengthened ties with Holland during a time when local art music was subjected to strong British and American influences. For Hartman Bouws acted as a mediator between Afrikaner and Dutch music histories, someone who could actively intervene in the decolonisation of South African art music by the British.

In the same obituary, Hartman writes that Bouws first started research on South African music in 1935 – twenty two years before his first visit to the country and eleven years before his first book publication on its music. Even a cursory glance reveals that the subject occupying the most space in Bouws's writings, is the Afrikaans song. It was a theme that, as will be discussed later in this chapter, Bouws linked closely to national music. He devoted a number of books and articles to both the Afrikaans folk song and the Afrikaans art song. Another large section of his output chronicles the history of music in South Africa from 1652 onwards. Then there are a number of Afrikaans articles dealing with certain of the canonised composers of Western art music (such as Haydn and Beethoven), while earlier articles considered Dutch music. Bouws also devoted attention to the subject that dominated the writings of Malan and Nepgen – church music – although it never became a dominant part of his discourse. Another aspect characterising his output deserves mention. It was not unusual for Bouws to publish and re-publish a piece of written work with no or only slight variation in the content. Published chapters became articles and were republished in other books, resulting in an output that now reads as repetitive and

stagnant in the body of ideas and historical information it conveys. Because of this, it makes little sense to present a chronological reading of all his writings. The sheer amount of books and articles he wrote place such a reading beyond the scope of the present chapter. Instead, I have identified three different narrative themes favoured by Bouws in the construction of his historical narratives. When reading Jan Bouws, one is often under the impression that his writing lacks a critical engagement with its subjects. Apart from his first book, chapters are usually very short and concise. In the different chapters, Bouws prioritises factual statements over and above a search for meaning. In certain instances his authorial voice is clearly heard in the text, but most of the time he employs others to speak on his behalf. While Bouws frequently quotes composers, musicians, poets and pedagogues, my reading of Bouws will attempt to locate and partially explicate the voice of Bouws himself.

Afrikaner monuments

Two years before the Nationalists under D.F. Malan came to power in 1948, Bouws published his first book on music in South Africa while still residing in Holland. The book opens with some authorial remarks inserted before the introduction. Here, amidst acknowledgements of a number of individuals and general remarks to the reader, Bouws states that some of the biographical information in the book is not complete due to certain difficulties. Referring to the use of this ‘incomplete information’ in the book, Bouws makes the following comment:

Hulle is tog opgeneem om die Europese leser in elk geval met ’n aantal persone in kennis te bring wat van belang was vir die ontwikkeling van die musieklewe van die Unie van Suid-Afrika (Bouws, 1946: 7).

They are included to familiarise the European reader with a number of persons of interest to the development of the musical life of the Union of South Africa (Bouws, 1946: 7).

Reading beyond the unconventional inclusion of incomplete information, the most important fact about this comment is that the book was written solely for a European audience. Bouws might have had a Dutch audience in mind – it was after all the country where the volume was published. However, intriguingly, the book was written in Afrikaans. It is clear then that Bouws regarded the Afrikaner, even in 1946, as European and did not even consider a readership of ‘non-European’ South

Africans. The presence of the ‘non-European’ in South Africa is further ignored by dating the first music in the country to the years directly after 1652. However, Bouws soon remarks on the mixed (‘gemengde’) population of the Cape that, together with Table Mountain, endowed the outpost with its own and peculiar character (1946: 9). The presence of non-Europeans is hence not erased from the book. But ‘they’ are included in the narrative as an exotic element, rather than a possible part of the readership. This assumption of absence and exotic presence grows in importance because it is *intuitively assumed* by Bouws (rather than argued).

In Bouws’s world the Cape of Good Hope resembles Europe in life and leisure. On one occasion he writes that the Cape is like Amsterdam, and on a later occasion, between 1781 and 1791, it resembles Paris (1946: 8, 10). The dances are the same as those being danced in Europe (1946: 28). Prominent composers or performers do not form part of this early historiography. Music is closely allied to the functions of church and state while difference is scripted into race, class and performance practice. In the case of church music, Bouws documents congregational singing and the singing of Psalms integral to the education of children. Music commissioned by the state included military music and music to accompany the social gatherings of governors and ruling authorities. Slaves were often expected to provide the music at these social gatherings of the ruling upper classes. On such occasions, slaves usually performed music without the assistance of a printed score, drawing instead on their aural abilities. Music was also a part of rural life in the early colonies. The rural Boers were very poor and led simple lives. Music for them was limited to the singing of the psalms in an utterance of their joy and gratitude (1946: 23).

Bouws follows his study of early music at the Cape with a chapter on music during the time of the Great Trek. There was no manifestation of art music amongst the Afrikaners to accompany them as they moved north in search of a new life. The singing of psalms remained an established practice and there were also lighter forms of dance music, mostly played on guitar, concertina and violin. The chapter on the Great Trek concludes the first large section in the book. The second of three large sections is entitled ‘Stryd om die lied’ (‘Struggle for the song’). Bouws’s devotion of an entire section to ‘the song’ is indicative of the importance he ascribed to this genre in Afrikaans music. The title is also further representative of a topos present throughout Bouws’s discourse on the song – that of a ‘stryd’ (‘struggle’). It is a topos that was earlier in this thesis encountered in the writing of H.F. Verwoerd, where it

was closely tied to a reaction against Englishness. Bouws seemed to imagine song as a space of contestation, which might in part explain the importance he accords to the genre.

The first chapter Bouws writes on the song deals with the subject of a Volkslied (national anthem) for South Africa. As with many of his other subjects, he would revisit the account he supplies here in later publications. In this early chapter, Bouws documents the various attempts at the composition of an anthem for the Boer republics and later for the Union of South Africa. Finally, in 1936, the text by C.J. Langenhoven, set to music by M.L. de Villiers and known as *Die Stem*, became the Volkslied of the nation. Of importance for the present study is not the history of a national anthem here documented by Bouws. Rather, it is the decision he makes to devote his first chapter in this section on the song to the various national anthems of South Africa in the past two centuries. Not only, as has been pointed out, does the title of this section on the song introduce the topos of a struggle, but the first chapter adds to this narrative of struggle through the focus on the song as a vehicle for national sentiments. It endows the struggle referred to in the title of this section with a national ethos and connects it with various national symbols. The existential requirement of such symbols are enunciated in an editorial of *Die Huisgenoot* that Bouws quotes in this chapter:

Sal ons daarin slaag om so 'n lied te kry wat ewig sal spreek tot die kinders van Suid-Afrika, tot ons wie se liefde so vergroei is aan veld en vlakke en vlei, aan berg en rots en grond (quoted in Bouws, 1946: 68).

Shall we manage to find such a song that will be timeless in its address to the children of South Africa, to us whose love is attached to veld, plain and moor, and to mountain, boulders and soil? (quoted in Bouws, 1946: 68).

The image of a national landscape advocated here is devoid of any human presence. It is dominated by vast stretches of land, soil, open spaces, boulders and mountains, the veld and wetlands as markers of national sentiment. It is this iconic depiction of the soil and fertile land, and an emphasis on nature that would constitute the national ethos of the Afrikaner so succinctly captured in *Die Stem*, the composition destined to meet the national expectations set out in Bouws's article.

The nationalisation of symbols drawn from nature and the notion of an intimate attachment to the soil was carried over from the volkslied into the creation of a national music idiom. This is affirmed in the next chapter on the song during the

second language movement. Throughout this chapter, the search for a national music idiom is the foremost theme in the writing of Bouws. First, he enlightens the reader of the enemy faced by the Afrikaner in the cultural struggle. He quotes a number of sources to state that the end of the nineteenth century marked a threat posed by English culture to all things Afrikaans. The popularity gained by English culture was for example manifested in a preference for English songs on various occasions. Two of the voices who protested against such anglicisation were Bosman di Ravelli and M.L. de Villiers. Di Ravelli raised concerns about the English elements that were beginning to replace established traditions in the domain of church music. On the particulars of such elements Bouws elaborates that the children sang Sankey songs in Sunday school and whenever an offering was taken up, there were ‘meisjes en seuntjies kore [wat] gesing word soos in die Salvation Army’ (‘Girls and boys choruses [that] are sung in a manner similar to the Salvation Army’) (1946: 74). Responding to such musical malpractices, Di Ravelli wrote that the achievements of the Afrikaans churches on national and dogmatic values were not reflected in the domain of art (1946: 75). Di Ravelli preferred the singing of ‘Psalms en gesange’ (psalms and hymns). His was not a lone voice against the evils of Sankey. One Doctor Wangemann (quoted by Bouws) also bemoaned the appearance of what Bouws calls the ‘Sankey-gevaar’ (‘Sankey danger’) and goes on to quote Martin Luther to underscore the importance of sacred church music (1946: 76). Sacred music similar to the Lutheran hymns were, in the words of C.G.S. de Villiers, ‘broodnodig’ (‘absolutely necessary’) for the Afrikaans churches to combat the ‘inferior Anglo-Saxon sacred music’ that ‘threatens the survival’ of the traditional choral music of our churches (1946: 76). The struggle for church music was in this instance one that guarded against the effacement of liturgical values cherished by the Afrikaner. Individuals such as Di Ravelli regarded popular music influences of the English-speaking world (such as Sankey songs) as dubious. In this discourse we hear echoes of a ‘superior’ and an ‘inferior’ music. The threat posed by a certain type of church music was hence not only a national one (‘Englishness’), but also one against the culturally ‘superior’ music that was the Afrikaner psalms and hymns.

The objections to Englishness in music did not pertain so much to church music as it did to the Afrikaans art song. In a 1920 issue of *Die Huisgenoot*, M.L. de Villiers laments the absence of an ‘Afrikaans Schubert’ who could set Afrikaans poems to music (1946: 78). By quoting from another author, Bouws intimates that

such music should ‘breathe the spirit of mountain, veld and moor’ (1946: 79). Here we have an example where certain symbols, in actual fact the exact equivalent of those recognised in the national anthem (mountain, veld and moor), imbue the Afrikaans art song with a national ethos. Bouws also mentions the earliest attempts at a national music idiom by Di Ravelli, but like Stefans Grové, Bouws is in no way convinced that Di Ravelli has succeeded in his endeavour.

It is inevitable then, that Bouws should turn to a discussion of folk music as part of his attempts to locate a national music idiom. Bouws points out a number of problems with folk music that limit its potential contribution to national music. In most cases the words and melodies cannot be traced back to the Afrikaner. Some of the melodies are taken over from European countries or America, while many of the melodies that originated in South Africa do not really belong to the Afrikaner. Songs such as ‘Kimberley se trein’, ‘Suikerbossie’ and ‘Hessie se witperd’, he tells us, originated from the ‘Hotnots’ of the Cape and Bouws writes that most of the well-known folk songs are therefore of either Anglo-American descent, or could be described as ‘hotnotsriële’ (1946: 87). Clearly the latter could not be accepted as Afrikaner folk music, even though the music had originated in South Africa and the song texts were in Afrikaans.

Throughout this early book on South African music, one gets the impression that certain markers for a national music idiom are established (such as the dubious connection with the veld, mountains and the land). However, the creation of a national music idiom had clearly not yet been achieved – not in the serious art songs composed by Di Ravelli, nor in Afrikaans folk music. For Bouws a national idiom therefore remained an ideal musical idiom never sufficiently captured by the local composers discussed in this volume. He recalls the words of M.L. de Villiers who underscores the absence of such a national idiom. De Villiers vexes over the possibility of a local Schubert and then writes: ‘Die Afrikaner moet kan komponeer, want ons behoort tog ook tot die Dietse Verbond’ (1946: 91) (‘The Afrikaner must be able to compose because we also belong to the German-Dutch community’). Bouws adds to this portrayal of a musical Euro-Afrikaner by relating elsewhere how Afrikaans poets made Afrikaans translations of German lieder texts by poets such as Goethe to rescue the ‘musiekgevoelige Afrikaners’ (‘musically sensitive Afrikaners’) from the ‘artless sentimental love songs’ heard on any and every occasion (1946: 89).

While a national music remained a deferred dream for the ‘musically sensitive Afrikaners’, it is clear from the final pages of this book that early and welcome advances had been made on another musical terrain. If an Afrikaner Schubert was not yet emerging, at least an Afrikaner Luther was in sight. Represented not by a single person, but by a collective of composers producing melodies to Afrikaans psalms, the Afrikaners would at least in part be rescued from the ‘Sankey-gevaar’. In this regard Bouws reports the beginnings of an Afrikaans Psalm book. The first fruits of this early labour was the publication of thirty six psalms in 1923 set to music by F.W. Jannasch, who was an avid supporter of the old choral melodies (1946: 99). The Afrikaans translations were done by the poet S.J. du Toit (Totius). In 1935 Totius completed an Afrikaans translation of all one hundred and fifty psalms, thereby paving the way to a complete Afrikaans Psalter. In December of the same year, a music commission appointed to set these translations to music completed their work. The Psalter was first published in 1937 (1946: 101).

In *Musiek in Suid-Afrika*, Bouws organises the narrative more or less chronologically according to certain historic and ‘monumental events’ for the Afrikaner. Examples include Dutch settlement in the Cape, the Great Trek and the Second Afrikaans language movement. His subsequent historiography always portrays and interprets music-historical events within this larger discourse of cultural occurrences at the heart of an Afrikaner historiography with mythical, political and religious meanings for the volk. While the narrative that unfolds on the pages of the book argues for and substantiates the emancipation of music in South Africa, on another level Bouws attaches music historiography to events that have loaded political and cultural meanings. Even if his music history does not display the crude racial terms discussed in the first chapter of this thesis, it remains a narrative in which music is consciously annexed by Afrikaner cultural history. Bouws erects musical monuments for Afrikaner history.

Musical innovators

Bouws's *Suid-Afrikaanse komponiste van vandag en gister* ('South African composers of today and yesteryear') was published in 1957. This 'aantreklike boekje' ('attractive little book'), as one reviewer called it, offered short discussions of a number of South African composers including Bosman di Ravelli, J.S. de Villiers, Stephen Eyssen, M.L. de Villiers, S. le Roux Marais, Arnold van Wyk, Rosa Nepgen and Stefans Grové (Cillié, 1959: 67). *Suid-Afrikaanse komponiste van vandag en gister* displays a historiography organised around certain composers (rather than important historical events) viewed as central to musical life in South Africa.

The first chapter on Charles Etienne Boniface opens with the following question: 'Who can be appointed with relative certainty as the first South African composer?' (Bouws: 1957: 9). He addresses the problem by starting from the assertion that Afrikaners in the eighteenth century in all likelihood did not commit their musical 'ingewings' ('ideas') to paper (1957: 9). Not for a moment does he entertain the possibility that the Afrikaners did not compose in the 1700s. With this settled, he shifts his narrative to the nineteenth century. In the early years of that century, he tells us, a change occurred and music was notated for the first time in South Africa. The discussion then turns to the central figure of the first chapter, the French-born composer and guitarist Charles Etienne Boniface. He is described as a 'merkwaardige Fransman wat sy lot met die Afrikaners ingewerp het' ('an outstanding Frenchman who cast his lot with the Afrikaners') (1957: 9).

Although it is not clear whether Bouws could in actual fact imagine Boniface as an Afrikaner composer, it is clear that neither Boniface, nor the next composer that is discussed in the book, Jan Stephanus de Villiers, were masters of their craft. Of the latter Bouws reports that he was known by the honorary name of 'Jan Orrelis' ('Jan Organist') and that this name is an indication of the direction of Afrikaner interests in music in the latter half of the nineteenth century (1957: 13). De Villiers was the leading musical figure in the Paarl for sixty years and apart from piano and organ, he also taught harp and violin with a large number of students spread across the district so that he had to journey on horse-back to teach them (1957: 13-15). Bouws supplies little information on his musical output. He composed large works for choir, oratorios, and a number of national compositions. The only characteristic of his music that is identified here is a marked preference for triple metre.

The portrayal of De Villiers as a composer predominantly interested in church music and national music, crossing the land on horse-back to attend to his students, is particularly interesting. It echoes with the stereotypical nineteenth-century Boer on his horse traversing and taming a wild land. Here, however, the two Afrikaner indispensables, the Bible and gun, are replaced with the main interests of Afrikaans music: church music and national music. The only ingredient missing from this picture of the perfect musical Afrikaner (to which we will return later in this chapter) is folk music, the subject of Bouws's next chapter. Here the focus is on the (mainly) 'unknown' composer of folk songs. Bouws identifies certain characteristics of Afrikaner folk music: the songs are mostly in a major key, they consist of eight, twelve or sixteen bars, there is a predisposition for simple and 'gemoedelike' ('jovial') dance rhythms, and many of the songs are constructed through combining various melodic fragments of existing songs in a process that Bouws revealingly calls 'contamination' (1957: 22). Bouws writes that this 'kontaminasie' ('contamination') has been remarked upon regarding the song texts, but has not yet been studied in the melodies. He continues to supply examples of melodic 'contamination' as a process through which different songs combine to form new ones (1957: 22). This evocation of 'contamination' in connection with folk music suggests a slippage from musical discourse to the now established metaphors of race and racism. Benedict Anderson writes:

The fact of the matter is that nationalism thinks in terms of historical destinies, while racism dreams of eternal contaminations, transmitted from the origins of time ... outside history (Anderson, 1983: 149).

Anderson not only affirms that the term 'contamination' belongs to a racial discourse, but he further states that, in discourses availing themselves of this concept, contaminations tend to occur 'outside history'. This notion of certain events 'outside history' is echoed by Bouws in his discourse on folk music. He refers to a process through which folk songs not indigenous to South Africa become 'goeie Afrikaners' ('good Afrikaners') through their 'immigration' to South Africa (1957: 19). While certain of these folk 'immigrants' become 'good Afrikaners', others remain strangers (1957: 19). Once they are assimilated into the local folk music repertoire (and in the process transformed into 'good Afrikaners'), Bouws believes that their initial origins are forgotten and erased:

Is hulle eenmaal in die Afrikaanse gemeenskap opgeneem, dan word die name van hulle ouers: digter, komponis en vertaler, of selfs hulle afkoms vergeet (1957: 19).

Once they are assimilated into the Afrikaans community, the names of their parents: poet, composer and translator, or even their descendents are forgotten (1957: 19).

Hence, the origins of these folk immigrants, in the words used by Anderson, lie beyond history. These folk songs, conceived outside of South Africa, beyond history, become 'good Afrikaners' through a process of erasure and the adoption of an Afrikaner identity. The fact that Bouws employs personification (the songs are 'foreigners', 'immigrants' and 'good Afrikaners') encouraged a reading within a racist discourse. It is particularly interesting to note this kind of discourse in Bouws, as folk music intuitively connects with nationalism rather than race and racism. However, it is clear that Bouws's theorising on folk music did not take place outside the metaphoric space of race. This is confirmed by the earlier disowning of certain folk songs because of their 'hotnot' origins. Whereas it was remarked earlier that Bouws turned to folk music in his search for a national sound, it is clear that this discourse was at least partly embedded in the metaphors of race and racism.

The next chapter of *Suid-Afrikaanse komponiste van vandag en gister* deals with the life of Bosman di Ravelli, who is described by Bouws as a 'forgotten' and 'tragic' figure (1957: 27). He was far ahead of his fellow Afrikaners in his refined knowledge of music, but was unfortunately neither a pioneer nor a leader (1957: 27). Bouws portrays him as a composer with great potential, but one who becomes a disappointment as Afrikaner pioneer because of his decadence. His 'decadent' quest for 'oorbeskawing' ('over-civilisation') was foreign to the nature of the 'young' and 'burgeoning' art of his volk (1957: 27). This statement reveals rather less about Di Ravelli than it does about Bouws. For Bouws, Di Ravelli's search for a national music amongst the Zulus was in itself a betrayal, a confirmation of a latent racist embeddedness already identified in this book. The odd use of the term 'decadence' clearly departs from its use in European contexts, but is nevertheless meant clearly to contrast with ideas of national music or nationalism.

The next two composers discussed by Bouws stand in stark contrast to the decadent and refined Di Ravelli. Neither Stephen Eyssen, nor M.L. de Villiers could rival Di Ravelli's musical education and knowledge. Yet Bouws is generous in his praise for the contributions of these men. Stephen Eyssen was a composer who

addressed the volk through his music. This enabled his music to move ('ontroer') its listeners (1957: 32). In his song 'Segelied', Eyssen achieved what Di Ravelli could not: lasting enthusiasm for the Afrikaans art song (1957: 33). Not only was he a national composer, but through his educational projects and school concerts, he greatly contributed to the musical development of the Afrikaner (1957: 33). Of M.L. de Villiers, Bouws writes no less extravagantly:

Die komponis van 'Die Stem van Suid-Afrika', Ds. M.L. de Villiers, was in die twintiger jare soos die waardevolle oktaaftoon wat die volheid van die grondakkoord kom versterk²⁴ (1957: 35).

The composer of 'Die Stem van Suid-Afrika' was in the twenties similar to the precious octave tone that enhanced the fullness of the fundamental chord' (1957: 35).

Although Bouws does not attempt to conceal De Villiers's amateurishness as a composer, whatever he lacked in musicality and craftsmanship was completely overshadowed by his single greatest achievement: the composition of the melody to 'Die Stem'. For Bouws, this secured his place of honour in South African music historiography. De Villiers was acutely aware of the absence of great Afrikaner composers who could serve as his example in creating a tradition of national music. He writes:

Hoe verlang ons na die rye van groot manne in die toonkuns op wie ons kan aanspraak maak ... 'n Mens voel innig behoefte aan afkoms, aan herkoms, aan eeueoue eie musikale herediteit! (1957: 36).

How do we not long for a line of great men in composition to whom we could appeal ... one feels an acute need for lineage, origin and for an own centuries-old musical heredity! (1957: 36).

Because of the absence of great historical musical precedents, De Villiers re-imagines himself as a composer disconnected from his native country's musical past. He therefore harks back to nineteenth-century Europe and chooses Schubert, Brahms and Schumann as his models in art song composition (1957: 36). And just like his European predecessors, Bouws tells us, De Villiers also turned to folk music as compositional material for songs (1957: 36). As a composer, De Villiers hardly casts an impressive figure in Afrikaans music historiography. However, one of the dominant themes in Afrikaans music historiography (and a strong theme in Bouws's

²⁴ The remainder of the 'grondakkoord', Bouws tells us, consisted of Jan Orrelis or J.S. de Villiers, Rocco de Villiers and P.K. de Villiers.

writing), the search for national music, is closely connected to his name. In spite of this connection, he never attained the status of a national composer or an idiom that could point the way to a possible future of such music. Although 'Die Stem' became the national anthem and foremost national icon for the Afrikaner, it was composed in a musical idiom that was by no means uniquely Afrikaans-national in character. The search for a composer of national music therefore had to continue beyond De Villiers and 'Die Stem'.

Following the chapter on De Villiers, Bouws also writes chapters on Charles Nel, S. le Roux Marais, Johannes and Gideon Fagan, Arnold van Wyk and Blanche Gerstman. In his work on Marais, Bouws attributes value to the songs not because they are the works of an innovator, but because they are honest portrayals of the feelings of the composer (1957: 46). Apart from this, Marais is an important figure because he 'taught his volk to sing' (1957: 47). The reader is told that the premature death of Johannes Fagan meant that the Afrikaans song 'misses a second chance' (the first is of course the failed attempts of Di Ravelli) (1957: 49).

Bouws makes much of South Africa's 'three female composers': Blanche Gerstman, Rosa Nepgen and Priaulx Rainier (1957: 59). He does not assign a chapter to Rainier, an interesting decision given her successes abroad. However, he does give ample attention to Rosa Nepgen, stressing the important contributions Nepgen made in the genres of art song and church music. As early as 1957 (Nepgen was then only 48), Bouws could divide her compositional career into three phases. It is clear that he has a high opinion of her work: he writes that she approached every text in a 'fris' ('fresh') and 'onbevange' ('original') manner (1957: 68).

After a brief and somewhat disappointing chapter on the then 35-year old Stefans Grové, Bouws shifts his full attention to the subject that has been ever-present in the discourse, albeit as a subtext. He entitles the chapter 'The national composer' and theorises how folk music could lead to a national idiom. He concludes that composers should not be over-concerned with composing national music; music that is good will be national, and if such compositions are not accorded national status, the idea of what constitutes national music should change (1957: 81). This is an astonishing conclusion in the context of his book and the rest of his intellectual work. I should like to argue that Bouws should be disbelieved on this point, as for him, national music was far more important than music of any other kind. In arguing for this disbelief, the racial foundations of this national music become an important

factor. The chapter opens by stating that the question of national music has been addressed on numerous occasions and by various composers. Bosman di Ravelli, Anton Hartman, Cromwell Everson and Stewart Hylton-Edwards all argued that folk music ought to be the 'source of inspiration' for national music (1957: 77). Composers like Di Ravelli and Stanley Glasser turned to the music of the Bantu to acquire models for national music. Bouws has already voiced his dissatisfaction with Di Ravelli's Zulu experiments and he is hardly more convinced by the efforts of Glasser to incorporate Bantu music into certain of his piano works. The 'ongelyksoortige' ('unequal') Bantu intervals are incompatible with chromatic piano intervals and hence any contribution made by these musics would be confined to rhythm while melody and harmony remained unsuitable for incorporation (1957: 77). He decides the case for collaboration between Bantu and Western musics by drawing on a statement by Hubert du Plessis, writing that such attempts are bound to fail as 'Bantu music falls outside our comprehension and ability to employ' (1957: 77). Thus it is a 'lack of understanding' and technical inability rather than 'the curious climate of racial feeling' that prohibits Bantu music from contributing to a national music idiom (1957: 77). It is clear that race and nationalism interlocks in this discourse, but even more fascinating is the notion of curiousness, strangeness or otherness exuded by these ideas. It is never made clear if the incomprehensibility of Bantu music is a result of the music's complexity or the restricted abilities of white composers (neither option, one has to assume, would please Bouws). It is important to note here, however, that Geoffrey Cronjé drew on exactly this 'otherness' of Bantu music to demonstrate that the Bantu is only fit for certain lower forms of labour. The concepts of nationalism, race and a utilitarian 'otherness' are as seamlessly part of the musical discourse here as they are of the discourses constructed in the intellectualisation of Apartheid.

The position of Hylton-Edwards is subsequently carefully considered by Bouws. Edwards seemingly held the belief that an 'African Bartók' (of any race) would arise who would be able to forge a national music from the musics of the Afrikaner, Briton and Bantu (1957: 79). Bouws purposefully distances himself from this idea. Afrikaner national music could not possibly reference the worlds of Bantu and British music. If it were to share its Afrikaans origins with any entity, it would have to be one not envisioned by Hylton-Edwards's 'African Bartók'. Finally Bouws turns to another possible path for national music, and it is clear that he is not only

narrator of but also advocate for this particular idea. It stems from Anton Hartman's idea that Afrikaans folk music could point the way to a national music idiom (1957: 78). Folk musics, Hartman wrote, were secular, sacred, vocal and instrumental (1957: 80). The answer to the question of 'origin' is given via Hartman and Bartók:

'n Mens kan aanneem dat amper elke nuwere Europese boere musiek wat vandag bekend is, deur invloed van die een of ander volksagtige kunsmusiek ontstaan het. In Suid-Afrika is dit die geval met die sekulêre volksmusiek, in besonder met die danswysies wat hulle modelle en voorbeelde vind in die instrumentale Europese dansmusiek (1957: 80).

One could assume that almost every new manifestation of European peasant music familiar in the present age, was influenced by folkish art music of some sort from the time of its inception. In South Africa it is the case with secular folk music, in particular with the dance numbers that find their origins and examples in instrumental European dance music (1957: 80).

To avoid any misunderstanding – Bartók was after all an expert on European (or rather Hungarian) folk music and not of the boere-vastrap – *boeremusiek* is simply called 'our folk music' (1957: 80). With a simple (and inaccurate) collapsing of any distinctions between *boeremusiek* and folk music, Bartók also becomes the great expert of *boeremusiek*. Bouws consciously or unconsciously rewrites the account of Afrikaner folk/*boeremusiek* to endow it with European origins. In the first chapter it was noted how Apartheid ideologues repeatedly re-imagined the birth of the Afrikaner. Bouws shows a similar concern with origins. His rewriting of the origins of *boeremusiek* supplies the music with a marked Europeanness: first there was European dance music, then *boeremusiek* and finally a national art music. The circularity depends on the fallacious assumptions of origins: folkish art music became *boeremusiek* which will develop into a national/folk art music. This circularity was also exposed in Chapter One of this thesis, where 'natural Apartheid' was both the 'origin' of Afrikaner history and its deterministic destination. Natural Apartheid remained a utopia in a similar way that a national folk/art music was never achieved on the terms envisioned by Bouws and Hartman. While natural Apartheid was an imagined condition for Afrikaner self-determination, European origins for *boeremusiek* made an Afrikaner folk music possible.

The concern with national music is continued in the next chapter on Hubert du Plessis. In the introduction, Bouws criticises certain ideas propagated by Hylton-Edwards. He arrives at the ultimate question addressed in this chapter: is Hubert du

Plessis a South African composer? (1957: 84). The answer seems to be negative and Bouws determines that Du Plessis did not draw on the 'eie' ('own') folk music in his serious compositions. He explains this in a familiar manner:

Die groot moeilikheid vir Hubert du Plessis as Suid-Afrikaner is, dat vir hom geen Suid-Afrikaanse musiektradisie bestaan nie. Vir hom is daar geen Rameau of Couperin soos vir Debussy of Ravel nie. Volgens hom besit sy volk geen volwaardige volksmusiek soos Grieg en Manuel de Falla, die jong Bartók en Strawinski in Noorweë en Spanje, Hongarye en Rusland van hulle landgenote gehoor het nie (1957: 84-85).

The great difficulty for Hubert du Plessis as South African is that for him, there exists no South African music tradition. Unlike Debussy or Ravel, for him, there is no Rameau or Couperin. According to him, his volk does not possess a fully-fledged folk music such as Grieg and Manuel de Falla, the young Bartók and Stravinsky in Norway and Spain, Hungary and Russia heard from their fellow countrymen (1957: 84-85).

Du Plessis does not compose national music because there is no local tradition that he can reference in his compositions. In the previous chapter, we saw that Bouws only half-subscribed to this idea, but that he did consider it possible for composers to incorporate Afrikaans folk elements in their works. How to solve this conundrum? By reaching to the one other criterium that could make Du Plessis (Afrikaner) national:

Die enigste tradisie wat in die Suid-Afrikaanse musiek bestaan, is die uitgesproke voorkeur van vrywel almal vir vokale musiek in die algemeen, en vir die lied met klavierbegeleiding in die besonder. En as sodanig toon Du Plessis hom 'n regte Suid-Afrikaner, want van sy 19 werke wat hy gekomponeer het, is meer as die helfte vokaal (1957: 85).

The only tradition in South African music is the outspoken preference by all for vocal music in general, and for the song with piano accompaniment in particular. In this regard, du Plessis proves himself to be a real South African, as more than half of his nineteen works are vocal (1957: 85).

Bouws could not foresee that du Plessis would write a large national work less than a decade after the publication of this volume, thus making any defence of his nationalism redundant. After *Suid-Afrika: Nag en Daeraad* there could exist no doubt over the political affiliations of Du Plessis.

Vocal vehicles

The third and last theme for Bouws's historical narratives revolves around vocal music. In 1958 he published *Woord en wys van die Afrikaanse lied* ('Word and

melody of the Afrikaans song'). The title refers to the collaboration between poet and composer in song composition, but Bouws has to admit that a composer-poet has not yet emerged in South Africa (1958: 11). A chapter on the song 'Letaba' by S. le Roux Marais is introduced by a plethora of references to amongst others Mendelssohn, Wagner, Smetana, Schubert, Stravinsky and Grieg. 'Letaba', he writes, is a South African 'water music' (1958: 18). In fact, most of the chapters in this book open with a preamble that draws on established composers or poets in the Western canon. Again Bouws dwells on the failure of South African composers to incorporate folk music into their compositions. This time Cromwell Everson is also criticised (in the previous book he was said to possess much knowledge on the folk song with frequent incorporations thereof in his music) (1958: 25). Finally, one of the ideas that was propagated in *Woord en wys van die Afrikaanse lied* again makes an appearance: the song as part of an Afrikaner struggle. The song has an important role in the language struggle of the Afrikaner, and it is also closely allied to a cultural struggle (1958: 58, 96). Another theme in this volume is that of 'suiwerheid' ('purity'). In a short chapter on a setting by Hubert du Plessis of a poem by D.J. Opperman, Bouws writes as follows:

Toe Opperman se Kersliedjie in nommer 26 van Standpunte (in 1952) verskyn het, het ek gewonder of daar nie op die een of ander tyd 'n komponis deur hierdie kunswerkie geraak sou word nie. Sou dit vandag nog moontlik wees om 'n kersliedjie te komponeer wat ons deur sy suiwerheid kan ontroer? Of moet ons maar tevrede wees met wat ons van ons vaders aan suiwerheid en ingetoënheid geërf het? Kan die hedendaagse – die 'moderne' – komponis vir een keer sy ingewikkelde toonsisteme en skokkende ritmes los om kind met die kinders te wees? Want ek dink u sal saamstem dat Opperman se 'drie outas' geen veelkleurige kombens van die kromatiek moet omslaan as hulle van die Karoo af die ster volg na Distrik Ses nie (1958: 38).

When Opperman's Christmas song appeared in Standpunte No. 26 (1952), I wondered whether a composer would not be touched by it. Would it be possible in contemporary times to compose a Christmas song that could still move us through its purity? Or must we be satisfied with what we inherited from our ancestors in purity and pristinity? Can the 'modern' composer of our day for once depart from his complicated tonal systems and shocking rhythms to be a child with the children? Because I think that you would agree that Opperman's 'three outas' require no colourful chromatic blanket when they follow the star from the Karoo to District Six (1958: 38).

'Suiwer' in this context is meant to stand in juxtaposition to 'complicated tonality' and 'shocking' rhythms. Purity will be attained through 'composing' in a simple and uncluttered style. While 'purity' ('musical simplicity') is desired in the accompaniment, the racial 'other' makes an appearance with the 'drie outas' (three

black men). These ‘outas’ are simple and unsophisticated people. Describing them on their way to District Six where the Saviour awaits them, Bouws phantasises about ‘die eenvoudige outas uit die Karoo wat “die skaapvet, eiers en biltong” kom bring’ (‘the simple black men from the Karoo who bring “ sheep’s lard, eggs and biltong”’) (1958: 39). The simplicity of the ‘outas’ require a pre-modern, simple and pure musical accompaniment. Bouws thus evokes the racial other to argue for a folk style of composition. Afrikaner nationalism, it seems, takes its aesthetic coordinates not from Europe, but from a paternalistic desire to ‘clothe’ and ‘contain’ the racial other in terms that distinguish South Africa from Europe. This is a particularly fascinating example where the language of ‘purity’ is employed in a vision of ‘containment’ (‘purity’ is required in the accompaniment of the song) that is ultimately anti-modern and anti-European. Later in the book the notion of displaced or transferred purity is again encountered in a passage where the racial other is present. Bouws narrates how he listens from his balcony to a singing ‘kleurling’ (‘coloured’):

Dit kom van veraf ... maar dit kom nader en nader, saggies. Vanaf my balkon kan ek hom gewaar, ’n Kleurling wat met sy ghitaar langs die Molenvliet stap en sing. Telkens weer gryp sy vingers onbewus die juiste snare om sy liedjie te begelei. En wát sing hy? Ek weet nie. Dit maak nie saak nie. Miskien het sy lied nog geen woorde nie en sing hy net op vokale. Maar hy sing, gelukkig onbewus van my, sy luisteraar daarbo, wat doodstil staan om die suiwere môrestemming nie te verbreek nie. Dan is hy verby en word sy sang weer sagter en sagter, totdat nog net af en toe ’n paar tokkeltone tot my kom. En ek neurie nog so ’n bietjie die wysie van ’n paar minute gelede wat die sanger – daar verder in Jonkershoek – al weer heeltemal vergeet het. Kan ons komponiste van vandag nog tot hierdie onbewuste spel met die tone kom soos hierdie onbekommerde Kleurling langs die Molenvliet? (1958: 50).

It comes from afar ... but it approaches nearer and nearer, softly. From my balcony, I can observe him, a coloured walking along the Molenvliet with his guitar while singing. Time and again, unconsciously, his fingers grip the precise strings, to accompany his song. And what is he singing? I don’t know. It does not matter. Perhaps, the song has no words and is only sung on vocals. But he sings, happily unaware of me, his listener from above, not moving for fear of disturbing the pure morning. Then he has gone, his singing becoming softer and softer, until only a few of the strung tones reach me. And I for a moment still hum the melody of a couple of minutes previously, which the singer – now in Jonkershoek – has already forgotten. Can our composers of today still give voice to the unconscious play of tones similar to this carefree coloured alongside the Molenvliet? (1958: 50).

Again the racial other is invoked in connection with childlike innocence and purity in an aesthetic ‘lesson’. The coloured man, for the narrator, conjures an uncomplicated musical world: his fingers ‘unknowingly’ strum the guitar, the words are only ‘vocal

sounds', he quickly forgets the song he has just hummed and he lives carefree. But intriguingly there is also a very specific built-in relationship between listener and musician in this little story: the listener observes from the top while the man below unconsciously performs to him. The listener is moved, not so much by the beauty or the 'purity' of the song or its guitar accompaniment, but by the 'oggendstemming' ('morning atmosphere'). Again 'purity' becomes an ideal, and again it is displaced by the racial other to an entity other than the music. In this instance, purity cannot be displaced to the accompaniment, because there is no white hand to compose it with ink on paper. The coloured man himself provides the accompaniment on his guitar. Thus purity is displaced to the 'oggendstemming'.

The 'coloured' voice is one that Bouws deals with repeatedly in his notion of a national Afrikaner *volkstümlichkeit*. In *Die volkslied, deel van ons erfennis* ('The folk song, part of our heritage'), Bouws includes a chapter on the folk music of the 'bruinmense' as he refers to the coloured people of the Cape. He calls the chapter 'Hartseer en lekker-wees' ('Sadness and jollity') and records some of the songs sung by the 'bruinmense as hulle 'n bietjie lekker was' ('brown people when they have been drinking') (1969: 7). The first song he mentions is of the drunken 'Jan Piet', and he then adds that it is still sung by children in Holland today (1969: 7). The themes of child-like emotionality and the 'jolly Hotnot' associated with drunkenness are indisputable. The entire approach reads as a confirmation of Gerrie Eloff's socially compromised coloured.

In all his writings, the 'coloured' remains an ambiguous site of musical theorising for Bouws. In the chapter under discussion here, he concludes for instance that 'of course' all these songs did not belong solely to the coloured people. They heard it from the people they worked for, took it over and changed it in certain instances (1969: 20). On the one hand this view portrays 'coloureds' bereft of creative abilities – an idea also propagated by Eloff. But then there is a residue that is not 'white' in this music. Bouws describes one song of which the origins are 'uncertain', while previously in this chapter we are reminded that he mentioned the 'hotnotsriële' which did not belong to the Afrikaner due to its 'hotnot' origins. While he denies for the greatest part the creative abilities of the 'bruinmense', they remain in his narratives, scripted into various parts, positions and roles on a continuum that always ran parallel to Afrikaner interests.

Conclusion

The discussion of Jan Bouws's writings offered in this chapter does not aspire to be comprehensive. The aim was rather to lay bare and probe the connections between Afrikaans music historiography as imagined by Bouws and the writings of an Apartheid intellectual vanguard. Almost in every Bouws chapter discussed here, the search for a national music and a sound that would be indigenous to the Afrikaner and Afrikaans art/folk music was of the utmost importance. However, Afrikaner national music remained an idealised music. More often than not, this 'failure' was ascribed to an absence of 'tradition' or 'models'. De Villiers longed for a line of Afrikaner musical progenitors, Grové and du Plessis wrote of the absence of folk models, and composers such as Van Wyk, Nepgen and others steered clear of Afrikaans folk music in their compositions. In the discourse on Apartheid discussed in the opening chapter of this thesis, a similar conundrum attached itself to the concept of natural Apartheid: the intellectualising of Apartheid, and the practical implementation thereof, was always a pre-emption of an idealised and utopian future, that of natural (and therefore timeless) Apartheid. A national music (like natural Apartheid) was taken by Bouws as a point of departure towards national music, a future never arrived at, but that would nevertheless haunt and shape the present.

Chapter 3

In 1941, one G. Besselaar wrote of the Afrikaner volk during the twentieth century as follows:

Hy (die Afrikanervolk) het die triomftog van sy nasionale wedloop gerig na die sterre, maar onder stote en stampe aanvanklik reeds geleer dat die Suiderkruis die enige konstellasië is wat konstante koers waarborg. Hier is dit nodig om die juiste nadruk te lê op altwee. Die 'Suider' staan vir nasionalisme, die 'Kruis' vir Christenisme. Die mees welkome trek in die ontwikkeling van Afrikaner-nasiebou is die groeiende besef en leuse: Christelik-Nasionaal. Dit is waarborg van veiligheid (Besselaar, 1941: 56).

He (the Afrikanervolk) had nothing less than the stars in mind in his triumphal national race but learned through trial and error that the 'Southern cross' is the only constellation that could ensure steady direction. In this case it is necessary to emphasise both. The 'Southern' represents nationalism, the 'Cross' Christianity. The most favourable aspect of Afrikaner nation building is the growing realisation and motto: Christian-national. It guarantees safety (Besselaar, 1941: 56).

While Europe experienced the destructiveness of German National Socialism, a different brand of a similarly potent force was emerging in South Africa. Besselaar's pronouncement encapsulates very well the essence of Afrikaner nationalism and underlines one of the great differences with its German counterpart: Calvinism. The Afrikaners were nationalists as much as they were Calvinists. Moreover Besselaar's words also ring true for Afrikaner culture and in particular Afrikaans art music. In the previous chapter, it was suggested that the Afrikaans art song became imbued with national Afrikaner sentiments while it also became an arena of contestation against Englishness. Adding to the national interests pointed out previously, this chapter will add the second aspect identified by Besselaar: Christianity²⁵ will be explored in Afrikaans music historiography. The intersection of religion and nationalism in the Afrikaner psyche has a long history. The Afrikaners have always purported to be staunch Calvinists at heart and (sometimes) also in deed. This finds expression in the title of W.A. de Klerk's book on the Afrikaners *The Puritans in Africa*, while R.W. Johnson reflects on the individual and collective guilt experienced by many Afrikaners in the present South Africa and perpetuated by their unswerving Calvinism (Johnson, 2009: 373-374). In Apartheid South Africa, traditional churches became

²⁵ I deliberately use the direct English translation of 'Christenisme' taken from Besselaar's book. The term allows for an important distinction between Christianity and Christianism, allowing me to introduce 'Christianism' into academic discourse alongside such 'isms' as nationalism.

places where politics and religion could meet and merge. John Vorster, for example, served as prime minister while his brother, Koot Vorster, was the moderator of the Dutch Reformed Church. It is also striking that Apartheid intellectualisation is often shot through with policy justifications straight from the Bible and with the blessing of God himself.

Afrikaner Calvinist zeal also manifested in Afrikaner musical practices. For individuals such as Rosa Nepgen and Jacques Philip Malan, Afrikaner liturgical music had to conform to certain practices reminiscent of early reformist traditions. The Afrikaans Psalter had to be a close replication of the Genevan Psalter. Both of these authors were also active contributors to thinking on secular music. Malan wrote numerous articles, papers, chapters and concert reviews. However, a single mammoth project dominates his oeuvre: the *South African Music Encyclopaedia*.²⁶ Nepgen, who was chiefly a composer of art songs and sacred music, also wrote concert reviews and contributed to more 'elevated' matters such as the literature on the Afrikaans Psalter. This chapter will navigate by the light of Besselaar's directive constellation of Afrikaner life and culture: nationalism and Christianity. It will show how, in the oeuvres of Malan and Nepgen, nationalism and Christianity are ever-present as two sides of the same coin: Afrikanerness. For the purpose of this chapter, Nepgen's writings will serve as a mere introduction to the more extensive writings of Malan. Although Nepgen's writings are not unimportant, she embodies an interesting case because of at least one reason beyond her control: she was a female composer in a male-dominated Afrikaner society. It is with this in mind that I should like to stray briefly from the path set here by the Afrikaner 'star of progress', the Southern Cross, first to consider various textual representations of Nepgen before considering her own writings.

Representing Rosa

After her death on 14 February 2000, Derik Van der Merwe described Nepgen as follows in *Die Burger*: 'Rosa Nepgen was a thinker, an intellectual spirit and above all a creator. Her contribution to South African musical life is formidable' (Van der

²⁶ The scope and nature of this four-volume work places it beyond the compass of the present chapter. However, a critical reading of the work will be of much importance in the study of Afrikaner music historiography.

Merwe, 2000: 4). While one could read the last sentence literally (Nepgen was not a small woman), the quotation, if anything, suggests the fascinating position of Rosa Nepgen in South African art music. As much as she was hailed by Van der Merwe (and elsewhere by Bouws and Malan) for her contribution to Afrikaans art music and sacred music, she was also the laughing stock of certain Afrikaner composers. Chris Walton's essay entitled 'Being Rosa', published in 2005 in *Gender and Sexuality in South African Music*, was the first to explore this aspect of her life. Not only does Walton record a limerick, probably written by Hubert du Plessis, that pokes fun at the composer, but he also identifies a number of occasions where Nepgen was the subject of parody for Du Plessis and Arnold van Wyk (Walton in Muller & Walton, 2005: pp.61 & 63). Her biography in many ways underpins her ambivalent reception by the local music establishment, as do her own writings. One is never sure whether to accord her writing authority, or simply to read it as the ramblings of an aging and sometimes raging Rosa.

Nepgen was born in Barkley East in 1909 to a lawyer father and a mother who was, according to Van der Merwe, an outstanding soprano.²⁷ Van der Merwe further records that Nepgen was fluent in reading at the age of eight. She read Dickens and would sing everything she read. Her inherent musicality did not end there: the young reading-singing Rosa would get hold of a stick, and in front of an audience consisting of her pet rooster, would repeatedly 'make music' by 'playing' with it on a paraffin tin. Van der Merwe adds that 'for her, the noise was real music'. She received formal training in music from the University of the Witwatersrand, and continued to lecture until her marriage with W.E.G. Louw in 1944. During her stay in Johannesburg, she taught piano to the children of H.F. Verwoerd, after he had moved there with his family to assume the editorship of *Die Transvaler*. In 1954, the wedded Nepgen and her husband visited Holland and during this time Nepgen-Louw studied at the Amsterdam conservatory. Three years later, W.E.G. Louw was appointed as the arts editor of *Die Burger*, an appointment that explains Nepgen's subsequent reviews and musical contributions to the paper. In 1968 the Louws moved to Stellenbosch following the appointment of W.E.G. Louw to a professorship at the University of Stellenbosch in 1966. Here, in the mid-1970s, Nepgen completed an honours degree in Italian, for which she attained (she reveals in a 1990 interview), 90% (Britz, 1990:

²⁷ Biographical information on Rosa Nepgen extracted from Van der Merwe's *Die Burger* article quoted above and the chapter by Chris Walton also quoted above.

4). Her Italian interests led to subsequent translations of poems in that language, the setting of Italian texts to music, and a translation of large parts of Dante's *Divina Commedia* into Afrikaans. Her seemingly endless talents also included painting. A 1986 newspaper clipping reports the exhibition of certain of her water colour paintings in Stellenbosch.²⁸

Walton makes two suggestions that could serve as a starting point for unravelling some of the representations of Rosa Nepgen. First, he postulates that the perpetual Nepgen spoofs invented by gay male composers could be ascribed to their jealousy aggravated by her elevated status in Afrikaner cultural circles. Nepgen, who was a married Afrikaner woman, had access to cultural circles that remained taboo territory for gay Afrikaans composers in a homophobic society (Walton in Muller and Walton, 2005: 69). This interpretation seems to be tenable given Nepgen's impressive CV, her insider status at *Die Burger* and the importance ascribed to her by foremost musicologists such as Jan Bouws. Calling his chapter 'Being Rosa', Walton intimates that the Nepgen parodies tell us as much of their authors as of their subject: subconsciously they wanted to 'be' the culturally well-connected Rosa. Secondly, Walton suggests that the Louws, Rosa and Gladstone, lived out a 'self-imagined' and 'romanticised' biography of themselves that strikes one as anachronistic in the twentieth century (2005: 65). In other words, their lives became constructions of a romanticised metanarrative and hagiographical truths which they could (and wanted to) read as the idealised 'Louw biography'.

Walton's approach to Nepgen enables us to perform other readings informed by 'being Rosa'. These readings of contemporaneous texts also collapse historical time between reality and narrative as exemplified in Walton's second point: whereas the realities lived out by Rosa and her husband became signifiers of a nineteenth-century biographical metanarrative, these readings of Rosa and her husband became signifiers of ways of 'being Rosa' during her own lifetime. In other words, while Walton demonstrates how the Louws lived a life that was more at home on the pages of the fantastical biographies of the late-nineteenth century (he has Wagner in mind as prototype), I want to argue that the textual representations of Nepgen by male authors in her lifetime became coordinates for her own life and the project of 'being Rosa'.

²⁸ The reference to her paintings appeared in *Die Burger*, 27 November, 1986, p. 22.

The first contemporaneous textual representation of Nepgen I should like to focus on here, appears in an article written by Derik Van der Merwe in 1989. While little has been written about Nepgen apart from music dictionary entries and small chapters by Jan Bouws, Van der Merwe wrote his doctoral dissertation on the composer and her songs. As the most eminent Nepgen expert in the land, he was the writer to publish on the composer in *Die Burger* on the occasion of her eightieth birthday. Reading this article leaves one with a single over-arching impression: Van der Merwe predominantly wrote about Nepgen in very specific metaphorical language. The title of his 1989 article sets the tone: 'Musiek en poësie verenig' ('Music and poetry unites'). Not only does this title remind the reader of Nepgen's marital union with Louw, but it is also tempting to recall the Wagnerian metaphor of the union between music and poetry (where music was considered female, and poetry or text male). Their unification, according to Wagner, yielded the perfect work of art. The Louw-Nepgen union was no different. He was the poet and she the composer and their union in the sphere of art yielded the Afrikaans art song. In this article Van der Merwe writes about the 'small Rosa' who sang all the poems she could find in her books. He adds that she was always aware of the connectedness between poetry and music (Van der Merwe, 1989: 8). He also writes that Nepgen preferred composing for the voice. For her it connected the music with that 'most intimate part' of a human being (1989: 8). The metaphorical implication, read against the backdrop of Wagner's union of word and music, is none too subtle: Van der Merwe clearly writes in the metaphoric of male-female sexual intercourse. This context prompts other (admittedly speculative) readings of sexual metaphor in his discourse. In one passage in this article, Van der Merwe uses the term 'seksioneel' (sectional) twice in the space of five short sentences. Of importance here, I am arguing, is the homophonic and semantic overlap with 'sexual', which results in the kind of slippage of meaning when Van der Merwe writes: 'Daarom verkies sy seksionele bo geslote vorm' ('therefore she prefers sectional form above closed form') (1989: 8). The more conventional word in Afrikaans would be 'strophic', not 'sectional'. Art song composition in particular (which is here the subject of his discourse) seldom draws on the term 'sectional' (usually reserved for larger forms such as symphony or opera).

If we accept Walton's suggestion that Nepgen's treatment by gay male composers like Van Wyk and Du Plessis originated in jealousy, it is also plausible to read the musicological portrayal of Nepgen in sexual metaphors as an affirmation of

Nepgen *based on her gender* and not her compositional prowess. This reading of Van der Merwe aims to show that, if part of Nepgen's contemporaneous reception was coloured by misogynistic gay discourse (as Walton would have it), her contemporaneous musicological 'rehabilitation' depended on recuperating her female genderedness as the perfect counterpart to the masculinity of language. For Van der Merwe, 'being Rosa' could thus have meant a portrayal of the composer in tropes of sexual union. It is a representation not only promoting the marital status of the matriarch dictated by Afrikaner nationalism, but also pregnant with the meaning of the Afrikaner moeder whose progeny, in the case of Rosa, was her music.

A second contemporaneous textual representation is recorded in an interview with the composer conducted in 1990 by Etienne Britz. In the Rosa Nepgen collection housed in Stellenbosch, the present writer chanced upon a transcript of an interview with the composer that was destined to be aired on Radio Suid-Afrika.²⁹ The transcript was clearly prepared before the actual interview and contains ten questions with carefully constructed answers. The survival of the document in the Nepgen collection suggests that she received the questions and answers before the actual interview. An interesting note appears on the first page of the prepared document: 'NB. This printed version of the interview contains indications for Mrs Rosa Louw of issues and themes on which she can focus when answering the questions. Of course, it remains up to her to omit some of the themes or include others'³⁰(p. 1).

The tone of the suggested answers – presumably written by Britz – is peremptory: Hugo Wolf, for example, is suggested to Nepgen as the greatest song composer of all time (p. 3).³¹ Elsewhere, Britz asks Nepgen to play one of her songs and to follow it with a discussion of the setting (p. 5). He then requests her not to dwell too long on this demonstration so that there will be sufficient time for other

²⁹ A recent visit by the present writer to the SABC sound archives suggests that the interview was never aired. A search through the computerised database delivered another interview with Britz regarding Nepgen's translations of Italian works into Afrikaans.

³⁰ This interesting document from the Nepgen collection is also prefaced with the residential addresses of Etienne Britz and Mrs Rosa Louw and an opening paragraph on Nepgen. The rest of the document contains ten questions, each followed by an answer. Britz often addresses Nepgen as 'u', or as 'Mrs Louw' in the answers and it is hence very likely that he both posed the questions and supplied the answers. Britz was well acquainted with Nepgen and her husband and frequented their house as a guest and lodger, a fact that makes the document particularly unusual.

³¹ In a concert review that appeared in *Die Burger* of 6 May 1959, Nepgen herself states that Wolf is a favourite with many in the Cape. Although she does not overtly announce her inclusion as part of that group, Wolf might very well be a highly regarded composer for Nepgen. However, it cannot be assumed that Britz was aware of this review and his mention of Wolf might also be for reasons of his own.

examples. Interestingly, the song here requested by the author is, in his own words, one that sympathises with ‘the suppressed black people’ (p. 7). The next question requests her to perform the same analytical task, but this time on one of her settings of a N.P. van Wyk Louw poem. The poem is a representation of the ‘gevaar’ (‘danger’), the vulture, that threatens the Afrikaners. This time Nepgen is not given a time limit. This interview, and these two questions in particular, provide another fascinating glimpse of Nepgen’s ‘construction’, or of ‘being Rosa’. Britz was clearly shaping Nepgen’s responses to leading questions, and controlling her representation. Nepgen, we hear, can sympathise with black people in passing, without dwelling on the subject. But she can also wax lyrically about the ‘swart gevaar’ (‘black threat’) in an unrushed manner and timeless space.

The rest of the interview confirms this reading. The first two questions request Nepgen to talk about the song and the art song. Here it is clear that emphasis had to be on German models with Hugo Wolf as the exemplary song composer. Nepgen is cast in the role of the ‘Afrikaner [Hugo] Wolf’ in the arena of Afrikaans art songs:

(die kunslied) was ’n baie moeilike nuwe kunsvorm. Slegs ’n groot gedig en ’n groot komponis soos Wolf wat poësie werklik goed verstaan, kon reg aan die moontlikhede van dié kunsvorm laat geskied; – dit is wat ék in ons tyd met die Afrikaanse poësie probeer doen het (p.3).

(The art song) was a new and difficult artistic form. Only a great poem and a great composer like Wolf, who understood poetry, could realise the potential of this art form; – this, in our time, is what I wanted to achieve with Afrikaans poetry (p.3).

After the establishment of her authority on Afrikaans and art music, Britz asks Nepgen about her early youth and her initial interest in the art song. Here it is interesting that she was first instructed in music by her soprano Afrikanermoeder. We read that her mother only knew English songs, but that Nepgen later introduced her to the treasury of German Lieder (pp. 3-4). With this apparently superfluous information, the link between Nepgen and Germany (recall Nepgen as the ‘Afrikaner Hugo Wolf’), is confirmed. It remains an important connection throughout the interview. But there is also another link, one with Afrikaans, that is ever-present in the interview. Nepgen’s earliest settings were of English songs, but, since the 1930s upon discovering the poetry of W.E.G. Louw, there could be no stopping her setting of Afrikaans texts (p. 4). A symbolic meaning that is predicated upon the union between husband and wife, text and music, is weaved into this short narrative. As Nepgen

encountered the first W.E.G. Louw poems, she united her own music with his texts, and through this unification turned to Afrikaans art songs. The Louw texts displace Englishness from her compositions and become redemptive moments in her life and music.

In the interview Britz requests Nepgen to elaborate on the working relationship with W.E.G. Louw. Not surprisingly, he suggests that she uses *Die dieper reg* ('The Deeper Right' or, less literally, 'The Fundamental Justification') as a case in point (p. 5). Reference to this van Wyk Louw play rings with nationalistic fervour: the older Louw wrote the play for the Afrikaner symbolic ox wagon trek of 1938. Britz explains that: 'U [Nepgen] het immers saam met WEGL tot die stryd om die erkenning en opbou van die Afrikaanse kultuur bygedra' (p. 5). ('After all, you [Nepgen] and W.E.G. Louw contributed to the struggle of Afrikaans culture for recognition and establishment') (p. 5).

With this prompting by Britz, and the evocation of van Wyk Louw's play, the 'redeemed Rosa', together with the younger Louw, are united and enlisted in the struggle of Afrikaans culture. As if this point has not yet been stressed sufficiently, in the following question Britz enquires about the principle that is fundamental to song composition and the highest aspirations of the song composer. The answer he supplies himself: the interweavedness of meaning and sound, in other words, text and music (p. 5). At this stage, the questions take a decisive turn. In the first six questions, Nepgen has been posited as the redeemed Afrikaner composer whose life enacts physical unification through marriage and whose music represents the unification of text and notes (the same cause of 'redemption', it has been argued, employed by Van der Merwe). Through her 'redemption' (after the encounter with Louw's poetry in the 1930s), her soprano Afrikaner moeder is also redeemed by Rosa from English songs (in this case through an introduction to German songs). She is an authority on the Afrikaans song, an aspiring 'Afrikaner Wolf' and a warrior for Afrikaner culture in an ongoing struggle.

With this version of Rosa now constructed, Britz's questions adopt a far more direct tone, and the politics of the present and the past are addressed more directly than before. The penultimate question reminds the reader of the politics of justification prevailing amongst white South Africans in 1990. Britz asks Nepgen about the apparent disparity in her sympathies for both black and white South Africans (p. 7). How can she sympathise, Britz wants to know, with 'both parties' in

the tragic conflict in South Africa? The suggested answer, scripted by the interviewer, explains that the ideals of the Afrikaners of the 1930s (Nepgen's generation) were not based on 'liefdeloosheid' ('lovelessness') towards other people. The aspirations of the generation of the 1930s were later abused by subsequent Afrikaans politicians and businessmen. Van Wyk Louw did not necessarily imply the 'swart gevaar' ('black threat') in his poem. Hence it is only logical that Nepgen could sympathise with both parties in both poems (p. 7). The reference to 'liefdeloosheid' unmistakably conjures up another reference, the infamous Verwoerd line that Apartheid was a system of 'good neighbourliness'.

Britz's final question returns to the all important matter of the 'German connection'. Nepgen is requested to discuss her setting of 'Winternag' by Eugène Marais and to elaborate on her interpretation of the poem in the light of the Second World War. Britz asks her to elaborate on how she mourned the destruction of Germany 'as great musical nation and civilisation from which she as composer herself drew heavily' (p. 8). His drafted answer advises Nepgen that she could here use the opportunity to clarify any misunderstanding that might exist about her own and her husband's German sympathies (p. 8). With this answer, Britz predicts in his transcript, the interview should close on a 'high note' (p. 8).

Mediating between the biographical world lived by Nepgen and the various meanings associated with 'being Rosa' in the two contemporaneous textual representations unpacked above, are her own words. Nepgen remarked on her position as female composer in a male-dominated world as follows:³²

Die beste komponiste, skilders en skrywers was nog altyd mans. In die manswêreld het die vrou nog altyd haar eie wêreld waarin sy haar moet toets om te bepaal hoe ver sy haar eie vermoëns kan voer. In ons land word musici nie eintlik aangemoedig nie, komponiste nog veel minder. Daarom is die uitdaging om jou slag te wys, nog groter (Van der Merwe, 2000: 4).

The greatest composers, painters and poets have always been males. In the male world the female has her own world in which she should test the extent of her own abilities. In our country, musicians are not really encouraged and composers receive even less encouragement. Hence, the challenge to demonstrate your abilities is even greater (Van der Merwe, 2000: 4).

³²According to Van der Merwe, these words of Nepgen date back to 1984. In his 2000 *Die Burger* article published a day after the death of the composer, he records the quotation.

The ‘maleness’ of Nepgen’s world is of course underlined by the genders of those authors (Van Wyk, Du Plessis, Van der Merwe and Britz) who created textual representations of ‘Being Rosa’. Judging from the biographical information on the composer and the chapter by Walton – the latter a retrospective male construction of ‘being Rosa’ – it seems fair to conclude that Nepgen was, if anything, on most occasions an enthusiastic and willing actress in the roles ascribed to her by male writers during her lifetime. But in this male world, Nepgen states that the female always had her ‘own world’ where she could prove herself. We intuitively feel that it is only in this ‘other world’, situated inside the male world but a place to which males had no access, that the real Rosa, stripped of the textual representations and roles ascribed to her by a male-dominated society, could emerge. Theorising the borders of and participants in this ‘other world’, this female space, is a different critical enterprise to what is attempted here. The readings performed here were concerned only with representations of Rosa Nepgen. Time and again she was imagined as existing in close union with the Afrikaner cultural world and as an important figurehead in the Afrikaner ‘cultural battle’.

But the most fascinating aspect of this entire representative discourse emerges when Nepgen notes that ‘musicians are not really encouraged and composers receive even less encouragement’. Similar statements by Stefans Grové (in Chapter 2) and Arnold van Wyk (in Chapter 4) point to a problematic that is not gendered in as obvious a fashion as my argument has been implying. Nepgen’s pronouncement questions the position of the composer in Afrikaner society in general, a society where (like many others), professions were (arguably still are) closely connected to gender. Males could be domineers, lawyers, governors, parliamentarians or even president or prime minister. Females were ‘familievroue’ (‘family wives’) who were best suited to perform the labour required to care for a family. At best, they could aspire to become nurses or teachers, roles that fitted their ideal demeanour of unselfishness and self-sacrifice. In short, males had to provide in a material sense for their families, while females had to foster these families.

In this world of gendered occupations, the composer had no place. For an Afrikaner male, an occupation as composer smacked of effeminacy. He would be better advised to aspire to the occupation of a ‘boer’ (‘farmer’) or a ‘suksesvolle sakeman’ (successful businessman). Those Afrikaner females who had an inclination towards artistic expressions could safely aspire to ‘borduurwerk’ (‘kneedle work’) or

‘blommeranskikking’ (‘flower arrangement’). To aspire to more risked ridicule or cooption to nationalist narratives of dependancy. The composer of art music and his/her position in Afrikaner society emerges as a kind of non-position, not befitting either of the sexes. Ultimately the textual representations of Nepgen display the insecurities of the abnormal society that constituted Apartheid South Africa. It was a society, I am arguing, where neither Afrikaner males or females could be composers. Nepgen’s own writings on music, I am suggesting, should be viewed against this hypothesis.

Rosa Nepgen: clothes for Afrikaners

In a 1991 SABC interview, Etienne Britz asked Nepgen why her translation of the *Divina Commedia* from Italian into Afrikaans was important to ‘the Afrikaner’. Her answer was unequivocal: ‘ “We” require it for our background. “We” have to know who “our” people are before we can be who we are. Greeks and Romans are “our” first people and part of our civilisation. We cannot solely adopt an African civilisation as our own – then we are naked!’ Nepgen clearly viewed her translation as a service rendered to her ‘own people’. Drawing on her metaphor of a naked volk, one can say that she supplied a cultural attire for the Afrikaner nation with her translations from Italian into Afrikaans. In all likelihood, she did not imagine herself differently when she composed songs, wrote reviews or polemicised about the nature of Afrikaans psalms and hymns. A maternal Nepgen robed ‘her people’ through her cultural acts of service and devotion to Afrikaans and the Afrikaner cause, metaphorically playing the part of the fostering female in the cultural life of the Afrikaner volk. Nepgen’s words tell of her role as a female in a nationalist society, a role characterised by self-sacrifice and service.

One of the historiographical footprints of Nepgen’s maternal cultural duties, is constituted by the concert reviews she wrote in *Die Burger* while her husband was arts editor of the Cape-based newspaper. A reading of her concert reviews reveals that she was usually generous in praise. At almost every occasion criticism was levelled not at soloists, but at the accompanying orchestra or piano. To Nepgen’s ears, the orchestra generally played out of tune. On one occasion she lambasted the Cape Concert Club for employing of a grand piano that was too small and lacked

character.³³ One particular work drew sharp criticism from Nepgen, after which a brief and interesting debate ensued in *Die Burger* where music critic and conductor publicly crossed swords. John Joubert's opera, *Silas Marner*, received its world premiere in 1961 under the baton of Erik Chisholm with students of the South African College of music in Cape Town. The opera was the first full-length work in its genre to be composed by a South African composer. Joubert was born in Cape Town, but by the time he started work on the opera, he had not visited his country of birth for thirteen years. It is important to realise that Nepgen's review of the opera was as much a review of the work as a continuation of an ongoing polemic about the opera. The work was discussed in letters and newspapers well ahead of its first performance, publicity of which Nepgen could not have been unaware. In fact, in her review she mentions (in passing) Chisholm's earlier writings on the opera. Thus it is probably that Nepgen's review was at least partially a response to this existing discourse.

The *Silas Marner* controversy started when the work was described as 'unsuitable' for performance at the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the Union of South Africa.³⁴ Both Joubert and Chisholm were enraged at this response to the 'first full-length South African opera' and made public and defensive statements reflecting their views. An interesting difference can be observed in the reception accorded *Silas Marner* by the English and Afrikaans press respectively. Chisholm, who was Scottish by birth, emerged the chief advocate for *Silas Marner* and the work was received favourably in the English press. The Afrikaans reception was characterised by sharp criticism. It is likely that the English text of the opera was part of the reason for its 'unsuitability' on the occasion of an Afrikaner festival. Nepgen, who, as we have seen, viewed her artistic work as acts of service to the volk, acted as primary spokesperson for the Afrikaans press. She was not prepared to side with 'the English' in delivering a panegyric on a work that was rejected for the Bloemfontein Union festival. She delivered a memorable judgement: the closing scene of the opera resembled a 'soufflé that had collapsed prematurely'.³⁵ Chisholm responded at length to her review, concluding that it was not the South African College of Music that was

³³ Her criticism of the particular choice of grand piano appeared in a concert review published in *Die Burger* on 13 June 1961.

³⁴ I extracted this information from a paper entitled 'Sounding disjuncture? Exploring displacement as a theoretical paradigm for John Joubert's opera *Silas Marner*' by Stephanie Vos. The paper was delivered at the Third conference of the South African Society for Research in Music held at the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal from 29 June to 1 July 2009.

³⁵ Nepgen made this remark in a review published in *Die Burger* on 25 May 1961.

out of its depth, but Nepgen herself as music critic. To this Nepgen responded that she could indeed not suggest another orchestra, but that deficiencies in performance could perhaps be remedied by appointing another conductor.³⁶

This exchange between Nepgen and Chisholm constitutes an important, if rare, piece of reception history for an important ‘South African’ work. Although some of Nepgen’s criticism was no doubt justified, it is also clear that she did not have a full score of the opera at her disposal while writing her review. In one instance, she misquotes the text while also mistakenly referencing particular parts of the orchestration. The polemic also demonstrates the divisions between Afrikaans and English South Africans (the rejection of *Silas Marner* by the Union festival committee, *Die Burger* in opposition to its English media counterparts in the reception of the work, Nepgen siding with the Afrikaners against Chisholm). The polemic shows Nepgen as comfortable in her role of service to the Afrikaner volk. Her role as Afrikaner matriarch even extends to her metaphoric inferences about food. Not only did the final scene of *Silas Marner* resemble a collapsed soufflé, but on another occasion she expresses displeasure of an incoherent piano recital programme by comparing it to a restaurant menu. If a restaurant specialised in seafood, Nepgen writes, she would not expect its poultry to be good as well.³⁷

Although the *Silas Marner* polemic is historically important, Nepgen’s critical public interventions were not restricted to this occasion. Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony was clearly a favourite of the reviewer. It was also a favourite for performance on national occasions. Unlike Joubert’s opera, this symphony was deemed ‘suitable’ for inclusion on the programme that would commemorate the fiftieth year of the Union of South Africa. It was also performed in Pretoria the following year for the celebration of the Republic of South Africa. Nepgen remarked that the work was fast becoming the ‘feeswerk by uitnemendheid’ (‘festive work par excellence’) of South Africa.³⁸ For the Republic Day Festival of 1966, Nepgen, perhaps now the ‘festive critic par excellence’ travelled to Pretoria to review another iconic work. Nepgen was full of praise for the appropriateness of performing Verdi’s

³⁶ Both Chisholm’s response and Nepgen’s reply to it were published in *Die Burger* of 16 June 1961.

³⁷ The comment appeared in a review published in *Die Burger* of 27 August 1964.

³⁸ Nepgen endowed the work with this national status in a review of it published on 3 June 1961 in *Die Burger*.

Nabucco in the Aula at the University of Pretoria.³⁹ The language of her review references the grotesqueness and control craved by the 1960s Afrikaner nationalism that bordered on fascism. She writes how great works should be performed by excellent performers in halls that can accommodate them with ease.⁴⁰ The acoustics of the Aula (the venue was sold out for almost every performance), the conductor, orchestra and soloists all elicited praise from her pen. The conductor in particular was commended for his control of the orchestra.⁴¹ For these performances recitatives were sung in English to enable the audience to follow the libretto. Perhaps, a decade later, Nepgen would have obliged with an Afrikaans translation, but she was not yet versed in Italian and its translations into Afrikaans. Her review closes with a warning. 'We' should not mistake such Italian folk music for the foundation of our own folk music, she cautions. Of course this contradicts her later pronouncement (quoted earlier in this chapter) that the Romans and Greeks were to be viewed as 'our' cultural ancestors. But it is a contradiction that is probably best understood by invoking the context of the Republic Festival. For the moment, Afrikaners did not require 'European roots'. They were firmly set on their cause of colonialism in Africa, and in the early 1960s it seemed that they could not be deterred. They wanted an 'eie' folk music and not an Italian replica.

The Southern cross of nationalism and Christianity invoked by Besselaar at the beginning of this chapter, also directed the writings of Rosa Nepgen. Those of her reviews cited here, illustrate her involvement with nationalist narratives. Her discursive engagement with Christianity is found in many writings dedicated to discussions of sacred music. In the Rosa Nepgen collection at the University of Stellenbosch there exists a document in which Nepgen outlines her contributions to

³⁹ It is important to note that Nepgen was here adding to a reception history of *Nabucco* that was already laden with political meanings. The Afrikaners who routinely imagined themselves as Israel and God's chosen folk are, through the 1966 performance and the review by Nepgen, linked across historical time to Verdi's exiled Israelites in *Nabucco*. Writing specifically with Italy in mind, Roger Parker has described the opera as a 'national monument' (1997: 20). If Nepgen's review is taken into account, the remark also rings true for the Afrikaners. It is possible to explore various layers of meaning in the libretto that might pertain to the Afrikaners. However, this falls beyond the scope of my present work and it is here only worth noting that the libretto could have a very specific and national resonance for the Afrikaners in 1966.

⁴⁰ This review appeared in *Die Burger* on 31 May 1966.

⁴¹ For a similar comparison between a conducting style that is obsessed with control and fascist control see Chris Walton, 'Bond of Brothers: Anton Hartman and music in an Apartheid state', in *The Musical Times*, Summer 2004: pp. 63-74.

Afrikaans church music. She refers to ‘ons Psalms’ (‘our Psalms’) and ‘ons N.G. Kerk’ (‘our Dutch Reformed Church’), all expressions of possessive writing typical for the time. Between 1956 and 1960, she writes, she conducted a study of the work of Totius⁴² on the Psalms (i.e. the Afrikaans Psalter created by the 1937 Music Commission), as well as the original Genevan Psalter (Nepgen, 1960: 1). Sixty reworkings of melodies resulted from her laborious studies, in many cases reverting to earlier Genevan melodies (the 1937 Afrikaans Psalter got rid of the Genevan melodies, an act Nepgen viewed as akin to sacrilege). Some Genevan melodies underwent slight adaptations for use with the Afrikaans texts. Yet others underwent more extensive changes, while Nepgen also contributed a number of her own melodies to Psalms when no suitable adaptations of the original melodies were possible.

In writing about her work on the Afrikaans Psalter, Nepgen uses an expression familiar from its use in the writings of Apartheid ideologues and, on certain occasions, in the writings of Jan Bouws. She writes of the ‘harmonic forms’ in use in the Dutch Reformed Psalter (Koraalboek) ‘wat nie suiwer is nie’ (‘that are impure’) (1960: 1). Here Nepgen is referring to specific (though unspecified) 1937 harmonisations (without naming their composers), but in particular the use of the tonal system to replace the modal system. She explains that she attempted to maintain the ‘gees en styl’ (‘spirit and style’) of the sixteenth-century psalms because the new melodies of 1937 were stylistically not ‘suiwer’ (‘pure’) (1960: 2). According to Nepgen, these 1937 melodies derive from another, younger and in many ways ‘minderwaardige’ (‘inferior’) musical tradition (1960: 2). She leaves little doubt that this other and ‘lower’ musical tradition was ‘English’ and given to popular trends. Thus the 1937 Psalter displayed the influences of the popular Sankey hymns earlier identified by Bouws as the ‘Sankey danger’. These inferior traditions, Nepgen states, make the newer melodies vessels of impurity. The article ends with a declaration of service to the ‘ons’ (‘us’) that was the Afrikaners. Nepgen ‘offers’ all her work as a ‘humble contribution’ to the revision of ‘our’ psalm melodies (1960: 3).

⁴² J. D. du Toit (1877-1953) was a professor in theology and wrote Afrikaans poetry under the name Totius. He is an important early Afrikaans poet while his theological position approved of separate development and Apartheid.

Nepgen's discourse on the Afrikaans Psalter serves as a context for the discussion of J.P. Malan's writings on sacred music, which become the focus of the last part of this chapter. It is only when Malan starts to write about the psalms that the racial metaphors introduced here by Nepgen, are deployed in full force. However, it remains to document that Nepgen's work on the Afrikaans Psalter spilt into another *Silas Marner*-like debate in the public domain. This time the discursive forum was *Die Kerkbode*, the official organ of the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa. Nepgen exchanged a number of letters with one Mr. Gradus Wendt, whose initial response to one of Nepgen's articles in the church magazine sparked the debate. In her initial article in *Die Kerkbode* Nepgen argued that the early practices of the first reformed churches of the sixteenth century should be restored in Afrikaans churches.⁴³ This, she writes, would entail the restoration of modal melodies or the so-called 'kerklike toonaarde' ('church modes') and rhythmic variation of long and short notes (Nepgen, 1962). The 1937 Afrikaans Psalter abandoned these 'original' practices, opting instead for major and minor melodies and rhythmically equal notes. For Nepgen this was an unfortunate decision in the history of Afrikaans church music and was reason enough to argue that the Afrikaans Psalter required revision. Nepgen motivates her case with a historical overview on sacred singing practices. She explains that her reflection will chiefly focus on practices in Holland because it was from this tradition that 'we' derived 'our' practices (Nepgen, 1962). She writes about the earliest organ accompaniment, and how the role of organ accompaniment became a display of virtuosic 'vinger- en voetvaardigheid' ('finger- and footwork'), in the process confusing the congregations. This, in part, is the reason for the accusation made by many that the psalms are 'onsingbaar' ('unsingable') (Nepgen, 1962). In South Africa, the already precarious situation of sacred music was further complicated by the introduction of Lutheran choral works that required congregations to sing rhythmically equal notes and the Scottish influences of the nineteenth century (here Nepgen has Scottish missionaries and preachers in mind). The latter were, according to Nepgen, not used to a vibrant church music tradition in their own fatherland. To compound an already disastrous serious of influences, one only had to think of the Methodist and American revival tunes ('oor die invloed van die Metodistiese en Amerikaanse revival tunes swyg ek hier liever!') (Nepgen, 1962). Nepgen suggests a

⁴³ The article entitled 'Herstel ons Psalms in hul oorspronklike glorie' appeared in *Die Kerkbode* of 24 October 1962.

series of Afrikaans church music reforms. Although unaccompanied singing of the original Genevan melodies is preferable, the organ has become such an important part of Afrikaans church singing (Nepgen was an organist herself), that she feels it can no longer be wished away. For the purposes of church service accompaniment, Nepgen suggests a 'simple, fluent rhythmic accompaniment in the original keys'. Accompaniments should also be without seventh chords, 'aimless modulations' and 'excessive ornamentation'.

Wendt reacted to Nepgen's article in the next edition of *Die Kerkbode*, after which a lengthy debate ensued to which others also added their voices. The main points of contestation were from Nepgen's October article. Wendt refutes the claims of Nepgen that the major/minor harmonisations of psalm melodies is an act of 'aanranding' ('abuse'). He writes:

In hierdie gevalle word die melodie self nie geskend nie en solank dit ook nie gebeur nie bestaan daar nie so iets as verminking, verknoeiing of verbrokkeling van ons Psalm melodieë nie. Maar wanneer daar aan die melodienote gepeuter word, kan ons die vinger vermanend ophef en sê: 'Daar word geknoei aan ons kosbare erfgoed; hou die hande tuis' (Wendt, 1962).

In these cases, the melody itself is not violated and as long as this is the case, there is no question of mutilation, botching or deformation of our Psalm melodies. But when one starts tampering with the melody notes we can point a warning finger and say: 'Our precious heritage is being meddled with; hands off!' (Wendt, 1962).

If this language sound emotionally highly charged, it is worth pointing out that Nepgen's own discourse is not more temperate. She also writes about the original church modes that have been 'violated' ('geweld aangedoen') by the new harmonisations (Nepgen, 1962). The title of her article is a veritable battle cry: 'Herstel ons Psalms in hul oorspronklike glorie' ('Restore our Psalms in their original glory'). What can be the meaning of this highly charged prose (of which the second part of this chapter will continue to offer documentary evidence)? Thinking back to Besselaar's Southern Cross of nationalism and Christianity, there can be little doubt that church music was symbolically important to Afrikaners precisely because it represented Christianity in the Afrikaner star of progress. It is a symbolism invested with myths of origin, but also metaphoric enactments of nationness. Nepgen remarks in her article that the Reformation was responsible for involving the entire congregation in the singing of Psalms. In church the custom was to sing in unison

while singing in different voices was reserved for the smaller family unit in houses.⁴⁴ No doubt Afrikaners drew great consolation from their sacred singing in one voice in the land they viewed as their rightful and God-given home, a unanimous declaration of a single purpose not unlike the unison singing in Verdi's *Nabucco* in the well known slave chorus. It cannot be incidental that the Sankey and Methodist hymns so despised by Nepgen, Bouws and Malan (as we shall see) were often sung in harmonising voices. Moreover, black South Africans usually sang hymns in more than one voice. Their solemn unison singing ritual set the Afrikaners apart from those who shared their religion in the land but were from another race. Their unison singing could also serve as a psychological affirmation of 'volk en vaderland' ('volk and fatherland') even in the 1960s when resistance to Apartheid intensified.

Jacques Philip Malan: an Afrikaner reformer

Jan Bouws writes that the surname 'De Villiers' resembles, for South African musicians, the trusted tones of the C major triad (Bouws, 1957: 35). Perhaps, if Bouws could continue an Afrikaans music historiography into the present, he would add another Afrikaner surname to his list of trusted triads: Malan. Malans were important in the Afrikaner musical world of the twentieth century (not to mention the Afrikaner political world, where the name 'D.F. Malan' would certainly have been music to even unmusical Afrikaner ears). Jacques Philip Malan, Jacques-Pierre Malan and Jacques de Vos Malan are only the most important musical carriers of the surname (there are many others). The oldest of these men, Jacques Philip Malan, is the subject of the second part of this chapter.

Finding biographical information on Jacques Philip Malan is not easy. The most informative source is the entry included in the *South African Music Encyclopaedia* (of which he was also the editor). Malan was born on 24 October 1917 as the fourth son of one J.H. Malan. Jacques Philip's father wrote articles for newspapers and periodicals on Afrikaner church music and music education, both causes that would later be taken up by J.P. Malan himself. Jacques Philip started playing the piano at the age of thirteen and later also took organ lessons. He matriculated from the prestigious Grey College in Bloemfontein in 1935. In 1938 he

⁴⁴ Nepgen made these remarks in her reply on the letter of Mr. Wendt on 12 December 1962 in *Die Kerkbode*.

completed a B.A. degree at the then Grey University College and after a brief hiatus his career as music educator was launched. After moving to Potchefstroom in 1941, he lobbied hard for the tertiary acknowledgement of music as an academic discipline there. The result was the instalment of a four-year BMus degree in 1946 and a music department at the Potchefstroom University with M.C. Roode as its first head in 1949. Malan, who only completed a BMus degree in 1946, left for Vienna in 1952 to complete a doctorate. This made him the first South African to pursue a career in musicology. Upon his return and subsequent resignation from the Potchefstroom Music Department in 1955, his next position was at the South African Broadcasting Corporation. Here Malan worked for four years in the serious music division. In 1960 he was appointed as Professor of music and Head of the Music Department at the University of Pretoria, to the creation of which his role was pivotal. Apart from his work on the *South African Music Encyclopaedia*, Malan attempted the establishment of a periodical on music in South Africa. The result was *Vita Musica*, which ran out of steam after five issues. Malan left the University of Pretoria in 1978 to become Head of the Centre for South African Music at the HSRC (Human Sciences Research Council). His interventions can also be linked to the founding of the then Musicological Society of Southern Africa while he spearheaded the South African Music Encyclopaedia which, in spite of all its shortcomings and political/ideological bias, remains an important milestone of South African musical scholarship.

Apart from his work on the *South African Music Encyclopaedia* and a book entitled *Die musiekskole in Duitsland en die toepassing van die idee in Suid-Afrika* ('The music schools in Germany and the application of the idea in South Africa'), Malan wrote various articles on important composers such as J.S. Bach and Richard Strauss. He gave attention to local composers and wrote seminal articles on, amongst others, Stephen Eyssen, Blanche Gerstman and Stefans Grové. Finally, he wrote on Afrikaans church music and also broadcast a series of programmes on the same subject. His most important written contributions on church music are the four articles published in the Afrikaans literary journal *Standpunte*. These articles are supplemented by a series of eighteen programmes between 1959 and 1960 on the Afrikaans Psalter, entitled *Erwe van ons vadere*. While these radio programmes merit closer reading by researchers, this chapter will only focus on the *Standpunte* articles.

Malan was an Afrikaner academic who had nothing less than a grand national overhaul of music and musicology in mind. His was the musicological clarion call for

national unity, conformation to political agendas, restoration of Afrikaans church music in its purest form and the advancement of music and musicology in South Africa. In short, it would not be an overstatement to ascribe to him the ideal of a national Afrikaner reformation with music at the centre. His belief in the centrality of music in social movements is succinctly captured in his pronouncement that ‘It is a striking occurrence that Reformation as well as Counter-reformation is always accompanied by musical reformation on both sides’ (‘Dit is ’n opvallende verskynsel dat wanneer Reformasie sowel as Kontrareformasie op dreef kom, die partye aan weerskante van die front ook ’n musiekhervorming deurvoer’) (Malan, 1961: 33). For Malan reformation in Afrikaans churches could not take place without musical reformation. Similarly, political reformation had to coincide with a national music reformation, and Malan himself would be the chief galvanising voice for the latter. The publication of his four *Standpunte* articles entitled ‘Die Afrikaner en sy kerkmusiek’ (‘The Afrikaner and his [sic] church music’) in the years 1961-1962, coincided with the four hundredth commemoration of the original Genevan Psalter of 1562. His articles aimed to connect the Afrikaner reformation tradition with the influence of what was posited as the precursor of Afrikaner church music. Again and again Malan emphasises his main concern: Afrikaner church music, he writes, has to be a replication of the earlier practices of the sixteenth-century Reformation, with the single exception that the psalms had to be in Afrikaans. He discusses both the Afrikaans Psalter of 1937 and the Afrikaans Hymnal that followed six years later. Malan identifies a troubling ‘dubbeldoor hoedanigheid’ (‘doubleness’ or even ‘ambiguous ontology’) in both texts (Malan, 1961: 23). This stems from the fact that in both the 1937 Psalter and the 1943 Hymnal, part of the collections could be described as ‘purely Calvinistic’, containing only Biblical and Bible-inspired texts. Part of these collections, however, also comprise ‘betragtings, meditasies en gevoelsreaksies’ (‘contemplations, meditations and emotional responses’) in a musical mixture of ‘German and other ingredients’ (1961: 23). These ‘mixed’ parts of the two collections are described by Malan as the work of human hands. He writes that Afrikaners who are zealous Calvinists in culture and custom have betrayed their own beliefs in their church music:

... (hulle) begaan voor die oë van die hele Kerk ’n sentimentele flirtasie met die musiek van serenade, balsaal, drinklokaal en paradegrond, sonder smaak, sonder diskriminasie en sonder besinning oor die verderf wat hierdie onheilige verbinte saai.

Dit is asof hy sê : laat my toe om ten minste in die melodieë wat ek sing die soetigheid van die wêreld te proe! (1961: 32)

... in front of the whole congregation they commit a sentimental flirtation with the music of the serenade, dance hall, pub and parade ground, without taste, without discrimination and without reflection on the execration of this unholy union. It is as if he [the Afrikaner Calvinist] says: allow me to taste the sweetness of the world in the melodies I sing! (1961: 32)!

In full flight, Nepgenian gastronomic metaphors unleashed, he continues:

In die Halleluja-bundel bly dit nie net by proe nie; ook nie in die wyse waarop ons predikante die voorgeskrewe liturgiese musiek opsy skuif vir die sentimentele bedwelming van sogenaamde ‘Voortrekkerwysies’ nie! (1961: 32)

In the Halleluja song-book it goes beyond mere tasting; also in the way our clergy trade the prescribed liturgical music for the sentimental intoxication of the so-called ‘Voortrekker melodies’! (1961: 32)

For Malan not even Voortrekker melodies could replace the original Genevan melodies by the early European reformers. He shares Nepgen’s preferences for modal harmonies and rhythmic variation. Such practices, he argues, have to be restored. Other liturgical genres are a forbidden presence in Afrikaner church music practice, and Malan makes clear that Methodist songs are more often than not given to sentimentality while the Lutheran hymn had also departed from the accepted path (1961: 47). The popular drive for children’s songs are another egregious sin in Malan’s opinion. The grossest violation of all, however, is constituted by the Sankey songs. Malan writes that they represent the all-time low of church music (1961: 48). Concerned with a single theme, conversion, emotional impact dominates these songs and presages some of the worst elements of film sentimentality and jazz (1961: 48). It is all about ecstasies and ‘thrill’ in these songs, Malan writes (1961: 48). Apart from the sinful Sankey songs, lyrics that foster a sense of individualism are also a Calvinist taboo. Malan elaborates on such individualistic songs as follows: ‘Outobiografiese liedere, tranerig, ekstasies en mistiek, ontkiem by die duisende in die vrugbare aarde van liberale humanisme en gerasionaliseerde individualisme ...’ (Autobiographical songs, tearful, ecstatic and mystical, germinate in their thousands in the fecundity of liberal humanism and rationalised individualism ...) (1961: 41).

The obverse of Malan’s disapproval of individualism in sacred music is the collective expression of a volk in one voice. As noted before, it is partly this homogeneous and unifying aspect of the psalms and Afrikaans hymns that could

account for their prominence in the Afrikaner psyche. But Malan went even further. For him, the Afrikaans Psalter, if restored to the earliest Calvinist practices, had the potential to become a manifestation of collective will and power. However, Malan refers to the 1943 Afrikaans hymnal as 'Die gesangboek van die onmag' ('the hymn book of powerlessness') (1961: 41). Power could only be harnessed in 'pure' music and one of the characteristics of 'pure' music was its collective appeal. Malan outlines this principle of unity when he writes about the function of music in the church service: not to represent the 'I' but to 'translate' the collective worship of the 'bridal church':

Sy roeping in die Kerk lê nie op die vlak van menslike verlanse na mistieke ervaring of van hoogs persoonlike Jesus-liefde nie, maar op die verhewe vlak van gemeentelike wil tot eenheid in Christus. Die gemeentelike lied is nie 'n Ek-lied nie, maar 'n Ons-lied (1961: 31).

[The calling of music] in the church is not located on the level of human yearning for mystical experience or highly individualised Jesus love, but rather on the exalted plain of congregational will unto unity in Christ. The congregational song is not an I-song but an Us-song (1961: 31).

Sung in unison, the psalms were a resounding affirmation of the will of a collective volk. Malan's so-called 'Afrikaans hymnal of powerlessness' is an intriguing construct. He describes the melodic 'veelwywery' ('polygamy') of the 1937 Psalter and the 1943 Hymnal as characteristic of this weakness (1961: 21). In both books the number of texts far exceeded the number of accompanying melodies, resulting in shared melodies between numerous of the texts (hence the 'polygamy').

In the last of his articles, Malan dwells briefly on the individual contributions by various composers. This follows earlier castigations of the expanded group of composers who contributed melodies for the Afrikaans Psalms and Hymnal. For him, this expansion meant the loss of the 'original unity' of the Psalter, and as already illustrated unity was an important imperative in Afrikaans sacred music (1961: 42). Malan discusses the four psalm melodies and one hymn contributed by Jan S. de Villiers or 'Onse Jan' ('Our Jan'), as Malan calls him. The melodies are described by Malan as 'hymn-like' in character (here Malan has the English models in mind), but are also redeemed by De Villiers's 'staunch Calvinist power' (1961-62, 23). The contributions by another De Villiers, Rocco, receive a less favourable report. He lacks 'inventiveness', and although Malan identifies a single 'verdienslike' ('deserving') melody, he adds that one wonders how this melody found its way into 'our' liturgical

music (1961-62, 24). Malan dismisses all possibility of clemency when he turns to the melodies of P.K. de Villiers. This De Villiers contributed by far the largest number of melodies, twenty five psalms and thirteen hymns. Malan dubs him an ‘ungifted’ composer and describes him as the most problematic figure on the Music Commission of the Afrikaans Psalter and Hymn book (1961-62: 24). He lists the stylistic problems inherent in P.K. de Villiers’s melodies, complete with a list of psalms displaying the following: melodic cadences sounding ‘onmag’ (‘powerlessness’), timely and untimely attraction to the ‘huppeling van gepunteerde note’ (‘skipping of dotted notes’), melodies that are short of breath and forced into repetition, ‘semi-tone sobs’ to denote ‘gevoelvolheid’ (‘emotional responsiveness’) and repeated notes for harmonic effect (1961-62: 24). Malan judges that De Villiers could perhaps make a contribution to Afrikaans secular music, but the omission of his melodies from the Afrikaans Hymnal would not be a loss for the Afrikaans church service (1961-62: 25). Only F.W. Jannasch receives a positive report from Malan. In spite of his small contribution of only six melodies, Malan calls him the pioneer of Afrikaans church music (1961-62: 23).

But for Malan there is one other redeeming intervention in the church music of the Afrikaner, a project that provides a striking contrast to the ‘powerless’ Afrikaner congregational books. Rosa Nepgen’s Psalter was completed in 1962 and ready for publication at the time Malan wrote this article, and he writes about it calling it a ‘miracle’ and an ‘artistic event of first rank’ (1961-62: pp. 29 & 31). He continues to explain the success of Nepgen’s work. A Music Commission is not suitable for the compilation of a Psalter (it compromises unity in the work). A better solution is for a ‘creative personality of note’ who could study the ‘spirit, style and technique’ of the original psalms with commitment and with a ‘heilige gloed van diensbaarheid’ (‘holy radiance of subserviance’) (1961-62: 28). The Afrikaner volk has produced just such a personality in the figure of Rosa Nepgen (1961-62: 28). Malan writes how she has given the Psalter back to her volk (1961-62: 29), performing, it should be noted, a service in the best of the Volksmoeder traditions.

Malan acknowledges in these four articles that church reforms necessitate new church music. (1961: 41). It is however abundantly clear to him that none of the Afrikaans churches could equal the musical achievement of their European reformist predecessors (1961: 44). The only solution is therefore to return to the practices of

congregational singing as exemplified in the first reformist churches. The single exception to this trend internationally, are the black slaves of the Americas. Malan writes that their songs were completely 'new', 'identical' to their people of origin and expressive of their 'heimwee' ('longing') for God (1961: 48). He then expresses the wish that a similar manifestation will happen from the midst of the South African Bantu (1961: 48). Possibly, such a new Bantu church song tradition in South Africa would be encouraged by the continued 'conversion' of the Bantu and the establishment of their own churches (1961: 48). Enter into Malan's historical discourse the unmistakable national gospel of separate development preached from the pulpit of parliament.

It is significant for the project of this thesis to note that, at the same time that Verwoerd was preaching his doctrine of separate development in separate locations for separate races, Malan adopted a similar line of argument for African singing and churches. This discursive resonance between music historiography and national politics encourages an even more skeptical reading of Malan's writing on the Afrikaans Psalter. Thus far his words have been taken to constitute little more than a tenacious treatise to install archaic musical practices in a twentieth-century church at the southern tip of Africa. But the Afrikaans psalms could also be the sonic mapping of a history that has little to do with church reforms. Writing about the use of the organ in congregational music, Malan states that the organ is the most problematic musical element in the Afrikaans church. This is so because it is equally at home in the church and in the secular world and, in the sixteenth century, it failed to draw any stylistic boundaries between sacred and secular music (1961: 36). Malan's description of sixteenth century organ music is instructive:

In die orrelmusiek vloei alles inmekaar: gewyde musiek en profane musiek, hoofse en burgerlike, kerklike en huislike, Roomse en Protestantse, en al die soorte is vrylik ondermekaar uitgeruil (1961: 36).

In the organ music, everything flows into everything else: sacred music and profane music, royal and bourgeois, congregational and salon, Catholic and Protestant, and all these kinds are freely exchanged among one another (1961: 36).

This unrestrained exchange between different genres typical of organ music, closely resembles another 'mishmash' mentioned in the first chapter of this thesis. Organ music as scripted by Malan reads like a sonic representation of the racial melting pot of South Africa, and the manner in which Malan states his case carries strong

semantic references to the writings of Gerrie Eloff and Geoffrey Cronjé. As with Eloff and Cronjé, the word ‘insypel’ and its derivative ‘insluip’ accompany the notion of the organ as instrument of transgression. In one example he writes that ‘Until 1773 the only development of note was the slow seeping in of organ accompaniment in the singing of psalms’ (‘Tot 1773 was die enigste noemenswaardige ontwikkeling juis langsame insypeling van orrelbegeleiding by die psalmsang’) (1961: 36). He also comments that the organ had no liturgical function or position in the church:

In die kerkordes is daar egter vir hom geen voorsiening gemaak nie, want hy het as’t ware ‘onwettig’ in die erediens gesluip en mettertyd ’n instelling geword toe niemand hom verdryf nie (1961: 33).

In the church order no provision was made for [the organ] and it, in actual fact, ‘illegally sneaked’ into the congregation, and in time became an institution when nobody drove it out (1961: 33).

The repeated use of the words ‘insypel’ or ‘insypeling’ and the metaphors thus invoked cannot be mistaken for anything but those used by Afrikaner racial ideologues discussed at length earlier in this thesis. Similar to the manner in which blacks and individuals of mixed race ‘sneaked’ into the white race through a process of ‘inseeping’, so did the organ contaminate the pure Calvinistic music practices of Afrikaners and many other Calvinists. For Malan the organ was the sonic and symbolic representative of ‘inseepers’. Hence his identification of the organ as the most problematic element in the church. He had such a strong dislike of the instrument that he would, if he could have his way, have the instrument purged from the church (1961: 37). But, as he writes elsewhere, tradition denied him that solution because the organ had become part of the Afrikaans churches (1961-62: 26).

Another moment of identification between Malan’s discourse and early Apartheid intellectualisation, happens when he quotes Dr. A. Kuyper. Abraham Kuyper (1837-1920) was a Dutch theologian and statesman who supplied the theoretical scaffolding for much of the Biblical justification of the ideology and practice of Apartheid. In South Africa, one of the chief voices who advocated the policy of Apartheid from the basis of the Bible was Totius, the Afrikaans poet who translated the psalms into Afrikaans. Kuyper has been identified as the source of much of Totius’s 1944 keynote address at the Afrikaner ‘volkskongres’ on ‘The religious base of our race policy’ (Dubow, 1992: 218). Given his nationalist ideals and appreciation of Totius’s work, it is probable that Malan knew the Totius address

and was aware of the latent Kuyprian influences thereof. His invocation of Kuyper in the symbolic presence of Totius is therefore a meaningful, and perhaps even religious, affirmation of separate development. It is an affirmation not only offered by Malan in his privileged position as author of the articles on Afrikaans congregational music, but also by the Afrikaans Psalms themselves. In spite of the organ that had 'seeped into' the Afrikaner churches, for Malan the psalms remains an anchor of Afrikaner culture and a steadfast undercurrent of Afrikaner history:

Psalmsang, die Evangeliese lied (veral dié met 'n sterk piëtistiese inslag), 'hymn tune' en 'Gospel Song' het almal in die vrome Boere-nasie 'n bodem gevind en gegroei — edelhout en brandhout deurmekaar. Na 'n anderhalf eeu van relatief vreedsame ekspansie het die geskiedenis sy fakkel oor die Suiderland gehou en 'n epos laat afspeel wat die sang van Homeros waardig is: In 'n korte honderd jaar is 'n nuwe volk met 'n eie taal gesmee teen die dag dat die donker kontinent sal ontwaak. Dit was 'n wording deur marteling en strawwe ontbering, gedra met heroïese gelatenheid en gelowige berusting, gekenmerk deur besonderhede sonder tal wat getuig van swakheid sowel as sterkte. Maar een ding bowenal onderskei ons epos en bepaal die gees en karakter daarvan. 'n Psalmklank wat deurgaans die ondertoon gee en telkens triomfantelik deurbreek as belydenis en gebed. Psalmsang is murg van ons murg en been van ons been, 'n erfenis in ons bloed en 'n weerklank in ons hart. 'n Afrikanervolk daarsonder is ondenkbaar — 'n liggaam sonder siel, 'n tong sonder taal. Dis die kern van ons wese, die geheim van ons krag. En dis ons eie en al wat ons het (1961: 48).

The singing of Psalms, evangelical songs (particularly those with a strong pietistic character), hymn tune and gospel song all found a home ['bodem'] in our pious Boer nation and grew — precious wood and fire wood intertwined. After a half century of relatively peaceful expansion, history cast its flame upon the continent and yielded an epic that is worthy of the song of Homer: in a short hundred years, a new volk with an own language was forged to withstand the time when the dark continent awakens. This was an awakening through martyrdom and difficult sacrifices, sustained in heroic resignation and faithful acceptance, characterised by numerous events that testify of weakness and strength. But one thing above all distinguishes our epic and directs its spirit and character. The sound of Psalms ['Psalmklank'] as fundamental tone which, time and again, triumphantly erupts in confession and prayer. Psalmody is marrow of our marrow and bone of our bone, grafted in our blood and resonating in our heart. An Afrikanervolk without it is unthinkable — a body without soul, a mouth without tongue. It is the centre of our being and the secret of our strength. And it is our own and all we have (1961: 48).

This extraordinary passage cannot be about congregational singing alone. We read here an allegory of Afrikaner existence and history. Just like the psalms, the Afrikaners also emerged as part of a mixed conglomerate on the 'bodem' of Africa. Within a century the marooned Afrikaners became a powerful volk and by the time the dark continent awoke, the Afrikaner heroic volk was here to stay. At this point the two narratives, the one on the psalms in Africa and the other on the Afrikaners in Africa,

intersect and merge. The psalms, much like all else in Africa, become the possession of the Afrikaners. But the psalms are far more than simply another African trophy. They become the distinguishing mark of the Afrikaner epic. The psalms become bone, marrow, blood, soul and language of the Afrikaner. Clearly Malan's discourse on congregational music is also a narrative on the triumph of the Afrikaner in Africa. Malan, the Afrikaner musical reformer, had far more than musical reform in mind when he suggested a reformation of Afrikaner congregational music.

Compelling as they are, Malan's writings on liturgical music only comprise a small part of his output. An important passage that connects the readings offered above with his secular writings can be found in a chapter written by Malan and included in a book that was edited by none other than Geoffrey Cronjé. The book *Die verband tussen die kunste* contains public lectures by a number of Pretoria academics on the arts. In his chapter (a transcript of a lecture given in August or September 1967) Malan describes the arts as 'documents of human life, each in another language and written in another alphabet' (Malan in Cronjé, 1968: 31). Striking here is not only the reference to different languages and different alphabets. For Malan the psalms as discussed in his *Standpunte* articles were exactly what he was writing about here: art *and* documents of Afrikaner life. The original lecture was delivered only a year after Malan delivered his inaugural address on 21 September 1966 at the University of Pretoria. Both addresses were thus delivered in the space of twelve months and it is no surprise that they share similar themes: unity, order and integration.

In the opening statement of Malan's inaugural address he declares himself eager for the task of 'kulturele vorming' ('cultural formation') of the people of 'our' land in a spirit of 'geroepenheid en beskeidenheid' ('vocation and humility') (Malan, 1967: 2). Almost immediately he proceeds to his main agenda: unity, order and integration. Music as science and art should be fully integrated into the university (1967: 2). Students should be united in their striving for 'insight, truth and intellectual life' (1967: 2). Malan praises the restored unity in South Africa between music as art and music as science (1967: 3). Further, music is an art that exemplifies order and the composer the creator of order (1967: 6). Any chaos in the music can only be chaos in service of a 'higher order' (1967: 6). Musicology is then credited with the 'binding' role in the university (presumably between the different expressions of music) and is 'living reminder' of the 'totality' of the university (1967: 7). His final peroration is

one of great promise to all: once music as art and music as science can come to its full right within universities, 'sound art' ('toonkuns') will be a 'positive, directing force against the fateful influences in our society' (1967: 9). About the particulars of these influences silence prevails. Malan also acts as an enthusiastic advocate for music education. It seems that Malan saw himself as an instructor of the volk, and he envisioned his music department as a centre that would produce even more 'volksonderwysers' ('teachers of the volk'). He writes: 'The largest musical need of our country at this point in our history is not for glittering specialists on the terrain of music but for large numbers of broadly trained musicians who can carry the banner of an all-encompassing music education forward into the volk ...' (1967: 3-4). Elsewhere he adds to this idea. 'Our' nation is close to 'musikale analfabetedom' ('musical illiteracy'), and that includes the 'tienduisende klavierspelertjies' ('tens of thousands of little pianists') (1967: 8-9). Clearly the activities of the music examination boards active in South Africa were not the models Malan envisioned for the education of the volk.

His chapter in the Cronjé book, although dealing with essentially different material, also advocates the principle of unity. On the first page he confirms the goal of this particular collection of faculty lectures: to demonstrate the fundamental unity between all the arts (Malan in Cronjé: 1968: 31). The rest of the chapter is devoted to discussions of what Malan calls the objective and subjective components of music, the higher and lower sensory receptors of each listener (the former is 'objective' and the latter 'subjective') and a discussion of Beethoven's Sixth Symphony to illustrate these and other ideas. For this thesis the content of this chapter is of less importance than the shared topoi evident in both addresses discussed here. Both published addresses speak of integration of all the arts, a contradictory notion to the meta-narrative of separation. However, the audience of both addresses (no doubt limited to white academics, most of them Afrikaners) make it highly unlikely that Malan could have been misunderstood as advancing an anti-Afrikaner cause. It is indeed far more likely, in the light of his homogenous audience, that Malan's ideas would have been heard with complete agreement. For the integration advocated here is envisioned in the absence of any references to indigenous music. The 'racial other' is carefully excluded to make place for only one group: the volk. In this kind of physical and discursive environment, unity could only be understood as unity within the volk. This notion of volkseenheid is affirmed by the setting in which Malan delivers both

addresses: The University of Pretoria, probably within the walls of a lecture hall, secured from the masses and the burning townships.

In 1982 Malan addressed the ninth conference of the Musicological Society of Southern Africa at the University of the Witwatersrand.⁴⁵ Almost fifteen years after the publication of his chapter in the Cronjé book, Malan was now the Head of Music at the HSRC. After founding two university music departments and starting and supervising the most ambitious music historiographic project ever in South Africa (the *South African Music Encyclopaedia*), he was by now the most important Afrikaner music scholar in the country. His entire address was later published in *SAMUS (South African Journal of Musicology)* of 1983 under the title ‘Suid-Afrikaanse musiekwetenskap: ’n uitdaging en ’n verantwoordelikheid?’ (‘South African musicology: a challenge and a responsibility?’). The article includes a survey of research output in musicology and its related fields at local universities and a short historical account of the founding of music departments at South African universities. Malan identifies the ethnomusicologist Percival Kirby as the father of ‘our’ South African musicology, stating that Kirby’s ‘great’ work on the musical instruments of the Bantu in South Africa marks the cornerstone of South African musicology (1983: 27). Through his work, Kirby established a ‘monument’ for himself in the country and Malan expresses the wish that a major institution should be named after him (1983: 27). In a rhetorical flourish not untypical for Malan, he describes Kirby’s work in epic terms:

In elk geval staan hy soos ’n musiekwetenskaplike Moses voor die klein volkie wat vandag hier by mekaar gekom het. Die beloofde land van die etnomusikologie lê vir ons oop (1983: 27).

In any case, he stands like a musicological Moses before the small folk that has gathered here today. The promised land of ethnomusicology lies open before us (1983: 27).

It is interesting to note Malan’s apparently generous perspective on ethnomusicology, one that he articulated in extravagant language. The references to a monument, but even more so to Moses, the ‘volkie’ and the promised land have always struck very

⁴⁵ The present writer first listened to this address on a recent visit to the Johannesburg sound archives of the SABC. The actual address lasted a full hour. Upon returning to my research materials, I found a copy of the address in its published form. My reading of this paper and subsequently of all Malan’s work could not but be affected by the experience of listening to his voice and manner of presentation.

specific chords with the Afrikaners. But for Malan South Africa is much more than a promised land. It is also a 'paradise' for music research (1983: 27). And in this paradise, young researchers have the chance to erect monuments (1983: 27). In the light of these revelations, Malan states that musicology in South Africa is much more than 'liefhebbery' (an 'indulgence') (1983: 27). It is a great responsibility, one that induces Malan's prose to awe-struck wonderment: 'Hoe jonk is alles nie nog nie!' ('How young is not all before us!'). Of course, a notion of the country's 'immaturity' implies general acceptance of the idea that the country was created in 1652. Looking at the list of contributors who continued Kirby's work in this musicological 'paradise', Malan remarks that the list has two very distinct characteristics: it contains not a single black person and not a single Afrikaner (1983: 27). And then, perhaps just for reiteration, he adds that the people who are acquainted with the music from the 'inside', the black people, have not yet made a single contribution (1983: 27). The implication is again seamless with Apartheid thinking: black researchers for black music and Afrikaner researchers for Afrikaner music and much else besides.

The greatest threat to music research in South Africa, Malan points out, is music practice (1983: 28). Performance, a showy business marked by applause, has gained the upper hand over music research (1983: 28). To explain his point, he provides a short inception history of South African music departments and an overview of the nature of music research outputs at these institutions. The ratio of research on South African topics to that on international subjects is 1:3 and Malan suggests that, at least temporarily, a ratio of 1:1 would be desirable (1983: 30). Most of the local research revolves around the 'musical' aspects of pedagogy, while another large section is devoted to what Malan calls 'straight-forward' matters such as the narratives of persons, cities, towns or church music (1983: 31). At the mention of the term 'ethnomusicology', Malan states, the first reaction is usually: 'Aha, the music of the blacks and the difficult work it requires and the knowledge of anthropology that is imperative for the researcher and all the deviations that are so hard to notate and nobody is really keen to do it' (1983: 32). But imagine, Malan asks his audience, the disaster of twenty million blacks 'who break loose' ('wat losraak') from their different tribes and who are now on the path to Western civilisation and inevitably also to the practice and appreciation of Western music (1983: 32). For blacks, unlike the Boers who faced a similar transition in the beginning of the twentieth century, this process implies a loss of 'their' identity (1983: 32). Perhaps Malan was not unaware

that the fabric of Apartheid was coming apart at this time. This would explain the anxiety with which this image of millions of blacks on the brink of Western life and arts changes to a discourse on musical identity as a manifestation of tribal peculiarities. In the rest of his address Malan figuratively shoves these millions back into their tribal and de-westernised units. The page is littered with question marks and exclamation marks as Malan follows his rhetorical questions with exclamations to hammer home certain ideas. He asks whether educators are familiar with methodologies followed at black schools, tonal language that grows from identity and tradition, and possible models for music schools where blacks could be systematically introduced to a kind of 'altered' Western music (1983: 32). Then comes the key question and the turn in discourse: has anyone considered just how much music is an expression of identity? (1983: 32). Exclamations: 'Ja, ja en ja!' ('Yes, Yes and yes!') (1983: 32). More questions: 'How can we be so blind? We are then all musicians. We know the value of identity. And we are educators: do we and our students grasp the enormity of the task that awaits us? Do we comprehend our responsibility?' (1983: 32).

Malan's arousing language confronts the reader with a double narrative. On the surface we read of twenty million blacks 'entering' Western civilisation and of the importance of ethnomusicology as an academic area of study. But occupying the interstices between such seemingly progressive statements are others detailing the potential of music as a marker of individual identity, education for blacks that draws on 'their' practices and methodologies, a kind of 'altered' Western music for 'them' – effectually stopping the millions of blacks in their tracks and marching them back into separateness to the tune of their own music. And if the messages in Malan's text sound contradictory to readers today, it is the contention here that they were perfectly understood by his audience then. Certainly the following words would have sealed the meaning he tried to convey:

Ek lewer 'n pleidooi daarvoor dat ons gewillig word om geesgenote in ons studeerkamer toe te laat, om ons van onmiddellike belange los te maak en die verband van ons werk met die nasionale geheel raak te sien. As 'n mens diamante delf, pen jy jou kleim af en dan begin jy grawe. Maar as jy agterkom dat die grotes moontlik diep lê en dat jou vermoë nie meer reik om hulle by te kom nie, dan begin jy met eendersdenkendes saamwerk en dan ontstaan daar dinge soos die groot gat by Kimberley. Ek sou graag wou sien dat die musiekwetenskaplikes tesame so 'n groot gat in die Suid-Afrikaanse geesteslewe grawe in plaas van 'n menigte klein gaatjies waar elkeen baas oor sy eie arbeid is. Ons krag lê in samewerking. Juis omdat ons so

min is, moet ons by mekaar aansluit en uit één mond praat en sodoende hard praat as dit gaan oor sake soos 'n nasionale musiekbeleid, 'n nasionale musiekonderwysbeleid, 'n nasionale beleid vir die uitvoerende kunste, 'n nasionale beleid vir die skeppende toonkuns. Dit is my oortuiging dat musiek 'n vername rol in die Suid-Afrikaanse huishouding moet speel en dat ons werk altyd meer op nasionale doelwitte gerig moet wees sodat die volle potensiaal van die kuns in die direkte diens van die land kan ontplooi (1983: 33).

I am pleading that we become willing to allow those who think and feel like us into our studies, to abandon immediate interests to notice the association of our work with the national unit. If one delves for diamonds, you stake your claim. But once you realise that the big ones lie deep and that it is beyond your ability to reach them, you start to collaborate with like-minded people, resulting in phenomena like the great hole at Kimberley. I would like to see that the musicologists together make such a big hole in the South African cultural life instead of a magnitude of small holes where each is master of his own work. Our power lies in collaboration. Precisely because we are so few, we should connect and speak as one in a loud voice on matters such as a national music policy, a national music education policy, a national policy for the performing arts, a national policy for composition. I am convinced that music should play an important role in the South African household and that our work should increasingly focus on national goals so that the full potential of art can be deployed in direct service to the country (1983: 33).

This unhappy metaphor and extraordinary vision removes all doubt about Malan's fanaticism. His enthusiasm for national policies governing everything from education to composition, all in step with 'national goals' 'in direct service to the country' is as clear an articulation of Afrikaner nationalism as fascism as one is ever likely to see. That this position was taken by a musicologist in 1980s South Africa, is perhaps the clearest proof yet offered that art music practice in South Africa could be neither neutral nor ideologically uncontaminated by Apartheid. Against this background Malan states that the task of education acquires new and different dimensions (1983: 33). Young people should be trained to take up their positions within the national unit (1983: 33). An example is provided of the exact and meaningful research at which he is hinting. Two 'dominees' (religious ministers) in Queenstown donned the 'karoodorp' with 'a musical face' by initiating study groups, lectures, debates, the formation of choirs and instrumental groups (1983: 33). They intentionally and constructively enlisted the 'power' of music to make the 'silence and loneliness' of the Karoo more pleasant (1983: 33). He continues to state that the role of the amateur in South African music history up to the twentieth century was a prominent one and he refers to 'national music households' (1983: 33).

Broadly speaking, Malan was advocating three different categories of research. First, the music of South African composers should be listened to and

studied in South Africa. Theorising on serious works would certainly fall within the ambit of South African musicology. Second there was ethnomusicology. The discipline harboured great potential for South Africa and the project of separate development. It could provide sonic proof that each ethnic group in South Africa had to be developed differently to and separated from others, even assisting in the process. Finally, there is amateur research in which each national household had a part to play. The national household and the community is inevitably the centre of this third practice. Malan could well have imagined an entire musical unit, the volk, who attended lectures, debates, sang in church choirs and played instruments, all in service of the highest national cause. Musicology, ethnomusicology and amateur music and research shared one common factor: they all served the national cause in the land.

Although my reading of Malan's 'national' visions is decidedly critical, it should be stated that stripped of the broader South African political context in which these ideas reverberated and acquired meaning, they were not entirely without merit. South African academic life and in particular musicology required expansion and Malan realised this. The quality of research done in South Africa had to improve and more people had to be exposed to music in all its forms. Moreover, it could reasonably be argued that national policies for music-related matters were not always harmful. However, it is impossible to read Malan as if the abnormal society in which he wrote did not exist, and it is equally impossible to ignore the tenor and register of his delivery. Mark Sanders has shown that intellectual complicity with regard to Apartheid was (and remains) inevitable and any attempt at making sense of it could only be based on *degrees* of complicity, affirmation and disavowal (Sanders, 2002: 11). Malan's complicity is clear-cut and damning. He envisioned a musical cosmos where all toed the national line. Listening to his voice, Malan often resembled a strict Calvinist 'dominee' sternly coaxing his flock in the right direction. On other occasions his voice has a magisterial dictatorial quality, perhaps even cavalier in tone. On such instances, he addresses the volk in short and punctuated sentences arranged around equally short and meaningful silences. His closing words at the Ninth Musicological Conference of the Musicological Society of Southern Africa contains the slightly comical metaphors customary of his style. But it also establishes his status as national leader in the land. If all Afrikaners had to look to P. W. Botha as their national leader in 1982, Malan would certainly be the figure they would follow as

national leader on the terrain of music. He writes of South African musicology that it is:

nie die gepiep van kuikentjies nie, maar die rondborstige gekraai van 'n onbeskaamde hoenderhaan. Ons het die moontlikheid, wat ander nasies ons kan beny, om in hierdie laaste Paradys ons eie monumente te bou (1983: 34).

not the peeping of chicks, but the full-chested crowing of a self-confident cock. We have the possibility for which other nations can envy us, that we can build our own monuments in this last paradise (1983: 34).

Malan went as far as to supply a document outlining the path to the erecting of national musical monuments. A year prior to his address at the Musicological Society he published his own contribution to a national policy for the arts in the journal of the society. The principle underlying the article (and perhaps most of Malan's work) is best enunciated in 5.6 of the article:

In die vorming van 'n Suid-Afrikaanse kunsbeleid en van 'n musieklewe met 'n eie klank, moet ons sonder skroom op kunsgebied, net soos op alle ander terreine van die nasionale bestaan, die politieke en ekonomiese ideaal van 'Suid-Afrika eerste' voorop stel (Malan, 1981: 36).

In the formation of a South African arts policy and the shaping of a musical life with an own sound, we should, on the terrain of art, just like on all other areas of national life, prioritise the political and economic ideals of 'South Africa first' without faltering (1981: 36).

Stated somewhat differently, Malan writes elsewhere that the artists of the volk must become prophets of the 'grootheid' ('greatness') of the volk (1981: 31). In the drafting of a national policy, Malan underlines different responsibilities for different groups. There had to be funding and sufficient education for composers (1981: 33). The SABC and arts councils had to do more in their efforts to champion music (1981: 35-36). The state could appoint artists as 'guest of state' for a year and pay them satisfactorily (1981: 36). Composers also had a responsibility. They had to collaborate to ensure a 'resonansbodem' ('resonance space') for their art and compose 'true South African melodies' birthed from the experiences and needs of the 'South African spirit' (1981: 35). Further they had to be active participants in the creation of a South African musical life that was something other than a far-off echo of musical life abroad (1981: 36). In this regard he writes that the 'ivory towers of their art' should take second place while composers should rather compose music that would cause an

‘aardskudding’ (‘earthquake’) in the ‘gemoedere’ (‘hearts’) of South African listeners. Alban Berg is respected, but Verdi is loved (1981: 36).

Near the end of his article, Malan orders the steps that should be taken to implement his national policy. Reviewing these steps supplies the reader with the best outline for his entire project. First, an advisory council for the arts had to be initiated (1981: 41). Second, the establishment of a South African music library (and Malan here adds that it had to be done for the music of whites and blacks) was imperative (1981: 41). Third, South African creative artists had to be appointed for short periods of service to regional councils, municipalities and the SABC so that they might complete ‘consented’ projects (1981: 41). A council for traditional South African music was also required while a special conservatorium for blacks had to be opened (elsewhere he suggests Soweto as the location for such an institution) (1981: 41). Malan’s motivation of the conservatorium is telling of his project. The conservatorium had to be focussed on ‘their’ own identity and its preservation, so that they could develop along their own lines in their own musical tradition in a manner that is different to that of the whites (1981: 41). Malan’s vision of traditional music and ethnomusicology was for them to function as keys to separate identity and separate development. In the light of this, Malan’s statements about Percival Kirby as musical Moses and his work on the Bantu instruments as the cornerstone of local musicology assume a less beneficent meaning. Kirby’s work, for Malan, utilised the potential of ethnomusicology as an instrument of separation, apartness and eventually Apartheid.⁴⁶ Malan’s national policies never gained official status in Apartheid South Africa. Whether this failure could be ascribed to the fact that by 1982 Apartheid’s time was running out, is not clear. Certainly, the South African government had more pressing problems in 1982 than arts policy. Or had they? In the previous chapter mention was made of the Schutte Commission of 1981 who was tasked with a nationwide enquiry on cultural matters. In his address at the conference of the South African Musicological Society, Malan mentions a similar enquiry into sport, but reports that there is nothing specifically for music (Malan, 1983: 31). Whether Malan was

⁴⁶ Stephanus Muller has read traces of inclusion and even a kind of ‘cosmopolitan early Afrikaner nationalism’ in Malan’s seemingly benevolent statements on Percival Kirby and ethnomusicology (Muller, 2007: 377-378). My reading proffers an indictment to Muller’s reading of the same statements by Malan. I would suggest that the political and particular discursive contexts of Malan’s statements (including separate development and general adherence to Afrikaner nationalist ideals in all spheres including music) are not adequately considered in Muller’s interpretation.

unaware of the Schutte Commission or whether that commission was too broad for his liking, is not clear. What is clear, however, is that in the early 1980s the South African government still attempted to regulate social and cultural matters. Regardless of his nationalist inclinations, Malan's remark points to a disaffection with government in the way it engaged with music, affirming an indifference that continues to plague our present dispensation.

Conclusion

It has been argued so far that the discourses of Apartheid intellectualisation filtered through into Afrikaans music historiography in a manner that requires investigation. Gerrie Eloff, Geoffrey Cronjé, Hendrik Verwoerd, Piet Meyer, Jan Bouws, Rosa Nepgen and Jacques P. Malan are central figures in the tracing of overlaps and ideological compatibilities between Apartheid and music historiography. But as is so often the case, theory did not always find expression in practice, and intellectual aspirations often remained unfulfilled when the machinery of Apartheid was set into motion. Simply stated, Apartheid was not the equivalent of Nazism when it came to music. There existed degrees of complicity, affirmation and disavowal in the relations of intellectuals with music and Apartheid. In the final chapter, an attempt will be made to connect theory and practice on certain levels.

Chapter 4

One of the much rehearsed analyses and models of self explication characterising art music and historiography in South Africa is epistemologically rooted in Europe. In a recent and typical example, Stefans Grové's style is described as evolving through interests in J.S. Bach, Olivier Messiaen and Paul Hindemith (Muller and Walton 2006: 3). As the tracing of aesthetic genealogies to Europe constitutes the uncritical acceptance of a European paradigm for South African art music, this approach is avoided here. The Stefans Grové example conceptually confirms certain strands of Nationalist propaganda, including beliefs that declared Afrikaners to be Europeans in possession of a superior cultural and racial standing in an otherwise 'dark' Africa. In contrast, the approach offered here will aim at an understanding of a broader twentieth-century culture framed by a critical understanding of these ideologies as propelled by South African historiography and primary documents from the Arnold van Wyk collection in Stellenbosch.

The cultural language of Afrikaner nationalism

In 1963 a book entitled *Die Westerse kultuur in Suid-Afrika* (Western Culture in South Africa) was published under the editorship of Geoffrey Cronjé, the apartheid academic and ideologue made infamous by J.M. Coetzee's much cited essay in his book *Giving offense: essays on censorship*.⁴⁷ *Die Westerse kultuur in Suid-Afrika* contains a number of lectures delivered two years previously at the University of Pretoria and published in the form of short essays. In the book a number of explanations are offered with regard to the establishment and advancement of Western culture in South Africa. In one essay, the birth of the Afrikaner people is imagined and historicised in the following manner:

Die Afrikaanse volk is tog 'n verlengstuk van die Westerse beskawing. So gesien, het die Afrikanervolk nie in 1652 of 1657 in die skadu van Tafelberg begin nie, maar mens kan ook die Griekse, Romeinse en Christelike wortels van die Westerse beskawing as die begin aantoon (Spies in Cronjé 1963: 33).

⁴⁷ See Geoffrey Cronjé (ed). *Die Westerse kultuur in Suid-Afrika*, Pretoria, 1963 and also J.M. Coetzee, *Giving Offense: Essays on Censorship*, Chicago and London, 1996.

The Afrikaans volk is clearly an extension of Western civilisation. Seen in this light, the Afrikaner volk did not begin in 1652 or 1657 in the shadows of Table Mountain, but one can also present the Greek, Roman and Christian roots of Western civilisation as its beginning (Spies in Cronjé: 1963: 33).

The attempt to provide Afrikaners with a pre-history stretching back to ancient Greece is hardly unknown as a cultural strategy in the West. However, of more interest here is the unstated cultural implication of this argument. As a Western culture derived from antiquity, Afrikaner culture from the seventeenth to the twentieth centuries could be expected to replicate the cultural and artistic patterns and developments of Europe. Extending this line of thinking, it would not be unreasonable to expect traces of both the European Enlightenment and nineteenth-century Romanticism in South African artistic production in the oldest places of settlement like Cape Town. And yet, amid these and other similar claims made in the book, an interesting explanation is offered by H.M. Van der Westhuysen for what he describes, in a puzzling contradictory statement, as the *negligible* cultural contribution by the Afrikaners in the first two hundred and fifty years of colonisation:

Dit is te verklaar uit hoofde van die feit dat hulle, eintlik net 'n handjievool gevestigde pioniers, ander noodsaaklike aanvoorwerk gehad het om te verrig: 'n woeste bodem moes getem en bewoonbaar gemaak word met 'n voldaagse program aan fisiese arbeid van allerlei slag; die godsdienstige en sedelike vorming vir instandhouding van die Christelik-beskaafde mens moes volgehou word; daar moes selfgenoegsame inrigting gemaak word vir eie huishouding en gesinslewe, dikwels onder omstandighede van gebrek aan byna alle elementêre lewensgeriewe wat 'n gewone oorsese Europese gesin geken het; daar moes met inspanning en natuurlike vernuf 'n doeltreffende praktiese kennis uit die alledaagse ervaring opgebou word om aan die primêrste lewensbehoefes te kon voldoen. In die kort, daar was min tyd oor vir en nog minder aanleiding tot kunsbeoefening (Van der Westhuysen in Cronjé 1963: 59).

It is explicable from the fact that they, only a handful of pioneers, had other crucial pioneering work to attend to: a rough 'bodem' had to be tamed and domesticated with all kinds of recurrent daily manual labour; the formation of religious and moral virtues for the maintenance of the Christian-Western human being had to be sustained; self-sufficient accommodation had to be made for an own household and family life, often in circumstances characterised by the prevalence of a lack of elementary living amenities familiar to almost any European family; to meet only the most primitive living demands required strenuous effort and natural ingenuity in daily experiences. Stated briefly, there was little time and even less cause for artistic practice (Van der Westhuysen In Cronjé, 1963: 59).

Paraphrasing Van der Westhuysen's words, the justification for the stunted development of South African 'Western' culture in the first two hundred and fifty years of settlement (roughly up to 1900) rests on the limitations imposed by a living

space ('bodem') devoid of any civilisation. All the available time and energy of colonists, the reader is asked to believe, was spent 'taming' this land and making it host to Western cultural standards. While Van der Westhuysen insists that a strong sense of cultural expression did exist among white settlers, the evident absence of a flourishing cultural life or comparable developments to those in Europe is explained by the idea that there was no time to expend on luxuries. In his own essay in *Die Westerse kultuur in Suid-Afrika*, Geoffrey Cronjé echoes this thinking, but simultaneously enlightens his readers about the character of the people who inhabit this wild country:

Wat die Afrikanernasie betref, is die merkwaardige feit egter dat hy in pioniersomstandighede, as't ware omring deur barbare en heidene, byna sonder die invloed van die georganiseerde kerk en die skool, en met so te sê geen aanraking met die lande van herkoms, tog die Protestantse godsdiens en Westerse lewenswaardes suiwer bewaar en in sy eie nasieskap gestalte laat kry het (Cronjé in Cronjé 1963: 92).

Concerning the Afrikaners, the extraordinary fact is that he, in pioneering circumstances and in actual fact surrounded by barbarians and heathens, chiefly without the influence of the organised church and school and almost without any contact with the lands of his descent, preserved and embodied the protestant faith and Western living values in their purest forms in his nationness (Cronjé in Cronjé, 1963: 92).

It is instructive that this myth of origin, posing as an epistemological window on Western culture in South Africa, has found its way into the writing of perhaps the most influential of early South African music historiographers of Western art music, Jan Bouws:

Die onderwys het in die eerste tyd egter nog maar min onder die aandag van die bestuur geval. Daar was ander sake: Die nuwe en wilde land sou hom nie maklik laat tem nie, en dit sou nog lank 'n belemmerende faktor ook in die kultuurverspreiding beteken. (Bouws 1946: 12)

In the early days, education received little attention from the management. There were other matters: the new and wild 'bodem' would not be tamed easily and this remained an impeding factor in the spread of culture (Bouws, 1946: 12).

The land, we read here, was 'new' and 'wild' and in need of 'taming'. And it is this 'wild newness' that provides an obstacle for cultural development and specifically music (with which Bouws is primarily concerned). The narrative taking shape here is consistent. While Europe was creating the central core of what today exists as the

canon of Western art music, a small group of pioneers, surrounded by heathens in a savage country, suppressed their latent cultural and creative impulses to conquer the territory of their settlement in the name of Christianity and Western values. But true creativity cannot be stifled. Instead of producing works of art, Van Der Westhuyzen continues to theorise in his article, the attempts of this brave and noble tribe yielded what could be termed the first important Afrikaner-European derived cultural product, the so-called Boereplaas:

Die eerste belangrike aksie waarby die witman reeds drie eeue gelede onmiddellik na sy aankoms in Suid-Afrika betrokke geraak het, was om die nuwe bodem te beset. Sy eerste groot skepping sou word die inrigting van veilige woonplek ... Die gemeenskaplike taak was om 'n onherbergsame streek vir Westers beskaafde mense bewoonbaar te maak. Uit hierdie gesamentlike aksie tree die eerste kulturele produk te voorskyn wat 'n magtige behoudende en vormende invloed op die Afrikaner sou gaan uitoefen: die boereplaas as selfgemaakte woonoord ... Die Afrikaanse boereplaas het die wieg geword van 'n nuwe Westerse nasie met 'n eie landelike kultuurpatroon ... nie alleen is dit 'n kultuurproduk van die allergrootste betekenis nie, maar dit het ook self 'n kultiverende faktor in die vorming van die Westerse leefwyse hier te lande geword. Die boereplaas was nog altyd 'n bewaarplek van die Wes-Europese gees en vormlewe, en tegelyk die bakermat van die voortgesette ontwikkeling daarvan in Afrika. (Van der Westhuysen in Cronjé, 1963: 49)

The first important engagement of the white man upon his arrival in South Africa three centuries ago, was to occupy the 'bodem'. His first eminent creation would be the cultivation of secure living space ... The communal task was to domesticate an inhospitable region for Western civilised peoples. From this joint action emerges the first cultural product that would exert a profound sustaining and forging function on the Afrikaner: The Boereplaas as self-constructed residence ... The Boereplaas has become the cradle of a new Western nation with its own rural living pattern ... Not only is it a cultural product of extolled meaning, but it has become a cultivating factor in shaping Western living in this country. The Boereplaas has always been a site for the preservation of the West-European spirit and substance and simultaneously also the foundation for its continued development in Africa (Van der Westhuysen in Cronjé, 1963: 49).

Added to the idea of a wild land ill-suited to cultural fineries, we now find that the taming of the land itself becomes a cultural event and even a 'product' (in the words of Van der Westhuysen), enabling the cultivation and appreciation of the West-European spiritual life. A direct link is established between control of the land as a prerequisite for the existence and practice of Western culture. The Boereplaas becomes the essential cultural enabler for Western culture in South Africa. Once this has been established, we read in Van der Westhuysen's article that the twentieth century became a time of rapid development of culture and art [1963: 58]. It is

impossible not to understand that the successful subjugation of the territory, its ‘taming’, is here implied’.

While this kind of writing clearly supplies an ideological frame for ‘reading’ the symbolic significance of Western art music for Afrikaner nationalists in twentieth-century South Africa, an even cursory glance at its *practice* in the corresponding time frame results in a paradox. It is indisputably true that general public interest in art music in South Africa was and remains peripheral among white South Africans. Yet none of the supporters of the historical narrative briefly outlined above, saw fit to point out that white South African culture – supposedly developing in parallel to its European counterparts – failed to produce the contemporaneous equivalents of a Bach, Beethoven or Brahms. Admittedly a number of good composers started emerging in the twentieth century – Muller identifies Arnold van Wyk (1916-1983), Stefans Grové (1922), Hubert du Plessis (1922), Stanley Glasser (1926), John Joubert (1927), Priaulx Rainier (1903-1986), Blanche Gerstman (1910-1973) and Rosa Nepgen (1909-2000) as ‘the pioneers of what was the first blossoming of a home-grown South African sound on the concert stages of the country and later, in a modest way, the world (Muller and Walton 2006: 2) – yet not a single one of these composers made enough of an impact to transcend their local importance. Furthermore, the general standard of musical performance throughout the twentieth century up until today remains, with a few notable exceptions, below that encountered in European or North American centres. Van der Westhuysen’s ‘era of rapid development on the terrain of culture and art’, I would argue, is thus put into perspective, at least as far as music is concerned.

The nationalist notion of the twentieth century as a time framing a blossoming of Western culture in South Africa was shared in music circles. Arnold van Wyk quotes Anton Hartman in a letter of 1961, in which the latter states that he expects a period of ‘unprecedented growth’ after the declaration of a republic in 1961 (and the metaphorical consolidation of the Boereplaas, one might add) (Muller in Olwage 2008: 293). Yet documentary evidence now starting to emerge also casts doubt on this optimistic nationalist narrative. Whereas Western culture was symbolically claimed and celebrated as evidence of the supremacy of Afrikaner control in South Africa, the practical experiences of composers tell a different story. In a letter shortly before his

death, perhaps the pre-eminent South African composer of the twentieth century, Arnold van Wyk, writes to the SABC:

I (and, I can assure you, all South African composers) feel convinced that the SABC and especially SATV are not really interested in us and that it is meaningless to try to change the situation. And should there be sense in trying again, I am bitterly upset that I have to devote precious time and energy at this late stage of my life to the unpleasant necessity of writing this (very difficult) letter. The strongest feeling that I have at the moment is that I wish to inform you that I should in future choose to have nothing to do with the SABC – especially because the disparagement and humiliation that one has to endure from the Corporation is not worth the few stale crumbs it throws one. Or let me put it like this: if I look back to the near half-century that I have had dealings with the SABC, I see more unpleasantness and disparagement than anything else. In the last ten years things have worsened, and in the last four years especially the SABC has made abundantly clear what it thinks of me. (Muller in Olwage 2008: 294)

A general assumption amongst present-day historians is that a more or less benevolent relationship existed between composers and the Apartheid state; one in which the former supplied music to glorify the ruling culture, the latter responding by generous financial and institutional support. Although a case of complicity, in which Van Wyk knowingly or unknowingly perpetuated state ideologies, is conceivable, this is not my main concern. Of more interest to the current argument is the fact that Van Wyk contradicts the nationalist Afrikaner notion of the twentieth century as rich in cultural and musical production. It articulates a telling discrepancy between historiographers writing with the aim to intellectualise Apartheid thinking (often in retrospect) and an important figure living and creating in the midst of the so-called ‘era of unprecedented growth’.

If we accept Van Wyk’s version of institutional indifference by successive SABC (and by extension government) dispensations, why, one could well ask, is twentieth-century nationalist South African discourse so enthralled by the spectre of a vibrant, rich, and fertile Western culture? The immediate answer is that these statements should be read as mere rhetoric, the accepted discourse of cultural allegiance to European norms and standards so important to differentiate Afrikaners from Africa. However, it is possible that the reasons for the incessant theorising about Western culture in Apartheid thinking are more significant. As Apartheid became more entrenched and resistance to it intensified it became evident, at least to some,

that the Apartheid state would survive only for a limited time.⁴⁸ This realisation had far-reaching implications. For Afrikaners it meant a questioning of their existence and their right to live in a country they regarded as their only place of belonging. Historian Hermann Giliomee remarked on this rising cynicism that became increasingly present within Afrikaner intellectual and political circles.⁴⁹ However, he also opined that no ideology can survive and perpetuate itself on the basis of an entirely cynical politics, but that the beliefs constituting an ideology will always also be idealistic and, in the nature of ideology, at least to some degree unconscious. The mere existence of this degree of cynicism is, however, important. I want to suggest that in Apartheid South Africa culture became the inflated symbolic legitimation of an unworkable system that existed with an underlying basis of cynicism. One does not have to search far to find support for this view. Gerrit Viljoen⁵⁰ writes in the late seventies that:

the most profound justification of Afrikaner survival was not physical or economic but the quality and appeal of our intellectual and social life, the ethical values which direct it, and the interpretation and explanation of life in our arts – in short, our cultural life (Giliomee 1994: 541).

The circularity and opportunism of the nationalist argument with respect to culture is now emerging. The narrative as constructed by Cronjé and his co-authors and taken up by music historians like Jan Bouws would have the reader believe that in the first two and a half centuries of South African colonisation, the development of white high culture was stunted by the immediate needs of ‘taming’ a savage country. Cultural ‘lack’ or ‘absence’ is the result of the ‘wildness’ of the country. In the twentieth century the argument is reversed: the notion of a superior white culture is offered as justification for the physical dominance of space by Afrikaners in South Africa. Now that Afrikaners finally control the country that inhibited cultural growth, they are left without a choice: the ‘quality and appeal of [their] intellectual and social life ... and the explanation of life in [their] arts’, to quote Viljoen, demands the occupation of

⁴⁸ As early as the 1950s, Eben Dönges, then minister of Interior, mentioned to a foreign journalist that Apartheid will protect only three generations against the growing threats posed by blacks and coloureds (Giliomee, 2005: 485). Giliomee also writes how scepticism towards Apartheid and its ideals increased after 1960: ‘Sharpeville and its aftermath brought to a head the doubts among leaders in the nationalist movement about aspects of its Apartheid policy (2003: 522)’. Giliomee specifically mentions Anton Rupert and Albert Geyer in this regard (2003: 522-523).

⁴⁹ Giliomee made this comment in a personal interview with the present writer on 21 May 2008 at the University of Stellenbosch.

⁵⁰ Viljoen was chair of the Broederbond from 1974-1980. He then became the minister of National Education and later minister of Constitutional Development.

roughly eighty seven percent of the living space in the country. A reciprocity between culture and country emerges, one that critically informs not only the dawn of Apartheid policy but also its demise.

At this point a number of comments could be made regarding the 'absence of cultural growth' in South Africa and the ideological explanations offered as justification thereof. As has been shown, cultural 'absence' or 'lack' during the first two and a half centuries of South African settlement is something Apartheid ideologists were acutely aware of. Their justification of choice references the idea of a 'wilderness' that needed to be 'tamed' before cultural development could take place. While historical evidence makes it difficult to dispute the notion of an impoverished high-cultural milieu in early colonial South Africa, the explanation supplied by Apartheid's ideologues is not an inevitable one. Far from it. I would argue that a more likely reading is that the establishment of Western cultural creations by an educated and highly cultured elite, the standard bearers of Western civilisation in South Africa, was not impeded by an unruly environment but rather by an indifference of this self-styled elite to the ahistorical reverse-engineered higher cultural values ascribed to them in retrospect. This explanation is much more likely when the (ideologically informed) idea of Afrikaner cultural apotheosis in the twentieth century is replaced by Van Wyk's more pessimistic diagnosis. It becomes clear that the ideology of Afrikaner nationalism entertained two levels of confusion in its explanation and use of culture. The first is on the level of historical narrative, or time, where 'superior culture' is first described as absent and then invoked as justification for geographical dominance. The second is with respect to indifference to the notion of class as this applies to the white settlement population of South Africa during the past three centuries. The narrative supporting white superiority tacitly assumes that 'white' equals 'elite culture', while the historical evidence suggests that much of the white settlement of South Africa was done by what would now be considered working-class, illiterate colonists.

The notion that culture in nationalist narratives became a vehicle for the symbolic legitimation of an unworkable and cynical system of political domination is confirmed by much Afrikaner historical writing. Though many publications dealt with the theme of Afrikaner Nationalism, a single exemplary tract that appeared in the latter half of the 1930s will suffice to illustrate the case being made here. The small

book authored by Nico Diederichs⁵¹ (later to become State President of the Republic) set out in his own words to achieve:

dat hierdie werkie daartoe mag bydra om by ons deur die politiek en politieke verdeeldheid gemartelde Afrikaner-nasie die gedagte te laat posvat dat die politiek nie die hoogste en die blywendste is nie, maar dat daar bo die politiek 'n ewiger en edeler terrein is, waarin ons almal, ten spyte van partypolitieke verdeeldheid, nog nasionaal een kan wees. (Diederichs 1936: 1)

that this tiny work might contribute so that we, martyred Afrikaner nation because of politics and political divisions, might recognise that politics is not the most elevated and lasting, but that above politics exists another eternal and more honourable terrain where we all, in spite of political differences, can be one national unit (Diederichs, 1936: 1).

In his book Diederichs places the importance of nationalism above politics and hence also above power. With the absence of Afrikaner nationalism, however, political power would have been unimaginable. How then did nationalism inform notions of Afrikaner culture and also living space or the subjection of a country? An explanation is supplied by Diederichs:

Die nasie is vry wat homself *geestelik* bevry het deur homself te wees en te word en deur sy *eie-aard suiwer en louter* te bewaar. En hierdie *geestelike nasionale vryheid* moet gedurig verower en verwerp word. Onvry is 'n nasie, nie net as hy sy *eie geestelike persoonlikheid* verloën en prysgee vir vreemde ideale wat met sy *diepste wese* nie strook nie, maar ook as hy die *hoogste in hom* laat verdor en ontaard weens te grote toewyding aan die laere materiële en ekonomiese lewe (italics by the present author) (Diederichs 1936: 54).

The nation is free when he has freed himself *spiritually* through a process of being and becoming himself and through a *pure* preservation of his own nature. And this *spiritual national freedom* must continuously be acquired and attained. A nation forfeits freedom when he denounces his own *spiritual character* for the ideals of an outsider which is not in accordance with his *essence* or when he allows the most *elevated* to wither away or degrade due to excessive dedication to the lower material and economic life (italics by the present author) (Diederichs, 1936: 54).

The use of words and phrases like 'spiritual', 'spiritual national freedom' and 'deepest essence' clearly reaches beyond politics to the metaphysical, the domain inhabited predominantly by art especially since the nineteenth century. Thus far the argument is a well-rehearsed romanticised one. But Diederichs continues:

Die *geestelike besit* van 'n mens word nie aan hom gegee nie; hy moet dit *verower*. Dit word nie *geërf* nie, maar *verwerp*. Die *vol-geestelike mens* is nie wat

⁵¹ Diederichs, an Afrikaner intellectual and staunch nationalist, was the South African State President from 1975 to 1978. He was also Finance minister for a time in John Vorster's government.

ander of omstandighede van hom maak nie, maar is wat hy geword het in en deur homself. Sy *ware besit* is nie dit wat van buite na hom aangedra is nie, maar *dit wat hy self deur eie inspanning en opoffering vir hom toegeeien het*. (italics by the present author) (Diederichs 1936: 19)

The *spiritual possession* of a human being is not given to him; it is something he has to *gain*. It is not *inherited* but *attained*. The *completed spiritual being* is not forged by others or by circumstances, but it is what he himself becomes in and through himself. His *real possessions* are not those added extrinsically by others but those he has *taken* for himself through *own effort* and *sacrifice* (italics by the present author) (Diederichs: 1936: 19).

Thus the metaphysical becomes the locus where (Afrikaner) nationalism and creative aspirations meet. And it is a space to be conquered, to be claimed by sacrifices and effort. All the elements of the ideological narrative unpacked thus far are present, but more clearly articulated: the importance of physical geographical dominance, the abstraction in retrospect of this dominance to defend that which is true and spiritual, the assignment of the national essence to the philosophical sphere of the spiritual and the elevation of art as a reason for the defense of a territory. The full circle is completed. Occupying the same space as the true national spirit, it could be argued that the cultural artefact – the poem, the painting, the composition – becomes the iconic artefact in which notions of the national and the cultural are seamlessly conflated. Diederichs confirms as much when he writes:

Uit al die voorafgaande sal dit nou ook al duidelik wees dat daar net een rigting is waarin hierdie antwoord gesoek mag word en dit is die rigting van die geestelike of kulturele lewe. Wanneer nasionalisme 'n lewensbeskouing is en wel 'n lewensbeskouing wat uitgaan van die nasie as sy sentrale idee, dan kan dit nie anders as om in die nasie iets hoogs en verhevens te sien nie. Anders sou dit as lewensbeskouing self nie hoog of verhewe wees nie. Die hoogste nou wat die wese van 'n nasie kan uitmaak, is nie sy grondgebied, sy afstamming, sy politieke mag of ander dergelike faktore nie. Die hoogste in 'n nasie is sy geestelik-kulturele lewe en dit is dan ook hierin dat die essensiële van 'n nasie in werklikheid te vinde is. (Diederichs 1936: 36)

From the preceding, it is clear that there is a single direction in which this answer may be located and it is the direction of the spiritual or cultural life. When nationalism is an outlook, one that departs from the nation as central idea, then it cannot but behold something high and exalted in the nation. Were it different, this outlook would not be high and exalted. The most exalted essence of a nation is not to be found in his living space, descent, political power or other similar factors. The most exalted in a nation is his spiritual-cultural life and in it his true essence is encountered (Diederichs, 1936: 36).

From this passage it emerges that the true nationalist views the nation as high and exalted. Following from this, Diederichs writes that the essence of the nation is its

culture, which constitutes the highest value for nationalism. The terms ‘spiritual’ and ‘cultural’ are used interchangeably and, for Diederichs at least, function as synonyms. An apotheosis of twentieth-century culture in South Africa, if Diederichs’s claims are followed through, locates nationalism and high culture in a shared metaphysical space. This metaphysical space is also informed by the reciprocity that exists between culture and country, as pointed out before. It is in this context that Van der Westhuysen’s identification of the Boereplaas as the first Afrikaner cultural ‘product’ is to be understood as pivotal. The Boereplaas is both a physical place and imagined space that is protected, controlled and dominated. Only after the country had been ‘tamed’ could the pioneers living on it find time to give expression to higher cultural values. The Boereplaas is the central pivot to notions of space, domination, culture and spiritual truth.

The art song

A study of South African composers of the twentieth century such as Rosa Nepgen or Hubert du Plessis suggests that vocal composition, and in particular the Afrikaans song, was an important genre. The writings of Jan Bouws confirm this. In his 1957 publication, *Suid-Afrikaanse komponiste van gister en vandag* (‘South African Composers of Today and Yesteryear’) all the composers are white and composed songs.⁵² This dominance of the Afrikaans art song is strikingly anachronistic. The historical understanding of the art song in the nineteenth century depends on the broader discourse surrounding it. An examination of this discourse reveals that the art song differed in many respects from large-scale compositions. First and most obviously, it required no more than two performers (a singer and a pianist) and was thus suggestive of an intimate setting foreign to opera or larger instrumental works. Second, unlike the majority of its musical predecessors, the art song was not primarily destined for royal courts, but rather the salons of aristocratic and later also middle-class citizens. Although the term ‘salon’ is French, we encounter the rise of the art song in the salons of Austria where the genre is closely connected with the name of Franz Schubert who forged the song into a vehicle for individual and personal artistic expression. The art song was unreservedly associated with salon culture through its

⁵² See also for example his publication *Woord en wys van die Afrikaanse lied* (1958) and *Die volkslied, deel van ons erfenis* (1969).

performance in the setting of a salon. Such performances were attended by a small and elitist audience that consisted of important and wealthy individuals. Richard Taruskin describes these performances by drawing on a definition of romanticism by historian Peter Gay, who described the stylistic period as ‘a vast exercise in shared solitude’ (Taruskin 2005: 77). In early nineteenth-century Europe (with Britain perhaps the exception) we thus find that the art song is closely associated with an elitist audience, who, through the intimate setting of the salon, witnessed a public display of solitude or privacy by the performers.

The rise of the art song in twentieth-century South Africa was not accompanied by the establishment of a salon culture. However, the elitist culture that became associated with the genre through the salons of nineteenth-century Europe is present in the South African context, albeit in a racial rather than a classist guise. The art song was composed, performed and witnessed by white audiences, helping to set them apart from their black or coloured compatriots. Not only was the classist elite of Europe replaced with a racial elite in South Africa, the primary venue for art song performance in the South African context shifted from the ‘salon’ (with its later connotations to effeminacy) to the intimacy of the Afrikaner house (the ‘moederhuis’) that was, as we will see, an important cultural institution for the Afrikaner.

In *Suid-Afrikaanse komponiste van gister en vandag*, Bouws includes a chapter on Rosa Nepgen who was known primarily as a song composer. In the opening paragraphs of this chapter he comments on the overwhelming presence of songs in the oeuvres of South African composers:

Wanneer 'n mens afgaan op eerste indrukke wat die Suid-Afrikaanse musiekproduksie maak, sou jy byna glo dat dit uitsluitend 'n liedkuns moet wees. Dit mag wees dat die skyn bedrieg, of dat die Afrikaanse kultuurstryd in die eerste plek die indruk gee van 'n táálstryd. (Bouws: 1957: 65)

An initial impression of South African music production suggests that it is almost exclusively a *lieder* art. This might be a mere deception or it might be the case that the South African cultural struggle, in the first place, gives the impression of a language struggle (Bouws, 1957: 65).

Although Bouws continues to write that the preference for songs might be a purely practical one (1957: 65), he also supplies an alternative explanation. For him the importance of the song as genre lies in the fact that it is a participant in the so-called

‘cultural battle’, one that originated in the latter part of the nineteenth century and continued into the twentieth century. Bouws writes that this battle was for the largest part waged in the domain of language. Due to the fact that songs drew on Afrikaans texts, they became, for Bouws, vehicles in the cultural struggle of the Afrikaner. This cultural struggle was mounted by certain Afrikaners to resist Englishness (so-called ‘verengelsing’) that was an increased threat to Afrikaner identity after the British victory in the Second Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902). In one of his earlier publications Bouws remarks on the infiltration of ‘englishness’ in local musical life in a chapter that is devoted to the art song (incidentally the only genre that receives a separate chapter in the book). He writes the following:

Die verengelsing van die musieklewe, miskien nie so dadelik opvallend as op die taalgebied nie en daardeur minder alarmerend, het meer as op watter ander terrein die eie kultuur teruggedring of verstik (Bouws, 1946: 70).

The Anglicisation of musical life, perhaps less obvious here than in the domain of language and hence less alarming, has, more than anywhere else, impeded and choked the own culture (Bouws, 1946: 70).

Elsewhere, he writes that:

In die beginjare van ons eeu het die Afrikaanse lied dit maar swaar gekry om tot ontplooiing te kom. Tog was daar, behalwe Bosman [di Ravelli], nog wel ander wat die gevaar van volledige verengelsing op hierdie kwesbare kultuurgebied opgemerk en aangewys het. So het b.v. ‘Onze Jan’ in sy bekende toespraak ‘Is het ons ernst?’ sy toehoorders in Stellenbosch daarop gewys dat op die meisieskole met ‘n Hollands-Afrikaanse bestuur amper uitsluitend Engelse liederes gesing word. Maar met dergelike vasstellinge het die Afrikaner in sy kultuurstryd nog op die verdediging gebly. (Bouws 1957: 31)

In the inception years of our century it was hard for the Afrikaans art song to develop. Still there was, apart from Bosman [di Ravelli], others who observed and pointed to the danger of complete Anglicisation of this vulnerable cultural area. For example ‘Onze Jan’ in his address ‘Is het ons ernst?’ pointed out to his Stellenbosch audience that the girls school with an Anglo-Dutch management used almost solely English songs. With similar practises, the Afrikaner remained on the defence in his cultural struggle (Bouws, 1957: 31).

It is evident from this citation that the ‘cultural battle’ referred to by Bouws was imagined as one that took place inside the arena of the song in the form of *a language struggle*. It is framed here as a struggle during which Afrikaners resisted English influences in order to establish their own cultural identity and heritage. It is not difficult to see how, for Bouws and others, this struggle continued within the genre of

the song in the twentieth century. Primarily, reading Bouws, the use of Afrikaans texts implied the resistance to 'Englishness' in music. But while the use of Afrikaans made the song an obvious site of cultural contestation, one can speculate if resistance to 'Englishness' is restricted to the use of Afrikaans texts, or whether traces of opposition are also encountered in the musical material or performance. Bouws answers this question rather simplistically by writing that composers like Stefaans Grové and Arnold van Wyk refrained from using Afrikaans folk songs in their compositions. To this question we will return. But for now, the constructed relationship between language and music points to a different question: did the Afrikaans song, as Bouws intimates, become a weapon in the cultural struggle through language, or did language in actual fact serve as a catalyst for the prominence and popularity of the Afrikaans art song in South Africa? Both perspectives seem possible. It is possible that Afrikaans texts stimulated increased interest in the art song and subsequently enhanced the popularity of the genre, and once this process was well under way, the art song became a 'weapon' (for Afrikaans and Afrikaners) in a cultural struggle against 'Englishness'. Given the importance of the relationship here theorised between Afrikaans texts and the song, it comes as no surprise that the Afrikaner cause was seen to be much advanced in 1936 when 'Die Stem' was recognised as the official anthem of South Africa. Referring to this event, Bouws writes that:

Na die erkenning van die eie taal in 1925 en die eie vlag in 1928, was die aanvaarding van die eie Volkslied in 1936 die afsluiting van 'n worsteling om baas te wees in eie huis. (Bouws 1946: 70)

Upon recognition of an own language in 1925 and an own flag in 1928, the acceptance of an own volkslied (anthem) in 1936 concluded a tussle for ownership in own house (Bouws, 1946: 70).

It comes as no surprise then that the composer of 'Die Stem', M.L. de Villiers, acquires almost Messianic status in the writings of Bouws. According to Bouws, De Villiers took it upon himself to lead his people towards a national music:

Hy voel dat hy 'n sending moet vervul. Hy moet sy volk die juiste pad na 'n eie, 'n nasionale musiek wys. (Bouws 1957: 35)

He feels that he has to fulfil a mission. He must point the path for his own volk to an own, a national music (Bouws, 1957: 35).

Bouws indicates that, for De Villiers, the song was indeed the foundation of a national music (1957: 36). Within the context of the argument constructed here, it is important to realise that the idea of the song as foundational to a national music is mediated in Bouws's historiography, and not propounded by the composer (in this case De Villiers). What is important to note here, is that Bouws's writing constitutes a discourse clearly aligned to the writings of Afrikaner nationalists who wrote about the reciprocity between country and culture and so attempted to legitimate physical dominance of the land. In the case of Bouws, we encounter a reciprocity between Afrikaans texts and music that emerges in a cultural struggle against 'Englishness'. Nationalist and music historiographical writings on the art song thus share a discursive space in which physical and cultural domination is thematised, one in which soil is metaphorically tied to culture. There exists no better or more focussed metaphor for what is being argued abstractly here, than the song 'O Boereplaas'.

'O Boereplaas'

J.M. Coetzee draws attention to the dedication of the first book by Geoffrey Cronjé, *'n Tuiste vir die nageslag* (1945) to his wife and also to 'Afrikanermoeders as protectors of the blood-purity of the Boerenasie' (Coetzee 1996: 168). Coetzee continues to demonstrate that the 'Afrikanermoeder is a morphological figure of introversion, exclusion, enclosure, embrace'. He writes that this figure 'looks forward to a lexicon in which there will be hundreds of entries for emotionally charged nouns starting with Afrikaner-: Afrikanermoeder, Afrikanergesin, Afrikanerbloed, Afrikanerplaas ...'. (Ibid.) Afrikaner intellectual and later head of the SABC, Piet Meyer, writes at some length on the Afrikaner farm, the Afrikaner household and Afrikaans as 'mother tongue' in a book entitled *Die Afrikaner*. The book was published in 1940 under the editorship of Geoffrey Cronjé and Nico Diederichs. From the writings of Meyer, it becomes clear that the Afrikaner father was the dominant figure in the 'Moederhuis' (Meyer, 1940: 62). However, when addressing the status of the Afrikaner mother Meyer writes the following: 'In die Afrikaanse geskiedenis speel die vrou veral die rol van saambindster van die gesin ...' (1940: 62) 'In the Afrikaans history the Afrikaner mother is the binding figure of the family' (Meyer,

1940: 62). The Afrikaner mother emerges as the 'binding figure' in the Afrikaner house ('moederhuis'). This function accorded to the Afrikaner mother by Meyer is not dissimilar to certain ideas encountered in the writings of Geoffrey Cronjé. In the introduction to '*n Tuiste vir die nageslag*, Cronjé states that the Afrikanermoeder is the keeper of blood purity of the Afrikaner race (See Coetzee, 1996: 168). Cronjé takes Meyer's idea of 'binding figure' further by imagining the Afrikaner mother as pivotal to the blood purity of the volk.

Derived from the powerful meanings ascribed by early Apartheid thinkers to the Afrikaner mother, the symbolic spaces of 'moederhuis' and 'moedertaal' are also particularly evocative. The presence of 'moeder' in both these words evokes images of the custodian of the blood-purity of the 'Boerenasie', as was pointed out by Coetzee. It is also significant that the Boereplaas, that first Afrikaner 'cultural product' according to Van der Westhuizen, is filled in all sorts of ways with compounds containing the prefix 'moeder'. In fact the Boereplaas is a space reserved for the purist and noblest of Afrikaner ideals: the 'moederhuis' and 'moedertaal'. Meyer imagines the origin of the Afrikaner as a sacred and *separate* calling for the Afrikaner when he writes:

Hollanders, Franse en Duitsers het nie as gevolg van omstandighede bymekaar gekom en hulself saamgeorden tot 'n Afrikaanse volk nie, maar God het deur hulle 'n nuwe volksgemeenskap, die Afrikaanse volk, as geloofseenheid in aansyn geroep om onder Sy bestier 'n afsonderlike taak tot eer van Sy Naam te volbring. (Meyer 1940: 59-60)

Dutch, French and German did not congregate due to circumstances to constitute an Afrikaans volk from own intervention, but God, through them, called into existence a new volk, the Afrikanervolk, to fulfil a separate task under His direction whilst united in faith (Meyer, 1940: 59-60).

The attempt to supply the Afrikaner with a pre-history stretching back to ancient Greece, referred to earlier in this chapter, is here supplemented with another history that relates the origins of the Afrikaner. According to the narrative by Meyer, the Afrikaner did not emerge from Dutch settlement in the Cape, nor did he emerge from the mixing of French, German and Dutch races with the indigenous tribes inhabiting the country. Instead, the Afrikaner was preordained by God, who had simultaneously entrusted a 'separate' calling to His people – in this case the Afrikaners. Meyer elaborates on this separate calling of the Afrikaner in another passage:

Voogdyskap oor die naturel soos in die Afrikaanse staatsvorm verwerklik, word aanvaar as deel van die Afrikaanse roepingsvervulling waarvoor die Afrikaner teenoor God verantwoordelik is. (Meyer 1940: 72)

Guardianship as it is reified in the Afrikaans state, is accepted as part of the Afrikaner's calling for which he is responsible before God (Meyer, 1940: 72).

According to Meyer's narrative, the Afrikaner has a God-given responsibility as part of his divine calling – he has to act as patriarch or guardian of the black man. In time, this separate calling would culminate in official Apartheid. The 'separateness' encountered in the Afrikaner calling and later in official Apartheid, a 'separateness' also symbolised in the enclosed space of the Boereplaas, emerges as yet another topos in Afrikaner writing. The Afrikaner farm becomes far more than the first Afrikaner 'cultural product'. The farm as place of birth ('geboortegrond') is also the place of divine revelation where the Afrikaner receives his calling to the position of guardian to the black man. Such a reading of the Afrikaner farm is affirmed by Meyer himself when he writes:

In die Afrikaanse plaashuishouding is die wesensinhoud van die Afrikaanse Calvinistiese Wêreldbeeld gekonkretiseer, daarin kom die geestelike en stoflike waardes as 'n Christelik saamgeordende geheel tot verwerkliking ... (Meyer 1940: 49)

The essence of the Afrikaans Calvinist world view is concretised in the Afrikaans farm household, in it the spiritual and material values are realised as a combined unit (Meyer, 1940: 49).

Van der Westhuizen's idea of the Afrikaner farm as the 'first cultural product' of the nation is here expanded by Meyer to include both the spiritual ('geestelike') and the natural or material ('stoflike') domains. In the more intimate setting of the Afrikaner house, the spiritual (for example the white man's divine separate calling) and material (for example the physical birth of the Afrikaner) merge in the organised unit of the house.

Cronjé's dedication of his book to the Afrikanermoeder as guardian of the blood-purity of the Boerevolk, and the centrality of the Afrikanermoeder to the notion of the Boereplaas, means that purity is a very important component of the Afrikaner spiritual ideal. It is interesting that the ideal of purity is present in both the work of musicologists and the writings of Apartheid ideologues. In the case of the former, Jan

Bouws envisions an Afrikaner art music that develops from Afrikaner folk music ('volksmusiek'). Bouws yearns for an art music with a distinctly Afrikaner character derived from the folk music of the Afrikaner⁵³ (1957: 78-80). The realisation of this ideal requires that folk music be notated and assembled all over South Africa (one thinks of Bartók), for composers of art music to draw on this music in the process of composition. In this regard Bouws mentions individuals like Jo Fourie and Willem van Warmelo who devoted their time to the collection of folk music. But for the pure Afrikaner cultural Utopia imagined by Bouws, the notation and collection of folk music on its own would be insufficient. Folk music could only provide the *source material* for Afrikaner art songs and other forms of art music. In this regard, Bouws quotes the composer Cromwell Everson (who also recorded Afrikaner melodies in an attempt to document folk music): 'Dit kom my voor asof Suid-Afrikaanse Boere musiek al die krag en voedsel het vir die magtige raamwerk van die simfonie' (Bouws 1957: 80). 'It seems to me that Afrikaans Boere music has all the force and substance For the powerful framework of the symphony' (Bouws, 1957: 80).⁵⁴

The cultural Utopia of racial purity imagined for music by Bouws is unsurprisingly present in the writings of Geoffrey Cronjé, who aimed to provide an intellectual premise for Afrikaner theories of race and politics. Cronjé imagines a cultural world that bears the imprint of the Afrikaner in all its expressions. He writes that

In die tweede plek moet egter beklemtoon word dat ons Westerse kultuurbevordering alhier by uitnemendheid 'n eie kragontplooiing moet wees, want alleen op die wyse kan ons ons inheemsheid handhaaf en uitbou. Ons kulturele identiteit en individualiteit moet ongeskonde bly. Ons moet nie veramerikaans of verengelsands of vernederlands of ver-wat-ook-al nie. Ons moet steeds wees wat ons self is. (Cronjé in Cronjé 1963: 111)

In the second place it should be emphasised that our Western culture should advance through the employment of our own power for it is only in this manner that we can maintain and expand our indigenusness. Our cultural identity and individuality must remain uncontaminated. We should not Americanise, Anglicise, Dutchise (sic) or whatever-ise (sic). We must still be what we ourselves are (Cronjé in Cronjé, 1963: 111).

⁵³In the passage referenced above, Bouws discusses the possibility of national art music growing from folk music and/or Boere music. Although he does not state his opinion explicitly, it is viable to suggest that he envisioned Afrikaner/national art music to grow from folk music. For a more detailed discussion of this matter, see chapter two of this thesis.

⁵⁴In this chapter Bouws also expresses dissatisfaction with composers like Stefans Grové, Arnold van Wyk and others for ignoring Afrikaner folk music in their serious compositions.

For Cronjé, it is imperative that Afrikaner cultural expressions display a character that could be interpreted as unique and belonging to the Afrikaner. He envisions a kind of cultural purity easily connectable with his obsession with racial purity when he writes of an ‘uncontaminated’ cultural identity for the Afrikaner. However, Cronjé’s imaginings of an Afrikaner cultural Utopia reaches beyond that of Bouws when the former proceeds to identify the place of inception for a pure Afrikaner culture:

Ten derde is dit noodsaaklik dat die bodemgebondenheid van ons kultuur nie verbreek moet word nie. Al het die stad oorheersend in ons kultuurlewe geword, sal die platteland altyd ’n eie bydrae lewer wat onmisbaar en kultuurverrykend sal bly. Ons platteland moet Blank wees om Westers te kan bly (1963: 111).

In the third place it is imperative that our culture does not forfeit its connectedness with the bodem. Even though the city has become dominant in our cultural life, the rural land⁵⁵ will always make an own contribution that is irreplaceable and culturally enriching. Our rural land must be white to remain Western (1963: 111).

Once again, the notion of a ‘bodem’ (that clearly constitutes a topos in Afrikaner writing) is present. Cronjé writes that Afrikaner culture should never forfeit its intimate connectedness with the soil (‘bodemgebondenheid’). He also informs his reader that the ‘Platteland’ ‘rural land’ should remain ‘white’ to guard the Western character of Afrikaner culture. The paradox in his reasoning is clearly visible from the above two quotations: he advocates an Afrikaner cultural Utopia that remains pure in a process of eschewing Englishness, Americanness, Dutchness or indeed all other influences; yet, in a contradictory statement he remarks that the rural land should remain white to guard the *Western nature* of Afrikaner culture. In other words, Cronjé is in search of an Afrikaner culture that is pure in nature and own to his people, but a culture that remains Western in its essence. He also writes that the rural land will always contribute to the honing and enriching of an Afrikaner culture. As the Boereplaas was the foremost cultural and communal institution on the ‘platteland’, we are presented here with a thought complex that draws together the Boereplaas, the Afrikanermoeder, culture and purity.

Conclusion

⁵⁵ ‘Platteland’ can also be translated with ‘rural regions’ or ‘countryside’. However, I deliberately use the more unconventional ‘rural land’ because it retains the connection with ‘soil’ and ‘bodem’ and hence places it in a register that is closer to the Afrikaans equivalent used by Cronjé.

This thesis has explored points of articulation between the early Afrikaner intellectualisation of Apartheid and early South African (specifically Afrikaans) music historiography. To do this, these discourses were kept and treated as discrete and coherent entities from which the flows of ideology were traced in the slippages of the vocabulary and rhetoric of the language. In this chapter this probing of parallel discourses has been suspended to attempt a more integrated reading of how ideology freely informed the cultural construction of Apartheid. The idealisation of the Boereplaas, the elevation of the Afrikanermoeder, the expansion of the moedertaal and its universalisation in the Afrikaans song have been charted and connected. Informing these tenets of the Afrikaner imaginary, it has been argued, is the ideal of purity. The narrative emerging from this chapter is nowhere better illustrated than in one of the most celebrated Afrikaans art songs, entitled 'O Boereplaas'.

On first inspection, the setting of the poem by C. F. Visser to music by Johannes Joubert draws on the most conventional, even uninteresting musical devices⁵⁶ The harmonic surface seems to be ruptureless and the composition never breaks the mould of primary chords. The melodic range of the soprano is mostly enclosed into an octave and rhythmic devices border on that kind of monotony identified by Cronjé elsewhere in this thesis as having a pacifying effect on the white master. However, a close look at the text and the setting for soprano voice conjures extramusical connections with images already encountered in the writings of Cronjé and Van der Westhuysen. The soprano who declares her deepest affections for the Boereplaas, the 'moederhuis' and the 'moedertaal' could be read as representative of the Afrikanermoeder, the keeper of purity in the Afrikaner house. Her presence and her purity are affirmed in the music: the vocal line subverts chromaticism and moreover, the composition never departs from the home-key of F major. The 'Afrikanermoeder', both literally and metaphorically inhabits the home of Afrikaner posterity, the Boereplaas.

In 1961 the 'wonder of Afrikaans' was celebrated at a festive occasion at the Voortrekkermonument in Pretoria. The occasion drew no less important a person than the first state president of the Republic of South Africa, Advocate C. R. Swart:

⁵⁶ C.F. Visser was an important Afrikaans poet in the nineteenth century. Johannes Joubert (1894-1958), who also composed under the name Hayden Matthews, was born in Wales and later moved to South Africa. Ironically, Joubert could not understand Afrikaans and became familiar with Visser's poem in English translation.

Op die oggend van 30 April begin die mense in hul duisende na die Voortrekkermonument stroom. Laat die middag sit die amfiteater met

40 000 mense gepak. Adv. en mev. Swart arriveer om 17h30 en word na die sitplekke van die eregaste vervoer. Mimi ontvang die eer om langs hom te sit, uitgedos in haar swart ferweel jas met wit pelskraag. Die verrigtinge word geopen deur dr. H. B. Thom, Voorsitter van die F.A.K. En dan moet Mimi sing. Terwyl die son in 'n goue gloed sak, neem sy stelling in voor 'n mikrofoon. 'Ek weet dat my Verlosser leef,' sing Mimi uit Händel se Messias. Haar wonderskone stem vul elke hoekie van die reuse-amfiteater, en 40 000 mense word stil. Soos dit donker word, en 'n silwer maan oor die rantjies verrys, vervolg sy met nog vyf Afrikaanse liedjies. Die laaste een is O, Boereplaas. En toe sy begin, begin almal saggies saamneurie. Teen die einde van hierdie mooi ou liedjie — wat net Mimi regtig kan sing! — staan die hele gehoor op en sing uit volle bors saam met SuidAfrika se grootste sopraan (De Wet, 1976: 154). Onbeskaamd rol die trane oor Mimi se wange.

On the morning of 30 April, people stream to the Voortrekker monument in their thousands. By late afternoon, the amphitheatre is packed out with 40 000 people. By 17:30 Advocate Swart and Mrs Swart arrive and are escorted to their seats. Mimi receives the honour to be seated next to the governor, decked out in her black velvet coat with white fur collar. Proceedings are opened by the chair of the FAK, Dr. H. B. Thom. Then comes the time for Mimi to sing. While the sun sets in a golden glow, she positions herself in front of the microphone. 'I know that my redeemer lives' sings Mimi from the Messiah of Handel. Her marvellous and pristine voice fills every corner of the large amphitheatre while 40 000 people fall silent. As dawn descends and the moon rises over the rantjies, she continues with five Afrikaans songs. The last of these is O Boereplaas, and as Mimi sings the first notes, all present join in with soft humming. At the end of this beautiful old song – which only Mimi can really sing! – 40 000 people rise to their feet and heartily sing along with South Africa's greatest soprano. Unashamedly, tears flow from Mimi's eyes (De Wet, 1976: 154).

This powerful description transforms 'O Boereplaas' into a two-way window through which we can both reflect on Afrikaner historiography and presage the Afrikaner dream of the (then) future. Telescoped back in time and scripted in the art song is the first Afrikaner cultural product, the Boereplaas, its transformation into a home for Afrikaner posterity through white domination of the 'bodem', the posting of the pure Afrikaner moeder as eternal keeper of the white race and the fainting echoes of British colonialism. Telescoped ahead in time in 'O Boereplaas' is the Afrikaner republic that would come into being only a month after this performance. And, perhaps in the tears of the singing Afrikaner moeder, is the prescience of the demise of the Afrikaner republic and its great hero, H.F. Verwoerd, and the dying sounds of Afrikaner colonialism in Africa. This example seems to suggest that not only did Apartheid theorisation and intellectualisation change and infiltrate early South African music historiography, but it seeped into the musical expression and aesthetic ideals of the Afrikaners. Viewed in this way, discourse points the way to an Apartheid aesthetics.

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