

**A CONCEPTUAL ANALYSIS OF TRANSFORMATION AT THREE SOUTH  
AFRICAN UNIVERSITIES IN RELATION TO THE NATIONAL PLAN FOR  
HIGHER EDUCATION**

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Dissertation presented for the Degree of

**Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)**



**at the  
University of Stellenbosch**

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April 2004

## **DECLARATION**

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that the work contained in this dissertation is my own original work and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it at any university for a degree.

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**DATE:**

## **ABSTRACT**

This dissertation explores the notion of (higher) education transformation in relation to logically necessary conditions which guide the concept. These logically necessary conditions (constitutive meanings) include: equity and redress, critical inquiry, communicative praxis, and citizenship. I explore how instances of these logically necessary conditions manifest in institutional plans at the universities of Cape Town, Stellenbosch, and the Western Cape. My contention is that these institutional plans seem to be tilted towards the exclusive implementation of performance indicator measures which might undermine deep educational transformation. In turn, deep educational transformation requires that logically necessary conditions be framed according to an African philosophy of educational transformation.

**KEYWORDS:** Higher education, education policy, transformation, conceptual analysis, logically necessary conditions.

## **ABSTRAK**

In hierdie proefskrif word die konsep (hoër) onderwystransformasie ondersoek soos dit logies in verhouding staan tot die voorwaardes wat die konsep rig. Hierdie logies-noodsaaklike voorwaardes (konstitusionele betekenis) sluit in: gelykheid en regstelling; kritiese ondersoek; kommunikatiewe praxis en burgerskap. Ek stel ondersoek in oor/hoe voorbeelde van hierdie logiese-noodsaaklike voorwaardes in die institusionele planne van die universiteite Kaapstad, Stellenbosch en Wes-Kaapland manifesteer. Volgens my lyk dit asof hierdie institusionele planne neig na die eksklusiewe implementering van maatreëls wat optrede aandui wat in-diepte opvoedkundige transformasie mag ondermyn. Aan die ander kant vereis in-diepte opvoedkundige transformasie dat logies-noodsaaklike voorwaardes binne 'n Afrika filosofie van opvoedkundige transformasie vertolk moet word.

**SLEUTELBEGRIPE:** Hoër onderwys, opvoedkundige beleid, transformasie, konseptuele analise, logies-noodsaaklike voorwaardes.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

- Prof Y Waghid for his guidance, critical comments, responsiveness, tremendous enthusiasm, rigorous feedback and attention to detail during the course of this study.
- My wife Lenore for her loving support and patience.
- My examiners for their comments.
- My Heavenly Father for grace, strength and wisdom.

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## CHAPTER 1

### CONCEPTUAL ANALYSIS AND EDUCATIONAL POLICY

#### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

Higher education is facing many difficulties in the modern world. Barnett (1990) argues that there exists a crisis with the way in which we understand higher education, the fundamental principles on which the idea of higher education has traditionally stood, and the way in which those principles are being undermined. The Council on Higher Education (CHE) Annual Report 1989/99 (1999: 35) identifies a crisis with the potential to intensify unless there is a considerable increase in student enrolments at a number of institutions and within the public higher education sector as a whole in South Africa. The crisis also relates to competing and sometimes irreconcilable claims and interests of different constituencies, institutional paralysis and/or loss of space and time for charting clear and realistic new institutional directions, a potent co-existence of a crisis of leadership, institutional debt and/or weak financial management (1999: 41-42).

As a social institution, higher education is paradoxical. On the one hand, its mission is to conserve; to embody the timeless values of scholarly inquiry and the transmission of knowledge from one generation to the next. On the other hand, higher education institutions are dynamic organisations that have the capacity to adapt to changing conditions and demands (Green & Hayward 1997: 4). There is pressure on institutions to change as social formations change, which presents a major challenge to higher education in general.

Given these pressures for change, it is not surprising that in the new millennium higher education reform is on the agenda in a large number of countries. In many parts of the world, including South Africa, the dialogue is no longer about incremental change, but about transforming higher education. On 27 July 1999, Education Minister Kader Asmal stated (CHE 1999: iii):

At the first Cabinet meeting of the new government, President Thabo Mbeki posed the question: 'Is our education system on the road to the 21<sup>st</sup> century?' The South African public has a vital interest in the answer.

There are two key policy documents which articulate higher education transformation in South Africa. The Education White Paper 3 (1997) establishes a comprehensive agenda to harness higher education to overcome social inequities, contribute to reconstruction and development and enable South Africa to engage effectively with globalisation (CHE 1998/90: iii). The National Plan for Higher Education (2001) outlines the framework and mechanisms for implementing and realising the policy goals of the White Paper.

There remain many unanswered questions with regard to transformation at institutional level. For instance, how is transformation interpreted? How can one measure the success or progress of the process? What is the level of transformation already attained? These are critical questions that deserve attention if we are to gain a deeper understanding of where we are with the transformation process. These questions motivated me to explore transformation at three universities, which represent three historical models of higher education, within the Western Cape province.

This dissertation provides a conceptual analysis of key areas of transformation of the higher institutional landscape. It is an attempt to gain a deeper understanding of how three regional universities cope with the complexities of transformation, in the light of profound social and political changes within a national and global context. In this chapter I shall explore the theoretical framework for this study.

## **1.2 WHAT ARE CONSTITUTIVE FEATURES THAT MAKE CONCEPTUAL ANALYSIS WHAT IT IS?**

The general approach of this dissertation is essentially conceptual in nature, and I start this section with an exploration of 'analysis' and the idea of a 'concept'. In uncovering the underlying meaning of terms related to this study, I want to establish a framework for subsequent analysis. In this section I explore conceptual analysis in the

context of its philosophical roots, which, to my mind involves a particular understanding of philosophy of education. Reference to analytic philosophy of education is made, and since no study can be completed without taking criticisms into account, I also include the latter.

### 1.2.1 Conceptual analysis

In this section I shall attempt to gain a deeper understanding of ‘analysis’ and what constitutes a ‘concept’, before I examine ‘conceptual analysis’ in more detail. I start this discussion by posing two questions, ‘What is analysis?’ and, ‘What constitutes a concept?’ The reason for this approach is to examine these concepts separately, and then to see how these concepts contribute to the meaning of conceptual analysis.

‘Analysis’ has been described as ‘... the elucidation of the meaning of any concept, idea or unit of thought that we employ in seeking to understand ourselves and our world, by reducing it, breaking it down, into more basic concepts that constitute it and thereby showing its relationship to a network of other concepts or discovering what the concept denotes’ (Hirst & White, in McLaughlin 2000: 445). Analysis in this sense is concerned not merely with the meaning of beliefs, but also with their justification and truth. The ‘connective’ character of analysis in this sense is worthy of emphasis: the investigation of ‘... how one concept is connected – often in complex and ragged-ended ways – in a web of other concepts with which it is logically related’ (White & White, in McLaughlin 2000: 445). This discussion of the concept ‘analysis’ already provides some pointers into the meaning of ‘conceptual analysis’. I shall now proceed with a discussion of what constitutes a ‘concept’ for the purpose of adding to my understanding of conceptual analysis.

Barrow (in Barrow & Woods 1988: ix), in the Preface to the Second Edition of his book entitled *An Introduction to Philosophy of Education*, draws a very clear distinction between words and concepts or between verbal and conceptual analysis. For him, words and concepts are not identical, and therefore linguistic analysis cannot be co-extensive with conceptual analysis. The task of the philosopher, having taken what hints and clues he (she) can from linguistic patterns, then is to arrive at a set of clear, coherent and specific concepts. Barrow argues that we need to clarify concepts

in order to assess them. We must not equate analysing a concept with defining a word in the sense of attempting to provide some verbally synonymous phrase for the word in question. Philosophical analysis is ultimately concerned with the clear and coherent articulation of ideas rather than with definition of words (although the latter may have a part to play in contributing to the former). This paragraph shows that Barrow may be linking conceptual analysis to philosophy.

Hirst and Peters (1998: 29) start their discussion of conceptual analysis by addressing the question of what it is to analyse a concept. They ask: 'What is a concept?' I also consider this a good way to examine the central features of conceptual analysis. They argue it is not the same as an image, and revert to their example that one can have a concept of 'punishment' without necessarily having a picture in mind of a criminal being hung or a boy being beaten. Is to have a concept then to be able to use the *word* 'punishment' correctly? If we have the concept, we can relate 'punishment' to other words like 'guilt' and say things like, 'Only the guilty can be punished'. They argue that this ability to relate words to each other would go along with the ability to recognise cases to which the word applied.

Hirst and Peters (1998: 29) continue to argue that this approach to explain a concept will not quite do for two reasons. In the first place we often distinguish between things or groups but have not got a word for marking the difference or similarity. Are we then to infer that in such cases we have no concept? This would mean denying that animals, which make quite complicated discriminations, have no concepts. It would mean that children, who behave differentially towards their mother very early in their lives, have no concept of their mother until they can use the word 'mother'. It would be better to say that our possession of a concept is our ability to make discriminations and to classify things together if they were similar. To be able to use a word appropriately is a sophisticated and very convenient way of doing this. It could be regarded as a *sufficient* condition for the possession of a concept though not a *necessary* one. In other words, we would probably be prepared to say that a person has a concept of 'punishment' if he (she) could relate the word 'punishment' correctly to other words such as 'pain' and 'guilt' and apply it correctly to cases of punishment. However, the absence of this ability to use the word would not necessarily lead us to say that a person has no concept of 'punishment'.



The second reason why it is not satisfactory to *equate* having a concept with the possession of an ability, whether it be the specific ability to use words appropriately, or the more general one to classify and make discriminations, is that both types of ability seem to presuppose something more fundamental, namely the grasp of a principle which enables us to do these things. Locke (in Hirst & Peters 1998: 30) said that an idea is ‘the object of the understanding when a man thinks’ and this probably is as near as we can get to saying what a concept is.

Hirst and Peters (1998: 30) then ask: ‘But what do we do in philosophy when we *analyse* a concept?’ A concept exists when one has the ability to use words appropriately; when one examines the use of words in order to see what principle governs their use. If those can be made explicit the concept would be uncovered. Historically, philosophers such as Socrates attempted to do this by trying out *definitions*. Now there is a strong and a weak sense of ‘definition’ in such cases. In attempting to make explicit the rules behind our usage of words, and thus get clearer about our concepts, it is important to distinguish logically necessary conditions from other sorts of conditions that may be present. What are ‘logically necessary conditions’? Hirst and Peters revert to their example of ‘punishment’ when they state that a logically necessary condition for the use of this word is that something unpleasant could be done to someone. They infer that conceptual analysis seems to consist in looking for logically necessary conditions for the use of a word. Part of our concept of ‘punishment’ is that something unpleasant may be inflicted. The strong case of definition is when conditions can be produced which are logically both necessary and sufficient. In other words if one can say ‘if and *only* if characteristics x, y, z are present, then a person is being punished’, we would have a really strong definition of punishment. They argue that there may be a case where we would naturally use a word, but where the condition that was made explicit is not established.

Let me illustrate ‘logically necessary conditions’ with another example. Hamm (1989: 6) asks the question: ‘What is an X?’ where X is the concept (or word) under scrutiny and the ‘is’ is one of identity, not predication. He analyses the following statement (where ‘X’ stands for ‘bachelor’: A bachelor is (a) unmarried, (b) happy, (c) female, (d) male, and (e) adult. Are conditions (a) to (e) jointly sufficient, that is, both

necessary and sufficient for calling someone a bachelor? Clearly (b) is predication and therefore does not belong in this series where the 'is' in the statement is one of identity. Some women have suggested that (c) should be included because of the negative connotation surrounding 'spinster', the female equivalent of bachelor. But of course this would amount to legislating a new use for the term, which has problems of its own. An accurate analysis would have to exclude (c). Conditions (a), (d) and (e) are clearly necessary, but are they sufficient? One could argue that they are not. A divorced man is not usually called a 'bachelor', though he is unmarried, adult, and male. Another condition such as 'never married' could therefore be included. Others have suggested that 'homo sapiens' should be a condition, since bachelor is a term reserved for human beings.

Wittgenstein (in Hirst & Peters 1998: 32) has made two very important points. The first is that we must not look for defining characteristics in any simple, stereotyped way, with the paradigm of just one type of word before us. The second is that concepts can only be understood in relation to other concepts. The second point is crucial for this study, as it implies that concepts in policy statements has to be examined in relation to other concepts in order to gain a deeper understanding of their meaning.

### 1.2.2 The point of conceptual analysis

The question is often put to philosophers when they have done some conceptual analysis: 'Whose concept are you analysing?' (Hirst & Peters 1998: 33). The first answer, obviously enough, is *our* concept. Concepts may be linked indissolubly with the social life of a group, and it would be impossible for an individual to have a purely private concept of, say, 'punishment'. The point of doing conceptual analysis is to get clearer about the types of distinctions that words have been developed to designate. The point is to see *through* the words, to get a better grasp of the similarities and differences that it is possible to pick out. And these are important in the context of *other* questions we cannot answer without such preliminary analysis.

Conceptual analysis helps us to pinpoint more precisely what is implicit in our moral consciousness (Hirst & Peters 1998: 34). But it also enables us to stand back a bit and

reflect on the status of the demand to which the word bears witness. It frees us to ask a fundamental question in ethics, which is that of whether this demand is justified. Hirst and Peters contend there is little point in doing conceptual analysis unless some further philosophical issue is thereby made more manageable.

What does it mean to 'justify' something? Hamm (1989: 163) answers the question when he states that 'to provide a justification for a course of action is to provide reason or grounds for that course of action. It is to show by argument the rightness of that action.' Justification is defined as 'rational assessment, which a person makes of his own beliefs, actions and feelings'. In ordinary contexts, justifying something is exhibiting sufficient grounds of its truth, rightness or appropriateness (Elliot 1998: 237). Hamm (1989: 165-171) refers to three kinds of arguments that can be used in justification. These are firstly, 'a moral argument', secondly 'instrumental justification' and finally, 'non-instrumental justification'. If it can be shown that certain sorts of pursuits we compel children to undertake are not justified on moral grounds, that would be a very good reason to limit compulsion to a few pursuits that are justified. If education is seen as a means to some other justifiable ends, then the means themselves are considered instrumentally justifiable. Peters' argument that there is something about the character of knowledge and understanding that in itself counts as justification, is an example of non-instrumental justification. Knowledge implies at least (1) that what is said or thought is justifiable, and (2) that the individual has grounds for what he (she) says or thinks. Understanding suggests that a particular event can be explained in terms of a general principle or shown to fit into some kind of pattern or framework (Peters 1998: 210). Questions of analysis, therefore, are often linked with questions of justification.

The linkage of conceptual analysis with these other types of philosophical questions explains why philosophers do not indulge in an indiscriminating analysis of any old concepts (Hirst & Peters 1998: 35). They do not attempt the analysis of concepts such as 'clock' and 'cabbage' unless there are further issues to clarify. To do conceptual analysis, unless something depends on getting clearer about the structure underlying how we speak, may be a fascinating pastime, but it is not philosophy.

Once it is appreciated that conceptual analysis must have some point, it can also be appreciated that the inability to emerge with a neat set of logically necessary conditions for the use of a word like 'knowledge' or 'education' is not necessarily the hall-mark of failure. In the process of trying to make explicit the principles that underlie our use of words, we could have become clearer both about how things are and about the sorts of decisions that have to be faced in dealing with them. We may be in a better position to look through the words at the problems of explanation, justification or practical action that makes such a reflective interest possible.

In conclusion I wish to ask: 'In a nutshell, what is conceptual analysis?' Conceptual analysis attempts to establish 'logically necessary conditions' for the use of a word. Sufficient (which I accept as enough, or more than enough) conditions must exist to make a concept necessary. Also, concepts can only be understood in relation to other concepts. Conceptual analysis is about establishing (philosophical) meanings of terms, and is often linked with justification. This concludes my discussion on this topic.

Conceptual analysis has been used in the field of philosophy of education, as has become clear from statements made by Hirst and Peters, as well as Hamm, referred to in this section. Similarly, to understand how the philosophical tool has been used one needs to know something about the history that has shaped its use. Hence, I shall briefly discuss philosophy of education as the context in which conceptual analysis has been used.

### **1.2.3 Philosophy of education as the context for conceptual analysis**

'Philosophy' and 'education' are two very important concepts contained within 'philosophy of education', and I shall examine them first. It is necessary to gain an understanding of what philosophy is in order to understand what philosophy of education is, since philosophy of education is simply philosophy about education.

### 1.2.3.1 What is philosophy?

Hirst and Peters (1998: 28) regard 'philosophy' as an activity which is distinguished by its concern with certain types of second-order questions, with questions of a reflective sort which arise when activities like science, painting pictures, worshipping, and making moral judgements are going concerns. Second-order questions are those that inquire in a reflective way. For them, philosophy is concerned with questions about the analysis of concepts and with questions about the grounds of knowledge, beliefs, actions and activities. For Hamm (1989: 10) philosophy is concerned with meaning, with justification, and with an examination of assumptions.

What do philosophers do when they 'philosophise'? The answer (according to Hamm 1989: 5-10) is that they ask, and try in various ways to answer three sorts of questions: Firstly, What do you mean? (Or, what does *it* – the word, the concept – mean?). When a philosopher asks, 'What do you mean?' he (she) is not so much inquiring into what *you* as an individual mean by a term, but into the meaning of the words you are using, or more accurately the concepts for which the words you are using are the labels. It is therefore a conceptual, not merely a verbal inquiry. Secondly, How do you know? (Or, what in general constitute the grounds or kinds of grounds for claiming to know something?). Philosophers typically point out such thinking errors as: contradiction, inconsistency, *ad hominem* attacks, circularity, incompleteness, category mistakes, and so on. In other words, philosophers are very much concerned with argument and assessment of argument. Thirdly, what is presupposed? (Or, what assumptions or presuppositions are you making or must you make for the proposition you are asserting?). Only when the truth of propositions comes into question or the meaning of the terms is indeed puzzling and in need of clarification does the examination of assumptions made amount to philosophical activity. Hamm suggests that as one acquires the habit of asking (and also answering) these sorts of questions in the context of education, you will be on your way to becoming a philosopher of education.



### 1.2.3.2 What is education?

The concept of education is an example of what WB Gallie (in Carr & Hartnett 1996: 19) has called ‘essentially contested concepts’ – concepts whose meanings are ‘contested’ in the sense that the criteria governing their proper use are constantly challenged and disputed. Such disputes are ‘essential’ in the sense that arguments about these criteria turn on fundamental political values and beliefs. It is for this reason that the problems to which the educational debate is addressed are always enduring problems that present and re-present themselves over time in different forms but which have no general routine, or ‘once and for all’ solutions.

The word ‘education’ may be derived from one of two Latin words or perhaps both, according to Winch and Gingell (1999: 70). These are *educere*, which means ‘to lead out’ or ‘to train’ and *educare*, which means ‘to train’ or ‘to nourish’. I shall now focus on the influential work of Peters, as referred to by Winch and Gingell.

Richard Peters’ work was largely driven by his analysis of the concept of education, and this is contained in his influential book *Ethics and Education* (1966). Central to his analysis were three complex criteria by which he maps the distinction between ‘education’ and other human pursuits. The first criterion is that ‘education’ in its full sense has a necessary implication that something valuable or worthwhile is going on. Education is not valuable as a means to a valuable end such as a good job, but it involves those being educated being initiated into activities which are worthwhile in themselves, that is, are intrinsically valuable.

Second, ‘education’ involves the acquisition of a body of knowledge and understanding which surpasses mere skill, know-how or the collection of information. Such knowledge and understanding must involve the principles which underlie skills, procedural knowledge and information, and must transform the life of the person being educated both in terms of his (her) general outlook and in terms of becoming committed to the standards inherent in the areas of his (her) education. To this body of knowledge and understanding must be added a ‘cognitive perspective’ whereby the development of any specialism, for example in science, is seen as in the context of the place of this specialism in a coherent pattern of life. Third, the processes of education

involve at least some understanding of what is being learnt and what is required in the learning, for example, so we could not be 'brainwashed' or 'conditioned' into education, and some minimal voluntary participation in such processes.

Peters' approach to the concept of 'education' became, in different ways, a main focus of debate within philosophy of education (Winch & Gingell 1999: 72). Probably the central criticism of his analysis is that it tries to do far too much with far too few resources: it seems unlikely that it is possible to answer all the questions that Peters claims to answer with the machinery on offer (Winch & Gingell 1999: 73). I take note of the criticism offered by Winch and Gingell, and agree with their conclusion that philosophers of education owe many debts to Peters' work.

I have noted that the concept 'transform' is used in the second criterion. It leads me to conclude that transformation is inherent in the processes and goals of education, and for education to be deemed a success it has to bring about a 'transformation' in the person who is or was 'educated'. The concept of 'transformation' is examined in the next chapter. Having briefly examined some pronouncements on the concepts of 'philosophy' and 'education', I shall now turn my attention to a discussion of 'philosophy of education'.

### **1.2.3.3 What is 'Philosophy of Education'?**

Burbules (2000: 3) regards an attempt to define 'philosophy of education' as complicated, and infers that a central theme in reading accounts of writers is the contested status of what philosophy of education is. He refers to Maloney (1985) when he states that the most striking characteristic of 'philosophy of education' has been that from the very first uses of the term, the negotiation of what the field itself is has been one of its primary objects of preoccupation.

It is possible to distinguish the highly general inquiries of metaphysics, together with logic and theory of knowledge (epistemology) from the more particularised philosophies of differentiated forms of inquiry, appraisal and action. The latter includes the philosophy of science, history, mathematics and religion, together with ethics, aesthetics and social philosophy (Hirst & Peters 1998: 37). Philosophy of

education is of the latter type. Philosophy of education, therefore, draws on established branches of philosophy and brings together those segments that are relevant to the solution of educational problems.

In order to philosophise, the philosopher of education can seldom turn to just one branch of philosophy. Assuming that the philosopher of education has both a theoretical and a practical interest in education, it can easily be shown in a more formal way what branches of philosophy will be of central interest to him or her. Educating people suggests developing in them states of mind which are valuable and which involve some degree of knowledge and understanding. The philosopher of education will therefore have to go into ethics in order to deal with valuations, and into theory of knowledge to get clearer about the distinction between concepts such as 'knowledge', 'belief' and 'understanding'. In setting out what is central to philosophy of education we are fastening on certain features of the concept of education which seem to be of particular significance – especially its connection with knowledge and understanding. The hope is that a philosophical study will do something to deepen our understanding of how we are placed as educators, and make more explicit the dimensions in which decisions have to be made (Hirst & Peters 1998: 38).

#### **1.2.3.4 Three dimensions of philosophy of education**

How can a philosopher of education make a contribution beyond the classroom? This crucial question provides a link between the philosopher of education and education policy. It also provides a justification for my engagement with education policy. Soltis (1998: 196-203) attempts to answer this question in his perspective on philosophy of education.

Soltis sketches contemporary philosophy of education according to three dimensions: the personal, the public and the professional. At the *personal* level is a set of personal beliefs about what is good, right, and worthwhile to do in education. The point of being philosophical about education in this way is for the individual to achieve a satisfying sense of personal meaning, purpose and commitment to guide his or her activities as an educator.



*Public* philosophy of education is everybody's business and ought to be, and is aimed at guiding and directing the practice of the many. The point of being philosophical about education in the public dimension is to articulate public aspirations and educational values, give sense and purpose to the cooperative public enterprise of education, and provide the opportunity for thoughtful participation in the direction of education by all who cares seriously about it.

The *professional* dimension of philosophy of education adds the approach and use of the technical tools of the professional philosopher to ways of dealing with conceptual and normative issues relevant to education. When philosophers perform as professionals, there is less proposing and more analysing, reflecting, evaluating, and seeking of a clearer understanding of educational matters. The point of being philosophical in this way is to make the educational enterprise as rationally self-reflective as possible by providing philosophically rigorous examinations, critiques, justifications, analyses and syntheses of aspects of the educator's conceptual and normative domain. Here a philosopher of education is more intent on providing illumination, understanding, and perspective for educators *to think with*, than on providing programmes and policies for educators *to act on*. Soltis argues that philosophers of education have a moral obligation to use their special skills in the public domain, a view I entirely agree with because philosophers of education can, by making public their views, make important contributions to public debates.

Having identified that philosophers should engage with policy analysis at the public level, Soltis (1998: 199-200) then expands his analysis by identifying three senses of public philosophy of education. Here follows a brief discussion.

There is firstly a 'going public' sense in which any proposal or critique offered in the hope of having some effect on education is all that is meant. There are a number of ways individual philosophers or groups may try to put a philosophical point, argument or message before a 'public' and many possible degrees of 'going public'. In the second 'public policy' sense explicit educational values are shaped, adapted, critiqued and rejected. Here, cooperative work by philosophers and others on explicit policies emanating from official commissions, committees, agencies, etc. provide guidelines, directives, and programmes to accomplish certain goals.

Finally, there is the third kind of ‘public ideology’ sense of what we all believe deep down about education and schooling for life in our society. Here the philosopher can unearth, examine, critique or attempt to justify our public ideological commitments, be they conscious or unconscious, or articulate a new form of public ideology. The expanded view of the public dimension suggests numerous ways for professional philosophers of education to try to serve the public at large by ‘going public’ to a greater degree, by engaging in public policy-making and by exploring the public’s educational ideology.

### **1.2.3.5 Analytic philosophy of education**

I now wish to elaborate on a particular branch of philosophy, namely ‘analytic philosophy of education (APE)’. According to Evers (1998: 121), the philosophical activity most characteristic of APE is the analysis of concepts, although latter day examples are mostly in disguise, often as exegeses of some theorists (e.g. White 1990, on Aristotle) or some established educational practice (e.g. Wenham 1991, on teaching). Scheffler (1954: 9) recommends construing philosophy of education as the ‘rigorous logical analysis of key concepts related to the practice of education’. In answering his own question about the main concerns of philosophy of education, Peters (1966: 18) remarks: ‘There is, first of all, the analysis of concepts specific to education – such as ‘education’, ‘teaching’, ‘training’, ‘university’, and ‘school’’. According to Evers (1998: 121) a search for who employed the methods of conceptual analysis in the field’s journals, shows Barrow (1991) analysing ‘critical thinking’, Gaden (1990) analysing ‘responsibility’, McLaughlin (1990) analysing ‘belief’, and Harvey (1990) analysing ‘stereotype’, to mention just a few of the fairly conspicuous examples.

Construed modestly, conceptual analysis serves the important and useful function of distinguishing uses of terms, sorting out ambiguities, and in general clarifying what is being claimed (Evers 1998: 121). Construed more ambitiously (by using the tools of modest analysis) two related approaches to conceptual analysis have been employed in APE to justify substantive educational claims. The first sees the analysis of concepts as a quest for logically necessary and sufficient conditions of usage or, where these are difficult to obtain, at least logically necessary conditions. The second

ambitious view of analytic methodology sees analysis as a quest for the basic *presuppositions* of knowledge. A discussion of presuppositions such as ‘philosophy’, ‘education’, and ‘philosophy of education’ was done in section 1.2.3.

### 1.2.3.6 Criticisms of analytic methodology

Three methodological criticisms of APE have been particularly important in pointing the way to post-analytic alternatives in philosophy of education (Evers 1998: 122-125). The first, widely felt in analysis and articulated by Edel (1973: 40) is epistemic: ‘A central difficulty in analytic philosophy of education seems to me to reflect a soft spot in the analytic theory generally – how to judge what is a correct or adequate analysis.’ Edel locates the difficulty in APE’s heritage from positivism: an untenable distinction between analytic (or conceptual) and synthetic (or empirical) claims. A second problem lies with the provision of necessary conditions for the correct use of a term.

The last major criticism raises the question of whose concepts are being analysed. It is important, because various answers strike at the assumption of epistemic privilege analysis allots to ordinary usage. For example, theories which see ordinary language as an *ideology* functioning to reproduce capitalist economic social relations of production, will count almost all the APE claims to conceptual truth as the most central falsehoods of a systematically false theory of education. More generally, the concepts of those for whom language is actually a structured misrepresentation of reality will not bear the epistemic weight required to justify educational claims. Davies (in Evers 1989: 125) suggests that gender theorists, for example, would place little value in ambitious versions of analysis.

Despite the criticisms discussed here, I still regard conceptual analysis as a valuable tool to examine transformation at the three universities in the Western Cape province. Some of my reasons for this type of analysis are because the effects of transformation have not yet being studied in the way I propose to do, and the analysis of the logically necessary conditions for transformation has not being exhausted. Also, an analysis of institutional plans may shed light on transformation within a regional and national context. In recent years, Barnett (1990) used this method to study higher education,

Beetham (1994) identified the logically necessary conditions of democracy, while Carr and Hartnett (1996) examined conceptually and historically the complex nature of democracy.

### 1.3 CONCEPTUAL ANALYSIS AND EDUCATION POLICY RESEARCH

Having provided a detailed account of conceptual analysis in the previous section, I shall now explore its links with education policy. Here I examine 'education policy' within my philosophical framework. It is crucial to first gain a thorough understanding of policy-making with regards to higher education, before I can proceed with my conceptual inquiry into its effects at institutional level. In this section I want to bring to the fore the interaction between a philosophy of education and the policy debate.

#### 1.3.1 What is education policy?

Education policy is often thought of as a *thing*: a statement of some sort, usually written down in a policy document. Viewed in this way, education policy could be defined as follows:

A specification of principles and actions, related to educational issues, which are followed or which should be followed and which are designed to bring about desired goals (Trowler 1998: 48).

In this sense policy is a piece of paper, a statement of intentions or of practice as perceived by policy-makers or as they would like it to be. Trowler regards this view of policy as a very limited one, and argues that it is better to see policy as a *process*, something dynamic rather than static. This dynamism comes from a number of sources (Trowler 1998: 49):

- There is usually conflict among those who make policy, as well as those who put it into practice, about what the important issues or problems for policy are and about the desired goals;

- Interpreting policy is an active process: policy statements are almost always subject to multiple interpretations depending upon the standpoints of the people doing the interpretive 'work'; and
- The practice of policy on the ground is extremely complex, both that being 'described' by policy and that intended to put policy into effect. Simple policy descriptions of practice do not capture its multiplicity and complexity, and the implementation of policy in practice almost always means outcomes differ from policy-makers' intentions (which were, anyway, always multiple and often contradictory).

Ball (in Trowler 1998: 49) takes these concerns into account when he says the following about policy:

Policy is both text and action, words and deeds, it is what is enacted as well as what is intended. Policies are always incomplete insofar as they relate to or map on to the 'wild profusion' of local practice.

'Education policy' is a term used to refer to almost any analysis of changes, reforms or developments in education, whether these occur at the macro (national or supra-national), meso (middle) or micro (local) level, irrespective of whether the focus is on contemporary or historical events and processes (Deem & Brehony 2000: 193). Those who see themselves as education policy analysts, or as conducting research on education policy-making, range from researchers conducting macro analyses of national or international policy on education to those studying policy-making and implementation that is confined to an individual institution. Education policy analysis worthy of the name involve taking into account the role of states and governments (at the global, national, regional or local level) in the formulation, implementation and monitoring of educational policies. Such a definition does not exclude meso and micro level policy analyses, nor does it suggest that states or governments will always lie at the very centre of researchers' concerns.

There seem to be four central issues, which in different combinations underlie most if not all higher education policy-making, and can therefore be used as the basic

building blocks for analysis. The four issues, which Cuthbert (1988: 49) label as 'policy themes', are:

- *Access*: who benefits from higher education and how many people benefit?
- *Funding*: how much should the government spend on higher education, who else should pay for higher education, and how much?
- *Control*: how is higher education activity regulated and by whom?
- *Quality and purpose*: how should we construe the nature and purposes of higher education and what standards should it meet?

In Kogan's (1975: 55) words: 'Policies are the operational statements of values'. He differentiates four value bases for policies: educational, economic, social and institutional. There is some congruence between Cuthbert's 'policy themes' and Kogan's four value bases. Weaver (1982: 10-11) also identified four key questions on curriculum, access, structure and resources in his elegant analysis of 'policy options for post-tertiary education'. These aspects are so closely interdependent that it is impossible to effect a change in any one of them without repercussions on all the others. The questions are:

Question 1: What are potential learners to be helped to learn? – The basic problem of curriculum. It subsumes questions of method and process as well as content, of standards and the criteria by which they are set and assessed. More widely it includes the hidden curriculum – the sum of the attitudes and values implicit in the community life of the institution.

Question 2: Who is to have the opportunity for systematic higher education? – The basic problem of access. This subsumes issues such as the desirable length, level and pattern of courses, the qualifications for admission to them, educational guidance, the level of fees and awards, and practical aids to accessibility by means of residence, refectories, transport and welfare services. All these contribute to access policy.

Question 3: How is a desirable pattern of institutions to be determined, organised and governed? – The basic problem of structure. This involves key questions about the differential functions of institutions, the problems of their internal management, and

the distribution of control over their lives between the institution itself and local, regional and central authorities.

Question 4: How are the sinews of war represented by staff, buildings, materials and money to be provided, distributed and accounted for? – The basic problem of resources. This includes such questions as the number of teachers needed and how they should be recruited, trained, rewarded, and made redundant; the level of capital expenditure; building standards; and above all, the determination of priorities as between subject and subject, teaching and research, institution and institution, sector and sector.

McLaughlin (2000: 442) lists four preliminary points about the *nature* of education policy and policy-making, which are relevant to the contribution which philosophy might make to them.

First, what is an education policy? I already addressed this question but restate it to emphasise and augment my theoretical framework for this dissertation. In answering this question, some writers stress the relationship between education policies and politics, power and control (Codd, in McLaughlin 2000: 442). Prunty (in McLaughlin 2000: 442) defines education policy-making as ‘an exercise of power and control directed towards the attainment or preservation of some preferred arrangement of schools and society’. Codd (in McLaughlin 2000: 442) argues that education policies are sets of political decisions which involve the exercise of power in order to preserve or alter the nature of educational institutions or practices. Prunty and Codd seem to imply that only those who exercise power and control, and who are involved in politics in this sense can formulate education policies.

Second, education policies originate at different levels and contexts in the educational system and from a number of different agents and agencies ranging from national to school (and even to classroom level). There are different ‘languages’ of policy debate, which can be roughly labeled as ‘official’, ‘professional’, ‘research’ and ‘popular’ (McLaughlin 2000: 442).

Third, education policies differ with respect to the scope of their content and application. One way of expressing these differences is to invoke various kinds of continuums on which policies can be located. One such continuum involves generality and specificity. At one end of this continuum are policies of a very general kind involving matters such as the aims of education and the structure of the educational system, whilst at the other end are very specific policies relating (say) to strategies for the teaching of particular topics within specific subjects. Another (related) continuum can be described as involving 'depth' and 'surface' characteristics. The 'depth' end of this continuum involves educational policies with clear philosophical implications and ramifications. At the 'surface' end of this continuum are education policies, which are less apt for philosophical reflection (McLaughlin 2000: 443).

Fourth, it is useful to note the distinction between different (though interrelated) aspects of education policy and policy-making: (i) the process of education policy-making, (ii) the policy itself, and (iii) the application and evaluation of the policy.

Another element of the mode of the relationship between philosophy and education policy concerns the different aspects of the policy-making process on which philosophy might be brought to bear. Ham and Hill (in McLaughlin 2000: 449) draw a distinction between 'analysis for policy' and 'analysis of policy'. 'Analysis for policy' contributes to the formulation of policy and takes two forms: 'policy advocacy' (which involves the making of specific policy recommendations) and 'information for policy' (which provides policy makers with 'information and data' relevant to policy formulation or revision). Philosophers can contribute to both, although in their case the 'information for policy' will take the form of offering (say) conceptual clarification. 'Analysis of policy', according to Ham and Hill (in McLaughlin 2000: 449), can also take two forms, 'analysis of policy determination and effects' (which examines the processes and outcomes of policy) and 'analysis of policy content' which examines 'the values, assumptions and social theories underpinning the policy process'.

Berkhout and Wielemans (1999: 404) argue that policy processes reveal both formal or overt (e.g., the organisational structures, rules and communication patterns, delegated competencies, and flow of information) and covert or implicit power



structures (e.g., micropolitics, informal networks, and discursive practices). For them, policy analyses should by implication be more than just the analyses of state mechanisms and policy documents as expressions of political purpose stating the actions and intentions to be implemented. They add that policy and political analysis are themselves seen as a source of influence that could be used to shape the political process of which policy studies/analyses are deemed to be part. At this stage I am not sure what my findings will be, but at best I foresee it might have some influence in that it might make a contribution to the existing knowledge base.

In my philosophical framework, in order to understand education policy development in South Africa, I shall be focusing on ‘analysis of policy’ rather than ‘analysis for policy’. It is my contention that as a researcher of education policy, conceptual analysis provides the necessary tools to analyse and explore education policies as outlined in the Education White Paper 3 and the National Plan for Higher Education. These documents contain concepts which are essentially contested, and to which meaning could be attributed. This can be done by philosophical analysis which study concepts in relation to other concepts, and which take into account the political and educational ideology into which these policies are embedded.

I am not alone in doing this kind of policy analysis. Others, such as Sayed (2001), van der Merwe (2000) and Waghid (2000) also followed this approach in their analysis of post-apartheid educational transformation. McLaughlin (2000) presumes that philosophers have a more obvious contribution to make to analysis of policy, although they can play a role in relation to analysis for policy.

### **1.3.2 Policy-making and policy implementation**

How is education policy made? Rein (in Trowler 1998: 50) argues that three basic steps are involved in policy-making at the national level:

- Problem (or issue) setting;
- The ‘mobilization of the fine structure of government action’; and
- The ‘achievement of settlements (compromises which establish a framework for policy and practice) in the face of dilemmas and trade-offs among values’.

Problem setting concerns defining something that needs to be done, and is usually the work of more than one agency. In South Africa, the Council on Higher Education advises the Minister of Education. What form 'mobilisation' takes depend on the nature of the policy being discussed and the context of policy-making (government, school, local education authority, etc.). On the 'achievements of settlements' Rein (in Trowler 1998: 51) holds that education policy-making is a complex, non-linear process. Policies are always the product of compromises between multiple agendas and influences. The actual outcome, the policy as articulated, will be the result of a micropolitical process and 'muddling through'. Trowler (1998: 50) connects with Rein when he suggests the following three important steps when policy is being made: a problem is identified, the policy-making process is put into gear, and a political process begins. In looking at the policy-making process it is useful to be clear about the ideologies which drive policy-makers and those who put policy into practice. 'Ideology' is used here to mean: a framework of values, ideas and beliefs about the way society is and should be organised and about how resources should be allocated to achieve what is desired. This framework acts as a guide and a justification for behaviour (Hartley, in Trowler 1998: 55).

The current debate around educational transformation in our country shows that two sets of ideological forces are at work: political ideology and educational ideology. The political ideology has changed from apartheid to a non-racial democracy, and political change aims to eradicate the legacy of apartheid. Education is a key area of contestation since much of the apartheid ideology centered on providing superior education for Whites, in order to maintain their privileged status. Therefore, for the new political ideology to succeed, education has to be transformed accordingly.

It is important for those interested in the academic study of education policy to understand the complex relationships that exist between education policy-making and education policy implementation (Deem & Brehony 2000: 194). Though some researchers make a clear distinction between policy-making and implementation (which implies that implementation is largely a question of routine procedure), such a separation is hard to sustain in practice. First, it is rarely the case that policy itself, however clearly outlined, has no unintended consequences. So the processes by which

policies are interpreted will almost always have uncertain outcomes, even if it were possible to predict the intentions of policy-makers, which are notoriously difficult. Second, it is unusual to find examples of clearly bounded policy innovations or developments. A well-informed historical awareness of the situated nature of educational policy frequently reveals that legislation itself either simply puts a regulatory framework around developments that are already in place or continues a trend or change already considered for some time beforehand.

Third, it is often the case that what Lipksy (in Deem & Brehony 2000: 194) calls 'street-level bureaucrats' play a key role in how a policy actually operates. This in turn is affected by the extent to which discretion is available to those expected to put policies in practice. In order to take account of this micro-level reinterpretation of policy, Bowe and Ball have developed a concept known as 'policy cycle' (Ball 1994, Bowe *et al.* 1992) which, they claim, overcomes some of the problems of separating policy-making from policy implementation. The concept attributes to those in educational institutions the capacity to interpret or 'recontextualise' policies: an activity over which policy writers have little control. A policy cycle approach thus removes the state from center-stage in the policy process, whilst acknowledging its existence as an initiator of policy change. Policy cycle approaches also place considerable emphasis on policies as texts and how these texts are 'read' by practitioners. According to Trowler (1995: 105) there is also a clear finding from numerous studies of the impact of education policy in different locales that outcomes are rarely the same in different places. Trowler (1995: 105) observes that studies by Woods *et al.* (1996), Gerwitz *et al.* (1995) and Arnot *et al.* (1996) on different aspects of education policy all conclude that outcomes are heavily dependent on local circumstances. This finding has a very important bearing for this study as it makes me aware that transformation of the institutions I shall focus on in this study may be influenced by regional developments to such an extent that the outcomes may be very different from what institutions in Gauteng province may experience.

#### **1.4 RESEARCH PROCEDURES**

My interest in education policy studies stems from two factors. Firstly, I spent several years as an academic administrator dealing with the practical impact of the unfolding

transformation process. Secondly, as a direct result of the former, I realised that research experience in the field could equip me with analytical tools to make a meaningful contribution to the discourse. I also contend that South Africa is a fledging democracy that has to be nurtured, and can best be served by critical, reflective and informed attitudes.

As I seek a better understanding of the unfolding institutional landscape, I appreciate the uniqueness of the transformation process, its embeddedness and interactions with its contexts. I agree with Stake (1995: 15-17) that the issues are not simple and clean, but intricately wired to political, social, historical, and especially personal (here I prefer the term 'institutional') contexts. Stake argues that perhaps the most difficult task of the researcher is to design good questions, research questions that will direct the looking and thinking enough and not too much. The design of all research requires conceptual organisation, ideas to express needed understanding, conceptual bridges from what is already known, cognitive structures to guide data gathering, and outlines for presenting interpretations to others. It is within this frame of mind that I formulated my research question.

#### **1.4.1 Research Question**

The key research question for this dissertation is: 'Do institutional plans enact educational transformation?'

This question guides the study of enactment of educational transformation at the three regional universities in the Western Cape province within a national context. These three institutions have a regional connection and are of urban character, yet they represent a microcosm of the national scenario as engineered historically and refined by the apartheid government. The University of Cape Town (UCT) represents an English medium, White liberal, also referred to as an Historically Advantaged Institution (HAI). The University of Stellenbosch (US) represents an Afrikaans medium, White, Historically Advantaged Institution (HAI). The University of the Western Cape (UWC) represents a dual medium (Afrikaans and English) institution initially reserved for Coloured people, also termed a Historically Disadvantaged Institution (HDI). It is within this historical context that I contend that a study of these

universities may provide an important knowledge base on the transformation of the institutional landscape of the higher education system.

#### **1.4.2 Research Methodology**

Methodology may be viewed as the interface between methodic practice, substantive theory and epistemological underpinnings. Epistemology can be used to refer to the presuppositions about the nature of knowledge and of science that inform practical inquiry. Methodology is thus the point at which method, theory and epistemology coalesce in an overt way in the process of directly investigating specific instances within the social world. Methodology, in grounding enquiry in empirical instances, thus make explicit the presuppositions that inform the knowledge that is generated by the enquiry (Harvey 1990: 1-2). I regard methodology as a broad framework, it may also be considered as a paradigm.

Iris Marion Young (1990: 16) eloquently describes a paradigm as a configuration of elements and practices which define an inquiry: metaphysical presuppositions, unquestioned terminology, characteristic questions, lines of reasoning, specific theories and their typical scope and mode of application. A paradigm determines how a problem is formulated and methodologically tackled. Depending upon the objective of a particular research project, emphasis is laid more on the one or the other paradigm.

For purposes of this dissertation, it is possible to distinguish between two main paradigms in educational research planning and with different epistemological bases (Adams, in Husén 1999: 36). On the one hand, there is the functional-structural, objective-rational, goal-directed, manipulative, hierarchical, and technocratic approach. On the other hand, there is the interpretivist, humanistic, consensual, subjective, and collegial one. The first approach is 'linear' and consists of a straight-forward rational action towards preconceived problems. The second approach may leave room for interpretation and reshaping of the problem during the process of dialogue prior to action and even during action (Husén 1999: 36).

The research methodology for this study can be described as Interpretivism. Interpretation is derived from *hermeneutics*, which is a systematic, scientific approach to understanding. The term ‘hermeneutics’ stems from the Greek verb *hermeneúein*, which has three meanings: to make something explicit (to express), to unfold something (to explain) and to translate (to interpret) (Danner 1995: 223). Hermeneutics may be understood as the ‘art of interpretation’. While hermeneutics is often limited to the interpretation of texts, Danner argues that hermeneutics cannot be reduced to interpretation of texts without misrepresenting its real and full content; interpretation of texts is a special, and important case of hermeneutics. Generally speaking, one could say that when we deal with human beings and human products we are involved in a hermeneutic process. Educational practitioners deal with (mostly young) people, who talk, gesticulate, deal with other persons, produce things, paint, write, solve tasks in mathematics, etc. All this – and not only the theory of education or the writings of famous educators – must be understood.

I shall now further discuss my understanding of hermeneutics, with reference to the work of Hans-Georg Gadamer and Paul Ricoeur.

Drawing on the work of Hans-Georg Gadamer I shall discuss two aspects. The first aspect relates to the hermeneutical question: ‘What does it mean to understand, and under what conditions can/do we understand?’ Fundamental here is the concept of understanding. Gadamer explores the question about the nature of and conditions for understanding in contexts that significantly transcend the interpretation of texts or the methodology of the human sciences (Van Niekerk 2002: 229). Gadamer’s philosophical hermeneutics argues that understanding is not, in the first instance, a procedure- or rule-governed undertaking; rather, it is a very condition of human beings. Understanding is interpretation. As Gadamer (1975: 87) explains, understanding is not ‘an isolated activity of human beings, but a basic structure of our experience of life ...’.

The second aspect relates to what is often described as Gadamer’s main contribution: historical interpretation. Gadamer develops a conception of understanding that takes the interpreter’s participation in history into account in a central way. Understanding is not reconstruction but mediation (1977: xvi). Historical interpretation can serve as a

means to understand the context of a text even when, from another perspective, it sees in the text simply a source which is part of the totality of the historical tradition (Gadamer 1975: 174). Following Dilthey (Gadamer 1975: 174), we may find that our texts are not only the sources, but historical reality itself is a text that has to be understood.

Paul Ricoeur (1998: 43) provides the following working definition of hermeneutics: hermeneutics is the theory of the operations of understanding in their relation to the interpretation of texts. With reference to Dilthey, Ricoeur regards understanding as the process by which we come to know something of material life through perceptible signs which manifest itself (1998: 150). This is the understanding of which interpretation is a particular province. Interpretation is the art of understanding applied to so such manifestations, to such testimonies, to such monuments, of which writing is the distinctive characteristic. Ricoeur assumes that the central problem of hermeneutics is that of interpretation (1998: 165). Not just any kind of interpretation, but interpretation dominated in two ways: the first concerns its field of application, the second its epistemological specificity. The first point relates to the problem of interpretation because there are written texts which autonomy (independence of the text with respect to the intention of the author) creates difficulties. The second point is that the concept of interpretation seems, at the epistemological level, to be opposed to the concept of explanation.

As 'interpretation' and 'understanding' are two concepts that will be used frequently in this study, Hans-Georg Gadamer and Paul Ricoeur's explanation of hermeneutics and concepts provide further clarity for methodological grounds of this study.

In my research stance I align myself with developments that have taken place in the latter part of the twentieth century concerning the status of social research in society. These are developments (May 2002: 1-2) in extensions of particular discourses into terrains that were once presumed to be clearer in their demarcation points, for instance the relationship between philosophy, theory, methodology and method. We now observe that data are produced, not collected, and it is the process of production that is fundamentally related to the product. The decisions that are made about theory, methodology, ethics and politics may now be open to routine scrutiny. Particular ideas

of neutrality, such as the maintenance of objectivity through positioning the researcher as nothing but a passive instrument of data collection, may now be exposed as falsehoods that seek to mask the realities of the research process. The knower (as researcher) is now implicated in the construction of the known (the dynamics and content of society and social relations). I do not regard myself as a passive onlooker that merely reports on what goes on around me, but as an active agent whose ideas may also be shaped by the research. In my research stance I also explicitly seek to avoid the quantitative-qualitative divide. By divide I mean there are differences between these two approaches, and researchers adopt either of these one for their inquiry. According to Denzin and Lincoln (2000: 8) the word 'qualitative' implies an emphasis on the qualities of entities and on processes and meanings that are not experimentally examined or measured (if measured at all) in terms of quantity, amount, intensity, or frequency. Qualitative researchers stress the socially constructed nature of reality, the intimate relationship between the researcher and what is studied, and the situational constraints that shape inquiry. Denzin and Lincoln observe that such researchers emphasise the value-laden nature of inquiry and seek answers to questions that stress how social experience is created and given meaning. In contrast, Denzin and Lincoln (2000: 8) explains, quantitative studies emphasise the measurement and analysis of causal relationships between variables, not processes. Proponents of such studies claim that their work is done from within a value-free framework. From these definitions it is clear that there is a divide between the two approaches, the divide results from the different emphases on processes. I want to avoid this divide because I intend to examine all available data, including statistics (which relate to quantitative research).

Finally, I want to emphasise that the interpretive approach is deliberately non-positivistic, or post-positivistic. The 'why' question is replaced by the 'how' question. That is, how is social experience, or a sequence of social interaction, organised, perceived, and constructed by interacting individuals? How, then, not why, is the key (Denzin 1989: 24). Following from remarks in the previous paragraph, I want to conclude that interpretivists find that their own worlds of experience are the proper matter of inquiry. Unlike the positivists, who separate themselves from the world they study, the interpretivists participate in the social world so as to understand and express more effectively its emergent properties and features.



### **1.4.3 Research Method**

In explaining the concept of method I draw on the work of Lee Harvey. Method refers to the way empirical data is collected and ranges from asking questions, through reading documents, to observation of both controlled and uncontrolled situations. While some methods lend themselves more readily to certain epistemological perspectives, no method of data collection is inherently positivist, phenomenological or critical (Harvey 1990: 1).

The research method for this study is Conceptual Analysis, and I discussed it in detail earlier in this chapter. Briefly, I see conceptual analysis as an analytical and theoretical tool used in Philosophy of Education whereby concepts are understood in relation to other concepts. Meaning, often linked to justification, is attributed to concepts. Attempts are made to establish logically necessary conditions for the use of a word, and sufficient conditions must exist for a concept to be necessary.

## **1.5 SUMMARY**

McLaughlin (2000: 444) suggests that a well-grounded approach to discerning the proper contribution of philosophy with respect to educational policy is to focus upon the embeddedness of philosophical considerations in (many) education policies. Many education policies contain (to a greater or lesser extent) assumptions, beliefs, values and commitments that, if not of a directly philosophical kind, are apt for philosophical attention. These elements permeate many education policies, even if they do not amount to ‘a philosophy of education’, and are not articulated, but remain implicit, embryonic and perhaps confused. These philosophically significant elements relate not merely to the ‘content’ of particular education policies but also to broader matters relating to education and education policy in general. The illumination which philosophy can bring is therefore wide ranging. Scheffler (1991: 104)) brings into focus why policy-making cannot be reduced to merely technical considerations. Policy is made, he argues, in the context of ‘... multiple human activities, experiences, purposes and needs’ and therefore broad human understanding is required together with a grasp of matters of value and of the ‘normative space’ created by policy decisions.

In this chapter I have explored conceptual analysis as a philosophical tool to study the process of transformation as it has evolved nationally, and as it impacts at institutional level. Key questions such as ‘What is analysis?’, ‘What is a concept?’, ‘What is education?’, ‘What is philosophy?’ and ‘What is education policy?’ have been addressed to develop understanding and attribute meaning to concepts. I have located conceptual analysis within the context of philosophy of education, and also explored the nature and complexities around policy-making, implementation and analysis. An attempt was made to show that there is often a clear link between ideology and policy, and reference made to some conceptual tools for understanding the forces that drive the policy-making process. The competing interpretations, interests and intentions of policy-makers do not make the task of policy analysts any easier.

McLaughlin’s (2000) reference to the embeddedness of philosophical considerations in many education policies provides an entry point for my focus on policy analysis. In order to understand education policy development in South Africa I shall engage in ‘analysis of policy’, while taking into account the political and social context of change.

## **1.6 PROGRAMME OF STUDY**

**Chapter Two** provides a conceptual analysis of the notion of educational transformation. Having concluded in Chapter 1 that conceptual analysis consists in looking for logically necessary conditions for the use of a concept, I shall attempt to construct logically necessary conditions of educational transformation in Chapter 2. Key features of such conditions will be elaborated upon.

In **Chapter Three** I provide an analysis of education policy documents such as the Education White Paper 3, the National Plan for Higher Education and others, in order to determine what they pronounce on the logically necessary conditions I have identified in Chapter 2. My rationale for analysing these documents is that they determine largely what the institutional plans are based on. In other words, before I

could analyse institutional plans I have to determine what national policy pronounces on these conditions. Before I analyse these policy documents I pose the question: what is a primary driver for policy developments in higher education in South Africa over the last decade?, and identify globalisation as a key driver. I also analyse how it (globalisation) affects policy developments.

**Chapter Four** provides an analysis of the institutional plans of the three universities of the Western Cape province. I concentrate on three-year rolling, strategic, and employment equity plans. This chapter provides an in-depth analysis of institutional plans in terms of the logically necessary conditions I have constructed, and illuminate how transformation at these institutions vary greatly in terms of space, scope, depth, form and content. In this chapter I also examine narrative constructions of educational transformation. My major finding is that instances of transformation link stronger with excessive performativity. That is, institutional plans may be regarded as an exercise in excessive performativity.

In **Chapter Five** I discuss the results of my inquiry into institutional plans, and do so by reconstructing my notion of educational transformation. My argument is that we cannot do away completely with performativity in educational transformation, but we need less performativity to enact deep transformation. Less performativity means less emphasis on performance indicators to enact educational transformation. In order to soften the blow of excessive performativity, and to enact deep transformation, I make an attempt to provide an African perspective on educational transformation.

**Chapter Six** provides a conclusion to this study. In reflecting on my journey through this study, I refer to methodological issues, academic writing, visiting scholars, conference presentations, publications, narrative constructions, and my own performativity. I conclude the chapter by suggesting possible pathways for future research.

## CHAPTER 2

### LOGICALLY NECESSARY CONDITIONS OF EDUCATIONAL TRANSFORMATION: EXPLORING CONSTITUTIVE MEANINGS

#### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

Transformation is a key concept for this study, and it is only logical that the concept must be explored in an effort to establish a clearer understanding of what it means. I want to develop my understanding of the concept in order to assess, in Chapter 4, how institutions deal with the process of transformation. This chapter, therefore, provides an analysis of the concept within the context of higher education. As has been argued for in Chapter 1, analysing a concept philosophically may assist in the transformation of the concept through revision, or to discredit the concept in a particular way, or to show that the concept has a particular prestige. My focus is to analyse the concept philosophically with the aim to show how it can manifest in higher education. The question arises: Is there a need for transformation? The need for change in higher education is recognised in order to serve a rapidly changing world. It is clear that institutions need to acquire greater flexibility and capacity to change, and transform themselves to preserve their most fundamental traditions and values (Duderstadt 2000: 262). My assumption in discussions to follow in this chapter is based on the assumption that transformation would not be possible, or successful, outside of the democratic context of our country. Educational transformation is not only aided by democracy, but in turn, provides impetus to the democratisation of other spheres of society. I shall now proceed with an analysis of the concept.

#### 2.2 THE CONCEPT OF TRANSFORMATION

My perception of educational transformation is that it implies 'fundamental change', as opposed to mere 'reform' (an example is the Education Renewal Strategy of 1992 which proposed renewal under apartheid legislation) or 'superficial or cosmetic change'. I want to develop my notion even further by describing transformation as 'democratic change', in accordance with my premise in the introduction to this chapter. Transformation is embedded in a political, social, cultural and economic

context. Political change, from apartheid to democracy, is the primary vehicle for social, cultural and economic transformation.

Two key policy documents, namely the Education White Paper 3 (1997) and the National Plan for Higher Education (2001), address educational transformation, and I examine these texts in detail in Chapter 3. Attempts to transform have to fulfill the conditions as set out in these key texts. The vision for the transformation of the higher education system in South Africa is articulated in the 'Education White Paper 3: A Programme for the Transformation of Higher Education' of 1997. Central to this vision is the establishment of a single, national co-ordinated system, which must meet the learning needs of citizens and the reconstruction and development of society and the economy. The National Plan for Higher Education (2001) outlines the framework and mechanisms for implementing and realising the policy goals of the White Paper. The core intent of these policies, articulated by eight conditions, are encapsulated in the following two paragraphs.

The transformation of the higher education system and its institutions requires (White Paper 3 1997: 5-6):

- *Increased and broadened participation.* It refers to increased access for Black, women, disabled and mature students;
- *Responsiveness to societal interests and needs.* The needs of an increasingly technologically-oriented economy must be met by providing research, highly trained people and the knowledge to equip a developing society; and
- *Co-operation and partnerships in governance.* This relates to a reconceptualisation of the relationship between higher education and the state, civil society, stakeholders, and among institutions.

The National Plan (2001: 14-15) addresses five key policy goals and strategic objectives central to achieving the overall goal of transformation. These are:

- To provide increased access to higher education to all irrespective of race, gender, age, creed, class or disability and to produce graduates with the skills and competencies necessary to meet the human resource needs of the country;

- To promote equity of access and to redress past inequalities through ensuring that the staff and student profiles in higher education progressively reflect the demographic realities of South African society;
- To ensure diversity in the organisational form and institutional landscape of the higher education system through mission and programme differentiation, thus addressing regional and national needs in social and economic development;
- To build high-level research capacity to address the research and knowledge needs of South Africa; and
- To build new institutional and organisational forms and new institutional identities through regional collaboration between institutions.

A cursory glance at the literature reveals there are many concepts in use to describe changes in education. These include, 'reform' (Mauch & Sabloff 1995, Eisemon & Holm-Nielsen 1995, Switzer 1996, Kogan & Hanney 2000), 'change' (Hirsch & Weber 1999, Brennan *et al.* 1997, Meyerson 1998, Ramaley 2000), 'reconstruction' (Cuthbert 1988, Donaldson 2001) 'restructuring' (Eggins 1988, Gumport 2000), and 'transformation' (Harvey & Knight 1996, Matthews 1998, Duderstadt 2000, Waghid 2000, van der Merwe 2000, Eckel 2001). There are many debates on the concept, and I shall firstly focus on some of those in South Africa.

According to Moja and Hayward (in Eckel 2001: 110) transformation as expressed in the Education White Paper 3 (1997) captures the objective to break with the apartheid past, while acknowledging some of the contributions and strengths of the old (apartheid) system. Waghid (2002: 459) asserts that transformation in higher education involves a process of new knowledge production, reflexive action, which means seeing new problems and imagining new ways of approaching old problems and, deconstruction and reconstruction or constant exploring beneath surface appearances to respond to a future that cannot be imagined. Van der Merwe (2000: 82) follows the same argument when she says: 'Transformation requires a paradigm shift, the abandoning of old ways of knowing and doing and the adoption of a new, broader definition of reality'. Transformation takes place at different levels: governance, demographics, core institutional functions, vision/mission and organisational culture (Fourie 1999: 277).

Transformation, for Fehnel, is meant to be a fundamental and deep-rooted restructuring process ultimately directed at national development. It means a substantial and meaningful degree of participation in key initiatives. This means empowering the disempowered, i.e., the reorganisation of power relations which focuses on common interest rather than special interest. Moreover, it addresses the issues of gender and racial equality. When applied to the role of universities (which is the focus of this dissertation), Fehnel (in Higgs 2002) claims that it alludes to the bringing about of fundamental changes (which is also my own expressed understanding of the concept) in the system of higher education in South Africa in order to adapt to the transformative national and regional realities of the 21<sup>st</sup> century (Higgs 2002: 12). In addition, educational transformation is driven by internal socio-political transformation imperatives (with a glance over our shoulders to the past - a commitment to addressing apartheid inequalities and – and by external economic efficiency imperatives (with a look across the oceans to our future) (Gultig 2000: 43).

The views (which are by no means exhaustive) I referred to highlight the complexity and scope of transformation. I shall now take my cue from Gultig, and look across the oceans for further insights.

In the United States of America (USA), the term transformation has been used to differentiate it from other types of change, such as adjustments, innovations, isolated, and surface-level change (Eckel 2001: 110). Transformation is a process of transmutation of one form into another (Harvey & Knight 1996: 10). In the educational realm this refers, in part, to changes in the knowledge and abilities of students – the development of domain expertise – but it also refers to the process of coming to understand. The idea of ‘critical transformation’ sees quality in terms of the extent to which the education system transforms the *conceptual* ability and *self-awareness* of the student (1996: 11). Transformation is not just adding to a student’s knowledge or set of skills and abilities. At its core, transformation, in an educational sense, refers to the evolution of the way students approach the acquisition of knowledge and skills and relate them to a wider context (1996: 12).

Transformation (Green & Hayward 1997: 6) implies rethinking rather than tinkering – re-examining the ways of conducting the business of higher education and altering

fundamental aspects of its structure and operation. According to Dolence and Norris (1995: 20) transformation is not a purely linear process, but rather, four interlocking sub-processes:

- 1) realigning higher education with the Information Age;
- 2) redesigning higher education to achieve this realignment;
- 3) redefining higher education to achieve this realignment vision; and
- 4) re-engineering organisational processes to achieve dramatically higher productivity and quality.

According to Dolence and Norris (1995: 20) a certain level of clear strategic thinking and fundamental realignment must precede and shape the processes of redesigning, redefining and re-engineering. All four components must eventually work simultaneously. These four processes are interconnected, perpetual and mutually reinforcing. My emphasis is on 'understanding' the process of transformation, to this end Dolence and Norris posit that understanding the characteristics of the four components can illuminate the pathways to transformation, and enable educational leaders to redirect campus processes and resources to transformative ends.

Duderstadt (2000: 268) poses the critical question: How does an institution as large, complex, and tradition-bound as the modern university transform itself to fulfil its mission, achieve its vision, and move forward its strategic intent during a time of great change? Some people contend that major change in higher education can occur only when driven by forces outside the academy, which is particularly true in the South African situation. Government set the tone by producing various policies to compel universities to change. From transformation efforts at the University of Michigan and the experiences of other organisations in the private and public sector, Duderstadt (2000: 269-70) identifies several aspects of the transformation process that should be recognised at the outset:

- It is critical to define the real challenges of the transformation process properly. The challenge is neither financial nor organisational, it is the degree of cultural change required. We must transform rigid habits of thought and organisation that are incapable of responding to change rapidly or radically enough;



- True faculty participation in the design and implementation of the transformation process is necessary, because the transformation of faculty (faculty is an American term which refers to academics in the South African context) culture is the greatest challenge of all. The creativity and the commitment of the faculty are essential to success. Policies come and go but change happens in the trenches where faculty and students are engaged in teaching and research;
- The involvement of external groups is not only very helpful, but also necessary to provide credibility to the process and to assist in putting controversial issues on the table (e.g., tenure reform);
- Universities, like most organisations in business and government, are rarely able to achieve major changes through the motivation of opportunity and excitement alone. It often takes a crisis to get the community to take the transformation effort seriously, and sometimes even this is not sufficient; and
- The president (the Rector in our context) must play a critical role as leader, educator, and evangelist in designing, implementing and selling the transformation process to the entire university community.

The transformation process must encompass every aspect of institutions, including the mission of the university, financial restructuring, organisation and governance, general characteristics of the university, intellectual transformation, relations with external constituencies, and cultural change (Duderstadt 2000: 70). The most important objective of any broad effort at transformation is not so much to achieve a specific set of goals, but rather to build the capacity, the energy, the excitement, and the commitment to move toward bold visions of the university's future. The real aims include removing the constraints that prevent the institution from responding to the needs of a rapidly changing society, removing unnecessary processes and administrative structures, and challenging, exciting, and emboldening the members of the university community to view institutional transformation as great adventure. To this end, Duderstadt (2000: 271-72) suggests that a possible approach to transform would include the following actions:

**Step 1: Commitment at the top**

The senior leadership of the university must buy into the transformation process and fully support it. The governing board (Council) must support, or at least not resist, the transformation effort. I regard commitment at the top as crucial. University managers are well placed to influence academics and other sectors of institutions and create the energy to deal with issues.

**Step 2: Seeking Community Involvement**

It is important to provide mechanisms for active debate concerning the transformation objectives and process by the campus community. Effective communication is critical for the success of the transformation process.

**Step 3: Igniting the Sparks of Transformation**

Individuals at all levels of the university must be identified to become active agents of transformation. Leaders must be selected (executive officers, deans and directors, chairs and managers) who not only understand the profound nature of the transformations that must occur in the years ahead, but who are effective in leading such efforts.

**Step 4: Controlling and Focusing the Transformation Agenda**

Since the transformation of a university is broad and multifaceted, part of the challenge is to focus members of various constituencies on those aspects of the agenda that are most appropriate for their attention.

**Step 5: Staying the Course**

Large organisations will resist change, they will try to wear leaders down, or wait them out. Leaders throughout the institution must carefully consider the issues compelling change, and be encouraged to board the transformation train.

This concludes my preliminary analysis of the concept of transformation, as the various pronouncements are adequate in exploring an understanding of the concept. The ideas of Higgs, Waghid, Harvey and Knight, Duderstadt, Green and Hayward, and others, confirm that transformation is complex, fundamental and deep-rooted and relates to a wide range of issues such as governance, mission, finance, culture, external stakeholders, quality, gender and intellectual property. Educational transformation is a worldwide phenomenon experienced by many universities.

### **2.3 CONSTITUTIVE MEANINGS OF EDUCATIONAL TRANSFORMATION**

From the literature review I am able to construct the following key features of educational transformation:

- 1) Knowledge production, reflexive action, seeing new problems and imagining new ways of approaching old problems and, deconstruction and reconstruction or constant exploring beneath surface;
- 2) Abandoning old ways of knowing and doing and the adoption of a new, broader definition of reality;
- 3) Participation in key initiatives;
- 4) Issues relating to gender and racial equality;
- 5) Bringing about fundamental changes;
- 6) Transmutation of one form into another;
- 7) An evolution of the way in which students approach the acquisition of knowledge and skills and relate them to a wider context;
- 8) The notion of rethinking;
- 9) Cultural change;
- 10) Putting controversial issues on the table; and finally
- 11) Effective communication.

The above eleven features embed meanings which can be associated with educational transformation. It illuminates what it is and in this way it provides constitutive meanings of educational transformation. In other words, educational transformation can and should be understood by these meanings.

In narrowing down these constitutive meanings, I shall attempt to establish 'constitutive rules' of educational transformation. But first I want to establish a conceptual link between 'constitutive meanings' and 'constitutive rules'. According to Brian Fay (1996: 116), constitutive meanings are the presuppositions of activities. Fay (1996: 64) also argues that constitutive rules (and roles) make certain forms of activity possible. I therefore contend that since both constitutive rules and constitutive meanings relate to activities, there is a conceptual link between the two. Having

established a conceptual link between constitutive meanings and rules, I now proceed to discuss constitutive rules. As John Searle (in Taylor 1985: 34) points out, we are normally induced to think of rules as applying to behaviour which could be available to us whether or not the rule existed. Some rules are regulative like commandments: they do not take the goods of another. But there are other rules, for example, those governing the Queen's move in chess, which are not so inseparable. If one suspends these rules, or imagines a state where they have not yet been introduced, then the whole range of behaviour in question, in this case chess playing, would not be. There would still be the activity of pushing a wooden piece around on a board made of eight squares by eight; but this is not chess any longer. Rules of this kind are constitutive rules. If I relate this to the constitutive meanings I identified, it follows that these meanings are not regulatory but constitutive, that is, in their absence educational transformation may not be possible.

My aim in this dissertation is to explain, understand and interpret educational transformation as a social phenomenon. In this way I want to develop my self-understanding of the phenomenon. Charles Taylor remarks that a society is among other things a set of institutions and practices, and these cannot exist and be carried on without certain self-understandings on the part of the participants. Taylor argues that these self-descriptions can be called constitutive (1985: 93). Constitutive rules (meanings) can therefore also be applied to social phenomena.

I shall now show how constitutive meanings relate to logically necessary conditions. This conceptual link is important for this study as it draws together the outcome of the literature review and the research method, which is conceptual analysis. Conceptual analysis consists in looking for logically necessary conditions for the use of a word, therefore my objective is to establish logically necessary conditions of educational transformation. Brian Fay (1987: 108) argues that in the modified educative conception, the creation of conditions to effect a social transformation is confined to those conditions which are *necessary*. Logically necessary conditions, or the identification thereof, assist us in understanding social transformation, in this case the phenomenon of educational transformation.

Logically necessary conditions of educational transformation are those conditions in which it is possible to achieve educational transformation. Put differently, where such conditions do not exist, it will be impossible to achieve educational transformation. The constitutive meanings as identified provide the 'conditions' under which educational transformation can take place. In other words, the constitutive meanings embed the necessary conditions in which it is possible to achieve educational transformation. In this way logically necessary conditions can be linked conceptually to constitutive meanings.

In the previous paragraph I argued that constitutive meanings can be conceptually linked to logically necessary conditions of educational transformation. Since there are eleven constitutive meanings embedding multiple meanings it will be difficult to work with such a large number of logically necessary conditions. Lee Harvey notes that where there may be a large list of concepts in practice, it is not necessary to attempt a separate critical analysis of each (Harvey 1990: 29). They are interrelated, and so the 'key' is to locate a central concept and critically analyse that. From that, the other concepts can be reconstructed. Taking my cue from Harvey, I can narrow the eleven meanings down to four core constitutive meanings which, for me, constitute logically necessary conditions of educational transformation.

The four logically necessary conditions of educational transformation I identify are: (1) equity and redress (constitutive meanings are: gender and racial equality), (2) critical inquiry (constitutive meanings are: knowledge production, rethinking, abandoning old ways of doing, fundamental change, transmutation, controversy), (3) communicative praxis (constitutive meanings are: effective communication, participation), and (4) citizenship (constitutive meaning: cultural change).

The process of selecting constitutive meanings is not unproblematic, though. How do I know that I have selected the 'correct' constitutive meanings? Harvey argues that the appropriate meaning only emerges in the course of the ongoing analysis (1990: 30). Furthermore, a constitutive meaning is only appropriate in the sense that it provides, at any point in the critical analysis, the best focus for deconstructing and reconstructing the phenomenon in its socio-historic context (Harvey 1990: 30). I am satisfied that the four constitutive meanings incorporate all eleven related meanings,

and that I have engaged in sufficient reflection of key meanings to establish the appropriate or justifiable logically necessary conditions of educational transformation.

In the next section I look at constitutive meanings in a logical way, through a closer exploration of the four logically necessary conditions.

## **2.4 LOGICALLY NECESSARY CONDITIONS OF EDUCATIONAL TRANSFORMATION**

In this section I provide an in-depth discussion of the four logically necessary conditions (equity and redress, critical inquiry, communicative praxis, and citizenship), which I regard as critical for educational transformation.

### **2.4.1 EQUITY AND REDRESS**

Equity has been a cornerstone of educational policy since the inception of publicly funded mass education systems during the nineteenth century. Equity means fairness, but fairness is a two-edged word. Being fair involves both giving to each according to the common lot (horizontal equity) and giving to each according to need and merit (vertical equity). Equity raises questions of redistribution, of reshaping the way in which resources are allocated, of tampering with the existing economic pie (Paquette 1998: 41).

John Rawls, in *A Theory of Justice* (1999: 11-15), discusses 'justice as fairness': it conveys the idea that the principles of justice are agreed to in an initial situation that is fair. One feature of justice as fairness is to think of the parties in the initial situation as rational and mutually disinterested, the individuals are conceived as not taking an interest in one another's interests. Rawls maintains that the persons in the initial situation would choose two rather different principles: the first requires equality in the assignment of basic rights and duties, while the second holds that social and economic inequalities, for example inequalities of wealth and authority, are just only if they result in compensating benefits for everyone, and in particular for the least advantaged members of society. If I can relate this to educational transformation I shall argue for an arrangement that strives for fairness based on equality, and

compensation for the least advantaged. Given Rawls' argument that we must strive for just arrangements (1999: 12), I contend that educational transformation should be a just arrangement, and that universities should transform accordingly.

At this stage I want to distinguish between 'equity' and 'equality'. Iris Young makes the point that equality refers not primarily to the distribution of social goods, though distributions are certainly entailed by social equality. Equality refers primarily to the full participation and inclusion of everyone in a society's major institutions, and the socially supported substantive opportunity for all to develop and exercise capacities and realise their choices (Young 1990: 173). I regard political equality, which has been achieved with the adoption of the new constitution in South Africa, as necessary for equity to be established. Andrew Donaldson views equity as a commitment to equality of educational opportunity (2001: 64). Samoff (in Sayed 2001: 253) argues that equity refers to justice, whereas equality refers to the principle of sameness. Equity, according to Samoff, includes the distribution of educational services so that all may be able to be equal. Equity in this approach can be perceived as a strategy to achieve equality. This differs somewhat from my view that political equality serves as a vehicle to achieve equity. For Samoff, equality implies that in a democratic system no one should be treated differently.

With regards to 'redress', I shall consider what John Rawls refers to as the 'principle of redress' in *A Theory of Justice* (1999: 86):

This is the principle that undeserved inequalities call for redress; and since inequalities of birth and natural endowment are undeserved, these inequalities are to be somehow compensated for. Thus the principle holds that in order to treat all persons equally, to provide genuine equality of opportunity, society must give more attention to those born with fewer native assets and to those born into the less favourable social positions. The idea is to redress the bias of contingencies in the direction of equality. In pursuit of the principle greater resources might be spent on the education of the less rather than the more intelligent. At least over a certain time of life, say the earlier years of school.

The principle of redress touches on several aspects that deserve closer examination. The first is that of 'undeserved inequalities'. My observation is that the Black

majority in South Africa have suffered from undeserved inequalities. An injustice was done, which resulted in such inequalities. My second point is that redress must address the bias 'in the direction of equality'. With his careful formulation John Rawls acknowledges that equality may never be achieved, but that there must be movement in that direction. Redress must therefore become a key focus in educational transformation, so that action can be taken to work towards equality. Finally, it is well documented that in the apartheid era allocation of resources favoured Whites, and disadvantaged Blacks (see section 2.4.2.2 for examples). A logical step of redress must be to allocate more resources for Blacks to increase their access to higher education.

I shall now discuss two further aspects of equity and redress. I first discuss distributive justice, which relates to the question of equity, and then I address the issue of affirmative action, which results from distributive justice.

#### **2.4.1.1 Distributive justice**

Distributive justice has to do with the proper distribution of benefits and burdens among persons. A just distribution is one where each person receives what is his or her due (Jones 1999: 3). Jones argues that what actually is due to each person is the job of specific, substantive positions on the question of distributive justice. A somewhat more controversial claim about the concept of distributive justice is that whatever is a person's due is equivalent to what that person can claim *by right*. In short, a person has a right to that which is his or her due: distributive justice concerns the correct assignment of rights to persons. While I do not want to dwell too much on what a person can claim by right, the South African Constitution (1996: 14) states that everyone has the right to a basic education and further education. Every South African citizen can therefore claim the right to pursue studies at an institution of higher education; this right is governed by entrance qualifications. The notion of distributive justice, with regards to higher education, is therefore not disputed.

Sayed (2001: 254) notes that in the South African context, equity does not imply redistribution in the sense of taking away from others, specifically the privileged White minority. The condition of distributive justice means bringing everyone up to a



certain level (however defined) without taking away from anyone. The only way I see this vision realised is to drastically increase resources to address the historical educational backlogs of the black majority.

How can distributive justice at universities lead to educational transformation? Brian Barry regards distributive justice as an attribute of institutions (1989: 355). He argues that an institution can be considered just or unjust. When we ask about the justice of an institution we are inquiring into the way it distributes benefits and disabilities, privileges and disadvantages, equal or unequal opportunities, power and dependency, wealth (which is a right to control the disposition of certain resources) and poverty. The judgement that an institution is unjust must count very strongly against its overall acceptability. I can therefore conclude that a just institution must therefore aim to eradicate racial, gender and historical imbalances. On the other hand, it will be unjust to continue to exclude marginalised groups, such as Blacks, women, and the disabled. To do justice, affirmative action must be practised, which is the focus of the next subsection.

#### **2.4.1.2 Affirmative Action**

Iris Young argues that affirmative action is an instance of the application of the distributive paradigm of justice (1990: 193-225). It defines racial and gender justice in terms of the distribution of privileged positions among groups, but fails to bring into question issues of institutional organisation and decision-making power. She questions the assumption that positions should be distributed according to merit by measuring the individual technical competence of persons and awarding the most competitive positions to those judged most qualified according to impartial measures of such competence. 'Merit' is therefore not unproblematic. She argues that impartial, value-neutral, scientific measures of merit do not exist, and that a major issue of justice must be who decides what are the appropriate qualifications for a given position, how they will be assessed, and whether particular individuals have them.

To relate to what Young is saying, I shall consider staff and student ratios at universities. Generally speaking, there is a view that there are not enough competent Black academics to fill available positions. It is argued that this hampers staff equity.

Iris Young is asking who decides on these matters? My concern is what is being done to rectify the shortage of Black academics? This concern arises from the observation that apartheid deliberately affirmed Whites, particularly Afrikaners, to raise their social and educational status. 1991 Figures on staff composition show that 76% of permanent academic posts, and 69% of administrative posts in higher education institutions were held by White people (NEPI Report 1993: 206). With regards to student composition, statistics show that 51 of every 1000 of the White population were enrolled in the higher education sector in 1991, while the figures for the Indian, Coloured and African populations were 35, 13, and 9 respectively (NEPI Report 1993: 206). It follows from these figures that to accommodate such a high percentage of White staff and students more resources had to be allocated to this sector. In 1990 Historically White Universities received over R600 million in government subsidies and private sector grants, compared to less than R100 million received by Historically Black Universities (NEPI 1993: 207). I refer to 1991 statistics, as I want to demonstrate the situation that prevailed under apartheid. I shall refer to more current data of the three regional universities when I examine institutional plans in Chapter 4. From these examples I conclude there is clearly a need for equity and redress to compensate for, and to correct inequalities created by apartheid.

Iris Young (1990: 199) argues that since affirmative action programmes require that racially or sexually preferred candidates be qualified, and indeed often highly qualified, they do nothing directly to increase opportunities for Blacks and women whose social environment and lack of resources make getting qualifications nearly impossible for them. An objective of affirmative action must therefore be to increase opportunities for Blacks and women.

A criticism levelled against affirmative action is that it is tantamount to 'reverse discrimination'. Asmal *et al.* (1996: 65) regards 'reverse discrimination' as a false concept which suggests that Blacks get special treatment of some sort, to the detriment of Whites, where corrective action policies are adopted. They argue that race-conscious corrective action does not give disadvantaged communities 'special treatment'. It rather undoes historical injustices that were perpetrated against disadvantaged communities and not privileged ones. I advocate affirmative action not as reverse discrimination, but as a counter for apartheid policies which served to

affirm Whites. Equity and redress, through affirmative action, is needed as past inequities will not disappear of their own accord, they must be actively dismantled.

Another criticism is that affirmative action threatens high 'standards', whether of 'merit' or 'civilisation'. Such claims, according to Asmal *et al.* (1996: 67), conveniently ignores the historical realities of job reservation (to the exclusion of Blacks) and of barbarity (in defence of apartheid). I take his criticism very seriously, but shall not discuss it in detail at this stage. I may return to this matter later, as I first want to gain more insight through the analysis of policy documents.

I am in favour of affirmative action for two reasons. First, it compels institutions to change. Second, justice may be served in that institutions (which) can, through affirmative action, demonstrate their commitment to correct the wrongs of the apartheid past.

Why is equity and redress a logically necessary condition of educational transformation? I have shown that Historically White Universities were better financed by the state and private sector during the apartheid era; that Whites held more academic and administrative posts; and that more Whites attended university. I recognise the need for equity and redress to compensate for and to correct the inequalities created by apartheid. I have also shown that we need just institutions that should aim to eradicate racial, gender and historical imbalances. For these reasons I regard equity and redress as a logically necessary condition of educational transformation.

#### **2.4.2 CRITICAL INQUIRY**

The notion of 'critical inquiry' means that I adopt a critical stance in my analysis of educational transformation. In a difficult and confusing world, humans can still come to terms with life because inquiry reaches into everything, and human beings are natural inquirers. Importantly, there are different degrees of certainty or uncertainty, depending upon the kind of inquiry in which one is engaged. Inquiry is not tied to blind positivism, or detached from rationalism, but grounded in mind, body and discovery. The sense of inquiry is related to the existential real life dilemmas we face.

An inquirer realises that expression is open ended and that existence is tied to action (Schulkin 1992: 1). At its best, inquiry is based on ethics and aesthetics, self- control and conduct (1992: 105). Inquiry, along with social intelligence allows us to participate in the community and to transcend the isolation of solitary thought (1992: 106). The method I use for this study denotes a philosophical inquiry, as explained in Chapter 1, and I explore educational transformation as a social phenomenon.

The condition of critical inquiry is an inquiry rooted in critical theory. For Brian Fay (1987: 27-29) a critical theory wants to explain a social order in such a way that it becomes itself the catalyst which leads to the transformation of this social order. How can an explanatory theory accomplish this? Brian Fay explains that a critical theory requires liberation from a social order to occur partly as the result of the absorption of itself by its audience – that liberation results from the enlightenment of the subjects of critical theory. Such a process of enlightenment is sometimes called ‘raising the consciousness of the oppressed’. But enlightenment by itself, Fay argues, is not enough. To have the practical force it requires, critical theory must become an enabling, motivating resource for its audience – it must empower them. This empowerment has emancipation as its goal. A critical theory is propounded with the specific end in mind of providing people with a systematic critique of their own self-understandings and social practices in order to provide them with the knowledge on the basis of which they can change the way they live (1987: 39). ‘Critical theory’ is ineluctably connected with the Frankfurt School (principally the social theorists Horkheimer, Marcuse, Adorno, and Habermas). Critical theory is a special term that is self-conscious about its historicity, its place in dialogue and among cultures, its irreducibility to facts, and its engagement in the practical world (Calhoun 1995: 11).

Two key points emerge from the above discussion. One relates to emancipation. The emancipatory interest is the guiding interest of critical theory and of all systematic reflection, including philosophy (Roderick 1986: 57). If I can contrast critical theory with apartheid education, then the latter aimed to make Black people subservient. It did not want Blacks to question the status quo; it did not want Blacks to become critical thinkers. It is thus appropriate for us in a democratic dispensation to consolidate the gains of political liberation by embracing critical theory at our universities. By doing so universities can produce a new type of graduate that can

function more productively in the real world. A second issue is that critical theory offers the alternative of emancipating people by providing them with the knowledge to change their own lives.

Why is critical theory/inquiry a logically necessary condition of educational transformation? The answer lies in that a critical theory is propounded with a specific end in mind, of providing people with a systematic critique of their own self-understanding and social practices in order to provide them with the knowledge on the basis of which they can change the way they live.

I shall pursue the discussion on knowledge production (as a key component of critical inquiry) in the next sub-section.

#### **2.4.2.1 Knowledge production**

In the *New Production of Knowledge*, Gibbons and colleagues make two claims that have become symbolic representations in the debate about the future of the academy. The first is that the nature of knowledge production is being transformed from Mode 1 (disciplinary, university-centred process) to Mode 2 (a trans-disciplinary based knowledge production in which academics cooperate with users and stakeholders to produce knowledge at the site of its application). The second is that the Mode 2 process is superior to Mode 1. These claims serve as a convenient banner for collecting issues ranging from epistemology to labour politics in the university, and they may also be read as legitimising the decline of the university as the central site of knowledge production (Jacob 2000: 2).

Gibbons *et al.* (1994: 3) summarise key differences between the two modes as follows: In Mode 1 problems are set and solved in a context governed by, the largely academic, interests of a specific community. By contrast, Mode 2 knowledge is carried out in a context of application. Mode 1 is disciplinary while Mode 2 is transdisciplinary. Mode 1 is characterised by homogeneity, Mode 2 by heterogeneity. Organisationally, Mode 1 is hierarchical and tends to preserve its form, while Mode 2 is more heterarchical and transient. Each employs a different type of quality control. In comparison with Mode 1, Mode 2 is more socially accountable and reflexive. It

includes a wider, more temporary and heterogenous set of practitioners, collaborating on a problem defined in a specific and localised context. I will now outline five critical aspects of Mode 2.

#### *Knowledge produced in the context of application*

The relevant contract here is between problem solving which is carried out following the codes of practice relevant to a particular discipline and problem solving which is organised around a particular application. In the former the context is defined in relation to the cognitive and social norms that govern basic research or academic science. Later this has tended to imply knowledge production carried out in the absence of some practical goal (Gibbons *et al.* 1994: 4). Knowledge is produced through a process of continuous negotiation of the needs, interests and specifications of all the involved actors. Users are integrated in the context of the research project (Jacob 2000: 16).

#### *Transdisciplinarity*

Gibbons *et al.* (1994: 4) contend that transdisciplinarity to which they refer is more than simply the gathering together of a diverse team of specialists to work on a problem. Enquiry is guided by a specifiable consensus as to appropriate cognitive and social practice, and a framework is developed to guide problem-solving efforts in each context. Consensus is conditioned by the context of application and evolves with it.

#### *Heterogeneity and Organisational diversity*

Mode 2 knowledge production is heterogenous in terms of the skills and experience people bring into it. The university is no longer the centre of knowledge production. A range of different organisations, including non-university institutes, research centres, government agencies, industrial laboratories, think-tanks, and consultancies are recognised as sources of knowledge. Research groups are less firmly institutionalised; people come together in temporary work teams and networks which dissolve when a problem is solved or redefined. The experience gathered in this process creates a competence which becomes highly valued and which is transferred to new contexts (Gibbons *et al.* 1994: 6).

### *Social Accountability and Reflexivity*

Growing awareness about the variety of ways in which advances in science and technology can affect the public interest has increased the number of groups that wish to influence the outcome of the research process. This is reflected in the varied composition of the research teams. Social accountability permeates the whole knowledge production process. It is reflected not only in interpretation and diffusion of results but also in the definition of the problem and the setting of research priorities. Individuals cannot function effectively without reflecting - trying to operate from the standpoint of - all actors involved. Operating in Mode 2 makes all participants more reflexive (Gibbons *et al.* 1994: 7).

### *Quality Control*

Mode 2 has multidimensional criteria of evaluation. In addition to the peer review process, criteria such as market competitiveness, cost effectiveness and social acceptability play an important role in determining the quality of Mode 2 knowledge products (Jacob 2000: 8). Merle Jacob concludes that the challenge posed to the university system by Mode 2 demands major adjustments to the present day university structure. Put differently, the present idea of the university is in desperate need of revision. What is unclear is who should be the architects of the new vision(s), and whose interest these new visions will serve.

Paulin J Hountondji in *Producing Knowledge in Africa today* (2003: 501-507) examines knowledge production from two different and complementary directions. First, we should pay attention to underdevelopment. Important here is theory building, interpretation of raw information, theoretical processing of data collected, economics, and assumptions around so-called backwardness of Africa and the Third World, and scientific and technological backwardness. Secondly, we should pay attention to what is going well. He calls for a renewed, systematic reflection on the status, the mode of existence, the scope and limits and the perspectives of development of so-called traditional knowledge.

The question arises: How does Mode 2 contribute to educational transformation, taking into account Paulin Hountondji's thesis of underdevelopment? This question has partly been answered with the discussion of the five aspects of Mode 2. Mode 2

contributes to educational transformation in that: (1) knowledge produced relates to the needs, interests and specifications of all involved, (2) there is consensus on the mode of enquiry, (3) experience gained is transferred to new contexts, in this way expertise is shared, (4) there is social accountability, which leads to social acceptability, and (5) participants are more reflexive (I have already identified reflexivity as a constitutive meaning of educational transformation). Put differently, Mode 2 knowledge production emphasises social accountability, consensus, research, sharing of expertise, and is sensitive to the needs and interests of those involved.

To address Hountondji's concerns more directly, there has been a new focus over the last few years, attempting to marry the resources of traditional knowledge with the more sophisticated technology of modern science. This can have important implications on research relating to the HIV-Aids pandemic, the prevalence of tuberculosis in especially the Western Cape, and social ills such as drug and alcohol abuse, and violent crime resulting from social deprivation. Waghid (2002: 485) argues that higher education institutions, in tune with the notion of a reflexive praxis, should move towards integrating aspects of their research and teaching agendas more relevantly with community service functions. Through this focus, I contend, issues of underdevelopment can be addressed as the resources of universities can be harnessed to alleviate the plight of communities through research that involves communities.

I conclude this section with the question: What makes critical inquiry a logically necessary condition of educational transformation? It is because a critical theory/inquiry aims to provide people with a systematic critique of their own self-understandings and social practices in order to provide them with the knowledge on the basis of which they can change the way they live. The claim that critical inquiry empowers people, through knowledge, to change their circumstances makes this, for me, a logically necessary condition of educational transformation. I also showed how Mode 2 knowledge production, as an instance of critical inquiry, can contribute to educational transformation.



### 2.4.3 COMMUNICATIVE PRAXIS

In this section I examine the role that communication can play in achieving educational transformation, by using Jürgen Habermas' *Theory of Communicative Action* as a focus for this discussion. Contrary to his title, I chose 'Communicative Praxis' as the topic for this section. My reason is that Habermasian action denotes specific forms of communication which he calls 'islands in the sea of praxis' (Outhwaite 1994: 112). In this sense, praxis can be viewed as the broader picture in which 'action' is embedded. 'Communicative action' can therefore be seen as part of praxis, hence my title. Higgs (2002: 15) confirms that philosophically, communicative action is more properly called communicative praxis.

Praxis means reflective activity. It does not include 'instinctive' or 'mindless' activity like sleeping, walking or undertaking repetitive work tasks. Praxis is what changes the world, so Harvey (1990) claims. For the critical social researcher knowledge is not just about finding out about the world but is about changing it. It is important that critical social research engages praxis. The critical social researcher is not interested in the specific actions or reasons for action of an individual, as they are simply indicative of social groups operating within an oppressive social structure and/or historical juncture. Critical social research may take into account that changes in social formations are the result of praxis. Harvey (1990: 22-23) suggests that critical social research is as much about questioning the nature of knowledge as it is about the critique of knowledge. Knowledge changes not simply as a result of reflection but as a result of activity too, as a result of praxis. This connects with my view that rethinking must not just be a passive process, but must be geared towards action. The activity of engagement is at the root of further development of knowledge.

Habermas insists that communicative action is not identical with communication, though it takes place by means of communication. Communicative action designates a type of interaction that is coordinated through speech acts and does not coincide with them (Outhwaite 1994: 72). This implies that not every form of communication is communicative action. I regard this as a very important distinction, and shall now attempt to illustrate the meaning of Habermas' communicative action.

Habermas distinguishes between ‘action oriented to success’, and ‘action oriented to understanding’, and between the social and non-social contexts of action. ‘Action oriented to success’ is called ‘*instrumental*’ by Habermas when the action can be understood as following technical rules and can be evaluated in terms of efficiency in dealing with the physical world (a non-social context). ‘Action oriented toward success’ is called *strategic* when the action can be understood as following rules of rational choice which can be assessed by the degree of efficiency of its influencing the decisions of a rational counterpart in action (Habermas 1998: 118). ‘Action oriented to understanding’, which can only take place in a social context, Habermas calls ‘*communicative action*’ (1998: 63). ‘Communicative action’ occurs whenever the plans of action are co-ordinated not through egocentric calculations of success but through acts of reaching understanding (1998: 118).

A speaker tries to reach understanding with another person through a speech act. A speech act situates the linguistic expression in relation to the speaker, in relation to the hearer, and in relation to the life-world (Habermas 1998: 246). Speech acts serve generally to coordinate actions through making possible a rationally motivated agreement between several actors; the two other forms of language – representation and expression – are also involved in this. From the point of view of reaching understanding, speech acts serve to transmit and further develop cultural knowledge; from the point of view of socialisation, they serve to form and maintain personal identities (1998: 247). Habermas calls culture the stock of knowledge from which the participants in communication, in reaching understanding with one another with regard to something, supply themselves with interpretations. Society consists of the legitimate orders by way of which the participants in communication regulate their affiliations to social groups and safeguard solidarity. In the category of personal structure Habermas includes all motives and competencies that enable a subject to speak and act and thereby secure her own identity.

Lifeworld is linked in the previous paragraph to speech acts. According to Husserl the life-world consists of individual skills, the intuitive knowledge of how one deals with a situation; and from socially acquired practices, the intuitive knowledge of what one can rely on in a situation, not less than, in a trivial sense, the underlying convictions (Horster 1992:21). Human beings’ communication with one another is only possible

in the trusted surroundings of the lifeworld; moreover, knowledge of the lifeworld is contained in language. Components of the lifeworld consist of the following processes that operate by way of communicative action: *reaching understanding*, *action coordination*, and *socialisation* (Habermas 1998: 247). The components of the lifeworld – culture, society, and personality structures – form complex contexts of meaning that communicate with one another, although they are embodied in different substrata (1998: 249). Cultural knowledge is embodied in symbolic forms – in objects of utility and technologies, in words and theories, in books and documents – just as much as in actions. Society is embodied in institutional orders, in legal norms, or in webs of normatively regulated practices and customs. Finally, personality structures are embodied in the substratum of human organisms.

Outhwaite (1994: 112) argues that although Habermas' arguments for the primacy of communicative action are not entirely successful, the latter identified an important sphere of human action which connects with our intuitions about consensual decision making and participatory democracy, as well as about our use of language. This connection between communicative action and participatory democracy interests me greatly. Outhwaite draws this conclusion from 'representative speech acts' as a condition in the third class of speech act of the ideal speech situation. Where I extend the ideas of Outhwaite is that I shall not limit communicative action only to participatory democracy, instead I shall also link it to 'deliberative democracy'. Elements of the latter are 'agreement', and the speech acts also allude to deliberation. Michael Pusey (1987: 120) cautions that we should not fall back into the mistake of confusing democracy with its formal structures (representative bodies, parliaments, constitutions, elections, unions and other formal arrangements). Democracy means that all is done 'in' and 'through' communicative interaction, through action that is genuinely 'oriented to reaching an understanding'. We should, therefore, think of democracy as a process of deliberation.

To conclude this section, I regard consensual decision-making and participatory democracy as important for educational transformation. That is why communicative praxis is a logically necessary condition of educational transformation. I have earlier identified 'participation' as a constitutive meaning of educational transformation.

I shall now explore rationality as a key feature of communicative praxis.

### 2.4.3.1 Rationality

Habermas defines rationality with reference to the employment of descriptive knowledge. Here he identifies two different directions. Rationality can be predicated of both human beings and their symbolic expressions, and of both speech and action (Roderick 1986: 112). The reason embodied in speech and action Habermas calls *cognitive-instrumental rationality*. He considers two paradigmatic cases of rationality from this perspective: (1) an assertion with which a speaker expresses a belief and (2) a goal-directed action with which a social actor pursues an end. In case (1), the speaker claims truth for his assertion. In case (2), the social actor claims prospects of success. The second paradigm, *communicative rationality*, is the focus of the next subsection.

### 2.4.3.2 Communicative Rationality

Communicative action is internally connected to communicative rationality, a central concept in Habermas's attempt to provide a normative foundation for critical social theory (Roderick 1986: 111). Communicative rationality is expressed in the unifying force of speech oriented toward securing understanding. The communicative use of linguistic expressions serves not only to give expression to the intentions of the speaker but also to represent states of affairs (or to presuppose their existence) and to establish interpersonal relations with a second person. A three-fold relation exists between the meaning of a linguistic expression and (a) what is *intended* by it, (b) what is *said* in it, and (c) the *way in which it is used* in the speech act. With his speech act, the speaker aims to reach understanding with a hearer about something. The speaker has an illocutionary aim: the speech act is first of all supposed to be understood by the hearer and then, so far as possible, to be accepted (Habermas 1998: 315-316).

The concept of communicative rationality may be explicated formally in terms of the three dimensions of communicative action: external nature, society, and internal nature (Roderick 1986: 114). In communication directed at external nature (the cognitive-instrumental sphere) rationality consists in expressing grounded views and

acting efficiently and includes the ability to learn from mistakes. The mode of argumentation proper to this dimension is *theoretical discourse* in which controversial truth claims are made thematic. In communication directed at society (the moral-practical sphere) rationality consists in justifying actions with reference to established norms, in acting prudently in situations of normative conflict, and in judging disputes from the moral point of view oriented to consensus. The mode of argumentation proper to this dimension is *practical discourse* in which claims to normative rightness are thematised. In communication directed at internal nature (the evaluative and the expressive spheres), rationality consists in interpreting the nature of your own wants and needs (as well those of others) in terms of culturally established standards of value, and even more so, in adopting a reflective attitude to the standards of value themselves. Here the mode of argumentation is not discourse but *aesthetic criticism* in which the adequacy of value standards is made thematic.

For Habermas the arguments reproduced in the psychoanalytic dialogue also belongs to this dimension (internal nature). In this context, rationality consists in being willing and able to free oneself from illusions due not to factual error, but to self-deception. The mode of argumentation here is *therapeutic critique* which serves to clarify systematic self-deception. Finally, in communication directed at language itself, rationality consists in overcoming disturbances to communication through a readiness to come to an understanding and reflection on linguistic rules. Both the comprehensibility of symbolic expressions and the meaning of these expressions may be reflectively examined. The mode of argumentation proper to this dimension is *explicative discourse* in which the comprehensibility and well-formedness of symbolic expression is no longer naively presupposed, but is explicitly thematised (Roderick 1986: 115). Habermas' account yields the following schema:

#### TYPES OF ARGUMENTATION

<i>Modes of argumentation</i>	<i>Problematic expressions</i>	<i>Controversial validity claims</i>
Theoretical discourse	Cognitive-instrumental	Truth of propositions: efficacy of teleological actions
Practical discourse	Moral-practical	Rightness of norms and action
Aesthetic discourse	Evaluative	Adequacy of standards of value
Therapeutic critique	Expressive	Truthfulness or sincerity of expressions

Explicative discourse

Comprehensibility or well-  
formedness of symbolic constructs

Four key aspects raised in this discussion are needed in educational transformation. These aspects link rationality conceptually to the logically necessary condition of communicative praxis. They are:

- (1) *Speech oriented toward consensus.* It is crucial that consensus is reached in taking decisions related to educational transformation. Decisions must not merely arise from majority vote, but from deliberation and persuasion on the strength of argument. In this way, I contend, will those who initially objected to a proposal then be willing.
- (2) *Speech oriented toward securing understanding.* One must not underestimate the fact that participants in the process of educational transformation come from diverse backgrounds. Participants therefore need to understand the process before they can contribute meaningfully.
- (3) *The ability to learn from mistakes.* Undoubtedly, mistakes will be made as institutions grapple with the demands and complexities of educational transformation. It is therefore incumbent upon all actors to learn from mistakes.
- (4) *Acting prudently in situations of normative conflict.* Cool heads are needed to make constructive input to the debate around educational transformation. This will not only reduce conflict, but also make the experience more worthwhile and productive.

I shall now discuss three strands of rationality, namely discursive rationality and reflection, epistemic rationality, and teleological rationality as advocated by Habermas (1998: 310-316).

#### **2.4.3.3 Discursive Rationality and Reflection**

The rationality of a person is proportionate to his (her) expressing himself rationally and to his (her) ability to give account for his expressions in a reflexive stance. A person expresses himself (herself) rationally insofar as he (her) is oriented performatively towards validity claims. A person not only behaves rationally but is him (herself) rational if he (she) can give account for his (her) orientation toward

validity claims. This kind of rationality is called *accountability*. Accountability presupposes a reflected self-relation on the person to what he (she) believes, says, and does; this capacity is entwined with the rational core structures of knowledge, purposive activity, and communication by way of the corresponding self-relations (Habermas 1998: 310).

#### **2.4.3.4 Epistemic Rationality**

Our knowledge is built up from propositions or judgements – those elementary units that can be true or false; on account of its prepositional structure, knowledge is intrinsically of a linguistic nature. The reflexive character of true judgements would not be possible if we could not represent our knowledge, that is, if we could not express it in sentences, and if we could not correct it and expand it; and this means, if we are not able also to learn from our practical dealings with a reality that resists us. To this extent, epistemic rationality is entwined with action and the use of language (Habermas 1998: 311, 312).

#### **2.4.3.5 Teleological Rationality**

All action is intentional; an action may be understood as carrying out the intention of a freely choosing and deciding actor. Action has a teleological structure, for every action-intention aims at the realisation of a set goal. The rationality of action is proportionate to whether the action has achieved this result on the basis of the deliberately selected and implemented means. A successful actor has acted rationally only if he (i) knows why he was successful (or why he could have realised the set goal in normal circumstances) and if (ii) this knowledge motivates the actor (at least in part) in such a way that he carries out his action for reasons that can at the same time explain its possible success (Habermas 1998: 313, 314).

From this last section on the three strands of rationality I can identify at least two reasons that make rationality important for educational transformation:

- (1) **Accountability.** Universities are accountable to the state and donors. Decision makers in institutions must also be accountable to all sectors of their institutions. Social accountability is discussed in section 2.4.2.1.

- (2) The reflexive character of judgements. Reflexivity is a constitutive meaning of educational transformation, and is identified again in Mode 2 production of knowledge. I also explained that praxis means reflexivity.

In sum, why is communicative praxis a logically necessary condition of educational transformation? I have shown that consensual decision-making and participatory democracy are needed in educational transformation. I have also argued that speech oriented to consensus, speech oriented toward securing understanding, the ability to learn from mistakes, and acting prudently in situations of normative conflict are critical in educational transformation. Accountability and the reflexive character of judgements are further meanings that make communicative praxis, for me, a logically necessary condition of educational transformation.

#### 2.4.4 CITIZENSHIP

Citizenship is intimately linked to liberal ideas of individual rights and entitlements on the one hand, and to communitarian ideas of membership in an attachment to a particular community on the other. It is not surprising that there has been an explosion of interest of citizenship amongst political theorists. In 1978, it could be confidently stated that the concept of citizenship has gone out of fashion among political thinkers. By 1990, citizenship was the 'buzzword' amongst thinkers on all points of the political spectrum (Kymlicka 2002: 284). In 2003, citizenship is very much part of the discourse on educational transformation in South Africa.

The first task for theorists of citizenship was to specify more concretely the sorts of civic virtues required for a flourishing democracy. According to William Galston's influential account (in Kymlicka 2002: 288), responsible citizenship requires four types of civic virtues: (i) *general* virtues: courage, law-abidingness, loyalty; (ii) *social* virtues: independence, open-mindedness; (iii) *economic* virtues: work ethic, capacity to delay self-gratification, adaptability to economic and technological change; and (iv) *political* virtues: capacity to discern and respect the rights of others, willingness to demand only what can be paid for; ability to evaluate the performance the performance of those in office; and the willingness to engage in public discourse.



So far I have not yet explored the meaning of the concept of citizenship, but a picture of the concept is already emerging from Galston's four types of civic virtues. Educational transformation requires that these virtues be instilled in our citizens. My point is, therefore, that these four civic virtues are necessary for transformation. For example, how can educational transformation take place if citizens do not engage in public discourse? It's just unthinkable. Passivity on the part of citizens will leave government officials with the task of driving the discourse, and that may lead to the voice of the people being muted.

Kymlicka (2002: 289) asserts that modern theories of citizenship must respond to the realities of contemporary pluralistic societies (such as South Africa). Thus much of the current debate has been focused on those virtues which are distinctive to modern pluralistic liberal democracies, relating to the basic principles of a liberal regime, and to the political role citizens occupy within it. These virtues include the ability and willingness to question political authority, and to engage in public discourse about matters of public policy – these are perhaps the most distinctive aspects of citizenship in a liberal democracy, since they are precisely what distinguish 'citizens' within a democracy from the 'subjects' of an authoritarian regime.

As William Galston notes, the willingness to engage in public discourse is a complicated virtue. It includes the willingness to listen seriously to a range of views which, given the diversity of liberal societies, will include ideas the listener is bound to find strange and obnoxious. The virtue of political discourse also includes the willingness to set forth one's own views intelligibly and candidly as the basis for a politics of persuasion rather than manipulation or coercion. This is often called the virtue of 'public reasonableness'. Liberal citizens must give reasons for their political demands, not just state preferences or make threats. Moreover, these reasons must be 'public reasons', in the sense that they are capable of being understood and accepted by people of different faiths and cultures. Liberal citizens must justify their political demands in terms that fellow citizens can understand and accept as consistent with their status as free and equal citizens. It requires a conscientious effort to distinguish those beliefs, which are matters of private faith, from those which are capable of public defence, and to see how issues look from the point of view of those with

differing religious commitments and cultural backgrounds (Kymlicka 2002: 289). I see this last remark as referring to tolerance, which I shall discuss later in this section.

Where must civic virtues be taught? Kymlicka (2002: 307) argues that we cannot rely on the market, the family, or the associations of civic society to teach the full range of civic virtues. Each teaches us certain important virtues, but also certain dispositions which may be vices when exercised in the public domain. Many theorists agree that these virtues must be learned in the education system. The idea that the education system should teach students to be sceptical of political authority, and to distance themselves from their own cultural traditions when engaging in public discourse, is controversial. Traditionalists object to it on the grounds that it inevitably leads children to question traditional and parental or religious authority in private life.

Now that I have explored some of the main theories around citizenship, I shall next attempt to illuminate the meaning of the concept of citizenship.

Citizenship can be defined as an ensemble of rights and obligations that determine an individual's access to social and economic resources. Citizenship is itself one of the most important resources which a society ascribes to a person as a legal personality. This juridic identity is part of a civil society organised around a set of values that can broadly be defined as 'civic virtue'. Citizenship can be seen as: (1) an inclusionary principle for the distribution and allocation of entitlements, and (2) an exclusionary basis for building solidarity and maintaining identity (Turner 2000: 23).

Citizenship is a valuable practice and it is desirable for people to function effectively as citizens. According to the *liberal conception* citizenship should be understood as a set of rights and corresponding obligations enjoyed equally by everyone who is a citizen of the political community in question (Miller 2000: 82). To be a citizen is to enjoy rights to personal security, to freedom of speech, to vote and so forth; correspondingly one has to an obligation to keep the law, and generally not to interfere with others' enjoyment of their rights. Central to the liberal view is the idea of a fair balance of rights and obligations: this is expressed in the now-classic exposition by TH Marshall and more recently in the work of John Rawls (Miller

2000). Parekh (2000: 183) and Carens (2000: 213) concur that citizens should enjoy equal rights.

By contrast, the *republican conception*, while not denying the importance of citizen rights, places more weight on the idea of the active citizen who takes part along with others in shaping the future direction of his or her society through political debate. Citizenship here is less a legal status (though it must of course be that too) than a role which the citizen assumes as a full member of the community. To be a citizen one must think and behave in a certain way: one must have a sufficient measure of, what the older republican tradition called, public virtue (Miller 2000: 82).

Diogenes the Cynic coined the term ‘citizen of the world’ (Nussbaum 1997: 56). The Stoic philosophers made the concept of the ‘world citizen’, *kosmou politēs*, a centerpiece of their educational programme. Stoics hold that the good citizen is a ‘citizen of the world.’ They hold that thinking about humanity as it is realised in the whole world is valuable for self-knowledge: we see ourselves and our customs more clearly when we see our own ways in relation to those of other reasonable people. They insist, furthermore, that we really will be better able to solve our problems if we face them in this broader context, our imaginations unconstrained by narrow partisanship. No theme is deeper in Stoicism than the damage caused by faction and local allegiances to the political life of a group. Stoic texts show repeatedly how easy it is for local or national identities and their associated hatreds to be manipulated by self-seeking individuals for their own gain – whereas reason is hard to fake, and its language is open to the scrutiny of all. To be a citizen of the world, one does not, the Stoics stress, need to give up local affiliations, which can frequently be a source of great richness in life. Instead we should work to make all human beings part of our community of dialogue and concern, showing respect for the human wherever it occurs, and allowing that respect to constrain our national and local politics.

Is Stoic philosophy relevant to educational transformation in South Africa? I certainly think so. To ‘make all human beings part of our community of dialogue and concern’ and ‘to show respect for the human wherever it occurs’, will certainly assist the process of transformation. Stoicism is particularly relevant because a concern I have with democracy in South Africa is that it gave rise to a resurgence of traditional

cultural and ethnic values. There is a new emphasis on culture which, and while it is good for diversity, also signals a return to 'local allegiances'. We are all too familiar with the damage that tribalism has done to the entire continent! The notion of citizen of the world, I think, can help us to overcome political and local allegiances.

Geoffrey Stokes (2002: 29-43) deals with citizenship in a very novel way by defining it in terms of various democratic theories. For him, the practice of good *liberal* democratic citizenship is largely confined to the requirement of voting in elections and possibly serving on juries. In this model, most citizens give up their power to govern to representatives and merely give periodic consent to governments formed by their representatives. The ideal *republican* citizen is one who is imbued with civic virtue, which means giving priority to the public (civic) good over one's private interests. The ability to maintain a critical and reflective distance from one's own interests and desires is a central feature. The good *developmental* citizen participates in political activity wherever possible, at all levels within a polity. Citizens will vote in elections, but also participate in the other non-political associations of civil society. The ideal citizen in a *deliberative democracy* is an active one enquiring many diverse capacities. I briefly depart from Stokes to explain what deliberative democracy is. Crucial to deliberative democracy is the idea of a 'public sphere' of opinion-formation, debate, deliberation, and contestation among citizens, groups, movements, and organisations in a polity. Deliberation is conducted rationally and fairly among free and equal individuals (Benhabib 1996: 80, 69). Stokes emphasises that central to the deliberative democratic citizen is the ability to engage in dialogue and communication. Ideally, citizens do not form their preferences solely according to their previously established statutes, role or identities, but also has the ability to listen carefully to others, and open themselves to revisions of their earlier position and interests, citizens need to have the moral strength to accept the decisions arrived at.

To summarise, some people view citizenship mainly in terms of duties and rights (the liberal conception), for others it involve community membership and a responsibility to actively promote the community's welfare (the republican conception).

Van Zyl Slabbert (1994: 450-451) argues for institution-building, which I regard as important for citizenship. He touches on two aspects of education that is important for

this study. He argues that education must focus on the acquisition of transferable skills and a spirit of intellectual inquiry. This is consistent with the identification of critical inquiry as a logically necessary condition of educational transformation. It is also congruent with the constitutive meaning that skills must be related to a wider context. Van Zyl Slabbert also argues for institution-building where competition in economic life is demonstrably fair and free and the civil service is maximally transparent and accountable – in other words – institutions which enhance society's capacity to become self-critical, to adjust to change, to respond to challenges in an undogmatic and reflective manner. This connects with justice as fairness. Van Zyl Slabbert's emphasis on enhancing society's capacity to 'become self-critical', and 'to adjust to change to respond to challenges in an undogmatic and reflective manner' is congruent with constitutive meanings of educational transformation.

Several important points for educational transformation arise from the discussion on citizenship. These are: (1) the ability to question political authority;(2) to engage in public discourse about matters of public policy; (3) the need for active citizens (this relates to participation); (4) to make all human beings part of our community of dialogue and concern; (5) to show respect for the human wherever it occurs; (6) a critical and reflective distance from one's interests and desires (relates to critical inquiry), and (7) the ability to listen carefully to others, and to open oneself to revisions of earlier positions and interests (relates to rethinking and effective communication). I contend that universities must educate citizens to lead productive lives, so they can build a society based on respect for differences. For these reasons I regard citizenship as a logically necessary condition of educational transformation.

I shall now briefly discuss the following aspects, which I deem critical for fostering citizenship: truth and reconciliation, respect, and tolerance. Respect and tolerance arise from the discussion on citizenship, and I include truth and reconciliation as I find it very important in our country's attempts to develop a new citizenry.

#### **2.4.4.1 Truth and Reconciliation**

There is no clearer demonstration of the importance of truth and reconciliation in the new South Africa than the formation of the 'Truth and Reconciliation Committee'

(TRC). The TRC was formed to promote a 'culture of human rights', and so to construct a new national identity. After the TRC was established in late 1995, the language of reconciliation and rights talk more generally became synonymous with the term *ubuntu*. Ubuntu is used to define just redress so as, in Tutu's words, to go 'beyond justice' to forgiveness and reconciliation (Wilson 2001: 9-11). Ubuntu implies both 'compassion' and 'recognition of the humanity of the other' (Asmal *et al.* 1996: 21). Ramose contends that ubuntu underlines and is consistent with the philosophical understanding of being. Ubuntu as a concept and experience is linked epistemologically to *umuntu* (Ramose 2002: 324). Umuntu means the emergence of homo-loquens who is simultaneously a homo sapiens. Umuntu is the specific entity which continues to conduct an inquiry into being, experience, knowledge and truth; this is an activity rather than an act. The complexity of the concept of truth resulted in the TRC adopting four notions of truth: factual or forensic truth, personal or narrative truth; social or 'dialogue truth', and healing and restorative truth (TRC Report, Vol 1, 1996: 110). For Gadamer, truth (certainly political and social truth) is the result of an openness and a willingness to reach agreement in dialogue which does not foreclose the possibility that the convictions of others could be right (Roderick 1986: 68).

The notion of reconciliation I wish to introduce is that of 'healing of the wounds'. This notion is underscored by titles such as: *To remember and to heal* (Botman & Petersen 1996) and *The healing of a nation?* (Boraine & Levy 1995). My thesis is that apartheid atrocities left many wounds on the Black majority, and reconciliation is needed to heal those wounds. In the political context, reconciliation is a shared and painful ethical voyage from wrong to right, and also a symbolic settling of moral and political indebtedness. It is, as Andre du Toit puts it, 'a conscious and justified settling of accounts with the past' (Asmal *et al.* 1996: 47). Genuine reconciliation involves moral and political restitution in the sense of the German term *wiedergutmachung*, which means to 'make good again'. I agree that we cannot really embark on the process of making good the history of South Africa unless we acknowledge precisely what bad there is to undo.

The TRC may have concluded its work, but the process of truth and reconciliation is not completed. While universities have not been under the spotlight of the TRC, they are certainly not exempted from their responsibility to contribute to nation-building.

'Ubuntu' is conceptually linked to 'redress' which I identify as a logically necessary condition of educational transformation. References to 'justice', and 'openness and a willingness to reach agreement', which are desirable goals, further convince me that truth and reconciliation can contribute to educational transformation.

#### **2.4.4.2 Respect**

I want to start this discussion by stating that respect is critical for educational transformation in that it provides an acceptable basis for human interaction. If there is no respect for others, hatred and resentment may result. Such a scenario will not be conducive to peace and stability in the country. Meaningful interaction can only result from mutual respect.

Respect means the willingness to listen, openness to the possibility of learning from, responsiveness, criticising when necessary (Fay 1996: 239). Respect means to engage with intelligence, sensitivity, and open-mindedness. Respect cannot simply mean acceptance, rather, it must mean the refusal to judge peremptorily, to quickly classify by means already determined categories, to consign to some category of Otherness by which to keep others at arm's length and thereby contain and dismiss them. Respect does not mean that everything they do is 'fine for them' or beyond the pale of critical judgement. For Iris Young (2000: 25) openness refers to a disposition to listen to others, to treat them with respect, to make an effort to understand them by asking questions, and not to judge them too quickly.

Respect understood as unconditional mutual acceptance is a bad idea (Fay 1996: 239):

I don't respect a student by accepting everything he or she says; students don't respect me by mimicking me. Respect demands that we hold others to the intellectual and moral standards we apply to ourselves and our friends. Excusing others from demands of intellectual rigour and honesty or moral sensitivity and wisdom on the grounds that everyone is entitled to his or her opinion no matter how ill-informed or ungrounded, or – worse – on the grounds that others need not or cannot live up to these demands, is to treat them with contempt. We honour others by challenging them when we think they are wrong, and by carefully taking their criticisms of us. To do so is to

take them seriously; to do any less is to dismiss them as unworthy of serious consideration, which is to say, to treat them with disrespect. Respect conceived as the mere acceptance of difference stymies interaction, dialogue, and mutual learning. It enjoins us to appreciate others but not to engage them in mutual critical reflection (Fay 1996: 241).

Mutual respect requires a widespread willingness and ability to articulate our disagreements, to defend them before people with whom we disagree, to discern the difference between respectable and disrespectable disagreement, and to be open to changing our own minds when faced with well-reasoned criticism (Gutmann 1994: 24). Multicultural societies and communities (which South Africa certainly is) that stand for the freedom and equality of all people rest upon mutual respect for reasonable intellectual, political, and cultural differences.

Several aspects (willingness to listen, openness to learn, make an effort to understand, to be critical, challenging others, to be open to change our minds) emerge from the discussion that is congruent with the constitutive meanings of educational transformation. In this way respect can be linked to educational transformation.

#### **2.4.4.3 Tolerance**

To connect with the liberal conception of citizenship, I want to start this discussion referring to the liberal conception of tolerance. Historically, liberals have believed in a specific notion of tolerance – one which involves freedom of individual conscience, not just collective worship. Liberal tolerance protects the right of individuals to dissent from their group, as well as the right of groups not to be prosecuted by the state. It limits the power of illiberal groups to restrict the liberty of their own members, as well as the power of illiberal states to restrict the liberty of collective worship (Kymlicka 2002: 231).

Fay argues that emphasis on the acceptance of difference is meant to express and encourage tolerance (Fay 1996: 239). Tolerance occupies an ambiguous position in political life (Phillips 1999: 126). John Horton (in Phillips 1999: 126) describes the core conception of toleration as ‘a deliberate choice not to interfere with conduct of



which one disapproves'. Tolerance seems to depend on defining an appropriate arena within which people can express the opinions and pursue the activities of which others disapprove.

For me, tolerance becomes necessary as people interact and participate in public activities. Where a public opinion is expressed, a citizen has to be mindful that, as we live in a multicultural and diverse society, not all people share the same views and cultural understanding. Apartheid has created a racially polarised society, and tolerance is a necessary condition for citizens to live in harmony and peace. Festenstein (1999: 149) explores tolerance where people debate and discuss publicly in a more formal manner. This area is important as it expose contradictions more sharply. Also, this area may be more applicable to educational discourse. Participation in public deliberation does not only require 'toleration', in the sense of passively permitting another person his/her views, it also requires civility or deliberate inclusion: that we make the effort to listen to, and comprehend, different views, with the aim not only of putting across our own reasons and arguments but of reaching an agreement (consensus). One can teach civility not just by telling students the morality of civility, but also by insisting that students sit beside students of different races and religions, and cooperate with them on projects or sports teams (Kymlicka 2002: 308).

The right of individuals to dissent from their group, to make the effort to listen to, and to comprehend different views with the aim not only of putting across our own reasons and arguments, but of reaching agreement (consensus) is definitely needed in educational transformation.

I have shown in this section how citizenship can be regarded as a logically necessary condition of educational transformation. I have also conceptually linked truth and reconciliation, respect, and tolerance to citizenship, and showed how each contributes to educational transformation.

## **2.5 SUMMARY**

This chapter demonstrates that educational transformation is a complex, and international, phenomenon that touches almost every aspect of the university. From a

literature review I identified several meanings of educational transformation. I showed how constitutive meanings can be linked conceptually to logically necessary conditions of educational transformation. An important departure from the reviewed literature is my formulation of four logically necessary conditions of education transformation. These are: equity and redress, critical inquiry, communicative praxis, and citizenship.

Joseph Carens, in his critique of Michael's Walzer's *Spheres of Justice* makes some very important observations, which I consider applicable to what I attempted to do in this chapter. Carens observes that every theory worth taking seriously will have interconnected strengths and weaknesses. He also remarks that in bringing light to bear on some questions, concerns, arguments, and ideas, a theory inevitably casts others into the shadows (Carens 2000: 22). By illuminating some theories and ideas in this chapter my intention was to paint a realistic picture of educational transformation. I shall explore various policy documents (Chapter 3) and institutional plans (Chapter 4) to determine how they contribute to educational transformation in South Africa, with reference to the four logically necessary conditions I identified, in particular whether they manifest or not in these policy documents and institutional plans.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **EDUCATION POLICY ANALYSES: FROM 1993 - 2003**

#### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

In this chapter I examine two key policy documents, namely the Education White Paper 3 (1997) and the National Plan for Higher Education (2001), with reference to the logically necessary conditions of educational transformation (equity and redress, critical inquiry, communicative praxis, and citizenship) as discussed in Chapter 2. My aim is to identify policy gaps (which can be weaknesses, shortcomings, or omissions) which may impact negatively on educational transformation. I also examine, to a lesser extent, policies which preceded or resulted from the two key policy texts. My methodological approach can be described as historical interpretation, which serves as a means to understand the context of a text even when it sees in the text simply a source which is part of the totality of the historical tradition (Gadamer 1975: 174). Each policy text I discuss in this chapter is therefore interpreted in its historical context. In the next section I identify a key driver for policy developments in South Africa over the last decade.

#### **3.2 GLOBALISATION AS KEY DRIVER FOR POLICY DEVELOPMENTS**

What is a primary driver for policy developments in higher education in South Africa over the last decade? While political change resulted in the development of new education policies, these developments, as I want to argue, can be attributed primarily to the phenomenon of globalisation. The Education White Paper 3 (1997: 9) and the National Plan for Higher Education (2001: 5) confirm my claim.

Globalisation is a complex concept used with increasing frequency with different meanings by different commentators who may be focusing on different dimensions (Porter & Vidovich 2000: 449). Rizvi and Lingard accept that globalisation is an essentially contested term that refers to diverse processes embracing political, social, technological, economic, and cultural changes (2000: 421). They observe that some of

the contradictory tensions emerging with globalisation have been highlighted by Stuart Hall, David Held, and Tony McGrew as a series of binary opposites including universalisation versus particularisation; homogenisation versus differentiation; integration versus fragmentation; centralisation versus decentralisation; and juxtaposition versus syncretisation.

According to Porter and Vidovich (2000: 449), globalisation has been extensively analysed by Anthony Giddens and David Harvey. They state that Giddens sees globalisation as a transformation in time and space in which the development of global systems and networks reduces the hold of local circumstances over people's lives. This is a continuation of one aspect of the process of modernity in which the 'disembedding' of social relations – lifting them out of from 'local contexts of interaction' and recombining them across time and space – is primarily associated with the forces of modernity. Harvey also conceives of globalisation as involving a change in our experience of time and space but he stresses the speeding up or the 'intensification of time-space compression.' Harvey sees this as less a developmental process than an historical discontinuity associated with the periodic crises of capitalism, the most recent of which was in the late seventies and early eighties.

Globalisation is also described 'as a set of processes which in various ways – economic, cultural, and political – make supranational connections' (Porter & Vidovich 2000: 451-53). Philip Jones (1998: 145-46) delineates these three types of globalisation as follows:

#### *Economic Globalisation*

- (1) Freedom of exchange between localities with indeterminate flows of services and symbolic commodities;
- (2) The balance of production activity in a locality determined by its physical and geographical advantages;
- (3) Minimal direct foreign investment;
- (4) Flexible responsiveness of organizations to global markets;
- (5) Decentralised, instantaneous and 'stateless' financial markets; and
- (6) Free movement of labour.

The reality of economic globalisation has been questioned by Paul Hirst and Grahame Thompson (in Porter & Vidovich 2000: 450), who argue that the economic evidence does not support a dramatic change in the degree of internationalization of the world economy, nor in the growth of genuinely transnational firms, nor in a shift of investment and employment to the developing countries, nor in the extent to which world economic forces are unable to be regulated.

### *Political Globalisation*

- (1) An absence of state sovereignty and multiple centers of power at global, local and intermediate levels;
- (2) Local issues discussed and situated in relation to a global community;
- (3) Powerful international organisations predominant over national organisations;
- (4) Fluid and multicentric international relations; and
- (5) A weakening of value attached to the nation-state and a strengthening of common and global political values.

Political globalisation has the same dual quality in its combined centrifugal and centripetal forces (Porter & Vidovich 2000: 452). Centrifugal forces involve the breaking up of large political conglomerates into smaller components, while centripetal forces operate on disparate political units, bringing them together. For example, there has been the disintegration of the former United Soviet Socialist Republic (USSR) along ethnic, religious and geographic lines, while the European Union is pulling together many political as well as economic aspects of previously disparate European countries. Africa followed the example of Europe with the formation of the African Union (focusing on political issues), while the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) seeks to enhance economic and cultural development.

### *Cultural Globalisation*

- (1) A deterritorialised religious mosaic;
- (2) A deterritorialised cosmopolitanism and diversity;
- (3) Widespread consumption of simulations and representations;
- (4) Global distribution of images and information; and
- (5) Universal tourism and the 'end of tourism'.

Cultural globalisation involves the paradoxical phenomenon that everyone's traditional values and beliefs seem to be, on the one hand, under threat from many different perspectives, and on the other hand, increasingly is being pushed towards similarity and homogeneity (Porter & Vidovich 2000: 451). In one sense, many people in many countries feel that, increasingly, diverse immigrants, multiple languages, challenges from other religions, and different cultural lifestyles are threatening their cultural identities. Sometimes this is referred to in the popular media as the 'McDonaldization' of the world, particularly when it is seen as a form of American cultural imperialism. At other times this kind of globalisation is seen more broadly as Western cultural imperialism. For example, Asian leaders argue that Western-style democracies are inappropriate in Asia; that Western social values are permissive; and that Asian values are built more on concern for the whole society.

Globalisation urges people to be more critical of, and adaptive to, economic and social transformations, while maintaining the national and local cultural heritage (Ketudat 2000: 39). They need to be prepared for multi-cultural interaction, values, changes, cosmopolitan ways of life, struggling to maintain their own ideals and identity. Thus globalisation places new demands on people's lifestyles, and moves away from narrow cultural and racial domains to a more diverse and tolerant approach.

What about criticisms of globalisation? I have already mentioned cultural objections. Mass demonstrations at G8 summits indicate that not everybody is satisfied with economic globalisation. This highlights a concern that the benefits of globalisation are not evenly distributed. There are also local backlashes against globalisation as local citizen movements and alternative institutions are springing up all over the world to meet basic economic needs, to struggle for human dignity, and to preserve local traditions, cultural life, and the treasures of the natural world (Rizvi & Lingard 2000: 420). Concerns about the environment have become a key issue, as seen from various summits. While I am not dealing with anti-globalisation in depth, it is nonetheless very important to note that there are anti-globalisation sentiments.

This brings me to my main interest in globalisation, which is its effect on higher education. Higher education occupies an ambiguous role in that it is both the lever

and the instrument of globalisation, whilst simultaneously being the historic repository of the nations' intellectual achievement (Huisman *et al.* 2001: 1). Higher education, due to its role in the production of knowledge, is important in globalisation.

To respond to globalisation often requires that the university adds further activities to its range of responsibility, not least by the onus on universities generally both to participate in it and at the same time to continue to uphold 'national' and 'local' knowledge traditions (Neave 2000: 16). Globalisation therefore brings a new international dimension to existing knowledge traditions. To this extent the White Paper emphasises the development of professionals and knowledge workers with globally equivalent skills (1997: 10). This means that South African professionals must be trained to compete internationally. With globalisation thus comes the notion of 'global citizens' which requires a new form of education aimed at enabling them to live and work with peoples of different races and cultures (Ketudat 2000: 39). Does this not contribute to the so-called 'brain drain'? I certainly think so, but this is in line with global economic trends. It provides a means for economic growth, which is a central feature of globalisation.

It is possible to see a number of common themes internationally in the reactions of higher education policy to globalisation and its impact on changes at the institutional level (Porter & Vidovich 2000: 456-57). Common elements include the following: Significant per capita government budget reductions have been experienced in higher education with institutions expected to do more with less; there has been a significant push to diversify income by increasing nongovernmental sources (such as tuition/fee increases, appeals to alumni, recruitment of overseas students); an increased commodification of knowledge as intellectual property has occurred, particularly with regard to connecting the intellectual work of universities with community, business, and government interests and priorities; reorganisation of higher education has been promoted by national governments, to relate it more closely to national economic agendas; 'ministerialisation', or the increased power of politicians has characterised political processes during this period; the pressures for new forms of accountability have increased at all levels; 'quality' movements in higher education have been established by governments, which are intended to monitor or audit institutional

processes and outcomes, and funding is increasingly tied to the results; discourses of managerialism have become pervasive, imported into education from the private sector via earlier general public sector reforms; concerns with social justice and equity issues in higher education have been evident and can be seen most clearly in expanding access to higher education in terms of numbers of places, and types of entry, and in increasing diversity of modes of study, both campus and technology-based; a preoccupation with higher education finance issues has developed at national levels; and finally, there has been an intensified public and political debate about the role of universities in contemporary society.

Given the South African government's identification with globalisation, it is not surprising that all these common themes are applicable to our country. Ntshoe's article (2002: 7-10) entitled 'National plan for higher education in South Africa: a programme for equity and redress or globalised competition and managerialism?' bears testimony. Waghid and Le Grange (2002: 5) explore whether globalisation offers possibilities for achieving a just higher education system commensurate with moral notions such as justice and equality. They argue for moving towards distributive justice in accordance with the justice as fairness thesis of John Rawls, which can be linked to concerns with social justice and equity issues referred to under common elements in the previous paragraph. I find this connection between globalisation and distributive justice highly pertinent, given the unjust arrangement that characterised higher education during apartheid years. It is possible that through distributive justice black South Africans can be granted an equal and fair opportunity to become globally competitive citizens.

Moja and Cloete (2001: 245) identify two major effects of globalisation on institutions in South Africa. One is that institutions are expected to become open to competition, to be more competitive, identify core business, plan according to cost center accounting and have a flexible, retrainable and redeployable staff who are efficiently line or project managed. The second major effect has to do with the changing role of knowledge, information and information technology. I shall examine what the various policies pronounce about this. Globalisation presents the following challenges for South Africa: information technology, knowledge, human resources,



institutional restructuring and a new relationship between government and institutions, not to mention a globally competitive market (2001: 252).

It is my observation that globalisation has a very huge impact on education policy developments in South Africa, and educational transformation is underpinned by global imperatives. This is enhanced by the fact that our transition to democracy coincided with a renewed focus on globalisation, and the fact that South Africa has been isolated economically, culturally and politically for many years as a result of apartheid. Educational transformation can therefore not escape global developments, which complicates our transition. Tensions develop in balancing local needs with global objectives. Policy, like globalisation, cannot escape contestation, which is good for democracy. How, then, do we contest educational policy in the light of globalisation? In the rest of this chapter I shall attempt to answer this question by critically analysing policies I consider to be important in the transformation in our higher education system. In answering this question, I shall seek to identify how globalisation affects education policy in South Africa, and whether these policies can enact or retard educational transformation.

In my attempt to interpret and understand education policy, I shall draw on the philosophical hermeneutical method as discussed in Chapter 1. Briefly, I follow Gadamer's argument as set out in his now famous work *Truth and Method* that 'interpretation is not an occasional additional act subsequent to understanding, but rather understanding is always an interpretation' (1975: 274). In connecting interpretation to history, Gadamer (1975: 174) asserts that historical interpretation can serve as a means to understand the context of a text even when, from another perspective, it sees in the text simply a source which is part of the totality of the historical tradition. To link this to education policy in South Africa, I contend that each policy text can be interpreted in its historical context. This means that no policy can stand on its own, and is best understood in relation to other texts. This will then be my theoretical approach in analysing policies in this chapter.

Policies relevant to this study can be interpreted in their historical contexts. To this end, I shall preface my analyses by using Kraak's historical phases of education policies in the next section.

### 3.3 HISTORICAL PHASES OF POLICY DEVELOPMENT

There are various policies pertinent to this study, and these policies can be seen as representative of distinct historical phases. Kraak (2000: 86-87) identifies five historical phases of policy development in South Africa: First, *The pre-taking of power phase*: By 1989, the possibility of a negotiated settlement has dawned. The politics of the anti-apartheid movement shifted from mass struggle to 'preparing to govern'. The period 1989-1994 witnessed the mobilisation of the entire anti-apartheid movement behind the task of forging new policy propositions, of which the National Education Policy Investigation (NEPI) was a key endeavour. Second, *The legislative era*: The 1994-1997 period witnessed significant education legislation being enacted by Parliament, culminating in the passing of the *Higher Education Act* in October 1997. The content of this legislation reflected a particular 'settlement' between the competing policy positions. Third, *The policy implementation phase*: This period overlaps with the legislative era and became amplified after the passing of the Higher Education Act to the present. It is a period when the limits of state power began to surface and when policy idealism was inevitably mediated by the structural constraints and political limits facing the new state. Fourth, *A vacillating state, the era of policy doubt and retraction*: The complexities of governance in the new state began to emerge, particularly in the period 1999-2000 when the Council on Higher Education (CHE) Task Team on Size and Shape deliberated. During this period the discursive tensions and political difficulties reached a high point, resulting in significant policy doubt, retraction and reversal. Fifth, *The National Plan, February 2001*. The release of this policy document sees the state reaffirm its support for the key policy principles contained in the Higher Education Act and the Education White Paper 3 of 1997.

Kraak's five phases can now be extended to accommodate recent developments. To this extent I want to add a sixth phase: '*The post National Plan era*', a key feature of which is the release of the document entitled 'Transformation and Restructuring: A New Institutional Landscape for Higher Education'. This document was released in June 2002, and follows on the National Plan for Higher Education. I shall now examine policies mentioned in the five phases to determine how they contribute to educational transformation.

By identifying these historical phases, I can pre-judge that these policies are most probably reflective of the dominant thinking of government at a particular period. I can also assume that as internal and external factors change, these policies may reflect such changes, and policies of a particular historical phase may completely differ from that of others. To determine if this is indeed the case, I shall now analyse these texts in more detail, in relation to the four logically necessary conditions I identified in Chapter 2 (equity and redress, critical inquiry, communicative praxis, and citizenship), and I shall also attempt to show how globalisation affects education policy development.

### **3.4 NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY INVESTIGATION (NEPI)**

NEPI is an inquiry into policy options for a future education dispensation in South Africa. It was commissioned by the National Education Co-ordinating Committee (NECC), which is a national body representing teachers, parents, and students, mainly from educationally disadvantaged black communities. The banner under which this co-ordination took place was that of 'People's Education', a mobilising ideal which embodies the broad non-racist, non-sexist, and democratic values of organizations which constitutes the 'mass democratic movement'. The NECC was formed in December 1985 to co-ordinate and lead the struggles being waged within education institutions and in communities around the country against an inferior and racist education system, and against a government which was quite unwilling to change. NEPI was formally launched at the National Congress of the NECC on 7-9 December 1990, with the submission date for final reports in August 1992 making it an investigation of some 20 months' duration (NEPI Framework Report 1993: 1).

#### **3.4.1 Redress**

Redress is identified as one the five guiding principles for the NEPI enterprise. The NEPI report criticises the Education Renewal Strategy (ERS) for failing to recognise the need to correct the historically produced racial imbalances in education, that is, for failing to deal with the problem of redress (1993: 13). However, the concept of 'redress' is not fully explored in the NEPI Report. Why not? The reason, according to NEPI, is because the democratic movement uses concepts such as 'equality' and

‘redress’ in a rather imprecise, interchangeable manner’ (1993: 13). An underlying assumption in the NEPI Report is that through ‘redress’ it will be possible to eliminate immediately all historically generated inequalities. It is now clear that NEPI was quite ambitious in its assumption as the historical inequalities still characterise the higher education system in 2003. NEPI’s projection proved to be incorrect, and I cannot agree with its assumption, since thus far attempts to redress did not have the desired outcomes.

Since NEPI was a formal research project of the mass democratic movement into education, I expected it to fully clarify terms such as ‘equity’ and ‘redress’, and thereby providing direction and leadership on the education terrain. By its own admission, NEPI failed in this regard. NEPI’s failure to formulate a conceptual understanding of ‘redress’ demonstrates a weakness (or a gap) in its analysis. An explanation for not conceptualising redress can be found in the historical events surrounding the NEPI process. NEPI was in process while the African National Congress (ANC) to which the National Education Crisis Committee (NECC) was aligned, was pre-occupied with negotiations on the future of the country. This meant that the NECC was a caretaker organisation which paved the way for an inevitable ANC government. NEPI was nonetheless a very important process to canvass broad participation in discussions on a new education system for a future democratic country.

### **3.4.2 Communicative Praxis**

NEPI regards ‘educational democracy’, sometimes called ‘representative democracy’, as compatible with the goals of equity. These notions are used as implying that they mean the same. For me, educational democracy can mean that democracy is build through intellectual debate, which while it can be participatory, can be described as deliberative, in that people participate through deliberation. I therefore make a conceptual distinction between the two notions. For NEPI, educational democracy points to the popular desire for wider participation in educational affairs. This can take one of three forms. Direct democracy is regarded as most appropriate at local levels of participation; consultation entails having one’s voice heard (though not

necessarily listened to); and a weaker form is that of simply being kept informed (NEPI 1993: 14-15).

I find NEPI's argument for 'popular participation' problematic. The concept 'popular' is indicative of the political period of the NEPI process. During that historical period the anti-apartheid groupings canvassed for popular and widespread opposition against apartheid. So NEPI can be viewed as a spillover from a political era dominated by populism. Nevertheless, NEPI could have projected that the populist era was drawing to a close and should have been more visionary in its approach. It could have formulated policies for a democratic era, but in explaining 'consultation' as having one's voice heard, but not necessarily listened to, reduces participation to an exercise which creates the impression that political leaders would take decisions, regardless of what the 'populace' might think. What is the point of making your voice heard, knowing that you are not being listened to? Perhaps in this statement are sown the seeds of political apathy experienced after the 1994 elections.

'Critical inquiry' and 'citizenship' do not feature among the five NEPI guiding principles, and is therefore not discussed in this section. The NEPI document does not display or include common themes in relation to globalisation. I assume that NEPI focused very narrowly on the immediate crisis of education (equity and redress) in the country, and the focus on globalisation was not of immediate concern.

### **3.5 NATIONAL COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION: A FRAMEWORK FOR TRANSFORMATION**

The National Commission on Higher Education (NCHE) was established by presidential proclamation. Its terms of reference were published in the South African Government Gazette Number 5460 of February 1995 (NCHE Discussion Document 1996: 1). The Commission was charged with advising the government of national unity on issues concerning the restructuring of higher education. The new government's commitment to the realisation of equity, redress, and reconstruction in South Africa provided the context for the Commission's work. The Commission proposed three central features within a broad framework of transformation (1996: 47): Increased participation in the system by a diverse range of constituencies;

increased co-operation and more partnerships between higher education and other social actors and institutions; and lastly, greater responsiveness to a wide range of social and economic needs.

### **3.5.1 Equity and Redress**

Transformation requires that historical inequities must be redressed (NCHE Framework Report 1996: 4). Furthermore, provision of resources and opportunities in higher education should be premised upon equity (1996: 4). Through equity and redress greater numbers of students will have to be accommodated; and these students will be recruited from a broader distribution of social groups and classes (1996: 5).

The report, as with NEPI, does not clarify the meaning of equity, but links equity to provision of resources and opportunities. I find it interesting that John Rawls (1999: 86) refers to 'inequalities' while the NCHE refers to 'inequities'. In the absence of a conceptual examination of 'inequities' by the NCHE, I hesitate to equate the two concepts, but a fair assumption may be to interpret the concepts as having the same meaning. If equity means fairness, then I extrapolate that 'inequity' means 'unfairness'. I made a distinction in Chapter 2 between equity and equality, and argued that equality serves as a vehicle to achieve equity. Like Rawls, the NCHE argues that the provision of resources should be distributed with a view to redress. The NCHE does not explicitly argue for affirmative action and/or distributive justice, which I regard as a gap in the policy. But what can affirmative action and distributive justice achieve? Affirmative action can improve student and staff equity, and sensitivity to distributive justice may result in that institutions take a different, and more humane approach in dealing with previously disadvantaged groups.

### **3.5.2 Critical Inquiry**

The Commission envisages a transformed system that will be able to contribute to the advancement of all forms of knowledge and scholarship, in keeping with internationally observed standards of academic quality (NCHE Report 1996: 4). References to trans-disciplinary knowledge production, the involvement of other research agents in addition to academic researchers, and interaction between higher

education and other knowledge centers (NEPI 1996: 7), convince me that the NCHE aligns itself with the arguments of Gibbons and colleagues. The NCHE seems to endorse Mode 2 knowledge production for a democratic South Africa.

The report is not explicit on a key component of critical inquiry: that of offering the alternative of emancipating people. This I regard as a gap in its analysis. Does the NCHE presume that the abolition of apartheid emancipated the black majority? Certainly not since the NCHE refers to the legacy of apartheid which created inequalities (Discussion Document 1996: 27). It envisages a 'higher education sector that is more participative, democratic, accountable and transparent' (Framework Report 1996: 8). The notion of 'emancipating people' could be read into these remarks, but I am not convinced that it is given enough prominence.

### **3.5.3 Communicative Praxis**

The NCHE builds on the NEPI theme of participation, which I interpret as endorsing participatory democracy. A weakness of this argument is that it does not take into account the uneven levels of expertise of constituencies. For instance, undergraduate students and workers may not be as articulate and skillful as seasoned academics, and this may have a bearing on decision-making. The report does not link accountability to reflexivity, in particular, that reflexive character of judgements are necessary for educational transformation. Educational transformation requires that after judgements are made and implemented, there should be further opportunity for reflection, in order to refine decisions, and to do away with those that did not work in practice.

### **3.5.4 Citizenship**

The Commission envisages a transformed system that will be able to support a democratic ethos and a culture of human rights and cultural tolerance (NCHE Report 1996: 4). I regard tolerance as a major challenge for educational transformation, and a lack thereof may retard the process at many institutions. Tolerance for diverse opinions, cultures and languages is necessary to enact transformation. The NCHE connects with globalisation in that it argues for citizens to become part of an international and global community (1996:3). This shows that the change of

government has shifted the focus to a greater awareness and participation in the global arena.

Before I conclude this section, I want to reflect on what the NCHE states about globalisation. In a dramatic departure from NEPI, the NCHE locates itself firmly within the globalisation debate. References such as ‘South African higher education now confronts changes characterised such as globalisation’ and ‘as South Africa locates itself in this network of global exchanges and interactions’ (1996: 3) point to a growing sensitivity to globalisation debates.

I have identified the following gaps in the NCHE Report: it does not clarify meanings of the concept of equity; it does not explicitly argue for affirmative action and/or distributive justice; it is not explicit on a key component of critical theory: that of offering the alternative of emancipating people; in endorsing participatory democracy the report does not take into account the uneven levels of expertise of constituencies; and finally, the report is silent on the reflexive character of judgements. Since these aspects are central to any notion of educational transformation, one can safely conclude that the NCHE Report, although showing much promise, certainly on its own, lacks the potential to effect meaningful educational transformation. But, one might argue that the NCHE is simply a discussion document that laid the basis for the Education White Paper 3, which is geared to effect educational transformation. This argument does not suggest that the NCHE can be ignored, on the contrary, it points to the importance of the work of NCHE. There is therefore enough justification for analysing it in this chapter.

### **3.6 EDUCATION WHITE PAPER 3: A PROGRAMME FOR THE TRANSFORMATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION**

The release of the Education White Paper 3 – *A Programme for the Transformation of Higher Education*, in July 1997, is the culmination of a wide-ranging and extensive process of investigation and consultation that was initiated with the establishment of the National Commission on Higher Education (NCHE) in February 1995 by former President Mandela, and the subsequent release of the Green Paper on Higher Education in December 1996, and the Draft White Paper on Higher Education in



April 1997. The document outlines a comprehensive set of initiatives for transformation through the development of a single co-ordinated system with new planning, governing and funding arrangements. I shall now analyse the White Paper with reference to the four logically necessary conditions of educational transformation I have identified earlier.

### **3.6.1 Equity and Redress**

Equity and redress feature very prominently in the White Paper. It is identified as one of the fundamental principles that should guide the process of transformation in the spirit of an open and democratic society based on human dignity, equality and freedom. 'The principle of equity requires fair opportunities both to enter higher education programmes and to succeed in them. Applying the principle of equity implies, on the one hand, a critical identification of existing inequalities which are the product of policies, structures and practices based on racial, gender, disability and other forms of discrimination or disadvantage, and on the other hand a programme of transformation with a view to redress. Such transformation involves not only abolishing all existing forms of unjust differentiation, but also measures of empowerment, including financial support to bring about equal opportunity for individuals and institutions' (1997: 11).

The White Paper justifiably explains the meaning of equity with reference to fairness. I stated in Chapter 2 that equity means fairness. The White Paper also seems to connect with John Rawls' *Theory of Justice* when it argues that inequalities must be redressed. The use of the concept 'inequalities' in the White Paper represents a paradigm shift from the concept of 'inequities' espoused by the NCHE. When the White Paper argues for abolishing unjust differentiations and mentions financial support it can be interpreted as advocating 'distributive justice', although the concept of 'distributive justice' does not appear in the text. The White Paper could have introduced the notion and argued more strongly in favour of it. Distributive justice could have been suggested as a goal of transformation, in order to overcome inequalities endemic in the system. The following statement alludes to distributive justice: 'The Ministry of Education intends to change the composition of the student body through targeted redistribution of the public subsidy to higher education (1997:

21).’ In my view, redistribution of public subsidy can be linked to distributive justice which ‘has to do with the proper distribution of benefits and burdens among persons’ (Jones 1999: 3).

The concept of ‘justice’ is used in a wide variety of contexts. The one that most readily comes to mind is justice as an attribute of individual legal decisions (Barry 1989: 34). As a first move we may say that a verdict is just if it is in accordance with the law. If we feel that the denial of a worker’s claim is unjust, while conceding that it was in accordance with the law, we can say that the law is unjust. Barry argues that distributive justice is in the first instance an attribute of institutions (1989: 355). We can say that some alternative to what exists would be more just. And we can say that it would be just for a kind of institution that does not now exist (for example, a scheme providing for systematic and nondiscretionary transfers of income from rich countries to poor ones) to be created. I can say that a university that continues to exclude students on the basis of race in South Africa can be considered unjust. Barry (1989: 355) contends that when we ask about the justice of an institution we are inquiring into the way in which it distributes benefits and burdens.

The only direct reference to ‘affirmative action’ in the text is that of ‘affirmative action for women’s advancement’ (1997: 43). Why is this so? Perhaps the White Paper did not want to be too controversial, but educational transformation requires that controversial issues be put on the agenda. The White Paper does not announce affirmative action within the context of arguing for large numbers of Black appointments in Historically Advantaged Institutions, for instance. An indirect reference to affirmative action is: ‘indefensible imbalances in the ratios of Black and female staff compared to Whites and males’ (1997: 8). I think this statement identifies the problem but offers no solution. I regard the omission of ‘affirmative action’ in the White Paper as a gap in the policy, because I cannot foresee how educational transformation can be enacted without a very strong insistence on affirmative action. At the very least, the Paper could have made a case for a much broader application of affirmative action than only the issue of women.

What does the White Paper pronounce on *redress*? There are several important references. First, it identifies the challenge is to redress past inequalities and to

transform the higher education system to serve a new social order (1997: 7). I agree with this conceptualisation of redress, as it overlaps with John Rawls' idea I discussed in Chapter 2. Second, institutional redress will play an important role in the planning process to ensure that inherited inequalities between the Historically Black and Historically White Institutions are not intensified, but diminished (1997: 20). For me, the leveling of the playing fields by doing away with these institutional categories is crucial for educational transformation. My concern is, however, that such a project will require an enormous financial input, which the country obviously cannot afford. Furthermore, some of the Historically Disadvantaged Institutions (HDIs) (especially those in remote rural areas) never gained respect as higher education institutions, and they were not productive in research. It may thus not be feasible to save such institutions. Closure, or some other arrangement, may be a more feasible option than to spend millions in trying to keep them operational. The White Paper (1997: 47) identifies backlogs at HDIs as: building shortages, overcrowded residences, poorly resourced libraries, inadequate information technology and other similarly quantifiable deficiencies. I want to reiterate that redress of these backlogs may no longer be financially viable, and other alternatives such as mergers and closure could be pursued. I shall address this issue later on.

### **3.6.2 Critical Inquiry**

The notion of the 'knowledge society' (widely associated with globalisation) is introduced in the White Paper (1997: 9). This clearly indicates the growing influence of globalisation on policy formulation in our higher education system. A key feature of the 'knowledge society' is that knowledge is the prime motor of economic growth. The knowledge society is characterised by a system of knowledge production which bears the following noteworthy features (Adler *et al.* 2000: 125): transdisciplinarity; a heterogenous market of knowledge-producing organisations; using practitioners' problems and knowledge as a basis for theorising; and the primary institution of reference or intellectual stimulus for research teams is not the academy but the practitioner or the group of practitioners who provide these problems.

The White Paper (1997: 9) states that new communication and information technologies, which place a premium on knowledge and skills, leading to the notion

of the 'knowledge society' have transformed the way in which people work and consume. This is a far-reaching statement that links higher education and consumerism. The Paper then argues for 'the development of professionals and knowledge workers with globally equivalent skills' (1997: 10). This is the first time I encounter such a direct requirement on professionals to be globally competitive. It also indicates that South Africa is following an international trend towards the marketisation of higher education. Mouwen (2000: 47) posits that in many countries in the western world the government is stepping back in the steering and funding of higher education. As a consequence, institutes for higher education try to find additional incomes on the market. Universities thus develop new market-oriented activities to compensate for decreasing governmental budgets.

Higher education encourages the development of a reflective capacity and a willingness to review and renew prevailing ideas, policies and practices (1997: 7), and contributes to the creation, sharing and evaluation of knowledge (1997: 8). In this regard higher education engages in the pursuit of academic scholarship and intellectual inquiry in all fields of human understanding, through research, learning and teaching. Reflexivity is a constitutive meaning of educational transformation, and its presence in the document demonstrates a commitment to transformation. The type of scholar envisaged by the White Paper is more in line with Mode 2 knowledge production as pronounced by Gibbons and colleagues. Phrases such as 'the production, advancement and dissemination of knowledge and the development of high-level human resources are core functions of higher education; the development of multiple sites of research and knowledge production; the impact of trans-disciplinary and trans-institutional research; and new forms of communication (the information highway)' endorse Mode 2 production of knowledge. This is a very important observation, as it shows that the government is committed to creating a new intellectual and scholarly culture in the country. This signifies a move away from the positivistic paradigm that characterised learning during the apartheid era. Auguste Comte first coined the term 'positivism', and I stress here the notion of rote learning (which is measuring factual information without appreciating its significance, relevance or application), and the role of the teacher or educator as a banker and students as depositories of knowledge.

Two goals of transformation relating to critical inquiry are:

- To secure and advance high-level research capacity which can ensure both the continuation of self-initiated, open-ended intellectual inquiry, and the sustained application of research activities to technological improvement; and
- To produce graduates with the skills and competencies, including critical, analytical, and problem-solving skills (1997: 14).

The emphasis on skills and competencies clearly makes a break from 'rote learning', a key feature of the positivistic paradigm that was so prominent under apartheid education. It builds on the resistance culture against apartheid, a culture that was very critical of white domination. I am not surprised that the goals of transformation emphasises a critical culture, as a critical culture can assist in the consolidation of democracy, and may make people more aware so that inhuman practices may not be tolerated. The promotion of problem-solving skills can contribute to educational transformation.

What does the White Paper announce on the notion of emancipation (which is a crucial element in critical theory)? There is a reference to a consequence of emancipation in the document. One such a consequence may relate to the freedom to improve one's quality of life, and here the White Paper envisages that all South Africans will, through higher education, 'enjoy an improved and sustainable quality of life to participate in a growing economy and share in a democratic culture' (1997: 11). This connects with the idea that people must be provided with the knowledge on the basis of which they can change the way they live (Fay 1987: 39). Emancipation can also be linked to scholarly activity, and research can be emancipatory as it allows for various ways of intellectual pursuit. The White Paper thus alludes to emancipation, although the concept is not specifically mentioned.

### **3.6.3 Communicative Praxis**

Structures and procedures should ensure that those affected by decisions have a say in making them, either directly or through elected representatives (1997: 12). The White Paper, as with NEPI and the NCHE, endorses participatory democracy. A goal of

transformation is to encourage interaction through co-operation and partnerships among institutions of higher education (1997: 14). This reference to interaction is much closer to a theory of communicative praxis, but falls short in that it does not advocate 'speech oriented to reaching understanding' or 'speech oriented toward consensus', which is vital for educational transformation. While the policy emphasises interaction, it does not stipulate how and in which ways these interactions must occur. With regards to participation, my contention is that 'participation' does not necessarily lead to educational transformation. My argument is presented in section 3.5.3.

Generally I find the White Paper much weaker on communicative praxis as it is silent on 'speech oriented toward consensus' or 'speech oriented toward securing understanding' (discussed in Chapter 2), which is crucial for successful policy implementation. The White Paper's reference to 'a reflexive capacity and a willingness to review and renew prevailing ideas, policies and practices' relates to a key aspect of communicative praxis, which is 'the ability to learn from mistakes'. Educational transformation requires this willingness to review and renew prevailing ideas.

#### 3.6.4 Citizenship

A purpose of higher education is 'to contribute to the socialisation of enlightened, responsible and constructively critical citizens' (1997: 7). This statement links citizenship and critical inquiry, and moves away from the notion of a passive, unquestioning citizenry which is exactly what educational transformation needs. I find the use of the concept 'socialisation' very interesting. I contend that citizens must be socialised as equals, and not according to the Verwoerdian doctrine of separate but equal development. A new mindset has to be installed in each citizen, so that citizens see themselves as individuals from diverse cultures which together comprise a nation.

Successful policy must create an enabling institutional environment and culture that promotes *reconciliation* and respect for human life (1997: 10). This is in keeping with the objectives of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, but there must a concerted effort on the part of citizens to respect differences and to reconcile across

racial lines. The document contains very brief references to truth and reconciliation, which can be interpreted that these concepts are not the main focus.

The gaps I identified in the White Paper are: (1) there is not a strong enough case made for distributive justice, (2) only 'affirmative action for women's advancement' is proposed, (3) it does not stipulate how and in which ways interactions should occur; (4) concepts such as truth and reconciliation, respect, and tolerance are not fully explored, but mentioned in passing. Generally, I find the White Paper much weaker on communicative praxis than, for instance, critical inquiry. Much less is mentioned about how the objectives of the paper must be communicated than issues of equity and redress, and critical inquiry. I do not regard the latter two conditions as more important to educational transformation, and I think there must be a balance between policy formulation and implementation. The latter relies more on communicative praxis, on which the paper is much weaker.

Can the White Paper enact educational transformation? It is a much more comprehensive document than both NEPI and the NCHE Report, and has more potential for transformation. While it certainly is more detailed on the process, it begins to lean more towards a globalisation agenda at a time when equity and redress should be a priority. From the gaps I identified my conclusion is that the paper is not equally strong on the four logically necessary conditions of educational transformation, and therefore, may enact transformation in certain areas, but not all of which the higher education sector so desperately requires.

### **3.7 TOWARDS A NEW HIGHER EDUCATION LANDSCAPE: MEETING THE EQUITY, QUALITY, AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT IMPERATIVES OF SOUTH AFRICA IN THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY**

This report by the Council on Higher Education Size and Shape Task Team seeks to institutionalise the principles and values of the White Paper in order to realise its social and educational goals. The Council on Higher Education (CHE) was established in May 1998. Its mission is to contribute to the development of a higher education system characterised by equity, quality, responsiveness to economic and social development needs, and effective and efficient provision and management. This

is done in three ways: firstly by providing informed, considered, independent and strategic advice on higher education issues to the Minister of Education; secondly through the quality assurance activities of its Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC); and, finally, through publications, media, conferences and workshops and various other focused activities (CHE Annual Report 1998/99: ii, 45).

I shall now briefly explore what the document announces on the logically necessary conditions of educational transformation.

Contrary to the NEPI Report, this CHE report explores the meaning of *equity* by positing that equity should mean more than access into higher education. It must incorporate equity of opportunity – environments in which learners, through academic support, excellent teaching and mentoring and other initiatives, genuinely have every chance of success. Equity, to be meaningful, is also ensuring that learners have access to quality education, and graduate with the relevant knowledge, competencies, skills and attributes that are required for any occupation and profession (2000: 10). The report thus explores both physical (access as a student to an institution) and epistemological access (skills to understand, interpret academic work).

The report introduces the notion of ‘social justice’, which is distributive justice. This is the first time I encounter this notion in policies relevant to this study, its presence represents a major departure from afore-mentioned policies where the notion is distinctly absent. The reference to distributive justice may also indicate a growing influence of globalisation on the formulation of policy in South Africa. The report recognises the potential of higher education to contribute to the consolidation of democracy and social justice (2000: 25). Through creating the opportunity for social advancement higher education is seen as also enhancing social justice (2000: 26).

The document devotes much attention to the condition of *critical inquiry*, of which the following are notable: higher education must foster open and critical intellectual debate; critical thinking is emphasised; a short-term priority and a long-term policy imperative is seen as the development of socially committed institutions and individuals with the critical intellectual capabilities to produce, disseminate and apply knowledge and technology; higher education must develop the high level and varied



intellectual knowledge, abilities and skills needed to meet the local, regional, national and international requirements of a developing democracy; it recognises the tendency for knowledge to be produced in the context of application by trans-disciplinary, less hierarchical teams from within and outside higher education; and a new social organisation of knowledge requires a differently equipped cadre of knowledge workers – problem identifiers, problem solvers and problem brokers. The document builds on the theme of the ‘knowledge society’ of the White Paper, and endorses Mode 2 knowledge production.

The report stresses the promotion of good *citizenship* (2000: 26), but what is good citizenship? I find no answer in the document. I think that a good citizen should have the virtues as pronounced by Galston (discussed in Chapter 2). Two important virtues for citizens are: the ability and willingness to question political authority, and to engage in public discourse about matters of public policy. A vision of the report is that diversity of cultures and economic and social backgrounds can enrich the educational experience of both staff and students and constitute one element of excellence in an institution (2000: 15). Educational transformation has to change the culture of institutions, and diversity, I think, is very important in this regard. Diversity can definitely contribute to better understanding among citizens, as more interaction may lead to better understanding of other cultures.

With regards to *communicative praxis*, democracy is announced in the context of participating in decision-making (2000: 26). I have already expressed my discomfort with ‘participation’ in the discussion of the Education White Paper 3 and the NCHE. The report states that a lack of institutional effectiveness compromises accountability to the public and government in relation to the investment of public resources (2000: 15).

Key aspects for educational transformation in the report are the introduction of the notion of ‘deliberative justice’ and the vision of ‘diversity’. A weakness of the report is that it fails to elaborate on the concept of ‘citizenship’. I have asked: ‘what is a good citizen?’ The report does not answer this important question.

### 3.8 NATIONAL PLAN FOR HIGHER EDUCATION (NPHE)

The National Plan provides the framework and mechanisms for the restructuring of the higher education system to achieve the vision and goals for the transformation of the higher education system as outlined in the Education White Paper 3: A Programme for the Transformation of Higher Education (July 1997). It builds on the Council on Higher Education (CHE) Report, 'Towards a New Higher Education Landscape', and taking these two documents into account, provides the strategic framework for reengineering the higher education system for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Since the National Plan followed four years after the Education White Paper 3, my question is: What happened in between? The most important consequence of the absence of a national plan has been the development of a competitive climate between public higher education institutions (NPHE 2001: 8). This competitive climate has been fuelled by the emergence of a market in higher education as a result of a growing private higher education sector. Reddy (2001: 68) states that the interregnum that followed the NCHE and the White Paper, i.e. the five year period between 1996 – 2001, led to a market driven higher education system which the CHE Report characterises as the lack of institutional focus and mission coherence, rampant and even destructive competition.

In order to understand the notion of a 'market driven higher education', I shall examine the works of Mouwen, Dill, Gumport, Subotzky, Gumport and Ylijoki. The literature suggests that in many western countries governments are becoming less involved in the steering and funding of higher education. A common and understandable reaction of universities is to develop new market-oriented activities, in order to serve two important strategic goals simultaneously. In the first place, they are strengthening their ties with (business) society; secondly, they earn additional income on the market to compensate for decreasing governmental budgets (Mouwen 2000: 47). Formally speaking a market is a means of organising the exchange of goods and services based upon other considerations such as tradition, or political choice (Dill 1997: 168). Dill, drawing on Leslie and Johnson (1974), posits that the use of the term 'market' in higher education often implies, but does not always specify, the additional assumptions of perfectly competitive markets, under which conditions the allocation

of goods and services will supposedly be optimally efficient for the larger society. It is important to note that there is not a single market, but rather multiple and interrelated ones. These include the market for programmes of higher education, but also separate markets for research and the labour market for academic professionals.

There are a number of rationales for the introduction of markets and/or market-like forms of higher education systems (Dill 1997: 172). Foremost is a desire for economic efficiency understood as 'value for money', particularly given the growing costs of meeting social demands for universal access to higher education. Also important is a desire to use market competition as an incentive for greater innovation and adaptation in higher education, than was thought possible through traditional forms of coordination relying on state control or professional norms. The introduction into higher education of government reforms encouraging competitive research grants systems, greater reliance on tuition fees, and providing incentives for private fundraising are therefore examples of the application of market instruments in academic reform.

The introduction of markets to higher education touches on the very nature of higher education. Does it change the role of higher education? Gumport (2000: 67-91) diagnoses a macro-trend whereby the dominant legitimising idea of public higher education has changed from higher education as a social institution to higher education as an industry. The perception of higher education as an industry primarily views public colleges and universities as quasi-corporate entities producing a wide range of goods and services in a competitive marketplace. A social institution may be seen as an organised activity that maintains, reproduces, or adapts itself to implement values that have been widely held and firmly structured by the society. When one uses the lens of 'social institution' to examine the institutional imperatives for public higher education, one sees educational organisations devoted to a wide array of social functions that have been expanded over time: the development of individual learning and human capital, the socialisation and cultivation of citizens and political loyalties, the preservation of knowledge, and the fostering of other legitimate pursuits for the nation-state.

Subotzky (1999: 401) argues that globalisation has significantly altered patterns of research and development, and production. In turn, this has generated new organisational forms and practices in higher education knowledge production. As a result, a strong trend towards the 'entrepreneurial' or 'market' university has emerged. Drawing on Slaughter and Leslie, Subotzky asserts that universities are functioning increasingly as market or market-like organisations. Slaughter and Leslie (in Ylijoki 2003: 308) call this growing involvement in market activity 'academic capitalism'. Academic capitalism consists of both direct market activity, which seeks for profit, and of market-like behaviour which entails competition of external funding without the intention to make a profit, such as grants, research contracts and donations.

Market driven higher education can therefore be associated with: decreased state funding, a deliberate market-focused strategy, the change of higher education from a social institution to an industry, and academic capitalism. These trends forces universities to become more competitive, in order to boost student numbers, to attract the best staff, and to conduct market-related research. This results in the kind of competition which the CHE (2000: 17) characterises as rampant and destructive. In essence, universities compete in order to survive. But what is bad about competition? Competition among universities replaces earlier paradigms of the 'community of scholars' in common pursuit of learning and may ultimately lead to a decrease of in the generation of new knowledge (Bostock 1999: 5). Competition also raises problems of conformity and lack of creativity. Bostock argues that such competition may further erode the objective of providing a skilled and educated workforce.

How does the traditional academic culture differ from the modern market culture? The traditional academic culture can be characterised by the following features: It is dominated by the creation and transfer of knowledge; is dominated by professionals; is organised according to 'historical' structures; is predominantly funded by the government; it is not focused on profit or money; and a government takes the main strategic decisions. The modern market culture, on the other hand, has the following characteristics: there is a firm belief in the working of the market; it is focused on money and profit, there is a belief in competition; there is respect for the client/customer and his demands; all strategic decisions are taken by the management;

and there is an effective and efficient organisation (Mouwen 2000: 54-55). There are fundamental differences between these two approaches, and friction can be expected when institutions adopt a market-driven culture in part or totally. In Mouwen's words, 'the best way to combine the traditional academic activities with the modern requirement of market and society can be realised by reshuffling and expanding the university core activities and redefining its structure' (2000: 56). I agree with Mouwen that the entry of the 'market' into the academic world is inevitable and will lead to fundamental changes in the strategic positioning of universities in the landscape of higher education. How does one deal with market issues? I find Dill's observation (1997: 183) very useful. He observes that competitive markets may have a place in higher education, but there are a number of important questions regarding the assumptions, design, and impacts of market-related policies that are deserving of careful research in the years.

### **3.8.1 Equity and Redress**

An important point raised in the introduction of the National Plan is that redress for disadvantaged institutions, which formed a key recommendation of the NCHE Report and the White Paper, remains largely unfulfilled. This, I contend, is a direct result of the shift in focus from equity and redress to a globalisation agenda.

While acknowledging that redress for disadvantaged institutions remains unfulfilled, the NPHE clearly points out that this does not imply that such redress is no longer relevant. The NPHE suggests that the focus of institutional redress must shift from current notions of redress, which are narrowly focused on the leveling of the playing fields between historically black and historically white institutions. The NPHE suggests that the key question that needs to be asked is 'redress for what?' (2001: 11). The answer is that the main purpose of redress must be to ensure the capacity of institutions to discharge their institutional mission within an agreed national framework (2001: 11). In accordance with theories of globalisation, redress funds are linked to performance improvement and efficiency measures. What this suggests is that historically black institutions which have been severely under-resourced by apartheid, must now first conform to efficiency measures before they can receive redress funds. This is a very difficult thing to expect from some institutions, and

institutions may require time to become more efficient. Failure to conform to efficiency measures negatively impacts on the viability of institutions.

In his guest editorial entitled ‘National plan for higher education in South Africa: a programme for equity and redress or globalised competition and managerialism?’ Ntshoe (2002: 7-10) posits that the National Plan is strong in rhetoric to achieve imperatives of equity redress and social inclusion but disappointing because of sterile strategies proposed to achieve stated outcomes. Ntshoe further argues that the policy decisions for achieving equity and redress are clearly influenced by the New Right ethos that shaped the government’s macro-economic policy – Growth Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) and the Size and Shape document. He concludes that the NPHE is clearly influenced by a globalisation agenda, which underpins government’s policy directions. Ntshoe (2002: 7) comments that the reconstruction and development programme (RDP) focuses primarily on fundamental issues of equity, social justice, reconstruction and development, while GEAR signifies the government’s surrender to imperatives of the globalised neo-liberal and New Rights ethos not only as economic reform strategies, but as political and social reform strategies as well.

Torres and Schugurensky (2002: 429) posit that concerns about equity, accessibility or the contribution of higher education to social transformation, which were prevalent during previous decades, have been overshadowed by concerns about excellence, efficiency, expenditures and rates of return. For them, the notion that higher education is primarily a citizen’s right and a social investment – which has been taken for granted for many decades – is being seriously challenged by a neoliberal agenda that places extreme faith in the market.

The previous two paragraphs suggest very strongly that education policy development and South Africa (and elsewhere) is heavily influenced by neoliberalism. I shall now examine the basic tenets of neoliberalism, and attempt to connect it with policy development. The term ‘neoliberalism’ suggests a system of principles that is both new and based on classical liberal ideas: Adam Smith is revered as the patron saint. The doctrinal system is also known as the ‘Washington consensus’, which suggests something about global order. The neoliberal Washington consensus is an array of

market-oriented principles designed by the government of the United States and the international financial institutions that it largely dominates, and implemented by them in various ways – for the more vulnerable societies, often as stringent structural adjustment programmes. The basic rules, in brief are: liberalise trade and finance, let markets set price (get prices right), end inflation (macroeconomic stability), privatise. The government should ‘get out of the way’ – hence the population too, insofar as the government is democratic, though the conclusion remains implicit. The decisions of those who impose the ‘consensus’ naturally have a major impact on global order (Chomsky 1999: 19-20). McChesney (in Chomsky 1999: 11) contends that neoliberalism is the immediate and foremost enemy of genuine participatory democracy, not just in the United States but across the planet, and will be for the foreseeable future. Since all the policies I analysed so far make a claim for participatory democracy, it follows that this notion of democracy is not supported by neoliberalism. It is also very clear that the South African government is following a neoliberal agenda, as Ntshoe correctly suggested. If this is the case, what are the implications for educational transformation? As Torres and Schugurensky (2002: 429) suggest, concerns about equity and accessibility is being overshadowed by concerns about excellence, efficiency, and rates of return. This results in a shift of focus from higher education as a social investment to the marketisation of higher education. In the process the achievement of equity is undermined.

Having examined the basic tenets of neo-liberalism, I shall continue with the analysis of the NPHE, in relation to equity and redress. The National Plan articulates the following priorities for equity:

- To increase the participation, success and graduation rates of black students in general and African and Coloured students in particular. The increased rate must also target disabled students, and institutions must set time-frames (in their three-year rolling plans) to indicate steps taken how that the institutional infrastructure is accessible to the disabled students, staff and the community.
- To increase the representation of blacks and women in academic and administrative positions, especially at senior levels. Employment equity is an important national goal, and institutions are required to develop employment

equity plans which conform to the guidelines required by the Department of Labour in terms of the Employment Equity Act.

The equity imperative in the NPHE addresses race and gender equity for staff and students, and equity for disabled students. My goal is not to examine these outcomes and projections in depth in this chapter, but rather to concentrate on how the Plan conceptualises equity and redress. I am thus more inclined towards a philosophical analysis of these concepts. I shall now consider some observations around race and gender equity.

Harold Herman (1998: 41) cautions that uncoordinated open admissions and affirmative action policies could lead to massive enrolments of educationally disadvantaged students, which may create unforeseen problems if the needs of students cannot be addressed in the teaching and learning programmes of universities. Wally Morrow has identified 'epistemological access' as a need of students. One of the difficulties around epistemological access is the task of enabling students to become participants in and users of a shared disciplinary practice that is initially beyond their reach (Bak 1998: 207). The challenge is that students need to acquire the language (the grammar, images, rules and logic) of the specialist practice. Access to an institution will be more meaningful if the issue of epistemological access is addressed, which will eliminate the undesirable presence of mass failures by students from previously disadvantaged communities.

What will happen if institutions do not reach their stated employment targets? Or if they fail to adhere to set time-frames? Will institutions be rewarded for achieving targets, and will they be penalised if they fail to do so? The document is silent on these points. Also, could the government not have been bolder in its efforts to achieve equity? For instance, historically white institutions have admitted large numbers of blacks students since the early 1990s, while their staff complement is totally unreflective of such changes. For example, in 2001 Blacks represented 13% of permanent research staff at UCT, while 29% was female; the US had 7% and 32% respectively; while UWC had 58% and 39% respectively (DoE 2003: 47). I think government could have suggested a formula to address staff composition, which could have taken internal training and aggressive recruiting methods into consideration. I



regard government's failure to propose such a formula as a gap in the policy. It is a gap as it again leaves the responsibility for employment equity with the institutions which may be quite willing to change, but cannot fire staff in order to make room for designated groups. Funding restrictions further hampers employment equity.

According to the NPHE, equity of access has not been complemented by equity of outcomes, with Black students accounting for a larger proportion of drop-outs and failure rates than White students (2001: 2). It means that there is a mismatch between the numbers of students that enter the system and those that complete successfully, and the majority of failures and drop-outs are Black. The objective of increasing access to the system is therefore not necessarily addressing the issue of equity. To remedy the situation, institutions are expected to establish equity targets with the emphasis on the programmes in which Black and female students are underrepresented and to develop strategies to ensure equity of outcomes (2001: 2).

Jonathan Jansen (2001: 5-9) contends there is no way in which sufficient numbers of learners will be able to pass well enough to fulfill the optimistic projections of the NPHE. Factors such as child mortality rates (largely due to HIV/AIDS) and decreased fertility rates come into play, a view shared by many analysts. Various factors are therefore against the realisation of targets of the NPHE. Jansen also argues that the lack of staff equity is one of the most intractable problems facing higher education transformation. His question is: how can staff equity be attained in institutions, given the undersupply of black and women academics within a highly competent labour market. Since 1994 many Black academics have left the education sector to take up lucrative positions elsewhere, this obviously impacted negatively on achieving equity targets.

Yusef Waghid is very critical about the NPHE's proposal that institutions be encouraged to recruit black academics from the rest of the African continent to serve as role models for Black students (2002: 8). He argues that postgraduate students and emerging academics from the disadvantaged sector with the potential and capacity to develop into good academics should not only be given an opportunity to become quality and reputable scholars, but should be mentored and fast tracked to senior

positions. Waghid's argument addresses the crucial issue of the undersupply of Black academics, and suggests a plausible solution.

The above two paragraphs highlight the complexities around policy and implementation. While there must be increased access for Blacks into the system, social phenomena impacts negatively on this objective. Waghid's counter to recruiting academics from the rest of Africa represents a more sustainable option to solve the undersupply of Black academics. Since the undersupply results, not entirely, from academics leaving the education sector, a solution must be to train larger numbers of Black academics, and to project that some of those will also be lured into more lucrative jobs.

The National Plan links quality to equity, and states that quality of academic outputs is central to equity and redress (2001: 26). Much has been said about the quality of the higher education system in recent years, and no-one can argue that the country needs higher education of quality. There is a general view that HAIs are offering better quality, while HDIs are not offering the same quality as their counterparts. The system is very uneven, though, with pockets of excellence scattered throughout the system. There has been a decline of student numbers at HDIs, which amongst other factors can be related to a perceived lack of quality, while Black numbers have increased at HAIs. The debate on quality is one of the common themes of globalisation, but the National Plan does not elaborate on how it conceptualises quality. It is thus difficult for me to gain further insight, from the NPHE, on such an important concept. I regard this failure to conceptualise quality as a gap in the policy. My reasons are that quality is a very important aspect of educational transformation, and institutions need to understand what it is all about in order to work towards the attainment thereof.

The National Plan makes very little reference to 'redress', and states that redress for historically black institutions will be linked to agreed missions and programme profiles, including developmental strategies to build capacity in administrative, management, governance and academic structures (2001: 3). The Plan wants to 'redress past inequalities' (2001: 15). As with the White Paper, reference to 'inequalities' comes close to, but still fails to argue in favour of 'distributive justice',

which I regard as a gap in the policy. The National Plan also fails in that it omits the notion of 'affirmative action'. My contention is that there can be no educational transformation in the absence of affirmative action. There should have been a deliberate expression in the National Plan to promote affirmative action, the fact that it is lacking constitutes, for me, a gap in the policy. The absence of 'affirmative action' in the document may be interpreted that it is not important for educational transformation, and may not be taken up as a strategic option by institutions. I am quite sure that such an interpretation is also not what the NPHE suggests, which all the more reason justifies the presence of the notion in the document.

### **3.8.2 Critical Inquiry**

What does the Plan announce on critical inquiry? The following is notable. A key issue is to ensure that all graduates are equipped with the skills and competencies necessary to function in modern society, in particular, computer literacy, information management, communications and analytical skills. Higher education has a critical and central role to play in contributing to the development of an information society in South Africa both in terms of skills development and research (2001: 6). The National Plan intends to develop a higher education system that will create educational programmes and practices conducive to critical discourse and creative thinking; that will contribute to all forms of knowledge and scholarship (2001: 7).

I assume that critical discourse refers to critical theory. But what elements of critical theory do the National Plan espouse? Take for instance the key concept of emancipation. The emancipatory interest is the guiding interest of critical theory (Roderick 1986: 57). If the NPHE espouses critical theory, then it should refer to this guiding interest of the theory. Creative thinking, knowledge and scholarship can all be emancipatory in that it frees the individual from dogmatism and societal constraints. In the attainment of knowledge a person grows intellectually, which equips him/her with the intellectual resources to confidently face day to day challenges. There is thus an indirect link in the National Plan to emancipation.

The Plan emphasises skills development, this connects higher education with economic development. It also relates to a commodification of knowledge, which is

one of the common elements of globalisation of higher education. Much has been written about the role of higher education in society, and the NPHE indicates that government is turning to higher education to provide the skills to promote economic well-being of society. I agree that higher education has a major role to play in the training of a skilled workforce. On this issue the National Plan states that ‘research engenders the values of inquiry, critical thinking, creativity and open-mindedness, which are fundamental to building a strong democratic ethos in society’ (2001: 71). Certainly, this conception of research will contribute towards educational transformation. We need students who can think critically, who are creative and open-minded, as this will ensure that new challenges can be addressed with a wider array of skills, thus creating more opportunities to resolve problems.

### **3.8.3 Communicative Praxis**

Communications skills for graduates are regarded as a priority (2001: 2). I agree with this sentiment, but again, the National Plan does not explain its philosophy of ‘communications skills’. When policy makers sit down and formulate policies, they must have a certain understanding of notions they include in the text. Why not then explain such notions? Does communication skills refer to reading, writing, public reasoning? All of these certainly make for good communication. What about computer literacy? I think communication skills should comprise all these aspects.

The NPHE argues for accountability for the expenditure of public funds (2001: 6). This I accept. Increased competition between institutions is seen as consistent with institutions as rational actors taking action to maximise their welfare (2001: 9). I have analysed ‘rationality’ in Chapter 2, and identified ‘accountability’ and ‘the reflexive character of judgements’ as two reasons that make rationality important for educational transformation. My idea is that institutions must act rationally and be accountable for their actions. Knowledge production and intellectual development are regarded as the product of social interaction and engagement (2001: 60). I regard critical engagement as necessary for educational transformation. Graduates should therefore acquire the tools to reflect critically on issues.

### 3.8.4 Citizenship

The National Plan envisages socially responsible professionals and people who are conscious of their role in contributing to the national development effort and social transformation (2001: 5). What does 'socially responsible' mean? The National Plan fails to explain this notion, and I offer Galston's four types of civic virtues (in Kymlicka 2002: 288) as a possible explanation for 'socially responsible'. Galston's general, economic, social, and political virtues are certainly appropriate for our democracy. Broad social phenomena such as a culture of non-payment for services, and unacceptable levels of violence show that these civic virtues are distinctly absent amongst large numbers of our population.

I shall now explore what the policy announces on the issue of culture. The end goal of a transformed higher education system must be the creation of higher education institutions whose cultural identity and cultural orientation is neither black nor white, English or Afrikaans-speaking, but unabashedly and unashamedly South African (NPHE 2001: 82). This is a very noble goal, but also ambitious. Is it possible to create a Fort Hare or a University of Zululand that is not predominantly black? Due to their geographical location, this may be an impossible task. I agree that we need institutions that are inherently South African. But what does 'South African' mean? In different parts of the country we find different cultural orientations. So, local and regional contexts might overshadow national ones. When the National Plan suggests that 'the role of higher education as a national system must be jealously guarded against any claims that are based on and promote a narrow provincialism' it actually acknowledges the tensions between regional and national contexts. The National Plan seems to assume that there is a uniform understanding of what 'South African' means, and I do not think that is the case. Some indigenous groups (Khoi, Griqua) in the country feel they are not treated on par with other citizens. There are other social groups who feel they are being discriminated against. In the process the meaning of being 'South African' have different connotations for different people. If there is a common understanding of the notion, it will be easier to deal with perceptions. For these reasons I contend that the meaning of 'South African' is not articulated well enough in the NPHE.

There are various concepts and notions (quality, communications skills, socially responsible, South African) which are not adequately explained in the NPHE. I think it is important for this study that these notions are addressed within the context of educational transformation. By not explaining these concepts and notions, the document leaves too much room for interpretation, which can result in an uneven application of the policy. The document is also silent on the question of what will happen if institutions fail to reach their stated employment equity targets. The NPHE omits the notion of affirmative action which is a vital measure to achieve equity and redress. The omission of 'affirmative action' may be interpreted as it not being important for transformation. Another gap in the document is that it does not argue in favour of 'distributive justice'. I have argued earlier that a just institution should aim to eradicate racial, gender and historical imbalances. For purposes of this study, there cannot be educational transformation without distributive justice and affirmative action, since these concepts deal with the distribution of benefits and the application of distributive justice respectively. Not surprisingly, most of the gaps in this NPHE relates to equity and redress. It reinforces the view that the neoliberal agenda undermines equity and redress.

Does the National Plan advances educational transformation? As the Plan is influenced so much by globalisation, I shall first explore global pressures for and against change before I answer the question. According to Sevier (in Maharasoa 2002: 273) global pressures for change are: financial disaster, competitive threats, visionary leadership, threatened markets, organisational pressure, and poor benchmark performance. Global pressures against change are: organisational inertia and comfort, fear, lack of knowledge and skills, work involved and lack of payoff, day-today focus, arrogance, and not my agenda. It is not difficult to illustrate how these pressures for and against change inhibit the leadership and operational staff at many higher education institutions in South Africa (Maharasoa 2002: 274). It appears that transformation is both inevitable and desirable, and that, while the Plan has strengths and weaknesses, it cannot, on its own, effect the necessary educational transformation. The National Plan is a very comprehensive document, but it focuses too much on global pressures for change. The marketisation of higher education impacts negatively on the achievement of equity and redress, which is the condition

that needs most urgent attention if educational transformation is to be successful in South Africa.

### **3.9 TRANSFORMATION AND RESTRUCTURING: A NEW INSTITUTIONAL LANDSCAPE FOR HIGHER EDUCATION**

This document, released on 31 January 2002, stems from a report of The National Working Group (NWG) established by the Minister of Education in April 2001 to advise on restructuring the institutional landscape of higher education, as outlined in the National Plan for Higher Education of 2001. The report focuses mainly on proposals for mergers of institutions, and is very limited on the logically necessary conditions of education transformation. I shall therefore limit my analysis of this document to the issue of mergers. In particular, I shall explore the potential or not of mergers to enact educational transformation.

The report recommends appropriate arrangements for consolidating the provision of higher education on a regional basis through establishing new institutional and organisational forms, including reducing the number of higher education institutions from 36 to 21 through mergers. The NWG took as its point of departure the emphasis in the National Plan on the need to ensure the 'fitness for purpose' of the higher education system, that is, the extent to which the elements constituting the structures and operations of the system are suited and well-equipped to fulfill effectively those functions which are its *raison d'être*, thus enhancing the quality of the higher education system (2002: 1). Equity, sustainability and productivity are considered as critical to ensure fitness for purpose.

What is a merger? A merger may be defined as the combination of two or more separate organisations, with overall management control coming under a single governing body and single chief executive. Normally all assets, liabilities and responsibilities of the former institutions are transferred to either a continuing institution or to a new institution (Harman & Harman 2003: 30-31). The Anglo-American literature on the mergers of institution contains two synonymous concepts, 'mergers' and 'amalgamations', which both reflect the merger of two or more previously separate institutions into one new single institution (Skodvin 1999: 65).

Mergers are not peculiar to South Africa, and the literature indicates that there have been many mergers since World War II in higher education in different countries (for example, Australia, The Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, and Great Britain). There is therefore much that we can learn from these experiences.

Central questions concerning mergers are: Who initiated the mergers? Were they forced or voluntary? The definition of a voluntary merger is when the institutions themselves have initiated the merger, while a forced merger is when the instigator is external to the institutions (Skodvin 1999: 66). In South Africa, as in most countries, mergers are involuntary, in the sense that educational authorities have initiated them. Such mergers are seen as part of the restructuring of the higher education system.

Over the past three decades or so mergers have become an increasing common phenomenon across many higher education systems. National governments have used mergers for major restructuring and efforts to address problems of institutional fragmentation, lack of financial and academic viability, and low efficiency and quality (Harman & Harman 2003: 29). There appears to be an international trend away from small, specialist institutions towards larger and more comprehensive institutions, and from institutions operating on single sites or campuses to multi-site and multi-campus institutions. Mergers in South Africa are following this trend, for example the merger of Potchefstroom University and University of North West; the merger of the University of the North, University of Venda and Medunsa; and the merger of the Welkom campus of Vista University and Technikon Free State.

There is a trend in South Africa to merge Historically Disadvantaged Institutions (HDIs) with Historically Advantaged Institutions (HAIs). While this trend has been criticised, the benefit is that it can bring together very diverse cultures into a single institution, which can result in the promotion of diversity. These mergers can have a substantial impact on the racial composition of the institution. On the other hand, it also fuses an under-resourced institution with one that has been well provided for under apartheid rule.

Are mergers successful or are they failures? Is it possible to answer such a question? Skodvin contends that it is not possible to answer it in a clear and unambiguous



manner. He posits that the answer depends on to whom you are talking, the stance and perspective that you take, and identifies the following lessons learned (1999: 75-77):

(a) Structural-cultural

First, mergers do not appear to be a marriage between equal partners. In this connection, the differences are related to size and the programmes which the institutions offer. Second, geographical proximity plays an important role in regard to the institutions which should be merged. Third, there are clear indications that mergers improve the future positions of the new institutions, especially in regard to the breadth of different educations.

(b) Process oriented

Fourth, mergers are characterised by the contradiction between status quo and implementing change. For public institutions, the tensions concern the wish to meet external political needs versus the desire to maintain traditional academic interests. Fifth, the implementation of organisational goals often occurs at the cost of individual needs. People may be negatively affected independent of the type of institutional control or backgrounds of the mergers. Sixth, merger processes are often connected to problems, stress, fear, and in part inadequate planning at all levels. Seventh, it appears that mergers in general are characterised by too many 'top-down' processes and too few 'bottom-up' processes.

(c) Economic

Eighth, mergers appear due to external conditions/factors. In this connection a general fear of not having access to resources is one of the driving forces behind a merger. Ninth, the results of many case studies in different countries indicate that administrative and efficiency questions seem to have dominated the processes (at least the first four to five years after the mergers), even if academic gains were the major reason behind the mergers.

Naturally, there have been negative aspects to mergers. Many mergers have been disruptive and strongly contested, and have involved considerable human and financial costs. I have noticed that job losses and the uncertainty that results from the process are an area of grave concern. While acknowledging these negative aspects,

Harman and Harman (2003: 42) observe that international experience demonstrates that sensibly conceived and well-managed mergers, with due sensitivity being paid to cultural and human issues, can produce substantial longer-term benefits, both for individual institutions and higher education systems.

Can mergers in South Africa contribute to educational transformation? I think so. Harman and Harman conclude that overall, well-planned and sensible merger efforts appear to have been largely successful, even if the merger proposals were strongly contested at the time (2003: 42). In many cases mergers have resulted in larger and more comprehensive institutions, with stronger academic programmes and support service, more choice for students and increased capacity for organisational flexibility. Jonathan Jansen (2003: 16) regards the merging of institutional curricula as critical in the wider merger process. I regard the academic goals of mergers as very important, and would like to see, as Skodvin (1999: 69) points out, that (a) duplicative programmes are eliminated, (b) there must be increased academic integration and collaboration, e.g. the creation of new multi- and interdisciplinary fields, and (c) there must be a diversification of academic profiles e.g. mergers must be between institutions that compliment each other and which strengthens the new institution's position in the national and international higher education market.

In this chapter I attempted to assess the potential or not of various policies to advance educational transformation by identifying gaps. These gaps highlight potential problem areas in understanding policies, and this may impact negatively on institutions' understanding of the policy. Institutions may interpret policy matters differently, which can then affect the implementation of policy.

How do I proceed from here, what am I to do? In this regard I want to make a few observations. A common thread of all these policies is that they propagate the notion of participatory democracy. I have pointed out a criticism of neoliberalism: that it is an enemy of participatory democracy. If that is the case, then participatory democracy is not appropriate to advance educational transformation in South Africa. My view is that the notion of democracy is fundamental for education transformation. The question is: what form of democracy is appropriate? I shall deal with it in a later

chapter. The analysis of policy documents highlighted the tension around an appropriate notion of democracy.

Another point I want to make is that in this chapter the notion of ‘quality’ surfaced in debates. If our country wants to become a world leader, we must have a higher education system of high quality. What is an appropriate form of quality for our higher education system? I shall address this question in a later chapter. My final observation is that the reduction of institutions from 36 to 21 can bring different cultures together in a single institution. In other words, diversification can take place. This could finally make notions such as ‘Historically Disadvantaged Institutions’ and ‘Historically Advantaged Institutions’ obsolete, and could realise the goal of creating a single higher education system for the country.

### **3.10 SUMMARY**

It is now well known and well documented that higher education institutions worldwide currently face considerable challenges in relation to rapidly changing global conditions. Higher education is being challenged to become more responsive to societal needs. The marketisation of higher education has disrupted the traditional disciplinary-based organisational features and functions of higher education. The prevailing economically-oriented paradigm and the ideological underpinnings of globalisation are in direct tension with the social purpose of higher education and its contribution towards the public good, social renewal and basic development (Subotzky 1999: 402). This tension is perhaps more visible in the imperative for equity within the South African higher education system. The challenges faced are very well articulated in the policy documents I examined in this chapter. Do these policies conform to the logically necessary conditions of educational transformation? My answer has to be a disappointing ‘not enough’. The solution points to a dual objective in that educational transformation must take place within a broad national vision while addressing the issues and opportunities raised by globalisation.

## CHAPTER 4

### ANALYSES OF INSTITUTIONAL PLANS

#### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I examine various policies of the three universities in the Western Cape, namely UCT, the US, and UWC. In particular, I examine the following: rolling plans, employment equity plans, and strategic plans. These plans register the intent and vision of how these institutions plan to transform themselves. My objective is to analyse to what extent institutional plans address logically necessary conditions of educational transformation, such as equity and redress, critical inquiry, communicative praxis, and citizenship. I also report on an empirical study conducted to obtain additional information on the transformation process at these universities. The empirical study is presented as narrative constructions of educational transformation.

#### 4.2 THREE-YEAR ROLLING PLANS

What is the nature of three-year rolling plans? The Education White Paper 3 (1997) states that the National Plan for Higher Education (NPHE) will provide the framework within which institutional plans will be developed, which will in turn be influenced by regional and institutional concerns and proposals. The institutional three-year rolling plans must be developed within the framework of the institution's strategic plan (DoE 1999: 4). The White Paper 3 (1997: 19) states:

- Three-year rolling institutional plans will be developed within the framework of the national plan, according to procedures which will be negotiated between the Department of Education and the institutions with the advice of the Council on Higher Education (CHE).
- Institutional plans will be expected to include the mission of the institution, proposed programmes, indicative targets for enrolment levels by programme, race and gender equity goals and proposed measures to develop new programmes and human resource development plans for new programmes. They will also include

plans for academic development, research development and infrastructural development.

I shall not refer to the rest of the guidelines in the White Paper, as my intention is merely to establish the (policy) nature of institutional plans. These are government policies that impact directly on the institutional programme. They are what Soltis (1998: 196-203) refers to as the 'public dimension of education' and, as such, are open to philosophical analysis. Evers (1998: 120) expresses himself in favour of philosophers of education to make pronouncements on a range of substantive educational issues, including educational policy. This provides a justification for my analyses of various institutional plans.

Rolling plans are not unique to South Africa. The Jarratt Report, in the United Kingdom, on efficiency recommended that universities and the system as a whole should work to clear objectives and achieve value for money. The recommendations for universities included: the development of rolling academic and institutional plans and the introduction of arrangements for staff development, appraisal and accountability (Harvey & Knight 1996: 73). This experience could have been taken into account for the South African situation, a phenomenon that Michael Young (2000: 18) refers to as 'policy borrowing'. In the early 1990s leaders of the democratic struggle searched abroad for policy alternatives to apartheid, especially those found in English-speaking, western democracies. Since the African National Congress (ANC) had a very strong base in the United Kingdom (UK), it is fair to assume that UK policies (among others) were targeted and studied as alternatives for apartheid legislation. Policy borrowing is one way of setting policy frameworks in place without reinventing the wheel. I support 'policy borrowing' on the condition that policies must be adapted to meet the political, educational, social, cultural and economic needs of the borrower, in this instance South Africa's Department of Education.

Having established the nature of three-year rolling plans, and following my attempt to provide an historical perspective on its entry into higher education policy, I shall now look more closely at institutional three-year rolling plans. In addition to analysing the documents in relation to logically necessary conditions of educational transformation,

I shall also attempt to establish how institutions address the issue of quality. I do this because the National Plan for Higher Education (2001: 26) declares that 'quality is central to redress and equity'. This focus on quality is also expressed by the Education White Paper 3, where it is stated that 'the pursuit of the principle of quality means maintaining and applying academic and educational standards, both in the sense of specific expectations and requirements that should be complied with, and in the sense of ideals of excellence that should be aimed at' (1997: 12). From this I deduce that the government's vision is that quality is important for the transformation of institutions. It also implies that the qualifications achieved should be of appropriate academic and educational standards. If this is the case, then I totally agree with such a sentiment because students may be assured that their qualifications obtained wherever will be valued by prospective employers.

I shall now discuss the three-year rolling plans of three universities.

#### **4.2.1 UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN (UCT)**

I shall start off the analyses of institutional plans by firstly examining each plan vis-à-vis the notion of globalisation. This is done to see how institutions respond to global challenges. In this respect UCT declares its intention 'to be a university of international standing that best reflects African capacity for success on its own ground', and that it 'will systematically exploit the use of information technology and will use this as one way of maintaining regular interaction with other scholars nationally and internationally' (1999: 7). Moja and Cloete (2001: 252) identify information technology (IT) as an additional challenge for South African institutions. According to Leatt (in Moja & Cloete 2001: 253) South Africa was in 1999 some 15 years behind other developed countries in the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) for teaching, research and management purposes in higher education. While UCT's reasons for exploiting IT are legitimate, I contend that there are obvious cost implications in the technology race, and the issue of equity and redress also has to be considered. It is possible that the financial outlay for IT may leave fewer resources for equity and redress, which is a major challenge for institutions.

On the export of Higher Education, UCT's goal is for increased international contact and partnerships including admission of high-quality international students (UCT 1999: 8). The goal to increase international student numbers clearly signals UCT's intention to enter the higher education export market. This brings me to the question: Is the export of higher education good for equity and redress? There are two related but separate concepts that are important to this question. The first one is 'globalisation', which I discussed in detail in the previous chapter. The second concept is 'internationalisation', which I shall discuss here. The latter concept is not new to South African universities as it relates to academic exchanges and collaboration. I view this as positive, as it enables our institutions to fully integrate into the international community of scholars. In the light of our apartheid past, which isolated our institutions from our international counterparts, I hold this as important for scholarly work. It is important because academics need to exchange and share ideas, and so learn from each other. This makes it imperative for our academics to make conference presentations, and to put their work in the public domain.

But what is 'internationalisation' all about? More specifically, we are dealing here with the internationalisation of universities. Bartell (2003: 45) maintains that the internationalisation of universities is far from a clearly defined and understood concept. Ellingboe (in Bartell 2003: 46) defines internationalisation 'as the process of integrating an international perspective into a college or university system. It is an ongoing, future-oriented, multidimensional interdisciplinary, leadership-driven vision that involves many stakeholders working to change the internal dynamics of an institution to respond and adapt appropriately to an increasingly diverse, globally focused, ever-changing external environment'. Ellingboe spells out five components, which are integral to more completely understanding the process applied in internationalising the university. These are: (1) college leadership; (2) faculty members' international movement in activities with colleges, research sites, and institutions worldwide; (3) the availability, affordability, accessibility, and transferability of study abroad programmes for students; (4) the presence and integration of international students, scholars and visiting faculty into campus life; and (5) international co-curricular units (residence halls, conference planning, student centers, cultural immersion and language houses, student activities and student organisations). These components, in my view, are positive and much-needed

activities for our universities. For instance, if one considers the issue of leadership we can certainly learn from experiences of other institutions with regard to cultural diversity, as many of our institutions are still grappling with this issue.

The definition offered by Ellingboe also points to a distinction between ‘globalisation’ and ‘internationalisation’, and here I find Peter Scott’s differentiation very useful. Internationalisation conjures up a world of diplomacy and of (ineffective) international agencies, in which the overweening influences of ex-imperial and great powers still linger, while globalisation conjures up the exciting world of the Internet, mass travel, tourism and world-wide popular culture (Scott 2000: 1). But there is no essential difference between these two movements, Scott posits, except perhaps in their scale and intensity. Scott (2000: 2) argues that in a rhetorical sense internationalism has always been part of the life-world of the university.

Bartell (2003: 46) contends that the reality is that internationalisation conveys a variety of understandings, interpretations and applications, anywhere from a minimalist, instrumental and static view, such as securing external funding for study abroad programmes, through international exchange of students, conducting research internationally, to a view of internationalisation as a complex, all encompassing and policy-driven process, integral to and permeating the life, culture, curriculum and instruction as well as research activities of the university and its members. I hold that these activities relate closely to academic issues, and may be separated from broader issues related to globalisation. They are by no means unaffected by globalisation, as ‘academic capitalism’ and the ‘marketisation of higher education’ (which I discussed in Chapter 3) clearly demonstrate. In the final analysis, internationalism appears to be less disruptive and more useful to the future of universities than globalisation. This is so because internationalisation aids the global integration of academic concerns.

To return to my question whether higher education export is good for equity and redress, my contention is that if access is denied to national applicants, it will be detrimental to equity and access. On the other hand, international exchange serves the useful purpose of exposing students and staff to international ideas, which can enhance scholarship.



The marketisation of higher education is unmistakably part of UCT's rolling plans, and the institution is, in line with international trends, looking more to the market to increase and diversify its sources of income (UCT 1999: 9). UCT is concerned about the aggressive entry of well-known foreign universities into the domestic arena (1999: 1). Such foreign interventions into the domestic arena come at a very precarious time for our universities who face greater internal competition to attract students, as national projections show that student numbers will not significantly increase over the short to medium term. To have foreign institutions competing for limited student numbers complicates issues of equity and access. The matter of accountability of foreign institutions is also a point of concern for UCT.

#### **4.2.1.1 Equity and Redress**

UCT is concerned about the decreasing enrolment, and the declining numbers of matriculants with exemptions especially among African students, in the higher education system. UCT argues that the failure of the schooling system to properly prepare talented young South Africans for life-long learning including higher education is a threatening national tragedy, particularly as many effective remedies appear already to have identified and are mostly implementable in terms of improved organisation and delivery of teaching and learning in schools across the land (1999: 12). UCT argues that the migration of White students to the private system and overseas, and escalating costs and inadequacies of the public financial aid system are having a negative effect on the ability of otherwise eligible and talented students to enter the higher education system (1999: 13). This concern points to the financial burden on universities, and their inability to fund all eligible and promising students. The loss of affluent students to institutions abroad is also adding to the debt burden, as it decreases incoming revenue to institutions like UCT. To deal with this UCT proposes that a National Financial Aid Scheme that is equal to the need should be instituted as matter of urgency (1999: 15).

The plan shows sensitivity for adult and mature students, as they are very interested in the broadening of their recruitment base to include international students as well as non-traditional students, specifically adult and mature students (1999: 13). UCT wishes to attract a diverse, talented and successful student body drawn from all parts

of the country and the entire South African society. Its admission policy is designed to attract both the most able applicants, irrespective of colour, gender or educational background, as measured by their prior educational performance at school or at another tertiary educational institution; and applicants from those sectors of the educational system which have not provided adequate opportunity for students to demonstrate their ability to succeed, but who are assessed as having the ability to succeed in a particular academic programme (1999: 14). It seems that UCT follows a two-pronged strategy to attract students, which is (a) irrespective of colour, and (b) those who had inadequate opportunities. My interpretation of the first strategy is that it is aimed at consolidating UCT's traditional base of White students, and the second is to increase its share of Black students. In this way the institution wants to combine imperatives of equity and redress without losing its share of White students. UCT furthermore plans to increase the number of graduating blacks and women, particular in programmes where these proportions are low (1999: 10). This conforms to the NPHE's (2001: 42) Outcome 7, which relates to increased equity in access and success rates.

#### **4.2.1.2 Critical Inquiry**

A key feature of the plan is the emphasis on critical thought and reasoning skills. UCT's commitment to education for life implies that faculties must ensure that all qualifiers are effectively literate, effectively numerate and computer literate at an appropriate graduate level and that all academic programmes must include courses which demand rigour and precision of language, critical thought and reasoning, and numerical/mathematical skills (1999: 7). A general and systematic emphasis on the 'deep' advancement of intellectual skills, acceptance of across-the-disciplines graduate enskilling as part of the agenda, and a particular emphasis on critical reasoning are built into UCT's plans (1999: 10). This is in line with the NPHE's (2001: 31) vision of enhanced cognitive skills of graduates, which aims to equip graduates for participation as citizens.

### **4.2.1.3 Communicative Praxis**

UCT recognises the importance of institutional capacity and optimal planning co-operation in order to generate plans that are rooted in reality and are internally consistent (1999: 3). They contend this will open up new ways for strategies that encourage faculties to be innovative, responsible and willing to change (1999: 4). A willingness to change is important for praxis, and may allow units to learn and adapt to changing circumstances.

### **4.2.1.4 Citizenship**

One of the goals on the policy on student housing is to create an environment in which students from diverse backgrounds can learn to live and work together (1999: 15). This approach may enhance diversity when students learn to be more tolerant of others, and learn to respect difference. I have discussed 'respect' and 'tolerance' as important aspects of citizenship in Chapter 2. Elements of respect that are congruent with constitutive meanings of educational transformation are: a willingness to listen, openness to learn, making an effort to understand, to be critical, and to challenge. Tolerance is about the right of individuals to dissent from their group, to make the effort to listen to, to comprehend different views with the aim not only of putting across one's own reasons and arguments, but of reaching agreement (consensus).

## **4.2.2 UNIVERSITY OF STELLENBOSCH (US)**

Markets in higher education are recognised by the US as follows: The problem of access to higher education has now been replaced with the problem of supply to higher education. It is no longer a question of competition between prospective students for a limited number of student places, or of discriminatory mechanisms for preventing prospective students from obtaining student places on the grounds of race, or on other non-academic grounds. Instead, the US argues, it is now rather a question of competition between universities for the decreasing number of suitable candidates (1999: 14). The university has shown that it has the capacity to deliver specialised research and development services (for which there is a huge demand) to industry and to society as a whole, at competitive prices (1999: 16). The US declares that

‘international competition necessitates high-quality products’ (1999: 16). Judging from these references the US, like UCT, seems to follow a tendency towards increased marketisation or corporatisation.

The question of the export of higher education is also addressed, and the US intends to provide detailed advice and meaningful assistance to local and foreign academics and students, through the dissemination of information on internationalisation that will facilitate the international mobility of the university community (1999: 69). Students from about fifteen countries in Africa, and a large number from elsewhere, study at the US (1999: 4). In 2002 1310 foreign students (out of a total of 19106 contact students) studied at the US, which is about 0.7% of the total student population. Is this good or bad for equity and access? The US has not been very successful in attracting large numbers of internal African students (1482 in 2002), and this has to receive urgent attention. Equity and redress remain the predominant challenge for institutions, and in my view, higher education export (or attracting more international students) does not address the equity imperative. No amount of success on the export dimension should be allowed to overshadow the predominant challenge.

#### **4.2.2.1 Equity and Redress**

The US sees equity as a value, and maintains that everything it does must be based on equity. This includes affirmative action aimed at rectifying the inequities of the past (1999: 3). To demonstrate that they take the problem of equity very seriously, the US has undertaken the following initiatives to promote student equity: the restructuring of its academic offering, the creation of new entry and exit points, conversion programmes are being designed, academic development bridging programmes broaden access, bursary funds are made available to support needy students, and there is an emphasis on recruitment (1999: 23-24). In these measures, which focus on student throughput, do not address the predominant challenge of equity and redress. These measures do not reveal how the US plans to attract significant numbers of African students.

The US also identifies another dilemma it faces. It acknowledges that the requirement for change in the composition of the student communities at institutions for higher

education could mean that it will have to exceed the growth limitations of 2.5% for contact students, and 5% for distance education students set for residential universities in the present subsidy formula (1999: 10). This will eventually have detrimental subsidy consequences within the existing funding framework. The US experiences, together with the increasing enrolment of Black students, continued growth in the number of White students. The dilemma is that given the need for change in the composition of the student community the only possibility of remaining within the projected numbers would be to refuse admission to qualifying White students. Such a step, the US argues (1999: 11), would be unattainable from both a legal and a practical point of view. The problem will therefore have to be solved within both the existing and planned new funding framework. In the light of decreasing student numbers I do see the logic of providing access to qualifying White students. This, however, has to be accompanied by providing access to increasing numbers of Black (African in particular) students. The dilemma that the US face is that equity and redress demand that the student profile must become more representative, and it can only be achieved by increased access to Black students. The US, therefore, cannot transform if it continues to boost White student numbers, without drastically increasing its Black student profile.

Another impediment for transformation at the US, which I identify, is its language policy. This distinguishes the US from the other regional universities. The language policy of the US is to serve South Africa as an inclusively Afrikaans-medium institution for all people. Accordingly, the US has accepted Afrikaans as its point of departure in matters relating to the administration of the University and its medium of instruction, but the University willingly accommodates non-Afrikaans speaking students through the differentiated and flexible use of other languages, particularly English (1999: 4). There appears to be a shift from this position. The Institutional Plan (2004-2006) endorses the University's commitment to the promotion of multilingualism (Afrikaans, English and to a lesser degree isiXhosa) (US 2003: 20). In contrast to UWC and UCT, the US seems unable to attract large numbers of African students, and my view is that one contributing factor may be the language policy of the US. Most African students are not fluent in Afrikaans, and they aggregate to institutions which cater for their language needs. This seems to be the case for both UCT and UWC, which attract large numbers of African students. The

Institutional Plan of 2003 of the US seems to address this matter. It is fair to say that the perception remains that the US is a predominantly Afrikaans university; but with the new multilingual approach African enrolments may increase.

#### **4.2.2.2 Critical Inquiry**

The US strives, through critical and rational thought to achieve national and international renown on the strength of its provision of graduates who are sought after because they are well-rounded and are capable of creative and critical thinking (1999: 3). Probably one of the most important aims of the US is to achieve the optimal development and refinement of the cognitive abilities (specifically the ability to reason) of all its students, so that they will not only be able to study more effectively but also be equipped for the rest of their lives with the capacity for independent thought and continuing eagerness to expand the extent of their knowledge and develop their intellectual skills even further (1999: 43). In addition to complying with the NPHE's outcome of enhanced cognitive skills of graduates, the US clearly values its contribution of supplying graduates to the job market. The acknowledgement that its graduates are 'sought after' also points to the niche the institution occupies in the job market. It shows that graduates from the US may enjoy an advantage over others when they compete for jobs.

#### **4.2.2.3 Communicative Praxis**

The people directly affected by decisions must be allowed to participate in the process leading to such decisions, and transparency is advocated in that decisions must be taken on the basis of considerations that are clear and widely known (1999: 3). This is a good model, and if the procedures are in place to give effect to it, it can contribute to better human relations and a positive campus environment. For people to participate in decision-making they require considerable skill of expressing themselves in a manner that others can understand. I think that deliberative democracy may promote better decision-making. I advance this model because it seems to be better suited to enhance institutional democracy.

The US strives to develop further the communication skills (including listening, speaking, reading and writing) of all its students by means of a large variety of programmes and modules, and through the use of modern technology (1999: 45). Communication skills are regarded as generic, and ought to be integrated into the teaching function in all disciplines (1999: 46). Courses aimed at developing the correct use of scientific language are regularly presented for senior students, particularly for postgraduate students (1999: 46).

#### **4.2.2.4 Citizenship**

The statement that 'we must respect personal convictions and viewpoints different from our own, and also the differences between the various forms of cultural expression' (1999: 3) outlines the university's position on mutual respect. This is very important for citizenship, but intentions are not enough. Recent incidents of violence against blacks and minority groups at the US, which were widely publicised in the media, show that mutual respect still lack among some university members.

#### **4.2.3 UNIVERSITY OF THE WESTERN CAPE (UWC)**

Unfortunately I am unable to provide page numbers to references in this section, as the document I received from the university was not paginated. Like UCT and the US, the notion of markets in higher education is very visible in UWC's three-year rolling plan for the period 2000-2002, dated 5 November 1999. UWC refers to an increasingly competitive environment, and that higher education institutions are expected to become more aggressive in their competition for students and funding. Areas where competition will surface include: the identification of areas of excellence and niche markets; competition between different types of institutions; competition for research funding and research students; and competition from private institutions and institutions abroad. Despite competition the university remains confident of its enrolment growth potential. UWC declares that it wants to become more entrepreneurial than it currently is. I am concerned about this declaration. It may imply that the focus is shifting from providing access to students from disadvantaged backgrounds (who lack the finances to perhaps study at UCT or the US) to attracting students who can afford to study at university. Where does this leave the majority of

Black, poor students? I think they may be denied access to UWC as more affluent students may be secured access. Such a scenario may undermine the predominant challenge of equity and redress. On the other hand, UWC's financial situation compels it to look for new revenue on the market, which I shall now examine.

UWC signals its intention to export higher education by wanting to market itself more aggressively among potential foreign students, both from Southern African Development Community (SADC) countries as a contribution to development in the region, and from other countries (1999). Again my question: is this good or bad for equity and access? It cannot be good if SADC development supersedes national interests, as we owe it to those who had inadequate opportunities in our own country to gain access to higher education.

#### **4.2.3.1 Equity and Redress**

UWC targets two groups for more meaningful access. First, they want to attract students with an inadequate schooling background. Without intervention from the higher education sector, UWC argues, such students are unlikely to gain equitable access to study opportunities and to the world of work. Second, they undertake to provide non-traditional learners (people with working experience) with opportunities to gain a higher education qualification.

UWC is concerned that success with the redress of racial and gender imbalances at the undergraduate level does not currently carry through to postgraduate level, the reasons for changing patterns of retention to postgraduate study have to be explored fully. In an attempt to entrench an equity culture, several cultural changes have to be made to ensure the attainment and sustainability of equity. What is desired is not only a more representative demographic profile, but an institutional culture that provides decent work, and promotes workplace democracy based on a shared human rights value system.

While UWC has been fairly successful with their student profile (56% female, 53% African in 1999), they find the drop in Coloured students, particularly Coloured males (from 47% in 1993 to 17% in 1999), disconcerting. In the light that UWC was



founded as an institution to cater primarily for Coloureds, this phenomenon is very notable. The dilemma is that while UWC has rejected the Coloured ethnic identity which was imposed on it by the apartheid state, it is committed to addressing internal factors which are discouraging Coloured students from enrolling or remaining at UWC. Why have Coloured numbers dropped at UWC? While there might not be a simple answer, I shall nonetheless attempt to offer a plausible explanation. It may be that the medium of instruction is one factor (and by no means the only) that contributed to the decline of Coloured student numbers. UWC adopted a new language policy in the 1990s, and changed to English as the medium of instruction. A criticism leveled against this policy was that it would alienate Coloureds (of which the majority is Afrikaans speaking). In contrast, the US has seen a significant increase of Coloured students. The result is that UWC's loss has been the US's gain. It may be that language policy has played a significant role in this change of student profiles amongst these two regional universities. The decline of Coloured students at UWC has also been accompanied by a drop in White and Indian enrolment. It is fair to assume that UWC never had significant numbers of White students, and that their Indian numbers have declined. UWC argues that to achieve student equity it must regain its share of Coloured and Indian students. This may prove to be quite a challenge because of the general decline in student numbers nationally, the migration of Afrikaans-speaking Coloureds to Stellenbosch University, and because many now opt for cheaper, shorter courses at colleges.

#### **4.2.3.2 Critical inquiry**

UWC states that academic planning should favour effective and coherent inter-disciplinarity. A feature of apartheid education was that it rigidly separated disciplines. What I would like to see is that UWC radically departs from this trend, and allows students a greater subject choice. For example, let students combine Philosophy or Philosophy of Education with science, commerce or law subjects. This can combine different paradigms, which I think may equip students better for the job market. UWC wants to encourage an enabling learning environment which fosters critical and creative thinking, and it recognises that in a period of political transition and social change there is a heightened need for specialised skills, the ability to

understand and manage change, and to undertake targeted research on issues of critical importance to the country.

#### **4.2.3.3 Communicative Praxis**

I could not find specific references to how the institution wants to enhance communication amongst staff or units, which is an important aspect of transformation. In an endeavour to enhance effectiveness and efficiency in the higher education environment and to avoid unnecessary duplication, UWC encourages interaction through co-operation and partnerships among institutions. Having worked as the International Relations Officer at UWC, I am aware that the institution has many formal agreements with institutions abroad. These partnerships can serve communicative praxis in that institutions have to make rational decisions about who they want to establish links with, and there has to be 'speech oriented toward securing understanding' as partnerships have to be established across cultural and economic divides.

#### **4.2.3.4 Citizenship**

UWC's history makes it critically aware of the inequities generated by colonialism, segregation and apartheid. UWC intends to continue to identify key areas of national capacity development, responding to the challenges of producing successful graduates, helping meet the need for equitable representation of disadvantaged groups on core professions, and equipping its graduates to be citizens who are able to respond to societal and economic needs in a creative and responsible manner. UWC also wants to help create a more critical and discerning citizenry, which is very important for educational transformation. UWC regards mutual respect as crucial for collaboration. As a South African and African university, UWC also insists it has a critical role to play in developing a more inclusive, culturally diverse global scholarship. This could mean that UWC wants to expose their students to a more diverse context, and that they foresee that their graduates must be equipped to operate within the global arena.

This brings to an end my examination of the rolling plans of the three universities. I have not touched on the issue of quality yet, and shall do so now by way of an

overview. The Education White Paper 3 (1997: 28) refers to the co-ordination of quality assurance in higher education through a Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC) which will be established as a permanent committee of the Council for Higher Education (CHE). As a consequence, the three-year rolling plans include institutional measures to ensure quality throughout the institution. I shall therefore not analyse institutional measures separately, as it forms part of a broader debate. I regard quality as a key component of educational transformation, and shall refer to it again when I discuss performance indicators in Chapter 5.

In conclusion of this section, I return to some of the themes I identified in the institutional plans.

First, all three universities show their inclination towards the marketisation of higher education (also referred to as academic capitalism). Academic capitalism is viewed as a response to the decrease in budget funding and the external push towards entrepreneurial activities (Ylijoki 2003: 307). Does academic capitalism hold any good for equity and redress? I am asking this question as I identified equity and redress as the first logically necessary condition for educational transformation (in Chapter 2). My view is that academic capitalism is shifting the focus from the immediate need of providing access to previously disadvantaged groups to the more lucrative alternative of obtaining much-needed funds. The fact that all three institutions want to attract more international students led me to a closer examination of the concept of 'internationalism'. I agree that there are positive aspects to internationalism, certainly one cannot deny universities the opportunity to look for co-operation with institutions abroad. Such co-operation, I want to argue, is necessary to rid our universities from the academic isolation experienced during the apartheid era. I think that the predominant challenge for institutions should remain equity and redress, and here I agree with Nico Cloete (2002: 415) when he states that equity was the pre-eminent transformation demand during the first policy phase which lasted from NEPI (1992/93) to the Education White Paper 3 (1997). Equity should remain because the evidence reveals a very complex picture in that while some progress has been made, the gains have been more modest than anticipated by the policy-makers (Cloete 2002: 442). In the next paragraph I shall discuss the student equity challenges

of the three universities in the Western Cape. Also, from my discussion in Chapter 3 I became aware that market tendencies undermine equity and redress.

Second, all three institutions face major challenges with regards to student equity. The US needs to drastically increase their African student numbers, but their Afrikaans medium of instruction is an impediment to achieve this objective. It also experiences an increased enrolment of its traditional support base of White students, and cannot refuse admission to eligible White students. As it cannot grow unrealistically, it has to accommodate the equity objective of increased African enrolments while not rejecting White students. Can this be achieved? I don't think so, because in this competitive climate and because of a decline in student numbers it may not be advisable to reject eligible White students. UWC, on the other hand, have done so well on student representivity that it lost its traditional support base of Coloured (and Indian) students. Equity now demands that UWC must attract more Coloured students (especially Coloured males). The comparison between the two institutions provides fascinating insights into the role of medium of instruction. UCT, on the other hand, still wants to attract more White students. They intend to do this to counteract the outflow of affluent White students to universities abroad. This shows they may not yet be prepared to become a predominantly African institution, which they claim to be.

### **4.3 EMPLOYMENT EQUITY PLANS**

The rationale for equity plans are stipulated in the Education White Paper 3 as follows: institutions will be required to submit human resource development plans, including equity plans, as part of their three-year rolling plans. Key issues that must be addressed are: staff recruitment and promotion policies and practices; staff development; remuneration and conditions of service; reward system; and the transformation of institutional cultures to support diversity (1997: 34).

In the ensuing discussion of employment equity plans of the three universities I also focus on numerical goals, to assess to what extent these goals really sample strategic priorities.

### 4.3.1 UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN (UCT)

UCT acknowledges that the race, gender and disability profile of the university's staff is significantly unrepresentative of the wider South African population. The real problem, they claim, is not the numbers and proportions themselves but what they reflect, namely: first, the underlying institutional racism, sexism and other forms of discrimination and inequity which have created barriers to black people, women and people with disabilities developing and realising their potential or having their potential recognised, and second, the failure to tap the potential reservoirs of talent and rich diversity of experience and perspective, which are available within South Africa (UCT 2000: 2). A fundamental goal for achieving equity is to become a truly equal opportunity institution to which all have access and in which all are able to develop their potential irrespective of race, gender, beliefs, sexual orientation and disabilities (2000: 3).

UCT acknowledges that commitment to employment equity across the university has been somewhat uneven and has not always reflected the commitment of top management. This may point to resistance on policy directions from some staff, and may also indicate that staff is sometimes at odds with decisions of top management. It may also be that the condition of communicative praxis is not sufficiently attended to. UCT also acknowledges that mistakes have been made by way of 'fast-tracking' appointees from the designated groups without providing them with adequate training or sufficient time to gain the necessary experience. This, UCT contends, has resulted in delivery being compromised and it also created a negative experience on the part of the 'targeted' employees.

Institutional culture is seen as inhibiting employment equity. UCT's institutional culture is sometimes seen as 'eurocentric', and leads to perceptions of discrimination even where the institution has gone to great lengths to tackle discrimination in its own policies. UCT is concerned that employment equity should not be reduced to 'a numbers game'. How will the institutional culture be changed? UCT's answer is that this needs to be addressed further. A somewhat unsatisfactory answer, I might add. I shall return to institutional culture later on in this section.

Priorities for action are the following areas: improved involvement, responsibility and communication (this addresses my concern raised earlier) around equity; attracting, recruiting and retaining staff from the designated groups; disability; institutional culture; skills development and training; mentoring and supporting staff from the designated groups; evaluation of employment equity initiatives; mainstreaming employment equity; outsourcing and employment equity. Outsourcing may be linked to privatisation, which has been opposed by organised labour groups such as the National Health and Allied Workers Union (Nehawu). Nehawu is the predominant labour union which operates on many university campuses. A well-known position of organised labour is that privatisation shed, rather than create, jobs. The position of the labour movement will be important in UCT's decision to outsource certain portfolios.

#### **4.3.2 UNIVERSITY OF STELLENBOSCH (US)**

The US sees employment equity as one of its strategic priorities, and one of the reasons for its focus is that 'it has to make efficient use of a diverse labour market' (2000: 2). I shall now discuss four aspects of the US policy framework.

*Elimination of unfair discrimination.* The US commits itself to the elimination of all forms of unfair discrimination, be they direct or indirect, and to create a working environment in which opportunities, dealings and expectations are based on practices that are not associated with race, religion, gender, convictions, nor any other arbitrary basis (US 2000: 3). In cases where there is discrimination, it may only be related to the inherent requirements of the job, implementation of the employment equity plan or other legally permissible grounds of justification.

The US projects that unfair discriminatory conditions of service will as far as possible be eliminated by 1 January 2001. This may be a somewhat ambitious goal, as it allows for a very short time-frame to eliminate discriminatory conditions that have been practiced for so long. My contention is that even if the US eliminates all actions that can be construed as discriminatory, it may not lead to an end of discriminatory practices as the latter may manifest in various forms. It may be far more difficult to rid the institution of cultural and racial biases, as these aspects are very difficult to

identify and to deal with. Institutional culture may be an important factor in the elimination of discrimination, and I shall explore this in more detail later.

*Implementation of affirmative action.* Affirmative action itself is not a goal, it is a planned process by which employment equity can be established in the workplace. It is a temporary measure with clear objectives, targets and timeframes (US 2000: 4). The notion of 'critical mass' (which symbolises a staff mix that lends natural momentum to the process of change) is introduced as a suitable strategy for achieving set objectives. The process of target-setting should be designed to ensure that the University attains a balanced staff mix over time. Changes to the staff profile will take place on the understanding that no person may involuntarily lose his or her job purely on the basis of affirmative action; that neither the standards of teaching and research, nor the quality of the University's graduates may be compromised; and that the job holders must be able to deliver the expected work performance and outputs within a contractually agreed adjustment period. I agree that staff must perform. My question is: does 'to deliver the expected work performance' assume that current staff is complying with expected work performance? For instance, what are the work expectations for academic staff, and what happens to those who do not currently perform? There are two factors I wish to raise on this matter. On the one hand, work expectations must be clearly articulated, and should apply to all staff in a similar position, so that uniform criteria apply. On the other hand, subjective factors (such as inclusion/exclusion) may also influence staff performance. It may be one thing to declare in policies that unfair discriminatory practices must be eliminated, but it may be far more difficult to ensure that this is realised at faculty or departmental level. Ultimately, each staff member must co-operate to ensure that policies of the institution are put into effect. But why should they, if their jobs are on the line? The US has addressed this matter by deciding that 'no person may involuntarily lose his or her job purely on the basis of affirmative action' (US 2000: 10). This is a good decision which eliminates any uncertainty around affirmative action.

An objective is that by 31 December 2003 at least 15% of staff at all levels and in all posts must be from the designated groups (meaning Coloured, Indian, Black, and women of all races) subject to certain guidelines (US 2000: 12). Is the target of 15% sufficient to enact educational transformation? A target of 15% from designated

groups (meaning Black) implies that 85% of staff remains White by the end of 2003. My contention is the imperative of equity demands that the status quo (which is predominantly White at the US) cannot remain. While there are factors (such as not enough available qualified Black staff) that inhibit change, I am not convinced that a 15% Black staff component can be sufficient for educational transformation. Such a small Black component may be easily assimilated into existing practices, and may not, as a group, present a real challenge to the status quo.

*Advancement of equal opportunities.* The elimination of unfair discriminating practices and the implementation of affirmative action measures will lead to the creation of a working environment in which equal access will be given to applicants and existing staff (US 2000: 4). 'Equal access' may be an important measure for equity. At the US, it means that blacks should have the same opportunities as whites. The achievement of potential and economic empowerment will be pursued within a framework of equal access to employment, promotion, training and development (US 2000: 4). I see training and development as very important aspects of career advancement, and these should be in place for every post.

*Utilization and management of diversity.* The US strives to develop a working environment and culture that is perceived as non-discriminatory and in which diversity is welcomed (2000: 4). I have already identified citizenship as a logically necessary condition of educational transformation, and it is very important for the cultivation of citizenship that diversity must be attained. I also stated that mutual trust is an important aspect of citizenship. Mutual trust can help to break down prejudice, and finally rid our society of the extreme polarisation that characterised the apartheid era. To this end, the US intends to create a relationship of mutual trust, co-operation and confidence (on the campus). The aim is to integrate diversity with the functions of the university in such a manner that is beneficial to the University.

### **4.3.3 UNIVERSITY OF THE WESTERN CAPE (UWC)**

The UWC plan of October 2000 contains an internal procedure to resolve disputes about the interpretation or implementation of the plan. I think this is very important as it anticipates that the plan may be contested, and it makes provision that differences of



interpretation may be resolved by approved mechanisms. This problem-solving process may bring about better understanding of the policy and enhance implementation.

The UWC plan sets out numerical goals, which may be construed as 'best case' scenarios, where natural attrition of employees and budgetary considerations would be consistent with the projected vacancies to be created over the next five years (the period 1 January 2001 to 31 December 2005). UWC does not indicate how many places will become available through natural attrition, but suggests this as a way of posts becoming available. In the absence of statistics it is very difficult to see if natural attrition can dramatically increase employment equity, and I shall assume that it will not create a significant number of available posts. Natural attrition does, however, provide a viable option for achieving equity. Budgetary constraints may have a far bigger impact on employment equity than natural attrition, and this may delay the achievement of employment equity at UWC.

The plan clearly states that most departments perceive significant short-term financial constraints that would prevent them from making new appointments during the first two years after the Employment Equity Plan has been submitted. It is also expected that suitably qualified persons from designated groups will enter the labour market in increasing numbers. UWC thus projects that most appointments will begin to take effect by year three, with the bulk occurring in years four and five. UWC projects that 10% of their total numerical goals must be achieved in each of the years 2001 and 2002, a further 20% in 2003, a further 25% in 2004, and the final 35% of total numerical goals in 2005.

It is proposed that UWC should aim to employ persons with disabilities totaling 3% of its staff, or 36 persons with disabilities by 2005. This number should reflect as far as possible the proportional breakdown of persons with visual, hearing, physical and other disabilities. Affirmative action measures form an important part of this projection. In the case of each affirmative action measure the responsible line manager(s) must be identified, responsibility assigned and a timeline for execution specified. Affirmative action measures include: where measures are to be implemented in planned phases, milestone dates and outcomes to be achieved by each

date; progress made towards implementation of each measure; reasons for failure to implement any measure or achieve outcomes by their intended date. I agree that affirmative action measures be applied in the appointment of disabled persons. Such a deliberate action is necessary as such appointments have been neglected for so long, and it may serve the useful purpose of fast-tracking such staff.

In conclusion of the discussion of the employment equity plans of the three universities, I shall return to some of the barriers I identify for employment equity, and I shall now examine these. First, there is the issue of *institutional culture*. Here I want to return to 'cultural change' I identified as a constitutive meaning of educational transformation in Chapter 2. Duderstadt (2000: 269) argues that cultural change means that we must transform a set of rigid habits of thought and organisation that are incapable of responding to change rapidly or radically enough. He adds that the transformation of faculty culture is the biggest challenge of all and while policies come and go without disturbing the institution, change happens in the trenches where faculty (meaning academics) and students are involved in the primary functions of teaching and research. My contention is that it is difficult for South African universities to transform without changing the embedded institutional cultures that is so infused by race and gender discrimination. UCT correctly states that underlying institutional racism, sexism and other forms of discrimination and inequity created barriers to Blacks, women and people with disabilities developing and realising their potential or having their potential recognised. The US policy to embrace diversity is a step in the right direction. UWC (where 56% of the student population in 1999 were African) recognises that their institutional culture (dominated by Coloured administrative staff) still represents a barrier to employment equity. To achieve employment equity, policy statements have to be supported and demonstrated especially in the primary functions of a university. My conclusion is that institutional culture can only change if there is a move away from a homogenous staff profile to a more diverse one.

From the plans it appear as if it is not easy to change institutional culture. I shall now explore this further. What is institutional culture? Allen (2003: 61) introduces the notion of 'organisational climate'. He argues that the concept of organisational climate is often conflated with the concept of organisational culture. For purposes of

this discussion I assume that 'organisational' also refers to institutions or universities. Verbeke *et al.* (in Allen 2003: 63) make the following distinction: organisational climate is a reflection of the way people perceive and come to describe the characteristics of their environment, and organisational culture reflects the way things are done in an organisation'. 'The way people perceive' and 'the way things are done' are both applicable to what I understand institutional culture to be. I therefore accept that both 'organisational climate' and 'organisational culture' describe the concept of 'institutional culture'.

Moran and Volkwein (in Allen 2003: 65) describe four conceptual approaches to the concept of organisational climate. First, there is the structural perspective whereby climate is seen as a manifestation of the organisational structures. As members of the organisation are exposed to common structural characteristics, they develop similar perceptions of the organisation. The second perspective of climate views it as a psychologically processed description of organisational conditions as individuals respond in a way which is meaningful to them. It locates climate in the individual rather than in organisational structures. The third approach is the interactive perspective where the interaction of individuals in responding to the same situation is seen as creating shared agreements which become the basis of organisational climate. The final perspective is the cultural one, which is the view that organisational climate is created by a group of interacting individuals who share a common, abstract frame of reference, i.e. the organisation's culture, as they come to term with situational contingencies, such as the demands imposed by organisational conditions. This approach to the origins of climate shifts the focus away from individual perceptions as a source of climate formulation and emphasises the interaction of the organisation's members; a view which it shares with the interactive approach (Moran & Volkwein, in Allen 2003: 66). These four conceptions illustrate the importance of individuals in determining organisational climate. To relate this to the universities relevant to this study, I contend that individuals are largely responsible for perpetuating a specific institutional culture. For instance, where one social group dominates in an institution, those individuals determine, to a large extent, the institutional culture. To effect change, it may be necessary to employ individuals with a different view on how the institution should be organised.

Allen (2003: 66) identifies three dimensions of organisational climate, which I think may shed further light on this discussion. The dimensions are: insecurity versus security, trust versus mistrust, and optimism versus cynicism. While only analysing insecurity versus security, Allen provides useful insights into a very complex concept. Insecurity revolves around job insecurity; the frequency of change initiatives (changes need time to be assimilated); predictability (organisational history do not help people to understand the nature of the changes, or to predict how the changes would affect the organisation, there is also a perception of a threatening and turbulent external environment which leads to a feeling that 'we sink or swim together'). While I have not tested these dimensions on any of the sample institutions, I assume that it may very well apply to this study. For instance, both UCT and the US link affirmative action to job loss or denying jobs to Whites. Having been insulated to a large degree, many staff at HAIs may not understand why change is forced upon them, and they may also not understand the pace of change. On the other hand, interdependence, mutual respect and trust reinforce the levels of security. It is important that people must feel secure, while recognising that no institution in this country is beyond educational transformation.

Second, there is what I want to label '*measure versus target*'. In setting targets for employment, institutions must guard against the target becoming the measure for success. For instance, the Faculty of Education at the US targets one female Black professor by the year 2006. This is a very conservative target, and since the projection has already been met in 2003, it cannot be used as a measure for success. What will the faculty then do in the period 2004-2006? The UWC Faculty of Education targets one African male and one African female at senior academic level for the period 2001-2005. What if they achieve their targets before 2005? My suggestion is that such targets must rather be seen as minimum objectives, and achieving such should encourage institutions to set more aggressive targets.

Third, there is the '*standards*' debate. An employment equity goal of UCT is excellence – to promote the highest achievable standards. In this statement UCT propagates quality as exceptional, and this conception sees quality in terms of 'high' standards (cf. Harvey & Knight 1996: 2-3). UCT maintains that only people who have the competency (not to be equated with formal qualifications) and have the potential

to develop the necessary competence to fulfill at an appropriate standard of performance. The US holds that changes to the staff profile will take place on the understanding that neither the standards of teaching and research, nor the quality of the University's graduates may be compromised. The UWC plan, while referring to quality, does not refer to standards. Since the concept of 'standards' is included in the plans (although meanings are not fully explained), I assume that there exists a conception of standards in these institutions. It is important for employment equity that these conceptions are made known and publicly debated, just to ensure that 'standards' do not become 'double standards' that impact negatively on the process. I am hesitant to introduce 'standards' into the debate on quality, and agree with the Education White Paper 3's conception of quality for 'fitness of purpose'. Here quality only has meaning in relation to the purpose of the product or service, and this notion is quite remote from the idea of quality as something special, distinctive, elitist, conferring status, or difficult to attain (Harvey & Knight 1996: 3).

Fourth, there is *natural attrition*. This means that posts become vacant as a result of people retiring or resigning from their positions. Since it is difficult for institutions to retrench staff and replace them with designated groups, natural attrition becomes an option to explore. The move towards increasing the age of retirement from 60 to 65 at public higher education institutions may result in that fewer positions become available through natural attrition. This measure may therefore not lead to a drastic improvement in employment equity.

Fifth, there are *budgetary constraints*. This may be the single most notable barrier to employment equity. Universities are experiencing reduced income as a result of decreased state subsidy and reduced student numbers. In this climate of financial restructuring, available posts may be recycled or not filled according to available budgets. For example, UWC was forced to offer voluntary severance packages to staff in the late 1990s in order to reduce their expenditure. Since then their student numbers have dropped significantly, and as a result, their state subsidy. I am convinced that the financial squeeze on universities will retard the process of achieving employment equity as there will be less money to spend on new appointments.

Finally, there is the aspect of *interpretation* of policy. The UWC plan makes provision for disputes relating to their plan. Different interpretations by stakeholders may arise because they represent different interests. This makes internal procedures to settle disputes all the more important. The nature of policy is such that ambiguous statements, omissions or even meanings which seem obvious can give rise to different interpretations, and this may surface where a stakeholder interpret it as being detrimental to its members. The sooner disputes can be resolved the better for policy implementation.

Can employment equity plans I discussed in this section lead to educational transformation? I have highlighted barriers that institutions face, and these represent formidable challenges to institutions. Institutional culture has to change for employment equity to succeed, and this aspect deserves much more attention. This section shows that institutions have succeeded in putting in place their equity plans, and this is a very important step on the road to educational transformation. But, can 'plans' alone ensure educational transformation. I shall return to this question after I have analysed strategic plans in the next section.

#### **4.4 STRATEGIC PLANS**

The Education White Paper 3 (1997: 55) introduces the provision of strategic plans as follows: 'The basis for improving public accountability in higher education is making public funding for institutions conditional on their Councils providing strategic plans and reporting their performance against their goals.' Public accountability is cited as the key driver for the submission of strategic plans.

##### **4.4.1 UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN (UCT)**

UCT speaks of a Strategic Planning Framework, meaning that they do not aim for a blueprint of a future UCT, but see the development of planning as a continuous process. UCT recognises that there is a world-wide fundamental change in what is understood to be the business of a university. They refer to the impact of globalisation, and the change from an industrial to a knowledge-based economy which occur in parallel with technological advances in communication. By stating that

‘the university will face increasing competition from other universities, nationally and regionally’ (UCT 1999: 3), and defining their ‘niche’ as their position in the national and internal educational market, UCT indicates its awareness and response to the growing trend of the marketisation of higher education. To this end UCT wants to become a university of international standing that best reflects African capacity for success on its own ground. This vision of being an African university signifies a move away from UCT’s erstwhile image as a White liberal university.

The UCT legacy requires a concerted effort in *redress* of inequities defined by race, gender and class in the higher education sector (1999: 2). Through redress UCT wants to reflect the diversity of African society in all aspects of life.

The document is very strong on *critical inquiry*. The vision is that all UCT graduates should be taught specified key skills in literacy, numeracy, computer-use, communication, and problem solving in the context of academic programmes (1999: 8). This vision addresses the backlog the country has in relation to information technology. Graduates must also be able to think creatively and be adaptable. UCT strives for a strong interdisciplinary focus with traditional disciplinary strengths enhanced by cross-cutting research and teaching.

With regards to *citizenship*, it is stated that the university as a whole is expected to contribute to society by the integration and dissemination of knowledge, by sending able graduates out into the world, by making available the expertise of its staff, and by the publication and application of research findings (1999: 2). This is what is expected of universities, and such a contribution to the human resource needs of the country is very necessary.

#### **4.4.2 UNIVERSITY OF STELLENBOSCH (US)**

My scrutiny of the Strategic Framework of the US (2000) reveals a total absence of the concept of ‘transformation’. Concepts such as ‘positioning’, ‘changing’, ‘reposition’, ‘redesign’, ‘self-renewal’, ‘self-scrutiny’, ‘reassessment’ are prevalent in the text, but ‘transformation’ does not appear even once. What does it mean? The seminal policy documents (Education White Paper 3 and the NPHE) revolve largely

around the concept 'transformation' and the logically necessary conditions which underscore its application in higher education. Given the historical and political background of the University of Stellenbosch, there seems to exist a subtle reluctance to use the concept. My inference is that it seems as if transformation used in policy documents might not necessarily be commensurate with the institutions 'positioning' in terms of the changes which currently transpire in higher education.

There is an unmistakable awareness of globalisation in the University's document. When the institution declares its vision for the future as 'the advancement of knowledge entrepreneurship' (US 2000: 12), is it announcing its support for the marketisation of higher education? It may be so, since 'market' or 'entrepreneurial' university means the same (Subotzky 1999: 401), and increasingly serves private sector interests. A strategic priority is to concentrate on meeting the demands of the information and knowledge society. A focus for repositioning here is the delivery of graduates who have a suitable level of professional competence in market-related areas (US 2000: 15). The university wants to achieve international recognition, and wants to become 'a strongly research orientated university, sought-after for the training of quality researchers, who are acknowledged as world leaders of research in selected niche areas' (2000: 12).

#### **4.4.2.1 Equity and Redress**

Equity, in bringing about a corps of excellent students, academic and administrative staff members that is demographically more representative of South African society, must be fundamental to all our actions including our redress of the inequalities of the past and our repositioning of the University for the future (US 2000: 10).

The US acknowledges its contribution to the injustices of the past, and therefore commits itself to appropriate redress and development initiatives. Redress involves all aspects of the University, and sees its commitment to achieving equity as major instruments in its efforts to redress its contribution to past injustices. In commitment to equity, the University acknowledges the following (2000: 16-17): (a) The academic backlogs – due to historical disadvantages – not only at the University itself, but also in the schooling system, require the extension of existing academic support



programmes at the University; (b) the need for demographic broadening of the University calls for a sustained critical appraisal of its accessibility. Redress requires a proactive approach in regard to both the student body and the staff body. Equity considerations as well as the national policy framework make it essential to expedite redress feasibly – through new appointments at staff level; (c) a need for active recruitment at the schools of educationally disadvantaged communities; and, (d) the university commits itself to carry through appropriate redress and development actions on a continuous basis.

#### **4.4.2.2 Critical inquiry**

Scholarship is an important concept for the University, and the plan emphasises critical thinking. This is evident from the following: ‘Our research, teaching, community service, and management must be characterized by the kind of objectivity and critical thinking that is intrinsic to excellent scholarly and scientific practice’ (US 2000: 10). Strategic priorities are the ‘creative, critical and innovative interaction with knowledge’, and ‘fostering and continuously strengthening a scientific approach to problem solving and critical thought and independent judgement’ (2000: 10).

#### **4.4.2.3 Communicative praxis**

The US values transparency, and states that decisions must be based on considerations that are clear and that are known (US 2000: 10). This can be interpreted that decisions must be communicated clearly to the university community, and that such transparency can build understanding. It is good that transparency can be institutionalised, as it builds confidence in the workings of the institution. What I find very interesting is that the US intends to decentralise decision-making, a move that may free the top executive from being involved in decisions which can be taken elsewhere. I also see this as building institutional democracy, in that more people will share in decision-making. Such short decision-making processes, the US contend, based on effective communication systems, is taken in support of better teaching and learning (2000: 13).

In obtaining a corps of people who are vision-driven, motivated and competent, two priorities are mentioned by the US: (1) the management and utilisation of a broadening diversity, and (2) the development of effective communication and mutual trust, notably between the academic and administrative staff (2000: 17). I regard diversity is a key outcome of educational transformation, and this may be realised by a change in student demographics.

#### **4.4.2.4 Citizenship**

An important statement by the US on citizenship is that ‘we must respect the differences between personal beliefs, between points of view, and between cultural forms of expression. We must strive to foster an institutional culture that is conducive to tolerance and to respect for fundamental human rights and that creates an appropriate environment for teaching, learning and research’ (US 2000: 10). Respect and tolerance are key aspects of citizenship, and I have discussed these concepts in Chapter 2. The US links tolerance to institutional culture, and this shows a shift from an apartheid past to an institution that now encourages respect for differences. This is good for the institution, as it prepares its staff and students for a broader, multi-cultural society. The university acknowledges institutional culture as a factor in accessibility. Accordingly, it commits itself as to an ongoing and critical appraisal of its institutional culture and of the implications of that culture for accessibility (2000: 20). Issues that already receive attention are the language question, and diversification.

#### **4.4.3 UNIVERSITY OF THE WESTERN CAPE (UWC)**

The *Draft Strategic Plan* (dated 21 November 2000) sketches UWC’s assessment of the external environment, which influences the institution’s strategic direction. UWC identifies two main external forces: globalisation as a world trend accelerated by information technology, and national transformation. Potentially dangerous conflicts of purpose between the two sets of demands are articulated as follows: (1) globalisation favours technological solutions while national transformation requires widespread creation of jobs, (2) globalisation requires high levels of education and cutting edge research while national transformation requires massive extension of

literacy and numeracy, (3) globalisation is associated with international commerce while national transformation must place the poor high on the agenda (2000: 12). For me, this analysis highlights the tension between meeting global and national demands. This tension may be more dramatic for HDIs (as a result of historic underfunding) than for HAIs. HDIs generally, and UWC in particular, have not focused as much on research as HAIs. This does not mean that there were no research conducted at UWC, but it means that the research focus is not on par with that of some HAIs.

UWC further argues that strategic plans are developed so they can be implemented, and calls for action which is not all radical (UWC 2000: 9). They suggest it is helpful to think of action under three heads: improvement, adaptation and change. Improvement is organic. It is strategically important, UWC states (2000: 9), to foster ongoing improvement through critical self-review and other quality promotion measures. Adaptation is creative response to new circumstances (2000: 9). Managed, strategic adaptation may give new edge to research and teaching in relation to developments in the society or the environment. This may involve restructuring to bring about greater efficiency, but this will not be a simple response to immediate market demand. According to UWC, change used in the plan is more radical, and derives from a sense that the present situation is unsatisfactory in some significant way. Action on the plan may build common purpose, improve accountability (both internally and externally), and further the aspiration to excellence (2000: 9).

#### **4.4.3.1 Equity and redress**

A core value of UWC states that 'we value diversity and are committed to equity and fairness' (UWC 2000: 8). Equity is discussed in the plan by arguing that the state wishes to broaden access as an equity measure and to expand access to meet human resources needs. Neither goal, UWC asserts, is easily attained. Institutions cannot afford to carry students who do not pay their fees, so, unless there is a major expansion of student financial aid, the vast majority of students from disadvantaged communities will have no chance of obtaining a higher education qualification (2000: 14). UWC raises a further issue: to admit students from poorer schooling backgrounds is one thing; putting them in a position to succeed – giving them epistemological

access – is quite another (2000: 14-15). UWC considers broadening access as a costly measure.

UWC provides invaluable insights into what I consider to be the real thrust of student equity – that of providing students from disadvantaged backgrounds an opportunity to study and, importantly, to succeed at an institution of higher learning. It is clear that UWC cannot cope with increasing student debt which impacts negatively on the vision for equity.

#### **4.4.3.2 Critical Inquiry**

UWC realises that higher education has to equip graduates to maintain the broad national vision while addressing the issues and opportunities raised by globalisation. UWC wants to enhance its reputation as a research training institution which actively contributes to the production, dissemination and application of advanced knowledge (2000: 18). Critical outcomes are listed as: (1) a productive culture, (2) significant development of research competence and expertise, (3) significant increase in Higher Degrees and research training, (4) significant income generation from research, and (5) collaborative research teams.

UWC also intends to create and maintain a critical teaching and learning environment offering undergraduate, professional, and postgraduate programmes of the highest quality (2000: 19). They list critical outcomes in this regard as (1) an effective teaching and learning plan, (2) a hospitable teaching environment and teaching support, (3) effective academic reviews, (4) fit between course, educational approaches and desired outcomes, (5) satisfactory success ratios at various levels, and (6) community service learning agreements.

UWC concludes that the marketisation of higher education is likely to lead to a preference for research with precisely measurable outcomes, within a tight timeframe, carrying external funding support, which may potentially undermine the long-term basis for research excellence (2000: 14). It seems as if UWC is concerned that

marketisation may be negative for basic or traditional<sup>1</sup>, university research. Bawa and Mouten (2002: 315) argue along similar lines, and they observe that there been a move away from basic and fundamental research towards the support of strategic, applied and product-related research. There are clear indications that there is a redistribution of research resources towards the applied and product-related end of the spectrum, and this reflects that drive towards responding to local needs and to global changes in knowledge systems (2002: 316). Taking these into account, UWC's concern seems to be legitimate.

#### **4.4.3.3 Communicative Praxis**

UWC boldly states that universities are unquestionably accountable to the general public for the appropriate and efficient use of state funds. They are also accountable (UWC argues) for the quality and efficiency of work done in their name, to students and graduates, to the internal academic community, to institutional partners, and to supporters in the donor community. Willing accountability is likely to meet all such demands as well as signaling a respect for partners (2000: 8). UWC strives for excellent communication and marketing, which arises from the understanding that communication and marketing is a team effort (2000: 11).

#### **4.4.3.4 Citizenship**

In its Mission Statement UWC declares that drawing on its proud experience in the liberation struggle, the university is aware of a distinctive academic role in helping build an equitable and dynamic society (UWC 2000: 3). As part of its core values, UWC wants to cultivate a socially responsive, people-centred approach to education, and expect high standards of integrity, ethics and respect from staff and students

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<sup>1</sup> The following are the official Frascati definitions: Basic research: Original investigation with the primary aim of developing more complete knowledge or understanding of the subject(s) under study. Fundamental research: Basic research carried out without working for long-term economic or social benefits other than the advancement of knowledge, and no positive efforts being made to apply the results to practical problems or to transfer the results to sectors responsible for their application. Strategic research: Basic research carried out with the expectation that it will produce a broad base of knowledge likely to form the background to the solution of recognised current or future practical problems. Applied research: Original investigation undertaken in order to acquire new knowledge, and directed primarily towards specific practical aims or objectives such as determining possible uses for findings of basic research or solving already recognised problems (Bawa & Mouton 2002: 315).

(2000: 8). It also wants administrative improvement to reflect respect for students as clients, and strives for a vigorous cultural programme which must reflect the diversity of the campus community (2000: 11).

This concludes my analysis of the strategic plans of the three institutions. Thus far I have analysed institutional plans of the three universities regarding their pronouncements on logically necessary conditions of educational transformation I have constructed. From the analyses of institutional plans I have gained insight and understanding in how the institutions have positioned themselves vis-à-vis educational transformation. My concern now is: What do people at these institutions think about the transformation of their institutions? Also, more broadly, what do others think about the extent to which institutional plans can enact educational transformation? In a way I was concerned that the picture painted by the institutional plans may be too clinical, and may lean towards satisfying policy requirements as demanded by government. My analyses of institutional plans thus far were in essence analyses of documents. Now that I have a clear sense of what these plans entail, I shall extend my study to an empirical investigation. The purpose is to reinforce or consolidate my document analyses.

#### **4.5 NARRATIVE CONSTRUCTIONS OF EDUCATIONAL TRANSFORMATION**

Instead of labeling this section just 'case studies' I opted, following Brain Fay for calling it 'narrative constructions'. Narratives are constructed, not discovered; are creations after the fact when one can assign – from one's own perspective – particular roles in particular stories to the various events and relationships of persons' lives (Fay 1996: 190). Narrative constructions in this study are in essence voices; the stories of people. I obtain these narrative constructions from interviews with people, so I conceptualise my interview accounts in terms of narrative. Somers and Gibson (in Lawler 2002: 243) call this 'conceptual narrativity'.

Lawler (2002: 242) is not using 'narrative' to indicate a 'story' that simply 'carries' a set of 'facts'. Rather, he regards narratives as social products constructed by people within the context of specific social, historical and cultural locations. He suggests that

narratives do not originate with the individual: rather they circulate culturally to provide a repertoire (though not an infinite one) from which people can produce their own stories. For Lawler stories that circulate culturally provide a means of making sense of the world, and also provide the materials with which people construct personal narratives as a means of constructing personal identities. Lawler also argues that narratives - which he defines as accounts which contain transformation (change over time), some kind of 'action' and characters, all of which are brought together within an overall 'plot' - are a central means with which people connect together past and present, self and other (2002: 242). It is interesting that Lawler should provide a conceptual link between 'narrative' and 'transformation'; it fits in very well with this study. His argument that narratives may change over time also suggests that people may have different stories to tell depending on the circumstances. Therefore the narrative accounts in this study may be quite different a few years down the line.

Importantly for the methodology of this study, Lawler posits that research which explores the narratives people produce will necessarily be interpretivist in nature: it will work from the basic premise that individuals and groups interpret the social world and their place in it (2002: 243). Firstly he links narratives with the central theme of this study, then he links it with the research methodology of this study. Conveniently, both these factors provide further justification for the method, methodology and focus of this study.

Iris Marion Young (1996: 131-32) further explores the connection between storytelling and the social world, and she makes three observations about narratives. First, narrative reveals the particular experiences of those in social relations, experiences that cannot be shared by those situated differently but they must understand in order to do justice to others. Second, narrative reveals a source of values, culture, and meaning. Narratives can serve to explain to outsiders what practices, places, or symbols mean to the people who hold them. Third, narrative not only exhibits experience and values from the point of view of the subjects that have and hold them, it also reveals a total social knowledge from the point of view of that social person.

I now consider whether ‘case studies’ and ‘narratives’ are the same. In the opening paragraph I mentioned case studies, and then went on to explore some theoretical underpinnings of narratives. I think that narratives or narrative constructions can result from case studies. For instance, I use elements of the case study (interviews, triangulation, interview questions) in order to obtain narrative constructions. Stake (2000: 435) makes the point that case study is not a methodological choice of what is to be studied. By whatever methods, we choose to study the case. We could study it analytically or holistically, entirely by repeated measures or hermeneutically, organically or culturally, and by mixed methods – but we concentrate on the case. For purposes of this study the case is a university, and the method I use is the narrative. I concur with Stake (1995: 39) that the uniqueness of individual cases are important to understanding. In looking at each case I want to further my understanding of the phenomenon of educational transformation, and again I concur with Stake (1995: 43) when he states that phenomena are intricately related through many coincidental actions and that understanding them requires looking at a wide sweep of contexts: temporal and spatial, historical, political, economic, cultural, social, and personal.

I shall now explain two important elements of the empirical study, that being triangulation and interviewing.

#### **4.5.1 Triangulation**

Stake (2000: 443) observes that to reduce the likelihood of misinterpretation, researchers employ various procedures, two of the most common being redundancy of data gathering and procedural challenges to explanations. These procedures are generally called triangulation. It is generally considered a process of using multiple perceptions to clarify meaning, verifying the repeatability of an observation or interpretation. Acknowledging that no observations or interpretations are perfectly repeatable, triangulation also serves to clarify meaning by identifying different ways the phenomenon is being seen. In this study I decided to conduct interviews, and by way of triangulation provided respondents with transcriptions to afford them an opportunity to censor the data.



#### 4.5.2 Interviewing

Interviews are one of the most important sources of case study information (Tellis 1997: 9). Yet, Fontana and Frey (2000: 645) contend, asking questions and getting answers is a much harder task than it may seem at first. They observe that the spoken or written word always has a residue of ambiguity, no matter how carefully we word the questions and carefully we report or code the answers. Despite this Fontana and Frey regard interviewing as one of the most common and powerful ways in which we try to understand our fellow human beings.

If interviewing is a powerful way to understand fellow human beings, then the relationship between the interviewer and interviewee can also be interpreted as a relationship of power. As Reynolds (2002: 303) notes, at a very basic level power may be vested with the researcher in terms of the design, implementation and the final reporting of the data. However, the research participant also exercises power in terms of actively selecting the information they will make available to the researcher during the interview. According to Foucault (1994: 340) the exercise of power is not simply a relationship between 'partners', 'individuals', individual or collective; it is a way in which some act on others. He also states that power exists only as exercised by some on others, only when it is put into action, which means that power is not a matter of consent. The next paragraph demonstrates the power of the researcher, which I attempted to balance by providing each interviewee an opportunity to censor the transcription of their interview.

In this study I decided to interview individuals from each of the universities in question, so I opted for face-to-face, verbal interchange. I selected individuals from three categories, management/departmental head, worker/staff union member, and student, and decided to interview at least two (possibly three) persons from each institution. In addition to obtaining voices from the universities, I also approached individuals attached to three agencies separate from the universities, but with a stake or interest in higher education. I managed to interview persons from the following agencies: Centre for Higher Education Transformation (CHET), the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC), and the South African Universities Vice-Chancellors Association (SAUVCA). I set out to interview at least ten people (which I achieved),

and informed them beforehand that I would record the interview, and also gave them the guiding questions well before the interview to give them time to prepare themselves.

The following are the interview questions (which extend my research question):

1. Do you think institutional plans (three-year rolling, strategic, and employment equity) are necessary to ensure transformation?
2. Do you think the plans are sufficient?
3. Do you envisage hindrances? And what are they?
4. Do you think substantive progress has been made thus far vis-à-vis transformation?

The remainder of this section is devoted to a discussion of the narrative constructions. I discuss the universities in the same order as I did in the previous sections, and refer to 'other voices' (that of outside agencies) last. To get a more coherent picture, I deal with each question separately. I refrain from using names in my discussion, and resort to calling them respondents.

#### **4.5.3 DO YOU THINK INSTITUTIONAL PLANS (THREE-YEAR ROLLING, STRATEGIC AND EMPLOYMENT EQUITY) ARE NECESSARY TO ENSURE TRANSFORMATION?**

##### **4.5.3.1 UCT**

**Respondent 1:** 'What happens is that UCT is experiencing what we call the revolving door syndrome, as soon as we get people they don't last very long. So there is still a long way to go in terms of making these plans realise their targets. There's a lot of pressure on making these equity appointments. The university has amazing difficulty of actually filling posts with Black, African people. And so, you're asking the question is it necessary, they're absolutely essential.'

**Respondent 2:** 'I think these plans are necessary. For any sort of change, you've got to have plans. Few things would probably get done without plans, more so with change management. I also think that change which relates to communal behavioural issues, doesn't come from within the individual, it has to be socially engineered.'

#### 4.5.3.2 US

**Respondent 1:** ‘I think that there is a need to have a structural framework within which higher education transformation can occur. These plans are some of the pillars which are provided in terms of fundamental change. Obviously, unless some institutions are forced to transform, they will probably not transform. So these requirements are important, it forces the institution to think in a particular framework, and to be clear about objectives which are linked to transformation. But one can also just go through the motions in terms of complying, while not fundamentally changing. But I think in the long run at an institution such as Stellenbosch we need formal requirements to ensure that they move in the right direction.’

**Respondent 2:** Wat nou gebeur op kampus het ons al die jare voor gevra. Maar nou dat sekere wette in plek is, besef ‘n mens al hoe meer dat, hoewel daar transformasie is, is dit transformasie wat baie na aan ‘window dressing’ kan kom. Vanuit ‘n Vakbond oogpunt gesien. Daar is definitief verskansing, maar dit word nie duidelik gesê nie. Dat daar transformasie is, ja, want die wet vereis dit. Maar dat die transformasie stadig is, die rat kom stadig in plek, dit is so. As ek byvoorbeeld dink aan ander universiteite, soos Kaapstad en die Wes-Kaap het hulle byvoorbeeld hierdie transformasie komitees gehad. Die Universiteit van Stellenbosch het dit doodeenvoudig net geïgnoreer.’ (What is happening now on campus is what we have asked for all these years. But now that certain systems are in place, one realise more and more that though there is transformation, it is very close to window-dressing, and that is from a union’s perspective. Although it is not stated openly, there is definitely entrenchment. Yes, there is transformation, because it is required by law. But it is also clear that transformation is very slow. If I think about UCT and UWC, they had transformation committees, but Stellenbosch totally ignored those committees.)

**Respondent 3:** ‘Yes I think it is important for a number of reasons, one is for sound planning. I think it’s also necessary for the university to show its commitment to transformation, to put it on paper, to say this is where we stand, this is where we want to go, this is how we’re going to get there. A third possible reason is that it is a way to get all the stakeholders for e.g., staff, management, students, and all societies involved in transformation.’

### 4.5.3.3 UWC

**Respondent 1:** 'In your plans you will be able to know whether you are actually planning for transformation. But plans are not sufficient. You also need to continuously monitor and evaluate how far you have come in terms of the goals you have set. You must do it on an annual basis. And you must align and adjust as you go on. You've got to ensure transformation, you've got to monitor it.'

**Respondent 2:** 'It is very necessary because ultimately it needs to give some direction. I think basically these plans are put into place to ensure that an institution achieves its purpose in society, and that it remains relevant in the context it finds itself. Now the playing fields have been leveled, and if we are going to make a contribution to the post-apartheid era, we have to adapt these plans and necessary mechanisms, and even to legislation to make it applicable to ultimately achieve our niche in higher education.'

### 4.5.3.4 OTHER VOICES

**Respondent 1:** 'There's a very rationalist assumption regarding transformation. One is that change will happen through policy, which assumes that you will formulate a policy, it will be accepted, it will then be implemented. There is a sequence to it. And to some extent the same logic underlies plans. Assuming that you can make rational plans, there is a set of implementation measures and then you can evaluate whether you brought about change or not. I think that institutions are finding it is quite easy to develop general plans, it is much more difficult to develop specific plans. And in terms of that you've got to look at new stuff what people are writing about symbolic policy, I think there are also symbolic plans. A lot of these plans are simply signaling, and institutions are signaling to government as well to the constituencies their intention to change. Since these plans never really involved detail implementation plans, I wonder if they serve any purpose beyond the symbolic, beyond symbols. There are four kinds of plans. But one category of plans is simply political, to satisfy, to obtain political legitimacy. And that raises a question as to whether there is any intention beyond that.'

**Respondent 2:** 'They are required, and institutions don't have much choice, they have to demonstrate that they comply with particular policy requirements. I got the

feeling that in putting together 3 year-rolling plans institutions were under pressure to be seen, to be fulfilling these particular bureaucratic requirements. In that respect I got the feeling that 3-year rolling plans were put together with a specific agenda in mind. ... the institutions are trying to impress the department, this is what they are doing. This is an entitlement, this gives the impression that they are in line as far as national priorities are concerned. But I got the feeling that the undercurrent was something else. I'll be blunt here, I don't have faith in 3-year rolling plans, I think they are documents that are hastily put together because the Department of Education's Higher Education Information Management Systems wants data. There is a discourse now of managerialism, and I see 3-year rolling plans as documents that serve that managerial discourse. If you look at how universities go about now choosing Vice-Chancellors, they want project managers, people with project management skills. I don't negate these rolling plans, or despise them, I just think they need to be interrogated. Strategic plans (SPs) need to be radical, introspective, candid, and honest about the way things ought to be run. SPs ought to engender radical change. Employment equity: Where are the Black academics? My concern is that academic staff continues to be predominantly White. You can't address equity without capacity-building, in terms of ensuring that there is a regular flow of Black, previously disadvantaged, more especially women.'

**Respondent 3:** 'It is important that institutions ensure that whatever plans and policies they have in relation to transformation, that it fits in with national goals and objectives as outlined by the National Plan For Higher Education (NPHE). It is important because it provides an opportunity, but also provides the institution with a focus in terms of actually rethinking, re-orientating and re-energising itself in terms of the role it should be playing as a university within a society that is transforming and changing. And I think it is important, given our past, that there has to be a formal, planned and constructive way to redesign higher education, so that it really responds to the needs of the people that we serve. Dealing with that, I think it is important that institutions at different levels make sure they have the strategic focus areas which form part of their mission, and also translate that into plans. The importance here for me is that there's always a danger that plans can become dead documents. It should be something that's workable, that's realistic, that has specific time-frames. And also in terms of a process, it goes through a continuous review, so that institutions can determine at different levels where they're at, how they're doing, where they require

improvements, what the strengths are, and how responsive they are. I think generally the notion of plans are good, it's the same with policies, but as they say the devil is always in the detail, and how those are implemented. The operationalisation of those policies and plans, and that pose the biggest challenge for these institutions and for institutions in general.'

#### 4.5.4 DO YOU THINK THE PLANS ARE SUFFICIENT?

##### 4.5.4.1 UCT

**Respondent 1:** 'Clearly not, I think there are big challenges here. The success of these plans is what one needs to comment on. Clearly, these plans have not succeeded. The fact that we have so few Black members of staff is a major concern. So these plans need to be supplemented or revised in one or way or another. It's not clear to me right now how one does that.'

**Respondent 2:** 'By a far cry, no. And we have much experience with that at UCT, to the point that it (UCT) became infamous in terms of policy formulation, and for its failure in implementation. There is the issue of institutional culture that has to experience genuine change. Rolling plans, strategic plans, and employment equity plans at UCT have not lived up to much over the last few years.'

##### 4.5.4.2 US

**Respondent 1:** 'No, I don't think so. There needs to be a commitment, and that commitment must be expressed and lived out in terms of implementing a particular vision. No, I don't think the plans are sufficient, we need to do much more. You must also remember that plans are just plans, they still need to be implemented; how they're implemented and the speed with which they're implemented depends for instance on resources. Now my sense is there has not been a ground swell of commitment towards fundamental and rapid change. So there need to be interventions in addition to these plans.'

**Respondent 2:** 'Ek dink ja. Die planne wat in plek is is deurtrapte planne van meeste van die rolspelers van die universiteit. Of die planne voldoende is? Dit is 'n ope vraag, want daar is salarisagterstande, byvoorbeeld, wat aangespreek moet word.' (I

think yes. The plans in place have been negotiated by all university stakeholders. Are the plans sufficient? It is an open question, as there are salary backlogs, for instance, that have to be addressed.)

**Respondent 3:** ‘There are two main problems: Firstly the process is just as important as the plans. The process that is used in drawing up the plans are just as important as the plans themselves: They have to be inclusive, transparent and make an effort to bring people on board. Secondly, there is needed what is called a ‘hartsverandering’ or a change of heart.’ She added: ‘Recent incidences such as racism, and even worse, attempts to cover up show that a lot more needs to be done.’

#### 4.5.4.3 UWC

**Respondent 1:** ‘Attitude is important, attitude to make those plans work. You need commitment to make those plans work, to support the plan. It’s useless to have the best plans in the world, and you cannot actually put it, practically put it down in terms of what you want. The plan is just a paper exercise, it’s what you put on paper, what you want to do. The implementation and operationalisation of those plans are vital. Attitude and the mindset for transformation are very important.’

**Respondent 2:** ‘Plans are one thing, policies are one thing, but the functionality or the implementation of those plans is crucial to achieve the objectives. So it’s important that people are made aware of these plans, and what role do we want to play in society. We can have the grandest of plans, but if they are not implementable or if they don’t address the issues then obviously they will not be successful. The leadership of an institution has to ensure that these plans are carried through, which is a major aspect of transforming an institution.’

#### 4.5.4.4 OTHER VOICES

**Respondent 1:** ‘The second problem that I have with these plans is that these plans are often written in a great rush by leadership. And the people who have to implement the plan are not part of it, or don’t buy into it in the first place. So you have a problem that you end up with. The people who actually got to do it are the ones who are not part of the plan, and who therefore also don’t see the actual need to do it, and if there isn’t an implementation plan worked out for them why should they do it? So I think

planning is a step towards transformation, but nothing more, and that factors like finances, the market, changing circumstances will impede on plans. Then you have the problem of what is called ‘strong and weak institutions’ – managerially and academically. Institutions with strong academic cultures are very resistant to planning, and will only implement what they want to because they are independent, and are linked to international networks sufficiently. On the other side, you find institutions which are weak managerially, or weak academically. They often accept the plans, but they don’t have the capacity to implement it. And then it still depends, a plan always has a better chance of success when it articulates the interest of the implementers. Then the problem of transformation with equity is it doesn’t coincide with the interest of the implementers, it is against the interest of the implementers. So in a contradictory way once you’ve got enough black students in an institution you almost solved the equity problem. And they will then implement the equity policy. But you almost have to partially solve the equity problem before you can actually get there. And there’s also the problem of planning in higher education institutions, where it works different than in business. Institutional culture is a big thing. If you have a compliant culture then the institutional planning and management may actually be more successful. So I would say that planning is one of the conditions for transformation, but is not a sufficient condition. It may actually enable an institution to avoid transforming.’

**Respondent 2:** ‘Whatever I have said speaks to 2, because I have a mixed response. There is some substance in some plans. Although there is managerial pressure, they are necessary as there is a bureaucratic requirement. There is a need for institutional plans, a need for structured plans.’

**Respondent 3:** ‘I suppose in terms of content and objectives it covers the issues, the important areas, which speak to national policy goals and objectives. But again, I would stress the importance of ensuring that the objectives and the deliverables, the outcomes are realisable and do-able, and are linked to specific-time-frames. The biggest problem that we have experienced in the sector is the question of policy overload, of people getting so caught up in the fads of strategic planning and processes that they actually ignore the actual implementation thereof, or don’t really pay much attention to that. And also, sometimes they’re not realistic with the goals they set for themselves. We have recognised that there’s huge capacity gaps in the system, there’s limited resources, and really the skilling of people at different levels is



problematic, problems with governance at institutions, those are issues that we picked up. And also the fact that with the restructuring agenda as driven by government, it puts even more strain on the system, already management, leadership levels are very thinly spread. And to expect people to go into a restructuring, changing mode and still carry on with the core business, the day-to-day functions of the institutions are asking a bit much. My sense would be that plans are important, they provide us with route markers, provide us with a guide and direction, give us a sense of where we need to go and how we need to get there. But for me the more important thing would be: How does one implement it? How does one ensure that you deliver as you anticipated?’

#### **4.5.5 DO YOU ENVISAGE HINDRANCES? AND WHAT ARE THEY?**

##### **4.5.5.1 UCT**

**Respondent 1:** ‘We are looking at structural issues here on this campus that reflect deep organisational and traditional heritages that you’re not easily going to shift. So you’re looking at deep structural issues, and these issues tie in very well with cultural capital. And this is in strong alignment with what might one call the social capital. And the social capital of the White intellectual here is essentially the social capital of the reproduction of advantage. People will want to preserve and reproduce their advantage. We have on this campus a pretty big contingent of people who are European ... And they have no imagination outside of that social and cultural capital. So there isn’t a clear right of passage to produce an intellectual, and the black intellectual needs a longer road.’

**Respondent 2:** ‘At UCT the aspect of excellence is an issue that has been juxtaposed around transformation. It is my opinion that the establishment at UCT has their own construction of what is excellent, and it does not coincide with what is African. Another hindrance is aspect of buy-in. There is a great tendency among your Coloured population, for instance, to happily fit into the mainstream without wanting the mainstream to change itself.’

#### 4.5.5.2 US

**Respondent 1:** ‘Just in the first instance I thought what we’re using as a term in our Employment Equity Plan at Stellenbosch is we prefer to speak of ‘obstacles’ rather than ‘hindrances’. We are not lacking a vision, we do have that, but buying into the vision, supporting it and championing the vision in an honest and enthusiastic way, that is the key. You need adequate resources to sustain the implementation of fundamental change. So resources might be an obstacle, institutional culture might be an obstacle in terms of, I think, many students and staff might be arguing well it’s always been like this, it’s always been done in a particular manner, so it has stood the test of time, whereas there may be an unwillingness to question and to debate and to look for different ways of dealing with certain issues.’

**Respondent 2:** ‘Die enigste hindernis is die menslike factor. Daar is tog mense, en al wil ‘n mens dit nou nie eintlik sê nie is dit so, daar is steeds mense wat progressie by die Universiteit probeer stuit. Dit is soos om ‘n rivier wat deur sy walle breek, met jou vingers te probeer keer. Dit gaan doodeenvoudig net gebeur. Ek dink ook daar moet strafmaatreëls wees vir mense wat die prosesse probeer stuit, of struikelblokke in die pad probeer sit.’ (The human factor presents the only hindrance. There are people, and one don’t actually want to mention it, who still try to prevent progression at the university. But it is like trying to prevent a river breaking through its walls with your fingers. It will happen. I just think there must be penalties for people who try to prevent processes, or try to put impediments in the way.)

**Respondent 3:** ‘I see two main problems. First there is a growing gap between management and the rest of the university. The second problem is the institutional culture. This university is White, male, Afrikaans and Christian dominated. People (including Council) needs to start thinking in terms of a completely new paradigm, not simply shuffling the deckchairs.’

#### 4.5.5.3 UWC

**Respondent 1:** ‘One of the hindrances is funding. At our institution, for argument’s sake, there could be a funding problem to ensure transformation. Transformation of staff is another issue. If you haven’t got funding, you’ve got to look at mobility of staff and potential retirees or people who go into retirement the next four years, and

then plan accordingly. And then replace those people in terms of your transformation philosophy, your transformation plan.’ He added: ‘the other part that you could possibly look into is how many people, Black staff, professionals of this institution went to another institution that tried to transform.’

**Respondent 2:** ‘One of the major hindrances, it is my observation, is that you would find some staff may be unhappy about how employment equity may unfold. The university has a particular objective it wants to accomplish, it is male dominated, so Coloured males may be unhappy, may feel threatened that if they would apply for jobs they may not be successful. The other hindrance I perceive would be the issue of plans being formulated or implemented without the participation of the labour movement, which is a big stakeholder on campus. The new buzzword in HE is the contentious issue of managerialism. It’s not only your academia that revolt against it, but also your workforce.’

#### 4.5.5.4 OTHER VOICES

**Respondent 1:** ‘I think the main hindrances are firstly often a lack of participation by the implementers in the plans. Secondly, the fact that the plans often don’t coincide with the interest of people who’re going to implement it. And thirdly, higher education institutions are not institutions that are easily amenable to planning. And to some extent one should be pleased with that, because otherwise what is the difference between higher education and South African Breweries?’

**Respondent 2:** ‘You know there is the discourse of mergers. I think until such a time that the status quo in terms of demographics and representivity is dealt with, we cannot rule out a strong possibility of hindrances. But we had a stage of policy development, now we have to take it further. So we have a lot of ideological talk, but these are words. It would be naive to expect transformation to be a smooth way. For some the pace may be too quick, but we have to work through these issues. To come back to mergers, it is a battlefield where ideologies meet. So it is not advisable to ignore hindrances.’

**Respondent 3:** ‘The biggest challenge for these institutions would be the question of organisational culture. But I think the thing that doesn’t come through for me is they haven’t created a safe place, a safe environment for students from non-traditional backgrounds going to those institutions feel that they’re part. They’re assimilated into

those systems very quickly, and form part of the organisational culture and life. I think that is one of the most crucial things from a student's point of view, when accessing higher education. With Stellenbosch in particular I get the sense that very little has been done in terms of that, in ensuring that students find a home within the institution and feel that they're part of the culture, that they don't feel left out, and alienated because of language or culture or gender or some of the other issues. I think also what concerns me about these institutions is the lack of Black academia. The fact that young Black professionals are not constantly been encouraged to stay, through planning or whatever methods incentivised to make a career in higher education. Institutions, especially Historically Advantaged Institutions like UCT and Stellenbosch should really look at creating opportunities for young, aspiring academics to come through the ranks, to be given the kind of support and incentives to make a career in academia and higher education. For me those are some of the biggest concerns. Transformation, in my view, is a lot like quality. What perturbs me a lot about the way people approach quality in institutions these days, it's almost that quality is an add-on. Whereas quality should actually undergird and drive everything we do in higher education because that ensures that we provide our students with the best possible results given our resources. I think transformation is the same, it's not just about complying with policy and legislation, and think this is a burden and setting up a structure where the issues are dealt with. For me it is something that should be approached in a holistic and integrated way, and should be driven by the various levels and stakeholders within the organisation. If there are any hindrances, that may have been the biggest hindrance at all institutions, that is that transformation is just another policy initiative. There are also global realities and imperatives that face us, that also drive education at a macro level and those also influence the way we respond, and handle ourselves as higher education institutions.'

#### **4.5.6 DO YOU THINK SUBSTANTIVE PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE THUS FAR VIS-À-VIS TRANSFORMATION?**

##### **4.5.6.1 UCT**

**Respondent 1:** 'It's quite a problem. I don't think that the progress we made is durable progress. We are not making big changes in leaps and bounds. The challenge

here in my department, the last time we had a native Xhosa speaker here was about eight years ago. So we have not made substantive progress at all.'

**Respondent 2:** 'There has been very little, if any, progress. What there has been to some extent is some measure of buy-in by outsiders towards the establishment. For all intents and purposes, there is still the old order, and there are outsiders who still aren't really part of the mainstream.'

#### 4.5.6.2 US

**Respondent 1:** 'It is difficult to say. I think in the one instance we need to say that the fact that Stellenbosch needs to change fundamentally cannot be questioned anymore, change is irreversible. We are heading in a direction that is a transformative one, and we cannot turn back. With the campus community been forced to become more sensitive in terms of religious preference, sexual orientation, racial prejudices and biases, that's probably being achieved as well. In some instances things are changing, in others they remain the same. I think the fact that the national anthem is being sung, might be something very small, but symbolically it's very important.'

**Respondent 2:** 'Ek wil sê nee, maar ek wil dit kwalifiseer. Transformasie, dink ek, is in plek, maar ek dink nie daar's genoeg byt. Laat ek sê, die meganismes is in plek, maar hoe effektief die meganismes werk moet nog gesien word. Daar moet nog strate verbeter word op die vordering wat gemaak is. Maar gelukkig, en ek sal dit beklemtoon, is daar wette in plek.' (I want to say no, but also want to qualify my statement. I think transformation is in place. Let me rather say, the mechanics are in place, but how effective it work remains to be seen. There has to be improvement on the progress made thus far. But fortunately, and I stress it, there are laws in existence.)

**Respondent 3:** 'At a formal level, yes. The Strategic Framework, ethos etc. was put in place. At the grassroots level there are huge problems relating to academics and students. I doubt that substantive change will take place, until the US has the courage to ask hard questions in terms of institutional culture.'

### 4.5.6.3 UWC

**Respondent 1:** ‘At our institution, yes there was substantive progress. The question is how do you determine whether real transformation is taking place? You can only gauge that over a couple of years.’

**Respondent 2:** ‘Yes there has been. We have to look at how we managed to sit down with students and labour and address issues – that can be seen as progress. A lot of issues that HAIs now have to deal with, we already reached that, and are already in a position to deal with that. Staffing, race and gender and academic programmes – a number of programmes were male dominated, and a number of females are coming through. We reached a situation at our university where we can sit down and discuss issues of difference as academic, labour and students and we can agree to disagree. So I think transformation at UWC is quite evident.’

### 4.5.6.4 OTHER VOICES

**Respondent 1:** ‘I think that one can only look at it in terms of particular areas. I think we must get away from the notion of transformation as transformation. I think we must start looking at what progress have you made with equity? What progress have you made with quality? What progress have you made with efficiency? And something like planning, for instance. To some extent planning may for instance be more effective in an area like efficiency than what it may be in equity, or in quality. It may actually be interesting for you to look at something like that. You may also look at something like performance indicators. In the book on performance indicators Bunting and I are looking on at the moment, we are looking at how you can divide them. Some deal with quality, some deal with equity and some deal with efficiency. And it is very interesting to see how institutions differ on that. And how some who are doing really well on equity, are doing really bad on quality and efficiency. And some, who are doing really well on efficiency, are doing really badly on equity. The plan may actually distract the institution from transforming, because it becomes a transformative activity itself. But the plan becomes an activity. Particularly the very poor institutions, you must look at these plans. What is the discourse on evaluation of the plan? Because it’s only when they develop a stronger discourse on evaluation of the plans that you can say the plan is actually going to make a contribution to change,

to transformation. If those things aren't built into the plans then you know they tell you a story. So if they don't tell you that in three years time we're going to assess the plan, and these are some of the penalties or some of the things we're going to do, then they are not telling you the whole story.'

**Respondent 2:** 'Transformation cannot depend on the goodwill of institutions; it has to be policy driven. There is the question of the sharing of resources, which relates to mergers. So I think the NPHE has touched on an area that is commendable. While it is not a perfect document, it opened issues we're trying to address. There is also the historical legacy of apartheid that must be met head-on, we cannot ignore it, and we must deal with it through policy. Ultimately, I think our progress resides in our ability to assert that position.'

**Respondent 3:** 'Generally, I have really been encouraged by the levels of access since 1994 and the early 90s for that matter, when a lot of public institutions opened their doors, especially the HAIs to students from non-traditional students, from disadvantaged backgrounds. So the numbers in terms of getting the students in is very encouraging, but I think a lot more can still be done, but the biggest challenge following that is to ensure the success of those students. Some institutions are quite cold-hearted in that when students fail, and can't make it, that they have to leave the institution and so they become disillusioned and demotivated. I think it's incumbent on these institutions that they have the support structures in place not only to support the new students that come in, but also new staff members, the ones who come from different cultural backgrounds. I suppose the biggest hangover of our previous dispensation is the fact there is still these cultural issues that have prevailed at some of these institutions, be that from an Afrikaner background, an Afrikaans background, or White liberal background, or in the case of UWC a so-called Coloured cultural context. If we're looking at truly South African universities, my sense is that institutions really need to rise above that. And it's difficult, it is a huge ask because transformation essentially requires that you change things from the roots, you tear things out, you go through a kind of metamorphosis. With everything that is happening in higher education currently, it's difficult, ideally if we were in a utopian situation we could have started all over again. The reality is that we have to face the changes that we are going through, but also ensure that the core business of the university happens and that it delivers what it is intended to do.'

## **4.5.7 DISCUSSION**

To conclude the section on narrative constructions, I want to highlight key points, related to logically necessary conditions, I have identified.

### **4.5.7.1 Equity and Redress**

One respondent observed that UCT has an amazing difficulty in appointing and retaining Black, African staff. This exerts pressure on achieving employment equity. Importantly, one respondent stated that you cannot address equity without capacity-building, in terms of ensuring that there is a regular flow of Black, previously disadvantaged academics, especially women. This statement implies that numbers are not enough to ensure equity; and that the development of staff is also necessary. The question ‘Where are the Black academics?’ further highlights the problems surrounding employment equity. The statement: ‘So in a contradictory way once you’ve got enough Black students in an institution you almost solved the equity problem. And they will then implement the equity policy. But you almost have to partially solve the equity problem before you can actually get there’ further highlights the complexity of equity and redress. From these narratives I can deduce that it is not easy to achieve equity, for example the Stellenbosch experience shows it is not easy for some institutions to attract large numbers of contact, African students. In sum, the narrative constructions point to challenges that relate to student equity and staff equity.

### **4.5.7.2 Critical Inquiry**

The statement that ‘strategic plans need to be radical, introspective, candid and honest’ can be linked to critical inquiry. Radical may be linked to the constitutive meaning of ‘abandoning old ways of knowing and doing and the adoption of a new, broader definition of reality’. In this way the drafting of strategic plans, and possibly other plans dealing with transformation, may require a critical attitude on the part of those involved. As one respondent put it, institutional plans provide a focus in terms of rethinking and re-orientating. He also mentioned the redesign of higher education, and regarded a continuous review as important elements of institutional plans.



Rethinking, re-orientating, redesigning are very appropriate concepts related to critical inquiry, and it demonstrates insight on the part of the respondent to conceptualise his response in terms of such appropriate concepts. Reflexivity is alluded to when a respondent refers to 'an unwillingness to question and to debate'. Gibbons *et al.* (1994: 7) argue that individuals cannot function effectively without reflecting. Reflecting requires that questioning one's actions, so as to improve and become more efficient. The three institutional plans (three-year rolling, strategic and employment equity) are documents that could not have been easily finalised, and I assume it required a lot of reflection by those involved to produce the final documents. Of course, reflexivity should not stop at the point when documents are finalised, but there should be ongoing reflection to ensure that stated objectives are realised. I accept that institutions are doing this.

#### **4.5.7.3 Communicative Praxis**

A respondent contended that the formulation of institutional plans can serve as a mechanism to improve participation (which I have identified as a constitutive meaning of educational transformation) among stakeholders of an institution. Participation in forums where institutional plans are formulated can be regarded as participation in key initiatives, which is the constitutive meaning. In the process stakeholders may, through deliberation, arrive at consensus which is important for communicative praxis. I have reflected on the statement that 'rolling plans, strategic plans, and employment equity plans at UCT have not lived up to much over the last years', and asked myself: Why not? A possible answer may be a lack of effective communication on campus. When people are not well-informed they invariably may not respond appropriately to policies, and this impacts on implementation. But there may also be other reasons, such as a lack of review or assessment which relates to reflexivity. Another respondent cited a lack of participation as detrimental to implementation.

The emphasis on project management skills in appointing university staff (especially at executive level) can be located within what Habermas (1998: 246) calls the life-world. The life-world consists of individual skills, the intuitive knowledge of how one deals with a situation. So it is fair to assume that universities' insistence on certain

skills on the part of executive members (the respondent referred to Vice-Chancellors) can be linked to communicative praxis.

#### **4.5.7.4 Citizenship**

I want to relate the comment that ‘there is a great tendency among your Coloured population, from which sector most seem to be happy to be part of the mainstream without wanting the mainstream to change itself’ to the condition of citizenship. The respondent implies that Coloureds are being assimilated into the mainstream (meaning White). Is this good or bad for citizenship? I think it is bad because it may lead to homogeneity rather than difference, the latter being necessary for diversity. How will social groups learn to respect different cultures if all groups tend to be the same? We should not be apologetic about diversity, but rather learn about and respect other cultures.

A charge leveled is that some institutions did not create a safe environment for students from non-traditional backgrounds. It may be interpreted that not all students share an equal attachment to a campus, some students may feel excluded from the institutional heartbeat. Whatever the reasons, institutions must ensure that all students (and staff) receive appropriate treatment to succeed in their objectives.

Another important point raised is the fact that Stellenbosch now (finally) sings the national anthem at official functions. This is long overdue, and can only assist with the development of a new citizenry. A final point on citizenship is that the campus community has been forced to become more sensitive in terms of religious preference, sexual orientation, racial prejudices and biases. This can be linked to the liberal conception of citizenship, which can be understood as a set of rights and corresponding obligations enjoyed by everyone (Miller 2000: 82). It can also be related to tolerance, which John Horton (in Philips 1999: 126) describes as ‘a deliberate choice not to interfere with conduct of which one disapproves’.

Another view expressed was that ‘there may be an unwillingness to question and debate’, and this can be linked to what Galston calls ‘political virtue’, which relates to a willingness to engage in public discourse. To ‘question’ can also be related to

political virtue. Kymlicka (2002: 289) asserts that the ability and willingness to question political authority, and to engage in public discourse about matters of public policy are perhaps the most distinctive aspects of citizenship in a liberal democracy. It is certainly important for citizenship in a democratic South Africa.

The narrative constructions touch on very important elements of the four logically necessary conditions identified in this study. As in the case of the institutional plans, these constructions highlight key points related to logically necessary conditions.

I now return to my earlier question: Can 'plans' alone ensure educational transformation? It is fair to say that all three universities address logically necessary conditions of educational transformation in their plans. In other words, it seems as if UCT, US and UWC comply with most of the criteria for educational transformation to occur. This observation is also strengthened by the narrative constructions, and I have shown how the latter highlight key points related to logically necessary conditions of educational transformation.

Yet, does this really mean that 'deep' educational transformation would occur, considering that most of the objectives, plans and visions of these institutions revolve around the achievement of performance indicators expressed in a language of 'quality', 'efficiency', 'standards of excellence', 'accountability', and so on? The analysis of institutional plans and the narrative constructions indicate that institutions are engaging in performativity. It is also fair to conclude that transformation is taking place at these institutions, but which is not unproblematic.

My major finding from the analysis of institutional plans and the discussion of the narrative constructions is that instances of transformation link stronger with excessive performativity. In other words, the institutional plans may be regarded as an exercise of excessive performativity in that institutions have excelled in formulating exemplary plans. My observation is that these plans in many instances exceed policy requirements, hence my conclusion that institutions are engaging in excessive performativity. A danger of such excessive performativity is that it may not result in 'deep' transformation. Put differently, transformation may be 'sham' or 'thin' as it revolves overwhelmingly around the achievement of performance indicators. In

Chapter 5 I shall discuss in depth the whole question of performance indicators and performativity in relation to educational transformation.

#### **4.6 SUMMARY**

The institutional plans analysed in this chapter reflect the intentions of universities as they attempt to transform themselves with respect to national goals. I concluded that all three universities show their inclination towards the marketisation of higher education (also referred to as academic capitalism), and I posed the question: Does academic capitalism hold any good for equity and redress? My view is that academic capitalism shifts the focus from the immediate need of providing access to previously disadvantaged groups to the more lucrative alternative of obtaining much-needed funding. I also analysed the concept of internationalisation, which I view as positive for scholarly work. Internationalisation conjures up a world of diplomacy, and I view it as less disruptive than globalisation. Having identified various barriers such as institutional culture, the insistence on standards, natural attrition, budgetary constraints, and aspects related to interpretation of policy, I contend it is important that such barriers to educational transformation are eliminated or reduced to enhance the potential success of the process. I have also demonstrated how narrative constructions highlight key points related to logically necessary conditions of educational transformation.

The major finding that emerges from this chapter is that instances of transformation link stronger with excessive performativity. That is, institutional plans may be regarded as an exercise in excessive performativity. I have argued that a danger of excessive performativity is that it may not result in 'deep' transformation because institutional plans revolve largely around the achievement of performance indicators as are overwhelmingly announced in the institutional policy plans of the three universities. As a result, transformation may be 'sham' or 'thin'. I shall continue my discussion on performativity and performance indicators in the next chapter.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **A RECONSTRUCTED NOTION OF EDUCATIONAL TRANSFORMATION**

#### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

My analyses of institutional plans in Chapter 4 led me to conclude that the logically necessary conditions of educational are addressed, to a lesser or greater extent by the three universities in the Western Cape province. I argued at the end of the last chapter that most of the objectives, plans and visions of these institutions (namely UCT, US and UWC) revolve around the achievement of performance indicators expressed in a language of ‘quality’, ‘efficiency’, ‘standards of excellence’, ‘accountability’, and so on, and I develop this argument further in this chapter. In this chapter I critically examine the notion of educational transformation I have advanced thus far in this study, and I attempt to reconstruct this notion. Given our African context, I also explore a reconstructed notion of educational transformation from an African perspective.

#### **5.2 PERFORMANCE INDICATORS IN ‘TRANSFORMATIVE’ POLICY**

The achievement of performance indicators at three universities in South Africa has the potential to enact educational transformation. However, such transformation can also be sham. In this section I argue that a reduced emphasis on the achievement of performance indicators could deepen education transformation at the universities of Cape Town, Stellenbosch and the Western Cape. My contention is that ‘performativity’ (Ball 2003) in educational transformation merely focuses on the exclusive achievement of indicators such as quality, efficiency and standards of excellence, accountability as are overwhelmingly announced in the institutional policy plans of the three universities. My argument is that unless ‘performativity’ in educational transformation also creates spaces for imagination and creativity the potential exists that educational transformation at the three higher education institutions would be thin.

Before I discuss performativity, I shall briefly explore what some policy documents pronounce on the performance indicators.

From a perusal of planning guidelines, provided by the Department of Education (DoE), it is clear that pressure was put onto institutions to comply with national policy. My claim is based on two statements made by the DoE: 'The change in the time-frames for the submissions and institutional visits is informed by two factors. First, the concerns raised by institutions that the deadlines for the first phase were too tight to allow for stakeholder participation and to meet the requirements of the formal decision-making processes within institutions. Second, the need to align the planning process with the medium-term expenditure framework (MTEF) process and the annual state budget cycle (DoE 1999: 3)'. The first point raised by the DoE shows that institutions were unable to meet departmental requirements. It is important to note here that the first round of institutional plans (rolling plans) for the period 1999/2001 was due in 1998, but was then treated as confidential, and institutions were requested to submit a second round of plans, for the period 2000/2002. The second planning phase was treated as public documents, and is the focus of this dissertation. The second planning phase served for the 'development and refinement' of the first planning phase (DoE 1999). A major problem identified by the DoE was that the 'current, highly volatile climate in higher education has led to a situation in which institutional enrolment projections for 1999 were 10% too high. This is a margin of error that no funding framework could easily tolerate' (DoE 1999: 2). This brings me to the second point, which is that rolling plans were linked to funding. Funding is crucial to the survival of institutions, especially in the light that the international trend is that governments worldwide are reducing their funding to universities. Certainly, institutions had this in mind in their planning. According to the DoE, institutional projections in 1998 (for 1999-2001) showed that the margin of error was 10% too high. My point is that this shows that institutions were under pressure, and provided optimistic projections. Institutions made mistakes because they wanted to comply with policy requirements. They made themselves guilty of engaging in performativity exercises.

The National Plan for Higher Education (NPHE) (2001: 26) links quality to equity, and states that 'quality is central to redress and equity'. In relation to quality of

graduate outputs, the NPHE (2001: 26) argues that ‘the focus on efficiency improvements cannot and must not be at the expense of the quality of academic outputs’. This echoes the sentiments expressed in the EWP 3 (1997: 12) that the ‘principle of quality means maintaining and applying academic and educational standards, both in the sense of specific expectations and requirements that should be complied with, and in the sense of ideals that should be aimed at. These expectations and ideals may differ from context to context, partly depending on the specific purposes pursued. Applying the principle of quality entails evaluating services and products against set standards, with a view to improvement renewal or progress.’ I think the reference to ‘evaluating services and products against set standards’ suggests and encourages institutions to perform. In other words, national education policy in South Africa may be interpreted as encouraging performativity.

In the previous two paragraphs I argued that institutions (in their plans) engaged in actions of performativity, which is encouraged by national policies. The fact that institutions were under pressure to submit rolling plans which contain performance indicators such as ‘equity, efficiency, and inter-institutional co-operation’ (DoE 1999: 1) prompted them to want to be seen to perform, or to impress the national DoE. An important factor was that ‘the release of the subsidy will be dependent on the submission of the institutional plans’ (DoE 1999: 2). So the element of funding was a crucial element in the submission of institutional plans. A definition of performativity is therefore emerging from my argument; performativity can be seen as institutions doing their best to put plans in place in order to obtain the best funding arrangement possible.

This brings me to a discussion of the concept of performativity. Stephen Ball poses the question: What do I mean by performativity? According to Ball (2003: 7), performativity is a technology, a culture and a mode of regulation that employs judgements, comparisons and displays as means on incentive, control, attrition and change – based on rewards and sanctions (both material and symbolic). The performances (of individual subjects or organisations) serve as measures of productivity or output, or displays of ‘quality’, or ‘moments’ of ‘promotion or inspection.

Ball's definition is applicable to the NPHE as there are rewards or incentives build into this document. The NPHE (2001: 3) states that 'redress for historically black institutions will be linked to agreed missions and programme profiles, including developmental strategies to build capacity, in particular, administrative, management, governance and academic structures.' The NPHE further states that 'earmarked funds will be allocated to build capacity, including scholarships to promote postgraduate enrolments, which would contribute to building the potential pool of recruits for the academic labour market' (2001: 3). A further incentive is that 'research will be funded through a separate formula based on research outputs, including, at a minimum, masters and doctoral graduates and research publications' (2001: 3). The NPHE clearly advocates that funding will be available for institutions that comply with certain requirements. This phenomenon is, however, not unique to South Africa. Transformation within the South African higher education sector cannot be divorced from global trends. That is, the growing influence of globalisation has to be acknowledged and understood. To this end, the EWP 3 clearly states that the 'national agenda is being pursued within a distinctive set of pressures and demands characteristic of the late twentieth century, often typified as globalisation' (1997: 9).

Equity was the pre-eminent transformation demand during the first policy phase in South Africa, which lasted from the National Education Policy Investigation (NEPI) in 1992/93 to the Education White Paper 3 in 1997 (Cloete 2002: 415). Cloete observes that the equity objective in the post-1994 period was not met, and instead changes resulted in a more elite public higher education system. He argues that this confirms Castell's assessment of one of the effects of globalisation, namely that inequality has increased in almost every country, in both the developed and the developing world. The implication, for Cloete (2002: 421), is that the difficult business of remedying historical disadvantage has not been as successful as had been expected. Cloete further notes that decreasing inequality is not a global trend, and global reforms in higher education have seldom set equity as a priority. Using the USA as an example, he observes that in countries where affirmative action had been out on the change agenda, it was based on individual advancement and there has since been a significant retreat from this policy. In South Africa, Cloete further observes, the same trend emerged in bringing about a dramatic improvement in individual access to historically advantaged higher education institutions, but doing little to



redress the systemic imbalances between HAIs and HDIs. This sentiment is echoed by Torres and Schugurensky (2002: 429) when they note that ‘concerns about equity, accessibility, autonomy or the contribution of higher education to social transformation, which were prevalent during previous decades, have been overshadowed by concerns about excellence, efficiency, expenditures and rates of return’. This means that performativity has overtaken the quest for equity, which is so vital to the transformation of higher education. In similar vein, Waghid (2001: 463) argues that the restructuring of higher education, according to the logic of globalisation, would not necessarily reduce socio-economic inequality, which can pose a threat towards achieving democracy. It is my contention that globalisation, or the benefits thereof, would not necessarily translate into equity and redress in the transformation of higher education in South Africa, it may in fact have a negative impact on transformation.

Central to the functioning of performativity is the translation of complex social processes and events into simple figures or categories of judgement (Ball 2003: 7). Ball (2003: 9) further argues that ‘it is the data-base, the appraisal meeting, the annual review, report writing, the publication of results and promotion applications, inspections and peer reviews that are mechanics of performativity.’ Earlier in this chapter I contended that performativity in educational transformation merely focuses on the achievement of indicators such as quality, efficiency and standards of excellence, accountability as are overwhelmingly announced in the institutional policy plans of the three universities. Ball’s ‘mechanics of performativity’ are very much evident in the institutional plans, and I now contend that these mechanics, such as reviews, reports, data-base, support the achievement of performance indicators. Examples of these mechanics are present in the institutional plans. The three-year rolling plans contain data on: projected student numbers; first-time entering undergraduates; actual and planned majors in science/technology, business/commerce, humanities; head count totals of masters plus doctors students; proportions of females and black students in head count total; student outputs related to undergraduate success rates, drop out rates, total graduates and graduates as percentages of head count enrolments; and staff statistics on full-time instruction/research professionals, executive/support professionals and other categories. Employment equity plans also contain data on numerical goals of

departments. Through the provision of data institutions want to show how they would achieve performance indicators, so Ball's observation on the data-base is thus appropriate. Stellenbosch University undertakes in their Strategic Plan (2000: 22) to develop 'one-year Business Plans from the Strategic Plan and from the three-year rolling Institutional Plans – each Business Plan to state detailed targets, goals, and methods for achieving and assessing those targets and goals, for a period of one university year.' UCT's Strategic Plan (1999: 7) refers to an internally-driven university wide audit that will provide quantitative information that can be used in planning. This speaks to efficiency and accountability. UWC's Draft Strategic Plan (2000: 7) also follows this trend when it states: 'It is important that outcomes be reviewed annually both quantitatively and qualitatively, that they be benchmarked against past performance (or practice at a comparable institution), and that they be considered together in assessing goal attainment or progress towards it.' This points to the appraisal meeting, the annual review and even report writing, and relates to quality and efficiency. I can therefore conclude that the institutional plans of the three universities touch on aspects that Ball calls the 'mechanics of performativity', and institutions use these mechanics in their plans to achieve performance indicators.

A net result of performativity is that it leads to a high degree of uncertainty and instability (Ball (2003: 9). Ball explains that there is a sense of being constantly judged in different ways, different ways, according to different criteria, through different agents and agencies. There is a flow of changing demands, expectations and indicators that makes us continually accountable and constantly recorded. Ball (2003: 9) argues that we become ontologically insecure: unsure whether we are doing enough, doing the right thing, doing as much as others, or as well as others, constantly looking to improve, to be better, to be excellent. And yet it is not always very clear what is expected of us. There is an unmistakable resonance of Ball's assessment with the South African situation. There has been numerous policy documents produced since 1994, which placed increasing demands on institutions, such as producing three-year rolling plans, employment equity plans, strategic plans, and these had to contain data, projections, and so on. Then there has been the issue of mergers, and all of these developments placed many demands and 'policy overload' on institutions. On top of that, there has been declining student numbers, and decreasing state subsidies. All of this created insecurity in the higher education system. I have identified, in Chapter 4,

insecurity that the process of transformation brings to existing and entrenched institutional cultures, so I have to agree with Ball's view on the insecurity and instability that result from performativity.

Ball also states that increasingly, our day-to-day practice is flooded with a baffling array of figures, indicators, comparisons and forms of competition (2003: 10). The institutional plans bear testimony to that. An example is a document authored by Ian Bunting (1999) entitled *Higher Education Planning Triennium: 2000 to 2002*. This document is a regional review which results from the DoE Planning Guidelines 2000-2002, and provides preliminary comments of plans of institutions in the Western Cape province. Bunting (1999: 2) explains that the document concentrates on the data submitted with the institutional plans. As I have explained before, data and statistics are provided to show how institutions plan to achieve performance indicators. In this document Bunting also performs a comparative analysis of the data provided by all higher education institutions in the Western Cape, which is consistent with Ball's statement. This example shows that Ball is justified in his comment on figures, indicators, comparisons and competition.

Let me briefly pause on the aspect of competition. In South Africa there has been the development of a 'competitive climate between public higher education institutions' (NPHE 2001: 8). The NPHE suggests two reasons for this. First, there has been a decline in student enrolments in the late 1990s. Second, competition results from financial constraints as a result of pressures on financial resources. These factors have forced institutions to become more competitive, and as the NPHE (2001: 8) puts it, 'institutions have attempted to respond by introducing efficiency measures and widening their income stream'. This ties in with Ball's point on forms of competition (2003: 10). Forms of competition are also evident in the institutional plans. UCT (1999: 7) wants to be a university of international standing, and thus has to compete with other universities. In their three-year rolling plan (1999: 14) Stellenbosch states that it is no longer a question of competition between prospective students for a limited number of student places, it is a question of competition between universities for the decreasing number of suitable candidates. UWC, in turn, calls for a balance between competition and collaboration in their three-year rolling plan (1999). With these brief references to institutional plans and policy documents I have attempted to

show that government and institutions are very aware of competition within the higher education institutions. As a result, I elaborated on Ball's opening statement to this paragraph.

Universities in South Africa have to compete, as I pointed out in the previous paragraph, for students in the face of declining student numbers. In the analyses of institutional plans it became clear that many affluent, White students are leaving the country to study abroad (UCT 1999: 13). There has also been a tremendous increase in private higher education institutions, as the CHE (2000: 20) pointed out. These factors have led to increased competition among institutions to the point that the CHE (2000: 17) recognised that 'excessively competitive behaviour and practices abound with potentially damaging effects on other institutions, especially those in more rural areas. Public universities and technikons appear to regard their immediate neighbours and other public institutions as market competitors rather than as colleagues striving towards unified and co-ordinated higher education system.' The CHE (2000: 17) concedes: 'this is inevitable in a context of falling enrolments and the absence of a clear, explicit and comprehensive national planning framework.'

The question arises: Can transformation in the South African higher education system be enacted without performativity? Can we completely do away with performativity? The answer has to be a resounding 'no'. The apartheid system created major inequalities in the educational system, and these have to be overcome in order to create what the Education White Paper 3 (1997: 17) refers to as 'a single, coherent national system'. There has to be national policy to drive the process of educational transformation, because 'the problems and weaknesses of the higher education system are extensive and varied. They will not disappear on their own or be overcome by institutions on their own' (CHE 2000: 21). It is my contention that in the absence of national legislation some institutions may choose not to transform at all, which is a luxury this country can ill-afford.

My argument is that we cannot do completely away with performativity in educational transformation, but we need less performativity to enact deep transformation. Less performativity means less emphasis on performance indicators to enact educational transformation. My contention is that excessive performativity may

result in thin or sham transformation because the emphasis on the achievement of performance may distract an institution from implementation. I am concerned that an excessive focus on performativity may result in less enthusiasm for implementation. I think that in quest of 'quality', 'efficiency', 'standards of excellence', and 'accountability' in a single and coordinated system, a measure of performativity is necessary since it provides a basis to evaluate how institutions are doing with regard to transformation. I shall now cite examples from the institutional plans (and logically necessary conditions) to strengthen my argument. UWC (1999) states that it will systematically introduce selected key performance indicators to measure progress towards the attainment of strategic goals. UWC (2000: 4) also states that their Implementation Plan give some sense of the richness of ideas generated in the planning debate; it represents a pool of possible strategies to be selected to fit particular sanctions, and does not constitute an implementation plan. I regard these two statements as examples of excessive performativity. In the first statement UWC continues to build on the theme of performance indicators, and actually intend to 'systemically introduce key performance indicators.' The second statement is even more worrying and contradictory, UWC states that their Implementation Plan comprises possible strategies but does not constitute an implementation plan. It is a possible vindication of my concern that an excessive focus on performativity may result in less enthusiasm for implementation.

With reference to logically necessary conditions, it is important that we do not do away completely with performance indicators. For example, institutions provide projected numbers on student equity which is necessary to assess how they progress over time. In section 4.2.3.1 I pointed out that while UWC has been fairly successful with their student profile (56% female, 53% African in 1999) they plan to increase their Coloured and Indian numbers. In the absence of performance indicators, it would be difficult to evaluate this projection. Stellenbosch, (section 4.3.2) on the other hand, set an objective that by December 2003 at least 15% of staff at all levels and in posts must be from the designated groups. This projection can be verified, and provides a basis to evaluate how the institution is doing on staff equity. With these brief examples from institutional plans and logically necessary conditions I attempted to substantiate my argument that we cannot do completely away with performativity, but we need less performativity to enact deep transformation. The advantage of less

performativity is that it may help us to refocus on concerns about equity, accessibility and the contribution of higher education to social transformation which, as Torres and Schugurensky (2002: 429) observes, have been overshadowed by concerns about performativity. I also addressed my concern that excessive performativity may result in thin or sham transformation.

The question arises: what is wrong with performativity? Or, what is wrong with performance indicators? I shall turn to the book entitled *The University in Ruins* by Bill Readings (1996) in an attempt to answer these questions. Borrero Cabal (in Readings 1996: 32) suggests that performance indicators in the university allow us to judge quality, excellence, effectiveness, and pertinence. Readings (1996: 36) suggests that the British turn to performance indicators should also be understood as a step on the road toward the discourse of excellence that is replacing the appeal to culture in the North American University. Readings also suggests that the performance indicator is a measure of excellence. Having clarified the notion of performance indicators according to Readings, I shall next discuss each indicator to illustrate what is wrong with performativity.

According to Readings (1999: 21) 'excellence' is rapidly becoming the watchword of the university, and to understand it as a contemporary institution requires some reflection on what the appeal to excellence may, or may not mean. Excellence exposes the pre-modern traditions of the university to the forces of market capitalism, and this classic free-market maneuver guarantees that the only criterion of excellence is performativity in an expanded market (1999: 38). The appeal to excellence marks the fact that there is no longer any idea of the university, or rather that the idea has now lost all content. As a non-referential unit of value entirely internal to the system, excellence marks nothing more than the moment of technology's self-reflection. All that the system requires is for activity to take place, and the empty notion of excellence refers to nothing other than the optimal input/output ratio in matters of information (1999: 39). Readings (1999: 29) also contends that the notion of excellence, functioning to permit visual observation than to permit exhaustive accounting, works to tie the University into a similar net of bureaucratic institutions. That is, excellence functions to allow the University to understand itself solely in terms of corporate administration. This chapter reveals a lot that is wrong with

excellence: it is performativity, it is technology's self-reflection, it is mere activity, it is input/output ratios, it is increased bureaucracy, and it is corporatisation.

Readings (1999: 25) suggests that we can ask a number of fundamental about what constitutes 'quality' in education, such as: Are grades the only measure of student achievement? Why is efficiency privileged, so that it is automatically assumed that graduating on time is a good thing? How long does it take to become 'educated'? Readings also argues that quality is not the ultimate issue, but excellence will soon be. Because it is the recognition that the university is not just like a corporation, it is a corporation. This, I think, is an indictment of the role of the university, and points to increased corporatisation I discussed in section 4.2.2. Readings seems to subsume quality, efficiency, and accountability under the notion of excellence, and this suggests that in order to understand excellence, it has to be related to quality, efficiency, and accountability. In other words, there is an interrelatedness between these performance indicators. Because of this interrelatedness, I shall not further discuss quality, but shall move on to the other indicators.

Borrero Cabal (in Readings 1999: 3) figures the university's tasks in terms of a generalised logic of 'accountability' in which the university must pursue 'excellence' in all aspects of its functioning. Readings (1999: 32) argues that the social responsibility of the university, its accountability to society, is solely a matter of services rendered for a fee. Accountability is a synonym for accounting in the academic lexicon.

Readings then links 'efficiency' to excellence, and refers to a report from a friend that Cornell University Parking Services received an award for 'excellence in parking'. What this meant was that they had achieved a remarkable level of efficiency in restricting motor access. What was pointed out to Readings was that excellence could just as well have meant making people's lives easier by increasing the number of parking spaces available to staff. The issue here is, Readings (1999: 24) contends, the fact that excellence has no content to call its own. Whether it is a matter of increasing the number of cars on campus (in the interests of employee efficiency – few minutes wasted in walking) or decreasing the number of cars (in the interest of the environment) is indifferent; the efforts of parking officials can be described in terms

of excellence on both instances. Readings (1999: 24) then explains what is wrong with this performance indicator: the very lack of reference allows excellence to function as a principle of translatability between radically different idioms: parking services and research grants can each be excellent, and their excellence is not dependent on any specific qualities or effects that they share.

I now return to my question: what is wrong with performance indicators such as excellence, efficiency, quality, and accountability? This chapter reveals a lot that is wrong with excellence: it is performativity, it is technology's self-reflection, it is mere activity, it is input/output ratios, it is increased bureaucracy, and it is corporatisation. What is wrong with accountability is that it is solely a matter of services rendered for a fee. What is wrong with quality is that there are so many questions, relating to university practice, that are left unanswered. Readings (1999: 24) also explains what is wrong with efficiency: the very lack of reference allows excellence to function as a principle of translatability between radically different idioms: parking services and research grants can each be excellent, and their excellence is not dependent on any specific qualities or effects that they share. I think that the overwhelming emphasis on performance indicators impacts negatively on the role of the university. To this end Readings (1999: 27) suggests that the question of the university is only the question of relative value-for-money, the question posed to a student who is situated entirely as a consumer, rather than as someone who wants to think. This is what is wrong with performativity, and less performativity is just the opposite. Less performativity does not see the student as a mere consumer, rather than as someone who thinks. Since there are so many challenges to educational transformation in South Africa, it will not serve our cause to think only in terms of value-for-money, as it may seriously undermine the equity and redress imperative. Before I point out further weaknesses on performativity, I just want to refer to an observation I think is applicable to the institutional plans. Readings (1999: 12) observes that university mission statements, like their publicity brochures, share two distinctive features nowadays. On the one hand, they all claim that theirs is a unique educational institution. On the other hand, they all go to describe this uniqueness in exactly the same way. What the institutional plans have shown is that the three institutions focus overwhelmingly on performance indicators, and in that respect they are the same, as Readings justifiably observed.



This is where I want to challenge ‘performativity in education’, and perhaps extend the ideas of Ball. I shall now attempt to identify further weaknesses (in asking the question: ‘what is wrong with performativity’? I already pointed out some weaknesses) of performance indicators, which would invariably retard deep educational transformation. In doing so, I shall draw on the work of James D Marshall.

According to Marshall (1999: 31), performativity (post-Lyotard) has become almost a term of abuse to be used for the ideology and efficient practices of those institutions which, based upon the human sciences, are increasingly dominated by bureaucracy wherein goals are set in ever narrowing demands of reporting, and where accountability is measured by outputs. In the general cry for efficiency and accountability, in social welfare, in general, the Western world has shifted from inputs and professional discretion as to how objectives are to be achieved, to an emphasis of less discretion as to how to achieve aims or ideals. This emphasis on outputs is very specific, wherein they are not only recorded but also used as the basis for further inputs. The debate therefore has shifted from aims or ideals to means or techniques for obtaining efficient outcomes – the most efficient way of using the (now limited) welfare dollar.

This emphasis on ‘outputs’ is very evident in the National Plan for Higher Education, and I discussed that also in the previous chapter. On the strategy for enhanced research output and quality at the masters and doctoral levels it is stated: ‘The Ministry will attempt to enhance research output and quality through revising the current policies and procedures on the measurement of research outputs at universities and technikons’ (NPHE 2001: 77). Marshall’s observation that outputs are ‘not only recorded but used as the basis for further inputs’ is applicable to South Africa. This relates to the matter of funding, and the way it works is that the better the output of graduates the more funding institutions will receive. Funding for outputs at masters and doctoral level is also more than for undergraduate levels. As a consequence, universities have to devise ways ‘for obtaining efficient outcomes’, to use Marshall’s words. This may be a weakness that could retard deep transformation, as the whole exercise may become a numbers game, produce more outputs and receive more funding.

Marshall (1999: 310) further argues that performativity in education, according to Lyotard, has been subsumed under the performativity of the wider social system because education is required to create the skills which are indispensable if the wider social system is to perform efficiently. These skills are of two kinds: those that contribute specifically to enable a country to participate in the markets of world competition and those that contribute to maintaining internal cohesion and legitimation. Thus, education is not to pursue or to produce ideals, or to provide an elite capable of guiding a society or nation towards emancipation but instead to supply the system with players capable of acceptably fulfilling their roles at the pragmatic posts required by its institutions. Consequently universities are no longer 'democratic' institutions, modelled along emancipations/humanist lines as they have undergone realignment to the performance of the wider social system. There are no longer grand narratives available to ground education. Rather, Marshall posits, there has been a splintering and proliferation of language games. Performativity can then be seen as a new language game: as science, for example, simply produces more work, makes more statements, and generates new ideas. According to Peters (in Marshall 1999: 311), science simply performs.

The remark that education is not to lead or guide a nation towards emancipation seems to be contradictory to the logically necessary condition of 'critical inquiry', and this may be a weakness that could retard deep educational transformation. The emancipatory interest is the guiding interest of critical theory and of all systematic reflection, including philosophy (Roderick 1986: 57). Marshall's argument that performativity in education has been subsumed under the performativity of the wider social system also indicates the pressure put on universities, and presents a challenge to the ideals that has governed universities for centuries, ideals. Universities always had a relationship with the wider society, but ideals such as 'autonomy' and 'academic freedom' maintained a balanced relationship. It now appears that there is greater realignment with society, and this is as a result of performativity.

A third point by Marshall is also important for this study, and this relates to a key component of institutions, namely students (I earlier pointed to Readings' observation about the student as consumer, and here I want to extend the debate). Marshall

observes how students are being changed; they are no longer from the liberal 'elite' more or less concerned with the great task of social progress, understood here in terms of emancipation (Marshall 1999: 311). It is educational institutions that change people away from the former liberal humanist ideals to people who, through an organised stock of professional knowledge, pursue performativity through increasingly technological devices and scientific managerial theories. The argument is then that students are being coached in performativity. I have argued earlier in this chapter that government policies (such as the EWP 3 and the NPHE) encourage performativity on the part of institutions. Marshall seems to take this argument further as he contends that performativity of institutions are being transferred to students, who then in turn will perpetuate this culture in the wider society. I think this may lead to an instrumental justification of education, in that the emphasis falls on the rewards that can be gained from studying, instead of non-instrumental justification, that is the pursuit of knowledge for its own sake. This may be another weakness that could retard deep transformation in that performativity is perpetuated, while I have shown that there are many weaknesses to such a notion.

In this section I have attempted to show that educational policies in South Africa encourage performativity on the part of institutions. I posed the question: what is wrong with performativity? With reference to Bill Readings I have pointed out what may be wrong with performance indicators such as excellence, quality, efficiency, and accountability. Further weaknesses of performativity were also discussed with reference to James D Marshall. A central argument of Marshall is that performativity of institutions are being transferred to students, who will in turn transfer this drive to perform to the wider society. My concern is that this may result in an instrumental justification of education, whereby education may be regarded as just another means to an affluent lifestyle.

Now that I have discussed the wrongs and/or weaknesses of performance indicators such as excellence, quality, efficiency, and accountability, and because I argued that we cannot do away completely with performativity, I shall next attempt to reconcile these two apparently contradictory positions. My conclusion thus far is that there are inadequacies in the institutional plans which cannot be addressed by simply looking at performance measures. To resolve this, I think that an African philosophy of

educational transformation could bridge the gaps. To make performativity more acceptable, I shall attempt to construct an African perspective on educational transformation. I do this because I want to 'soften the blow' of excessive performativity.

### **5.3 AN AFRICAN PERSPECTIVE ON EDUCATIONAL TRANSFORMATION**

South Africa has, and still is, undergoing a very unique process of educational transformation. In this section I therefore make an attempt to provide an African perspective on educational transformation, in order to soften the blow of excessive performativity, as I stated earlier. There have been many attempts to deal with questions around an African philosophy such as 'Is there an African philosophy?' (Ramose 2002: 4), 'Is there an African philosophy in existence today?' (Laleye 2002: 86), 'Did (or do) traditional Africans have a philosophy?' and 'What is African philosophy?' (Outlaw 2002: 137). These are very pertinent questions because an African perspective on educational transformation presupposes that there exists, or should exist, an African philosophy. Outlaw (2002: 138) argues that each of the key terms in 'African philosophy' is made problematic by the very efforts to carve out, uncover (and thus recover) distinctively African modalities or traditions in the complex enterprise of philosophy. In light of the European incursion into Africa, the emergence of 'African philosophy' poses deconstructive (and reconstructive challenges, Outlaw adds.

My argument here is that one cannot reconstruct a notion of educational transformation without approaching it also from an African perspective. An African perspective could, as I stated before, help to bridge the gaps in performance measures. I also contend that an African perspective could soften the blow of excessive performativity. Now it is not my intention to construct a new 'African philosophy', much work has been done on it. So for purposes of this study I presuppose that there exists an 'African philosophy'. In Chapter 2 I discussed the concept of 'ubuntu', and I identify it here as a key concept in an African notion of educational transformation. Another key concept is the idea of 'community', which is so evident in African tradition.

Ubuntu is used to define 'just redress' so as, in Tutu's words, to go 'beyond justice' to forgiveness 'and recognition of the humanity of the other' (Asmal *et al.* 1996: 21). Ramose (2002: 230) describes 'ubuntu' as the root of African philosophy. Ubuntu is actually two words in one, and it consists of the prefix *ubu-* and the stem *ntu-*. For Ramose, *ubu-* evokes the idea of be-ing in general. It is enfolded be-ing before it manifests itself in the concrete form or mode of ex-istence of a particular entity. *Ubu-* as enfolded be-ing is always orientated towards unfoldment, that is, incessant continual concrete manifestation through particular forms and modes of being (2002: 230). In this sense *ubu-* is always oriented towards *-ntu*. Ramose further argues (2002: 231) that 'ubuntu' can be understood as be-ing human (humanness); a humane, respectful, and polite attitude towards others. For Ramose, being human is not enough; one is enjoined, commanded as it were, to actually become a human being.

Key concepts used to describe 'ubuntu' are forgiveness, recognition, humanness, humane, to be respectful, and to be polite. These aspects, related to an African philosophy, is what we need in educational transformation. These aspects provide a different approach than performance indicators to educational transformation as they concentrate on our humanity rather than excellence which serves nothing other than itself, as Readings (1999: 43) puts it. I want to argue that in moving from an apartheid higher education system to a transformed one, we also need to rediscover our humanity, and recognise the humanity of others. Whereas apartheid was de-humanising, educational transformation should seek to restore the dignity of all human beings. This, I contend, can happen if we reconcile with others, if we adopt a more humane attitude, if we show respect, and become more polite in our interactions with those we consider different from us. The institutional plans do refer to respect, for instance Stellenbosch calls for mutual respect (section 4.2.2.4), and for respect of difference between personal beliefs, between points of view, and between cultural forms of expression (section 4.4.2.4); and UWC regards mutual respect as crucial for collaboration (section 4.2.3.4). While these references to respect further justify the identification of ubuntu as a key concept in an African perspective on educational transformation, it may also be interpreted as contradictory to my view that institutional plans are too performative. This apparent contradiction can, however, be explained. My overall impression is that institutional plans focus overwhelmingly on performativity (remember that three-year rolling plans focus on efficiency and quality

measures), and that references to respect are not a primary focus as it is overshadowed by performativity. An African perspective highlights respect (as an aspect of ubuntu) much more.

The concept of ubuntu therefore incorporates 'respect' as advocated by the institutional plans. This, for me, makes ubuntu so much more relevant. I next discuss the concept of community.

The slogan 'your child is mine, my child is yours' has a particularly African flavour to it. In many ways, it epitomises the sense of community so prevalent in African society. Gyekye (2002: 297) observes that the communal or communitarian (and he uses the two interchangeably) aspects of African socio-ethical thought are reflected in the communitarian features of the social structures of African societies. This sense of community, according to Dickson (in Gyekye 2002: 297), is a

... characteristic of African life of which attention has been drawn again and again by both African and non-African writers on Africa. Indeed, to many this characteristic defines Africanness.

Gyekye (2002: 299) then expounds on the idea of communitarianism:

Communitarianism immediately sees the human person as an inherently (intrinsically) communal being, embedded in a context of social relationships and interdependence, never as an isolated, atomistic individual. Consequently it sees the community not as mere association of individual persons whose interests and ends are contingently congruent, but as group of persons linked by interpersonal bonds, biological and/or non-biological, who consider themselves primarily as members of the group and who have common interests, goals, and values. The notion of common interests and values is crucial to an adequate conception of community; that notion in fact defines the community. It is the notion of common interests, goals, and values that differentiates a community from a mere association of individual persons. Members of a community share goals and values. They have intellectual and ideological, as well as emotional attachments to those goals and values, as long as they cherish them, they are ever ready to pursue and defend them.

This rather lengthy quotation provides a good description of what community, from an African perspective, can contribute to educational transformation. My contention is that an African perspective on educational transformation needs a sense of community characterised by common interests, goals, values, intellectual, emotional and ideological attachment, interpersonal bonds, group of persons, association, communal beings, and interdependence. There appears to be an overlap between an African perspective of community and a Western perspective; Kymlicka (2002) uses concepts such as 'shared practices', 'understandings with each society', 'common good', 'self-determination', 'solidarity', and 'attachment'. What this overlap shows is that an African community is not isolated from the rest of the world, and we hold dear aspects that are also important to Western communities. What is important for me is that an African sense of community is articulated so clearly by African scholars, it shows our independence and interdependence.

I thus argue for an African notion of educational transformation of which two concepts, namely 'ubuntu' and 'community/communitarianism' are key features. I have two main reasons for doing so. The first is that a focus only on performance indicators, as announced in institutional plans, would not enact deep transformation. For example, when the US (1999: 23-24) undertakes to create new entry and exit points, to design conversion programmes, and to recruit more actively they seem to focus on what Readings call 'inputs/outputs'. In other words, they focus narrowly on performativity. The same applies when UWC plans for satisfactory ratios at various levels (UWC 2000: 19). I asked: what is wrong with performance indicators? I noted that excellence is performativity, is mere activity, relates to input/output ratios, and leads to increased bureaucracy and corporatisation. I doubt whether increased bureaucracy and corporatisation can enact deep transformation. I also doubt that treating a student just as a consumer can enact deep transformation because it focuses narrowly on the student's ability to pay; it shows that universities are departing from humanist ideals which place the human being at the centre of activity. Certainly that is not the only contribution a student can make, and not the only concern of higher education. What about the life of the student, and the responsibility of the university to provide an education that can transform the person to become a better citizen? I think such a focus by a university can lead to deep transformation.

My second reason is that I want to argue that 'Africanisation' in relation to logically necessary conditions can deepen educational transformation. I have indicated that institutional plans do address logically necessary conditions of educational to some extent, and I am satisfied that the conditions constructed in this study are appropriate. My focus on an African perspective was intended to soften the blow of performativity, and I showed that an African perspective highlights the value of ubuntu which relates to forgiveness, recognition, humanness, to be respectful, and to be polite. An African perspective of communitarianism sees the human person as an inherently (intrinsically) communal being, embedded in a context of social relationships and interdependence, never as an isolated, atomistic individual. These brief summaries give me a different picture than the descriptions of performance indicators. Whereas the latter is associated with consumers, corporatisation, bureaucracy, input/output, outcomes, and goals, the language associated with an African perspective is much softer and places more emphasis on desirable character traits of human beings. It can be argued that an African perspective focuses more on 'good' aspects of human relationships or, as Singh calls it, the 'public good' (2001: 11). Public goods are in the common interests of a country or society at large. I want to reiterate that I am not arguing that we completely discard performativity, but for less performativity. Here I agree with Singh (2001: 9) that the university valorised by von Humboldt or John Henry Newman in the 19<sup>th</sup> century cannot be the main model of the higher education institution of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, but to lose entirely the vision, which exalts intellectual life contained in their perspectives, would be an impoverishment for both higher education and society. In the same vein, losing sight of an African perspective may also impoverish our understanding of educational transformation since this perspective brings our humanness to the fore.

In the next section I turn my attention away from performativity, and explore imaginative and creative ways in which universities may pursue educational transformation.



#### **5.4 MOVING BEYOND ‘PERFORMATIVITY’: CULTIVATING IMAGINATION AND CREATIVITY**

What do I mean by ‘imagination’ and ‘creativity’? According to Passmore (1998: 235) a minimum requirement for imagining (imagination) is that we go beyond anything that we have observed or experienced – even if not every form of ‘going beyond’, deduction for example, counts as imagining. ‘Imagination’ as Dewey (in Passmore 1998: 238) writes, ‘supplements and deepens observation’. Imagination can also be shown in the capacity for making use of old things in a new way (Passmore: 1998: 245). Elliot (1998: 229) describes the ‘new’ concept of creativity as two main versions. First, creativity is taken as the capacity to resolve problematic situations. Second, creativity means getting novel ideas and making use of them. By ‘making something of’ is meant either solving some existing problem by means of it. Or putting it to some other acceptable purpose, or just making it available to others who actually do or might well find some employment for it. The getting of a novel idea is a condition of creativity.

The value of clarifying concepts is demonstrated by the fact that I came across Passmore’s idea that imagination implies ‘moving beyond’ after I chose the heading for this section. Thus Passmore confirms that the heading is justified. I shall now discuss imagination and creativity in ‘moving beyond performativity’.

Higgs (2003: 17) argues that a pluralistically sensitive philosophical framework such as an African philosophy can contribute to the construction of empowering knowledge that will enable communities in South Africa to participate in their own educational development. This I regard as a creative and imaginative way of moving beyond performativity. Central to his argument is the concept of empowerment which I think is critical in ‘moving beyond performativity’. I agree with Higgs (2003: 17) when he argues that ‘people cannot be empowered if they are locked into ways of thinking that work to oppress them’, and ‘nor can people be empowered if they do not have access to those indigenous forms of knowledge which provide them with their identity as persons.’ My argument is that we can move beyond performativity by firstly emphasising empowerment or emancipation of people. This also supports my argument for less performativity in that the emphasis should not be narrowly on the

completion of a task (e.g. formulating a three-year rolling plan), but in a much broader sense task completion must contribute to empowerment. In other words, I suggest that the emphasis should change from the action to the person performing the task. The person must have access to knowledge, and here the notion of 'epistemological access' (which I discussed in Chapter 4) comes to mind. Epistemological access entails helping students to develop academic skills (Bak 1998: 212), which they can utilise to empower themselves. Empowerment or emancipation is also crucial for the logically necessary condition of critical inquiry. My argument for empowerment therefore relates to critical inquiry, and I emphasise here the importance of the person in contrast to a narrow focus on performativity.

I also regard language as important in moving beyond performativity. Drawing on Higgs' reference to 'indigenous forms of knowledge' (2003: 17), I think African languages can be considered as such. It gives people their identity, as Higgs calls it. The Education White Paper 3 also addresses the question of language, and stresses 'the role of higher education in promoting and creating conditions for the development of, all South African languages, including the official languages, the Khoi, Nama and San languages, and Sign Language, and in elevating the status and advancing the use of the indigenous languages of our people' (EWP 3 1997: 30). I think that universities can serve communities by giving attention to languages which have been suppressed in this country for so long. Every university should have a centre for the advancement of all languages mentioned by the EWP 3. I am not suggesting that these languages should be taught officially, instead I suggest that they may be accommodated informally. People from surrounding communities may be approached to teach informal sessions. In this way many people can be exposed to all the languages of the country, and in this way diversity may be promoted. The promotion of indigenous languages question may restore the dignity of African people, and so contribute to transformation.

Finally, where do universities send their student teachers to do practice teaching? It appears that the convention is to send race groups to schools that cater for them. For instance, White students are sent to predominantly White schools. I think there should be a change in practice. Why not send a White student to an African school, for at least one teaching practice session? If a student must practice teach for four weeks, let

the student spend at least one week at a school with a totally different racial mix. Also, why not send city students to rural areas? Of course, the freedom of the student to choose should be respected, and accommodated. We should expose students to far broader experiences, so they can learn to cope with different cultural settings.

This concludes my thoughts on cultivating imagination and creativity in educational transformation. I only touched on three aspects but their scope is such that it may take a very long time for institutions to put it into effect. These aspects represent, for me, imaginative and creative ways in moving beyond performativity.

Finally, my reconstruction of educational transformation results from my analyses of institutional plans in Chapter 4, where I concluded that the logically necessary conditions of educational transformation are addressed, to a lesser or greater extent by the three universities in the Western Cape province. In my reconstruction I explored educational transformation from an African perspective, in relation to ubuntu and community. My reconstructed notion of educational transformation thus includes logically necessary conditions of educational transformation (equity and redress, critical inquiry, communicative praxis, and citizenship) and an African philosophy of educational transformation of which ubuntu and community are key aspects. I contend that this reconstructed notion will enact deep educational transformation.

## **5.5 SUMMARY**

I observed that the achievement of performance indicators at three universities in South Africa has the potential to enact educational, but such transformation may also be sham or thin. To substantiate, I demonstrated how national policy, through a language of performativity, encouraged institutions to engage in performativity. This was done in several ways. First, institutions were put under tremendous pressure to produce institutional plans within limited time-frames, and second, government explicitly linked funding to institutional plans when they stated: the release of the subsidy will depend on the submission of institutional plans' (DoE 1999: 2).

I discussed the concept of performativity which Ball (2003) describes in terms of inputs/outputs, productivity, moments of promotion or inspection, the data-base, the annual review, figures, indicators, comparisons, forms of competition, and so on.

In this chapter I argued that we cannot do away completely with performativity in educational transformation, but we need less performativity to enact deep transformation. Less performativity means less emphasis on performance indicators to enact educational transformation. Deep transformation takes into account logically necessary conditions of educational transformation, as well as African notions of ubuntu and community. I expressed my concern that excessive performativity may lead to sham or thin educational transformation. My examination of the work of Bill Readings and James Marshall pointed to what is wrong with performance indicators (and their weaknesses) such as 'excellence', 'quality', 'efficiency', and 'accountability'. These performance indicators can be associated with consumerism (treating the student as a consumer), increased bureaucracy (the notion of excellence ties the university into a net of bureaucratic institutions), corporatisation (excellence functions to allow the university to understand itself solely in terms of corporate administration), input/output ratios, and mere activity.

To soften the blow on performativity (arguing for less performativity) I attempted to provide an African perspective on educational transformation, and identified 'ubuntu' and 'community/communitarianism' as key aspects of a not comprehensive view on the subject. Ubuntu invokes forgiveness, recognition, humanness, respect, to be polite, while community in the African context sees the human person as an inherently communal being. I think ubuntu and community brings a freshness to an educational discourse that is so overwhelmed by the 'harsh' language of performativity. In exploring imaginative and creative ways in which educational transformation may be enacted I discussed aspects relating to empowerment, languages and student practice teaching.

## CHAPTER 6

### REFLECTION ON MY JOURNEY THROUGH THIS STUDY

#### 6.1 INTRODUCTION

In this final chapter I reflect on my journey through this dissertation, and offer possible pathways for future research. In my reflection I touch on moments which profoundly affected my thinking, such as methodological issues, the area of academic writing, visiting scholars, conference I attended, and my thoughts around publications. I also link my (narrative) journey with logically necessary conditions of educational transformation. This chapter may conclude this dissertation, but it also starts another phase of my academic career, and I identify possible pathways (which I certainly intend to pursue, but which other scholars might find of interest) for future research.

#### 6.2 METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES

One of the first things I reflected on in preparing the proposal of this study was what would be an appropriate methodology. From a study of the literature, and my early intention not to problem-solve, I decided that ‘interpretivism’ would be an appropriate methodology as it does not claim to solve any problems, and because I set out to understand the phenomenon of educational transformation. My thinking at that stage was that it is important to understand a phenomenon before one can decide how to deal with it. I still think it is important to proceed in that way, but perhaps a flaw in this argument is that it may be impossible to fully understand something, and real-life situations do not always afford one the luxury of in-depth analysis before one has to take action.

Although I did not initially intend to problem-solve, I did offer solutions in some respects. For instance, I argued that we cannot do away completely with performativity, and suggested that we need less performativity to enact deep transformation. By less performativity I mean there should not be an overwhelming emphasis on the achievement of performance indicators. The solution I offered was to

turn towards an African perspective on educational transformation, and I identified ubuntu and community as key concepts.

As the study proceeded, I became more and more aware (and concerned) that I was slowly departing from my methodology. I became aware that I was becoming more critical of government's and institutional attempts to transform. From a research perspective, I tended to think of methodologies that are neatly separated and compartmentalised. Although I identified critical inquiry as a logically necessary condition of educational transformation, I was searching for the link between 'Interpretivism' and my increasing critical stance. It was not until the second year of my research that my concerns were clarified. Thomas Schwandt in his discussion of Philosophical Hermeneutics (2000: 194) clarified things for me with his statement that 'interpretivist philosophies, in general, define the role of the interpreter on the model of the exegete, that is, one who is engaged in a critical analysis or explanation of a text (or some human action) using the method of the hermeneutic circle'. This reference to 'a critical analysis or explanation of a text' set me on the road to resolving my methodological concerns.

An 'aha Erlebnis' moment arrived when I read Kincheloe and McLaren's book chapter entitled *Rethinking Critical Theory and Qualitative Research*. In this chapter I came across the concept of 'Critical Hermeneutics' for the first time. Kincheloe and McLaren (2000: 289) posit:

Critical hermeneutics is suspicious of any model of interpretation that claims to reveal the final truth, the essence of a text or any form of experience. Critical hermeneutics is more comfortable with interpretive approaches that assume that the meaning of human experience can never be fully disclosed – neither to the researcher nor even to the human who experienced it. Critical hermeneutics seeks to understand how textual practices such as scientific research and classical theory work to maintain existing power relations and to support extant power structures. As critical researchers we draw on the latter model of interpretation, with its treatment of the personal as political. Critical hermeneutics grounds a critical research that attempts to connect the everyday troubles individuals face to public issues of power, justice, and democracy. In its ability to render the personal political, critical hermeneutics provides a

methodology for arousing a critical consciousness through the analysis of the generative themes of the present era.

Kincheloe and McLaren provide the link between hermeneutics and my critical stance, and this is demonstrated by their observation that ‘critical hermeneutics grounds a critical research’, and ‘critical hermeneutics provides a methodology for arousing a critical consciousness’. They confirmed that I was not radically departing from the research methodology, and introduced me to the concept of ‘critical hermeneutics’, which links my methodology with my increasingly critical stance.

At my presentation at the 2003 Kenton-SACHES Conference I was finally ready to expound on my methodological stance. In the introduction of my paper entitled ‘Educational Transformation - Revisiting Gadamer’s Philosophical Hermeneutics’ I stated briefly my research methodology, and then went on to say ‘but let me correct myself’, and informed the audience that I was actually involved with Critical Hermeneutics. This was a turning point in my methodological stance, and this was caused by the work of Schwandt, and Kincheloe and McLaren. This ‘methodological journey’ is characterised by reflexivity, which is important to critical theory as well as communicative praxis.

Looking back, I now realise that my methodological concern caused me to reflect, and to search for an explanation. My ‘critique of my own self-understanding’ (Fay 1987: 39) prompted me to search for an explanation. My experience has shown the importance of reflexivity, which I also identified as a constitutive meaning of educational transformation. My experience also demonstrated the importance of research which, as the NPHE (2001: 71) puts it, engenders the values of inquiry, critical thinking, creativity and open-mindedness, which are fundamental to building a strong, democratic ethos in society. I am satisfied that my inquiry resolved my concern about my methodological stance.

### **6.3 ACADEMIC WRITING**

Generally I found in this dissertation that I didn’t lack ideas, but was often unable to articulate (hope I’m doing better now) myself in a manner that is academically

acceptable. On several occasions my promoter recommended many changes to my submissions, and I realised that if I want to succeed in my studies I needed to acquire more skills of academic writing. I then set out to find literature that could improve my writing.

One of the best works I consulted was the book by Strunk and White (1959) entitled *The Elements of Style*. They discuss elementary rules of usage, and two rules deserve to be mentioned. First, they have a rule: ‘use the active voice’ (1959: 13), and propose that the active voice is usually more direct and vigorous than the passive:

I shall always remember my first visit to Boston.

This is much better than

My first visit to Boston will always be remembered by me.

Second, they have a rule: ‘omit needless words’, and state that: ‘Vigorous writing is concise. A sentence should contain no unnecessary words, a paragraph no unnecessary sentences, for the same reason that a drawing should have no unnecessary parts’ (1959:17). Many expressions in common use violate this principle:

‘there is no doubt but that’ should read ‘no doubt (doubtless)’

‘he is a man who’ should read ‘he’

I found these rules very useful in my writing, and suggest that students take the time to improve their writing skills.

What I found very difficult was to find my own voice. I now realise that writing style has a lot to do with one’s own voice. Here originality is very important. Pat Cryer’s book *The Research Student’s Guide to Success* (2000) has a chapter devoted to originality in research. The statement that ‘originality is a high-profile requirement for research at PhD level’ (Cryer 2000: 190) prompted me to always check whether my voice is coming through.

My promoter repeatedly stressed that he did not want information, but good arguments. Since there is no manual in the department about what good arguments are, I set out to educate myself, and found several books that dealt with argumentation. Fairbairn and Winch (1996) in their book entitled *Reading, Writing*



*and Reasoning. A Guide for Students* discuss arguments of different kinds, which I found very useful. Another book I consulted was *Real Writing* (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.) by Walter H Beale (1986). What I found very useful was his discussion on the classical - Greek and Roman - use of rhetoric. I shall return to the concept of 'rhetoric' later in this chapter.

As the study developed I also developed an increasing interpretive nature. In my search to improve my arguments I found several useful articles in a website on Philosophy. Titles such as 'Guidelines on Writing a Philosophy Paper', 'How to Write a Philosophy Paper', 'Identifying the Argument of an Essay', 'Developing Coherent Paragraphs', and 'Critical Reading Towards Critical Writing' helped me to focus and orientate myself. In *Tips on Writing a Philosophy Paper* Douglas W Portmore (2001: 3) suggests the following on 'The Introduction':

get right down to business! Avoid inflated, rhetorical introductory remarks (commonly known as 'fluff'). If, for instance, your paper is on abortion, you shouldn't waste limited space with some irrelevant and long-winded spiel about what an important and controversial issue abortion is. Nor should you start your paper off with a sentence like, 'Down through the ages, mankind has pondered the problem of ...'

Having realised how important critical writing skills are for research, I compiled a reader of all articles that helped me to develop my skills, and it is now a constant companion when I sit down for serious writing. It will be my companion, as a reference work and also as a reader which I frequently open when I have some spare time.

My reflection on academic writing can also be linked to the logically necessary condition of critical inquiry. I found that by compiling the reader I could consult it whenever I needed. This became very emancipatory in the sense that the more I consulted it the more I became familiar with its contents, and this made me more aware of my own limitations. To end with, Roderick (1986: 57) regards the emancipatory interest as the guiding interest of critical theory and of all systemic reflection, including philosophy. The NPHE (2001: 31) also emphasises the importance of writing, communication, and presentation skills.

#### 6.4 INTERACTIONS WITH VISITING SCHOLARS

I greatly value the opportunity I had to interact with visiting scholars to our department. One of the first articles I read was entitled *Philosophy of Education*, written by Nicolas Burbules. I read the article when I was working on my first chapter, in an attempt to understand various concepts, for instance Philosophy of Education. At first I found the article very frustrating, because I could never find an explicit meaning of what Philosophy of Education is all about. The more I read the article I realised that Burbules was making the point that there is no easy way to explain the meaning of Philosophy of Education. In fact, there are many ways to describe a concept. Later on I also read several articles in *Educational Theory*, the journal of which Nicolas Burbules is the editor.

By the time that Nicolas Burbules visited our department, I was better informed about his work, and had an opportunity to participate in discussions during his lectures. In a private session with some other colleagues I asked him what he would advise students in my position (doing doctoral studies, and wanting to publish). He responded by saying that I should see myself 'as a scholar'. This made a profound impression on me, and changed my perception of my research. It taught me to value my own work, and to make every effort to put it into the public domain. He went on to explain how to get one's ideas published in journals, which was tremendously helpful.

I also had several talks with Margery O'Loughlin, who was visiting from Australia. She is very active in research on citizenship. She attended my presentation at the 13<sup>th</sup> Biennial Conference of the South African Association for Research and Development (SAARDHE) held at the University of Stellenbosch from 25-27 June 2003. She commented afterwards that my statement that 'citizenship involves attachment' has much relevance for her situation. She related her involvement in a project to obtain views around students' understanding of the concept. She is finding that different social groups in Australia have diverse views on attachment. This discussion made me aware that while I glossed over 'attachment' in my paper, it can be a research topic for further exploration.

Attachment is linked to the logically necessary condition of citizenship. Kymlicka (2002: 284) observes that citizenship is intimately linked to liberal ideas of individual rights of entitlements on the one hand, and to communitarian ideas of membership in an attachment to a particular community on the other. I have observed many novel ways to demonstrate attachment in our country. One that I find particularly striking is how proudly supporters at an international rugby, cricket or soccer match display miniature national flags on their cheeks or foreheads. Not only does it fill me with pride, but also with a great sense of optimism for this country. If only such optimism could be displayed in the process of educational transformation!

In my discussion with Noel Gough he almost immediately picked up some pointers for further exploration. I related some of my thoughts around the implications of 'globalisation' on 'equity and redress', and he asked me about institutional pronouncements on the marketisation of higher education. This opened up avenues which I subsequently explored. He also explained that the export of higher education in Australia has become a major source of revenue, and this alerted me to possible directions for South Africa. I expressed my concern about the negative impact of globalisation (referring to academic capitalism, the marketisation of higher education, and managerialism) for equity and redress. A telling remark is that concerns about equity, accessibility or the contribution of higher education to social transformation, which were prevalent during previous decades, have been overshadowed by concerns about excellence, efficiency, expenditures and rates of return (Torres & Schugurensky 2002: 429). It is my contention that we need equity and redress in educational transformation, but global developments militate against this imperative.

I now return to the concept of rhetoric. Penny Enslin visited from the University of the Witwatersrand and her reader included Iris Marion Young's chapter on *Communication and the Other: Beyond Deliberative Democracy*. Young (1996: 129) proposes three elements that a broader conception of communicative democracy requires in addition to critical argument: greeting, rhetoric and storytelling. She refers to Plato and Socrates in discussing rhetoric, which conjures up images of men dressed in white linen garments, 'trying to get and keep the attention', and 'through humor, wordplay, images, and figures of speech embody and color the arguments, making the discussion pull on thought through desire' (Young 1996: 130-31). Rhetoric appeals to

me, and I think the university may be an ideal place to revive such an ancient, intellectual activity.

What I have observed about these visiting scholars was their willingness to offer advice. It is advisable to listen and learn from respected scholars, because even if they do not have the same research focus, their wealth of experience can only be useful to graduate students. How does this relate to logically necessary conditions of educational transformation? I turn to Habermas' communicative praxis for an answer. Habermas (1998: 246) explains the notion of 'speech acts', and states that from the point of view of reaching understanding, speech acts serve to transmit and further develop cultural knowledge; from the point of view of socialisation they serve to form and maintain personal identities. My interaction with these visitors can be explained in relation to speech acts. A case can be made that through dialogue knowledge and information was shared. This can be regarded as a form of socialisation in which personal identities met. Therefore, my interaction with visiting scholars can be linked to communicative praxis.

The NPHE's (2001: 71) assertion that research creates communities of scholars who build collegiality and networks across geographic and disciplinary boundaries, is a fit description with which to end this section.

## **6.5 CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS**

During the course of this dissertation I have made seven presentations. Looking back, I have learned that conference presentations are an indispensable part of research. It affords an opportunity to report on one's research in front of other academics, and to be challenged by peers. It helped me a great deal to discipline myself to write a paper, and to develop arguments. While it can be very challenging to present a paper in front of seasoned academics, it is certainly a worthwhile one.

It is very important to put one's ideas in the public domain, and to get feedback from others about one's work. I found that I grew in confidence with every presentation I made, and it also developed my understanding of my own work. An example of that is my presentation at the Kenton conference held at Goudini Spa during October-

November. Just as I started with my presentation, two keynote speakers, Faizal Rizvi and Stephen Ball, entered the room and they remained almost until I was finished. If that happened a year earlier, I would have been very intimidated. But the Kenton Conference was my sixth presentation, and I was confident enough about my own research not to be bothered by their presence. I was also familiar with Faizal Rizvi's work on globalisation, and who doesn't know about Stephen Ball's ideas on policy matters? So I actually revelled at the opportunity to present a paper to such well-known scholars.

For me, conference presentations can be linked to what Galston (in Kymlicka 2002: 289) refers to as a 'willingness to participate in public discourse', which is linked to citizenship. This includes the willingness to listen seriously to a range of views which may include ideas the listener is bound to find strange and obnoxious. Through such participation a person may open himself (herself) to revisions or amendments of an earlier position. In a conference a listener may also point out some weakness to an argument presented, which may lead to the presenter going back and strengthen the argument accordingly. Tolerance, in that a person afford someone else the opportunity to state his/her views is required in public discourse. A last point I want to make is on respect. Respect means the willingness to listen, openness to the possibility of learning from, responsiveness, and criticising when necessary (Fay 1996: 239). Through attending conferences I have learned that respect for others is necessary for one's own intellectual development.

My advice to postgraduate (especially doctoral students) is to attend as many conferences as possible. It not only provides a platform where you can present your work and obtain feedback from other academics, but it is an opportunity where you can listen to others, observe how they present themselves, and by reading conference papers you can learn how to write such papers. It is also an opportunity where you can learn how not to present, by learning from others' mistakes. You can see the pitfalls, and can plan accordingly how to avoid them. I have learned that every presentation I made gave me more confidence to speak in public, and provide me with better insight into my own research.

To produce graduates with enhanced cognitive skills is an outcome of the NPHE (2001: 31). In a humble way I can now say that I have acquired certain skills during the course of this study, and these skills made me more confident. The NPHE (2001: 31) further states that employers want graduates who can demonstrate a strong array of analytical skills and a solid grounding in writing, communication, and presentation skills. Conferences provide an adequate training ground to hone such skills.

## 6.6 PUBLICATIONS

Several publications emerged from this study thus far. I recall my elation when I was informed that my first ever article appeared in the *Journal of Special Education*. It is imperative that academics publish their work, so that it can be scrutinised in the public domain. There are several reasons for this. One is to make a contribution to the production of knowledge, and so expand the existing knowledge base. The other is the emphasis and importance universities attach to the research enterprise. What emerged from one narrative account was the 'revolving door syndrome' which is characterised by the fact that academics who do not publish do not receive the promotions they may wish. The lack of promotion causes unhappiness, and this leads to staff turnover. The 'publish or perish' dictum is particularly true in the climate of growing competition for funding, and in striving for excellence. But this seems too much of an argument in support of performativity! My suggestion is that we must not overlook the intrinsic reasons for publishing. The sense of achievement when an article has been approved for publication is a great reward for hard work, and should be an encouragement to those who want to publish.

Publications can also be linked to critical inquiry. Schulkin (1992: 1) observes that a sense of inquiry is related to dilemmas we face in life, and that an inquirer realises that expression is open ended and that existence is tied to action. He further explains that inquiry, along with social intelligence allows us to participate in the community and to transcend the isolation of solitary thought. My contention is that publications enable academics to transcend the isolation of solitary thought. The sense of isolation which one experiences when writing an article is broken when the article is published. I think inquiry is necessary for developing publications.

During my appointment as Research Assistant in the Department of Education Policy at Stellenbosch University I was entrusted with the task of managing editor of the *South African Journal of Higher Education*. It afforded me the opportunity to read many articles submitted for publication, and also to take note of reviewers' comments. It certainly is not easy to get one's work published in accredited journals, but think it is an integral part of academic life. If it were not for publications, there would be no difference between teaching at a school and teaching at a university.

I was also afforded an opportunity to technically edit a book due for publication in 2004. It was another valuable lesson, as editing of such a nature requires attention to detail. It is also very time-consuming and energy tapping. All these experiences have exposed me to the rigours of publishing, and in the final analysis, if one considers your research as worthwhile, it is necessary to submit it for publication.

## **6.7 NARRATIVE CONSTRUCTIONS**

When I started with this study I thought it might not be necessary to conduct an empirical study, as I would largely conduct a document analysis. When my promoter suggested that I should undertake empirical work, I was not sure what to expect. It proved to be almost a study within a study, and I could not foresee how identifying suitable people, setting up interviews (even travelling to Johannesburg to conduct interviews), transcribing, and sending transcriptions for verification could be so demanding. I was pleasantly surprised by the theoretical depth of the interviewees, and am now convinced that doctoral studies need to incorporate some empirical work. Several important points, worthy of further study, emerged from the narratives.

## **6.8 MY OWN PERFORMATIVITY**

Now I have a confession to make. Despite my critique of performativity, I must humbly acknowledge that in conducting this study I became a victim of performativity. I had to submit a research proposal, then I had to hand in chapters at dates agreed with my promoter, so I had to keep deadlines. I had to rework submissions, I attended conferences and made presentations, I was expected to publish, I attended research seminars, and had to lecture. In other words, I engaged in

performativity. All of this is consistent with what Ball (2003: 7) refers to: the performances (of individual subjects or organisations) serve as measures of productivity or output, or displays of 'quality', or 'moments' of promotion or inspection. I often admonished myself to produce work of quality, and to excel in my studies. As I progressed I experienced a variety of emotions, sometimes of joy when I came across new ideas or a new publication relevant to my study. At such times the intrinsic reasons for studying reigned supreme. There were times I experienced the dreaded writer's block, but I persevered, and the extrinsic reasons for studying became a great motivator. I wanted to complete and graduate, and beyond that was the lure of employment possibilities. Now that I reached the stage where I was preparing for examination, I am even more conscious of performativity. It seems as if I cannot escape it, as I intend to publish from this study. But I shall also keep reminding myself that, as an African, there are resources of African philosophy (such as ubuntu and community) I can draw on from time to time to soften the blow of performativity.

## **6.9 POSSIBLE PATHWAYS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

Through the course of this study I discussed concepts which I now wish to offer as possible pathways for further research. Other researchers can further explore these, but it is certainly my intention to reflect on these in future.

First, I draw attention to the concept of *democracy*. Several policies such as NEPI, the National Commission on Higher Education: a Framework for Transformation, the Education White Paper 3, suggests 'participatory democracy' as an appropriate form of democracy in higher education. I have stated in Chapter 3 that mere participation may not necessarily lead to educational transformation, as one has to take into account the status of participants: can they express themselves adequately, and can they provide good reasons for their statements. For instance, it may be very difficult for a first-year student to speak in front of seasoned academics, such a student may not have acquired the skills in terms of knowledge and academic language to make any impression. Such a student may have good ideas, but may be unable to express such ideas academically. I have suggested an alternative to participatory democracy, being *deliberative democracy*. A limitation of this study is that I did not fully explore what



deliberative democracy is all about. To deliberate, you must in the first instance participate, therefore deliberation is a form of participation.

I now suggest that deliberative democracy in higher education be explored as a more appropriate form of democracy. The model of deliberative democracy conceives of democracy as a process that creates a public, citizens coming together to talk about collective problems, goals, ideals, and actions (Young 1996: 121). In free and open dialogue others test and challenge these assertions and reasons. Young posits that by putting forward and criticising claims and arguments, participants in deliberation do not rest until the 'force of the better argument' compels them all to accept a conclusion. Young also propose an extension to, or move beyond deliberative democracy. She proposes an ideal of communicative rather than deliberative democracy. The ideal of communicative democracy includes more than deliberative democracy, because it recognises that when political dialogue aims at solving collective problems, it justly requires a plurality of perspectives, speaking styles, and ways of expressing the particularity of social situation as well as the general applicability of principles (Young 1996: 132). Young argues that a theory of democratic discussion, useful to the contemporary world, must explain the possibility of communication across wide differences of culture and social position (1996: 132), and it is this reference to 'culture' and 'social position' that persuades me of the importance of identifying a democratic theory appropriate for higher education in South Africa. So I suggest further exploration of deliberative and communicative democracy in higher education, which may serve to consolidate democracy in the wider society.

How would deliberative democracy enhance deep transformation? First, deliberation succeeds to the extent that participants in a joint activity recognise that they contributed to and influenced the outcome, even when they disagree with it (Bohman 2000: 33). The opportunity to participate in discussions and to influence decisions may enhance deep transformation. Second, citizens may learn to use what Meira Levinson (2003: 23) refers to as 'the language of power' in their deliberations. English can be considered the language of power in the world, and mastering the language of power may improve deliberation. At the University of Stellenbosch

Afrikaans is certainly the language of power, but the language of power may also include nuances, gestures, and cultural peculiarities.

Second, there is the issue of *institutional culture*. Institutional plans and the narrative constructions of educational transformation have identified institutional culture as a possible hindrance. The University of Stellenbosch acknowledges institutional culture as a factor in accessibility (US 2000: 20), and the University of Cape Town observes that their institutional culture, sometimes termed as ‘eurocentric’, leads to perceptions of discrimination even where the institution itself has gone to great lengths to tackle discrimination in its own policies and within the arena of higher education at large (UCT 2000). Since it is true that all (except private ones established recently) higher education institutions are products of segregation and apartheid, my argument is that in order for educational transformation to be enacted, it is necessary that entrenched institutional cultures be changed. Questions such as ‘What is institutional culture?’ (I addressed the question to some extent in Chapter 4), ‘What are institutions doing to change their institutional culture’ may be important considerations for further exploration. An empirical study may provide fascinating insight into this area, which I think has largely been neglected as a research focus.

Third, and flowing from institutional culture, is the concept of *attachment*. This relates to citizenship, particularly to communitarian ideas of membership on an attachment to a particular community. It links two separate concepts, that of ‘citizenship’ and ‘community’. Accepting that universities are becoming more diverse, it will be interesting to research what attachment, if any, minority groups display towards institutions. White Afrikaans students at Stellenbosch University may have a totally different attachment than their Coloured counterparts or even other White, English speaking students, for example. Similarly, White liberal, English-speaking students at UCT may have a different attachment to the institution than their African counterparts. Such a study may not have to be restricted to students, but can be extended to include staff as well, and then it may even be combined with research on institutional culture. One may very well find a certain degree of detachment on the part of students and staff at some institutions, which may then be negative for educational transformation. On the question of ‘community’, it may be useful to research who students and staff regard as ‘community’ on a campus; who they spend

their time with, and who they relate to most. From this one can deduce whether race, class, and gender still play a major role in relationship patterns at universities. In order to provide a theoretical base, I have earlier linked attachment to the logically necessary condition of citizenship, and the same applies here. Kymlicka (2002: 284) observes that citizenship is intimately linked to liberal ideas of individual rights of entitlements on the one hand, and to communitarian ideas of membership in an attachment to a particular community on the other.

Fourth, I have identified *globalisation* as a primary driver for education policy developments in South Africa. In the course of this study I have discussed concepts such as ‘internationalisation of higher education’, ‘knowledge society’, ‘academic capitalism’, the ‘marketisation of higher education’, ‘entrepreneurial university’, ‘higher education export’, ‘managerialism’, and so forth, and pointed out that many authors make a distinction between ‘internationalisation’ and ‘globalisation’. Since all three universities pronounce in their institutional plans their increasing dependency on the market, I want to offer this whole group of concepts, how they are related, how they influence educational transformation, as possibilities for future research. Importantly, and I asked the question ‘are markets good or bad for equity and redress?’, we need a better understanding of how these factors impact on the logically necessary conditions of education transformation: equity and redress, critical inquiry, communicative praxis, and citizenship. My assessment at this stage is that globalisation may be negative for equity and redress, and may be more favourable for critical inquiry, communicative praxis, and citizenship.

Fifth, there is the matter of *performance indicators* related to notions such as ‘quality’, ‘efficiency’, ‘equity’, ‘excellence’, and ‘accountability’. In a narrative construction it was suggested that we should look at these indicators individually. For instance, How is an institution doing on equity? How is an institution doing on quality? How is an institution doing on efficiency? It might be very interesting to see how institutions differ on that. I have looked at statistics gathered by the Department of Education (dated June 2003) which provide information for 2001. On permanent staff (DoE 2003: 47), UCT has 13% Black research staff, and females make up 29% of all research staff. Stellenbosch has 7% Black research staff, and females comprise 37% of all research staff. UWC has 58% Black research staff, and females comprise

39% of all research staff. It is obvious that UWC is doing better on staff equity, while Stellenbosch is doing badly on Black research staff. On contact students (DoE 2003: 39), UCT has 4980 African, 2608 Coloured, 1328 Indian, and 9686 White students out of a total of 18602, of which 8849 are female and 9753 are male. Stellenbosch has 1333 African, 2016 Coloured, 352 Indian, and 14641 White students out of a total of 18342, of which 9095 are female and 9247 are male. UWC has 5165 African, 4438 Coloured, 661 Indian, and 235 White students out of a total of 10499, of which 5997 are female and 4502 are male. This shows that Stellenbosch is also doing badly on student equity, while gender ratios for all three universities are satisfactory. Keeping in mind that these statistics reflect the standing of two years into the second three-year rolling plans, it is obvious that the condition of equity and redress is far from resolved, and has to remain on the agenda for a long time. The suggestion to explore how universities are doing on each performance indicator can therefore be taken up for further research.

Sixth, I want to return to *methodological assumptions* of this study. In my discussion of hermeneutics I referred to the works of Hans-Georg Gadamer and Paul Ricoeur. An extension of the theory of hermeneutics is a possible pathway for future research. In his discussions Gadamer refers to Schleiermacher, Dilthey, Heidegger, Aristotle, Hegel, Kant, Hegel, Nietzsche, Jaspers, and Wittgenstein. It is advisable for a researcher that intends to use Interpretivism extensively to research thoroughly what these writers offer on the methodological assumptions. I am aware that Habermas also wrote on hermeneutics, but I did not explore his writings in this study, so his name could be added to the list. I did not explore Habermas' thoughts on hermeneutics because I concluded that Gadamer and Ricoeur provided sufficient theoretical grounding for the methodology of this study.

Finally, I want to touch on a *philosophy of higher education*. Education policy developments that form part of this study touch on many aspects (academic freedom, institutional autonomy, accountability, quality, etc.) that are fundamental to a philosophy of higher education. The global imperatives, and the emphasis on preparing citizens for the economy are further factors that points to a reconceptualisation of a philosophy of higher education. The growing awareness of our position in Africa must also be taken into account. I therefore propose that

research should be conducted on reconceptualising a philosophy of higher education from an African perspective. After all, philosophy of higher education should be the basis in our understanding of the transformation of higher education in South Africa. The aim is to research dominant views on philosophy of higher education, and then to see how educational transformation (with its underlying philosophy) fits into that broader picture. Tentatively, I think there may be an inadequate philosophy of higher education undergirding recent policy developments in South Africa.

## 6.10 SUMMARY

In this reflection I touched upon my methodological concern. It is now a relief to boldly state that I am satisfied that whereas I initially conceptualised my study in terms of Hermeneutics, I ended up with Critical Hermeneutics. The latter provides a methodology for arousing a critical consciousness. Academic writing is very important in a study such as this one, and I made every attempt to develop my skills. Scholarly dialogue is vital to intellectual development, and I am fortunate that I had the opportunity to meet and dialogue with distinguished visitors. With reference to performativity, Bourdieu's comment on 'individual performance objectives' (1998: 1) is applicable to my account of my own performativity. As I sat down to write this last summary of this study, I became acutely aware that I was reflecting on my performance objectives.

In offering possible pathways for future research I identify concepts (democracy, institutional culture, attachment, globalisation, empirical work on performance indicators, hermeneutics, and philosophy of higher education) that I came across during the course of this study, and which I would like to explore further.

I now refer to more general comments pertaining to educational transformation. Educational transformation in South Africa remains on the national agenda. As Duderstadt observes: 'higher education has been and will continue to be greatly affected by the changes in our society and our world. In an increasingly knowledge-driven society, more and more people seek education as the hope for the better future, the key to good jobs and careers, to meaningful and fulfilling lives. The knowledge created on our campuses addresses many of the most urgent needs of society, for

example, health care, national security, economic competitiveness, and environmental protection. The complexity of our world, the impact of technology, the insecurity of employment, and the uncertainty of our times have led all sectors of our society to identify education in general and higher education in particular as key to the future' (2000: 20).

The South African situation is very complex. All higher education institutions are products of segregation and apartheid, of the 'geo-political imagination of apartheid planners'. It is also beyond dispute, the CHE contends, that under apartheid certain higher education institutions experienced a history of disadvantage (CHE 2000: 14). It is this disadvantage that educational transformation now seeks to correct.

According to the CHE Task Team (CHE 2000: 11) 'no public institutions should believe that it is exempt from the imperative of system-wide reconfiguration, from the need to change fundamentally, and from contributing to the achievement of a new higher education landscape. No higher education institution can assume that its track record with respect to equity, quality, social responsiveness and effectiveness and efficiency is beyond dispute and self-evident. Much remains to be achieved by all institutions to advance new social goals and take us beyond the distinctions between historically advantaged and historically disadvantaged.' It remains the responsibility of the national, democratic government to drive the transformation agenda until there exist a higher education system that is finally rid of the inequalities of the past.

Finally, I extended my research question (Do institutional plans enact educational transformation) by the interview questions. I am satisfied that this study provided an answer to the question. I concluded that institutional plans addressed the logically necessary conditions of educational transformation to some extent, and I reconstructed educational transformation to include an African philosophy of education with key concepts such as ubuntu and community.

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