

technikon is that technikons are essentially technicist. They have clear objectives and know where they are going and what they are doing. Universities are essentially agnostic institutions: they can't know where they are going, although hopefully, they know what they are doing. It's a bit like the difference between Columbus and the Mayflower pilgrims. Columbus didn't know where he was going, but he discovered America. The Mayflower pilgrims knew where they were going.

To conclude, public relations will never be able to present a clear image of a university while it tries to define the university in technicist terms and to produce an image which can be sold like any other package. But if PR officers accept that they have no package to sell, but rather an ideal and a commitment which is essentially agnostic, uncertain and indefinable and they concentrate on creating an understanding of the underlying unities that are embodied in the academic process, they will be in a position to educate the community — or public(s) — as to what to expect from a university.

If they consider themselves educators rather than salesmen then they may be able to come to grips with the image of a university (8).□

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3. Gasset, O. 1957: *Man and People*. WW Norton, New York, p. 140.
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6. Booyesen, P. de V. 1984: *Inaugural Address*, University of Natal, Durban.
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8. UCT has made a breakthrough in this area by appointing Dr James Moulder, a former philosopher, to the post of Director of the Public Relations Division.

By Leslie Witz

MISPLACED IDEALS? THE CASE OF UNIBO A REPLY TO J F DE V GRAAFF (*Reality*, January 1986)

Bophuthatswana has always been regarded as unique among the bantustans created by South Africa's apartheid structure. Although Bophuthatswana was given "independence" in 1977 its President, Lucas Mangope, has consistently stated that independence is merely a stepping stone towards a "greater independence" for a united South Africa. The primary reason for accepting independence, he has asserted, is to turn Bophuthatswana's back on apartheid and build "a model of non-discrimination that can act as a catalyst in the whole of Southern Africa". (1) That model is supposedly enshrined in the bantustan's constitution which embodies the principles of non-discrimination, non-racialism, human rights and the rule of law.

It is within this framework that the territory's major tertiary institution, the University of Bophuthatswana (Unibo), is intended to operate. Established in 1980, Unibo proclaims itself to be a totally non-racial institution with complete autonomy from the Bophuthatswana government. The University's official publication, its calendar, proclaims loudly that the university has "full academic freedom to determine whom it will appoint, whom it will enrol as

students, and what it will teach". It goes on further to state that the university is controlled by a Council which encourages all staff "to help develop the theoretical framework needed for the emergence of a 'post-separate development' dispensation in South Africa".

IDEALISM

It was these principles which gave rise to the aura of idealism which permeated Unibo in its early years. Johan Graaff, one of the original staff members at Unibo, relates in the January 1986 issue of *Reality* how he and the other members of staff believed they "were re-creating a little piece of paradise". Here, for them, was a homeland university which did not take as its model the bush colleges but the liberal institutions like Wits and U.C.T. Although Mangope at times acted with an iron fist he always listened to reason and allowed the university its autonomy. Crucially then it was Mangope's character which allowed Unibo to develop its liberal image. "My own feeling", Graaff states, "is that Mangope is less authoritarian than the likes of Matanzima".

This idealism was reinforced by the "liberal education" which Unibo offered. One thing which Bophuthatswana "independence" has brought about, in spite of its political limitations, is a commitment "to break from the stranglehold of Bantu Education and introduce reforms to improve the quantity and quality of education". (2) As Francine de Clercq points out Bophuthatswana has greater freedom to introduce educational reforms since it doesn't deal directly with the Department of Education and Training. Educational reform also fits in neatly with the bantustan's ideology of self-determination. (3) Unibo plays a major role in changing education in the bantustan, not only through what it teaches but also through imparting teaching skills and conducting research into Bophuthatswana's educational structures.

On the 9th October 1985 this idealism was rudely swept away when the students called a prayer meeting on campus in response to Bishop Tutu's call for a National Day of Prayer. For Mangope the prayer meeting was the "final straw" coming after student demonstrations against the visits of P W Botha and Andries Treurnicht to Mmabatho. He marched onto the campus, accompanied by his cabinet and 300 riot police, interrupted the prayer service and closed the university. Unibo remained closed for a month as a group of students challenged the legality of Mangope's action in the Bophuthatswana Supreme court. Although the court ruled against the students the government decided to re-open the university on 6 November 1985 and a commission of enquiry was appointed by the university to investigate the closure and related events. Mangope, in the interim, had already decided to take further action against the staff and students of Unibo.

INTERNAL SECURITY ACT

On the 2nd of December, four days before the eighth anniversary of Bophuthatswana's "independence", an emergency session of the bantustan's parliament was called to amend the Internal Security Act. The amendments are aimed at giving the Bophuthatswana government greater power in the running of educational institutions, in particular the University. In terms of the amendments the President is given the power to close any educational institution if he considers it "necessary in the interests of public safety, national security and the maintenance of law and order". Students can also be debarred from a school, technikon or university, if the government is reasonably satisfied that the registration of the students is "undesirable in the public interest". For staff members the accompanying piece of legislation, the Security Clearances Act, is even more ominous. The Act states that new members of staff have to obtain a security clearance from the government of Bophuthatswana before they can take up their posts. As Mangope switched on the lights of Bophuthatswana's new multi-million rand independence stadium on the 6th of December the lights of academic freedom were slowly being extinguished in Bophuthatswana.

Armed with this battery of legislation Mangope now made his move. On the 23rd of December the government of Bophuthatswana issued deportation orders against 10 members of Unibo staff. A month later 36 students were sent letters from the University indicating that the government would not allow them to re-register in terms of the Internal Security (Amendment) Act. (4) The principles on

which Unibo had apparently been created were swept away. Academic freedom became an expression that was only whispered in the corridors of Unibo. Staff and students, intimidated by Mangope's actions, hardly uttered a word of protest. The standing of the University as a credible academic institution was almost destroyed overnight.

Why did this happen at Unibo? Why did Mangope, usually a "reasonable" man, take such unreasonable action? Why did the ideals on which Unibo was built disappear so quickly? In terms of Johan Graaff's argument the answer can only be found in terms of Mangope's character: "Mangope's courage and trust were not up to the challenge. Fear won." (*Die Suid-Afrikaan*, Lente en Vroeg-Somer, 1985). This may be part of the answer but a fuller explanation must be sought in terms of the general structures in which Mangope and Bophuthatswana operate.

APARTHEID

Bophuthatswana is a child of apartheid. It was born as a direct result of the Promotion of the Bantu Self-Government Act promulgated by the Verwoerd government in 1959. Africans were, in terms of the act, to have no political rights in South Africa and instead were given political rights in the eight bantustans. This act, according to Dr Verwoerd, would place the African "on a new rung of a ladder of development which can continue as far as he is able to take it. If it is within the power of the Bantu and if the territories in which he now lives can develop to full independence, it will develop in that way". By accepting independence in 1977 Mangope in effect carried Verwoerd's plans of separate development to their logical conclusion. Therefore, despite his protestations to the contrary, Mangope *does* accept the grand structures of apartheid.

In order for Mangope to retain control he thus has to depend upon the perpetuation of apartheid. He has to rely upon those very same structures that gave him power in the first place. Any criticism of Bophuthatswana's "independence" is not tolerated as this challenges the very basis of Mangope's power. When he addressed members of Unibo staff on the 10th of December on the reasons for the security legislation he stressed this point:

We will not tolerate anybody who doesn't respect our independence as a country. We won't. My request to such people, no matter how valuable a service they render, if that is your attitude this is not the place for you.

The university, Mangope claims, is one of the main centres of dissent to Bophuthatswana independence. This criticism, he further asserts, is orchestrated by the U.D.F. His government has "established beyond doubt" that certain students are members of the U.D.F. As he himself points out, neither the U.D.F. nor the A.N.C. are banned in Bophuthatswana but he doesn't "want non-Bophuthatswana organisations to disturb our (Bophuthatswana's) peace. If our independence as a country is threatened by what originates in the university we will not tolerate it".

The extent to which Mangope will go to retain power seems to have no limits. He would rather have Unibo turn into a second rate institution (he has stated this categorically) than have it criticise Bophuthatswana's independence. He has

even threatened to close the university down completely if such criticism emanates from it.

STRUCTURES

How then do recent events challenge the ideals which Johan Graaff and the first members of staff held so dearly? Were their ideals misplaced? What seems to have happened is that in accepting Mangope's ideological rationalisation they lost sight of the structures in which they were operating. In the early years Mangope's actions tended to reinforce their belief in those ideals. Mangope might act harshly at times but not with consistency. His heavy-handedness in recent months has therefore shocked the idealists. Yet within the structures which Mangope operates it is not altogether surprising. Throughout 1985 opposition to apartheid intensified in South Africa and the system started to crumble. Unibo students, many of them emanating from the P.W.V. areas, were exposed to this process of "informal" politicisation. At Unibo the philosophy of liberal education developed this critical awareness even further. It is this, not any A.N.C. or U.D.F. conspiracy, which threatens Mangope's power. As a group of residents from Mafikeng spelled out in a letter to the *Weekly Mail* on 6 December 1985, "the downfall of apartheid will signal the downfall of the homeland system".

Despite the limitations to the idealist vision, which have been exposed as the crisis in South Africa has deepened, I do not think that the ideals that they strove for were entirely hollow. One was able to teach what one wanted at Unibo and, as we have seen, turn graduates of Bantu Education into critically aware people. For this reason it certainly was worthwhile teaching students at Unibo.

Nonetheless it must be emphasised that even this "liberal education" has its limits narrowly defined in Bophuthatswana. The more liberal education becomes (as it did at Unibo) the more questions students are going to ask. This in turn means that the structures of apartheid, and inevitably Bophuthatswana's "independence", will increasingly be placed under the critical scrutiny of the youth. Mangope cannot accept this as it would threaten his position of power. It is thus not altogether surprising that there are rumours that some members of the Bophuthatswana government favour a return to Bantu Education. They hope the students will then become more submissive and compliant.

Therefore I do agree that Unibo in some respects did present one with an idealist vision with a limited prospect of achieving that vision. However, it must be emphasised that those ideals were *always* limited by the structures of apartheid. The hopes of the idealists were not entirely misguided but they could have been tinged with a greater degree of realism.□

REFERENCES

1. University of Bophuthatswana Calendar, 1986.
2. F. de Clercq, "Some Recent Trends in Bophuthatswana Commuters and Restructuring in Education". *SA Review* 2, Johannesburg (1984).
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4. The government of Bophuthatswana later partially went back on its decision. All but 7 of the students were re-admitted to Unibo and the staff members were allowed to appeal to the government for re-instatement. 4 decided to appeal, one of the appeals being turned down and the rest upheld.

By Barbie Schreiner

RESETTLEMENT

Arms entwined on a shady park bench, framed by the excitement of a brief day in town together, we smile on paper behind shards of glass; it is pinned now under familiar corrugated iron. I shall never get it out, the bulldozer tracks have bruised it into the ground.

"Let them sleep in God's own fresh air."

Our homes have folded like paper toys into the dust. In a crinkled plastic packet my blue clock counts the time of the bulldozer's shadow across my mother's grave.

With lonely thousands I follow the winding track. A suitcase bounces from an overloaded truck, somersaults twice with lazy grace, splits, bursts like a ripe seed pod offering socks and petticoats to the wind.

Dull barrels signpost our way past a pumpkin lying at the side of the road, thrown aside, too heavy to carry. Its sweet

smell beckons flocks of shiny flies that crawl on shrivelling orange seeds in the sun.

"The new location has all the facilities that the community requires, better, I assure you, than what they had before."

My new home wavers in the bending heat, a mirage in an empty Bantustan. Even the rain doesn't reach this far. My breasts have dried amongst the brown grass and the dust. My child's belly is swollen with hunger. She tastes my sour sweat with parched lips.

Across the rustling veld, from hard-packed soil tilled deep with calloused hands and simple hoes, below the unmoving aloes, small white flowers blossom, row upon row, straight, square, their names fading in the heat. Thandi, three and a half years old; Nhlanhla, six months; Sipho, five and sister Gcina, four.□