## Introduction

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Introduction

*St Augustine College of South Africa* marked its 10th Anniversary with a conference on the theme *Intellectual and moral leadership: what is a university for?* This conference, held at the campus in Victory Park from 14-16 July 2009, attracted considerable interest and was a fitting celebration of our first ten years as the first Catholic University in South Africa. Some 70 academic leaders and scholars from several South African, African and overseas universities, as well as many interested friends, attended the proceedings and contributed to the talks and discussions.

The programme was divided into three broad themes: The Nature and Role of the University, Teaching, Learning and Research, and Social Engagement. Proceedings were opened with an address by Professor Edith Raidt, our President Emeritus, who outlined the values and mission of this university, traced its history and noted its future challenges. The progress that has been made is fitting witness to the faith and trust in Divine Providence which guided the founders in the development, and to the contributions of many individuals who worked tirelessly to ensure the viability of this university.

This opening address was followed by that of Dr Cheryl de la Rey, CEO of the Council on Higher Education, on “Universities and the Common Good”. Other talks on the subject, but not published here, included those by Professor Andre Du Toit, University of Cape Town, on “Academic Freedom and different visions of a university”; Dr Gerard Walsmsley, St Augustine College, on “What is a university for? Catholic and secular models”; and Professor Jonathan Jansen, Rector of the University of the Free State, with a challenging talk on “The university as welfare bucket”. Professor Malegapuru Makgoba, Vice-Chancellor of the University of KwaZulu Natal, and other speakers, whose papers are published in this issue, developed the theme further. It was interesting to see that the seminal thoughts of John Henry Newman – “The idea of a university” – were frequently referred to in the various talks.

In addition, there were a number of interesting and very thought provoking panel discussions on such themes as the private sector’s role and responsibility in higher education; teaching and learning for ethical practice beyond the university and the limits and possibilities for social engagement, consciousness and responsibility.

This edition of *St Augustine Papers* contains a selection of the addresses/papers given at the conference. We regret that panel discussions could not be included in the edition. Endnotes and bibliographic formatting were accepted as of the originals.

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*Professor Marilise Smurthwaite*

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The West African concept of *Sankofa* - meaning in the Akan language of Ghana “to go back and fetch what you forgot” - is symbolically expressed in a mythic bird that flies forward, or with its feet firmly planted forward, but with its head turned backwards and looking backward with an egg, symbolizing the future, held tightly in its mouth. In the African tradition the concept of *Sankofa* teaches us that we must go back to our roots in order to move forward. Not only is there wisdom in learning from the past to build the future but we should reach back and gather what is best of what our past has to teach us, so that we can achieve our full potential as we move forward. Whatever we have lost, forgotten or been stripped of, can be reclaimed, revived, preserved and perpetuated.¹

When looking at the past and future of *St Augustine College* (our institution) the mythical Sankofa bird can be a useful symbolic guide in
assessing the various steps and even milestones in the gradual development and unfolding of this Catholic university, the first of its kind in South Africa. While looking back and evaluating our past we constantly have the future of this university in mind. This exercise is therefore not a nostalgic walk down memory lane, but rather an honest assessment of the raison d’être of such a new institution vis-à-vis the other tertiary institutions in the region and the unique contribution it can make to the academic landscape. In the relatively short time of 10 years, 1999-2009, the Catholic university St Augustine College of South Africa developed into a viable institution of higher education, accredited by the Department of Education to confer its own degrees. Already 112 students have graduated with Masters degrees in the humanities (Applied Ethics, Educational Leadership, Theology and Philosophy), 9 with Doctorates in Philosophy and Theology, 40 with certificates in Political Leadership, and we have a prestigious library of over 26 000 catalogued books. How did this come about, and what is the task of St Augustine College now and in the future?

PHASE 1: 1993-1999

The roots of this institution go back to the year 1993 when a group of senior Catholic academics and some clergy first mooted the idea of founding a Catholic university. This was explored in a symposium in January 1994, held at the Schoenstatt Family Centre, in Bedfordview, Johannesburg, attended by 33 participants from South Africa and neighbouring countries such as Swaziland and Zimbabwe. In retrospect it was truly providential that the beginnings of this project would coincide with that momentous watershed year in South Africa’s history, the transition to democracy and the election of the first democratic president, Nelson Mandela.

From the outset the Planning Group had to be conscious of the particular intellectual contribution of a Catholic university to the ethical, social and political issues in the region and to the cultural development and
intellectual well-being of its peoples; and how the rich treasures of Catholic higher education accumulated over the centuries could enrich our local higher education. The long-term aim was clear in broad outline in that the new institution would have to make a unique contribution to higher education in the new South Africa through values-based programmes and degrees not offered at other universities. Further, true to its character as a Catholic university, the emphasis would be on the common good and therefore be in the service mainly of the previously disadvantaged citizens of this country.

However, this ambitious project would have to be developed from ground-zero since there was no money whatsoever, no pre-existing school or college, no parent institution somewhere else on which to build (as in the case of other private universities in South Africa such as Monash, Bond, Montfort), and of course there was no library. In the following years a “Planning Group” reflected further on the “idea of a Catholic university”, inspired by John Henry Newman, but in an African / South African context, and on the feasibility of this venture. Newman’s vision of a genuinely liberal university education, with the qualities of responsibility, fidelity, and the inherently ethical nature attached to a truly liberal education, and therefore with the focus on the humanities, remained the guiding star. The study of *Ex corde ecclesiae* (1990), the Apostolic Constitution on Catholic Universities, gave vital information and inspiration on a difficult and rocky way ahead. It is not surprising that many of the early fellow travellers gradually dropped out of the race while others joined us later on the way.

**THE YEAR 1997**

Quite unexpectedly Stichting Porticus, a Dutch Foundation, invited me to undertake an extensive study tour in March 1997, organised and funded by Porticus, to test the viability of this project by visiting some 25 leading Catholic universities and institutes in Europe and the United States. This was another providential and groundbreaking intervention
because it laid the foundation for our future international network with promises of collaboration from many leading scholars in the humanities. These contacts helped us to design and later to start high-powered and unique Masters programmes in the humanities. At first, the Planning Group gave serious consideration to the possibility of setting up a university in association with another university such as the Open University in the United Kingdom, Notre Dame in the US, or another university in South Africa, e.g. the University of the Witwatersrand.

In May 1997 the Planning Group took the momentous decision to actually embark on the project. They chose the name “St Augustine University of Southern Africa” in order to indicate the African identity of the institution and because St Augustine of Hippo (354-430 AD) was one of the first and greatest Christian scholars of Africa.

In June 1997, a Board of Trustees was set up with prominent Catholic businessmen, and in November 1997, St Augustine College became a Section 21 Company, that is a non-profit company, with a Board of Directors, thereby establishing the institution as a legal entity. In December 1997 when legislation was enacted that made it possible to create private universities in South Africa, the Planning Group elected to go the route of an independent South African university without having to have its degrees accredited by any other institution.

At more or less the same time the then Minister of Education downsized, rationalised and even closed many departments in the Arts Faculties at South African universities (especially language departments, history, philosophy, theology etc), marking them as “obsolete programmes”, thereby weakening exactly those disciplines which foster critical, independent and creative thinking. The new Act on Higher Education, passed in December 1997, placed the emphasis squarely on the labour market of society, addressing the development of a knowledge-driven and knowledge-dependent society, but a society that was facing “moral bankruptcy”. However, it is the human sciences that should play a key role at our universities in the search for moral
fundamentals and ethical absolutes in a country and increasingly in a world characterised by political, religious, ethnic and economic diversity. St Augustine, the new university wanted to provide a complementary higher education with the emphasis on a holistic formation of young men and women, developing the mission of the humanities in tertiary education because the humanities deal with values, the arts subjects are about values for individuals and society as a whole. As Pope John Paul II wrote in *Ex corde ecclesiae*:

> It is essential, that we be convinced of the priority of the ethical over the technical, of the primacy of the person over things, of the superiority of the spirit over matter. The cause of the human person will be served only if knowledge is joined to conscience. Men and women of science will truly aid humanity only if they preserve the sense of transcendence of the human person over the world and of God over the human person.

I want to stress that the institution was founded independently from the Southern African Catholic Bishops’ Conference, although there was always constructive dialogue and ongoing communication with the SACBC so that the bishops were kept informed while the autonomy of the institution was safeguarded.

In June 1997 the College rented its first and rather modest office in Helvetia House (Edenvale) Johannesburg and appointed a part-time secretary. All the business meetings could now be held at this venue.

**THE YEAR 1998**

In 1998, St Augustine College took a bold leap when it offered to the public a *Winter School* on “Applied ethics in the workplace” in response to the loss of moral fibre and to the violence and corruption sweeping the country. With the help and inspiration of our newly appointed registrar, Mrs Felicity Eggleston, the first full-time appointment, an ambitious programme was designed. A panel of 24 eminent scholars -
philosophers, theologians and politicians, business leaders and educationists from South Africa, Uganda, Nigeria, the United States, Belgium and Germany - examined in 50 lectures these issues and, within a theoretical framework, addressed in a practical way the problems facing South Africa. It was aimed at leaders and at developing leadership. In a time of upheaval and negativism in South African society and politics, the Winter School was designed as a positive response to urgent problems and a genuine search for potential solutions and the way forward. Furthermore, the Winter School was the forerunner of the proposed Catholic university which at that stage was not much more than a dream, perhaps a prophetic dream, but interestingly, the fledgling university already had a fairly clear goal. As stated in the Winter School brochure, the university will provide a Christian education for the transformation of our society based on academic freedom, a proper esteem for all human life and culture, authentic human freedom, the fearless quest for truth and search for meaning, promotion of open dialogue between Christianity and the world, concern for Christian morals and ethics in all areas of life and a commitment to finding God in our world. Above all, it will provide an education recognised by leading overseas universities. The Winter School in 1998 will indicate the quality of education to be offered by the new university.

In 20 evening seminars, lasting from May to August, held at Holy Rosary School in Edenvale, and attended by approximately 500 people, topics such as the following were dealt with:

- Ethics in the South African context
- Economy, market and morality
- Ethics and the exercise of power
- Ethics in a changing business environment
- Professional ethics in education
- Bioethics and belief
- Economic ethics and Christian Social Teaching.
In the course of that year, and in frequent discussions and with input from many colleagues, the College had already acquired a more pronounced identity. Prof Brian Gaybba (Rhodes University) formulated it as follows:

The specific aim of a Catholic university is to be a place where students can experience the unity between a religious faith and the broader experience, a unity that is not normally available at secular institutions…

The difference from a secular institution is that within a Catholic university those who accept both religious values (especially those found within Catholicism) and the world of knowledge built by reason and human experience are given an intellectual and spiritual environment in which to pursue the integration of those areas with each other.

The group formulated an early version of its later mission statement. It stated that values such as the following would have to be woven into the fabric of the holistic process of higher education:

- Respect for the dignity of the human person
- Freedom and the pursuit of truth
- Respect for the cultures of our society and of the world today
- Responsibility for society
- Commitment to the common good
- Integrity and all-round self-development
- Service and wisdom.

Against the background and history of colonialism and apartheid the stress would be placed on the dignity of the human person, which would become an obligatory course or module in the later syllabus.
THE YEAR 1999

In January 1999 a formal application was submitted to the national Department of Education and on 5\textsuperscript{th} July 1999 St Augustine College was given conditional permission by the Department of Education to function as a private higher education institution and to offer the degree of Master of Philosophy in five different fields and the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, which degrees were duly accredited by that Department.

Also in January 1999, the College had moved to rented spacious premises on the site of the old Union Observatory in Observatory, Johannesburg with the historic Sir Herbert Baker buildings. It enjoyed the advantages of the quiet and gracious grounds of the AS & TS (Associated Scientific & Technical Societies), previously owned by the CSIR.

It was here that on 13 July 1999 the College was opened by the Deputy Minister of Education, Father Smangaliso Mkhatshwa, and that it started teaching its first 20 Masters students that same month. A number of prominent academics from African and overseas universities attended the solemn opening. This occasion also marked the installation of the first Chancellor - Archbishop Buti Tlhagale OMI - and the first Vice-Chancellor - Professor Edith Raidt.

However, the opening nearly did not take place because - only days prior to the event - the Minister of Education, Professor Kader Asmal, tried to stop the institution from being officially recognised. Drama always belonged to the various stages of our development, but in the end we succeeded, although we had to drop the name “university” and opt for “college”.
Sankofa review

Reflecting in true Sankofa style on the first phase of our development one cannot but discern that this was a divine initiative, that we had discovered a plan of God and were also experiencing God’s guidance and assistance in striking ways. At every stage enormous difficulties had to be faced and overcome. In hindsight it is amazing that all of that was possible with the barest essentials, minimal financial resources and a “library” that consisted of a few, mostly borrowed, books which the lecturers made available.

Already from the first phase we learnt the wisdom of the small steps, of growth and development within the confines of our very limited means, but also the courageous realisation of the divine plan. At the very start in 1997 a critical overseas donor said to me: If you want to establish a Catholic university in South Africa NOW, it means you have hope for your country. This university would be a sign of hope!

For practical reasons the College started off in a small way with postgraduate degrees only, but one of its most important aims, as a service to the community, had always been to expand to a broader range of disciplines at undergraduate level, a goal that was only reached in January 2009 with the introduction of the B Com (PPE) and the BTh programmes, to be followed by the BA (Humanities) the following year.
PHASE 2 : 2000 – 2005

Thanks to the wide ranging international network and support in the form of visiting academics from overseas - whose travel expenses were carried by their own universities - St Augustine College could offer Masters programmes of exceptional quality and diversity. Here we owe a debt of gratitude to the Universities of Notre Dame (USA), Leuven (Belgium), Nijmegen and Brabant / Tilburg (Netherlands), Fribourg (Switzerland), Oxford (UK), Tübingen (Germany), and the ACU (Australia). This was of particular importance in the early years when the College had very few permanent academic staff.

Prof Emmanuel Katongole, Duke University (USA), and Uganda Martyrs University (Uganda) 1999
Prof Johan Verstraeten, KU Leuven (Belgium) 2000
Prof Wil Derkse, KU Nijmegen (Belgium) 2000, 2002
Prof Bénézet Bujo, University of Fribourg (Switzerland) 2004
Prof Ottmar Fuchs University of Tübingen (Germany) 2003
Prof Peter Hodgson, Oxford University (UK) 2003
Prof Lawrence Cunningham, Notre Dame University (USA) 2001
Prof Oliver Williams, Notre Dame University (USA) 2000, 2001, 2003
Prof Jan Jans, University of Tilburg, Netherlands, annually since 2000
Dr Norman Tanner, Oxford University (UK) 1999
Prof Franz Josef Stegmann, University of Bochum (Germany), annually since 1999
Prof Luk Bouckaert, KU Leuven (Belgium) 2000
Prof Rita Gesquière, KU Leuven (Belgium) 2000
THE YEARS 2002 - 2003

In January 2002, thanks to the generous financial help of an overseas donor, the Diocese of Rottenburg-Stuttgart (Germany), the College acquired its **own campus** in Victory Park, a quiet and leafy suburb and yet close to the city centre of Johannesburg. In April, the campus was **solemnly opened** by the donor in a colourful ceremony and in the presence of numerous local and international dignitaries. The ceremony was televised and screened on German television on a number of occasions.

In the same month the College hosted the **General Assembly of ACUHIAM**, the Association of Catholic Universities and Higher Institutes in Africa and Madagascar, with the Rectors and Vice-Chancellors of 10 African Catholic universities.

During the ACUHIAM conference the College held its **first graduation** with international and especially African participation. 17 students received the degree of MPhil in the fields of Applied Ethics and Theology. Some 14 representatives of Catholic universities in Africa, mainly Rectors and Vice-Chancellors, took part in the celebration.

By mid-2002 the number of registered postgraduate students had increased to 95; 7 of whom were doctoral students. The MPhil in Educational Leadership had the biggest number with 33 students.

The staff of the College which had increased to 6 full-time academics, worked out a “Higher Education Manifesto”, the definitive **Mission Statement** of the College. This was a major breakthrough in that - after weeks of reflection and debate - it spells out how the College sees

- a vision of a University / Catholic University
- the context of the contemporary University in Africa
- defining characteristics of the Catholic University in Southern Africa
goals, aims and social outreach of a Catholic university in Southern Africa.

Important growth areas in 2003-4 were the introduction of the certificate course in Political Leadership and the MPhil programmes in Educational Leadership for teachers from Lesotho. Both were made possible by overseas donors.

THE YEARS 2004 - 2005

A very important breakthrough was reached when on 29 July 2004 the College received full accreditation from the Department of Education with the right to offer five degrees of Master of Philosophy and two degrees of Doctor of Philosophy.

Thanks to the initiative of Stichting Porticus (Netherlands) the College could appoint five doctoral students as Research Assistants / Junior Lecturers, one for each field of study. This should give the College the opportunity to train its own future teaching staff from the ranks of promising black candidates.

The academic staff by now had increased to 12 plus 50 visiting and part-time lecturers from overseas universities and 10 local adjunct staff members, and 9 administrative staff.
Sankofa review:

Looking back on Phase 2, there was considerable growth, a steady increase in student numbers up to 152, more academic and admin staff, several graduations, but there was the danger of trying to settle in our comfort zone. The idea or goal of going undergraduate was met with resistance from both academic staff and our postgraduate students who wanted to retain the status quo.

Furthermore, we were repeatedly on the brink of financial disaster when our accountants on the Board of Directors warned us of the possibility of having to close the College. But each time blind faith in Divine Providence and the generosity of our great trustee and donor Bill Lynch bailed us out.

PHASE 3: 2005 - 2009

UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMMES

In 2006, challenged by our International Academic Advisory Committee and our Grand Chancellor, the daring decision was taken to introduce undergraduate programmes. This was made possible thanks to a big 3-year grant from an overseas funding agency, the Italian Bishops’ Conference. It required a careful investigation into which Bachelor programmes would be selected, and then the full documentation, syllabuses etc. for accreditation had to be worked out. Our original aim of educating leaders in Africa for Africa, of providing ethical and
intellectual leadership should come to fruition in these bachelor programmes. Therefore ethics and Catholic Social Teaching should become hallmarks of the new educational programmes. This longstanding dream of ours became a reality in 2009 with the start of the BCom (PPE) and BTh degrees.

**LIBRARY AND BUILDINGS**

Overseas grants and local donors made it possible to extend the library to over 26 000 books, establish a computer centre and refurbish the building. The Library now also houses the unique and priceless *Bishop Grimley Collection* of 16th and 17th philosophical and theological publications, and the complete John Henry Newman collection. Both of these collections are unique in Africa. Furthermore, with a generous donation from a German donor (Diocese of Rottenburg-Stuttgart), the brand-new building with modern lecture halls could be erected in 2008 in preparation for the undergraduate students.

**NEW PRESIDENT**

An important milestone was reached in 2008 when Dr Michael van Heerden was inaugurated as the second president of the College. This marks the end of the founding period and ushers in a new phase in the growth and development of the institution especially in view of the introduction of Bachelors programmes.

**SOCIAL OUTREACH**

From the start the College fostered outreach programmes on topics dealing with ethics in the workplace, such as
• 1998 The **Winter School on Applied Ethics in the Workplace**
• 2000 **Business Breakfast** for 200 business leaders on the theme “**Restoring the moral fibre of the country through Education**” with the Deputy President Jacob Zuma as the guest of honour.
• **Leadership Seminars** in collaboration with the Konrad Adenauer Foundation with over 100 participants each:
  - 2001 **Defining a New Citizenship for South Africa and the Fundamental Values that Will Shape It**
• Regular **Public Lectures** about eight times per annum

**RESEARCH AND PUBLICATIONS**

Next to all of these activities and in spite of not having research funding, the College stressed the importance of research and publications both among staff and our postgraduate students. The College publishes two journals with international distribution:

• **St Augustine Papers (from 2000 onwards)**
• **PRAXIS – Journal for Christian Business Leadership**

Both journals publish refereed research articles by staff and Masters students.

**INTERNATIONAL NETWORK AND CONFERENCES**

The College has hosted several local and international conferences:
• 2002 - General Assembly of ACUHIAM (the Association of Catholic Universities and Higher Institutions in Africa and Madagascar)
• 2003 - AIDS Conference
• 2005 - The African Meeting of the Pontifical Council for Culture
• 2006 - African Spirituality Conference
• 2007 - African Philosophy Conference

Furthermore, staff members attended and actively participated in numerous international academic conferences (at Notre Dame, Boston College (USA); Padua and Rome (Italy), Bangkok (Thailand), Uganda, Kenya, Cameroon, Mozambique (Africa).

OUR DONORS

St Augustine College is a non-profit organisation, and as a private institution for higher education it does not receive any state subsidy. This makes us extremely vulnerable and highly dependent on the generosity of donors. Over the past 12 years our major donors have been:

• The diocese of Rottenburg-Stuttgart (Germany)
• Stichting Porticus (Netherlands)
• The Archdioceses of Munich and Cologne (Germany)
• The Italian Bishops’ Conference (Italy)
• Missio Munich and Aachen (Germany)
• Local donors: Bill Lynch, Tokyo Sexwale, Mark Lamberti, Gavan Ryan and Marc de Mûlenaere
Sankofa – Challenges for the future

Assessing the past with the view to the future – again in Sankofa style - we must ask ourselves: Are we what we should be?

Challenge 1: Already in phase 1 we took a conscious decision that we wanted to start a Catholic university, not just a private values-based Christian institution. We saw and still see this as the core of our identity and raison d’être, yet it has to be examined and evaluated in every new phase.

In 2001 Cardinal Godfried Danneels, as Chancellor of the Catholic University of Leuven, pointed out:

- The Catholic university is always more or less in a state of crisis, and it has to be… If faith and reason are two entranceways to the one truth and only come together behind the horizon, then it is obvious that in the foreground both – faith and reason – must be engaged in a dialectical dialogue… The ‘crisis’ is imprinted, so to speak, in the very ‘genes’ of a Catholic university.”

- St Augustine of Hippo put it in these words: *Intellege ut credas - Crede ut intellegas*  
  Understand that you may believe - Believe that you may understand.

Challenge 2: Furthermore, the Catholic ethos in every sphere of the institution needs to be carefully nurtured and fostered so that it becomes
a lived and tangible experience within the academic community. This will remain a huge and ongoing task.

**Challenge 3** is the increase in our student numbers. The College needs the critical mass of students not only in order to become financially viable but also to make a meaningful contribution to the country and society by educating as many ethically motivated and formed leaders as possible.

**Challenge 4** concerns our finances. While we are deeply grateful to our donors and will need them also in the future, we have to find a broader base for our financial security. Also, and this is a lesson learnt from the past, we have to stay within our limited confines until such time that we get some meaningful government subsidy!

**Finally**, the past has taught us that faith and trust in Divine Providence guided us in our whole development and helped us through very rough times. Therefore we need to be and remain also a community of prayer. Apart from striving to be an institution of academic excellence in teaching, research and service, St Augustine College will always need to grow in the power of faith and prayer.

**Notes**

1. See www.gilliam-consulting.com/Sankofa. See also http://www.duboislc.net/SankofaMeaning.html
3. See Rocky Williams, “SA needs a new moral awareness.” In: The Sunday Independent, 12 April 1998
Three Sophists – what a university must not be

MICHAEL J VAN HEERDEN

1. Introduction

This conference has two manifest intentions: firstly, to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the founding of St Augustine College and, secondly, to use that celebration to explore more deeply the question as to what a university should be like in the 21st century. Judging from the list of esteemed speakers, I am sure that much will be said positively around the functions of teaching and learning, research and social outreach. In my talk, however, I have chosen to approach the question negatively. While there are hints of my approach in the scientific methodology prescribed by Francis Bacon (1561-1626) and other philosophers, the use of the via negativa is really an age-old theological method. Today we are faced with a plethora of higher institutes of education, many claiming to have found the elixir of life to keep the ideal of the university alive. However, because of the inherent contradictions between many of these models, I have become convinced that, if we are to discern what is at the heart of a university’s mission in our time, we must understand clearly what it must not be.

To this end, I have chosen three of the dominant Athenian Sophists of the fourth century B.C. This choice I have made for two reasons. The first is ideological: I believe that, since their teachings instigated a counter reaction that was arguably the birth of the university ideal, to understand where they went wrong will help set the boundaries of our discourse. Originating in the genius of Socrates, the Academy and the Lyceum, established respectively by Plato (B.C. 428-348) and Aristotle
(B.C. 384-323) in the 4th century B.C., were colleges founded to counter the teachings of the Sophists. In these nascent academies, they sought to reinstate the objectivity of knowledge and the centrality of the knowing subject. Especially the knowing subject as an ethical being – charged with the improvement of his/her own life and the betterment of the lot of his/her society. A second reason for choosing the Sophists is historical: an analysis of the circumstances they found themselves in shows uncanny similarities to our own in Africa today: the struggle to establish young democracies, the collapse of the old orders, the fluctuation between periods of economic prosperity and recession, a widening gap between rich and poor, rapid urbanization and abusive leadership - with the resultant conflicts (including xenophobic attacks) between the peoples and regions affected, to name just a few. These uncertainties were ultimately aggravated by the teaching of the Sophists for if, as the Sophists claimed, humans are the measure of all things and success is the sole criterion of truth, it is difficult to see how a united effort for the common good could be born to face these challenges.

Admittedly, the Sophists have received somewhat of a ‘bad press’ and their educative efforts have been revisited by many scholars such as Werner Jaeger in his Paideia. One author has likened them to “Encyclopaedists of culture”, or “Polymaths”, who “accumulated facts from which they proceeded to draw conclusions” (Copleston, 1985: 82). Their breadth of view generally made them advocates of Panhellenism, a doctrine sorely needed to unify the Greek city states and end the internecine conflicts between them. But, the undisputed error of their ways was that, while some of their levelling-out techniques were undoubtedly needed, their sceptical tendencies did not “put anything really new and stable in place of old convictions which they tended to unsettle” (Ibid.: 84). Further, because their ideologies differed widely, the Sophists were really an aggregate of specialists, with no united vision. This tended to deepen the general malaise among the youth of the time - a malaise characterized by three pertinent factors: a lack of human purpose, a broken sense of belonging, and a crippled imagination. When one surveys other periods of history which had comparable
socio/historical factors and a similar malaise (one thinks of post-1918 Germany) the combination can become explosive. More especially in times of critical upheaval - as is shown in the Greece of their times:

It is stated with a particular and terrifying force by Thucydides in his *Melian Dialogue* . . . In his descriptions of the revolution at Corcyra and of the effects of the plague at Athens, Thucydides observes, what others have noted since, that in times when the restraint of law and the conventions of morality are removed, human nature can become something almost indescribably vile and savage. (Warner, 1958: 52)

In South Africa today, these factors exist and people are affected by the same malaise, which makes the role of the university here all the more critical and conferences such as this one all the more pertinent.

2. Three Sophists

2.1 Thrasymachus of Chalcedon

In Plato’s *Republic* (Plato, 1987: 17-42; Book 1, Part 3: 337-54) our first Sophist, Thrasymachus, is portrayed as holding to the idea that “might is right”. Justice is defined by the laws enacted by the ruling party, whether it be a monarchy, an oligarchy or a democracy, and these laws will always serve the interests of those in power. Not only is power that which defines what is right – Thrasymachus further contends that the unjust person is positively superior in character and intelligence. The use of the word ‘unjust’ is merely one that portrays the balance of power:

If you are caught committing such crimes in detail you are punished and disgraced . . . But when a man succeeds in robbing the whole body of citizens and reducing them to slavery, they forget these ugly names and call him happy and fortunate . . . So we see that injustice, given scope, has greater strength and freedom and power than justice”. (Plato, 1987: 27; Book 1, Part 3: 344, b-c)
Plato’s response to the idea that people should aggressively pursue their own interests “in a virtually unlimited form of self assertion” (Stumpf, 1988: 33) is twofold: firstly, he mentions that if anyone be a true professional, the very nature of one’s effort is directed towards the realization of one’s craft - which, in turn, serves the common good in a particular way. One’s own interests are secondary and flow from the realisation of the first end. Second, Plato also mentions that if one is not guided by justice, then, not only does one become ineffectual in the end (because of the dissension that ensues); but, one’s own nature is compromised and this “division of purpose” sets one at variance with oneself:

Injustice, then, seems to have the following results, whether it occurs in a state or family or army or anything else: it renders it incapable of any common action because of factions and quarrels, and sets it at variance with itself . . . And it will produce its natural effects also in the individual. It renders him incapable of action because of internal conflicts and division of purpose, and sets him at variance with himself and with all who are just”. (Plato, 1987: 38; Book 1, Part 3: 352)

Plato, however, in no way succeeded in putting Thrasymachus to rest. His thought has resurfaced periodically through the ages. One has only to think of *The Prince* by Niccolò Machiavelli (1469-1527), *Leviathan* by Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679) and *Beyond Good and Evil* by Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900).

**But, how does this affect our discussion of what a university should not be.** I think in a number of ways. The most obvious is that it raises the awkward, but ever self-regenerating, question as to what is the **purpose of life.** We have seen that the first Greek academies were formed to reinstate the knowing subject as an ethical being - charged with the improvement of his/her own life and the betterment of the lot of his/her community. For the great Greek thinkers the purpose of life was justice: the right ordering of one’s life and that of society. Power and privilege, if sought as ends in themselves, led to the disintegration of
justice. I have also noted that the first element of the malaise that infects our generation is precisely a lack of human purpose or an overall vision to guide life. Bombarded with a barrage of notions of what the good life is, it is hardly surprising that confusion and mental fatigue has set in.

In *The Idea of a University*, one of John Henry Newman’s (1801-1890) central theses is that the university should be producing people with an appreciation of the interconnectedness of reality, which is what he depicts as the “teaching of universal knowledge” (Newman 1902: 20). For Newman, it is this vision that forms the basis of a sense of human purpose:

> That only is the true enlargement of mind which is the power of viewing many things at once as one whole, or referring them severally to their true place in the universal system, of understanding their respective values, and determining their respective dependence. (Ibid: 137)

Universal knowledge can only be secured in a university where each science is awarded its place and autonomy. But no one science must be given an importance at the expense of another. The core integrative disciplines such as philosophy, ethics, the humanities and theology are vital in ensuring this balance. This enlargement of mind gives a sense of purpose beyond the often exploitative interests of the most powerful. So we must ask ourselves continually as to how far universities have aligned themselves with the powers that be: producing specialists in their fields with the sole ambition of succeeding at any cost. Not that I think excellence should not be rewarded; but should we not be preparing people content to make their contribution to the common good by pursuing that excellence in their respective crafts and not just monetary reward? If the lacuna, occasioned by the lack of purpose, is filled only with the purpose of success, how will people contend with the inevitable disappointment of being second best or having to live a life that is less than perfect? How will they succeed in resisting the temptations of the shortcuts to be on top of the pile? Is this not the “internal conflicts and
division of purpose” that Plato spoke about that sets a person “at variance” with him or herself?

Another more insidious way in which this brand of Sophism has crept into our institutions is, I believe, in the almost uncritical acceptance of the most radical form of ultra-Darwinism. Here the survival of the fittest, the most powerful, has become the motif of life at every level, and chance its only restraint. This year we celebrate the 150th anniversary of the publication of Charles Darwin’s (1809-1882) *Origin of Species*; a book which contains insights that should rightly affect how we think about almost every topic, and something I would like to return to later in the final section. Ultra-Darwinism, perhaps encouraged by the thought of Schopenhauer (1788-1860), was quick to become the dominant interpretation of Darwin’s insights. It was already popularised in the nineteenth century by Nietzsche (1844-1900).

‘Exploitation’ does not pertain to a corrupt or imperfect or primitive society: it pertains to the *essence* of the living thing as a fundamental organic function, it is the consequence of the intrinsic will to power which is precisely the will of life. (Nietzsche, 1978: 175)

If genes - rather than organisms or personalities - become the fundamental units of selection, then persons are reduced merely to the sum of their genes and the world is just an arena for a fight to the death. Even Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) had to admit (in one of his last writings: *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*) that ultimately, because he had tried to reduce the human only to his/her basic molecular units, he had “steered unawares into the haven of Schopenhauer’s philosophy for whom death is the “real result” of life” (Freud, 1952: 657). This strange inversion of the purpose of human life has affected sciences as widely ranging as socio-biology and jurisprudence. People see themselves as victims of their biology and this undermines the critical role that the conscience should have in the formation of their character.
However, with the collaboration between sciences, including the humanities, wider visions of evolution have begun to surface in a broad corpus of thinking termed meta-Darwinism. I mention, to illustrate my point, just two such theories: holon theory and endosymbiosis. Holon theory was introduced by Arthur Koestler (Koestler, 1978) more than a quarter of a century ago and postulates that whatever exists - in whatever field of enquiry - exists as both a whole and a part. Every whole forms a part of something larger, without ceasing to be a whole of its own parts. This paradox of autonomy and interdependence is an apt delineation for what a university is, as well as for what its role in society should be. It also gives a more universal view of the purpose of life: at each level of supervenient synthesis a broader and more comprehensive purpose emerges that cannot be reduced to the mere sum of its parts. In the theory of endosymbiosis, biologists such as Lynn Margolis (Fowler & Kuebler, 2007: 320-1) focus the theory of evolution not on just competition and conflict, but also associations and co-operations between organisms. These symbiotic relationships, they contend, are of escalating value as the structures involved become all the more complex. In other words, as structures of higher complexity emerge at each new level, so do the structures of their relationships and the importance these have for their evolution. Human purpose, therefore, as reflective of the most complex of known structures i.e. the human psyche, would be based more in cooperation than competition. The university has the awesome task to decipher the precise nature and implications of this relationship between justice to the self and justice to all, without capitulating to the fundamentalism of ultra-Darwinism:

How to interpret the Epic of Evolution is neither obvious nor simple. It requires romantic vision and philosophic rigor... an interpretive community that seeks to integrate knowledge and wisdom from across the disciplinary boundaries of our compartmentalised modern university and our fragmented post-modern society. (Grassie, 2009:139)
2.2 Protagoras of Abdera

Among all the Sophists that came to Athens, Protagoras of Abdera was the most influential and enjoyed the personal favour of Pericles. We are told, for example, that he was entrusted by Pericles with the task of drawing up a constitution for the Panhellenic colony of Thurii – founded in 444 B.C. Protagoras is accredited by Plato (in the dialogue *Theaitetos*) with the saying that ‘man is the measure of all things’ (Plato, 1961: 79; Par.: 152ff). While there is some opinion today that with the term ‘man’, Protagoras did not mean the individual person, but the community or the whole human species, this does not seem to be born out in any of the dialogues of Plato. Since, then, knowledge is limited to our perceptions - which differ with each person - there can be no objective standard by which to judge the veracity of knowledge. This position, when embraced, inevitably lands one in varying shades of cultural relativism and post-modern solipsism. Plato’s immediate response is to say that, if this be the case, then all academies should close shop, for this position undermines the very project of education itself:

. . . every man is to have his own beliefs for himself alone and they are all right and true: on these assumptions, I ask you my friend, how comes it that Protagoras is so wise as to justify setting up to teach others in return for large fees; and how comes it that we are so comparatively ignorant that we need him as our schoolmaster, when each of us is the measure of his own wisdom? (Ibid.: 91; Par.: 161, c)

On a more serious note, Plato contends that this position reflects a gross misunderstanding of the very act of knowing. We have already noted that the project of the earliest academies was to reinstate the centrality of the knowing subject and the objectivity of knowledge. Plato acknowledges that the cosmos can best be described as a unity of developmental systems (Ibid: 84-5; Par.: 156, b), which means that all experiential knowledge must grow and change in accord with that development. All knowledge is unfinished; but, the fact that it is in
process does not mean that there has not been the refinement of understanding and insights, nor does it mean that all knowledge gleaned so far is relative. At every advance, the knowledge judged to be a true belief should be relatively more adequate than that which preceded it. On the other hand, the very act of knowing demonstrates that each person (arguably because our intellect has been forged by the very processes of that we study) has within him/herself the innate “standard by which to judge” their experiences and beliefs (Ibid.: 111; Par.: 178, c). This standard Plato explains with an analogy: imagine a person in an aviary; the pigeons flying around being our thoughts and the person being the mind. The act of knowing means that we are able to both hold in our hands the right pigeon (i.e. we are able to extract from our experience that which is relevant to knowledge) and get the right pigeon to fly to our hands when we need it (i.e. to extract from memory that which forms the basis of comparison for any judgment) (Ibid.: 138-9; Par.: 198). Education is the very process by which people are, firstly, trained to be both more discerning in what they extract from experience and, secondly, are equipped in memory with the right thoughts that enable broader and more comprehensive judgments.

Again we have to admit that Plato was unable to put the thinking of Protagoras to rest. From the thinking of the medieval nominalists to the challenges of David Hume (1711-1776) and post-modern conceptual constructivism, this relativism continues to bedevil the academic enterprise. 10 Côté and Allahar show how it has even crept into standards of marking:

At the same time, the ‘postmodern view’ gained ascendance among many faculty members: standards are relative and students’ knowledge needs to be accepted as comparable to that of professors’. When professors believe in relativism . . . they become less confident in their judgements of student’s work, and more likely to reward student performances based solely on students’ pre-formed opinions. (Côté and Allahar, 2007: 163)
More importantly, as I mentioned in the introduction, this form of relativism has the direct effect of destroying the sense of belonging of our generation, a result anticipated by both Plato and Protagoras himself (Plato, 1961: 104-5; Par.: 172, a). For if everything in our culture is relative, then each individual is the final arbitrator of the truth and there can be no sense in adhering to social codes and customs that do not suit his/her subjective definitions. This cultural relativism gives a directionless freedom that does not enhance a person’s well being; but, ultimately, deepens their sense of anomie and lack of belonging. In my inaugural address last year, I mentioned that one of the primary tasks of a university should be to advance the cultural appreciation of their students and their sense of being rooted. In any culture there are enabling elements and disenabling elements. Building on the valuable or the enabling elements within the student’s own cultural perspective, the educator should weave his knowledge and experience through by careful steps of explanation and discussion which bring the learner to a more exact understanding of the reality being examined. This new understanding does not annihilate the learner’s culture; but it does abrogate it into a new synthesis with other truths. Pope John Paul II, makes this clear in his Apostolic Constitution: Ex Corde Ecclesiae (ECE):

Traditional cultures are to be defended in their identity, helping them to receive modern values without sacrificing their own heritage, which is a wealth for the whole human family. Universities, situated within the ambiance of these cultures, will seek to harmonise local cultures with the positive contributions of modern cultures. (Pope John Paul, 1990: ECE Par.: 45)

Cultural relativism thrives on the notion that because cultures are human constructs, they are all equally arbitrary and dispensable. Aristotle, in both his Ethics and Politics, acknowledged the fact that all cultures have elements that are relative to the history and geography of a particular people. This is why one cannot legislate as to which of the three forms of legitimate government might best suit a particular culture: monarchy,
aristocracy or polity (what we call democracy today). However, whatever form is in place, it should govern for the common good of all the people. The most insidious presumption of a corrupt democracy, Aristotle holds, is to assume that because people and cultures are similar in some respects, they are similar in all respects (Stumpf, 1988: 105). As the equalizing tendencies of globalisation continue unabated in our time, it is imperative that universities be the think-tanks where new cultural forms are born - preserving the best of the past syntheses. These must be able to give a sense of belonging to a technological generation. This will take discernment to judge what the enabling elements within each culture are and how these can best be developed in personal and ecologically friendly ways.

What is wrong with our culture is that it offers us an inaccurate conception of the self. It depicts the personal self as existing in competition with and in opposition to nature... We fail to realize that if we destroy the environment, we are destroying what is in fact our larger self. (Mathews, 2009: 290)

2.3 Prodicus of Ceos

This brings our discussion to the last of the three Sophists: Prodicus, who came from the island of Ceos in the Aegean. Prodicus, was undoubtedly an expert in linguistics; but, he is arguably best known for his theories on religion. For him, God is really a human construct: religion begins with animism, in which the natural elements are worshipped; then, as people become more civilised, religion becomes a reflection of their arts and technological endeavours; finally, however, religion will become redundant and will be replaced with scientific concerns (Copleston, 1985: 92). His position seems to be an early anticipation of the thinking of Auguste Comte (1798-1857). Comte’s positivistic philosophy postulated what he called the law of three stages (Magill, 1968: 588-93). In the theological stage of society, people invent gods and are held bound by superstition; in the metaphysical stage, the
intellect deifies itself and religion becomes a sectarian phenomenon; finally, in the positive stage, the sciences provide certainties that make a new social order possible and inspire a moral regeneration.

In our post-modern world, the sciences are a lot more humble about what they can achieve and the limits of their discourses. For example, it is clear to most post-modern thinkers that the physical sciences cannot, on their own, provide the sorely needed moral regeneration; nor can they provide any meta-narrative beyond the strictures of their empirical methodologies. The resurgence of religious fundamentalism and the stand-off between many religious thinkers and scientists indicates, however, that the quest for a meta-narrative is part and parcel of the human condition. Hans-Georg Gadamer (1900-2002) sees this quest as arising in the imagination and holds it to be an essential part of each person’s self-transcendence (Gadamer, 2003: 80-1). Commenting on Plato’s notion of a wise person, Gadamer contends that:

. . . Plato is interpreting the being of the human being in the great scope of cosmic events in that he unifies the two aspects of self-movement and ‘logos’ in mythical metaphors . . . is Heidegger not also justified when he discovers a Heraclitus who is enquiring back behind metaphysics, yet one in whom all things play into one another? Could he not also have discovered Plato’s dialectic, in which the play of these ideas is played out further? (Ibid.: 81)

I have mentioned as the third element of the malaise of our time - a crippled imagination. I agree with Gadamer that this can only be restored to health through a living dialectic - akin to the method prescribed by Plato. In the context of the university this means that there is a living discourse between the various sciences, one in which none is marginalised. This dialogue will probably entail the reformulation of many theological doctrines to bring them into existential fitness with scientific truths; but, it will also entail the physical sciences seeking for an inclusive metaphysics in which all the diverse human experiences can be interpreted. While strictly speaking the province of the philosopher, this arena - in which the imagination thrives – is the result of a common
reflection of all involved in the quest for truth. I mentioned earlier that the insights of Darwin should influence how we think about almost every topic. But equally should the truths of systematic theology and insights of the Chaucer’s *Canterbury Tales*. To marginalise the theological sciences and the humanities, or to reduce them merely to hermeneutics, as many contemporary universities are doing, is to exclude a vital corrective and contribution in the dialectic of knowledge.

What particularly kills the work of the imagination is fundamentalism of any kind. Fundamentalism reduces the complexity of life to some comfortable truths that are then given a prominence that distorts other truths, crippling the sense of wonder and the power of the imagination to find more inclusive narratives. What is particularly alarming is that, while religious fundamentalism might be frowned upon by most academic institutions, what seems to be encouraged under the banner of academic freedom is the equally corrosive and fundamentalist influence of what has been coined the “new atheism”. Roy Varghese describes the chief target of the new atheists as:

. . . organised religion of any kind, time, or place. Paradoxically the books themselves read like fundamentalist sermons . . . they refuse to engage the real issues involved in the question of God’s existence . . . they show no awareness of the fallacies and muddles that led to the rise and fall of logical positivism. (Varghese, 2008: xvi-ii)

3. Conclusion

I heard it once said that Mark Twain, when asked to comment on the state of universities, wryly responded that universities are full of knowledge: the freshmen bring in a little, the seniors take none away, so the knowledge accumulates. At the outset, I mentioned that the Sophists were an aggregate of specialists, without a united vision. I believe that if the university today is no more than that aggregate, then there is a danger that Twain will be proved right. If the university is to provide the
critical role envisaged by the great Greek philosophers then it must 
reinstate the thinking subject as the source of objective truth and as an 
ethical being capable of realizing the ideals of justice. To do this will 
help to counter the malaise of our time. People are essentially self-
transcending in their quest for purpose and belonging; equally the whole 
project of knowledge could not have started or sustained itself without 
the imagination. Perhaps at the kernel, the role of a university today is 
merely to restore people to their real selves. Newman seems to sum this 
up when he says that the university is really there to refine that method 
which is anyway so “natural to ourselves” (Newman, 1902: 75):

The intellect of man . . . energizes as well as his eye or ear, and 
perceives in sights and sounds something beyond them. It seizes and 
unites what the senses present to it; it grasps and forms what need not 
have been seen or heard except in its constituent parts . . In a word, it 
philosophizes; for I suppose Science and Philosophy, in their 
elementary idea, are nothing else but this habit of viewing, as it may 
be called, the objects which sense conveys to the mind, of throwing 
them into system, and uniting and stamping them with one form. 
(Ibid.: 74-5)

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Notes

1 For many Francis Bacon is considered to be one of the fathers of the modern scientific method. Bacon held that, at its core, the scientific quest was the discovery in each object of its “true form; for the form of any nature is such, that when it is assigned the particular nature infallibly follows” (Bacon, 1952: 138). However, in order to discover that form, Bacon prescribed four stages in the inductive process: presence, absence, comparison and exclusion (Ibid. 40-52). The second stage was the negative stage where, in describing instances where there was resemblance to the nature under investigation, without, however, the nature being present, one was able to discern better the true nature of the form.

2 Especially in the field of spiritual theology the distinction is drawn between the *kataphatic* and *apophatic* approaches (Egan, 1978: 400-3). The *kataphatic* approach (*via affirmativa*) is perceptive and positive - where the nature of something is understood through its clear manifestations; whereas, the *apophatic* approach (*via negativa*) stresses the knowledge gleaned through understanding the instances of the absence and negation of the nature of something.

3 The Sophists were an itinerant group of lecturers who gave courses: “mainly on rhetoric and the art of getting along, in return for fees from their audiences” (Urmson, 1985: 270-1). Their encyclopedic knowledge of the different cultures of the time made them sceptical about the possibility of attaining any objective truth or universal set of moral norms. “It was their scepticism and relativism that made them suspect . . . they developed the reputation
of gathering young men from good families only to lead them in a critical and destructive analysis of their traditional religious and ethical views” (Stumpf, 1988: 31).


5 In the *Republic* (Plato, 1987: 44-55; Book 2, Part 4: 358-67) two other, lesser known Sophists – Adeimantus and Glaucon - are presented as holding the same view.

6 Fowler and Kowler contend that there are four main positions in the evolution controversy (Fowler & Kuebler, 2007: 30-4). These are the Neo-Darwinians (amongst who are the ultra-Darwinians); the Creationists; the Intelligent Design advocates and the Meta-Darwinians. I count myself amongst the last group that are united in their conviction that there are more mechanisms at play in evolution than mere survival of the fittest and chance mutations.

7 Supervenience is the relation that exists between different levels of discourse or between different levels of reality. While a supervening level cannot exist without the subvening levels that comprise it, nonetheless, the novel properties and purposes that emerge at the supervening level cannot be reduced merely to a sum of the subvening levels (Kim, 1995: 582).

8 Copleston, 1985: 87.

9 Solipsism is an extreme position that derives its name from the Latin: *solus ipse* (I alone). Solipsism contends that, since all I know comes from my perceptions, which are unique to myself, I have no guarantee that anything apart from myself actually exists. Interestingly enough, the most extreme statement of this position ever given was by the Sophist Gorgias. He contended that we can never know whether anything really exists and even if we did know (for example, if we knew ourselves to exist), we could not understand that existence, as we have no fixed point of reference, which also makes communication of that knowledge to others impossible (Stumpf, 1988: 33).

10 Nominalism is: “the theory which holds that the objects of thought are simply words and that there is no more to the meaning of a general term than the set of things to which it applies. At its most modest nominalism holds that there is no independently accessible thing, universal or concept, that constitutes the meaning of a word (Quinton, 1985:209).

11 Anomie was a term coined by Emile Durkheim to describe the sense of being without roots and connections among youth in urban areas that lack social stability (Reid, 1979: 204).

12 In Plato's *Cratylus*, he is described as giving a “complete education in grammar and language” (Plato, 1952: 85; *384b).*
Knowledge/Research: Opportunities for South African Universities in the context of globalisation in transition

MALEGAPURU W MAKGOBA

Summary

The knowledge and research opportunities for higher education in South Africa are closely-linked and located within this triad of:

i) an African identity;   ii) transformation/diversity and 
iii) autonomy/academic freedom.

These three tensions are not only unique to our universities but also require a bold leadership and constructive management approach in order to unleash the great potential currently locked in by current defensive approaches.

Within this triad is the type of knowledge and research we construct and pursue, the type of human capital we involve and develop for the future and the relationship between the universities and the society in which they exist, to which they are mutually accountable and responsible.
The humanities in our country are our greatest comparative and competitive advantage and asset in knowledge production and wealth creation.

May I take the opportunity to congratulate the organisers for such a wonderful colloquium and St Augustine College turning 10 years old. Nothing is more exciting than new knowledge, the love of knowing, the joy of knowing, the possibilities knowledge opens to us all, the provision of individual sovereignty. There is no such thing as “knowledge for its own sake”.

1980: 6th Floor, John Radcliffe Hospital, Oxford: A Nigerian doctoral colleague made the following statement:

“If a Nigerian had written William Wordsworth’s famous poem, The Daffodils in Nigeria, this Nigerian would have been found guilty by a military tribunal. He would have been sentenced to death or life imprisonment or more kindly he would have been certified mentally ill and sent to a mental asylum for long-term treatment and rehabilitation.”

Asked why this severe sentence - he continued:

- “Daffodils do not grow in Nigeria and this flower has no meaning - culturally or existentially to the life of a Nigerian.”

- If there were no apple trees where Sir Isaac Newton lived---where and when would the Laws of Motion be/have been discovered?

- If all we had were showers and there were no baths - Archimedes would not have figured out the relationship between volume and weight and assisted the king;
• If there were no vineyards in France - the Lille industrialist, Napoleon III and the French Agricultural Ministry would not have consulted Pasteur - bacteriology and hence the pathology of disease and the wine industry as we know and experience them today would have evolved differently;

• When one wears Levis jeans - one feels the spirit of the American cowboy and some feel reliving Elvis - after all Levis is just another way of writing Elvis;

• When one drives a Mercedes Benz or a Jaguar - one identifies with the best of German or British engineering;

• When one drinks Whisky, Vodka or Champagne - one identifies with Scottish, Russian and French values and traditions.

The great discoveries of Louis Pasteur, Archimedes and Albert Einstein, the economic theories of British economist John Maynard Keynes, the Manhattan Project that led to the formation of the atom bomb - these were not the isolated, esoteric and miraculous breakthroughs they have been popularised as. They were also the product of a complex and dynamic interplay of societal, political, historical and economic pressures - pressures which had an impact both on knowledge for understanding and knowledge for use, commonly referred to as basic and applied knowledge or science respectively (Stokes DE in Pasteur’s Quadrant: Basic Science and Technological Innovation 1997).

Louis Pasteur’s fascination with microorganisms, for example, led him down the applied path towards understanding the pathology of disease, the creation of alcohol and commercially viable high-quality vinegar. Pasteur developed his science by accepting problems presented by a Lille industrialist, the Ministry of Agriculture and Napoleon III.
Again, Lord Kelvin’s physics was inspired by a deeply industrial view and the needs of the British Empire (Stokes DE in Pasteur’s Quadrant: Basic Science and Technical Innovation 1977).

These anecdotes - about Wordsworth’s poem, Lord Kelvin’s, Sir Isaac Newton’s and Archimedes’s discoveries - together speak to several fundamentals of Knowledge: its meaning, its context, its relevance; its identity, its use and its culture-relatedness. Perhaps more critically they all illustrate that knowledge always originates and moves from the local to the universal and finally to the global.

In starting with knowledge, we follow a long history of knowledge development which reflects the extent to which knowledge is also intimately related to historical, cultural and geographical circumstances.

In an interview with Kwame Appiah, Nigerian novelist Chinua Achebe spoke about the difficulties of defining the “African Identity”.

“It is of course true,” he said, “that the African Identity is still in the making. There isn’t a final identity that is African. But at the same time, there is an identity coming into existence. And it has a certain context and a certain meaning… Africa means something to some people. Each of these tags,” says Achebe, “has a meaning, and a penalty and a responsibility…”

Edward Said succinctly put it this way: “nothing is more common in public discourse than phrases like ‘the English’ or ‘the Arabs’ or ‘the Americans’ or ‘the Africans’, each of them suggesting not only a whole culture but a specific mind-set”.

Knowledge has identity and a signature. Universities have been the seekers and custodians of this identity and signature. Our first opportunity is the identity and signature of our knowledge and research.
Throughout history the primary objective of universities as an institution has been the pursuit of knowledge, scholarship and excellence in teaching, research and community engagement through research i.e. research is the foundation of a university and it is its most distinguishing characteristic from any organisation or institution in society over the centuries. However, in South Africa research has lost its rightful place as the University’s raison d’etre. In particular, a few studies (M. Kahn, HSRC and Pouris, NRF) have shown that there has been a distinct decline in quantum and quality of research, given the enormous changes taking place at a social and political level, to entrench an intellectual and an academic culture, to contextualize scholarship and render knowledge relevant. There is a fundamental failure to perceive the relationship between relevance and quality of knowledge as complementary.

An assessment of South Africa’s tertiary education system prompted three South African academics in an article in the Cambridge Journal of Economics to describe the tertiary system in South Africa from 1910 to 1993 as a “dead-weight structure”, rather than as a “capstone” to South Africa’s educational system - as it should be. (Fedderke, De Kadt, Luiz, CJE, 2003, 27, 377-400). “The University sector’s experience”, the article says, “shows that discrimination is not necessarily cheap - not only in the form of forgone development opportunities, but simply in the absolute cost of running a racially segregated tertiary educational system.”

The findings of the recent Minister’s report on Transformation and Social Cohesion and the Elimination of Discrimination in Public Higher Education Institutions (30 November 2008) not only echo and support the above conclusion but, further illustrate how our university system has deviated from the primary objective of the knowledge project and failed to exploit the reality and opportunity that Diversity is a necessary condition for Excellence and Transformation in South Africa. Furthermore, the report without stating it upfront alludes to the human wastage and tragedy the system has become.
Achebe described diversity “not as an abnormality, but as the reality of our planet”:

“The world is big”, he said. “Some people are unable to comprehend that simple fact. They want the world on their own terms, its peoples just like them and their friends, its places like the manicured little patch on which they live. But this is a foolish and blind wish.”

Cardinal John Henry Newman knew this in principle when in 1854 he wrote his now famous paper on the “Idea of a University” in which all the key elements of a university - scholarship, truth, tolerance, autonomy, and particularly diversity are captured with understated grace and eloquence. In Newman’s terms, a university is:

 “[P]ledged to admit, without fear, without prejudice, without compromise, all comers - (diverse), if they come in the name of Truth; to adjust views, and experiences, and habits of mind the most independent and dissimilar - (diverse); and to give full play to thought and erudition in their most original forms, and their most intense expressions, and in their most ample circuit.”

Thus, says Newman, to bring many things into one, is the “special function” of the University; and “it learns to do it”, he says, “not by rules reducible to writing, but by sagacity, wisdom and forbearance, acting upon a profound insight into the subject-matter of knowledge, and by a vigilant repression of aggression or bigotry in any quarter”.

What Newman clearly understood is that the nurturing of a diversity of people, cultures, ideas, perspectives, interpretations and world-views is what makes a university reflect and relate to its society and to civilization. Despite the passing of time, Newman’s appreciation of diversity, his respect of knowledge and wisdom, and his conviction of the need for a “vigilant repression of bigotry” are themes that are today as relevant, if not more relevant than they were at the time he wrote them.

Achebe, C. Bates College Commencement Address, 27 May, 1996
The second opportunity is the exploitation of diversity as a necessary requirement for transforming the knowledge and research base and content and also in developing the future scholars.

The third opportunity lies in how we develop the freedom to academic inquiry in knowledge as an exciting and an enjoyable enterprise.

The Humanities in Global Knowledge Competitiveness and University Differentiation: South Africa’s HE Comparative Advantage

South Africa, which is inhabited by 0.7% of the world’s population generates 0.5% of global GDP and takes 0.6% of the world’s top 500 Universities according to Karen MacGregor, in http://www.universityworldnews.com

The USA HE system, regarded as the most successful, and vibrant, is differentiated. It has 3300 Universities. Only 215 of these Universities are accredited to award postgraduate degrees and only less than 100 within this system are research-led Universities. It is subject to the annual, and cleverly-constructed USNews analysis and ranking. Australia has its ‘great’ 8 research Universities that are specially funded, all of which feature highly in the World university rankings. India has 9 out of 367 universities that receive special and strategic government funding to ensure these are globally competitive. In the UK there is the traditional Golden Triangle of Cambridge-London-Oxford that is recently changing to become the ‘Golden Diamond’ with the newly merged Manchester University. In South Africa, the National System of Innovation and Industries is already flourishing and competitive as a result of differentiation.

In contrast, the European HE system, which treats all Universities “the same”, has 2000 universities and all of them doing everything and the same things i.e. teaching, research and community services. The result
has been mediocrity all round and through the Bologna Declaration, Europe is fast waking up to the notion that it is “unwise and a mistake to treat and fund universities the same”. While it is important to harmonise and promote quality assessment in HE, it is even more important to differentiate and resource accordingly. “Treating universities the same” not only destroys academic innovation, creativity and merit but also produces equal misery and mediocrity.

The annual world University Ranking, the market-driven USNews, India’s Higher Education Funding Council and the Australian funding model systems are a differentiating and a branding system that is a reality of our time. Evidence shows that those countries whose higher education is differentiated are able to compete, adapt and provide a vibrant system that underpins GDP. Equally, evidence, particularly from Europe, is emerging that undifferentiated university systems or “treating Universities the same” is disastrous.

South Africa has 23 Universities with differing histories, differing capacities, differing resources, different visions and missions. With this rich diversity, one would intuitively think diversity would be used as strength to promote excellence and global competitiveness. However, and despite this rich intellectual diversity, South Africa continues to pretend these 23 universities are ‘the same’ and therefore treat them ‘the same’ without differentiating, focusing and resourcing each to its comparative and competitive advantages. It is this failure to differentiate and continue to function contrary to or the denial of factual evidence that characterizes much of present-day South Africa and has led to a decline in academic productivity, new knowledge production and innovation relative to the rest of the world.

Where are South Africa’s strengths in knowledge production and wealth creation? In the humanities. We have produced 10 Nobel Laureates, so we pride ourselves. Like all the globalisation trends/pressures we follow blindly that Science and Technology (S & T) will be the panacea to our
developmental challenges. The facts and experiences on the ground are quite different:

i) 6 of the 10 laureatees we pride ourselves in are broadly in the Humanities i.e. literature, politics and peace;

ii) 6 of these laureate’s seminal work was done in South Africa and generally related to the human condition our country faced;

iii) the 4 laureates in the sciences did their seminal work in other countries other than South Africa i.e. the USA and UK. Claiming these 4 as our own is similar to claiming Roger Federer’s exceptional achievements in tennis because his mother is allegedly South African. One can honestly and accurately say that as a country we have never trained or produced a laureate in Science, Physiology or Medicine, who did his/her opus magnum in South Africa, while we have produced 6 in the Humanities-related fields. Our science education system is only competitive up to the level of a Bachelors degree and, in contrast, our postgraduate environment and infrastructure are weak to compete globally;

iv) there is so much innovative and unexplored knowledge embodied in our indigenous languages, histories and cultures that only the humanities can explore and exploit,

v) the common problems encountered by our society i.e. crime, poverty, violence, corruption, moral degeneration and unethical conduct - are challenges whose analysis and solutions are more appropriately located in the humanities;

vi) the areas in which we as a country excel and are strong in i.e. international mediation, non-racism, reconciliation, justice, equity and even xenophobia - are all within the humanities domain;

vii) our icons and role models e.g. Mandela, Tutu, De Klerk, Coetzee and Gordimer are all strong humanitarians;

viii) our central value i.e. Ubuntu is anchored philosophically and strongly on humanism and finally the raison d’être of our struggle was fundamentally to create a humane and just
society. The priority in the creation of such a society is largely a humanities project based on sound societal values, morals and ethics. For the above factors I want to place the humanities as our priority national knowledge project for which we have an unparallelled history, icons and a social laboratory of unique value that should be exploited by scholars. Even our Constitution, the blueprint of our society, and regarded as the most advanced and liberal in the world, also underpins this humanistic approach to the organisation of our society and consequently its knowledge production. Such a humane society, free of crime and corruption would attract investment and transform its work ethic to a highly productive work force. In this all-encompassing project the humanities would contribute significantly and become the springboard and central pillars of other societal developments including science and technology. Were Einstein to arise from the grave today, he be would much happier practising science amongst poets, literary scholars, performers, creative artists and philosophers than amongst ‘nerds’ of scientists. In fact a large aspect of the so-called South African miracle or even our exceptionalism are grounded on the abundant humanism of South Africans. Confronting the above South African experiences would need more and earmarked government investment into strengthening our humanities in universities. The humanities are the foundations of a university in critical thinking, values, ethics and the evolution of good citizenry.

Lest I am misunderstood, I do not wish to underplay the well-established role of science and technology in development and in the assault of ignorance in society. All I wish to state that which is obvious i.e. we are all human first before we become scientists; the best science and the best scientists thrive and flourish in societies whose human values are strong and solidly grounded in people’s culture. In fact it is when the human sciences are strongest and are underpinned by sound ethical standards and moral principles that scientific and technological ideas and
innovations are born and better shaped, better communicated and translated for the betterment of society. Which hungry child is going to aim to become a great scientist?

It is common knowledge and common experience throughout history that S & T thrives in societies that are highly organised and are not torn by destructive tensions. Investing in S & T for the greater public good and for future generations is noble, is a great strategic choice but this investment has to be understood, nuanced and balanced within a context on the ground reality and in the long-term of our broader development. South Africa does have niche areas of comparative and competitive edge in the Health, Mining and Veterinary Sciences and some aspects of astronomy. But all these require a different infrastructure, personnel and work ethic. Currently we are investing pittance in these areas.

The universities of our country must now be differentiated and funded adequately for the reality of the knowledge project, global competitiveness and economic development, as a matter of priority; this differentiation and funding must be performance-based; the humanities in our country are our greatest comparative and competitive advantage and asset in knowledge production and wealth creation, and universities should be appropriately located and explicitly mandated to play a greater leadership role in our economic, scientific and technological, intellectual and cultural developments.

*This paper arose out of my installation lecture Sept 2005 and commentaries that appeared in the Sunday Times (South Africa) and World University News in 2008.*
Theology and the Academy: Mutual Enrichment?

RODNEY L MOSS

1. Introduction

Allan Bloom’s *The Closing of the American Mind* postulates a contemporary malaise in the academy. He traces this current malaise to the repudiation of the Socratic tradition of philosophical inquiry. For, Bloom, the “rich drama” of the life, teaching, and vision of Socrates represents “the soul of the university.” Socrates found in the academy a space for rational discourse freed from the seductions posed by myths or translated into modern parlance, ideology. Developments in the contemporary academy influenced at least indirectly by post-modernism have generated a bias towards moral and cultural relativism and against even the possibility of ‘universal knowledge’. One of the victims of this move has been theology. Prophetically, John Henry Newman had foreseen the marginalisation of theological discourse as one of the fundamental developments in the modern academy. He insists both on the need for a critical examination of the reasons for sidelining this long standing tradition of inquiry and for a careful scrutiny of its repercussions in the intellectual life of the university.

This paper proposes to address Newman’s twofold concern in the following manner. First, an examination of Newman’s ‘Circle of Knowledge’ will illustrate the importance of universal, interconnected and interdisciplinary ‘knowledge’ for the health of the academy. Individual academic disciplines are limited and incomplete, therefore
they require interdisciplinarity in order to complement their own inadequacies. Secondly, the usefulness and value of theology in the academy will be addressed using as a text Newman’s *The Idea of a University*. The open-ended, paradoxical and mysterious nature of the discipline which is beyond any system would in Newman’s opinion help to keep all disciplines open. Thirdly, there is a need to address the concern that theology as necessarily linked to the Church and the magisterium could limit academic freedom so cherished by the academy. Certainly the concept of academic freedom for church-related institutions is of concern. However, theology acknowledges that it always stands in need of correction and that the final word is never spoken. Religious sectarianism is indeed to be rejected as are various forms of secular sectarianism. Lastly, how may theology and the academy mutually enrich each other in terms of the needs of contemporary learning? Here a contrast will be made between instrumental and contemplative learning.

2. Newman’s circle of knowledge

In *The Idea of a University* Newman contends that the true university is a place of growth in human wisdom in a universal, all-inclusive sense. He states uncompromisingly that a university “is a place of teaching universal knowledge”. As the object of university education is to produce thinking people this aim will involve that “... the intellect ... once... properly trained to have a connected view or grasp of things (my emphasis) will display its powers with more or less effect according to its particular quality and capacity in the individual”.

Newman views knowledge and all its branches as interactive and interdependent with important repercussions for both the idea of a university in general and the conception of liberal education in particular. He is indeed emphatic that the neglect or omission of one branch of knowledge, particularly if it is important, and likely to impact
on other branches, does not mean that the subject simply slips out of the totality of knowledge as it were. Rather

[i]f you drop any science out of the circle of knowledge, you cannot keep its place for it; that science is forgotten; the other sciences close up, or, in other words, they exceed their proper bounds, and intrude where they have no right. For instance, I suppose if ethics were sent into banishment, its territory would soon disappear, under a treaty of partition, as it may be called, between law, political economy and physiology…

In a more contemporary parallel, we have witnessed the rise of sociology and its intrusion into the areas of ethics, theology and literature. Sociological criteria and norms have been used to evaluate data (which may indeed bear some sociological analysis) in such a way as to suggest that other interpretations are either irrelevant or redundant. Newman would view such assumptions with disdain and would contend that such persons ‘have made their own science … the centre of all truth, and view every part or the chief parts of knowledge as if developed from it, and to be tested and determined by its principles.’ It was Newman’s concern with the relations between individual branches of knowledge that gave him a prophetic insight into the ways in which individual specialisations can arrogate to themselves evaluation and judgment which often lie outside their sphere of competence. Contemporary examples are not hard to find.

Newman is all too aware of both the potential and the limitations of the human mind. Moreover, the sheer vastness and complexity of the world requires human beings to partial views of reality or to make abstractions of those objects presented to them. It is for this reason that the limitations and incompleteness of the individual sciences can be partially appeased by their interdependence. Thus when taken together in some approximate or subjective sense they can become a somewhat pale reflection of objective truth. Consequently, one needs to be ever attentive to the presence and influence of other sciences. Disciplines, Newman insists, must know their limitations. Thus he contends that
political economists who attempt to advance moral conclusions on the basis of their sciences without reference to various accounts in ethics or moral theology, invariably provide a skewed interpretation of the particular theory they are addressing. The specific ‘take’ or ‘view’ of reality provided by any one science is checked, balanced, complemented, and completed by the contributions of other disciplines within the academy.

In order to illustrate better Newman’s metaphor of the universal sciences (or knowledge), the title of this chapter, we need to probe what he meant by the philosophical habit of mind.

[A] philosophical cast of thought, or a comprehensive mind, or wisdom in conduct or policy, implies a connected view of the old with the new; an insight into the bearing and influence of each part upon every other; without which there is no whole, and could be no centre. It is the knowledge, not only of things, but of their mutual relations (my emphasis). It is organised and therefore living knowledge.

All the sciences lie within the same circle; they are relatively bound to one another. “This means that every science will have at least something to say to each of the others. But scientists who carry their conclusions beyond the proper range of their science have failed to respect the integrity of the universal circle of sciences”.

Newman recognised all too well that scientific restraint was lacking in his day and so people often ran the risk of being persons of one idea, or of one science. It is, indeed, the limitation of the range of knowledge, that distorts the cognitive function of the university itself. The question is posed as to why the various sciences should be brought together into a learning community rather than pursue their research independently of one another. Indeed, Newman would argue that the interdisciplinary context of the university has more than a functional significance or is allied to historical circumstances. The diverse sciences are “various partial views or abstractions, by means of which the mind looks out
upon its object”. The university, for Newman, facilitates the growth of knowledge which involves the interaction and interdependence of various branches of knowledge. According to Ian Ker, for Newman

[t]hat ‘form of Universal Knowledge’ which is the ‘perfection’ of the ‘individual intellect’ is not knowing all branches of knowledge, but simply ‘is the power of viewing many things at once as one whole, of referring them severally to their true place in the universal system, of understanding their respective values, and determining their mutual dependence.

Note that Newman never speaks of a ‘hierarchy’ of branches of knowledge. Rather, he favoured, as has been noted, the image of the ‘circle’ which is intended to imply interdependence, not equality. Only when “viewed together” within an interdisciplinary context, do they “approximate to a representation or subjective reflection of the objective truth”.

Newman’s dialectic saw, on the one hand, that each discipline was part of a larger whole while, on the other hand, the distinctive discipline was in control of its own domain. What of theology? He was aware of the view that religious truth represents a type of knowledge that cannot be appropriately handled within the university. Moreover, he is further aware that many members of the academy who continue to believe in God, support the marginalisation of theological discourse. In the next section we will consider Newman’s insistence on the need for a close scrutiny of the arguments put forward to justify the repression of a long tradition of academic inquiry.

3. Why theology?

Newman’s The Idea of a University is structured to respond to two fundamental developments in the modern academy: firstly, the suppression of the tradition of theological inquiry and secondly, the
dismantling of the liberal arts tradition. Newman argues that the marginalisation of theology is a crucial factor in the definition of academic debate. He sites some of the following reasons for this marginalisation.

Firstly, theological inquiry is said not to constitute a ‘scientific discourse’. Newman, as we have noted earlier, argued that the various disciplines in the university differ in regard to their methodologies. The nature of human reason, he argues, is “complex, indirect and recondite” and cannot be reduced to a neat and monolithic “science of reasoning”. To so restrict the range of reason, restricts the range of debate within the academy and inevitably, as we have noted earlier, bears upon more disciplines than theology alone.

Secondly, Newman was concerned that the various pietistic and evangelical movements in modern religious culture would undermine the cognitive dimension of religious faith. Newman suggests that “[t]he religious world as it is styled, holds, generally speaking, that Religion consists, not in knowledge, but in feeling and sentiment”. Thus it is that the subjectivist conception of faith in popular religion, provides a support for those opposing a place for religion in the academy. Doctrinal and derived theological claims are not to be taken seriously nor subjected to rational debate. Rather, they are seen as expressions of subjective experience, private conviction or as the mere articulation of a human need for meaning. For Newman, the cognitive and dogmatic claims of religion are an integral dimension of the religious tradition.

Thirdly, Newman maintains that a tacit deism lingers within the academy. The problem for Newman is that this incipient deism means that theological discourse can become a mode of viewing reality that is “commensurate” with a “material or moral world”. If this is indeed so, then, theology is merely a “supplementary” process which provides a kind of “poetic” veneer to “complete and harmonise” the feelings of the leading scientific or philosophical discourses.
would add nothing of real substance to theological debate. Various liberal strategies which purport to incarnate theological discourse and thus correlate it with human experience is another variant of this, the deistic marginalisation of theology. Daniel Cere expresses this ‘development’ in these words: “Religious doctrines become ‘manifestations’ of a leading idea. They are integrated into a conceptual ‘scheme’ or a ‘system’ that provides a coherent interpretation of human experience”. Again Cere demands that “[t]heology must involve more than a learned attunement of theological categories to secular discourse”.

Theology has a distinct and special place within the academy but it does not exist in isolation. It must engage in critical development with philosophy and the sciences. However, for Newman, the virtual denial of God in itself signifies a profound restricting of the traditional contours of academic debate. He contends that the effective marginalisation of major academic discourses, such as theology and ethics, narrows the range of scholarly inquiry and leads to what he calls “bias”.

Newman underlines the importance of the God-question to any discourse about the nature of human fulfillment and the limits of knowledge. He insists that theological inquiry is transcendental in that it raises questions which “enter into” other fundamental concerns about goodness, beauty and truth. It is also transcendental in a modern sense in that it grapples with the “condition” for human knowing. Indeed theological inquiry displays a complex developmental nature which makes its “pace of thought rugged and circuitous above other disciplines”. Although Newman insists that theology is “the science of God or the truths we know about God put into a system”, it needs to engage in dialectical encounter with other disciplines. “No traditions have a claim upon us which shrink from criticism, and do not look a rival in the face”. Theology has in its development been seen as a tradition of inquiry based on its openness to dialectical contestation. Newman is clear that theology is not to rule over other branches of
knowledge. “As it is an abstract take on reality it is inherently incomplete. It positions other sciences by its contributions while being positioned by other contributions”. Theology, then, does not reign over the academy as a “sovereign queen” but rather takes its place as a legitimate “sister” in the “goodly family of sciences”. Clearly, then, theology’s task is certainly not to rule over other branches of knowledge.

But where lies theology’s particular significance? It surely lies in its openness to transcendence. Kevin Mongrain notes that theology, for Newman, “always invites us to move towards a perpetually fascinating, yet ever-receding horizon of understanding”. Theology, then, as the ‘science of God’, is a science that invites us to the wonder of the unknown or the known, to the Reality that always transcends the limits of what we take to be reality. Newman states:

Such is what Theology teaches about God, a doctrine, as the very idea of its subject-matter presupposes, so mysterious as in its fullness to lie beyond any system [italics added], and in particular aspects to be simply external to nature, and to seem in parts even to be irreconcilable with itself, the imagination being unable to embrace what reason determines. It teaches of a Being infinite, yet personal; all-blessed, yet ever operative; absolutely separate from the creature, yet in every part of the creation at every moment; above all things, yet under every thing. It teaches of a Being who, though the highest, yet in the work of creation, conservation, government, retribution, makes Himself, as it were, the minister and servant of all; who, through inhabiting eternity, allows Himself to take an interest, and to have sympathy, in the matters of space and time.

Mongrain notes that there are, arising from the above passage, matters that he would like to highlight. The first is that the subject matter of theology is “so mysterious” that it lies beyond any system. Secondly, the subject matter of theology is so inherently paradoxical that it teaches the reality and validity of what escapes exhaustive rational explanation in any system; in effect it “teaches a Truth beyond the system of any set of truths”.

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Newman links the mystery of God to the mystery of creation in a very positive sense. We need a sense of open-ended wonder, an existential contemplative attitude to creation. Again, Mongrain notes,

“[i]t is this theological understanding of the world that guarantees the validity and goodness of an open-ended exploratory, contemplative dimension towards reality…”

Consequent to the above, theology in the academy is a discipline that fosters a perpetual openness to a vast reality that lies beyond any system. Newman felt that the value of the liberal arts including theology lay in their exciting an existential disposition which could be either healthy or perverse. “If it is healthy it fosters a perpetual openness to the fascinating vast reality that is ‘beyond any system’. If it is perverse it fosters a closed-minded know-it-all attitude towards reality that undermines the foundational exploratory sensibility of the liberal arts”.

For these reasons Newman feels the need to introduce theology into the liberal arts curriculum:

Liberal knowledge has a special tendency, not necessary or rightful, but a tendency in fact, when cultivated by beings such as we are, to impress us with a mere philosophical theory of life and conduct in the place of Revelation…. Knowledge, viewed as knowledge, exerts a subtle influence in throwing us back on ourselves, and making us our own centre, and our minds the measure of all things. There is the tendency of that Liberal Education, of which a university is the school, viz., to view Revealed Religion from an aspect of its own - to fuse and recast it - to tune it, as it were, to a different key, and to reset its harmonies - to circumscribe it by a circle [italics added] which unwarrantably amputates here, and unduly develops there; and all under the notion, conscious or unconscious, that the human intellect, self-educated and self-supported, is more true and perfect in its ideas and judgments than that of the Prophets and Apostles, to which the sights and sounds of Heaven were immediately conveyed. A sense of propriety, order, consistency, and completeness gives birth to a rebellious stirring against miracle and mystery, against the severe and the terrible.
Newman was in effect saying that liberal education without theology has a tendency to produce or create closed intellectual systems. It is such systems that Newman referred to as “spurious religion” and where the “sin of the intellect” is found. He further finds that solipsism is the existential disposition of such closed ideological thinking.\footnote{42}

To conclude this section we note that Newman sees theology as providing the existential disposition of contemplative receptivity for the well educated mind. “This disposition involves self-forgetfulness and the willingness to attend seriously to the value of something which is not the self but which speaks to the self and teaches it to listen to what seems alien and to learn from it new and surprising truths”.\footnote{43} If theologising can liberate humanity from rigid ideologies and open the human person to an ever greater but never complete understanding, is it not, however, constrained by its method to deny the academic freedom so prized by the academy? The next section will seek to demonstrate how a Catholic university or college can illumine our way through life both by the light of faith and the light of reason.

4. Academic freedom and theology

Academic freedom has traditionally referred to the liberty of an individual person to conduct an intellectual investigation in a scholarly manner within the structure of an academic community. Sydney Hooker defines academic freedom in the secular sense as “the freedom of a professionally qualified person to inquire, discover, publish and teach as they see it in the field of their competence, without any control of authority except the control of the authority of a rational method by which truth is established”.\footnote{44}

In terms of the above definition, we may conclude that academic freedom involves an unhindered freedom to explore a given subject to the extent that our rational powers of investigation are capable and do so without interference or pressure external to the process. It should be
noted further that the above definition will accept human reason as the arbitrator in all matters under investigation and that the scientific method involving the study of empirical data can alone yield truth and that no other voice or norm external to the process can play a determining role.

However, any scientific investigation will also be circumscribed by the limits that are internal to any process. Donald W. Wuerl notes, “The laws of physics (eg gravity), the laws of chemistry (eg elemental weights) or mathematical rules (eg the identity of numbers), all set limits to scientific theory”. In such areas, the recognition of limits does not halt scientific advance. Rather, it can be said that it is fruitful and aids real development. What would be harmful are limitations imposed from outside for reasons other than a quest for truth.

Is the above scientific model suitable for theological method? Theology uses as its starting point, revelation which of its very nature carries us beyond the limits of unaided reason. Internal to the process of theological investigation is revelation which is both the starting point and the principle of verification. Indeed, Catholic scholarly method recognizes the role of Scripture, its scholarly interpretation and the function of the Church in judging the validity of the interpretation. Further, the Catholic theological tradition includes as intrinsic to the whole process of theological development, the voice of the teaching office (the magisterium). Furthermore, the teaching office of the pope and bishops is not external to the Church’s self-understanding but is a vital and essential internal part of the process.

At this point it must be stressed that a cornerstone of Catholic identity is the communal character of the faith. Again Wuerl notes, “The Church’s *magisterium* is a central part of the communal character of the faith and something that is of the very constitution of the church to provide it direction, stability, self-awareness, and unity”. The Church’s self-understanding or the development of doctrine as it is sometimes expressed, guided by the Spirit, moves simultaneously on at least three levels:
the study and penetration of faith and morals by theologians (whose authority derives not from their office but from their skills of scholarship and the arguments they put forward to support their positions); the spiritual or almost intuitive grasp of the faith by the faithful; and the authoritative proclamations of the bishops who have the pastoral care of the church as their ministry.\textsuperscript{47}

The three levels function in different ways and act as a corrective for the others in the process. However, the office of the pope and bishops (i.e. the magisterium) passes the final judgment on the authenticity of any specific teaching proposed as the faith and teaching of the Church. “The ecclesial model provides for both development of the faith as well as a safeguard against the proliferation of teaching tailored to the secular influences of any one area or culture, no matter how much popularity the new teaching might enjoy”.\textsuperscript{48}

As the Catholic theological tradition has the task of penetrating ever more deeply the revealed Word of God in Scripture and Tradition, theologians in particular have an important role to play in the life of the Church as they respond to changing human realities in a way that reflects new insights into the Church’s tradition, developing yet faithful to the absolute claims of revelation. However, to focus on the university status of theologians alone so as to place the theologian outside or above the church, loses sight of the ecclesial reality. There is the need to keep all three levels involved in the Church’s self-understanding in focus as we consider the work of the theologian which allows the Church to grow and face the ever-new circumstances of the faith.

However, this does not mean that all theological advances need the intervention of the teaching office at every stage of development. The world of theological discourse has its own internal forum and self-critique within the theological community. Indeed, the very ability and willingness of various theologians and schools of theology to critique each other’s work and theories are essential to the development of theology. Hence, theology possesses a certain freedom over and against
the hierarchical magisterium. Without that freedom it could not be theology; and hence it could not be of service to the Church. However, as the theological enterprise attempts to push the understanding of the faith to new and more profound levels, the task of the bishops is to note when limits have been crossed that will compromise the integrity of the faith. Both theologians and bishops need to stand together to avoid two extremes: a stagnation in our understanding of revelation or the substitution of any one personal opinion for the teaching of Jesus Christ.

The concept of academic freedom, especially as understood in the secular sense can raise a delicate debate in questions concerning church-related institutions. Avery Dulles raises, in my estimation, a legitimate expectation: “The Church and the Catholic people … expect that some universities will provide an intellectual environment in which the meaning and implications of the faith can be studied in relation to the whole realm of human knowledge”. Must we forever remain captive, in my estimation, to only one model of academic freedom: the absolute freedom of personal expression unrelated to societal and ecclesiastical considerations? All individuals exist in relationship to societies and communities beyond themselves. For this reason among others, a Catholic college or university is not purely and simply an academy in the secular sense of the term. It seeks to discharge a service towards the Church and towards the religious development of the students, especially those who are Catholic. If theology, for example, were expelled from the university, Catholic parents and students would be deprived of a fundamental religious right. Dulles notes, too, that “[t]he university would suffer because, as Newman pointed out, other disciplines would occupy, without adequate warrant or competence, the territory vacated by the departure of theology”.50

Dulles further trenchantly comments: “To define university education so as to exclude such institutions and faculties is evidence of a narrow parochialism, that is, in my estimation, very sectarian. If religious sectarianism is to be rejected - as indeed it should - secular sectarianism should not be established in its place”.51
To conclude this section, I would like to state that the prevailing secular model of the university, as described by standard authorities, requires some modification before being applied to Catholic and other Church-related institutions. The model overlooks the responsibility of theology to the community of faith on the one hand, and the mandate of the ecclesiastical magisterium to assure the doctrinal soundness of theology, on the other hand. Moreover, the secular model is, in my opinion, rather narrowly based on a theory of knowledge more suited to the empirical sciences than to theology which rests primarily on divine revelation. The purely secular model loses sight of the Catholic tradition of “faith seeking understanding” which was responsible for centuries of fruitful intellectual development in the Western world.

John Paul’s encyclical letter on the relationship between faith and reason, *Fides et Ratio* states clearly: “Faith and reason are like two wings on which the human spirit rises to the contemplation of truth; and God has placed in the human spirit a desire to know the truth - in a word, to know himself - so that by knowing God, men and women may also come to know the fullness of truth about themselves”. 52 The unique contribution of a Catholic university is to bring both faith and reason together in a collaborative and interactive relationship with a scientific method. Donald Wuerl expresses the relationship in these terms: “At a Catholic university or college the light of faith and the light of reason illumine our way through life. Science illumined by the light of reason and theology illumined by the light of faith together throw necessary light on the human condition”. 53

In the next section the distinctiveness of the Catholic university will become noticeably more evident. Louis Dupre’s *Transcendent Selfhood: The Loss and Rediscovery of the Inner Life*, sets the scene:

What is needed is a conversion to an attitude in which existing is more than taking, acting more than making, meaning more than function, an attitude in which there is enough leisure for wonder and enough detachment for transcendence. Culture requires freedom, but freedom
requires spiritual space to act, play and dream in. The space for freedom is created by transcendence. What is needed most of all is an attitude in which transcendence can be recognised again.\(^\text{54}\)

5. Instrumental vs contemplative learning

In this section I shall address the question of the artificial limits imposed upon thinking itself. A narrow definition which is sometimes given is that thinking involves only critical and methodical thought. It is true that there is a perennial need to question which never attains a final satisfaction. Each answer reformulates new questions and each partial fulfillment arouses new intellectual curiosity. So pursuing the human need to question must involve acquiring the methods of thinking clearly. However, I further propose that reason itself has to be illuminated through a unity of thought which involves a kind of illumination of reason, a circle of knowledge proposed by Newman which was the focus of the second section. This illumination opens out into an attitude of transcendence and open mindedness.

We first need to establish that part of allowing young men and women to think for themselves involves an existential commitment to the basic moral principles of our culture. Raw individualism, a lack of respect for life and the environment that sustains life have facilitated a moral bankruptcy. Is clarity of thought possible without the virtuous life? Socrates thought not, for he implied that the value of a person’s life lies in examining it, for only the examined life is the virtuous and hence good life.\(^\text{35}\)

Secondly, education should stimulate a sense of wonder and the need to question. Indeed, theology ought to teach the student to raise questions before it proposes tentative answers. In so doing it will lay the foundations of a contemplative attitude in stark contrast to a more ‘instrumental’ process of learning. By ‘instrumental’ I refer to a process of learning by which we provide information to fill in the details in a picture we have already drawn or in which we provide skills to enable us
to perform a task we have already formulated. Mike Higton contrasts this approach with ‘contemplative’ education which he maintains

…does not leave us in control in this way, but places us before [my emphasis] some subject matter that we do not control, and for which our current categories are inadequate. If efficient accumulation is the hallmark of the instrumental, waiting and paying attention are the hallmark of the contemplative.\(^{56}\)

There is the contemporary temptation that would turn university education into a product, to require that all teaching be ‘useful’, that it serve certain clearly specified goals which pursue a clear practical strategy and so ‘equip’ the student for the needs and plans of current secular society. Yet, the university open to a ‘circle of universal knowledge’ in Newman’s understanding of the function of the university would be a resistance to this instrumentalising in demonstrating a clear refusal to allow knowledge to conform solely to the needs and plans of contemporary society. Expressed differently, this is qualified resistance to ‘total usefulness’.

Thirdly, the ‘contemplative’ way in education could be conceived as a form of ‘spiritual formation’ in a very ‘broad’ and ‘open’ sense. I mean by this a process in and through which one is stripped of the illusion of control and mastery. It becomes a means whereby one is “…overwhelmed by a subject matter that does not fit neatly into one’s life … [through] which one … repeatedly has to risk interpretations [and] in which one is repeatedly opened up to judgment”.\(^{57}\) Higton elaborates in these words: “And so it is a process in which the learner is - or can be - trained precisely in contemplation: in patient, risky, transformative exposure to an as-yet-ungrasped truth which can only be encountered with a humility that is willing to lay down preconceptions and fixed ideas.\(^{58}\)

In other words the clear assertion is being made that good academic study is formational in a manner analogous to spiritual formation: a
disillusionment (a stripping bare, as it were) in which both our selfunderstanding and that of the world in which we live are brought up against ‘a larger whole’ which challenges both understandings, breaks them down and opens them to new growth.

We have tried hard to establish that the university ought to be a place where the expansion of the mind, and indeed of the spirit, ought to be a powerful antidote to closed-mindedness, instrumentalisation, and social myopia. Tertiary education should provide the opportunity and place where students come to value an understanding of things that are worth knowing for their own sakes, where learning is not sidelined by more pressing and immediate social, economic or political objectives and where knowledge is ‘instrumentalised’ in favour of other values.

How may theology aid the student to enhance his/her ability to think more deeply and widely about the world, one’s nature and one’s identity? Our earlier treatment in this article of John Henry Newman’s classic The Idea of a University demonstrated his belief that Catholic universities would be lost if the legitimate differentiation between faith and reason degenerated into a separation and opposition. It is true that Catholic theology (and indeed all Christian theology) has a modality that distinguishes it from those disciplines that stand or fall on objective evidence. Thus it is quite impossible to ‘do’ Catholic theology without faith. Faith, as understood in Catholic theology, is a total human affirmative response to divine truth not based on reason and scientific fact but on God’s revelation through Jesus Christ. Thus evidential certitude does not result as an outcome of the Catholic theological process since it would destroy one of faith’s most necessary qualities in a believer: freedom. The certitude of faith, then, is different from that based on reason alone and scientific fact but no less certain and no less real.

But what further value does theology have in the academy apart from the three aspects mentioned in the first part of this chapter. These have been raised in our earlier analysis of Newman’s Idea of a University in
Chapter 3. Theology as an ongoing search for a transcendent truth which will always elude full explicitation in this world, is a useful and necessary corrective to any tendency towards the sacralisation of the present and the contemporary. Theology thus performs a useful critical function: there are no final societal or scientific solutions - all is provisional prior to the last day. This eschatological basis of the theological enterprise makes it critical of any finality concerning the secular order. Mere secular solutions are never enough for the Catholic theologian. There is always more: the Christ who will come again. Thus theology lies beyond any limits but ‘imposes’ limits on other disciplines.

Newman had noted how each academic discipline tended to aggrandise its way of looking at reality and to ignore other ways. Marsden draws our attention to Newman’s hope that theology could check this tendency by keeping all disciplines humble enough to be open to reality beyond any system. Newman was aware not only of the mystery of God but also, as we noted earlier, of the mystery of all creation. Mystery, as understood by Newman, is positive. Indeed, theology is about mystery in the positive sense since it disposes one towards an ‘existential contemplative receptivity’ to the world. It is this understanding of the world that “guarantees the validity and goodness of an open-ended exploratory, contemplative disposition towards reality” (my emphasis).

It is my contention that theology’s value in the academy lies in its fostering a perpetual openness to a vast reality beyond any system. There is, as we have noticed, a perpetual tendency in the academy to produce ideologies creating closed intellectual systems which Newman had described as “spurious religions” and “sins of the intellect”. Further, Newman would contend that solipsism is existential disposition involved in such closed ideological thinking where preference is given to the dictates of one’s own mind and nothing more. Perhaps in a spirit of academic humility we could say with Newman that the presence of theology in the academy assists in facilitating a spirit of true freedom and openness in learning for it fosters an existential disposition of contemplative receptivity. Such a disposition can liberate us from rigid
ideologies, on the one hand, and be always open to intellectual surprises and an ever developing, but never finished understanding, on the other hand.

How can academy enrich the contemporary Christian and Church and her theological education? Much attention, perhaps a disproportionate amount in terms of this paper, has been given to attempting to justify the place of theology in the academy. Perhaps this is understandable given the ‘hostility’ displayed by a significant number of more secular-inclined academics to any place being given to theology in the academy. However, if there is a mutual enrichment as I suggest, then the positive influence of the academy on theological education will need to be considered briefly.

Firstly, good university theological formation can counter an instrumentalist approach on the part of many Christian communities and foster a return to a more contemplative, reflective and rational approach to Christianity. Instrumentalisation affects both the academy and the Church and is indeed one of the most virulent forms of secularization. In the Church one of the effects of instrumentalisation would be that all the teaching one receives for ordination should serve certain clearly specified goals that equip the student to fulfil a practical pastoral strategy. One of the services that the academy could provide is to resist this tendency: it needs to provide transformative learning that “takes place when learners are brought into contact with something they cannot control, and opened up by it. Theological education must always place any quest for mastery that it contains within the broader context of being overmastered”.

Secondly, the academy may also remind the Church of her identity. The university has often become the repository of the Church’s memory or tradition. The Church of all institutions should not be tied to the tyranny of the ‘present’ for she needs to be both relevant and prophetic. In order to achieve this end the church needs to be reminded of forgotten aspects in her memory and wider tradition: “The university can, by bringing the
Church’s past to bear … help to sensitize and complexify the Church’s present, calling it to an acknowledgment and understanding of what it has been in such a way as to open up possibilities for what it can become”.

Thirdly, earlier the point was made that good academic study is analogous in some sense to spiritual formation: a “transformative exposure to an as yet ungrasped truth which can only be encountered with a humility that is willing to lay down preconceptions and fixed ideas”. All good university education, both theological and secular, involves disillusionment, self-understanding and the overcoming of pride and security. Surely, the instrumentalised Church needs these virtues?

6. Conclusion

The value of theology in the academy lies in its fostering what may be called an existential disposition of openness and contemplative receptivity to a never-finished understanding of reality. In this task it prepares and encourages people to study a wide variety of scholarly disciplines (theology is always interdisciplinary as it engages divine revelation with all physical and human realities) with an eye for inclusivity. Theology has a breath and width in order that it may operate within a vast domain. Over the ages it has come under the influence of Platonic and Aristotelian philosophy and more recently various contemporary philosophies, historical events, scientific and geographical discoveries and human experiences expressed through political, social and psychological developments. These sciences have made valuable contributions to theology, for theology is relationally bound to legitimate scientific enquiry and genuinely open to dialogue. Theology is indeed a tradition of inquiry based on an openness to dialectical contestation.

Newman has made it clear that the university is a place for teaching universal knowledge. Inherent in such universal knowledge are those
truths that can be known through the science of theology. Surely theological truths occupy an important and prominent place within the circle of universal knowledge. Indeed, we cannot ignore the foundational role of the Christian tradition in the development of the university. We have noted how Newman had insisted on the need for a close scrutiny of arguments put forward to justify the marginalisation of the theological tradition of academic inquiry and his equal insistence on the various academic disciplines knowing their limits.

Finally, in an age when universities and indeed knowledge have become increasingly ‘instrumentalised’, disciplines that display a more ‘contemplative’ dimension that always seeks the ‘more’ in open receptivity will help to counter the threat of higher education being turned into a ‘product’. Good teaching involves more than the ‘useful’: it is formational. It is a process of rigour and openness, disillusionment and consequent self-understanding and growth. This is the task of theology and the task of the university. Mutual enrichment? Yes.

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The idea of a university in a networked world

DUNCAN GREAVES

We are living through a technological revolution that is unprecedented in its intensity, its scope and its range, and this revolution is driving, or is at least profoundly shaping, revolutions in economics, politics and culture. In the 19th century Karl Marx, commenting upon a similar revolution, remarked that “all fixed, fast-frozen relations, with their train of ancient and venerable prejudices and opinions, are swept away, all new-formed ones become antiquated before they can ossify; all that is solid melts into air.” So again today: the institutions of modernity are metamorphosing as we watch.

Prominent among those institutions are universities. They have existed continuously for a thousand years, but are today under profound threat. Twelve years ago the management luminary Peter Drucker confidently forecast their demise. In an interview with Forbes magazine, he predicted bluntly that the teaching traditionally conducted in a bricks-and-mortar university will be rapidly supplanted by distance education, delivered by means of the new technologies, and that universities will not survive long into the 21st century. Drucker’s prediction was by no means new, and indeed similar claims had been made in the 1950s when educational television appeared to be a meaningful possibility. Universities have survived technological revolutions before. But there is something singularly penetrating about the Internet revolution that gives these claims a new and urgent force. I want to consider in this talk whether universities can indeed sustain themselves in the 21st century and beyond. I think that the predictions of their demise are wrong, but I
also think that the structure of this wrongness must be carefully understood by those who take the idea of a university seriously. For there is no question that universities are on perilous ground, and that they have been driven onto it, indirectly, by the information technology revolution upon which Drucker looked so brightly.

In the long record of their existence, universities have accommodated a remarkable range of demands upon their purpose. They have been training colleges, research incubators, gatekeepers of class and status hierarchies, engines of cultural normalization, badges of national pride, and many things beside. In considering their future, however, it is to first principles that we must recur. In this regard, the work of Newman is an enduring and indeed inescapable point of reference for all discourse on the nature and purpose of higher education. In seeking first principles, I want to extract from Newman an argument that I believe is critically important in understanding how the information revolution impacts upon the idea of a university.

Newman defined a university as:

a school of knowledge of every kind, consisting of teachers and learners from every quarter. Many things are requisite to complete and satisfy the idea embodied in this description; but such as this a University seems to be in its essence, a place for the communication and circulation of thought, by means of personal intercourse.

There are several important aspects of this definition to which I want to call attention. The first of these is the sense of place. He makes the point repeatedly that the physical contiguity of minds is an indispensable condition for the enterprise of education. And indeed Newman digresses at some length upon the physical setting of the university. He seeks here a purity of space, not as an end in itself but as a prerequisite for the unmediated contact of minds. And the contact of minds is precisely the second element of this conception, and may indeed be considered to be
the core of Newman’s argument. I shall recur to this in due course. For the moment, let us note a second reason why Newman emphasises the sense of physical space so strongly, and that is the transdisciplinary character of knowledge. It is only by aggregating the proponents of many disciplines in one place that this can be assured, for it is the juxtaposition of disciplines which compels the balancing of their rival claims and hence the preservation of the unity of knowledge.

This I conceive to be the advantage of a seat of universal learning, considered as a place of education. An assemblage of learned men, zealous for their own sciences, and rivals of each other, are brought, by familiar intercourse and for the sake of intellectual peace, to adjust together the claims and relations of their respective subjects of investigation. They learn to respect, to consult, and to aid each other. Thus is created a pure and clear atmosphere of thought, which the student also breathes, though in his own case he only pursues a few sciences out of the multitude. He profits by an intellectual tradition, which is independent of particular teachers, which guides him in his choice of subjects, and duly interprets for him those which he chooses. He apprehends the great outlines of knowledge, the principles on which it rests, the scale of its parts, its lights and its shades, its great points and its little ones, as he otherwise cannot apprehend them. Hence it is that his education is called "Liberal." A habit of mind is formed which lasts through life, of which the attributes are freedom, equitableness, calmness, moderation, and wisdom; or what in a former discourse I have ventured to call a philosophical habit. This then I would assign as the special fruit of the education furnished at a university, as contrasted with other places of teaching or modes of teaching. This is the main purpose of a university in its treatment of its students.

What emerges vividly is a model of knowledge formation in which the process is almost osmotic in character. Knowledge transfer is slow and thick, as in the relationship between master and apprentice. The emphasis falls on the formation of intellectual matrices rather than on the acquisition of facts. It is profoundly informed by a particular
epistemological and ontological posture. Like his contemporary John Stuart Mill, Newman emphasizes the emancipatory and developmental nature of education. He denies the proposition that knowledge and consciousness can be mechanically transmitted and insists that they are formed through internal processes of apprehension and reflection, and in particular through contact with opposing points of view. It is a standpoint that Mill famously carried through in the text On Liberty, written in the same decade that Newman produced the discourses on the idea of a university. Truth, on these principles, is discovered and reaffirmed through the clash of paradigms; it is a living force that must be constantly renewed or perish, not an abstraction to be extracted from textual authority. All education is thus essentially self-education and all emancipation self-emancipation, but the indispensable prerequisite for both is the free contact of minds. Its fundamental precondition is shared, intimate, personal time and space.

Let us now step out of Newman’s world and back into our own, where time and space assume a completely different character. It is these two quantities the boundaries of which are famously shattered by the information technology revolution. Far from being enabling factors, as they are in Newman’s conception, they appear in Drucker’s vision as obstacles. Obstacles moreover that are easily overcome: distance education supplants the need for campuses and recorded lectures replace the intimacy of the seminar. Because Drucker has not understood the foundations of Newman’s argument, it is a trivial matter for him to dismiss the Newmanian university and replace it with a virtual one. And this alternative vision comes at a deadly time for universities in general. They are everywhere in a state of low-grade crisis. Their revenue streams, both public and private, are under threat; the former because of a global withdrawal of state funding, the latter because of the emergence of private universities offering credentials for profit. They have lost their claim to being the definitive repositories of knowledge; on the Internet they are relatively small nodes rather than hubs. They are losing, perhaps have already lost, their monopoly on credentialisation. Most threatening of all, they have lost their principal role in the stabilisation
of class structures. The new economy revolves primarily around the way in which information, rather than industrial commodities, is globally produced and consumed. The gatekeeping functions which universities traditionally performed in maintaining class contours no longer hold. The human capacities requisite to the new economy can be produced and reproduced in many ways. The dominant educational requirement is for constant retraining of the workforce, a need which can be ably met and probably better met outside of universities. The complex internal economies of cross-subsidisation which have long characterised universities are destabilised by the emergence of nontraditional providers of higher education. Such providers focus, for obvious reasons, on the low-overhead and high-profit domains of demand, most notably on commerce and management. The erosion of this market is, for obvious reasons, profoundly threatening to universities, because it threatens to destroy the transdisciplinary consensus which traditionally binds them together. Pointed looks, and sometimes more than that, are cast at disciplinary net contribution. In a constant struggle to manage the bottom line, university executives are pushed in directions that are profoundly corrosive of the traditional values of university environments. Academic staff feel themselves coldly measured by their financial contribution rather than their dedication to the life of the mind, while being simultaneously forced to bear administrative burdens that militate against their very capacity to add financial value. These are, for the most part, not happy places. Should we not look forward to their demise and discard Newman’s vision as quaint but irrelevant?

But Newman has in fact anticipated Drucker. Newman’s critics sometimes forget that he too was dealing with an information revolution: cheap paper and cheap printing had precipitated a great flood of printed material which seemed to contain immense possibilities for the dissemination of knowledge: Thus Newman writes:

Considering the prodigious powers of the press, and how they are developed at this time in the never-intermitting issue of periodicals, tracts, pamphlets, works in series, and light literature, we must allow
there never was a time which promised fairer for dispensing with every other means of information and instruction. What can we want more, you will say, for the intellectual education of the whole man, and for every man, than so exuberant and diversified and persistent a promulgation of all kinds of knowledge? Why, you will ask, need we go up to knowledge, when knowledge comes down to us?

To which he answers in effect that the written word, whether it be in the form of books, pamphlets or Wikipedia, is a point of departure, not of arrival. Newman calls these things “an instrument of teaching in the hands of a teacher” but still insists that “we must consult the living man and listen to his living voice.” It is only through the unmediated contact of mind with that the texture of knowledge can be explored. Thus he writes:

no book can convey the special spirit and delicate peculiarities of its subject with that rapidity and certainty which attend on the sympathy of mind with mind, through the eyes, the look, the accent, and the manner, in casual expressions thrown off at the moment, and the unstudied turns of familiar conversation …. The general principles of any study you may learn by books at home; but the detail, the colour, the tone, the air, the life which makes it live in us, you must catch all these from those in whom it lives already.

Newman is perfectly willing to accept that the authentic contact of mind with mind might be achieved in other ways. He speculates that we might one day discover “some intellectual daguerreotype, which takes off the course of thought, and the form, lineaments, and features of truth, as completely and minutely, as the optical instrument reproduces the sensible object.” Until that day, however “we must come to the teachers of wisdom to learn wisdom, we must repair to the fountain, and drink there. Portions of it may go from thence to the ends of the earth by means of books; but the fulness is in one place alone. It is in such assemblages and congregations of intellect that books themselves, the masterpieces of human genius, are written, or at least originated.”
We must ask therefore: does the Internet constitute Newman’s hypothetical intellectual daguerreotype? The answer must be an emphatic no. Justifying that answer is an extended exercise in its own right, but I can point to two issues that deserve exploration.

The volume of online information is growing at a geometric rate – doubling somewhere between every nine months to every seven years, depending on what estimate you want to use. And what counts as “information” is of course subject to contestation. If we distinguish variously between high-grade information, low-grade information, misinformation and disinformation (which can themselves be delivered in different grades) the result is an information landscape that is simply bewildering. The skills and capacities requisite to successfully navigating it are not trivial. They are the skills of analysis and judgement and the capacities of insight and argument. They matter in any context, but in this one more than any other, for without them the traveller in this landscape is hopelessly lost. These are precisely the skills which are taught in universities, through the contact of mind with mind, and we do not yet have another way of developing them.

It might be objected that it is precisely the contact of mind with mind that is made possible, over distance and time, by the Internet. But in fact - and this is my second point - the Internet’s protocols are not very good at transmitting semantic content. They transmit words, but that is not the same thing, and they can transmit voice and video, but with almost none of the subtlety of gesture, body language, muscle tone and vocal inflection that underpin communication, and which make it possible for two people in conversation to synchronise their mutual understanding. And indeed as soon as these layers of communication are stripped out by digitisation, the scope for misunderstanding becomes great. These failings are all the greater when technology is employed asynchronously, as is almost invariably the case. Digital education is a very pale shadow of the real thing, and its weaknesses open the door to a multitude of secondary shortcomings - for example, the propensity to mere assertion.
instead of argument and to what Linda Stone called “continuous partial attention” instead of the focused application of the mind.

I do not mean to suggest that there is no place for these technologies in the modern university. Quite the contrary: they are indispensable adjuncts to teaching and research. Besides this, students have a legitimate expectation that universities will prepare them to function in the modern world, and that means, among other things, equipping them to deal with these technologies in an intellectually substantial way. But the point is that the technology is an adjunct and not an alternative.

I thus conclude that Newman is sustained and that Drucker is wrong.
Ivan Illich’s idea of a university tallies with John Henry Newman’s in that the education process at a university should be formative, reducing to order and meaning the subjects learned and the elements acquired for knowledge and digesting what has been received into the substance of previous state of thought. Therefore, a trained intellect takes and connects the view of the old and new, the past and the present and has an insight in the influence of all these on one another. However, looking critically at the modern setting and the mission of the university Illich declares:

*The structural purpose of the modern university has little to do with the traditional quest...The modern university has forfeited its chance to provide a simple setting for encounters which are both autonomous and anarchic, focused yet unplanned and ebullient, and has chosen instead to manage the process by which so-called research and instruction are produced.*

The university is a setting where the community of masters and students works on new discoveries, seeks to advance knowledge, works on the enrichment of the mind so as to break through the sound barriers of
knowledge, consolidates knowledge and wisdom and sharpens the processes of reason and insight into reality in order to manage it well. It is there where teaching leads students to new vistas of knowledge. This is also a product of the communion of the minds, the masters and the disciples together. Illich makes another remark with regard to the university’s degeneration to the point of depriving its students of personal responsibility in learning and in the development of knowledge and skills. There is a tendency for students to transfer the responsibility from self to the institution. This is in fact a social regression in the area of education. He also points out that the travesty of the modern university comes from the orientation that has developed to fix consumer goals, whereas the old university did not aim to convert knowledge into wealth.

The Apostolic Constitution *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* says of Catholic Universities:

> Because knowledge is meant to serve the human person, research in a Catholic University is always carried out with concern for the ethical and moral implications both of its methods and of its discoveries. This concern, while it must be present in all research, is particularly important in areas of science and technology. It is essential that we be convinced of the priority of the ethical over the technical, of the primacy of the person over things, the superiority of the spirit over matter. The cause of the human person will only be served if the knowledge is joined to conscience. Men and women of science will truly aid humanity only if they preserve the sense of the transcendence of the human person over the world and of God over the human person. (Ex Corde Ecclesiae No.18)

This article outlines the agenda and the spirit of a Catholic University.

We can, therefore, draw inspiration from this article No.18, of *Ex Corde Ecclesiae (1990)*, for the purpose of charting the path for the development of and the vital mission of St Augustine College as a Catholic Institute of Higher Education. It is expected to enjoy academic
freedom and free to do research, to publish results of scientific research and to contribute to academic progress. It has a mission to address existing institutes of higher education in South Africa, education in general, to engage in a dialogue and sharing with its peer institutions locally and internationally. It must have courage to venture into the deep, to avoid timidity and to take risks for the sake of development, social change, adjustment and betterment for human life.

This College was established in the midst of economic and social problems which were due to political processes and social change, a change from the Apartheid era to the era of democracy in the new South Africa. It is not the awareness of technical, economic, industrial and educational realities as such that brought about its foundation, but the ethical concern with regard to social change, development, business and finance and economic engineering in this country. This college, I expect, has to inject ethical and moral elements in the area of social life, business science, commerce, life sciences among the people of South Africa. Article 18 of Ex Corde Ecclesiae exhorts us that the ethical should have priority over the technical. This is founded on the idea and concept of the philosophy of dignity of the human person and that the technical is oriented towards the wellbeing of the human person. There is always a challenge to maintain coherence between the sciences, arts, politics, business and economics to serve the human person.

Processes of ethical reasoning do not provide ready-made laws for application in anticipated and well defined situations, and yet these are essential to safeguard human life. Engagement in ethical education means that one is embarking on the creation and shaping of a mental and spiritual attitude, a mental culture that helps to develop sensitivity and a serious listening to the human spirit. Ethical education also develops a faculty that salubriously directs human interactions in the world of trade, industry, economy, finance and society in general. It means the ethical “informs” the teaching of courses, training and the imparting of professional skills. On 11 July 2009, at the Angelus prayer, referring to the G8 that had just taken place in L’Aquila, Italy, Pope Benedict
exhorted that those current problems of humanity cannot be merely technical, but they must take account of all the needs of the human person for the absolute supremacy of technology could lead to a grim future for mankind. Therefore, there is a need to develop an ethical faculty in the development and application of knowledge. Newman says:

_Such a power is the result of scientific formation of the mind: it is an acquired faculty of judgement, of clear-sightedness, of sagacity, of wisdom, of philosophical reach of the mind, and of intellectual self-possession and repose, qualities which do not come from mere acquirement._

Application of reason or thought on acquired knowledge brings order and meaning to facts, arts and skills acquired with great sensitivity in relationship with other human beings. These help to redeem people of various specialisations from the narrowness of mind and to acquire, even by intuition, the realization that priority must be given to the dignity of the human person rather than to maintain that there is no salvation outside the market. Technology, economics, business science and finance have their rules as sciences. However, the global economic meltdown that has affected many nations is due to the failure of business sciences and administration, in spite of their rules and methods of operation, to infuse the ethical in the technical. Their approach sounds very clinical, objective and perfectly reasonable. But one who is ethically conscious of the world’s ‘egoism’ and works for the service of human beings is aware that this is not just a simple matter: there is prevalent corruption, greed and avarice in the world and the exploitation of the helpless. Financial magnates call the tune and ethics and morality are not brought into the core of business management.

Therefore ethics education and training in the processes of ethical thinking should lead to the formation of the _habitus_ of establishing an ethical and moral management perspective for business by the economist, the financier, the investor, the industry chief and the medical scientist, so that all may never lose sight of the fact that it is not the
market that has priority over the human person and so become an unmitigated idol that has to be worshipped. Rather, it is the cause of the human person that has to be served by means of knowledge and expertise joined to the consciences of the above.

The relationship between “can” and “ought” should be brought into the discussion between science, technology, ethics and morality for ethics is a profound reality imbedded in the deeper structures of human life. Such intellectual formation directs the journey of knowledge and science to the core of the human being and the human society and so leads to sound and sane existence and the promotion of wellbeing. In order to cultivate the capacity for ethical reasoning in various fields of specialisation for the sake of serving humanity, the university should assist those engaged in various disciplines to go beyond the bulk of accumulated knowledge and skills, as Newman would say, without symmetry and without design.7

Finally, a Catholic institute of higher education in this country has to function within the historical context of this country, take into account the memories of the past that keep on haunting the present, and the socio-political struggle of the people, especially the poor of this country in areas of the economy, education, business and social and human development. As mentioned above, the emphasis on ethics operative in the education process of the university, has to challenge the scientists’ and business specialists’ faith in systems which end up being ends in themselves and so neglect to pay attention to the ultimate goal, the service of man, the protection and the enhancing of human life and avoiding the tyranny of reductionism, and the promotion of the common good.
Notes

3 Ivan Illich, *Deschooling Society*, p. 41
5 Ivan Illich, *Deschooling Society*, op. cit. p. 41.
The University as Human Capital Factory:
Teaching and Research from an Economic Point of View

CHARLES SIMKINS

Paper prepared for a symposium celebrating the 10th anniversary of St Augustine College

JOWETT:… You are here to take the ancient authors as they come from a reputable English printer, and to study them until you can write in the metre. If you cannot write Latin and Greek verse, how can you hope to be of any use in the world?

Tom Stoppard – The invention of love

1. The strange case of Wilhelm von Humboldt

Political and economic power establish prestige for cultural forms and, in a world with only one superpower, it is not surprising that the top universities in the United States are taken as models for universities around the world. It is customary to observe that the contemporary system of instruction at Harvard, Yale, Stanford and the like traces its origins to late 19th century reforms based on the post-Napoleonic German model. The architect of the German system is often identified as Wilhelm von Humboldt, briefly head of the section for ecclesiastic affairs and education in the Prussian ministry of the interior from 1808 to 1810. In that time, he instituted a reform of the entire Prussian
education system and established the University of Berlin which combined teaching and research in one institution - the ‘research university’.

And yet the line from Humboldt to the present is not very direct.\(^{21}\) Firstly, he thought that national education should ‘lie wholly beyond the limits within which political agency should properly be confined,’\(^ {2}\) a far cry from the contemporary situation round the world where governments supervise - often quite closely - education in general, and universities in particular.

Secondly, his conception of the research university derives more from Rousseau than contemporary practice:

> The university is reserved for what the human being can find by and within himself: insight into pure science. For this self-activity in the fullest sense, freedom is necessary, and solitude is helpful; from these two requirements flows the entire external organisation of the universities. Lecture courses are only a secondary aspect; the essential thing is that people live for a number of years for themselves and for science, closely alongside like-minded individuals of the same age, conscious that this same place has a number of fully developed intellects who are solely dedicated to the elevation and promulgation of science.\(^ {3,4}\)

In other words, the university was a research university by Humboldtian definition; students and teachers alike were engaged solely in it. Lectures and seminars were, above all, a way of communicating research findings.

Thirdly, Humboldt was a liberal who was finally dismissed from the Prussian civil service by a conservative king in 1819. Prussia and Imperial Germany after they were firmly under conservative control during the entire century between Waterloo and the First World War, provided the context for the crystallization of the German research
university during that time. Karl Marx was able to submit what, by modern standards, was a brief doctoral thesis to Jena University in 1841 but, by the time of Max Weber at the end of the nineteenth century, an intending academic had not only to complete a doctoral thesis, but also a second, and different, habilitation thesis at the university at which he intended to work. Practically, and in contrast to Humboldt’s intentions, this meant, as Weber pointed out that the “career of the academic person in Germany is generally based on plutocratic prerequisites. For it is extremely hazardous for a young scholar without funds to expose himself to the conditions of the academic career… If he is a Jew, of course one says lasciate ogni speranza.”

If the circumstances of birth heavily influenced the chances of an academic career in late 19th and early 20th century Germany, it is the working of the market that has controlled access in the United States over the last century. It is the market that accounts for the transition from a generally mediocre school system to a much more efficient university configuration. High school graduates generally follow the rule that they should go to the best universities that will accept them. They know which these are from a dense set of ratings of universities and of departments within them. This information is even more important for those starting postgraduate studies and those applying for first academic jobs. The process of sorting into a hierarchy of talent is relentless. Unlike the old German system, able students from households without much money can generally finance their way through higher education, so the best available talent which can stand the system is recruited. At the apex of the system, some approximation to the Humboldtian ideal is achieved. Lower down, the process is more akin to what Humboldt would have regarded as appropriate in secondary schools.

2. Modern economic history: the escape from the Malthusian trap

Gregory Clark (and he is not alone in this) divides the economic history of the world into three phases: the Malthusian trap, the industrial
revolution and the great divergence.\textsuperscript{7} The Malthusian trap refers to a situation in which there is no appreciable long run increase in per capita income. Any short run increase is followed by an increase in the population until wages revert to subsistence level. Technological change - the only real escape from the Malthusian trap - before the end of the eighteenth century was at best very slow, or showed no advance or regressed. Then came a series of technological advances: in textiles, iron and steel production, agriculture, land and water transport, and communication. These permitted a sustained rise in per capita incomes, first in Britain, then in North America and Europe. The speeding up of technological change was followed by a fertility transition that took place in most of Europe and North America and Australia between 1870 and 1930, with a later spread to most of the rest of the world. The United Nations estimates the current total fertility rate (children born per woman) at 2.56, down from 4.92 in the early 1950s. The projected total fertility rate in 2050 is 2.02, slightly below replacement. Nonetheless, population momentum (the consequence of earlier high fertility) means that world population is projected to rise from 6.83 billion in 2009 to 9.15 billion in 2050\textsuperscript{8}, an increase of a third in just over forty years. Mankind’s ability to survive and to improve its standard of living continues to depend on rapid technological progress.

So central is this fact to modern existence that economic theory has seen major advances in the fields of human capital theory and the theory of economic growth. While the concept of human capital had been latent in much economic writing, in the 1960s Gary Becker set out\textsuperscript{9} how investment in an individual’s education and training is similar to business investment in equipment. Individuals (or their parents) could be expected to invest in human capital until the rate of return on it fell to the level of returns from other investments. The point at which this equilibrium is achieved depends on the talent of each person, so that a range of different educational outcomes could be expected. Human capital could be valued as the discounted rate of additional earnings flowing from it, just as physical capital is valued. Unlike physical capital, of course, it could not be transferred between persons.
Educational institutions, on this view, become human capital factories and their efficiency becomes a legitimate subject for enquiry, especially given mankind’s reliance on its wits. And if a now rather old-fashioned sort of educationalist should insist that education should be valued ‘for itself’ rather than for what it can be used to earn, an economist can reply that the ability to enjoy Monet’s Water Lilies in a museum is a ‘non-pecuniary’ return on a knowledge of the aims and achievements of the Impressionists.

Economic growth theory received a powerful boost in the 1980s from endogenous growth theory. In the older Solow growth model, technical change was exogenous, i.e. not generated by the model itself but introduced into it from outside. Endogenous growth theory, on the other hand, seeks to explain the production of new knowledge and technology. Such knowledge is associated with increasing returns and it is so because it is a non-rival (your use of knowledge does not prevent my use of it, and only partly excludable good (your possession of a piece of knowledge may not make it easy for you to prevent my use of it). Four consequences flow from the economic characteristics of knowledge:

- The opportunities for growth may be almost limitless and different people use the same knowledge in different ways
- Markets tend to under-invest in knowledge, because knowledge has public goods characteristics
- The competitive model of the neo-classical world becomes replaced with monopolistic competition
- Outcomes are indeterminate and depend on history in ways not contemplated in the neo-classical world. Path dependence and evolution take centre stage.

The Internet is an example of a knowledge-based system originally designed to facilitate national defense and which now has countless uses not foreseen by its original developers, some commercial, some not. Combined with a globalised communications network, it has led to previously inconceivable relocation of a number of commercial
functions through outsourcing of call centres, technical support and the like.

All of this looks at education from a social rather than an individual point of view. It leads to the concept of a knowledge system – a set of relationships which incorporate basic research, the application of knowledge and learning by doing, with the more spillovers the better. Both big scientific breakthroughs and millions of small innovations drive growth. Management in this world encourages all workers to develop new ideas.

It was only about a century ago that national efficiency was conceived of as the capacity to wage war. Indeed, one of the roots of the British National Health System was the discovery at the time of the South African war and again in the First World War that only two out of every five young working class men were fit to fight. Now national efficiency is much more likely to be assessed in terms of the effectiveness of the educational system and the efficiency with which knowledge is produced and used. This situates universities within fields of force unknown for most of the several centuries of their existence.

3. University education in a demotic age

Table 1 sets out UNESCO’s estimate of total enrolment in tertiary education between 1999 and 2007. It shows how rapid the expansion of the sector is, with aggregate world enrolments rising from 88 million to 151 million in eight years, a rate of increase of over 6% per annum. The rapid rate of increase is likely to slow but will continue well into the future. There are wide regional disparities in the tertiary gross enrolment ratio, which ranges from 4% in sub-Saharan Africa to 80% in North America and Western Europe. There remains plenty of catch-up to be done outside North America and Western and Eastern Europe.
Globally, about 10% of students are registered for qualifications in arts and humanities and another 10% in education. 33% are registered for qualifications in the social sciences, business and law. 8% are registered for qualifications in science and 14% in engineering, manufacturing and construction. 2% are registered in agriculture, 9% in health and welfare and 3% in services. 11% are in general or unspecified degrees. 80% are registered for first qualifications that can form the foundation for higher degrees, 18% are registered for practical and vocational qualifications and 2% for higher degrees.11

**Table 1 - Tertiary enrolments, 1999 and 2007**

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<tr>
<td>Arab States</td>
<td>5,165,102</td>
<td>7,146,174</td>
<td>4.14%</td>
<td>23</td>
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<tr>
<td>Central and Eastern Europe</td>
<td>12,420,822</td>
<td>20,749,657</td>
<td>6.62%</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Asia</td>
<td>1,212,131</td>
<td>1,994,408</td>
<td>6.42%</td>
<td>25</td>
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<tr>
<td>East Asia and the Pacific</td>
<td>23,081,605</td>
<td>46,531,377</td>
<td>9.16%</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin America and the Caribbean</td>
<td>10,664,030</td>
<td>17,757,024</td>
<td>6.58%</td>
<td>37</td>
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<tr>
<td>North America and Western Europe</td>
<td>28,240,250</td>
<td>34,008,815</td>
<td>2.35%</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South and West Asia</td>
<td>9,345,475*</td>
<td>18,409,207</td>
<td>8.84%</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-Saharan Africa</td>
<td>2,136,026</td>
<td>4,139,797</td>
<td>8.62%</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>88,175,364</td>
<td>150,736,459</td>
<td>6.33%</td>
<td>43</td>
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The South and West Asia enrolment in 1000 is an estimate

Source: UNESCO education data base

- The Gross Enrolment Ratio is found by dividing enrolments by the size of the appropriate age group

Four things follow from this state of affairs:

1. University education recruits from further down in the ability spectrum than it used to at least in countries with already high
Gross Enrolment Ratios. The strength of the effect depends on the size of the GER. A very low GER usually means that only students from well-to-do households enter higher education. The next stage usually entails access by talented members of poorer households and so may not reduce (or may even increase) the average ability of students in higher education. But if the GER continues to rise, moving down the ability spectrum is inevitable, This leads to a debate about higher education. Some observe that this necessarily entails a ‘dumbing down’ of the curriculum. Others prefer to attack the generalized concept of ‘ability’. Our own Department of Education speaks of the ‘interests’ of learners rather than their ‘ability’ as guiding their way through the educational system. Congruent with this approach is the replacement of the concept of ‘failure’ with the category ‘not yet achieved’ indeed, the ‘not achieved’ category in the National Senior Certificate is much smaller than the ‘failed’ category in the older Senior Certificate\textsuperscript{12}. Within the fog, the search for new curricula adapted to new circumstances goes on.

2. Greater regulation of teaching emerges, usually by the state. We are familiar with this in the form of the National Qualifications Framework, and a process of minutely specified accreditation of qualifications. This is standard in the countries of the Commonwealth. Elsewhere, the forms of regulation vary from the prescription of content by the state to the market regulation preferred by the United States. Within the state-regulated South African system, the intention is to situate a particular block of work within an ‘articulated’ system with clear pathways to it and from it. The implicit emphasis, too, is on replicability, both in instruction and assessment. Approaches to regulation often contain a hefty dollop of optimal contract theory, the branch of economics concerned with how a principal regulates the activity of an agent whose objectives and conduct cannot be fully observed. So university funding is tied to research output meeting specified criteria and to enrolments and pass rates in courses.
3. The rapid global expansion of higher education reflects the process of expansion and consolidation of a global middle class. This results in a demand for vocational, marketable qualifications reinforcing state efforts at standardisation.

4. While there has been a shift in education from the imparting of culturally valued items of knowledge to the cultivation of procedures of investigation, every unit of instruction must have content. With the admission of more groups to higher education, conflicts about content have increased. A well documented case in point are the ‘culture wars’ in humanities departments in the United States, where proponents and opponents of a ‘canon’ have sometimes contended with a vigour that has left little more than a pile of rubble for their students.\textsuperscript{13,14} Culture wars can have a no holds barred intensity reflecting the irresolvability of normative dissensus, often exceeding the circumstances of negotiation within which cultures are actually formed.\textsuperscript{15}

4. **Research in a modern economy**

At the beginning of the 20\textsuperscript{th} century, Weber noted the existence of “large institutes of medicine or natural science [as] state capitalist enterprise, which cannot be managed without very considerable funds.”\textsuperscript{16} Such institutes have grown in number and scope since then. They can be constituted as government parastatals, such as the Medical Research Council or the Human Sciences Research Council, or they can be situated within universities as centres or institutes, or they can be organised as academies parallel to universities as in Russia. In addition to such essentially public institutions, corporate research has grown and is central, for instance, to the pharmaceutical industry and to computer hardware and software. Sometimes, the internal organisation of research is quite similar in the private sector to the public sector, as in medicine and mathematical scientific research.
Excluding patronage, the general principle of resource allocation within all these institutions is the competitive bid. That is to say, a scope of research is defined and a budget to go with it, and individuals or teams of individuals bid for allocations based on the strength of proposals as assessed by adjudicators. There are the two sources of error in this process with which statisticians are familiar (i) funding a proposal which is not fruitful and (ii) failing to fund a proposal which is fruitful. Quite a lot of error is unavoidable, since there are all kinds of things which cannot be known until a number of approaches have been tried. This makes the return on research investment quite variable. It was not knowable in advance, for instance, that it would prove very difficult to find HIV vaccine, whereas techniques of management of HIV infection would make fairly steady advance. That all emerged from the research itself.

More recently, it has been suggested that there are positive externalities from research or other forms of advance, such as in 15th century Florence or contemporary Silicon Valley, achieved by having researchers in different fields stimulated by each other. The unanswered question is: can such a situation be consciously created or do such synergies suddenly burst into existence and equally suddenly die away?

5. Global externalities

Fifty years ago, the great fear was that humanity would blow itself up with nuclear weapons. Now the concern is that human demands may exceed the capacity of the earth to sustain them: worries about ‘peak oil’, the disappearance of fish stocks and global warming all have this common theme. More recently has been added the concern that there is insufficient regulation of the global financial system. Deft packaging of shaky mortgages in New York can help create a banking crisis in Tokyo, just as smoky industries in Shanghai can increase the incidence and intensity of hurricanes along the Gulf of Mexico coast. These are examples of ‘negative externalities’ i.e. negative by-products of market
activity which are not themselves mediated by the market. Too much or (in the case of positive externalities) too little of the primary product will be produced.

A number of means to bring market outcomes closer to social optima exist, of differing efficacy in different situations. Common to all of these is either an authority which can make determinations or a forum in which agreements can be negotiated. It is an open question how far the constellation of international organisations - the United Nations, regional associations such as NAFTA and the European Union, the International Monetary Fund, the World Trade Organisation, the World Bank, the Bank for International Settlements and regional development banks - can evolve the necessary agreements and institutional development for the resolution of potentially lethal externality problems.

The analysis of how national and cross-national political and economic forces frame the agendas of multilateral organisations is the province of international political economy. Several outcomes in relation to externality crises are possible:

1. The international system may simply lack the resources to deal with the crisis. This is the outcome described by Auden on the outbreak of the Second World War:

   And helpless governors wake
   To resume their compulsory game:
   Who can release them now,
   Who can reach the deaf
   Who can speak for the dumb?\(^1\)

2. Circumstances may change in such a way that implementation of long-standing agendas becomes possible. To-day’s crisis may lead to a resolution of yesterday’s externality. An example of this is the long-standing desire of some governments to regulate tax shelters and hence to strengthen their tax bases. It has taken the current
financial crisis to extract concessions of information from Lichtenstein and Switzerland.

3. Changed circumstances may simply lead to changed positioning with a view to later resolution (or the postponement of resolution). The Israel-Palestine issue is a case in point. That jelly has been pushed around the plate many times.

4. The failure of a flawed initial attempt at resolution may produce pressures for improved proposals. This was the case of the League of Nations. It will also probably be the case with Kyoto Agreement on climate change.

5. Or there may be real progress as in the case of a number of successful trade rounds since 1945.

The point is that successful international agreement on an externalities issue is never guaranteed and that the supply of agreements is scarce and certainly less than optimal. Nonetheless, they are essential. Once sensible and universal agreements on carbon dioxide emissions are reached, the way is paved for research all over the globe on the best ways of meeting them. Without these agreements, a crucial specification for researchers is missing.

Externalities have the characteristic that research alone (either fundamental or applied) is not sufficient to resolve them. Institutional innovation, dependent on political processes, is also required.

6. Economic aspects of university education

The following contemporary issues in the economics of university education can be discussed against the background sketched so far:
1. **Ranking and globalisation.** World university rankings have started to appear. One of the most influential is the Shanghai Jiao Tong University Institute for Higher Education’s global ranking of research performance. This casts research universities as global actors competing with one another across national boundaries. The major part of this index (60%) is determined by publication and citation performance in the sciences, social sciences and humanities. A further 30% is determined by the location of winners of Nobel Prizes and Fields Medals in mathematics. The remaining 10% is determined by taking the total derived from the above data and dividing it by the number of staff.19

Within the United States, university rankings by US News and World Report are particularly influential. Here the orientation is more towards potential students. The components of the rating are: peer assessment of the university, student retention, staff resources, student selectivity, financial resources, graduation rate performance and alumni giving rate.

Marginson and van der Wende make the point that holistic rankings can conceal more than they reveal and they recommend a fuller range of more specific data, with which interested parties can interact on the basis of their own criteria. The effect would be to make a fuller information set available, not to decrease the global competition between universities.

Another aspect of globalisation is increased international mobility of students and teachers. This has become a major feature of European higher education as historically disparate national university systems are increasingly harmonised with the Bologna process. It is a theme taken up elsewhere as well. The participants in the South, South-West and Central Asia Sub-Regional UNESCO Preparatory Conference on Higher Education in February 2009 resolved as follows:

We acknowledge the trend towards internationalisation of higher education, as reflected in the increased mobility of students, academics,
educational programmes and higher education institutions across national borders. The region experiences large outflow of students and we recognize the need to establish an appropriate regulatory framework and to ensure optimum benefits of cross border educational opportunities.

2. Finance. Up until 1945, university education was accessible mainly to those who could afford to pay for it, although there were always some scholarships for those who could not. One of the aims of the post-war welfare state was to broaden access and this was done by often quite generous grants for those with the necessary ability. It came to be realized, however, that these grants were regressive in fiscal terms since they redistributed from taxpayers in general to set a high ability students who would reap the rewards in terms of higher lifetime earnings. Accordingly, there has been a scaling back of support for tuition costs (with sharply rising tuition costs) and a shift to at least partial financing of student expenses by loans. Income contingent repayments are widely accepted as an equitable reflection of the fact that some university qualifications have higher market value than others; they also protect against risk.

The change in the financing of students has taken place within a wider global context. The rapid contemporary growth of higher education has been noted and this has often outstripped the ability of the state to finance it. This has led to greater emphasis on accountability for the use of public money in universities. Increasingly, universities are positioning themselves as multi-product corporations, with a range of revenue streams. In addition to endowments, these can take the form of fees for tailor-made and continuing education programmes, fees from overseas students, research patents, licenses and royalties, services from internal privatization programmes, profits for ancillary services, rents from conference and sports facilities, rents from residential facilities and income from science parks.
It has also led to a greater role for the private sector in higher education, a move of which St Augustine College is a part. Some countries have encouraged the formation of private universities using a variety of incentives, including a partial tuition subsidy. Religious and philanthropic foundations have been setting up private universities. And a for-profit sector has grown up developing chains of universities. Sanyal and Martin report that 12 such US companies were valued at more than $40 billion in 2004. India has the National Institute for Information Technology which has 2500 education centres in India and abroad.

7. Higher education and social inclusion

It is often observed that an increasingly market-oriented university system runs the risk of increasing social exclusion and there are several reasons why this might be so: the greater needs of poorer students, the lower levels of support from poor parents, risk aversion on the part of borrowers and lenders, poor information and guidance in poorer communities and the like. And yet, globally, the evidence is that higher education is becoming more inclusive, not less, as gross enrolment ratios rise. So things have been moving in the right direction, but problems remain. The Higher Education Funding Council for England identifies four key risks for achieving its strategic objective of widening participation:

- The supply of places in higher education may not match the demand in terms of level, mode or location
- Insufficient demand for higher education places among young adults
- Insufficient increase in enrolments from under-represented socio-economic groups
- No increase in the rate of progression to higher education for those with vocational qualifications. 21
A study of US college presidents on the other hand, sees costs going up (in the form of higher salaries and health care costs, needs for greater campus security and more remedial help for struggling students) while the contribution to public colleges from the states is decreasing. The inevitable consequence is higher tuition costs, placing a greater burden on students and families. Access and throughput is additionally under threat because many students do not have adequate academic skills for college work.

Emphases will vary across other regions. In Latin America, issues of equitable access are likely to be salient. In East Asia, on the other hand, one has a collection of universities determined to work their way up the global rankings. In South Asia, issues of multi-cultural and multi-ethnic values are important. The Arab world has complex cultural attitudes towards globalisation as a concept and as a force, and this complexity comes up against a desire for the technical fruits of globalisation.

8. When I hear of culture, I release the safety catch of my Browning

Higher education has a cultural dimension as well. The humanities are centrally concerned with it. At present, the danger is that knowledge is presented and digested without cultural references, with the result that students fail to be properly oriented in time and space. Without such orientation, they lack the resources for critical thinking.

The question then becomes: Whose culture? One possible answer is ‘Nobody’s’. A legitimating text for this view is Lyotard’s The Postmodern Condition, in which we read:

In contemporary society and culture – postindustrial society, postmodern culture - …the grand narrative has lost its credibility, regardless of what mode of unification it uses, regardless of whether it is a speculative narrative or a narrative of emancipation… There is
an erosion inside the speculative game, and by loosening the weave of the encyclopedic net in which each science was to find its place, it eventually sets them free. The classical dividing lines between the various fields of science are thus called into question – disciplines disappear, overlappings occur at the borders between sciences and from these new territories are born. The speculative hierarchy of learning gives way to an imminent and, as it were, ‘flat’ network of areas of enquiry. [pp 37-39]

This leads to a ‘hermeneutic of suspicion’ towards grand narratives. By grand narrative, Lyotard means primarily Hegelianism, Marxism or the Encyclopedists of the Enlightenment. But he has been (mis)understood to mean particular cultural traditions and more specifically, particularly in the United States, the intellectual heritage of ‘dead white males’. And application of the hermeneutic of suspicion does indeed lead to flatness and flux, some of it very strange, in the humanities.

An alternative answer to the question Whose Culture? is ‘Everybody’s’. In literary criticism, the new historicism has succeeded deconstruction. Deconstruction ended up in a welter of equally valid because equally arbitrary (mis)readings of texts. The new historicism seeks to enquire into the historical details of the production of valued cultural objects and so to situate them. One remarkable application of the method is to be found in G W Bowersock’s *Mosaics as history: The Near East from late antiquity to Islam*. His book, beautifully illustrated with pictures of many of the mosaics he describes, observes that a long period of relative peace settled on the near East from the first part of the 2nd century. The reason for the peace was an extraordinarily mixed culture. Many religions and many peoples shared Hellenic traditions they had all inherited. The mosaic evidence shows that Jews and Arabs shared fully in this culture, which lasted a hundred years or more into Islamic rule. Bowersock’s book is a model piece of early 21st century humanities scholarship.
9. The argument

Higher standards of living in the increasingly crowded 21st century world will require mobilization of all available intellectual resources. Ways will have to be found of economizing on what will often be more expensive physical resources. So the economic demand for greater throughput and efficiency from the higher education sector will be insistent.

Increasing demand for higher education is also an outcome of democratic processes, notably the spread of social citizenship. Authoritarian regimes, sooner or later, tend to run into trouble with their higher education systems and often stunt their development with economic costs down the line. This is one way in which political factors can arrest the growth of higher education.

The trend towards greater access to higher education has been very powerful in recent decades and looks set to continue. Finding the resources to finance higher education is an increasing problem and has led to important changes, including greater reliance on the future earnings of graduates. A weak international economy may, for the next few years, force a slowing of the growth of higher education.

If domestic political development towards democracy is uneven and subject to reversals, the international political situation poses even sharper constraints. The opportunities for constructive research into global externalities depend on prior construction of a framework of agreements and institutions within which the new knowledge can be deployed. There are races against time which the international political system is not guaranteed to win. The cultural issues of orientation in space and time may look like a luxury in all of this. They are not. The search for orientation is a powerful human urge and, if the higher education system does not help satisfy it, can lead people into all kinds of strange and dark places. A careful process of retrieval of mankind’s cultural treasures is needed.
Notes

1 For a discussion of this point see Mitchell G Ash, Bachelor of What? Master of Whom? The Humboldt Myth and Historical Transformations of Higher Education in German-Speaking Europe and the US, European Journal of Education, 41(2), 2006. Ash sees ‘Humboldt’ as a symbol manipulated in contemporary debates about access, financing, internal university structure and cross-national standardization of qualifications.

2 W von Humboldt, The limits of state action, 1792

3 W von Humboldt, Preliminary thoughts on the plan for the establishment of the municipal school system in Lithuania, 1809

4 Humboldt assumed that everything a teacher was capable of imparting would have been imparted by the end of secondary school. In this he is at odds with our contemporary world, and conditions in South Africa in particular. When a university entrance pass fails to guarantee that its holder can read proficiently, follow even the most elementary mathematical argument in a text, or can orient himself or herself in time and space, it takes all of a university teacher’s tricks of the trade to get thought moving among students. Left to themselves, students would produce next to nothing in Humboldtian self-activity.

5 The U.S. version of the habilitation thesis at its top universities is a six year probationary period during which the probationer must establish him or herself as a recognized scholar through the publication of well-received books or articles in top journals.

6 Max Weber, Science as a Vocation, 1918

7 Gregory Clark, A farewell to alms: a brief economic history of the world, Princeton University Press, 2007


9 In Human Capital: a theoretical and empirical analysis, with special reference to education, 1st edition, 1964


11 China is excluded from the statistics on type of qualification. They return all their tertiary education enrolments as registered for practical and vocation qualifications.

12 This is achieved by granting many more supplementary examinations – the deferral rather than the denial of achievement.

13 My niece, recently a student at the University of Washington, had to do some humanities subjects for her degree in business. She selected ‘Death of the Author’ and ‘Murder’. Whether this was morbidity on her part or on the part of the university is not clear.

14 One wonders whether the culture wars did not supply the imaginative beginnings of Samuel Huntington’s Clash of Civilizations.

15 One only has to visit two points at which Islam and Christianity met – the Iberian peninsula and Istanbul – to see ample evidence of the borrowings by each culture from the other.

16 M Weber, op cit

17 The threat has not entirely evaporated. Consider, for instance, what might happen if the government of Pakistan falls to radical Islamic forces. Or if North Korea implodes.

18 W H Auden, 1 September 1939


20 While data on public expenditure are spotty, Sanyal and Martin report that public expenditure student fell by 80% in Africa between 1980 and 1995, while in the United Kingdom state funding per student fell by 50% during the 1990s. See Bikas C Sanyal and Michaela Martin, Financing higher education: international perspectives, in Higher Education in the World 2006: the financing of universities, Palgrave MacMillan

21 Higher Education Funding Council, Strategic plan 2006-2011.

22 John Immerwahr, Jean Johnson and Paul Gasbarra, The iron triangle: college presidents talk about costs, access and quality, American Council on Education, 2008

23 ‘Every reading is a misreading’ was one of the major slogans of deconstruction.

24 Published by the Belknap Press in 2006
Universities in the 21st Century: Challenges for South Africa

Raphaël de Kadt

Introduction

This presentation began as an essay ‘around’ the themes that it identified in a deeply insightful paper entitled Reflections on ‘University Autonomy in the European Context: Revisiting the Research-Teaching Nexus in a post-Humboldtian Environment by Ulrike Felt.

Her paper identifies a number of key issues that define the changing character of universities in the contemporary European context. These issues – and changes – reflect not only the situation facing European universities. They reflect, too, the general pattern of circumstances and pressures that confront universities globally. The African, and more specifically South African, universities will not be able to avoid the processes, pressures and problems identified.

What is important to note, however, is that although the forces identified are of global reach, the policy responses of, and adaptations made by, university systems have and will vary according to historical circumstances. These include the ‘historical template’ of the university system - reflecting its ‘culture’, financial and funding patterns and organisational forms - and its ambient operating environment. Different systems, and sub-components of those systems, will adapt differently to these forces. Thus the Humboldtian ‘ideal type’ based university will be, and has been, challenged in ways both similar to and different from the
ways in which Newmanian ‘ideal type’ based universities have been and will be. ‘Mixed mode’ systems such as the South African or American (with its - in parts - ‘Deweyan’, ‘learning by doing’ - character) will, again, adapt in their own ways.²

Systems that historically have a strong heritage of private endowment (e.g. the United States ‘Ivy League’/ ‘Ivy Group’ ³ are able to respond differently (and in my view probably better) than those with an historically exclusive or almost exclusive dependence on state funding (e.g. the European and South African systems).⁴ This leads me to argue that the South African universities will need to address the challenges identified by Felt and others - not least in various contributions to this colloquium - by, among other things, the building of endowments (as distinct from dedicated project funding).

The South African system is a hybrid system with both ‘Humboldtian’ and ‘Newmanian’ elements as well as various ‘pragmatic’, ‘vocational’ and ‘instrumental’ features. Suffice it to say that the developmental trajectory of the South African university system over the past decade has largely been in the direction of an increasingly homogeneous system - a point elaborated on by Professor Makgoba in his address - largely as a result of the need to address the consequences of the pernicious forms of diversity and differentiation that characterized the system which evolved during the Apartheid years.⁵ The major South African Universities have largely become - University of KwaZulu Natal, University of Johannesburg and the University of Pretoria are excellent examples of this -‘multiversities’ in Clark Kerr’s famous term.⁶

I have taken the liberty to identify, in my own way, nine principal themes that emerge from the Ulrike Felt document. I will only deal with some of them in this brief presentation. The nine are listed below:

1. The multiplicity of functions
2. The imperatives of ‘managerialism, marketisation and massification’
3. The tension between ‘social’ and ‘scientific/academic’ responsibilities
4. The tension and synergies between teaching and research
5. The precarious ‘identity’ of both the institution and of individual members
6. The fragile funding basis
7. The tension between ‘autonomy’ (implying ‘internal accountability’) and external accountability
8. The need to articulate with regional and international systems, protocols and practices.
9. The situation of PhD students

1. The multiplicity of functions

Universities have always been more diverse in the functions they perform than ‘ideal-type’ models and related popular conceptions suggest.

Typically these functions are identified as: teaching, research, outreach and management.

In my view, this understates the growth of diverse functions and structures. Teaching itself has come to be divided - to use Charles Simkins’ felicitous phrase - into ‘human capital factory’ type operations (mass skills/knowledge transmission) and ‘groves of academe experience’ (participating in a seminar with Ludwig Wittgenstein at Cambridge, or with Anthony Appiah at Princeton comes to mind!) Associated with this are relevant costs, and the problem of optimally allocating resources between these functions. (How much, if at all, should Chemical Engineering 101 cross-subsidize exposure to Wittgenstein’s or to Anthony Appiah’s talent?)

As societies modernize, the differentiation of institutional spheres and functions becomes ever more pronounced. This has, on the surface, an
apparently paradoxical nature: on the one hand these spheres become increasingly ‘autonomous’ and ‘specialized’; on the other they become ever more complexly interdependent with one another. It is this more general, ‘paradoxical’, character of modern societies that has come to be reflected in universities (as well as in other large corporate systems). A good example of this is governance: the requirements of good governance have become, increasingly, the domain of experts and specialists; their expertise is constantly evolving as a domain of technically and legally specialized knowledge which cuts across many different forms of association, ranging from small businesses to universities to NGOs, pension funds and government departments.

One of the requirements of contemporary universities is that they comply with the externally imposed requirements of good governance. This bears on a point that universities now matter in a way that they did not in earlier times and that people do not, any longer ‘trust’ universities to ‘do the right thing’ in their own, autonomous way. This has led to the emergence of a plethora of auditing and monitoring mechanisms to ensure ‘quality control’. And, while this might have resulted, in balance, in an improvement of many teaching and research practices, it could also be argued - as it has been by Onora O’Neill in her Reith Lectures - that these attempts to create ‘abstract systems’ of trust have also had counter-final outcomes. That is, they have often undermined the very trust that they were created to underwrite.

This development has impacted on the texture of everyday academic life as well as on the organisational forms of the university. Its statutes, practices and norms are inflected on by the ‘heteronomously’ given rules of good governance. While this has always been the case, in some measure, it increasingly constrains the freedom of universities to establish their own internal norms and protocols.

The only way in which universities can accommodate this development is to develop their own, specialized ‘organs’ to address the issues. Thus, whether it is governance, quality assurance, research, teaching or
admissions, specialized offices/instruments have to be set up to deal with the plethora of challenges.

One of the complaints that academics - that sometimes real, perhaps sometimes imagined community of scholars - regularly voice, in consequence, is about ‘layers of bureaucracy’. Much of this is unavoidable. The challenge, especially in large universities, is how to render it ‘optimal’ - that is to have as light and cost-effective bureaucracy as circumstances permit and one that minimally affects teaching and research as well as ‘academic freedom’ and university autonomy.

This development, which is global and intimately bound up with societal modernisation (recall Bruno Rizzi’s 1939 phrase ‘Bureaucratisation of the World’) leads directly to ‘managerialism’, one of the aspects dealt with in the next section.

The problem with the multiplication of functions is that it makes the definition and achievement of core goals more difficult. It also makes the harmonisation of the traditional functions (teaching and research) more vexing (research, for example, has become a highly regulated affair, subject to national and international protocols that bear on everything from the ‘standardisation’ of research proposals to ethical regulation). This, in turn, has implication for everything from the way the ‘life of the mind is lived’ to finances. Creativity has become more bound by the requirements of bureaucratic regulation and conformity to protocol. And bureaucratic regulation and protocol enforcement are necessarily costly affairs.

Another problem, especially in highly resource-constrained environments, is that of ‘overload’ and the associated errors, imperfections and disenchantment. It is very difficult - if not impossible - to be simultaneously a leader, manager, teacher, scholar, and researcher where each of these roles is increasingly specialised. What
holds for the European universities and other large ‘state industrial’ universities holds a fortiori for the South African.

2. Managerialism, marketisation and massification

The modern university is subject to the triple pressures of managerialism, market forces and democratisation (‘massification’). That is, access to university education is (at least in normative terms) no longer the exclusive preserve of an established, affluent social elite or class - even as it contributes to the formation of new elites. This has meant, globally and nationally, a huge increase in the number of students.

‘Massification’ has not only been driven by the steady spread of liberal democratic type systems across the globe and the demands by an increasingly informed citizenry to improve its understanding of the world and its ability to participate in the polity and economy. It has also been driven by market forces and the demand for (and national need to supply) ‘human capital’. Globally, the race for economic pre-eminence and for productivity advantages has pressed universities into a kind of service that was not a marked feature of the world that von Humboldt and Cardinal Newman knew. The fact is that technological and scientific progress bears directly on the capacity of countries and regions to compete economically, - a point well borne out in the international literature.

Large-scale ‘human capital factories’ inexorably lead to managerialism; this in turn impacts on the working conditions of academics. The ‘groves of academe’ referred to above do not relate easily to the managerial imperative. They do not flourish in, to deploy and expression coined by the late Ralph Dahrendorf, ‘imperatively coordinated’ organisations. Indeed, their very nature - at once both collegial and idiosyncratic - is based on a resistance to - indeed perhaps incompatibility with - the
‘instrumentalisation’ associated with the managerial order of the ‘human capital factory’.

There is a potential ‘danger to thought’ itself entailed in this instrumentalisation. ‘Socratic’ dialectic is endangered by it. If ‘both genius and madness’ flourish at the ‘creative margins’ of society, and if universities have historically been home to at least one of these (perhaps to both!), then managerialism seriously jeopardizes one of the historically important - if perhaps overly ‘stylized’ - functions of universities.10 This not only has implications for individual scholars and ‘thinkers’ (I make a distinction) but also potentially poses a threat to society and the public sphere. Although many of the most creative modern thinkers largely worked outside of the university system (Marx, Freud, Nietzsche and many, many others come to mind), this ‘protective’ or ‘custodial’ role of universities - alluded to in passing by Ulrike Felt in a reference to Einstein - has had a massively important civilisational impact.

The challenge is: how do universities simultaneously meet the needs of sustained, long-term economic growth (highly institutionalized research and ‘standardized’, quality-assured curricula) and the human need to freely reflect and to give expression to ‘curiosity’ and the ‘desire to understand’? How, too, do they combine the need for mass skills transfer and wide access with the need to secure a ‘safe space’ for ‘intellectual dissidence’ and risk-taking.

One answer, of course, is to differentiate institutions by type (liberal arts colleges, research universities, technikon/polytechnic and vocational universities and community colleges etc). The United States of America’s tertiary system has evolved, in part, in this direction. It is, however, a much more difficult challenge for the large, state-dependent ‘multiversity’. There is the danger that universities, as relatively ‘safe spaces’ for the articulation of independent social criticism, could be significantly jeopardized. Of course, unbridled curiosity and social criticism will not disappear even as, perhaps, we move towards an
increasingly homogeneous global system of norms and values. They will, as activities, simply ‘migrate’ elsewhere.

Finally, these triples forces have implications in two other, related, dimensions. The first, of course, is for the ‘autonomy’ of universities; the second is for the ideal of ‘competitive collegiality’ that is implicit in the Newman model of the university not entirely ill at ease in the Humboldtian.

3. Teaching and research

A feature of the contemporary global research environment is that it emphasises a model of research that has been shaped by the natural science and technology/applied science agendas. Arguably, increased emphasis is given to ‘research programmes’, not least because of the synergies and economies that flow from collaborative work. Indeed, the ‘condition of knowledge’ in the contemporary world has changed: the person with broad, all-round, high-level competence, skills and knowledge may be valued and important, but the drift is in the direction of ever-greater specialisation. The ‘Renaissance man’ - to once again use stylized depictions - has largely been replaced by the ‘research team’.

There are several problems that flow from this. Firstly, as the pressure to produce ‘new’ or technically exploitable knowledge increases, and as this kind of research activity becomes the principal source of reward, recognition and resources, another - historically important - form of research, that is scholarship (literally, to re-search), is devalued. The tendency is for curricula to ‘fragment’ and for knowledge to be generated on a ‘parcellised basis by researchers who are expert in a particular field. This is a consequence of the extension of the Humboldtian ideal into the vast, labyrinthine, contemporary universities. Secondly, there is a tendency for researchers to eschew teaching, or to regard this as ‘secondary’. The ideal of ‘mass-education’ is compromised by this; teaching is a ‘chore’ for some and the temptation to
flee into ‘dedicated’, well-funded research units is strong. This courts the danger that teaching becomes the preserve - especially in the ‘multiversity’ - of an ‘underclass’ of ‘academic proletarians’ who are poorly paid, lowly-esteemed and who - rumour has it - are driven into ‘academic prostitution’ by writing online plagiarised essays for students able to afford a ‘bought’, dot.com assignment!

Thirdly, the ideal of a ‘holistic’ education is potentially compromised. This is especially problematic in a country such as South Africa where pre-university education does not generally provide the level of educational preparation that, say, the German Abitur system or the British A levels system provides. (US universities address this problem with a broad, liberal arts first degree; South African universities do not do so for both affordability and historical reasons).

4. The problematic situation of PhD students

Ulrike Felt’s paper documents at length to the precarious situation of PhD students. Again, the danger is that they can become part of a new ‘academic proletariat’, poorly funded, potentially exploited and holding false hopes and expectations.

It should be pointed out that this is not a new concern. The situation of young academic bearers of ‘science as a calling’ was alluded to in Max Weber’s famous essay, Wissenschaft als Beruf (Science as a Vocation) published in Tübingen in 1922, around the same time as his equally famous essay on Politics as a Vocation. In his essay, Weber outlined the different circumstances that attach to the vocation of science in Germany and the USA, and notes the risk (and the requirement for a ‘plutocratic’ background) that attaches to the career of a young German academic. Weber writes as follows:

Everybody knows that in Germany the career of the young man who is dedicated to science normally begins with the position of
Privatdozent. After having conversed with and received the consent of the respective specialists, he takes up residence on the basis of a book and, usually, a rather formal examination before the faculty of the university. Then he gives a course of lectures without receiving any salary other than the lecture fees of his students. It is up to him to determine, within his *venia legendi*, the topics upon which he lectures... Practically, this contrast means that the career of the academic man in Germany is generally based upon plutocratic prerequisites. For it is extremely hazardous for a young scholar without funds to expose himself to the conditions of the academic career. He must be able to endure this condition for at least a number of years without knowing whether he will have the opportunity to move into a position which pays well enough for maintenance.¹³

I cite this observation because in South Africa, especially, the attractiveness of university employment to talented young people coming from financially stressed and disadvantaged backgrounds will be limited to the extent that career prospects are seen to be uncertain, and where the reward for the risk of such a choice is not offset by reward. Since a key function of universities is to ‘reproduce’ themselves, even in different forms over time, this is critically important. This goes beyond stipends and scholarships: it means that university careers must be seen to be financially competitive with other careers.

5. The tension between ‘autonomy’ (implying ‘internal accountability’) and external accountability and the ‘fragile’ identities of universities and their members

This has long been an issue for universities - even when the ‘boundary conditions’ have been stable, and the boundaries more clearly defined than today. Universities have always been subject to pressures - from the Church, the state and corporations to name only a few. Defending their independence has always been difficult. The ever more complex web of connections between universities, industry, NGOs, government and - increasingly - intergovernmental and regional bodies, makes this
especially challenging. It raises the deeper question of exactly what we mean by a ‘university’. When does one act as a member of the university - that is as someone who ‘professes’ a discipline or is the bearer of a scientific or scholarly vocation - and when as a politician, businessman or corporate functionary. If the university, in Newman’s terms, is a ‘School of Universal Learning’ then it claims obligations and loyalty from its members pursuant to that task. Conflicts of interest become problematic. The nature of the problem is clear when the university is called upon to serve ‘special interests’ (such as those of a particular social constituency, business interest or government but less clear when the core function of teachers and researchers cannot be readily separated from the functions of other instances. This is especially the case where research is as much the preserve of industry, an NGO or government department as it is of a university, or where it is commissioned or done on condition that it serves some end other than the pursuit of ‘Universal Learning’ or the fulfillment of an Aristotelian ‘desire to understand’. This, again, is not something entirely new: in times of war universities’ personnel and resources have been commandeered and seconded and pressed into ‘national service’.

What is arguably new is the extent to which instances outside of universities are the site of original research in both the pure and applied areas of science, as well as sites of higher-level instruction.

What is especially vexing for individual academics is the matter of loyalty. Does the university - in which the sense of ‘community’ has been weakened, have a stronger claim on the loyalty of individuals than do other instances? This matter would have been relatively less problematic fifty years ago.

6. The need to articulate with regional and international systems, protocols and practices.

A ‘new world order’ defined in institutional terms is emerging. Slowly, a global system of legal regulation, involving international agreements and
subtle - and not so subtle - attempts to articulate transnational law enforcement capacities is taking shape.\textsuperscript{15} While much of this is contested (it reflects, arguably, the beginning of the decline of the Westphalian system of sovereign nation states that began in 1648),\textsuperscript{16} and much of it is still embryonic, it bears on many areas of activity. Beginning with the Nuremberg trials and broadly articulated with the growing, multifaceted, ‘human rights movement’, it finds expression in developments such as the ICC, the abrogation of ‘national sovereignty’ as a defence against the charge of committing ‘crimes against humanity’, as well as in many international and regional conventions. This complex system of international and transnational agreements and protocols has come to impact increasingly on university practices. Research ethics has become one such highly regulated field of an international kind. Researchers from the US, for instance, may not do certain kinds of research in South Africa without clearance from recognised South African research ethics committees.

As the globalisation of knowledge production increases, South African universities will need to manage the requirements of participation in this global process. That means that universities will need increasingly to develop specialist units - and are doing so - to ensure compliance with, and constructive contributions to, the development of, the regulatory framework. This articulation applies to more than just the legal and ethical domains. It applies, too, to the ‘standardisation’ of everything from journal publishing practices to research proposal formulation, to the commensurability of the outcomes and content of many study programmes. The competitive global, capitalist market economy demands increasing cross-system ‘fit’ in terms of expected competence - whether in relation to the interpretation and application of regulations or expertise in technology use. The recognition of and respect for intellectual property rights is yet another aspect of this larger, interrelated process. Both the content of what is produced - for example online journal ‘bouquets’ such as ScienceDirect (at a price), the MIT's Open CourseWare material (free) - and the structure of the rules that
define its production and use, are all being ‘abstracted’ from national and local contexts.

Now, while it should be noted that the South African universities system may not be directly subject to the Lisbon and Barcelona processes, and there is not yet regional equivalent to the European initiatives outlined in Felt’s paper, this does not mean that a future regional framework of equivalent scope and ambition might be created. Indeed, if Africa is to emerge as a major regional force in the global economy, developments along such lines will likely be embraced.

7. Some policy issues for South Africa

South Africans cannot escape these processes. This is especially so in light of South Africa’s ‘re-integration’ into the global university system post-1994. The fact that we are a liberal democracy and that we have experienced sustained economic growth has increased the pressure to recast our tertiary education system. As the Chinese proverb has it, ‘what you cannot avoid, welcome!’ But there are limits to what and how one welcomes. We must ‘control’ the welcoming process as best we can.

Below are seven broad, normative proposals:

1. **Financial viability is crucial.** The more financially independent universities are, the better they can manage - on their own terms - the challenges identified above, even as they ‘disintegrate and reinvent themselves’. This means commitment to a long-term process of endowment generation. Endowments must be distinguished from ‘soft money’. Soft money can almost always be got where there is a direct material or societal interest in the potential outcome. Endowments underwrite relative autonomy in perpetuity. They render universities less vulnerable to the vagaries of state funding and promote better long-term operational stability.
They facilitate rational planning. Creating endowments means encouraging a culture of philanthropy.

2. We need to seriously address the **fragmentation of the curriculum**, while at the same time strengthening scientific and technological knowledge and skills. Our graduates generally (in my view) do not enter the global labour markets with the breadth of learning that their top-end US or European counterparts have, nor with the high-powered mathematical and technical skills many of these - and many Asian counterparts - have. Humanities and social science graduates need scientific literacy; science and engineering graduates need exposure to humanities and social science subjects. This enhances the ‘power of judgement’, which is a necessary complement to technical skill. We need also to protect the ‘creative spaces’, which, notwithstanding the major re-configuration of universities that is occurring both globally and nationally, are enormously important. They define the limits of ‘acceptable instrumentalisation’. This, I believe, is where smaller, independent universities such as St Augustine College have a potentially very important role to play.

3. South Africa does not yet have the high pre-tertiary educational ‘base’ that, for instance, Europe has. Thus **we need to be careful not to neglect undergraduate teaching**. Our problem at present is two-fold: to generate sufficient students genuinely able to do high-level postgraduate work that is internationally competitive and to generate the capacity to ‘service’ those who can. The cost burden confronting undergraduate education in South Africa is not to be underestimated in light of the often dismal education that pupils have received at school.

4. **Employment conditions** - a serious problem identified by Felt in the case of Europe - need to be significantly improved across the board. There is a general agreement that, apart from those who have extra-university market capacity, academic staff is
inadequately paid and overburdened. The financial plight of many PhDs referred to in the Felt document extends to the bulk of academics in South African universities. Historically, the South African system used resources in an exceptionally inefficient way. Mergers and rationalisation were meant to at least partially address this legacy. There is an urgent need however to revisit government and private sector funding, not least because South African universities face not only competition from government and the private sector for the best graduates, but also competition from abroad. If the ‘brain drain’ has been a problem for the Netherlands, as has been noted, it is - and will remain - a problem for South Africa.

5. In the South African university, it is probably **undesirable that some academic staff members have exclusively research posts** (with perhaps a smidgeon of postgraduate supervision) while others have vast undergraduate teaching loads. This places inordinate loads on those who teach undergraduate classes and threatens to convert them into an ‘underclass’ who do not develop research profiles, do not get promoted, do not make it to conferences abroad and do not benefit from the rewards of consultancy that full-time researchers do. This does **not** mean that there should not be some division of labour according to preference, demonstrated talent and areas of productivity. There is a strong normative presupposition at many great research universities such as the MIT and Princeton that the greatest scholars and academic leaders teach at least some undergraduate classes. Indeed, the luminaries in the field should ideally ‘induct’ first year students into fields. If Paul Krugman, Lester Thurow and Steven Pinker can give first year courses, then so too can South African professors of note. (One could list almost indefinitely the names of such luminaries teaching undergraduates!)

6. Just as von Humboldt and Newman articulated visions for a ‘reinvented’ 19th century university, we need to contribute to the
articulation of a vision for a reinvented 21st century university - a university of the ‘information age’. In that regard, it will probably be more difficult to craft ‘national’ university cultures and traditions. There are many reasons for this. Much research and learning takes place in a global system of information flows and partnerships. Online material, increasingly, is defining benchmarks in many fields. The most ambitious of all such developments is the MIT’s extraordinary $100 million Open Course Ware project. Almost every teaching programme today can access relevant course content taught at one of the world’s premier (in the top 5-10 on any measure) universities, thereby better to judge its standards. ‘Informal’ sources of information (such as Wikipedia) and online, globally accessible course-management instruments such as Moodle mean that South African universities must re-design themselves knowing these instruments.

7. Differentiation by institution-type: There is a need to differentiate the tertiary education and training system much more than is presently the case. The differentiation that was consolidated under the Apartheid order resulted in massive inefficiencies, injustices and much irrationality. It had the impact of severely damaging what had been a reasonably good (for its time) system, and put in place a system that was not the ‘capstone’ of the education system that ought to have been, but a deadweight arrangement characterized at best by inertia and sub-optimal performance. The response was, in effect, to redress the inequities of the past by greater centralisation and ‘homo-genisation’. This has produced a system that is insufficiently diverse and insufficiently differentiated by role, ‘market niche’ and variety of offerings. We need here to look at the extraordinarily successful system in the USA for ‘guidance’, even if it may not be desirable or feasible to fully emulate or replicate that system. But there certainly is room for a much greater variety of institutions, both public and private - including, especially, non-profit private
providers. An education ‘market’ needs to evolve where this market itself provides arguably the best form of quality assurance.

Notes


2 This ‘ideal type’ categorization is meant only as a heuristic device. It is mean to capture some of the dominant features of the various diverse systems. In reality, all systems – and universities – display mixes of these features. The US system, for instance, has a strongly 'Humboldtian' aspect to its great research universities, a ‘Deweyan’ or pragmatic ‘learning by doing’ influence – as well as Humboldtian influence - in its leading edge technology universities such as the MIT and something of a ‘Newmanian’ character to its liberal arts Universities.

3 The ‘Ivy Group’ includes a few non-traditional Ivy League institutions such as Stanford and the MIT.

4 A 1994 World Bank report suggested that privately endowed university systems had an adaptation advantage.


6 See Jeff Lustig ‘The Mixed Legacy of Clark Kerr: A Personal View’. Lustig writes as follows: His 1963 book, The Uses of the University, explained what it (the multiversity) was. As he saw it, the federal-grant university, the new educational complex that was displacing the old land-grant college, was destined to become the core site for "knowledge production and consumption" in the emerging knowledge-based economy. The new multiversity, as he named the complex, was also being transformed into a knowledge industry. It "and segments of industry are becoming more alike," he explained. As surely as form followed function, that meant the university was also becoming more of a bureaucracy than a community - "a mechanism held together by administrative rules and powered by money" (and, in his most prescient bon mot, united by "a common grievance over parking”.) Jeff Lustig 'The Mixed Legacy of Clark Kerr: A Personal View’


9 See J. Kornai, The Socialist System (1991) on how the collapse of the State Socialist systems was related to a lack of technological innovation; see also the New York Times article which points the emergence of Europe and Asia as potential challengers to the Unites States’ dominance in science and technology – a fact that defines, in large measure, the European policy debates which inform the document we are discussing.

10 See, generally, Michel Foucault’s oeuvre. See also Roger Deacon, Fabricating Foucault: Rationalising the Management of Individuals. Marquette University Press, 2003. See too:


14 See Aristotle’s Metaphysics, Book 1, Ch 1 where he asserts that all human beings have a desire to understand. See, too, Jonathan Lear’s excellent Aristotle: The Desire to Understand, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988
See Anne-Marie Slaughter’s *A New World Order*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2004 on aspects of this.

See Martin van Creveld, *The Rise and Decline of the State*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1999 for the most forceful account of this phenomenon.

What is required of a Presidential State of the Nation address at the dawn of a new political administration? Two elements are important in such an address. First, the President needs to map the agenda of his administration for the next five years. Second, since mapping such an agenda requires making choices and undertaking trade-offs, the President needs to explain the policy choices and the prioritization thereof, and thereafter inspire the nation behind this political agenda. Did Jacob Zuma do this? NO!

Instead he promised everything to everyone. There is not much that I would disagree with in his speech. He gave business what it wanted. He gave labour what they wanted. Students got what they wanted. Middle and upper middle class citizens got what they wanted. But sometimes when we say everything, we land up saying nothing. No choices were made. No trade-offs were undertaken. As a result, I am no closer to understanding how this political administration is different from its predecessor on the basis of this address.
What should the President have said? From the perspective of Higher Education, he should have pinned his mast to the issue of cheaper if not free higher education. This is after all what the Polokwane conference committed him to, and what his Minister of Higher Education, Blade Nzimande, has promised in his term. As Minister Nzimande put it to the University Vice-Chancellors when he met them, ‘it is imperative that poor students should not be denied the opportunity to quality higher education. He also urged Vice Chancellors to make higher education more affordable. But herein lies the dilemma. For every rand universities forsake in student fees, government has to make it up. Otherwise we are likely to go the route of the rest of Africa in the last two decades of the twentieth century, where increased access was not tied to greater resources. The net effect in such a case is not only does one provide free or cheaper higher education, but one also provides a sub-standard higher education for the poor and the working class.

This is what South Africa needs to avoid. How do we bring down the cost of higher education without reducing the operational budget of our universities? Minister Nzimande has recognised that this will not happen immediately and would most probably have to be phased in. He has also suggested that the likely route would be to expand the focus of the National Student Financial Aid System (NSFAS) so that it captures a bigger cache of students. But there is a danger here. Universities in South Africa have differential fees with some almost double the cost of others. If higher education is to be expanded using the NSFAS system, then, the net effect will be that universities will be subsidized at differential levels, with the most well endowed receiving the greatest grants. This obviously would go against the spirit of Minister Nzimande’s agenda. The mechanism for advancing affordable or free higher education must therefore be thought through much more carefully.

The second post school education priority, also identified by Minister Nzimande is the need to expand vocational and artisanal training in South Africa. This is necessary not only for generating the necessary
human resource needs for the economy, but also for creating a more inclusive society through the provisions of skills to millions of black youth thereby enabling them to break their own family and community cycles of poverty and hopelessness. It would involve revitalizing the Further Education and Training (FET) institutions and the college sector, which are in an abysmal state at the moment. Again, this is going to require a significant investment of resources. As importantly, it requires addressing the racial perceptions that exist about diplomas and degrees in South Africa. Historically, under apartheid vocational training was reserved for the working class. Traditional academic training was seen to be the preserve of the middle classes, particularly, but not only, in the white community. This class and racial hangover still defines popular perceptions with diplomas being perceived as second class qualifications. So long as this perception is not addressed, South Africa is going to struggle to get its vocational training to take off with all the obvious adverse consequences for its economic development.

The final challenge that urgently needs to be prioritized is the enhancement of South Africa’s research and innovation profile. This is not required for some abstract academic need. It is absolutely essential for the country’s economic development. In this knowledge-based global economy, high level human resource capacities, research abilities and innovation is necessary for economies to retain their competitiveness. And despite some attempts in this direction, it is not hard to come to the conclusion that South Africa is lagging behind its competitors if one were to simply cast a cursory glance at the investments being directed to research, innovation and higher education in China, India and Brazil. In all these cases new universities are being built and enormous investments are being made in academic appointments. To take one example, on average, Brazil’s leading universities have twice the number of permanent academic appointments that South Africa’s institutions have for the same number of students. One consequence of this better endowment of staff is that Brazil’s higher education system produces 10 000 doctoral graduates a year compared to South Africa’s 1 500. South Africa’s dismal number of
doctoral graduates significantly inhibits its innovation ambitions, thereby undermining its economic and developmental potential.

Compounding the problem is that most of the research funding in South Africa is targeted in specific areas largely defined by state bureaucrats on the basis of what they perceive as important for economic and social development. The result is that very few resources are directed to generic research, undermining the establishment of a broad base research foundation from which an innovation profile can emerge. The problem becomes even bigger if one recognizes that a significant amount of research resources are really spent on institutional bureaucracies themselves. This was really striking at a recent academic conference in Europe where South Africa had more institutional bureaucrats (research managers, program officers) from the Department of Science & Technology (DST) and the Science Councils than actual academics and researchers. Finally, unlike countries like France which have a seamless flow between their Science Councils and universities, in South Africa these institutions report to different departments: Science Councils to DST, and the universities to the Department of Education. Research resources are therefore not expended optimally, and research decisions not made efficiently, because of the competing bureaucratic claims and agendas that emanate from this institutional arrangement. Clearly, if we are to address the science and technology challenge South Africa confronts, not only is much more significant resources required, but a complete overhaul of the management of our scientific infrastructure is also warranted.

Do I expect President Zuma to explain the details of these dilemmas in his State of the Nation address? Obviously not! After all there are as many dilemmas in other priority areas. But I would have expected the President to recognize these issues, and in particular the fact that major investment is going to be required to address them, and as a result trade-offs between competing priorities will have to made. The President should have also been urging the business sector to recognize the necessity of these needs and its own obligations in this regard. Is this not
one of the fundamental purposes of the state? Individual business leaders, driven solely by shareholder value, sometimes do not see the bigger picture. It is the responsibility of the state bureaucracy to recognize and create the enabling environment for long term economic development. Zuma should have indicated the necessity of high level human resource skills, research and development for long term economic development, and made the case for increased investment in these areas. He should have also challenged the business community and other more privileged stakeholders to partner the state in addressing some of these needs.

In short, the President should have provided leadership, challenged stakeholders and citizens, and urged them to rally behind a collective national agenda. He should have inspired the nation. Instead he merely parroted what its most important stakeholders wanted to hear.
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Instructions to Contributors

EDITORIAL POLICY
St Augustine Papers is the journal of St Augustine College of South Africa and is published twice annually. It publishes scholarly, refereed articles and book reviews in all the fields in which academic programmes are offered at the College. Publishing decisions are made by the Editorial Committee.

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Articles may be around 6000 words in length and should be an original contribution. Two hard copies of each manuscript should be submitted as well as a disk containing the article using software that is compatible with MS Word. Manuscripts should be typed, double-spaced and on one side of standard A4 paper. The name, address, telephone number(s) and e-mail address of the author should be typed on a separate sheet. The first page of the manuscript should carry the proposed title and author’s name with highest degree. Under the name should appear an identification line, giving title and position held, the institution and its location. A brief abstract (no more than 150 words) should follow the author identification data.

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The Harvard method should be used. All references should be specified in parentheses in the text (and in the text of notes) by surname(s) of the author(s), the year of the publication and page number(s), for example (Dworkin 1986:45-52). The complete citation should appear at the end of the manuscript (after the notes, if any) under the caption ‘References’. Such citations should be listed alphabetically by surname of author; for authors cited more than once, by year of publication, with the most recent references first. Please note the use of capital letters, punctuation marks and italics in the following examples:


NOTES
Notes should be numbered serially throughout the text by superscript numbers (without parentheses) to the right of any punctuation marks. The notes themselves should appear at the end of the manuscript but before the references, under the caption ‘Notes’.
The idea of founding a Catholic university in South Africa was first mooted in 1993 by a group of academics, clergy and business people. It culminated in the establishment of St Augustine College of South Africa in July 1999, when it was registered by the Minister of Education as a private higher education institution and started teaching students registered for the degree of Master of Philosophy and Doctor of Philosophy.

It is situated in Victory Park, Johannesburg and operates as a university offering values-based education to students of any faith or denomination, to develop leaders in Africa for Africa.

The name 'St Augustine' was chosen in order to indicate the African identity of the College since St Augustine of Hippo (354-430 A.D.) was one of the first great Christian scholars of Africa.

As a Catholic educational institution, St Augustine College is committed to making moral values the foundation and inspiration for all its teaching and research. In this way it offers a new and unique contribution to education, much needed in our South African society.

It aims to be a community that studies and teaches disciplines that are necessary for the true human development and flourishing of individuals and society in South Africa. The College's engagement with questions of values is in no sense sectarian or dogmatic but is both critical and creative. It will explore the African contribution to Christian thought and vice versa. Ethical values will underpin all its educational programmes in order to produce leaders who remain sensitive to current moral issues.

The college is committed to academic freedom, to uncompromisingly high standards and to ensuring that its graduates are recognised and valued anywhere in the world. Through the international network of Catholic universities and the rich tradition of Catholic tertiary education, St Augustine College has access to a wide pool of eminent academics, both locally and abroad, and wishes to share these riches for the common good of South Africa.