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# Social Problems in National Perspective

**Background reading by**
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The ISA
Handbook of

# Diverse Sociological
# Traditions

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# 19

# Dealing With Domination, Division and Diversity: The Forging of a National Sociological Tradition in South Africa[1]

Tina Uys

## INTRODUCTION

Sociopolitical processes within South African society since the early twentieth century shaped the trajectory of the institutionalization of South African sociology. In particular, domina-tion, division and diversity are key issues when considering the development of South African sociology. This paper assesses the impact of these issues on the emergence of a national sociological tradition in South Africa.

Nikolai Genov distinguishes between a 'strong' and a 'weak' notion of a national soci-ological tradition (1989: 16). He describes a 'strong' tradition as 'designating an outstand-ing contribution to the development of world sociology' and a 'weak' notion as representing the specific constellation of 'the intellectual and institutional development in a given national social and cultural context'. The inward orientation of South African sociol-ogy suggests that a 'weak' notion is more appropriate here. Two kinds of social rela-tions are explored in this context, namely those focusing on the production and transfer of sociological knowledge from generation to generation and second, those related to the organization of scientific sociological activi-ties (Genov, 1989: 2).

The South African national tradition will be considered in terms of three dimensions that provide useful ways to examine the social relations and social conditions that gave rise to a particular national formation of these social relations. First, the establish-ment of a tradition of scholarship will be explored by analysing social relationships as these are reflected in academic sociology at

the universities. Second, the establishment of a tradition of sociological organization and collegial relationships will be considered. Beyond these two dimensions, a third dimension is also crucial in the South African context and that is the development of a tradition of public engagement. In particular, social relations with the state, the private sector and civil society will be considered. It is argued that from its earliest years the focal point of South African sociology was the promotion of public sociology, albeit in different incarnations.

## THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A TRADITION OF SCHOLARSHIP

The earliest roots of sociology as a discipline can be traced back to 1903 with the founding of The Association for the Advancement of Science in South Africa. This association held annual congresses and published *The South African Journal of Science*, which provided a platform for discussion of sociological themes, thereby bringing the discipline to the attention of the scientific community. Periodically calls were made for establishing sociology at university level (Ally et al., 2003: 73; Groenewald, 1984: 156).

The University of South Africa was the first to develop sociology as a discipline in its own right in South Africa, when it introduced sociology as a one-credit course in 1919 (Groenewald, 1984: 157–9). The initial offering of sociology as a service course at various universities was soon replaced by the establishment of departments of sociology under various names and (at least initially) in combination with other disciplines.

During the 1930s and 1940s sociology as a subject of teaching was institutionalized at universities in South Africa. The first department of sociology and social work was established at the University of Stellenbosch in 1933, followed by the University of Pretoria in 1934, the University of Cape Town in 1936 and the University of the Witwatersrand

in Johannesburg in 1937 (Groenewald, 1984: 401–2; Pollak, 1968: 14–15). By the middle of the twentieth century South African sociology was firmly entrenched at university level with 'twice as many sociology departments as universities in England' (Higgins, 1974: 9).

Since its inception, South African sociological thought has displayed a strong focus on the social problems of the day. It could be argued that South African sociology has cultivated a tradition of what Burawoy (2004) calls public sociology, through acting in the interests of civil society, broadly defined. This is demonstrated by the initial focus of sociological research being mainly on poverty, development issues and race relations, with an eventual shift to other social problems such as 'prostitution, alcoholism and crime' (Pauw, 1958: 1095; Peterson, 1966: 35). For instance, the problems experienced by the 'poor whites', that had its roots in the proletarianization of the Afrikaner group exacerbated by the devastation caused by the burning down of farms and the placing of a substantial part of the civilian population (black and white) in concentration camps during the Anglo-Boer War of 1899–1902 (Terreblanche, 2002: 237, n. 42: 268, 298). Later, the war figured prominently in the consciousness of academics lobbying for the establishment of sociology as a discipline (Groenewald, 1984: 164). Many Afrikaans-speaking whites (Afrikaners or Boers) left their farms to seek employment in the cities. This was aggravated by the extended agricultural depression and widespread unemployment among skilled artisans in South Africa following the First World War (Peterson, 1966: 34–5). Pauw considers the report of the Carnegie Commission on the Poor White Question, published in 1932, to be 'the first important stimulus to the development of sociology in South Africa' (1958: 1095).[2] Groenewald demonstrates that the Carnegie investigation recognized the importance of including a component of sociological investigation from the outset, which contributed to a growing awareness of the value of sociological insights and research (1984: 411–2).

Four main figures influenced the institutionalization of sociology in South Africa. All four concentrated their sociological insights on addressing pressing societal problems, the most important being poverty, while using different approaches. The first professor of sociology was Hendrik Verwoerd, appointed in 1932 at the University of Stellenbosch. Verwoerd introduced a welfare sociology with a focus on reform through social work He had no formal training in sociology and his background as a psychologist led him to seek solutions to problems of poverty in an analysis of individual behaviour (Miller, 1993: 640–1). His seminal role in the development and legitimization of the ideology of apartheid as editor of *Die Transvaler* from 1937, and especially after he entered politics in 1948, is often attributed to his 'sociological background' (Lever, 1981: 250). However, Roberta Miller demonstrates convincingly that 'the man who was chief editor of *Die Transvaler* in the late 1930s held very different views from the man who worked so effectively as an academic psychologist and sociologist and as a social welfare activist earlier in the decade' (1993: 652).

In 1935 Edward Batson was appointed to the social science Chair at the University of Cape Town. He had received his training in economics at the London School of Economics. Batson addressed poverty issues through the empirical study of social economy with a strong emphasis on the structural causes of poverty, its social consequences and debated the possibilities of societal reform (Groenewald, 1984: 325–31, 337–8). By conducting the first all-encompassing social survey of Cape Town using sampling theory and the poverty datum line, Batson 'highlighted sociology's role as the discipline that would provide the tools to identify areas needing social relief, and to provide such welfare' (Ally et al., 2003: 79).

Geoffrey Cronjé was the only one of the four founders of South African sociology who had a doctorate in sociology (from the University of Amsterdam). He became the first professor of sociology at the University

of Pretoria in 1937. Cronjé focused mainly on white poverty through an emphasis on social pathology and cultural sociology and conceptualized South Africa as consisting of separate racial communities (Groenewald, 1984: 289, 336). His strong support for and legitimization of apartheid policies through academic publications earned him the title 'the mind of apartheid' (Coetzee, 1991).[3]

The first offerings of sociology at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg coincided with the appointment of Professor J.L. Gray as the first head and professor of the newly-established department of social studies in 1937. Gray considered race relations and the living conditions of black people to be the most urgent societal problem and emphasized the necessity of using a comparative sociology to study inequality in terms of wealth and levels of development between black and white (Groenewald, 1984: 283–4, 336–8; Hare and Savage, 1979: 344).

From the 1940s the initial interest in the poor white problem started to fade, and more attention was given to issues related to the black population. Hare and Savage identified two streams:

> One was devoted to the examination of social problems within the black community, such as poverty, the lack of housing, and family pathologies; it embodied the techniques and assumptions first found in the study of 'white' problems. The other stream was devoted to the study of race relations, particularly at the attitudinal level.
>
> (1979: 344–5).

A trend towards specialization also developed during the 1950s, particularly with regard to urban sociology, family sociology and criminology, demographic studies, sociology of medicine and of education, and industrial sociology (Hare and Savage, 1979: 345; Pauw, 1958: 1096). Furthermore, Pauw emphasized interdisciplinary research and teaching, for example in the case of the training of social researchers at the University of Natal (1958: 1097).

The early establishment of sociology coincided with the increasing formalization, expansion and bureaucratization of policies and

practices of racial segregation or apartheid, including an increasingly comprehensive system of racist legislation especially after the National Party victory in 1948 (Terreblanche, 2002: 297–306). Apartheid was not a new invention of the twentieth century but built on segregationist policies which had been introduced progressively since the advent of colonialism. What apartheid did was to consolidate and elaborate an overarching framework aimed at ultimately achieving complete separation of the various 'population' groups into separate socioeconomic units.

As part of this process the Extension of University Education Act of 1959 introduced separate universities for the various ethnic groups in South Africa and prevented black students from registering at 'white' universities without permission from the relevant cabinet minister (Hare and Savage, 1979: 331). This led to the broadening of the teaching of sociology through the introduction of sociology courses at the so-called ethnic universities.

The latter piece of legislation especially, exacerbated the cleavages[4] already existing between the Afrikaans[5] and English-medium universities. The Afrikaans universities justified this legislation as a means of providing to the black people of South Africa the same opportunity to have their own universities 'for the full maturation of a group culture and for helping the group to attain a better life' (Viljoen, 1977: 184). The two 'open' English universities (Witwatersrand and Cape Town) saw the legislation as an infringement of their academic freedom and continued to allow access to black students without applying for the permit required by the legislation.[6]

By the mid-1980s the discipline of sociology was firmly established at university level, with twenty South African universities offering teaching of sociology. Unfortunately, the divisions engendered by the apartheid historical forces were also reflected in higher education. The linguistic and racial divisions in particular had led to the development of

three cleavages within university education in South Africa:

(i)  a grouping of the five Afrikaans-medium white universities (to which the dual medium universities of the University of Port Elizabeth and the University of South Africa (Unisa) were also aligned), mostly conservative and supportive of the apartheid government, if not openly, at least by omission;

(ii)  a second grouping consisting of the four English-medium white universities, with a staunch anti-government stance and who considered themselves to be 'liberal' institutions, aspiring to strong international links;

(iii)  a third grouping combining the nine black universities created by the apartheid state for instrumental and political reasons through providing training to black people in areas considered useful to the apartheid state and important for the 'maintenance of the overall apartheid socio-political agenda' (Bunting, 2002: 74).

## A TRADITION OF ORGANIZATIONAL AND COLLEGIAL RELATIONSHIPS

During the early years of its establishment a distinction could be made between sociology as practised by the Afrikaans and English language[7] universities, with the former following the strong philosophical approach of the Dutch and German universities where their founders had studied, and the latter displaying the more empirical emphasis of universities in England such as the London School of Economics. This distinction was, however, soon erased by the strong influence of American sociology, which led to a general emphasis on empirical research and the use of quantitative techniques (Pauw, 1958: 1095–6). The major theoretical influence of structural functionalism on South African sociology evident during this time continued well into the 1960s (Lever, 1981: 255). As late as 1976 Marshall Murphree, then President of the Association for Sociology in South Africa (ASSA), identified a cognitive conservatism

at ASSA's conferences, especially in its focus on the structural–functionalist paradigm (Hare and Savage, 1979: 343).

During the late 1960s South African sociology entered a phase of increasing division and internal isolation. This is exemplified by the establishment of two separate professional associations for sociology with limited overlap in their membership or activities. These two were ASSA and South African Sociological Association (SASOV). The majority of members of ASSA were associated with the English-speaking campuses, and the support base of SASOV drawn largely from the Afrikaans campuses. There was increasing polarization between SASOV and ASSA that corresponded to a similar divide between Afrikaans and English-medium universities. However, it should be kept in mind that SASOV and ASSA also had some overlapping memberships.

The establishment of SASOV, the first sociological association, was characterized by internal strife with the three members of the committee (Edward Batson from the University of Cape Town, S.P. Cilliers from Stellenbosch and O.J.M. Wagner from the Witwatersrand), who drafted its constitution, withdrawing from the organization before its first congress in 1968 in Bloemfontein. The reason for their withdrawal was related to the inclusion of a clause restricting membership of the organization to whites only. Although some of the members of the new association seemed to support the clause to avoid rifts with the more conservatively-inclined members, the reluctance of many Afrikaner academics to challenge the parameters of operation set by the state created divisions in the South African sociological community that still bedevilled relationships even after the union of the two associations more than two decades later. Frans Maritz of the University of South Africa proposed the scrapping of the racial clause at a congress of SASOV in January 1976. When it was rejected he and three other members walked out. Although SASOV decided to drop the offending clause

a year later, it was too late to prevent an increasing estrangement from developing between the Afrikaans- and English-language campuses (Grundlingh, 1994: 56–7).

ASSA was formed in June 1970 in Mozambique. It was not, as is generally believed today, formed in opposition to SASOV, but was aimed at providing an opportunity for closer contact for social scientists in the Southern African region and was generally in line with the government of the time's emphasis on *détente* (Grundlingh, 1994: 57). It was also not an exclusive initiative by the English universities, as eleven of the nineteen South African sociologists attending that first meeting were from Afrikaans institutions (Hindson, 1989: 70). Its first president was S.P. Cilliers of Stellenbosch University. By the late 1970s and especially in the 1980s, however, ASSA had developed a 'clearly defined oppositional identity' and participation by members from the Afrikaans universities had begun to decline (Grundlingh, 1994: 59).

In an analysis of the state of sociology in South Africa, Kobus Oosthuizen, an Afrikaans-speaking sociologist from the University of Pretoria, argued that SASOV could not lay claim to being a national organization as its support base was restricted to a segment of the Afrikaans-speaking sociological community. He described the sociology practised by this segment as conservative and 'scientific–sociological': 'the sociology practised by SASOV sociologists was generally empirical, 'value-free' and structural–functional' (1981: 35) (own translation).

In contrast, Oosthuizen argued, ASSA had gradually become more radical in its approach (1981: 33–6). Its younger members especially were displaying a tendency towards what he called an 'ideological sociology', with an emphasis on promoting revolutionary change to the existing political and social order. Although Oosthuizen's views were robustly critiqued (Joubert, 1981; Jubber, 1981), there seemed to be general agreement that there were 'serious Afrikaans–English rifts in the

sociology establishment' (Joubert, 1981: 73). This was reflected in the ongoing support for structural–functionalism and quantitative methods by the Afrikaans universities, while Marxism and qualitative and critical methods gained a foothold at the English universities (Jubber, 1983: 54). According to Webster (1985: 45) the favourable reception of Marxism during this time was a response to the relentless accusations by the Black Consciousness Movement from the late sixties to the impotence of liberal institutions in effecting change in South Africa. White academics, therefore, saw Marxism as 'an intellectually coherent political alternative to Black Consciousness'.

Rifts were also apparent in the relations between the white universities and the so-called 'tribal' or 'ethnic' universities. The white English universities especially tended to refer disparagingly to these universities as 'bush colleges', staffed by the 'most reactionary products of the established Afrikaans-medium universities' (Balintulo, 1981: 149). Hare and Savage state bluntly that '[a] substantial number of these [white] staff have low qualifications and would find it difficult to obtain an equivalent post in a 'white' university' (1979: 332). As creations of the apartheid government they were viewed as instruments in the promotion of apartheid policy aimed at providing an education to black students that would 'systematically but subtly . . . indoctrinate them in their own inferiority' and also fragment and 'weaken their collective resistance' (Balintulo, 1981: 147). These perceptions meant that the staff of black institutions (black as well as white) largely found themselves on the fringes of both SASOV and ASSA.

In his presidential address to ASSA in 1984, Eddie Webster (1985) called for a review of the organization's negative attitude towards members who worked in the 'ethnic' universities. Webster supported the Vilikazi brothers' appeal to white liberal scholars to become involved in teaching at the black universities and to refrain from the 'contempt that liberal intellectuals have for what are contemptuously called "bush universities"' (in Webster, 1985: 47).

During the 1980s, the international academic community introduced boycotts, which meant that the vast majority of South African academics were cut off from international networks and were prevented from attending international conferences. International isolation reduced the influence of western sociology somewhat, although South African sociology was still largely exposed to the English world and to a lesser extent to Dutch and German sociology.

## A TRADITION OF PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

From its earliest origins South African sociology has been characterized by a strong tradition of public engagement in terms of its involvement with the state, the private sector and civil society, the first being the Carnegie Commission study of White Poverty. It demonstrated the important role that social science could play in assisting the state with policy research (Cloete and Muller, 1991: 145). This orientation led the state and universities to appoint heads of sociology departments as members of commissions of enquiry (Pauw, 1958: 1098).

Some sociologists from the Afrikaans-medium universities aligned themselves strongly with the apartheid government focusing on the 'maintenance, elaboration, and justification of apartheid' (Jansen, 1991: 3). The prime example is of Geoffrey Cronjé of the University of Pretoria who authored such publications as *Regverdige Rasse-apartheid* (1947) ('just racial apartheid').[8]

From the 1960s an 'intellectual and political fissure' opened up between the largely liberal English universities and 'their more conservative Afrikaner counterparts' (Jansen, 1991: 19). One of the most blatant examples of collusion between Afrikaans sociology and the apartheid state to subvert sociological research was exposed in 1977 when

it was revealed that Nic Rhoodie, head of a Pretoria University institute, had received research funding through one of the secret projects of the South African Department of Information, aimed at promoting the public image of the apartheid government (Savage, 1981: 52). While Afrikaans universities were increasingly seen as providing the 'intellectual scaffolding for the justification, pursuit and extension of apartheid policies', the English universities were in the ambiguous position of trying to sustain a critical liberal tradition of research on apartheid, without compromising the advantages of being members of the South African racial 'core', in particular their increasingly strong alliance with big capital in the form of research funding from companies such as Anglo-American (Jansen, 1991: 24–25).

During the 1970s and 1980s, sociologists at the English universities were either disengaged from or actively resisted involvement with the apartheid state. They did not apply for research funds from the Human Sciences Research Council, the nodal agency that allocated funds for academic research in the social sciences. In some instances they also refused to submit articles to so-called 'accredited' journals, for which the state was awarding subsidies to the universities as a 'production reward' system (Cloete and Muller, 1991: 148).

There is an orthodox position that presents South African sociology as divided into two traditions, the one a critical Marxist tradition linked to the liberation movement with a research tradition steeped in historical and qualitative approaches, primarily at the English-medium universities. The other is a conservative, functionalist positivism linked to the apartheid state, with a quantitative research tradition, primarily at Afrikaans-medium universities. While containing some elements of truth, such an account is reductionist and ahistorical, and fails to reflect and to acknowledge the complex array of traditions and institutional formations in which an emerging post-apartheid sociology of liberation and reconstruction is grounded.

For instance, in 1961 S.P. Cilliers was purged from the South African Bureau of Race Relations (SABRA)[9] when a committee that he chaired suggested radical changes to government policy with regard to the so-called 'Cape Coloured'[10] (Adam, 1981: 119). Cilliers was a Parsonian in his sociological perspective and was instrumental in establishing structural–functionalism as the dominant paradigm in South African sociology during the 1960s and 1970s. However, his critical stance towards apartheid and his promotion of a wider South African nationalism 'limited the possibility of applying this model in the service of a narrow Afrikaner nationalism' (Groenewald, 1992: 224).

A number of Afrikaans sociologists were prepared to leave the fold of Afrikaans nationalism and suffer the consequences. Two sociologists from the UNISA in Pretoria, Cornie Alant and Frans Maritz, played leading roles in the formulation of the '29-declaration' issued by twenty-nine Transvaal Afrikaans academics in 1971 in which they called for the integration of coloured people. A similar declaration by one hundred and two Afrikaans academics, including S.P. Cilliers, followed later in the year (Roode, 1972: 11). In 1973, Cornie Alant helped to establish the Verligte Aksie, an organization aimed at providing a non-partisan platform for mobilizing enlightened opinion recognizing the common destiny and entitlement to human dignity of all people in South Africa (Van Schoor, 1973).

From the late 1960s and early 1970s the black universities actively started challenging the apartheid state through their alignment with the Black Consciousness Movement. Despite sporadic incidents of unrest, the institutionalized repression unleashed by the state on these campuses ensured that they remained marginalized with regard to the production and transfer of knowledge. The sacking and deportation of Herbert Vilikazi, the only explicitly Marxist sociologist based on a black campus, during unrest in 1984 at the University of Transkei[11] demonstrated the stranglehold of the state on these campuses

at the time (Balintulo, 1981: 152; Jansen, 1991: 25).

In the 1970s and 1980s the state imposed various restraints on researchers in the social sciences. This included the banning of publications considered subversive, the banning of sociologist teachers such as Fatima Meer and Jack Simons, restrictions on access to places and people and the unstated but nonetheless clear indications that certain research topics were taboo (Hare and Savage, 1979: 347–9). In the light of these impediments, it was perhaps not surprising that the members of SASOV withdrew 'themselves in their departmental ivory towers and . . . left it to others to determine the socio-political developments in South Africa' (Oosthuizen, 1981: 35; own translation).

Oosthuizen (1981: 36) was equally dismissive of the impotence of the radical views espoused on some English campuses. He believed that the ivory tower withdrawal from engagement with government on the part of SASOV members and the contemptuous rejection of government policies by ASSA members meant that sociology played only a marginal role in influencing the direction of sociopolitical developments.

Burawoy (2004: 22) takes a different view. He identifies the 1980s as the time, when public sociology flourished, especially in the English departments of sociology, with a close connection between sociology and anti-apartheid struggles and strong links with the labour movement as well as very diverse civic organizations. During this time theorizing of the relationship between sociology and social movements took place.

It could be argued that South African sociology has, since its infancy, focused on strengthening the agencies of civil society. Jackie Cock argues in the case of consultancy work, 'the "client" could be *the vulnerable, the dispossessed, and the marginalised,* who need the expert knowledge of policy sociology to help devise solutions and formulate demands that meet their needs' (Cock, 2006: 305).

## POST-APARTHEID SOCIOLOGY: A SOCIOLOGY OF RECONSTRUCTION?

Higher education in general and South African sociology in particular has not escaped the contradictions of transition: an attempt to de-racialize and democratize South African society by a government advancing an aggressive market-driven programme of economic reforms. The release of Nelson Mandela and the unbanning of the African National Congress and the South African Communist Party at the beginning of 1990 paved the way for the reintegration of South Africa into the international community. The International Sociological Association (ISA) was not prepared to approve collective membership for two associations for South Africa. This facilitated discussions between the two organizations with regard to a possible merger, which came to fruition with the establishment of the South African Sociological Association (SASA) in 1993 (James, 1993: 115). The new association seems to be overcoming the divisions of the past with a representative spread of office bearers and locations for conferences across the spectrum of historically Afrikaans, English and black universities. However, its gender equity record still has a long way to go. So far, the three South African sociological associations have each only had one female president, Anna Steyn (SASOV), Fatima Meer (ASSA) and Tina Uys (SASA).

Although the merger between SASOV and ASSA in 1993 to form the new SASA was long overdue, it did not immediately serve to strengthen sociology in South Africa. The increased global access available to South African sociologists meant that we were no longer dependent on local organizations or journals for the expression of our scholarship. One clear indication of this trend is the fact that in 2007, the South African membership of the ISA was more than double the total membership of SASA.

The confidence and optimism with which South African sociologists, in particular from

the English universities, greeted the new South Africa soon proved to be misplaced. The new democratic government does not seem to show appreciation or recognition of the value that the social sciences, in general, and sociology, in particular, can add to solving the problems South Africa faces in dealing with the apartheid legacy. Like many other governments, they do not necessarily want citizens who 'think critically, . . . transcend local loyalties and . . . become better citizens of the world' (Vale, 2006). Vale's argument that the South African workplace increasingly wants graduates with 'the ability to resolve social puzzles, how to argue, and the ability to express themselves in an articulate and even-handed fashion' seems to escape our new government. In July 2007 Minister Naledi Pandor announced the target set by the Department of Education for students in the humanities and social sciences nationally, which meant a reduction in enrolment from over 500,000 to fewer than 200,000 (Govender, 2007).

Higher education in South Africa has become increasingly hostile to the development of the human sciences. The growing emphasis on the commercialization of knowledge production and transfer, accompanied by the displacement of Marxism and the discomfort of dealing with a government still anchored in the revolutionary activities of its recent past has led many to display 'the marks of a fatigue and exhaustion' (Sitas, 1997: 12). Both Ari Sitas (1997) and Fred Hendricks (2006), past presidents of SASA, lament the decline of the initial vibrancy of sociology during the post-apartheid period. Ironically, Hendricks argued that South African sociology was in decline at precisely the time when it was hosting the ISA World Congress, the first time this event took place in the African continent.

Ari Sitas (2006: 371) identifies three major tasks for South African sociology: the promotion of African continental interactions through welcoming students from the rest of Africa to enhance a project of self-discovery; the exploitation of the conduciveness of South Africa's 'social laboratory' to develop an understanding of global racism in all its complexity; and the development of indigenous and endogenous knowledge bases focused on exploring 'inequality, interconnectedness, organization and social evolution'. This is in line with South African sociology's enduring tradition of public engagement.

Building on its strengths in the areas of poverty, labour studies, social movements and the heritage of Harold Wolpe in theorizing the race–class debate,[12] South African sociology is particularly well placed in leading the way towards establishing what John Rex calls 'a sociology of liberation and reconstruction'. This emerging national tradition should be nurtured, not by indulging in abstract, esoteric theorizing, but in focusing on what South African sociology does best: the utilization and application of sociological knowledge, based on empirical investigation, in the service of making the world a better place for all. Keeping the lessons of the past in mind, the challenge to South African sociology will be not to 'mindlessly protect the new order, but to relentlessly interrogate it, giving power no place to hide' (Jansen, 1991: 11).

## NOTES

1. I would like to thank Andries Bezuidenhout and Irma du Plessis from the University of the Witwatersrand and Charles Puttergill from the University of Pretoria for their valuable comments on this paper.

2. Cilliers (Grundlingh, 1994: 52) acknowledges its influence but does not consider it to be critical, while Peterson argues that the inclusion of sociology in university curricula was an indigenous development flowing from 'the insistence of local laymen who needed aid in solving several pressing social problems' (1966: 3).

3. There is a tendency in later writing to exaggerate the influence of Cronjé and Verwoerd on Afrikaans sociology during these early years. Ally et al. (2003: 76) states that they 'dominated Afrikaans sociology between 1920 and 1950'. Apart from the fact that Verwoerd only became professor of sociology in 1932 and Cronjé only in 1937, Verwoerd also left academia at the end of 1936 to become editor of *Die Transvaler.*

4. See Welsh and Savage (1977) for the origins and unfolding of these cleavages.

5. The nine South African universities at this stage were divided into four Afrikaans universities (Pretoria, Stellenbosch, Orange Free State and Potchefstroom), four English (Cape Town, Witwatersrand, Rhodes and Natal) and one bilingual (University of South Africa), which is a distance education institution. Although the University of Fort Hare was established as the South African Native College in 1916, it was only declared an institution for higher education in 1923 and students were awarded University of South Africa degrees until 1970. It only started teaching sociology in 1962 (Pollak, 1968: 14).

6. This access was for academic purposes only. See Welsh and Savage (1977: 138–40) for a discussion on the limited nature of the inclusion of black students at the open universities.

7. The third cleavage identified earlier only developed during the 1960s with the introduction of the ethnic universities.

8. See J.M. Coetzee (1991) for an analysis of the four main publications through which Cronjé attempted to provide a sociological justification for apartheid.

9. SABRA, a think tank aimed at promoting apartheid policy through scientific research, was formed in 1948 in opposition to the more liberal South African Institute of Race Relations (Groenewald, 1984: 377).

10. The designations used for racial categories remain a contentious issue requiring clarification even in post-apartheid South Africa. In general in this article the term 'black people' is used in line with the approach of the South African Employment Equity Act to refer jointly to Coloureds, Indians and Africans. The latter category is however also problematic as it seems to imply that Coloureds, Indians and whites are precluded from being African. Therefore this category is referred to as 'black African'.

11. Although the Transkei was nominally an independent university at this time, it could be argued that it was the lackey of the apartheid state.

12. See Jubber (2007) and Webster (2002) for an overview on some recent research and publications produced by South African sociology.

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