

RHODES UNIVERSITY
Where leaders learn

The Rhodes University Community Newsletter

Rhodos

Staff Edition

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Rhodos Editorial team
would like to express
their gratitude to
everyone who supplied
us with pictures.

Newly launched equipment
Time-of-Flight-Secondary-Ion-
Mass-Spectrometer (TOF-SIMS)

Rhodes students privileged to have world class nanotechnology equipment

Having the newly launched Time-Of-Flight-Secondary-Ion-Mass-Spectrometer (TOF-SIMS) located just down the hallway from them in Rhodes University's Chemistry Department makes all the difference to postgraduate students Muthumuni Managa, Gugu Kubheka and Phindile Khoza.



Ms Muthumuni Managa

Current studies: Second year Master's in Chemistry - Conjugates of size controlled platinum nanoparticles with tetra - (4-carboxyphenyl) gallium porphyrin and their use in photodynamic antimicrobial chemotherapy.

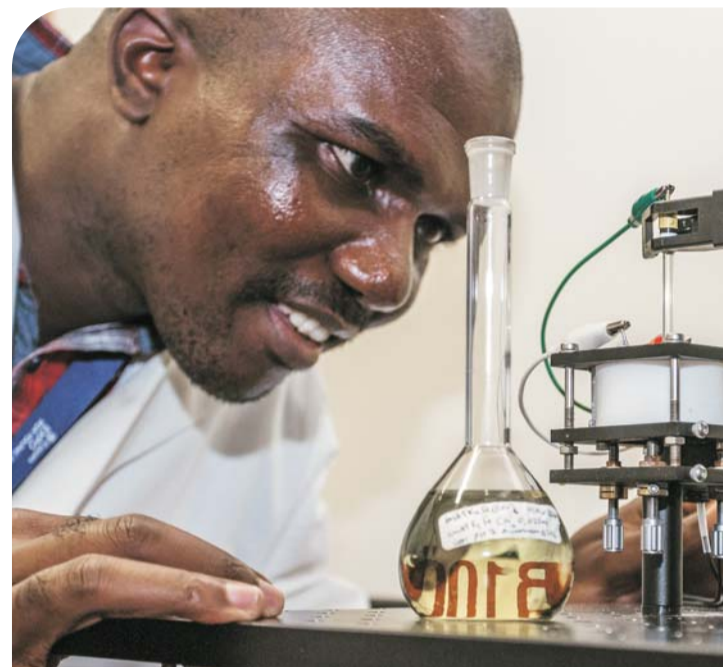
Undergrad studies: Rhodes University

Place of Birth: Ha-Rabali village, Venda

Awards: Lelona Fufu Prize (2013)

Certificate in peer mentoring TAI mentoring programme (2012)

The Oppidian Award for Community Engagement (2010)



Stephen Nyoni - PhD student

According to Muthumuni Managa, "We are so fortunate, all the equipment we need is at our finger tips. I never struggle to fully characterise my compounds because all the equipment is available. The new equipment will be beneficial because it will enable us to carry out more specific characterisation that we were not able to do before," she said.

The focus of Managa's MSc thesis, entitled "Photodynamic antimicrobial chemotherapy activities of porphyrin- and phthalocyanine-platinum nanoparticle conjugates" includes making dyes and combining them with platinum nanoparticles in order to increase their antimicrobial activities. These compounds are then embedded on fibers for support and tested for antibacterial and antifungal properties.

The possible application for this, according to Managa, is that "if this works the possibility is that they can be put into an elastoplast and if a person has a bacterial or fungal infection on their skin they can just take the elastoplast and put it over the infection as the dyes are activated by visible light".

Managa began her studies at Rhodes in 2007 after being accepted for a BSc foundation programme, and the choice to pursue her studies in the area of photodynamic therapy, a personal one influenced by the death of her mother from cancer in 2011.

"We are so fortunate, all the equipment we need is at our fingertips. I never struggle to fully characterise my compounds because all the equipment is available." - Ms Managa, MSc student

"I lost my mother to cancer when I was just about to complete my third year. I wanted to understand more about cancer and Prof Nyokong's research group provided that for me. In my honours work I was able to do research on cancer and the current treatment and trying to combine chemotherapy and photodynamic therapy so as to reduce the side effects and I understood completely what my mother went through."

Managa plans to pursue a PhD after the completion of her MSc. She believes her involvement in Science and Technology could inspire other women to pursue careers in the field.

"For me this is also done to encourage girls back home in the rural village of Venda where I come from that they are able to accomplish anything they put their minds to," she added.



Ms Gugu Kubheka

Current studies: First year Master's in Chemistry - Nanotechnology field, working with BODIPY dyes for application in antimicrobial photodynamic therapy and glucose sensing.

Undergrad studies: Rhodes University

Place of Birth: Escourt, KwaZulu Natal

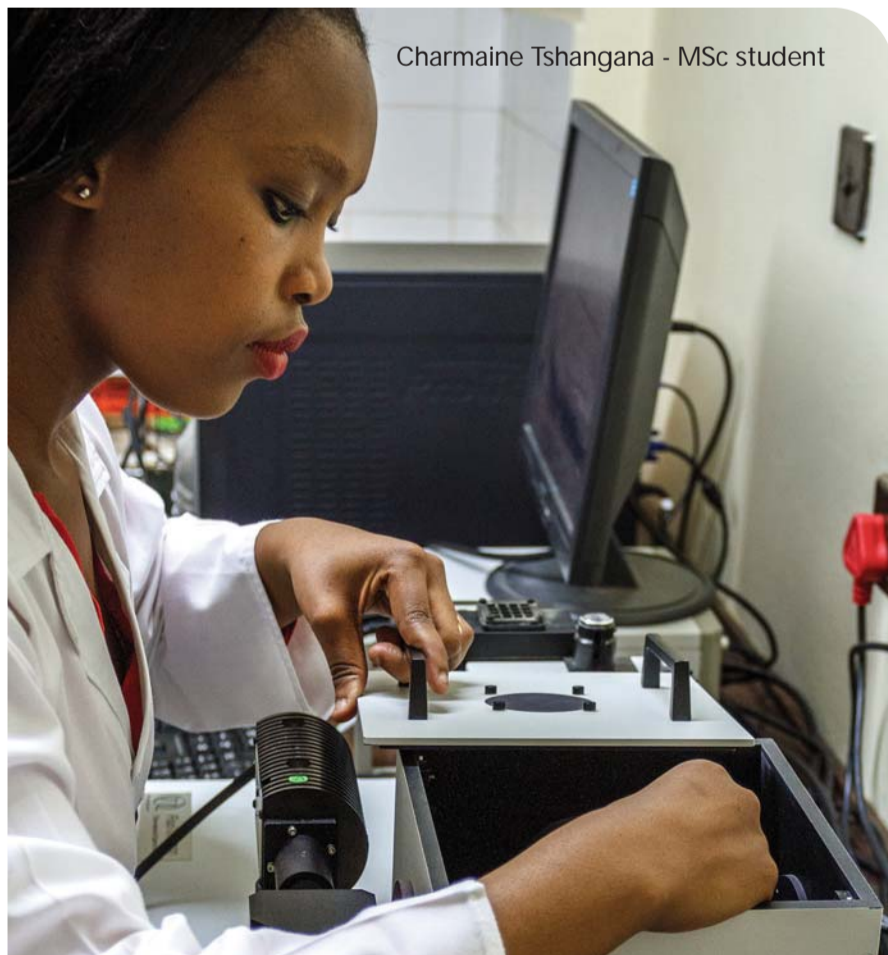
Awards: Academic Achievement Award (2009) from Kimberly Dining Hall at Rhodes University.

Kubheka's research focuses on the use of dyes conjugated to nanoparticles for application in antimicrobial photodynamic therapy as well as glucose sensing. Essentially, she uses bright colored dyes mixed with the nano-sized particles to kill bacterial infections.

Inspired to help increase access to medical supplies especially to rural, marginalised communities, Kubheka was drawn to chemistry after attending Professor Tebello Nyokong's speech after being awarded the UNESCO-L'Oreal Laureate.

She also had an opportunity to work with the legendary Prof Nyokong during her Chemistry internship in her third year, working in her laboratory for a semester.

"This was when I realized that I could make a difference in solving the problem by contributing to the treatment of bacterial infections. The research that was done in this laboratory gave me that opportunity. Knowing that I am working on something that will help millions and develop our country should it be a success is very fulfilling and it gives me great pleasure. That is why I do not mind putting in more hours working in the laboratory," she said.



Charmaine Tshangana - MSc student



Martijn Wildervanck - MSc student

The new equipment will allow Kubheka to examine surface features of the nanoparticles, for the development of sensors, depth profiling and 3D imaging of cells. "It has a positive impact on my research and on myself since I can now be compatible to using this instrument that not many other universities have, thus adding to my knowledge of different equipment," she said.



Phindile Khoza

Current studies: PhD Chemistry - Enhancing specificity of phthalocyanines by conjugating with different vitamins and nanoparticles

Undergrad studies: UKZN

Place of Birth: KwaZulu Natal, Olundi

PhD candidate Phindile Khoza's thesis entitled "Phthalocyanine-nanoparticle conjugates for photodynamic therapy of cancer and phototransformation of organic pollutants" entails combining dyes (phthalocyanine) with nanoparticles and molecules, such as folic acid, that cancer cells require in excess. The ultimate goal is to increase the selectivity of these dyes towards tumor cells. She also focuses on the use of these dyes in the removal of pollutants in water.

According to Khoza, the nanotechnology equipment available to students at Rhodes "is an absolute privilege. They have definitely impacted on my research tremendously, they have made it stronger."

"I have learnt how to use and interpret data from so many techniques which I consider the biggest honour as I have seen how in other institutions they suffer, research wise, due to a lack of proper equipment," she said.

“I am a supporter of the underdog”

South Africa's position as a global leader in nanotechnology, and Rhodes University's contribution to this field was given a boost last week with the launch of the first-of-its-kind Rhodes/Department of Science and Technology (DST) Centre for Nanotechnology Innovation, one of the most advanced facilities of its kind within a single facility in a university environment in South Africa.

Minister of Science and Technology, Naledi Pandor, Chief Executive Officer of the National Research Foundation (NRF) Dr Albert van Jaarsveld, Vice-Chancellor of Rhodes University Dr Sizwe Mabizela, Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Research and Development Dr Peter Clayton, Rhodes staff and students gathered on campus on Friday 14 November to celebrate the launch of the Centre.

Hosted in the Chemistry Department under the leadership of the DST/NRF South African Research Chairs Initiative Professor of Medicinal Chemistry and Nanotechnology, Distinguished Professor Tebello Nyokong. The new equipment Time-Of-Flight-Secondary-Ion-Mass-Spectrometer (TOF-SIMS), examines thin films and provides surface composition of these films, and studies the surface characteristics of nanoparticles.

The examination of the surfaces using TOF-SIMS impacts not only on layer interactions in development of sensors and drug delivery agents but in a wide range of disciplines where thin films are employed and where the immobilisation thereof is critical to the success of the technologies being examined or developed, such as electronics, physics, geology and biotechnology.



Centre for Nanotechnology Innovation

In addition, the equipment could be used in the fields of pollution treatment, in green chemistry, forensic sciences, biotechnology and could be geared towards energy and sustainable development. The cutting-edge equipment was purchased with a combined substantial investment of R17 million from Rhodes, the DST and National Research Foundation (NRF).



From left: Vice-Chancellor of Rhodes University Dr Sizwe Mabizela, Distinguished Professor Tebello Nyokong, Minister of Science and Technology, Naledi Pandor, Professor Janice Limson, Chief Executive Officer of the National Research Foundation (NRF) Dr Albert van Jaarsveld, Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Research and Development, Dr Peter Clayton

Minister Pandor said Nanotechnology has a critical role to play in the future of South Africa and is a key tool for industrial development and as a means to improve the lives of ordinary people through more efficient health care services, safe water and low-cost, clean energy.

“I’m really pleased when I observe the field of Nanotechnology and the manner in which it has developed well in South Africa. We believe Nanotechnology has an extraordinarily important role to play in shaping our future. We are taking our place in the world and attracting scientists to our shores...”

“We are very important actors in the scientific community and we shouldn’t neglect that fact. We’re not only investing in nano science because we want people doing high level research with highest quality equipment, but we are also interested in whether Nanotechnology can play a role in socio-economic development in our country,” she added.

In partnership with industry and many of South African universities, the Centres are conducting cutting-edge research to unlock the potential of Nanotechnology and to support the training of young nano-scientists and technologists, a critical area according to Ms Pandor. “We have not yet properly addressed why we are placing equipment in universities and not training the technicians who are maintaining it. I would like to get to point where we have people trained within all laboratories who can maintain our equipment,” she said.

The Eastern Cape is increasingly being recognised for its role in advancing the field. Along with the Rhodes/DST Centre, the province plays host to the Ultra High Resolution Transmission Electron Microscopy Facility located at Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NMMU) in Port Elizabeth, making the Eastern Cape a significant Nanotechnology hub in the country.

According to Prof Nyokong, the province has an important role to play in advancing the field and her decision to remain at Rhodes is testament to her belief in the potential of the calibre of researchers and facilities here.

“I am a supporter of the underdog. I have decided to stay in the Eastern Cape. The news media will say it’s a poor province and nothing good will come out of it, that Rhodes is too small. For me those things are challenges. This equipment, together with the equipment at NMMU makes us the hub of Nanotechnology. People can say we are poor, our education is low, but we will make a difference slowly.”

The Rhodes/DST Centre is considered a national facility and is used by other Eastern Cape universities including NMMU, Walter Sisulu University, University of Fort Hare and other South African institutions such as the University of Johannesburg, Centre for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), the University of the Western Cape, Mintek, the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal and the University of the North West. It also serves international researchers from countries such as Kuwait, Turkey and China.



The Time-Of-Flight-Secondary-Ion-Mass-Spectrometer (TOF-SIMS)

Minister Pandor unveils R17m nanotech equipment

It's extremely gratifying to see how our country continues on an upward nanotechnology development trajectory, considering where South Africa started only a few years ago.

The publication of the National Nanotechnology Strategy in 2005 was an important first step. Since then the Department has been hard at work establishing a series of programmes to advance the objectives of the strategy. The establishment of the Nanotechnology Innovation Centres based at Mintek and the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research are the most significant steps taken to help advance nanotechnology innovation. These are complemented by programmes focusing on expanding the nanoscience and nanotechnology research base.

South Africa's National Nanotechnology Strategy has been hailed by the science community as one of the best in the world, given its focus on socio-economic development. It aims to address our challenges in the areas of water, health and energy, as well as to give a competitive edge to some of the country's strategic industries (mining and minerals, advanced materials and manufacturing, and chemicals and bioprocessing).

Our National Nanotechnology Strategy not only advances the national technology missions that were identified in the 2002 National R&D strategy, but also strengthens the integrated industrial focus of government.

There is little doubt that nanotechnology has an extraordinarily important role to play in shaping our future.

We can only be proud of what we have accomplished in such a short time.

We have produced no less than 170 postgraduate students and published in excess of eleven hundred articles in peer-reviewed journals. We have filed more than twenty patents. I am confident that it is only a matter of time before South African-developed nanotechnology-enhanced products will enter the market.

We are amongst a few countries to have established a formal nanoscience teaching programme. This is a Master's programme in nanosciences, founded in 2012, that had its first cohort of students graduating in the current calendar year. Championed by a consortium of four universities - the University of the Western Cape, the University of Johannesburg, the University of the Free State and the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University - the programme is touted as the model for future institutional collaboration in formal teaching programmes.

All of this has been made possible by a suite of programmes the Department initiated for nanotechnology development - the National Nanotechnology Equipment Programme, the Nanotechnology Flagship Programme, and the Nanosciences and Nanotechnologies Research Chairs. They have catapulted nanotechnology research in the country to a point where we have become global players of note.

The National Nanotechnology Equipment Programme, in particular, has led to the establishment of world-class nanotechnology research facilities in the



Minister of Science and Technology, Naledi Pandor, addressing guests at the opening of the Rhodes University Centre for Nanotechnology Innovation

country. It has given birth to the Centre for High Resolution Transmission Electron Microscopy (HRTEM), which is established at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University. This Centre is among the best in the world. The nanotechnology equipment programme has also enabled the creation of world-class nanotechnology research centres in our various universities, namely Rhodes University.

The Time-of-Flight Secondary Ion Mass Spectrometer (TOF-SIMS) is one of the powerful equipment requirements critical for nanotechnology research. It is capable of producing a mass spectral map of a surface area, has extremely high surface sensitivity that is essential for the detection of contaminants, and it provides elemental composition as a function of depth. The TOF-SIMS also provides the sole means to providing information on chemical composition and morphology at the same time. It is based on the fact that ions with the same energy, but different masses, travel with different velocities.



Without access to equipment such as the TOF-SIMS, it is difficult to quantify nanostructured materials. At the moment researchers rely on their overseas collaborators for such studies. The availability of the TOF-SIMS in the country will enhance the quality of research and students training. The equipment will assist in advancing requirements to address the national skills shortage in many key areas of research (such as physics, chemistry, biotechnology and the emerging area of nanotechnology).

It is no surprise that institutions in the Eastern Cape play a key role in nanotechnology development. You find their presence in almost all of the Department's major nanotechnology initiatives. The province boasts two of the six research chairs in nanotechnology. It plays host to the premium Centre of High Resolution Transmission Electron Microscopy I referred to earlier. It hosts one of the nodes of the Mintek Nanotechnology Innovation Centre, and is part of the consortium that established the Master's programme in nanosciences, which I also mentioned.

I want to challenge institutions in this province to leverage their world-class infrastructure and world-acclaimed researchers to bring essential developments to this Province and the rest of the country.

The Department is considering mechanisms for the creation of a suitable environment for nanotechnology innovation through a roadmap that will help pave the way to the conversion of laboratory outputs to products and services that South Africa, and the Eastern Cape, desperately needs.

The Rhodes University node of the Mintek NIC is headed by Professor Tebello Nyokong. Prof Nyokong's publication record, which is over 500 papers, and her very impressive H-index are a clear demonstration of why she is a recipient of so many awards, which include the prestigious Order of Mapungubwe.

Your contribution to human capital development endeavours, Prof Nyokong, having trained more than 70 postgraduate students, is also outstanding.

I would like to thank Rhodes University for continuing to provide the environment for researchers such as Prof Nyokong to excel. The university's significant financial contribution to the acquisition of the TOF-SIMS is an example of the kind of support that will produce the excellence we see in this institution.

May I also appeal to the university to ensure that the piece of equipment being unveiled today becomes an asset that supports research not only in this institution. Make sure that it is accessible to researchers from all across South Africa and helps them advance their research work. I also call upon researchers in the country to use these facilities.

It is, therefore, my pleasure, honourable Vice-Chancellor and esteemed guests, to launch the TOF-SIMS, acquired through the support of the Department and the NRF, with co-funding from the University. May it provide the necessary environment to advance research in general and nanotechnology in particular.

Management Education for all



In his first month as the new President of the South African Business Schools Association (SABSA), Professor Owen Skae, who is also the Director of Rhodes Business School, shares his views.

The World Economic Forum's (WEF) latest Global Competitive Index ranks South Africa's business schools as 24th in the world. It speaks of the quality of our 18 business schools, for which SABSA is the collective voice.

As the new President, I aim to make management education and our business schools far more accessible to all sectors, public and private, and to everyone with the desire to learn about leadership and management.

Not nearly enough use is made of our business schools, and I believe that government, the private sector and civil society should be extensively drawing on our knowledge, experience and course offerings.

To increase employment in an economy where unemployment percentages of 25% and youth unemployment percentages of 50% are bandied about, there needs to be a far greater emphasis on management education initiatives across all sectors, private and public.

The need is simple: if we do not develop leaders and managers who can think strategically and manage well, we are shooting in the dark. Based on this, a key objective during my two-year term of office will be for SABSA to become far more of a lobbying voice in promoting the importance of management education as a key component in employment and economic growth.

Towards achieving this, we will be appointing a part-time executive director who will ensure that SABSA is well represented on strategic committees and that the importance of management education in South Africa is given the public and media focus it deserves.

What many people do not realise is that business schools are not only for business people. All of our business schools have very diverse student bodies.

In our MBA classes, for example, we emphasise that the strength and benefit of the class is its diversity. We have doctors, lawyers, people from the public and private sector, artists, musicians, accountants and engineers, all wanting to learn the art and science of management, and all bringing their own, rich perspective and experience to the class.

For this reason I believe that the MBA remains the premier business qualification and I would like to see more trade unionists and representatives from NGOs and civil action groupings doing the MBA, or any of the short courses, postgraduate diplomas and postgraduate degrees that all the business schools offer.

Across all constituencies we need people with management skills and foresight who can critically engage issues of transformation and develop a social compact that helps to lead South Africa forward.

We know that big business alone cannot create anything near the number of jobs we need in South Africa and the continent. It's obvious that we need to develop the medium and small business sector, and my view is that management education is as important in these sectors as it is in big business.

The FET Colleges, for example, are playing an important role in providing skills education across a wide range of sectors. But whether you are building houses or IT hubs, you still need a business manager with leadership, management, financial and project management capabilities to run the business. The same applies to entrepreneurs.

We also need to address the issue of graduate employment through the

development of learnerships and programmes between the business schools and the public and private sector. There are several success stories in this regard, which demonstrate the power of collaboration. We need to build on these and replicate them around the country.

In the public sector, unless we address the need for management training at all levels of government we will not solve the challenges of service delivery.

To assist with this, we need government to ensure that the tender process is fit for purpose. At present, the tender format is far more appropriate to building contractors or the purchasing of physical goods, rather than providing leadership and management development.

We have been seeking engagement with government but, in general, we have not received a satisfactory response. We need to find a way of solving this because the success of South Africa, as emphasised in the National Development Plan, is dependent on our leadership and management capacity. In my opinion this needs to come from our business schools.

Business schools exist to address fundamental questions about the *why*, *what* and *how* of business towards achieving the sustainable growth and development that our economy and all our citizens require.

This rests on experienced leadership, the hallmark of which is the ability to steer a course through diverse and complex issues by embracing solid, principled, humanitarian values, while still remaining competitive.

In South Africa there are many *why*, *what* and *how*'s that have to be addressed, including the trigger point around the vast discrepancy in wages, and why perceived inequity in the workplace continues to bedevil the labour relations environment.

We need far more rigorous engagement about this and what 'decent work' means, and how to build trust and respect in the workplace. As part of the bigger picture into which this fits, we need to identify from where the next growth industries will come, in order to build the economy and address the challenges of unemployment, while recognising that we cannot tax the existing taxpayers any more than we are currently doing.

We need to collectively strategise how best to position ourselves in Africa, and how to contribute to the growth and development of the continent's tremendous potential.

We need to address how to reduce the cost of doing business in Africa and how to play our part in developing strong economies in the countries around us, which will bring market benefits and fruitful movement between our countries.

And while we are doing all this, we need to make sure that we have learnt the lesson from the 2008/9 global financial crisis: that while strong economies are imperative for organisations to survive, if they are pursued in a manner that is inequitable and unethical, they will not be sustainable and success will not follow.

As Professor Mervyn King of King I, II and III, the originator of integrated reporting, says: "Today, 80% of market cap is comprised of intangible assets, such as the company's reputation, the integrity of its board and the quality of its management."

Our business schools are proactively focusing on how companies make their money, and contributing to the advancement of new knowledge and research in a changing business environment. One of the changes currently affecting all South African business schools is the raised admission requirement for MBA students, as set by the Council on Higher Education, and which will come into effect from 2016.

To date, business schools have been able to accept students with a Bachelor's degree and work experience into the MBA course. From 2016, however, only students with a four-year degree, an Honours degree or a postgraduate diploma can be accepted. Business schools are currently adapting their programmes and certificate courses to meet this need, and will be offering postgraduate diplomas in order to ensure that access to the MBA is not compromised.

The cost of postgraduate diplomas and degrees is another factor that SABSA will be proactively addressing with the public and private sector.

There are many students in South Africa who have the talent and drive to complete the MBA degree. The stark reality is that many are excluded simply because they cannot afford the fees.

There are concessions within the South African income tax system that facilitate part-time study through the payment of study bursaries by employers. However these opportunities require the active participation of employer, employee and the educational institution.

To encourage and facilitate this, SABSA's appointment of an executive director will prove significant, as part of our contribution to the advancement of management education and skills development in our country, which is precisely what we should be doing.

'My Body My Choice'



picture taken, what they are comfortable wearing or not wearing and how they will pose. They also choose which of the images from their shoot to use in the final exhibition. In this sense the words 'My body My Choice' are taken very literally. Everything comes down to the choice of the individuals involved."

The event is one of a number of activities hosted by the Gender Action Forum (GENACT) this year that aims to build awareness about the harmful effects of socially constructed gender-based norms in society.

Since the first photo shoot in 2009 the initiative has grown steadily and now has over 300 photographs in the 'My Body My Choice' album. The exhibition travelled to Cape Town City Hall in 2012 as part of a collaboration between the City of Cape Town's Arts and Culture Department and Rhodes scheduled to coincide with the *16 Days of Activism for No Violence against Women and Children*. All subjects who participated in this shoot signed detailed release forms, specifying where and how their photos could be used and there is no online database where the images can be accessed, in order to protect the women who posed.

For the first time since its inception at Rhodes University in 2009, the 'My Body My Choice' (MBMC) exhibition welcomed men to join with women in a photographic celebration of the body as a site of courage, beauty, strength, autonomy, love and resistance.

According to organiser Dr Lindsay Kelland, post-doctoral fellow in the Allan Gray Centre for Leadership Ethics at Rhodes, the MBMC campaign has always served as a follow up event to the Silent Protest and emphasises the reclamation of agency and embodiment. Given the number of male participants who are now involved in the Silent Protest, she thought it was time to open MBMC up as well.

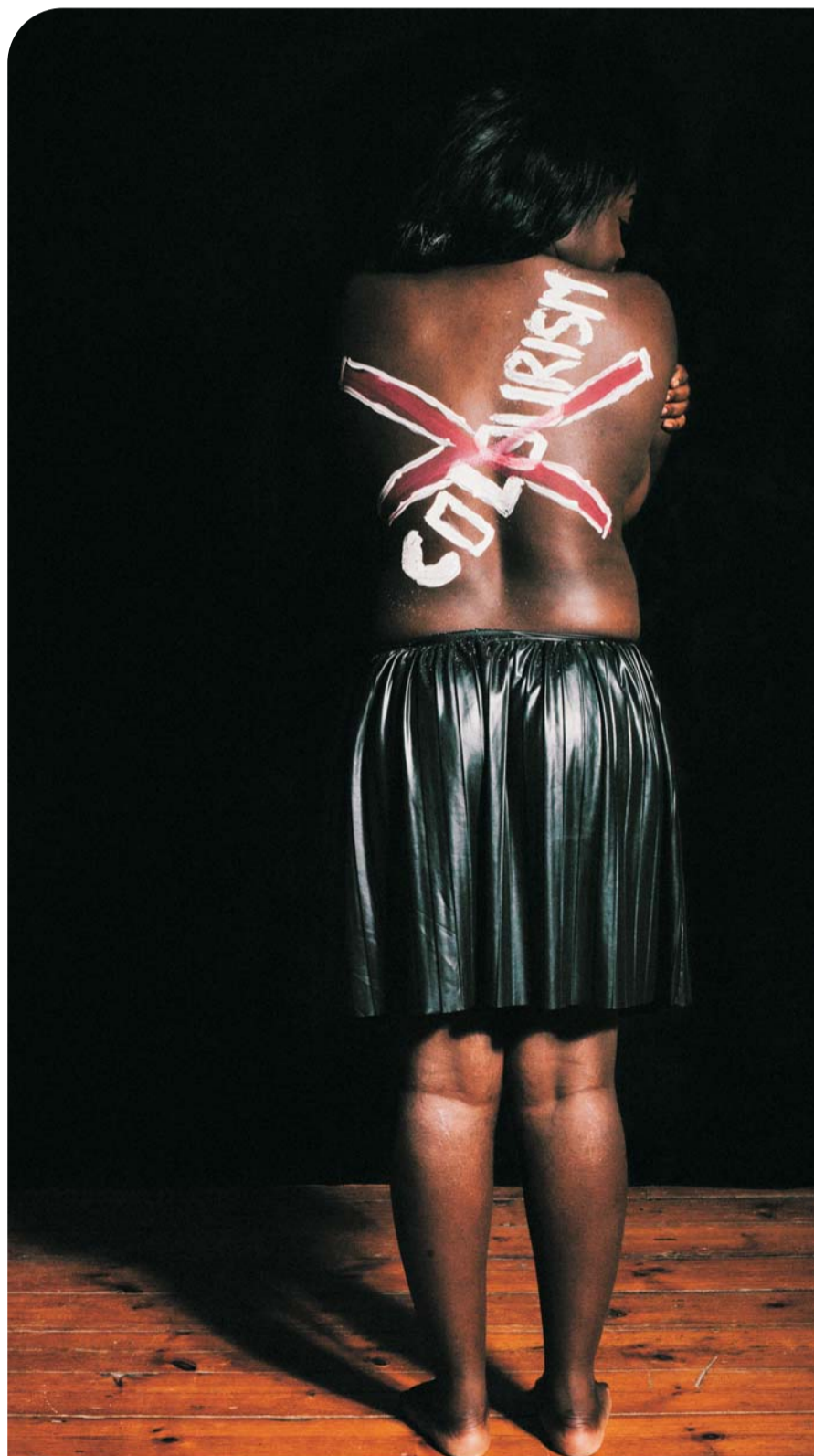
"Relatedly, I think that it is essential for feminist activities to include both sexes, as both men and women are (albeit differently) impacted by patriarchal ideology, norms, values and beliefs, and in that sense the liberation of either sex is interwoven with that of the other. We had two males participate this year in the form of couples' shots and we are really hoping to see far more males participating in 2015."

With the aim of using their bodies as message-boards to carry statements about sexual violence, the exhibition of the resulting photographs focuses its message on the objectification of women's bodies as well as on sexual and gender-based violence, believing that we cannot properly address violence against women without also addressing the objectification of women's bodies.

According to Dr Kelland, "women's bodies are a site of constant struggle, and the objectification of women's bodies results not only in danger from without-in the form of both sexual and gender-based violence-but also in danger from within-in the form of alienation..."

"'My Body My Choice' challenges patriarchal ideology and creates a space within which we can experience our bodies as whole, beautiful and, above all, our own. The space is also one in which solidarity can be fostered, where ordinary people can come together, support each other and listen to each other's stories," she said.

This year's event was also open (thematically) and participants were able to choose to interpret the campaign in a way that made sense to them. It is for this reason that participants have total control over their image, Dr Kelland said, "as they choose what to do, what their message is, how they want to have their



Rhodes students scoop record number of Mandela Rhodes Scholarships



Photo: from left to right: Aviwe May, Selokwane Morake, Abigail Branford, Lumumba Mthembu, Vice-Chancellor Dr Sizwe Mabizela and Ameil Harikishun.

Six outstanding young South Africans at Rhodes University have been recognized for their potential to make a difference in society with the prestigious Mandela Rhodes Scholarship. This is a record number of scholarships for the university.

Rhodes has the highest number of scholarships awarded to a University in South Africa; University of Cape Town received 5 scholarships, University of the Witwatersrand 1, Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University 1, Stellenbosch University 0 and Monash South Africa 1.

Mandela Rhodes Scholarships received 400 applications nationally, 60 applicants were interviewed and 40 scholarships were awarded for 2015.

Rhodes University submitted nine applications (2.25% of the applications assessed came from Rhodes), and seven were interviewed (7 of the 60, 12% interviewed were from Rhodes) and six were awarded (of the 40 awards). Fifteen percent of the awards made were from Rhodes.

Aviwe May, Ameil Harikishun, Lumumba Mthembu, Abigail Branford, Kyla Hazell and Selokwane Morake represent a range of disciplines including Law, English, Marine Biology and Biotechnology, and epitomise the best of what South African youth have to offer society.

Vice-Chancellor, Dr Sizwe Mabizela, met with the students recently and congratulated them on their achievements and asked them to share their research interests and ambitions with him.

Describing Rhodes as a leader in many of the fields represented by the six awardees, Dr Mabizela said they couldn't be in a better place to pursue their particular research interests at a postgraduate level than Rhodes.

Aviwe May, who aspired to be a medical doctor throughout school, changed his mind after his love for Chemistry was "revitalised" during career exhibitions in his Grade 11 year at Toise High School, King William's Town.

May is interested in the biological side of Science, and wants to pursue studies in medicinal chemistry. Currently, the Rhodes Chemistry Department offers research topics ranging from designing inhibitors of molecular chaperones,

medicinal natural products and the use of photodynamic therapy in cancer diagnosis and treatment.

The research for his BSc Honours will be determined early next year, but of all the topics offered by the department, the use of magnetic fluid (MF) to treat cancer stands out for him.

While he doesn't consider himself to have reached the point of being a leader in the chemistry field, May has developed some leadership skills and values through a broad involvement with various initiatives including being on the Dean's list for academic merit at Rhodes, being a two-time recipient of the Kimberley Hall academic excellence award and receiving more than 11 academic achievement certificates at school.

"Looking at my previous involvements in leadership, I would say I am the kind that is open to correction and receives criticism with an open heart, no one is perfect," he said. May sees himself developing as a leader and demonstrating his abilities in the various leadership positions available at Rhodes.

"In South Africa I have a responsibility to play with regard to rural development and reconciliation." In the short term he plans to continue with chemistry research, and plans to pursue his dream of moving into the medical side of science in the long term.

May said he didn't expect to make it to the final selection round of contenders: "I did not expect to make it this far due to the competitiveness of the selection process. When I was informed that I was awarded the scholarship, I began to give praise to God."

Fellow scientist Ameil Harikishun's passion for marine biology developed early on in life. "I was always fascinated by nature and this led to many hobbies with my siblings. My family encouraged this passion by providing me with books and documentaries and I soon became aware of environmental change and the anthropogenic activities that underpinned it," he said.

He described himself as a "passionate environmentalist" from the age of 10. "My childhood passion for environmental conservation and sustainability has matured into a pursuit to understand the political and socioeconomic complexities that underpin environmental change," he said.

His research interests lie in marine ecosystem response to climate change, marine conservation and resource management and his current research spans the effects of climate change on the coral reefs in Sodwana Bay, KwaZulu-Natal, to an undersea mountain off the Madagascar Ridge.

The results of this research will contribute to climate change monitoring of South African marine ecosystems as well as the potential demarcation of open ocean marine protected areas. Harikishun completed a Bachelor of Science and Bachelor of Science Honours at the University of Cape Town before moving to Rhodes to pursue his MSc. He is a recipient of the Allan Gray Orbis Foundation fellowship for 2010-2013 and National Research Foundation (NRF) scholarship (2012, 2013).

Leadership is an important aspect in his approach, as Harikishun explains: "Global issues such as climate change and population growth represent threats to the future of Africa, its environment and its people. I see the need for highly qualified and principled scientists to branch into politics to spread their expertise into the resource and environmental policies of Africa, both at a local and international level."

"I am currently building my understanding in a multitude of fields so that I can eventually move into politics and policy, from a strong science background. I believe that good science can inform effective policy, leading to sustainable and long term socio-economic change."

Determination and resilience have gotten first year Masters in English scholar Lumumba Mthembu this far in his academic career. Eleven months into his undergraduate studies at Rhodes Mthembu lost his mother to alcohol poisoning. The loss destabilised his academic performance and precipitated a withdrawal from public life.

Three years later, his father disowned him and his sister, Khwezi, for failing to obtain university degrees. "I responded by obtaining my BA with distinction in English; Khwezi's reaction was to go on to become a CA," he said. Before coming to Rhodes Mthembu attended St Peter's College where he was Deputy Head Boy and received full colours for Oratory, was senior debating team Summator, and a semi-finalist at the provincial debating trials (2004).

Following graduation Mthembu picked up odd jobs over the next three years, including a brief stint as the youngest member of staff at Lebone II College of the Royal Bafokeng. Then in June 2013 Mthembu was faced with "one of the most defining moments of my life" when he suffered second degree burns from a winter house fire.

"For the next four months I lay on my stomach enduring mind-shattering levels of pain. My body fought back and co-opted my mind, demanding a single promise that if I get back on my feet I have to take over the world," he said.

Following a steady recovering he approached Professor Mike Marais of the English department at Rhodes in November 2013 enquiring about funding opportunities for postgraduate studies for 2014. "I bussed down to Rhodes on the ghost of a chance with no accommodation or guarantee of funding. All my hopes hinged on was the promise I had made to my body," he said.

Since then Mthembu has gone from strength to strength. Currently enrolled for a Masters in English at Rhodes, he intends to pursue his PhD and stay at Rhodes in the future.

He is researching and writing his thesis on four young South African authors, all under the age of 40, writing for Kwela Books. "I am interested in how they depict post-apartheid black identities in their fiction," he said.

Of the scholarship, Mthembu said: "For me, the scholarship is my most significant academic achievement to date. It means everything. It is the chance to step into better things, as a character in one of the novels I am studying states."

A deeply personal and absorbing engagement with gender inequality has contributed to Abigail Branford dedicating herself to developing inclusive ways to interrogate the ideas which generate and excuse gender violence.

After majoring in Politics and History during her undergraduate degree at Rhodes, Branford came to realise the vastness of the interrogation required. "How could a question, with no acceptable answer and which so grotesquely configured our past, reiterate through every day of our present."

"The further I took my intellectual enquiry the more I saw the same blindness and self-delusion play out, the same brand of horrifyingly destructive beliefs so vulnerable to any sustained examination," she said.

In order to provide a platform for the necessary interrogation, and after being inspired by the work of engaged scholars Eusebius Mckaiser and Beth Vale, Branford founded the Gender and Sex Project.

"I identified the outrageously underutilised Life Orientation in high schools as an opportunity to translate an excellent tertiary education into discursive change in my community."

"Teenagers, while challenging at the best of times, are incredibly intellectually supple; they are ready to be challenged by many of the issues which currently are only leveled at Humanities students," she said, explaining that during the classes she introduces the learners to the social, political and historical concerns of gender studies through contemporary and relevant stimulus.

According to Branford, "it is only by leading them to self-reflection, not by pushing my liberal dogma at them, that I will make a meaningful impact in their development as thinking beings."

Branford, a former Dux Scholar of Kingswood College and recipient of honours in academics, hockey and debating, said she has had an interest in the field of gender (in)equality since her days as a learner.

"Even at school I had an interest in gender equality and I have always pushed the institutions and people around me to acknowledge sexist behaviour as such. However, gender violence became much more real once I came to varsity."

"Once you realise how pervasive it is, in the university and elsewhere, you realise it isn't just the hallmark of a bad relationship, upbringing or character. It's part of a wider culture of how we treat persons of subordinate genders/sexual orientations and what we decide their social worth is. It's important to recognise and interrogate that wider culture and that's really what I want to contribute to this area," she said.

Kyla Hazell is currently studying a joint Honours degree in Law and Political and International Studies, with a focus on Political Philosophy and Human Rights Law and is currently on exchange at Utrecht University in the Netherlands completing the second half of the curriculum.

Selokwane Morake is well on his way to fulfilling his vision of establishing himself as a "firm and positive contributor in Africa through scientific development". Morake, who has been a Candidate Fellow of the Allan Gray Orbis Foundation since arriving at Rhodes in 2011, plans to fulfill this vision by not only using the skills and knowledge I have acquired through my academics, but through my various leadership roles and experiences as well," he said. Currently studying for an Honours in Biotechnology, Morake completed a BSc majoring in Biochemistry and Chemistry.

Since undertaking his studies Morake said he has grown immeasurably in areas of leadership and personal development as a result. "Choosing to do my Honours in Biotechnology has been one of the most amazing decisions I've ever made. The structure of the programme as well as the vision of the recently established Biotechnology Innovation Centre at Rhodes is really aligned to what I would like to do and achieve as a young scientist," he said,

He said the Centre affords him the unique opportunity of translating his current research in fuel cell technology to bring about tangible, socio-economic change in the energy sector.

According to Morake, who was part of the academic top five at school Sekolo Sa Borokgo from 2008-2010, recipient of the Zenex Foundation Scholarship (2008-2010), prefect and recipient of the Principal's Award (2010), the Honours programme so far "has given me a glimpse into ways of meaningful engagement with the community around Science and further cultivating an entrepreneurial mind-set."

The Mandela Rhodes Scholarships aim to help in building leadership excellence in Africa.

A Meeting of Many Worlds

Professor Lewis Gordon is amused that in South Africa he is sometimes confused with the human polar bear, Lewis Gordon Pugh.

"When people meet me they are even more confused because I'm definitely not white or swimming in the snow," says Prof Gordon from his office in the Department of Politics & International Studies at Rhodes University, where he has taken up the Nelson Mandela Visiting Professorship for 2014/2015.

A leading global academic in philosophy, politics, Afro-Judaic studies, Africana studies and the study of race and social thought, he is based at the Philosophy Department and the Africana Studies Institute at the University of Connecticut in the United States.

He commutes between here, South Africa and Europe, where he is the European Union Chair in Philosophy and a visiting professor in the Department of Philosophy at the University of Toulouse in France.

Describing himself as "a meeting of many worlds", Prof Gordon draws on his own multiculturalism to encourage people worldwide to recognise the meeting of many worlds within us all, and to draw on this as a source of activism for a more humane world.

"I was born in Jamaica to an Afro-Chinese-Jamaican father and a Jamaican Jewish mother. They were childhood sweethearts and I am the consequence of this. They were just 19 when I was born," he explains.

"My father's family originally came to Jamaica from Africa as slaves. My mother came from a family of Sephardic and Palestinian Jews who immigrated to Jamaica in the 19th century from Ireland and Palestine to participate in the burgeoning coconut processing industry and other opportunities there."

The Sephardic Jews are a distinct Judaic group that settled in Spain and Portugal during the period of Afro-Arabic control of Iberia.

Prof Gordon left Jamaica as a young boy and moved to New York with his mother and two brothers to find a better life.

"We lived in the Bronx in poor but very happy conditions, and my mother, who passed away in 2004, was one of the most courageous, resourceful people I know," he says.

His father died that same year in an accident.

"It took us several years to find out what had happened to him. He'd lived a hard life; he grew up on the streets of Jamaica, and had to find ways to look after himself and his brothers. He used his wit and good looks to achieve this, and he certainly charmed my mother," says Prof Gordon.

He, in turn, fell in love with and married Professor Jane Anna Gordon, a world-renowned academic of South African parents. She teaches in the Political Science Department and the Africana Studies Institute at the University of Connecticut.

"Jane's mother, Jean Comaroff, is from Port Elizabeth and her father, John Comaroff, is from Cape Town. Both are of Ashkenazi or European Jewish descent. I'm thus also connected to South African through marriage and our family, which includes our four children. We, in turn, practise our own form of Creolised Nazarene Judaism," says Prof Gordon.

"It's a combination of our combined Jewish ancestry (Ashkenazi, Sephardi, and Mizrahi) and the original, ethical foundation of Judaism, which is all about taking responsibility for the ethical face of God on Earth."

The reason he elaborates on various Judaic groups is because "just as people have a very narrow understanding of race and origin, so they have a very narrow understanding of religions".

Drawing on Judaism as an example, he illustrates that it is an extremely diverse religion with many different philosophical approaches.

"A very important part of this, and something that I pursue as an academic



when I am teaching about Judaism, is to debate critically what it is. Judaism was always intended as a religion of debate where students would discuss and argue this. It was never intended to be dictatorial," Prof Gordon elaborates.

Dictatorial religious, cultural and political doctrines of any kind, he adds, underlie the world's history of violence, poverty, intolerance, enslavement, colonialism and human rights abuse.

"The opposite happens when you open yourself up and study life and try to see the relationship that everything has to everything else, and the relationship that everyone has to everyone else," he says.

This is reflected in the title of his *Thinking Africa* public lecture as the Nelson Mandela Visiting Professor at Rhodes in October 2014: *When did and do we meet? A philosophical anthropology of time: Euro-modern, Afro-modern and beyond*.

"It's all about re-thinking the distortions we have created around the philosophy of what it is to be human," he explains.

"As part of this, I believe that modern philosophy and epistemology or the theory of knowledge, as practised in many universities, misrepresent human history."

According to this misrepresentation, 17th century French philosopher and mathematician René Descartes' statement "I think; therefore I am" becomes a fulcrum of human thinking and self-understanding.

This, Prof Gordon explains, serves to reinforce predominantly racist notions that the so-called "primitive human" had no concept of what it means to be human; that we all had to wait for European thinkers like Descartes to come along to start exploring this.

"What this is, is a deliberate fiction of the Euro-modern world during the transition to European global colonialism," he says.

What this did was to create an ideological dichotomy between "modern" or "developed" people, who are generally perceived as white, and "primitive" or "undeveloped" people, who are generally perceived as dark or black.

"Certain theorists today point out that these are prejudicial, racist impositions on a wide range of communities and human beings who, in fact, have a far richer understanding of what it means to be human than many so-called developed people," Prof Gordon explains.

"It goes further. Implicit in this racist appeal to primitivism is the thesis that the so-called undeveloped people belong in the past. This is a fallacy as many of these people are not only very much in the present, they also address the contradictions of the present and are far more attuned to the conditions required for a sustainable future for all."

Such a future, he continues, requires an entirely different model to the current corporate capital model, which was conceived to serve the global north, and which is deeply flawed. Symptoms of this are the global financial crash of 2008 and the mounting planetary crisis.

"At all levels - from economists to scientists to artists - we are seeing a crisis in decision-making about where we are going. For me, this is extremely exciting; it's the perfect opportunity for human beings to re-think who we are and what is important," he continues.

"With eight billion people on the planet today, combined with the rapid movement of knowledge and ability to communicate across the globe in an instant, if only 3% of

the eight billion are extraordinarily talented people with great insight, that is still a lot of talent and insight coming together to recreate a new model for humanity."

Prof Gordon explains this is a model beyond presidents and kings. "The time has long gone to look to presidents and kings as if they were gods. All leaders, even the greatest, like Nelson Mandela, are human beings. If we insist on reaching out to them as if they were gods, we will only be disappointed when what we receive back is a human being."

This realisation, he continues, places the power of change in each one of our hands.

"We are all part of one global community and therefore Syria or Nigeria or Israel or Palestine or South Africa's problems are everyone's problems, and we must all try to understand the many cultures and groupings that are part of all societies in order to develop a more thorough understanding of each other," he emphasises.

"We need to do the same at universities. We need to cultivate more informed, cross-cultural human relationships to build the intellectual, artistic and scientific project."

"We need to ask the question, 'I think, therefore I am what?' We need young people at university to claim their adulthood instead of what we all too often see - grown people behaving like adolescents and continuing to do so into middle age."

"I am heartened to be able to say that the students I have met at Rhodes over the years, stand among the very best of the various cohorts I have taught at many universities. I appreciate not only their intelligence and wit but also their humanity and their ethical spirit."

"We need people like these, and indeed all people, to seek solutions to the problems we face, because at the heart of all our problems, whether they are political, social, economic, environmental or anything else, are human beings, and it is up to us as human beings to solve human problems, humanely."

Bringing world-renowned scholars to Rhodes

The Nelson Mandela Visiting Professorship was launched in 2012 with a view to bringing world-renowned scholars to Rhodes University to teach postgraduate courses and give seminars and public lectures.

In welcoming Professor Gordon to Rhodes, the Dean of Humanities, Professor Fred Hendricks said: "Lewis is a distinguished leftist scholar and is very well known for his work on universities, race, justice and all the issues that are confronting us. He has made a major contribution to these issues globally."

On taking up the Nelson Mandela Visiting Professorship, Prof Gordon said: "As I see it, this is a national professorship since its namesake embodies the spirit of the nation, its aspirations and its character. That Mandela cannot-indeed, could not-be everything for the nation is a reminder of there being much to do, much to learn, much to figure out."

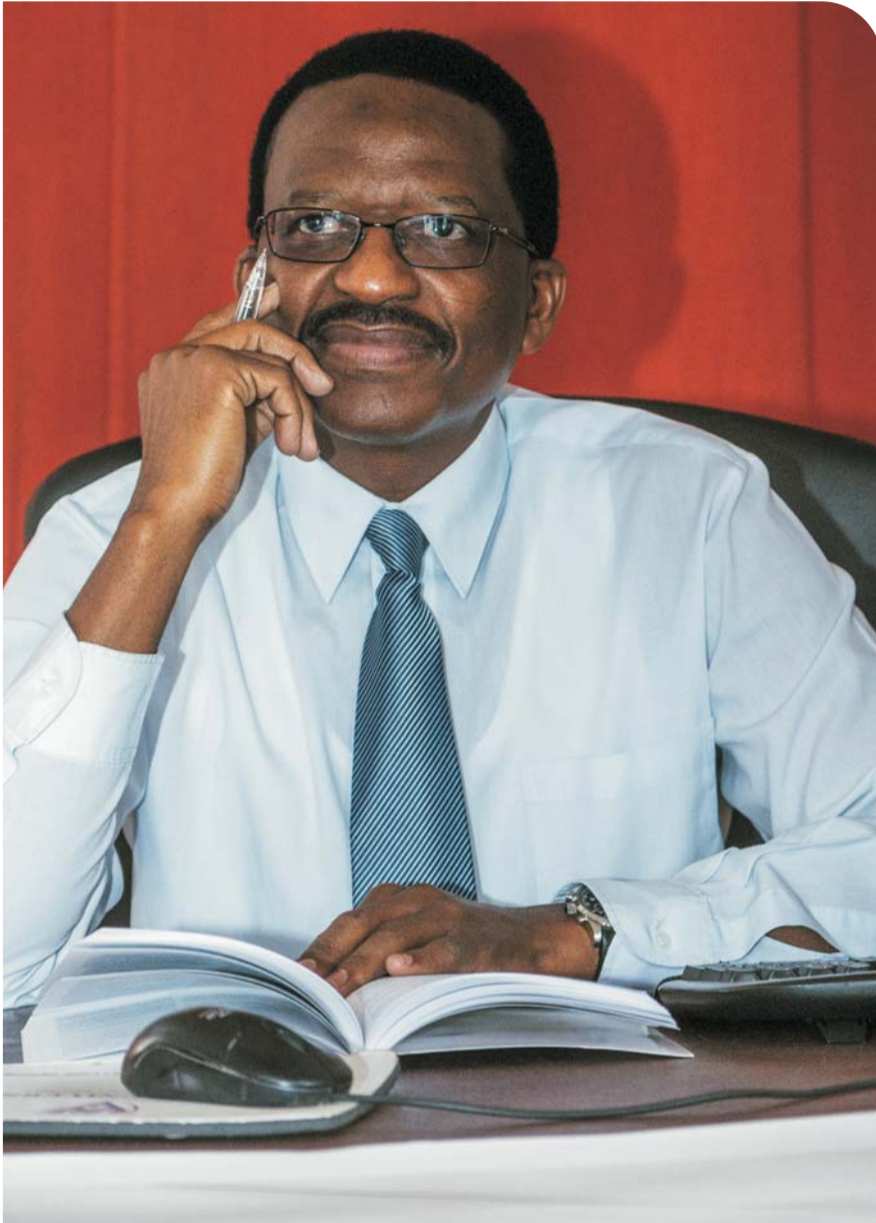
"That is one of the principles of research and scholarship, and with the name of such a historic public figure behind it, is also a reminder of the value of knowledge

for the public good, and the important meeting of knowledge and courage in the form of action. It reminds us of the importance of public commitment and what it means to attempt to make human institutions humane. This includes inquiries into questions of justice and the associated struggles.

"I have been meditating on problems of 'unjust justice', of what it means when systems of justice go wrong. I have been working on these ideas, with special attention to the intellectual offerings from what is known these days as the Global South, for my next book *No Longer Enslaved Yet Not Quite Free*."

"This project benefited much from my spirited engagements on African humanism and ubuntu at Rhodes last year. I would like to explore these contradictions along with the ongoing concerns of what it means to be human, what it means to be free, and what it means to offer critical reflection on such matters, especially in the realm of political thought in terms of 21st century global challenges."

The Vice-Chancellor who loves Mathematics and cares about people, not things



He loves Mathematics, sudoku and jogging. He believes that understanding our place in the universe is far more important than the accumulation of material possessions. Meet the new Vice-Chancellor of Rhodes University, Dr Sizwe Mabizela.

If you're on the streets of Grahamstown in the Eastern Cape at 4.30 in the morning, you might see the Vice-Chancellor jogging past.

"It's a wonderful time of the day and it is one of the aspects of Grahamstown that makes living here so enjoyable. I can jog and enjoy the beauty of creation and the fresh air," says Dr Mabizela.

Jogging energises him for the very long day ahead. On most nights his office light burns deep into the night.

"Long hours don't bother me, I enjoy my work," he says. "I find the university environment very stimulating and I cannot imagine myself anywhere else but in an institution of higher learning."

Dr Mabizela is a professor of Mathematics and has been at Rhodes for 10 years. He was the absolute frontrunner for the position of Vice-Chancellor, out of 17 applications.

He has served as the Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Academic & Student Affairs at Rhodes from 2008 to the present. Prior to this, he was the Head of the Department of Mathematics (Pure and Applied) from 2004 to 2008.

He has also been the acting Vice-Chancellor of Rhodes University since the departure of the former Vice-Chancellor, Dr Saleem Badat, in July this year.

After eight years at Rhodes, Dr Badat resigned to take up a post in New York with the Andrew W Mellon Foundation Higher Education Programme.

In South Africa, where mathematics is emphasised as a key study area for future graduates, Rhodes now has a mathematical maestro at its helm.

"I love mathematics, and have done so since childhood," says Dr Mabizela, who has a PhD in *Parametric Approximation* from Pennsylvania State University in the United States.

"The beauty of mathematics is that it inculcates in one ways of thinking systematically and innovatively about the widest range of challenges."

The mathematics approach to problem solving, he explains, is to first break down the problem into "manageable chunks" rather than trying to deal with the problem in its entirety.

From here you tackle each of the chunks, using the power of logic and argument.

"At each stage of the process you rigorously interrogate your assumptions, and from here you will hopefully have found a way forward towards solving the bigger problem," he says.

The biggest problem we currently face in South Africa, he believes, is that, "we live in a globalised world in which there is a hegemonic dominance of the neoliberal free market logic, which makes the market the main thing. This breeds a society where people are preoccupied with the accumulation of personal wealth above all else," he explains.

As the new Vice-Chancellor he aims to lead by example in producing graduates who are not consumed with material gain.

"I have never had dreams of vast financial wealth, owning a multi-storey home or driving a fancy car. What is important is to gain knowledge that can help us understand our natural environment, human interactions and our place in the universe," he explains.

"It is all about developing a deeper understanding and appreciation of how we can live in this world in a sustainable manner, and in a manner that fosters social cohesion."

"And if, along this path, our graduates acquire significant material wealth, then my hope is that they will use it to make a change in the lives of those who are less fortunate in material and educational terms."

Dr Mabizela grew up in Ladysmith, KwaZulu Natal and matriculated in 1980 from St Chad's High School in Ladysmith.

His mother, Sibongile Mabizela, was a nurse and his late father, Christopher Mabizela, was a teacher.

"They were very loving parents who instilled in us the importance and value of education," he explains. My father constantly reminded us that he didn't have any material possessions to bequeath us but what he could do for us was to make sure we received quality education.

"My mother was a wonderful role model and she had a big influence on my interest in mathematics as she was very good at it. I was fascinated by it, and it came naturally to me. I was also very fortunate to have excellent mathematics teachers all the way from primary school through secondary school who developed my love of mathematics and gave me challenging problems, over and above the standard homework, to keep me interested."

This led to him enrolling for a BSc at the University of Fort Hare in 1981.

At that time, as a black person, you needed a ministerial permit to study at the so-called 'white' universities, and you could only get one if the so-called 'black' universities did not offer the particular degree programme you wanted to pursue. The BSc was not one of these.

"Those were highly turbulent political times," Dr Mabizela recalls.

"The government of the day had granted nominal independence to Ciskei, which included Fort Hare, and as students we were involved in the resistance movement against apartheid and its homeland policies."

The University of Fort Hare had such a rich history of educating struggle stalwarts that they were not going to allow it to be associated with the homeland government.

"We fought pitch battles with the police, the university was closed down on several occasions, and, along with several of my peers I was arrested in 1983 because of my role in student protests and in the mobilisation of the United Democratic Front (UDF) against the government," Dr Mabizela continues.

"The people we looked up to were Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu and Govan Mbeki, all of whom were on Robben Island. To find out what was happening in the liberation struggle, we would huddle around the radio and listen to Radio Freedom, which was broadcast on short wave from Lusaka, Zambia," recalls Dr Mabizela who completed his Honours and Master's in Mathematics at Fort Hare, and was awarded a scholarship in 1986 to do his PhD in the United States.

"It was a wonderful era in certain ways because the level of political consciousness was very high and most of us were united in the common cause of liberating the country from apartheid."

"People like Archbishop Desmond Tutu also had the foresight to set up scholarships for black South Africans to study in the United States, with the aim of preparing us to play a role in a free and liberated South Africa."

Thirty years later, however, he says: "As a nation we have lost our way, we have lost our moral compass; which is a great tragedy. Unbelievable levels of corruption, consumerism and materialism have engulfed the ideals that we held so dear, and the vision we had for this country."

"We could never have imagined that so many of those who were at the forefront of the liberation struggle would be the first ones to be so seduced by material possessions. It is a terrible disappointment."

What does he feel can be done to re-find our way as a nation?

"We need a revolution," he laughs. "But this is a different kind of revolution - it is the kind that can help us to realise our own humanity; something that can only reach its fullness if we affirm, defend and advance the humanity of others."

"This requires a revolutionary way of being," he explains. "Not one where we carry arms - but instead one guided by our wonderful constitution, and based on the principles of human rights, human dignity, social justice, non-sexism and equality; one that truly subscribes to that time honoured African philosophy of *Ubuntu*."

The role of universities in creating such a society, he adds, is to produce graduates who are thoughtful, critical and engaged citizens: "These are citizens who would want to be agents of social change and societal transformation, who would use their education and positions of power and influence to advance the cause of those who are less fortunate."

The role of schools is equally important to develop citizens with a caring heart and a deep value of education, says Dr Mabizela who serves on the schools' Maths Olympiad Committee and helps to set the problems - something he loves doing.

He and his wife Dr Phethiwe Matutu who is the Chief Director of the Department of Science and Technology, share a love of mathematics and education, which they impart to their 12-and-14-year-old daughters, Zinzi and Zama.

"They are both at Victoria Girls in Grahamstown, which is a top class government school that represents what all government schools in South Africa should be like," he says.

"We deliberately chose a government school because we wanted our girls to interact with others from diverse social, cultural and economic backgrounds so

that they do not become elitist in their way of being and can grow as well-rounded young girls ready to find their place in our society."

The girls are boarders at Victoria Girls as Dr Matutu is based in Pretoria and commutes between there and Grahamstown as often as she can. She joined the Department of Science and Technology after a long career as an academic, at three universities: the Universities of Cape Town and Stellenbosch, and Rhodes. She has a PhD in pure Mathematics from the University of Cape Town.

She and Dr Mabizela met when he was an academic at the University of Cape Town and she was working on her PhD. "We fell in love with each other and realised how much we wanted to be together, it's that simple," he says.

For him it is not a problem that his wife works in Pretoria:

"My wife is inspired by her position at the Department of Science and Technology, and that is important to me. We make the distance issue work for us and have done so for six years," says Dr Mabizela who is available to the girls when they need him, as his office is two minutes from Victoria Girls.

"It's another big advantage of being in Grahamstown. As an academic with a family here, you have a choice of excellent public and private schools, and you are close by if your children need you."

From his new office, Dr Mabizela will seamlessly assume his new role. For some time he has been leading the development of an Institutional Development Plan (IDP) for Rhodes - "it's a strategic document that will be the institution's compass for the next 10 years."

"In the process of formulating the IDP we have identified seven *Grand Challenges*," Dr Mabizela explains.

The seven challenges are to:

- Ensure financial sustainability of the University;
- Improve staff remuneration and salary competitiveness;
- Improve staff and student equity profile and advance transformation;
- Modernise systems, processes and procedures;
- Attend to infrastructure maintenance;
- Find funding for financially in need students; and
- Engage the local municipality to ensure provision of basic services such as water, sanitation and electricity.

He has applied himself to develop innovative ways to address each of these challenges.

To address academic equity, for example, he aims to ensure, *inter alia*, the continuation of the Next Generation Academic Programme at Rhodes, which focuses on attracting and developing top-achieving black and women academics to Rhodes.

Recent studies have shown that almost 20% of academics will retire in the next ten years, including half of the professoriate.

Since its inception in 2001, 44 new lecturers have participated in the 3-year Next Generation Academic Programme at Rhodes, which is the model being used to develop a national programme for all universities in South Africa.

"Our approach should be premised on- and guided by the principle of pursuing 'equity with quality and quality with equity', which our former Vice-Chancellor, Dr Badat, so eloquently advocated," says Dr Mabizela who has been hailed as "the first black African Vice-Chancellor of the 110-year-old institution that is Rhodes".

"I don't want us to be hung up on this," he says. "For me it is whether the university has identified a suitable and competent person to serve as its Vice-Chancellor and provide leadership for the institution at this time.

"I am deeply honoured and humbled to have been invited to serve as the Vice-Chancellor and I use the word serve advisedly, as my model of leadership is about serving, and something I hope to clearly demonstrate over the next seven years."

Congrats to new VC

Higher Education South Africa

Higher Education South Africa (HESA) welcomes the appointment of Dr Sizwe Mabizela as the 6th Principal and Vice-Chancellor of Rhodes University with effect from 1 November 2014.

Of this appointment, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Dr Jeffrey Mabelebele said: "Dr Mabizela's impeccable academic research; his leadership credentials and his track record in Higher Education - have earned him a place as a deserving Principal and Vice-Chancellor of Rhodes University. He will, without a doubt, contribute immensely to the exciting new growth and development phase of Rhodes University."

"HESA is delighted to welcome Dr Mabizela. We are confident that he will help create conditions for the university sector to prosper and thrive; and to address the pressing development needs and challenges facing our society," Dr Jeffrey Mabelebele said. "We congratulate him on his new role and look forward to working with him in the near future."

Eastern Cape Premier

EASTERN Cape Premier Phumulo Masualle has congratulated Rhodes University's newly appointed Principal and Vice-Chancellor Dr Sizwe Mabizela. Mabizela's appointment, with effect from November 1, was confirmed this week by the university's council chairperson, Mr Vuyo Kahla.

Masualle said: "We welcome this appointment and hope to work with the Rhodes University community and Dr Mabizela as we seek to address the human resources development challenges of our province."

"We are proud of Rhodes University's prestigious place as a premier institution in the production of knowledge in the Eastern Cape and its graduates who continue to serve society at home and abroad."

"On behalf of the Eastern Cape Provincial Government, I wish to extend our heartfelt congratulations to Dr Mabizela and wish him well during his tenure."

By Sithandiwe Velaphi (Source: *The New Age*)

President of the Convocation of Rhodes University

This appointment of Dr Sizwe Mabizela as Vice-Chancellor/principal of Rhodes University by the council of the university is a fantastic one. He follows the tradition of Rhodes Vice-Chancellors who have been outstanding scientists, mathematicians and leaders.

He is concerned about students who are qualified to enter university but are unable to do so because of poverty.

In my capacity as President of the Convocation of Rhodes University, I send him hearty congratulations on behalf of all former students.

By The Reverend Dr Simon Gqubule, Uitenhage

(Source: *The Herald*)

Former Vice-Chancellor

I am thrilled by the announcement of the appointment of Dr Sizwe Mabizela as the 6th and new Vice-Chancellor of Rhodes University.

The University has chosen wisely. My successor is a person of impeccable integrity with a strong commitment to human values, ethical principles, equity and social justice.



He possesses the knowledge, expertise and experience to lead Rhodes University into the future, as it strives to maintain and continually renew itself as one of Africa's outstanding research universities and to become a more socially inclusive and equitable institution.

Dr Mabizela is able to assume his new and important responsibilities confident in the knowledge that he enjoys the strong support of all university constituencies.

I wish him well and look forward to his contributions to both Rhodes and South African higher education more generally.

Dr Saleem Badat, Program Director: International Higher Education & Strategic Projects, The Andrew W Mellon Foundation

Rhodes on the forefront in digital thesis

Dr Peter Clayton

Rhodes University was the first higher education institution in Africa to mount a digital thesis on the World Wide Web in 1998, and has been at the forefront of making research as freely available as possible in recent decades.

In 2013 Rhodes joined the list of signatories to the *Berlin Declaration on Open Access to Knowledge*, committing itself to implementing a policy that encourages its researchers to deposit a copy of all their published articles in an open access repository, and encouraging researchers to publish their research articles in open access journals where a suitable journal exists and provide the support to enable that to happen.

According to Mr Wynand van der Walt, Head Librarian: Technical Services at Rhodes University, open access is not an issue which is up for philosophical debate. "Open access needs to be placed on the agendas of governing bodies, to debate how it will feed into the institutional research trajectory at a national level and into the global knowledge society," he said.

He said open access calls for the transformation of the publishing industry as it currently stands. He believes it is essential to encourage debate on how to encourage exposure of research, while at the same time adhering to international requirements for access. As access to research is becoming less and less affordable, Van der Walt said the increasing costs comprise the biggest threat to universities, as access can begin to limit research capacity.

Given the significant fiscal constraints many institutions of higher learning are under to access research, Van der Walt said it is not surprising that developed nations are leading in research production, but noted that even Harvard University has made public its struggle to fund access to research.

"As research institutions we hold the rights of knowledge and power to transform scholarly publications. We have to leave a legacy, and part of that is to make sure access to information and research is sustainable and that students have this information for years to come. Without this information, Rhodes and other institutions in their current shape and form will simply cease to exist," he said.

Dr Peter Clayton, Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Research and Development at Rhodes University described Rhodes as a research-led institution, and explained that many universities' reputations reflect the caliber of research.

"The bigger the dissemination pool for knowledge, the more influence you have. It makes sense for us to put our knowledge out into public space and enable people to access it for free. This has the most potential influence for scholarly voice," he said.

With a combination of teachers and researchers, Rhodes values its intellectual space, he said, committing to "fully embrace open access if it builds this knowledge environment".

Rhodes is in the process of compiling an institutional development plan, a significant portion of which is dedicated to improving the research environment.

According to Dr Clayton, "the publishing model of the global academy is bizarre; somehow the publishers of the world have managed to set up a business model for tertiary institutions that enslave us in the way that researchers do work. They give it away for free, and then buy it back," he said, noting that while publishers add value, he is hopeful that over time this expensive publishing model will be



replaced with a more "reasonable" one.

Rhodes has a repository hosted in the library, which is an open access compliant archive, enabling academics and researchers to put up their work to be mined by anyone in the world.

Dr Clayton said "this is really important for us. The number of hits we get on items in some of those repositories is huge, much higher than the number of citations from academic journals." Rhodes' policy also requires that all Rhodes theses are open access.

He said Rhodes is proceeding towards open access in a sober way. "Just because it is called open access doesn't mean all people who trade in the area are ethical. We don't want to pander to unscrupulous profiteering. It should be about making knowledge freely available at the lowest cost we can," he said, noting that the maximum charge for a paper at Rhodes is R5000.

Online access to maximise research investments?

“Open access” to information - the free, immediate, online access to the results of scholarly research, and the right to use and re-use those results - has the power to transform the way research and scientific inquiry are conducted, with the potential to maximise research investments, increase the exposure and use of published research, facilitate the ability to conduct research across available literature, and enhance the overall advancement of scholarship.

This according to academics and researchers who were at Rhodes University recently participating in an Open Access symposium in observance of the International Open Access Week initiative, hosted by Rhodes University Library in collaboration with the Rhodes Research Office.

Dr Reggie Raju, Deputy Director of Client Liaison Services at the University of Cape Town (UCT) Libraries described open access as a continental and national issue, and as an institutional imperative and said it is incumbent on South African researchers and institutions to contribute to changing the research divide between the global south and north through the adoption of open access policies and practices.

“All three of these aspects are knitted together with one cycle leading into the other and society becoming the richer for it. Information is the one commodity that grows in value the more it is used, so it is important to have support from institutions in their totality,” he said.

According to Dr Raju, South Africa has a significant role to play in advocating for the open sharing of scholarly literature for the growth and development of the country and continent, more broadly.

He said, while researchers are the obvious beneficiaries of such practices, others stand to benefit too.

“I was lucky enough to attend the Berlin conference and while I had always believed open access to be beneficial to researchers, it was there that I learnt for the first time that 60% of information accessed via the open access platform is used by the layman,” he said.

Dr Raju shared his opinion that open access facilitates growth of research and society, connecting researcher, society and development. The issue of connectedness highlights that the research process is only complete when the end product is distributed as widely as possible, he said, noting that “more often than not the authors, reviewers and editors don’t get paid yet we pay exorbitant amounts of money for that research”.

Open access is required from the conceptualisation of the research problem to the distribution of research findings. Failing to do so would be equivalent to “relegating Africa to the periphery of word knowledge production” he said. “The upsurge of South Africa’s research agenda is reliant on open access to scholarly research,” he said, citing evidence that open access increases the impact of the researcher.

Ms Susan Veldsman

According to Ms Susan Veldsman, director of the Scholarly Publishing Unit for the Academy of Science of South Africa (ASSAf), open access does not have to be an “all or nothing” issue.

“I personally have a very moderate approach to open access in its entirety. Because of how universities are funded we need to step back and look at this from a much broader perspective,” she said.

South Africa currently hosts 24 open access institutional repositories, she said, with almost 30% of the 284 accredited journals in the Department of Higher





Education and Training (DHET) system registered as open access journals.

Despite this progress, she called for challenges to the current policy and procedures for the measurement of research output of public higher education institutions, which she said should be replaced with a quality assurance system.

"The system is not equal. There are no standard quality checks in journals," she said, noting statistics that up to 80% of all research output in South Africa is published by regional journals, and the rest by international journals.

Given that the majority of monies earned is through local journals, she challenged audience members to consider what those in higher education institutions are doing to assist those undertaking this work.

In addition she said the South African education sector is faced with the challenges of having to produce a highly qualified human resource base which is needed for national development; develop the next generation of academics to sustain and transform the system; and produce high-quality research and innovation outputs that can enhance the country's global competitiveness.

In an effort to address this, ASSAf has established an external peer reviewing process for South Africa, dividing the 284 journals into broad subject groups, with appointed panels and reviewers. The organization formulated a process of guidelines and editor questionnaires, in an attempt to assist editors, and published five research reports. ASSAf is now undertaking reviews of new applications, books and conference proceedings for accreditation for the DHET.

Open Access Week, a global event now entering its eighth year, provides an opportunity for academic and research communities to learn about the potential benefits of Open Access, share what they've learned with colleagues, and attempt to inspire wider participation in helping to make Open Access a new norm in scholarship and research.

Research funding agencies, academic institutions, researchers and scientists, teachers and students are supporting a move towards Open Access in increasing numbers every year, and have utilized Open Access Week as a platform to host faculty votes on campus open-access policies, issue reports on the societal and economic benefits of Open Access, and commit new funds in support of open-access publication.



Rhodes celebrates multilingualism

Rhodes University staff and students recently gathered to celebrate multilingualism and diversity in a cacophony of cultural colour, showcasing performances by students in a range of languages, mediums and genres.

The event, a joint initiative between the School of Languages, in collaboration with Professor Russell Kaschula's SARChI Chair in the field of Intellectualisation of African Languages, Multilingualism and Education, and the Rhodes University Language Committee, highlighted the promotion of multilingualism as encapsulated in the University's newly unveiled Language Policy believed to be among the most progressive in South Africa.

During the event, students from departments and faculties across the university including Journalism, Education and Pharmacy demonstrated their knowledge of various languages including isiXhosa, French, German, Latin, Greek, Chinese and Afrikaans.

According to Professor Patrice Mwepu, Head of the School of Languages, "We are dealing with languages with the aim not only of promoting the understanding of those who live with us in our community, but also of producing graduates who have the consciousness of what a better society should be."

Prof Mwepu recounted an idea from an introduction to an ethics module during his studies of philosophy. "We were told that 'there are human beings who have lost everything that is human'. Today, I strongly believe that the lost part of our humanity can still be restored through various aspects of our

curricula. I also believe that the most important part is the understanding of the existence of otherness, and togetherness."

"The learning of different languages makes students fully participate in the positive reconstruction of ourselves in a world that is conceived as a shared space. It shouldn't be only the geographic space that needs to be shared. The invisible needs also to be managed. Our heart needs to provide a space for others to come."

The understanding of multilingualism at the School of Languages is underpinned by the idea that it is not merely about "the existence of more than one language in the same society", but the constant effort to master more than one language and take active part in the development of the community.

"We are proud at the School of Languages to say that we make constant efforts to widen our space," he said, referring to the various programmes extended into the faculty of Pharmacy, Education and the School of Journalism and Media Studies.



Professor Patrice Mwepu

"I think what I am": Heritage, Identity and Social Cohesion

African Language Studies in association with the National Research Foundation (NRF) South African Chairs Initiative (SARChI Chair) recently hosted the Southern African Folklore Society's International Conference under the theme, "I think what I am": *Heritage, Identity and Social Cohesion* at Rhodes University.

The conference featured a keynote address by Ekkehard Wolff, Emeritus Professor and Chair: African Linguistics, Leipzig University, and Visiting Professor in the School of Languages at Rhodes University, as well as an address by Ruth Finnegan, Emeritus Professor of Sociology at the Open University, United Kingdom.

Other presentations included the role of technology in preserving, restoring and the dissemination of indigenous knowledge; social media as part of reclaiming language and identity; innovation and oral literature forms; the role of oral literature in guarding against gender abuse; problematising orality and its role in a changing global reality; orality and urban youth culture, ethnomusicology, education, health, power, politics and religion.

Professor Chrissie Boughey, Dean of Teaching and Learning at Rhodes, welcomed all the guests and participants and said that Rhodes was a particularly fitting place for a conference of this nature given the strong tradition in the Humanities, "thankfully not weakened by moves which have seen large numbers of students move into areas such as Commerce during the last fifteen or twenty years".

"Within the Humanities we have strong and vibrant interests in languages and their associated literatures. Our School of Languages not only has a thriving Department of African Languages but also teaches French, German and the Classics," she said.

"We also have a flourishing Department of English. Perhaps our greatest strength, however, is as hosts of the NRF funded SARChI Chair in the

Intellectualisation of the African Languages, Multilingualism and Education," she said, noting that the hosting of this Chair is supported by other initiatives on campus such as the work done by the Centre for Higher Education Research, Teaching and Learning (CHERTL), which encourages academic teachers to allow their students to draw on languages other than English for their learning.

The aim of the Chair is to produce high-quality postgraduate students; as well as strengthen research and scientific output in the identified thematic area of Intellectualisation of African Languages, Multilingualism and Education and retains a focus on corpus development in African languages, African languages and technology, literary studies in African languages, acquisition of African languages as additional languages and techniques, methods and approaches to language policy implementation plan in multilingual higher education contexts.

In addition, the university is in the process of introducing a bilingual Bachelor of Education degree, an initiative of the Faculty of Education, which will see student teachers using two languages in their training and subsequent teaching. According to Prof Boughey, this holds the promise of furthering the special interests in language and literature at Rhodes.

Emeritus Prof Finnegan holds a first-class degree in Classics, a doctorate in cultural (literary) anthropology (based on fieldwork in Sierra Leone), both from the University of Oxford, and five years university teaching in Africa.

Emeritus Prof Wolff studied general and African linguistics, ethnology, and sociology at the University of Hamburg, Germany, where he received a doctorate in African Linguistics in 1972. This was followed by a second degree ("Habilitation") at the same institution in 1980 where he later became Professor of African Linguistics (1983-94). From 1994 to his retirement in 2009, he held the Chair of African Languages and Literatures at the University of Leipzig, Germany.

Experience of learning isiXhosa has been an eye-opener

With a focus on developing isiXhosa language skills used in communicating with patients and to understand and interpret cultural issues embedded in isiXhosa communication, isiXhosa for Pharmacy aims to equip students with the necessary skills to enable pharmacist-patient interactions.

The course, which has had about a 20% take-up among final year students; equips students with the skills necessary to conduct basic conversations in isiXhosa within a health context; demonstrates knowledge of common cultural practices amongst amaXhosa and shows an understanding of how a lack of competence in the language and culture of patients could influence medicine-taking behaviour.

According to Professor Rod Walker, Dean of Pharmacy at Rhodes, becoming culturally sensitive, specifically in respect to healthcare, is crucial in the African context. As the roles of pharmacists are increasingly acknowledged to be changing and including a broader sphere of responsibility such as addressing elements of upbringing and culture to better manage medicine-taking behaviour, Prof Walker said learning an African language can encourage students to better understand diversity and cultural sensitivity, aspects which will help in their work in communities.

"I'm pleased the students are enjoying it. The other value of the course is that it is offered by people who are passionate about the language, and their enthusiasm is tangible," he said.

According to lecturer Dr Pamela Maseko, the main purpose of the course is to provide linguistic and cultural proficiency to students to be able to engage effectively in their work as pharmacists in contexts where isiXhosa is spoken. The aim of providing this proficiency is not only so that they use isiXhosa for its instrumental value, for themselves, but for the benefit of their patients as well.

"The idea is that the use of isiXhosa during pharmacy-patient consultation should facilitate the patient's voice, and the 'fears' that often arise because of the difference in language and culture between the patient and the pharmacist should be alleviated and the patient should be an equal partner in the communication event," she said. In reaching a conclusion on how a patient's condition can be treated, both health and socio-cultural concerns of the patient have to be taken into consideration, and these have to be "heard" through the medium that the patient is comfortable in, she added.

Learning is structured around themes where language knowledge and cultural knowledge is elucidated and learning starts from the learner who, for example, is given language tools to be able to introduce themselves and provide personal and social background information about themselves in the context of mock pharmacist-patient interviews. These interviews used for learning are adopted from real-life contexts by the course designer who observes patient-pharmacist interviews in three Grahamstown pharmacies and then creates the course around topical themes.

According to Dr Maseko, "It is a great pleasure to see students at the end of the course, who had no knowledge of a Nguni language, being able to strike a conversation with us when they see us anywhere on campus. But a greater pleasure is derived when you receive reports where they have used isiXhosa to communicate with a patient in their Community Experience Programme and make a breakthrough. Most important of all is students' understanding that respect of self also means respect of others, and that language and cultural awareness and sensitivity have a big contribution in this."

For final year Pharmacy students Avish Rampearie and Sanam Ranjit, who participated in an isiXhosa health-related dialogue during the event, the experience of learning isiXhosa as an elective has been both eye-opening and helpful.

According to Ranjit, "this has made us so much more



Dr Pamela Maseko

culturally aware. I love the language, it is passionate and full of respect. We are lucky enough to have experienced this."

For Rampearie, the challenge of learning a new language, while daunting at times, has paid off. Originally from Natal where isiZulu is spoken widely, Rampearie was not familiar with the cadence of isiXhosa and underwent a baptism of fire in the first few weeks of the course.

"The course has been highly beneficial: I did not know a word of isiXhosa going into the course but I gained such a brilliant life skill. Of course my learning does not stop now but the course equipped me with skills that can be developed further," he said.

He added that he is now able to converse with catering staff at Rhodes and "show my gratitude for the services in a way they can understand".

"Taking that initiative also allows you to develop friendships and bonds which contributes to one's personal growth. In the final year course we make visits to the community where isiXhosa is most widely spoken. Having skills to communicate better with people gave depth to which I could communicate," he concluded.

From 'orature' to 'literature'

Drawing on some of the inherent theoretical features implicit in German-speaking African linguistics, Ekkehard Wolff, Emeritus Professor and Chair: African Linguistics, Leipzig University and Visiting Professor in the School of Languages at Rhodes University, showed how one major task of African linguistics is the theory-based description and documentation of unwritten African languages and their standardisation for writing purposes and for use in formal education.

German-speaking African linguistics was established towards the end of the 19th century with a focus on the study of languages and cultures in mostly oral African societies, dealing with languages which are, or have been until quite recently, unwritten.

His keynote address "Losing the flavour? From 'orature' to 'literature', and on 'choices' when compiling dictionaries for unwritten African languages", was delivered at the recent International Conference of the Southern African Folklore Society held at Rhodes University.

Prof Wolff said that as soon as a previously unwritten language becomes the object of linguistic and philological documentation and research, in Africa as elsewhere, it "crosses the Rubicon from oral to written and undergoes the first steps in the transition from orature to literature".

He suggested how the almost natural process may be studied under at least two perspectives, including the linguistic and cultural "costs" of such transition, as well as that of the ideological burden in terms of stereotype and prejudice when researchers with a "Western" background, by extension including researchers who have been trained under the impact of "Western" scholarship, approach languages and cultures of "others".

According to Prof Wolff, this links up with lexicographic work on languages which are predominantly or exclusively used for oral communication, by influencing the choices that lexicographers face in terms of lemma identification and speech variability when compiling the - often first ever - bilingual dictionary of a hitherto unwritten language.

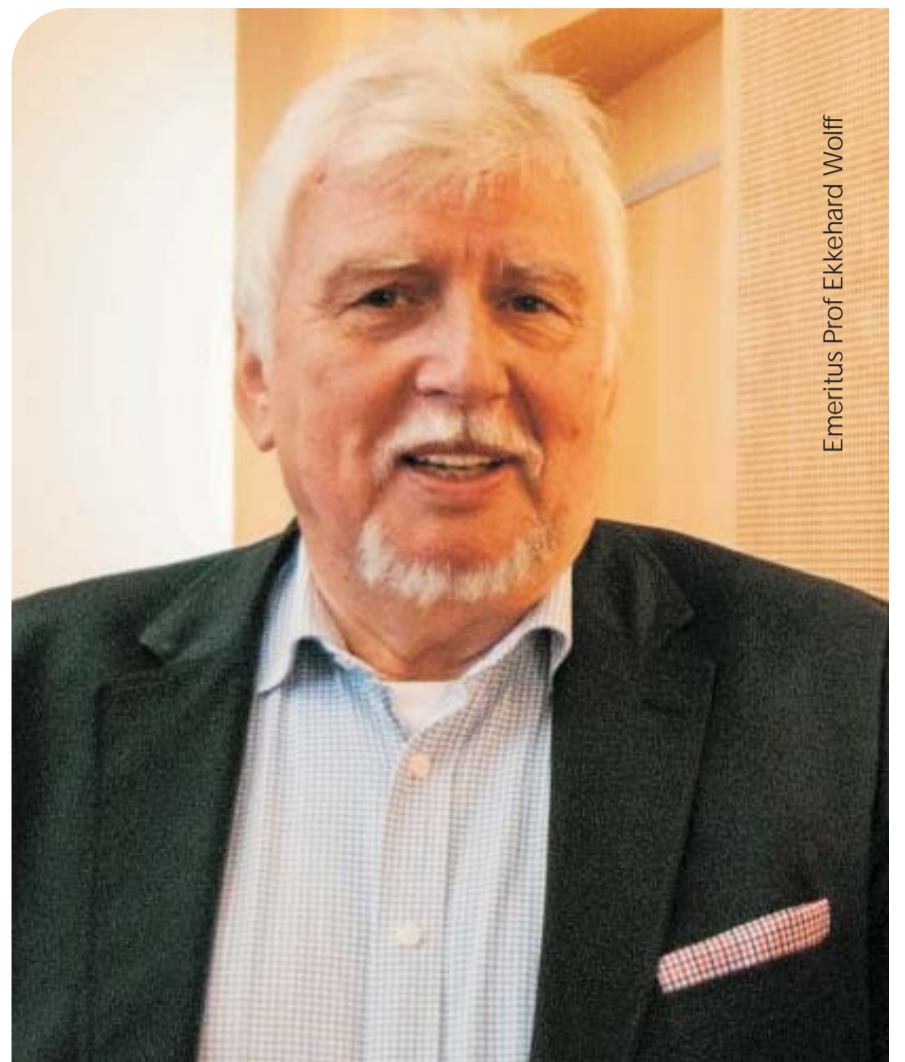
While the issue of "transition" from oral to literal could be expected to be a central issue in African linguistics, it is not, which may come as a surprise, Prof Wolff said. The question of why this should be so is an interesting one which relates to the ideological positions of Eurocentrism and Orientalism.

"Working with and on unwritten African languages, in particular as a 'Western' expatriate in Africa, invokes a non-trivial question: To what extent is it at all possible for linguistic and cultural aliens to produce reliable research results concerning somebody else's language and culture?" he asked.

Eurocentrism and Orientalism, which Prof Wolff described as "constant intellectual threats which lurk in the darker corners of our brains when we, as 'Westerners', approach features of alterity" (the linguistic and cultural 'other'), reflect a mindset which, "often subconsciously, creates condescending attitudes towards non-European languages and cultures by even highly educated members of so-called 'Western civilisations'".

For an exclusively oral mother tongue in Africa to emerge as a standard language used in higher domains such as literacy and education the minimum requirements include phonology-based orthographies, reference grammars, and dictionaries, ideally to be complemented by standardised post-literacy reading materials.

"Modern African linguistics does regularly provide such theory-based phonologies and grammars for individual



Emeritus Prof Ekkehard Wolff

languages, but the provision of dictionaries and post-literacy materials for a new reading culture to emerge is hardly ever considered to be among the tasks of mainstream African linguistics and is, therefore, neglected most of time," he said.

It is also necessary to explore the implications of the "ideological paradoxon" involved in idiomatic English language usage, "that we speak about languages being 'reduced' to writing, while, on the other hand, we speak about languages or even cultures or societies as a whole being 'upgraded' from oral to literal". It is worth considering the linguistic "costs" of the transition from purely oral to occasionally, at least, literal expression.

"How literal should we take the English idiomatic phrase that languages are being 'reduced to writing' - what kind of reduction do we imply, what is it that will get lost on the way?" A second question, according to Prof Wolff, relates to the cultural "costs" of the process of "upgrading" languages from oral to written, "if we are right to assume that cultural identity hinges, partly at least, on certain unique features and particular aesthetics of verbal art form in one's mother-tongue language which, as one could fear, might get 'lost' on the way up. Will and can literary texts share and preserve all, or at least most, salient linguistic features of their oral forerunners?"

In his answer, Prof Wolff identified the artistry of tone rhymes in African poetry to be the most likely aesthetic features to be lost, since linguistic tones are usually not represented in writing.

The fourth annual *Thinking Africa* colloquium

The proliferation of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in Africa in recent decades has been accompanied by an increasing scepticism about their ability to contribute meaningfully to struggles for social justice.

With a view to providing a platform for considering and debating the role of NGOs in popular struggles on the continent, the fourth annual *Thinking Africa* colloquium, hosted by Rhodes University's Department of Political and International Studies,

brought together academics writing on NGOs, individuals involved in NGOs and activists working in social movements under the theme "NGOs and Social Justice in Africa".

Thinking Africa colloquiums seek to encourage careful consideration of key issues related to the study of Africa and typically include active participation from postgraduate students with the aim of encouraging conversation and debate between current and future scholars.

The romanticisation of black life and struggles

According to digital communications consultant, campaigner, blogger and freelancer Koketso Moeti, language and political education has been a key part of the practice which reinscribes the superiority of the white middle class.

"When confronted on this, leftists like to respond that political education is necessary. What strikes me is how language is mobilised so as to perpetuate the inability of white leftists to relate to sources outside of their sphere of reference."

In her presentation, "Infiltration and instigation: How white suburban activists act out left politics on black bodies", She unpacked the "romanticisation of black life and struggles" which has come to characterise the NGO sector, within which mobilisation is understood as agency.

"But this mobilisation happens within a white, male, heterosexual superstructure and it is within this structure that choices are made - they are never made in a vacuum, and are influenced by this superstructure. This intervention of calling on agency is extremely compromised. We have serious questions to ask ourselves of the way things are being done," she argued.

Pointing to a gap in research as to whether social movements operate in a hierarchical way with decentralised decision-making structures, Ms Moetsi said it is particularly significant at this point in South Africa's history to consider how critical internal democracy is and how some social movements have been inflated as a result.

"Despite interventions and reflections on solidarity the basic structure remains the same - a handful of white suburban activists engaging with black township activists where the central thing is the solidarity of the moment, she said, noting that the division of labour remains clear, as "black militants are sought by white suburban activists".

"We need to reach a point that when people are acting in solidarity with social movements, this should involve placing them in a position of putting privilege at some risk. This risk even involves sitting there and knowing the world doesn't revolve around you and your comfort zone. You aren't what you think you are. Structures of privilege preclude judgement, making it harder for people to think critically about what they are doing."

She suggested that activists "leave township politics to itself", given the number of "dodgy power relations" that arise with such interventions. Instead, she encouraged colleagues to self-reflect on their work, which she described as being critical to society.

"Where is the self-critique? I'm not seeing it. Where is the reflection on how your own personal political practice is racially inflected? I'm not seeing it." In addition, rather than looking to practice outside, she suggested activists concentrate on "how you can practice your radicalness in your own space."

"If you want to be radical in your own life and there was a trust fund set up by your family during apartheid, don't keep that generational wealth in your life. Think of ways you can be radical. I can give many examples of where people can be radical in their own lives without involving a black body to do it," she said.

Thinking emancipation

Despite the major differences between non-governmental organisations (NGOs) on the continent, it is possible and necessary to understand NGOs in relation to an idea of emancipation (equality, justice, freedom, dignity) which some NGOs uphold and many argue is their purpose. This is according to Professor Michael Neocosmos, Director of the Unit for the Humanities at Rhodes University (UHURU) who presented "Navigating the pitfalls of state democracy: Thinking NGOs from an emancipatory perspective".

Thinking emancipation does not involve a utopian conception of a future society, Prof Neocosmos explained, but rather "concerns a politics of the 'here and now' founded on an 'excessive' collective subjectivity which is valid for all and not only for certain sections of society however poor or oppressed."

Contrary to much left opinion, there is no major political distinction between NGOs and social movements, as all such civil society organisations generally operate within the limits of practice and thought largely set out by the state or "in dialogue" with the state, within the globally hegemonic discourse of good governance, human rights and democracy".

Irrespective of the kind of NGO in question, their relations to the state are such that they are necessarily legitimated by the state, rendering institutional distance from the state a "spurious distinction".

"Without this legitimacy conferred by power they could not exist." As a result, according to Prof Neocosmos, 'excessive' modes of politics with a potential for emancipatory practices today are more likely to exist outside or at best at the

margins of civil society and are excluded from any 'public sphere'.

As such, an emancipatory politics today "can only be found in a small number of sites where excess beyond the various domains of politics regulated by the state is made possible".

For Prof Neocosmos, the thought and practice of emancipation requires a break from NGO subjectivity, which, "despite what may be thought, is always contained within a state subjectivity that disables the thought of a universal notion of emancipation".

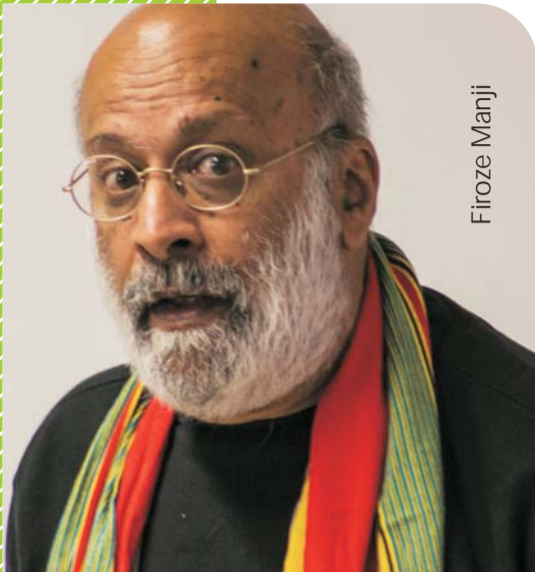
"The enabling of emancipatory politics therefore requires a transcending or exceeding of NGO thinking into a universal egalitarian practice, something which NGOs, due to their function in society, and one may also add due to their consequent structure, of themselves cannot possibly enable," he said.

An emancipatory politics can exist only when a collective subjectivity is self-created and exceeds the interests of that particular group by referring to principles of universal equality.

"We can refer to this as 'disinterested interest', in other words emancipatory politics is founded on a universal politics which eschews interest and its expression in identity as a matter of principle: it's only interest is disinterest so to speak."

"If such a universality is absent, identity politics can easily collapse into particularisms or communitarianisms which can then easily degenerate into versions of fascism. Emancipatory politics is therefore not identitarian unless that identity itself expresses some form of universality," he argued.

The struggle for NGO emancipation



Firoze Manji

"The pitiful cry of civil society that another world is possible stands in stark contrast to the shouts of social movements that another world is necessary." This according to Kenyan-born author, activist and editor-in-chief Firoze Manji.

His presentation entitled "Can NGOs play an emancipatory role in contemporary Africa?" challenged understandings of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and called for a reframing of their roles and responsibilities in society.

He said academics have a crucial role to play in reformulating understandings of the roles of NGOs in society, and encouraged researchers to be actively engaged in the struggles ordinary people are undertaking in a way that listens to the experience of those people.

"There is a richness of thinking and perspectives that need to be listened to, and we have an obligation as putative intellectuals to formulate and engage on a theory of liberation in the 21st century dealing with the particular nature of capital in the way it has evolved," he said.

According to Mr Manji, the term "NGO" is too broad a category to be useful analytically and the rise in the popularity of its use, like that of 'civil society', is associated with the establishment of neoliberalism, characterised by the domination of financialised capitalism.

He explained how "development" NGOs became, consciously or otherwise, the "handmaidens of neoliberalism" in their willingness to become the new missionaries, needing "little tethering to confine their visions exclusively by the parameters set by imperial donors".

He defined two forms of freedoms, including emancipatory, in which individuals and communities push boundaries and challenge those who delimit their freedom; and license freedoms, in which the parameters are set and constrained by others rather than those who seek their own freedom.

"The NGOs I've been critical of are most concerned with license freedoms. Human rights organisations work on the same paradigm - they might be more vociferous of human rights violations but they don't contest the right of the rulers to rule, and they take no account of historical origins that give rise to situations," he argued.

License freedoms are popular today, he added, with no challenge made to the state or operations of capital. "Large sections of civil society beg only that capital should behave nicely. Forgotten is the bloody and genocidal history of capitalism," he said.

The nature of the (post-colonial) state from which NGOs seek license freedoms is such that "NGOs need no persuasion to collude with capital, which seems pragmatic. Capital begins to dictate the agenda; it interferes with local peoples movements that have traditionally been self-reliant. Real political resistance offers no such shortcuts. The NGO-sation of politics threatens to turn resistance into a 9-5 salaried job."

According to him, the Lancaster House Agreement signed in 1979 which brought independence to Rhodesia and covered the Independence Constitution, pre-independence arrangements, and a ceasefire, fundamentally deracialised the state and "dressed up the organs of the state in the colours of the national flag".

"What people omitted to recognise was that these were colonial states, formed and established to protect and advance the interests of particular parties. The structure of the state was meant to protect the interests of capital and no amount of fiddling with it would deliver change, even if you had the best of intentions".

This contestation with capital occurs not only in the workplace but in all corners of life, he said, and the roles of NGOs must be assessed in relation to capitalism and its manifestation in the peripheries, such as transnational corporations, finance capital and the neo-colonial state.

"The reality is that most NGOs are dominated by a particular class, speak a language that is full of dogma, assumes that there are answers to all the questions posed, rarely listens to the struggles that are going on, and are not accountable to the very people they claim to be working for and with."

He suggested that members of civil society assess organisations including institutions, academia and other forms, in relation to their role in the struggles of the oppressed and exploited for emancipatory freedoms and not just by the structural form that such organisations take.

"In the struggle for emancipation private organisations such as NGOs' role has to be focused on acts of solidarity, not acts of charity. Their role is to amplify the voices of the oppressed, not to speak on their behalf. The name of the game is emancipation - the struggle to reassert ones humanity, to have the courage and audacity to proclaim that. I think that has to be the basis upon which everything else is done."

"Schizophrenia is a real lived experience"

Western Cape team leader at Activate! Change Drivers, a network of young leaders equipped to drive change for the public good across South Africa, Ms Injairu Kulundu, shared insights from her seven years as a facilitator of social change about "the knowledge about NGOs we make public and the private knowledge we only dare to whisper in conversations in the corridors".

In "The obscure anatomy of the NGO sector", she teased out the hidden spaces on the NGO sector, reflecting on a type of "internal schizophrenia" that persists in the sector.

"Over the years I have been fascinated with the contrasts between what NGOs say they do and how they treat themselves internally. Their visions and missions characterise wanting to work on the world, but some of their internal dynamics paint a very different picture to how they portray themselves."

"Staff have to keep up values but are often working in spaces that demonstrate prejudice on many levels. More often than not those in high management are white or of mixed origin, and those who do work on the ground are black

Africans," she said.

She said some NGOs in the Western Cape are described as "cappuccinos" - white foam on top, a creamy middle and black at the bottom, referring to the racial demographics that comprise many.

"Those at the bottom feel their competencies are conflated with race, and they feel underpaid and undervalued for their contributions. The irony for me is that those at the bottom, the foot soldiers, often hold the most important job of converting the vision of NGOs into communities. This becomes very intense when you are serving your own demographic."

She is fascinated by the coded language that happens in that space, "because despite the curses people might utter under their breath when they step out into the world, they must find the language to engage with communities with dignity."

"I am moved when audiences themselves can see the integral flaws but still open themselves up to the process. Schizophrenia is a real lived experience, and this interactive space between practitioners and participants is underestimated."

"The work they do is often not seen," she said.

Tricky paths NGOs traverse



Professor Kirk Helliker

The relationship between NGOs and social struggles, including rural struggles in South Africa, is a problematic one fraught with difficulties. This relationship, like all social relationships, is marked by tensions and countervailing tendencies, and how NGOs negotiate this relationship depends often on the balance of social forces, notably the strength of existing rural movements.

In "NGOs and rural movements in contemporary South Africa" Professor Kirk Helliker, head of the Department of Sociology at Rhodes University, provided a socio-political context for contemporary NGOs and highlighted the tricky path NGOs traverse, particularly given the dangers of upward accountability arising from donor funding and dependence.

According to Prof Helliker, although pre-1994 South Africa has a "proud history of rural struggles", including the Pondo Revolt over fifty years ago, rural movements in post-apartheid South Africa have never reached the critical mass necessary to shift the balance of power towards far-reaching change.

The devastating effects of the 1913 Natives Land Act remain vividly and disturbingly etched in the South African countryside, he said, accompanied by the failure of agrarian change, including the deeply reformist character of state politics and the dearth of grassroots rural struggle.

"The intense decades-long struggles against apartheid have been defused, incorporated into and institutionalised by the logics, rationalities and imperatives of the post-apartheid state's technocratic-style of democracy. Indeed popular - including rural - struggles generally are discouraged, delegitimised and repressed by the apparatuses of the ANC state," he argued.

A "politics of demand" in contemporary South Africa in which the state readily displays openness, transparency and responsiveness to popular struggles is a troublesome, fraught and uncertain venture, comprising a detachment from popular struggles. This has become increasingly clear to a number of NGOs currently seeking agrarian transformation, as reflected in their lukewarm response to civil society land summits initiated and held by the state in recent years.

Prof Helliker argued that the state's detachment from popular struggles arises for two main reasons. Firstly, the ANC government has sought to domesticate urban and rural popular struggles by reducing them to ANC party politics and thereby incorporating, institutionalising and subduing them. This is exemplified by the

deepening formal recognition and authority of traditional authorities in the former Bantustans as found in controversial legislation such as the Traditional Leadership and Governance Framework Act of 2003.

"In the case of struggles which do not fit neatly into the ANC's logic of state politics and which sit uncomfortably beyond its reach, it de-legitimises, criminalises and represses them, as it did at times with the Western Cape farm strikes," he said.

Secondly, the form of the South African state has been increasingly marked by a range of 'centripetal tendencies' which has led to 'institutional centralisation' within the state, which in turn, inhibit the state from creating 'institutional spaces for democratic participation'.

While the struggle against apartheid, at least in the later years, is generally recognised as an urban-based struggle, many of the current urban struggles - including the struggles of shack-dweller movements such as *Abahlali baseMjondolo* - entail struggles around the land question in its urban manifestations.

At the same time, rural struggles cannot be reduced to land struggles, as labour struggles continue to be of crucial significance given for example the ongoing predominance of large-scale (mainly white) commercial farms in the South African countryside.

He explained how every day and organised struggles are critical for any prospects for genuine agrarian and land reform, implying that a fundamental pre-condition for any meaningful agrarian transformation is local mobilisation, organisation and struggles, "and quite possibly those which stand at some distance from state politics".

A significant body of literature now exists on rural struggles, which have been of great significance globally since the neo-liberal restructuring of the 1980s, including in relation to transnational agrarian movements such as *La Via Campesina* and more locally-based movements such as the *Movimento dos Trabalhadores Sem Terra* (MST) in Brazil. These movements as a whole incorporate diverse categories of rural people, including the landless, indigenous people, the unemployed, peasants, women and proletarians. Like social movements more broadly, these rural movements display two broad strategies for change - state-centred politics and society-centred politics - which are often combined in fluid forms. The relationship between movements and the state further complicates the world of NGOs, as their work becomes embedded in shifting movement-state dynamics.

According to Prof Helliker, this dynamic is clear with regard to rural struggles. "Wariness by rural movements with respect to political parties and the state more broadly because of the possible ensuing incorporation into - and subordination to - representative politics is an important theme in terms of the interface between movements and NGOs."

"This arises in part because NGOs themselves are often state-centred in their practices, such that the space for small community-based initiatives to promote voluntary action for local change is drowned out by the cacophony of large, policy-oriented, advocacy-pushing, service provision NGOs," he said.

Additionally, NGOs as organisational forms normally reproduce representative politics *vis-à-vis* their interactions with movements, as they claim to act on behalf of grassroots communities and movements. For these reasons, movements can be "sucked into a representative-type of politics which subordinates them to the dictates of NGOs and by extension NGO donors", leading to what many critics refer to as the "NGOisation of struggle".

Deconstruct the logic of the social justice project

The South African post-1994 social justice project is churning out a skewed political program which serves to preserve white historical privilege, due mainly to the mediation of the project through vestiges of historical privilege and skewed post-1994 democratic dividends. According to Mr Thapelo Tselapedi "there are deeper and underlying issues at play which remain unaddressed".

Investigating what the term social justice has meant in the lexicon of South African civil society, the paper entitled "Black liberation and the notion of 'social justice' in South Africa" chronicled and interrogated the intellectual construction of the social justice project in South Africa, problematising the silencing of race in South African public discourse and recentring the question of race in the post-1994 narrative.

He argued that while there has been an emergence of black professionals, the beneficiaries of apartheid settler colonialism and the post-1994 constitution are institutionalising an enduring politics of liberalism - "a liberalism rooted in a sanitised or idealised view of the polity that ignores racial subordination". Given this reality and the persisting unequal differences between white and black people, he invoked the black radical tradition to deconstruct the logic of the social justice project.

He argued that any analysis of the present day inequalities in South Africa, if it is to offer any illuminating insights, must grapple with historical realities - "the continued and continuing fact that inequality is widest between black and white people is indicative of this very reality."

He suggested that, given the dispossession of black people in South Africa, the 'grammar of suffering' between black people on the continent and those in the diaspora remains the same.

"This is the net effect of generations of exploitation which led to the durable idea of black inferiority, thus prompting racism to stand alone as a study deserving its own conceptualisation," he said.

Given that the South African black radical tradition has always been at odds with its white liberal/leftist counterparts, white liberals have, and continue to have, an uneasy relationship with black radicals.

According to him, this is because the former tends to patronise the latter and "thus re-inscribe the very notion of white supremacy it purports to critique". "In its intellectual manifestations, the liberal analysis tends to avoid the fact that present problems are historical problems - this is indicative of what the U.S. political philosopher Mills refers to as the 'ideal theory'".



A fundamental misreading of the history of the build-up to democracy needs rethinking, he said, to replace the conception of a peaceful transition. "Typically, we are told that ours was a 'peaceful transition' or 'miracle' personified by the magical world icon Nelson Mandela," he said, noting that given the thousands of people who died in politically related violence in the decade prior to the first elections suggests otherwise.

"Given that so few white people died during this period, it has been accepted as working truth in South African mainstream liberal discourse that, in spite of the fact that whites were perpetrators of gross human rights, the number of black people who died was insignificant."

"Worse still, in adopting the usual a-historical, or even anti-historical, analysis of society, liberals have tended to see post-1994 South African problems as purely a result of a 'corrupt' and 'incompetent' black government which seeks only to amass wealth and boost a 'black elite' - as if, in some writings, being black and well-off are mutually exclusive.

"We have all too often seen the unrelenting onslaught on the current government from civil society. The peculiar nature of liberal critiques tends to come dangerously close to saying things were better under the apartheid government. No doubt the ANC-led government is failing on so many levels."

As a result, and with a black government as their main target, today's social justice campaigners have largely articulated a programme primarily centred on class and gender.

"Admittedly, the gap between the rich and the poor has worsened and gender-based violence is on the increase."

Towards transformative NGOs

Mr Mazibuko Jara, is the Director of Ntinga Ntaba kaNdoda, a community owned and controlled non-profit organization based in Kesikammahoek and servicing 13 villages and 3500 households.

He presented a paper entitled: "Towards transformative NGOs: dilemmas, possibilities, unity and struggle".

Addressing the audience, he argued that there is a need to revisit historical inequality in South Africa if the NGO sector is to be effective in its efforts.

"We need to go beyond the problem statement. We cannot end with the task of stating problems. It is one thing that we have outrage at misery, squalor and poverty but we need to go back to the systemic roots of these problems," he said.

Human bodies in their capacities are required to take this struggle for emancipation forward, he argued, as it cannot happen in an abstract way. "If we are going to think about change we must be prepared for struggles. The people required to bring about this change have to be self-aware, question

why they are located where they are, and think about the extent to which they are products of an oppressive and exploitative system," he said.

While NGOs have traditionally failed to trigger self-organised activity, this is crucial in securing an emancipated society. "This requires deliberate attention to how we breed critical consciousness. The unemployed must speak for themselves, but to what extent in speaking for themselves are they unlearning necessary things and relearning new ways?"

If a new path is to be forged in rebuilding the social forces that can drive the struggle for change, there are a number of features that are required, according to Mr Jara, and these include sustained, mass based, participatory, transformatory, and organised components. This differs drastically to mobilisation, which is about "moving people into action for short-term goals".

He argued that lasting change "has to be about what is needed to change society for the long-term" and pay deliberate attention to how to challenge

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Social justice in a time of neo-apartheid constitutionalism



Mr Tshepo Madlingozi

In “‘Social justice’ in a time of neo-apartheid constitutionalism: assimilationist or decolonial?” Mr Tshepo Madlingozi defended the thesis that one of the main objectives of the post-1994 constitution is to guarantee the metaphysical white world.

From this perspective, in South Africa, the reality is of a neo-apartheid constitutionalism, a state of affairs that perpetuates the historical “unhomeliness and non-belonging of black South Africans”, he said.

The quest for contemporary ‘social justice’ must be placed within the context of colonialism, which displayed characteristics of an “urge to genocide” and “emptying the land of its original inhabitants”.

Constructing a regime of black invisibility, colonial authorities utilized “racial proletarianisation” to render blacks worthy only of a peripheral identity in which they were of use for cheap labour, a tactic which proved “central to expelling black people from the common world and rendering them invisible”.

He argued that the historical problem in South Africa has always been black sub-ontology and invisibility. “Colonial-apartheid was about the sub-ontology of black people. Reducing the problem to gross human rights abuse, social injustice and exploitation glosses over the problem.”

“The South African conflict and thus the South Africa social justice problem is unique and cannot be resolved without resolving the question of black sub-ontology,” he said,

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patriarchy in society. This type of social change must be participatory, creating spaces for conscientisation, knowledge production and collective power sharing, and must transform consciousness, power and positionality.

“For example, where I work in Keiskammahoek there is such dispossession and disempowerment, someone like me is in such a powerful position. I am traumatised by this idea of positionality and power. How do I change dynamics so I am not in such a powerful position?” he said.

What we see of semblances of social movements in South Africa have achieved one crucial thing - dramatisation of social crises. According to Mr Jara, they are not yet disrupting power or constituting an alternative, but dramatisation is an

noting that historical conflict in South Africa - colonial-apartheid - is ultimately a problem of “coloniality of being and coloniality of power”.

In these conflicts violence is deployed chiefly to impose ontological difference and lack of co-existence. In these conflicts violence is more productive than destructive; it is a cultural praxis aimed at ensuring that even after the physical strife is halted, in the ‘post-conflict’ dispensation the primary goal is secured and the historically dominant group comes out ahead, he said.

“Here the transitional process is teleological in the sense that it is aimed towards the extant world of the dominant group, the colonising group. In these circumstances, the historically dominant group maintains its supposed ontological supremacy...”

In Africa, the second phase of colonisation in the late 19th century was a further consolidation of this myth of epistemological, and thus ontological, superiority and a justification of the ‘right of conquest’ of the ‘Dark Continent’.

“The colonization of Africa provided a perfect laboratory for enlightenment ideas about discovery and reason,” he said, referring to findings of author Bernard Magubane’s *Race and the Construction of the Disposable Other*, which has shown that the ideas of enlightenment philosophers influenced Jan van Riebeeck and his crew’s 17th century attitudes to the Khoi in the Cape and later to the other indigenous people in the rest of the land.

“Their epistemic arrogance naturally led to the denial of full ontology of indigenous people and thus the subsequent massacre, enslavement and the dispossession of the land of those in his diary van Riebeeck called ‘dull and stupid’”.

Any endeavor to move towards a post-conflict situation in South Africa and to undo the power-relations that reproduce racial inequality and other hierarchies or social injustices must be located in this problematic of black “non-thinking” and “non-ontology”.

That is, “...we must recognise that since the beginning of what is called South Africa, African people have been made to be in need of European tutelage... The transition to ‘post-apartheid’ confines the problem to apartheid - violent segregation and the production of wasted bodies - and thus leaves the original sin of colonial ontological difference intact.”

“To get over apartheid is then to submit to the civilisational ethic of the North and Northern ways of being-in-the-world: for the state to become a Euro-modernist state, the nation to become a member of the civilised nations of the world, for the people to become Euro-American,” he argued.

important step to opening the door.

“We don’t have anything close to the kind of social movements required to change things. We haven’t taken the time to analyse the problems.”

“We are focused on the question of the immediate leading to short-term struggles not long-term; ANC hegemony has forced young people to seek concessions from the state and not to go beyond certain concessions, strategy and vision.”

“We haven’t spent the time to pay attention to the intellectual task, and instead, we have allowed anti-intellectualism to emerge. We have allowed the dumbing down of our society in the way we constitute our movements. This is a major weakness because it opens doors to all the other problems,” he argued.

Ross and Van Wyk awarded sports awards

Natalie Ross and Cody van Wyk



Natalie Ross and Cody van Wyk were named Sportswoman and Sportsman of the Year respectively at the Rhodes University Sports Awards Dinner recently.

Ross, four-time time recipient of the award, is a member of the Athletics Club at Rhodes and has received three medals out of her five world championship appearances.

Ross who finished third in the 2014 Pontevedra ITU Duathlon World Championships in Spain, winning the championship bronze medal. She represented South Africa at the 2013 International Triathlon Union (ITU) Duathlon World Championships in Ottawa, Canada and as one of 60 South African athletes in Edinburgh, Scotland in 2010.

Ross is reading for an MSc in Human Kinetics and Ergonomics at Rhodes, said despite having won the award numerous times before, it serves as affirmation that her efforts are not going unnoticed.

“I was really happy to have won this year. It’s always great to feel like one’s achievements are recognized and Rhodes has been great with that. I would have to say that it is motivating,” she said.

She has been involved mainly in athletics at Rhodes, in particular running and multisports (triathlon and duathlon, a combination of running and cycling). “There is so much I love about sport. I absolutely love competing, I find it extremely exciting and I really enjoy the sense of personal achievement that comes with it. Whether the race goes well or not, it always leaves me feeling good about myself,” she said.

She started competing in her second year at Rhodes. She first thought about

competing on a higher level after participating in the SA champs, where she decided “to just go for it”. She plans to compete for a few more years and stay active and involved in sport for as long as possible, for the social aspects and health benefits.

Van Wyk, a first year BSc student at Rhodes, joined leading sportsmen and women in representing South Africa at the 2014 Youth Olympic Games in Nanjing, China, in August 2014.

Van Wyk, a recipient of the Old Rhodian Sports Bursary for hockey. He has played the sport since he was six years old and represented Eastern Province in hockey since Under 14.

“When they announced that I was the Sportsman of the Year I couldn’t believe it! I was in the same category as some other really talented sportsman at Rhodes who have also represented South Africa in their own sports codes. In addition, being the first first-year recipient of this award was also something really special and a moment that I will never forget,” he said.

While at Rhodes, Van Wyk has participated full time in hockey, as well as squash and running.

Besides the Youth Olympics, he participated in the National u/18 Test series against Australia in July 2014 in Durban and also played in the African Qualifiers in Zambia during March for South Africa u18 in the Hockey 5’s format. He was selected as a member of the SA u16 squad in 2012 and as a member of the SA u/18 B hockey Team in 2013.