

**VICE-CHANCELLOR'S DISTINGUISHED SENIOR
RESEARCH MEDAL**

Mr Chancellor, I have the honour of presenting to you
Paul Robert Maylam,
Professor and Head
of the Department of History

for the award of the Vice-Chancellor's Distinguished Senior Research Medal.

What distinguishes Professor Maylam's research most notably is his publication of scholarly books. He has written five substantial sole authored books, and published a sixth as a co-edited collection. All are original contributions to knowledge, and all have been met with high acclaim by scholarly reviewers.

Professor Maylam published his first work in 1980. Entitled *Rhodes, the Tswana and the British: Colonialism, Collaboration and Conflict in the Bechuanaland Protectorate*¹, this book had its foundations in his PhD studies at Queen's University (Kingston, Canada) a few years earlier.

His second book, published in 1986 and entitled *A History of the African People of South Africa: from the Early Iron Age to the 1970s*², has been described in a review as "an unusual and rather exceptional book in South African historiography". It also became a popular read, and has sold several thousand copies.

His work on urban history carried out in the 1980s with a special focus on Durban, culminated in the co-edited collection of essays published in 1996, entitled *The People's City: African Life in Twentieth Century Durban*³.

All three of these books, published in the early portion of his career, have become standard reference works.

From 2001 onwards, Professor Maylam published a major work every few years, with

- *South Africa's Racial Past: The History and Historiography of Racism, Segregation and Apartheid*⁴ appearing in 2001, a book with an ambitious agenda, that is described by reviewers as a "significant work" and as "very enlightening"; this was followed by
- *The Cult of Rhodes: Remembering an Imperialist in Africa*⁵ in 2005, in which Maylam set out to demythologize the carefully crafted cult of Cecil John Rhodes,

¹ *Rhodes, the Tswana and the British: Colonialism, Collaboration and Conflict in the Bechuanaland Protectorate, 1885-99* (Westport, Greenwood Press, 1980).

² *A History of the African People of South Africa: from the Early Iron Age to the 1970s* (New York, St Martin's Press; Cape Town, David Philip; Beckenham, Croom Helm, 1986).

³ *The People's City: African Life in Twentieth Century Durban* (Pietermaritzburg, University of Natal Press, and New Hampshire, Heinemann, 1996) - co-edited with Iain Edwards.

⁴ *South Africa's Racial Past: The History and Historiography of Racism, Segregation and Apartheid* (Aldershot, Ashgate, 2001).

⁵ *The Cult of Rhodes: Remembering an Imperialist in Africa* (Cape Town, David Philip, 2005).

and which is described in a scholarly review as “an intriguing, original and elegant study”; his latest book

- *Enlightened Rule: Portraits of Six Exceptional Twentieth Century Premiers*⁶ was published in 2011, and is described by a review in Business Day that it “should be required reading for any leadership initiative”.

Some researchers establish their reputations by concentrating their efforts throughout their careers on a fairly narrow research field. By contrast, Prof Maylam’s contributions have ranged across a number of areas of historical significance: his recent individual analyses of exceptional premiers across the globe, his early work in urban history, and a broad contribution to South Africa’s racialised past. Even his two books on Cecil John Rhodes, published 25 years apart, have very different approaches, and make very different scholarly contributions.

Professor Maylam has also had the distinction of having one of his books reviewed by former Education Minister Kadar Asmal.

Outside of his authorship of books, he has produced numerous articles, essays, and conference papers, has served on the editorial boards of a number of journals, and has graduated 13 PhD students, three of whom went on to publish their theses in book form under the influence of their mentor.

What makes this research record especially significant is that it has been achieved while simultaneously undertaking a full teaching load, as well as the administration and leadership responsibilities of Head of the Department of History, and diverse leadership roles within the university more generally. Professor Maylam has been a head of department for over 23 consecutive years - first at the the University of Natal from 1989-91, then at Rhodes University since 1991.

Mr Chancellor, I request you to award the **2011 Vice-Chancellor’s Distinguished Senior Research Medal** to **Professor Paul Robert Maylam**.

⁶ *Enlightened Rule: Portraits of Six Exceptional Twentieth Century Premiers* (Bern, Peter Lang, 2011).