Afrikaner responses to post-apartheid South Africa: Diaspora and the re-negotiation of a cultural identity[1]

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Samevatting

Hierdie artikel handel oor Afrikaners se reaksie op die uitdagings wat post-apartheid Suid-Afrika sedert 1994 aan die posisie van Afrikaans as amptelike landstaal en 'n Afrikaner kulturele identiteit gebied het. Afrikaner-reaksie tot die dramatiese veranderinge wat die Suid-Afrikaanse bestel ondergaan het, het veral op twee wyses gemanifesteer. Ten eerste was daar 'n neiging tot inwaartse, maar veral uitwaartse diaspora. Tweedens is daar pogings om 'n Afrikaner-identiteit in post-apartheid Suid-Afrika te herdefinieer. In hierdie geval word op drie spesifieke kwessies gefokus, te wete die posisie van Afrikaners in 'n post-1994 liberale demokrasie, die Afrikaanse taaldebat en Afrikaanse populêre kultuur en die sogenaamde "De la Rey-verskynsel". Die artikel kom tot die gevolgtrekking dat die handhawing van 'n Afrikaner-identiteit in oorsese diaspora omstandighede op die lange duur nie volhoubaar is nie. Ook binne Suid-Afrika is Afrikaner kulturele identiteit tans baie vloeibaar. Die voortbestaan daarvan sal afhang tot hoe 'n mate Afrikaners daardie identiteit volgens 'n nuwe waarde sisteem kan herdefinieer en alle Afrikaans-sprekers kan saamsnoer om 'n waardige plek vir Afrikaans as hulle moedertaal te beding.

Introduction

In his keynote address, on the occasion of the Biennial Conference of the South African Historical Association celebrating the centenary of the History Department at the University of Stellenbosch in April 2004, the renowned Afrikaner historian, Hermann Giliomee, with reference to the historian C Vann Woodward (who hailed from the American South), stated that "history has happened to Afrikaners recently". Giliomee referred to the Afrikaners'

1 "Pax Africana: The Continent and the diaspora in search of identity" (Paper, International Conference, Russian Academy of Sciences and Moscow State University, 12-14 September 2007).

position in South Africa's transition from apartheid to a democratic, non-racial post-apartheid society. According to him, they discovered that their power was fragile and transient. Even while they possessed the strongest army on the African continent, they had to relinquish power because they had clung to it too long rather than sharing and distributing it. Instead of planning for a transfer of power, they thought that South Africa could never be governed without them. While still in power, Afrikaners sought their security in plans and projects (apartheid) that would render the realization of real security impossible. Once they relinquished power, they discovered that they were being treated like King Lear figures. Because they were powerless in a post-apartheid South Africa, they were ridiculed and disdained even by those who had praised them while they were still in power.[2]

Similarly, FW de Klerk, the last Afrikaner president of South Africa, said during a speech he made in London in 1997 on the process of the transition from white to black rule:

> "*The decision to surrender the right to national sovereignty is certainly one of the most painful any leader can be asked to take. Most nations are prepared to risk war and catastrophe rather than to surrender this right. Yet this was the decision we had to take. We had to accept the necessity of giving up on the ideal on which we had been nurtured and the dream for which so many generations had struggled for and for which so many of our people had died*"[3]

These statements indeed reflect a very frank view by two prominent Afrikaners of their people's experience of the transition of power in contemporary South Africa. Although it should be stated in all fairness that Afrikaners had time to grow into the new political dispensation since 1994, it would also be no understatement to say that many of them experienced the transition as nothing less than traumatic. Leopold Scholtz, the deputy editor of the Afrikaans Cape Town daily *Die Burger* refers to this feeling as "shell shock".[4] A telling example of ordinary Afrikaners' experiences of the dramatic changes that were beginning to take place in almost all spheres of life since the 1990s occurred at a protest meeting in Mpumalanga Province after several farm

2 H Giliomee, "Die skryf van geskiedenis in radikaal nuwe omstandighede" (Keynote address, Biennial Conference of the South African Historical Association, University of Stellenbosch, 5-7 April 2004). Although the definition of the term "Afrikaner" always was, and still is, a matter of contentious debate among historians [see e.g. H Giliomee, *The Afrikaners. Biography of a people* (Cape Town, Tafelberg, 2003), p. 23], for the purpose of this article it refers to those white Afrikaans-speakers who associate themselves with Afrikaner history and cultural heritage.

3 Quoted by H Giliomee, *The Afrikaners…*, p. 656.

4 L Scholtz, "Selfrespek is vereiste vir respek van ander", *Die Burger*, 5 Mei 2006, p. 12.

murders, where a farmer was loudly cheered when he exclaimed:

> *The country does not belong to Afrikaners anymore, it belongs to blacks. We voted it away and we can't get it back*.[5]

In her recently published novel on the emotional experiences of an Afrikaner émigré family abroad, the novelist Erika Murray-Theron describes this Afrikaner "lostness" as follows:

> *What we have known, is lost. What we have defined has lapsed. What we want to contribute is distrusted*.[6]

Based on an analysis of the discourse and debates as reflected especially in the Afrikaans media and Internet discussion forums, two broad notions in which Afrikaner reaction to these dramatic and profound changes is manifested are investigated: a disposition towards diaspora and efforts at redefining Afrikaner identity in post-apartheid South Africa. For reasons of space the article focuses on four related issues only, namely an Afrikaner diaspora, the position of Afrikaners in a post-1994 liberal democracy, the Afrikaans language debate, and Afrikaans popular culture and the so-called "De la Rey phenomenon". These were some of the more contentious issues which enjoyed great prominence in the Afrikaans media and generated vigorous and hectic debate and polemics as part of the discourse on the place of Afrikaners in a post-apartheid South Africa since 1994. It is, however, important to state that the Afrikaans language debate also includes speakers who claim Afrikaans as their mother tongue, but who do not necessarily regard themselves as Afrikaners. It entails, for instance, the often eventful and thorny relationship between white and Coloured Afrikaans-speakers, but this issue warrants a paper in its own right. Therefore the author does not purport to cover all aspects defining Afrikaner identity and all issues regarding the position of Afrikaans within the scope of a single article.

The following questions could be posed: What is happening to Afrikaner identity, which was constructed and monopolised in a peculiar way under apartheid, in a post-apartheid South African society? How do Afrikaners negotiate the new space opened up by the advent of the new political order and how do they create a position for themselves in post-apartheid South Africa?

5 See H Giliomee, *The Afrikaners…*, p. 656.

6 A translated excerpt from Erika Murray-Theron's *Verblyf* (Pretoria, Protea Boekhuis, 2007), p. 91 as quoted by J Roux, "'Verdwaalde' Afrikaners raak geteken", *Rapport Perspektief*, 3 Junie 2007, p. 5.

Afrikaner diaspora in historical and present terms

In historical terms Afrikaner migration or diaspora is neither an isolated nor a unique phenomenon.[7] This "nomadic urge to move", "wanderlust" or "trekking spirit" as CJ Scheepers Strydom describes the phenomenon, was manifested as early as the 18th century among pioneer and frontier Afrikaner society. Firstly, there were the expansion treks of Afrikaner pastoralists from the Cape Colony during the 1700s, and the so-called commission treks to reconnoitre the interior of South Africa for a suitable Afrikaner homeland on the eve of the Great Trek, to be followed by the Great Trek itself in the 1830s. Between 1874 and 1905 another period of migration occurred, collectively known as the Dorslandtrek, from the Transvaal Republic to Angola and later to Namibia in search of better economic opportunities. In 1928 the Portuguese colonial authorities banned their private schools with Afrikaans as language of tuition: this was an important determinant in the repatriation of the Angola Afrikaners to Namibia after 40 years in the former Portuguese colony.

After 1891 another spate of Afrikaner migrations occurred, this time towards present-day Zimbabwe, Zambia, Kenya and Tanzania. Some Afrikaners even ventured into the north-western regions of the Congo and Uganda, while in 1903, after the Anglo Boer War (1899-1902), others served as mercenaries in Italian Somaliland. The search for new economic livelihoods, a strong nationalistic "calling" for those who still strove for political independence after the Afrikaners' defeat in the Anglo Boer War, and the ideal among those who nurtured the notion of Afrikaner territorial expansion in Central Africa, were important incentives for this first phase of an Afrikaner diaspora. After the Anglo Boer War Afrikaner patriots also made life in South Africa intolerable for many of their kinsmen, the so-called "hensoppers" and "joiners", who served the British war effort.

The Argentina rush

Probably the most prominent manifestation of the first period of Afrikaner diaspora occurred after the Anglo Boer War, when a few hundred Afrikaners from the former Boer republics migrated to Argentina in protest against the British military conquest of South Africa. A renowned Boer general, Ben

7 E Bornman, "Emigrasie onder Afrikaners vandag", *Tydskrif vir Geesteswetenskappe*, 45 (3), September 2005, p. 388.

Viljoen, together with his family, even went to settle as far as New Mexico in the USA.[8]

According to the sociologist, Brian du Toit, the Afrikaner diaspora to Argentina and into "black" Africa in the long run were, however, not successful. In the Argentinian situation the emigrants' cultural baggage of racial prejudice and division persisted. There was a strong prejudice against those who were not Afrikaans speaking, Protestant, or white. So they looked down on the Argentinians, particularly those of swarthy complexion and there was a strong preference for girls to marry within their own ethnic group. Among those Afrikaners who migrated northwards into Africa, the same conditions and thus the same prejudices applied as whence they came. They remained a small, white, skilled minority among the black Africans. Their language, religion, race and related labels continued to prevail unchallenged. Children were frequently sent to South Africa, the Afrikaner cultural heartland, for secondary and especially tertiary education. Ministers of the Dutch Reformed Church (DRC) served congregations in East Africa, and the white settlers remained identifiable as the northernmost Afrikaner frontiersmen. Through the mediation of the DRC and the moral support of certain Afrikaner politicians, the majority of the Argentinian Afrikaners were repatriated after 1937 after an absence of 35 years abroad. And since the advent of *uhuru* and the violence that went along with the decolonisation of countries such as Kenya, Tanzania, Zambia and the Congo in the latter half of the twentieth century, large groups of Afrikaner settlers in East Africa were eventually also forced to return to South Africa.[9]

The effect of political transition after 1994 on Afrikaner migration

The second, present-day, Afrikaner diaspora had its origin in South Africa's period of transition from apartheid to a democratic, non-racial society during the late 1980s and 1990s. After the negotiation process for a new South Africa between the white National Party government and the unbanned black liberation movements such as the African National Congress (ANC)

8 BM du Toit, *Colonia Boer, An Afrikaner settlement in Chubut, Argentina* (Lewiston, Mellen, 1995) and BM du Toit, *The Boers in East Africa. Ethnicity and Identity* (Westport, Bergin & Garvey, 1998), especially pp. 1-2,9-11,174.

9 See CJ Scheepers Strydom (ed.), *Afrikaners in die Vreemde* (Cape Town, Tafelberg, 1976), BM du Toit, *Colonia Boer, An Afrikaner settlement in Chubut, Argentina* and BM du Toit, *The Boers in East Africa. Ethnicity and identity* (Westport, Bergin & Garvey, 1998), especially pp. 1-2,9-11,174.

commenced, newspapers began to report on growing numbers of white emigrants who were uneasy about the process of political transition.[10] The new diaspora manifested itself basically in three dimensions of migration.

Firstly, some right-wing Afrikaners resorted to internal migration, which meant "migrating" to the all-white enclave of Orania, the nucleus of an envisaged ethnic *volkstaat* (homeland) for Afrikaners in the interior of South Africa as the solution to escape from the county's problems. According to Van Rooyen, the *volkstaat* option is particularly attractive to those Afrikaners who cannot or do not wish to emigrate to a foreign land but, sensing their impotence to effectively challenge the current government, want to isolate themselves from the black majority to the greatest extent possible and under the constraints of the South African constitution, with their primary goal being to secede and form an Afrikaner state.[11] Robert van Tonder, a prominent right-wing Afrikaans language activist, argued that Afrikaners' proficiency in the English language actually encouraged diaspora among them as the "hegemony" of English within South Africa cannot be escaped. According to him, Afrikaners are now regarded as "foreigners" by black South Africans and can only restore their cultural and language sovereignty and ethnic identity by creating an Afrikaner fatherland or "*Boerestaat*".[12]

A second dimension of migration which some Afrikaners opted for was some form of inward, metaphysical migration - what Van Rooyen refers to as localised "pseudo emigration" and what Richard Ballard calls "semigration". Apart from the trend of moving to safer, enclosed neighbourhoods with high walls and 24-hour armed patrols, or so-called "gated communities", certain Afrikaners have resorted to a physical and psychological withdrawal from

10 BM du Toit, "Boers, Afrikaners, and diasporas" (Paper, Seminar of the History Commission of the South African Academy for Science and Arts, Pretoria, 30 January 2003), p. 19; J van Rooyen, *The new Great Trek. The story of South Africa's white exodus* (Pretoria, Unisa Press, 2000), pp. vii,5.

11 J van Rooyen, *The new Great Trek…*, pp. x,16, BM du Toit, "Boers, Afrikaners, and diasporas", p. 20. For reference to Orania see also T Pienaar, "Die aanloop tot en stigting van Orania as groeipunt vir 'n Afrikaner-volkstaat" (MA, US, 2007) and M Vestergaard, "Afrikanerdoom? Negotiating Afrikaner identity in post-apartheid South Africa" (MA, UCT, 2000), pp. 78-121.

12 See R van Tonder, *Ons Diaspora* (Fontainebleau, Postma, ca 1985). By using the term *Boerestaat* Van Tonder refers back to the pre-Anglo Boer War Boer republics of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State.

everyday life and a kind of self-induced emotional detachment from the realities of South Africa, where the outside world is simply shut-out.[13]

In essence, the reasons for the domestic dimensions of the contemporary Afrikaner diaspora reverberate as a vote of no confidence in a South Africa under black majority rule. According to Vestergaard, for the Afrikaners of Orania the new South Africa is characterised by disorder, crime, violence, farm murders, a general decline of standards and moral values, affirmative action, declining educational standards, and government incompetence, corruption and racism towards whites. Their discourse constructed South Africa as a society on the path to chaos. They experienced a sense of alienation and a feeling of political marginalisation and exclusion, because majority democracy had undermined Afrikaner ethnic political power. It was as if "foreigners" had stolen their country and were now "mismanaging" it.[14]

The most prominent dimension of the present-day diaspora, however, is emigration. Apart from discussing the core causes of this diaspora, it should also be mentioned that as a result of globalisation most ethnic groups, including Afrikaners, are no longer restricted to specific geographical spaces. Since the demise of apartheid and the end of the country's isolation and of travel restrictions, many South Africans became part of what Appadurai referred to as the "ethnoscapes" of globalisation and migrated either temporarily or permanently to all corners of the earth in search of better material conditions such as lucrative job opportunities, transferable skills and career improvement

13 J van Rooyen, *The new Great Trek…*, pp. 11, 18-19; E Borman, "Emigrasie onder Afrikaners vandag", *Tydskrif vir Geesteswetenskappe*, 45 (3), September 2005, pp. 389-390; ZB du Toit, Die *nuwe toekoms. 'n Perspektief op die Afrikaner by die eeuwisseling* (Pretoria, Van der Walt, 1999), pp. 327, 342; R Ballard, "Assimilation, emigration, semigration, and integration: 'white' peoples' strategies for finding a comfort zone in post-apartheid South Africa" (available at http://www.litnet.co.za/seminarroom/ballard.asp, as accessed on 24 March 2005), pp. 3, 12-13.

14 M Vestergaard, "Afrikanerdoom?...", pp. 102-106, 121. Although Vestergaard's research appears to be a sincere attempt to analyse "different aspects of 'negotiations' of Afrikaner identity in post-apartheid South Africa", his methodological points of departure are not scientifically sound in all respects. Fieldwork interviews and questionnaires with Afrikaners were restricted to a sprinkling of Afrikaner spokespersons, two Cape Town suburbs and the right-wing Afrikaner enclave of Orania, while the only Afrikaans literature that was consulted seems to be the peripheral alternative cartoon magazine *Bitterkomix* (see pp. 15-25). Vestergaard apparently made no effort to peruse the often intense discourse and discursive debates on contemporary Afrikaner identity that is being carried on in the mainstream Afrikaans media and literature and other Internet discussion forums. Although Vestergaard's research also identifies a declining economy and currency as a reason for emigration, it must be stated that in general Afrikaners have benefited materially from the ANC government's successful economic policies. In this regard see H Giliomee, *The Afrikaners…*, pp. 662, 666.

possibilities.[15] These are regarded as so-called "pull factors" of emigration.[16]

"Push factors" in the decision to emigrate are often triggered by a critical negative experience – a so-called "last straw" event - affecting the person, a spouse or children, a relative, or a close friend.[17] These negative experiences correlate to a great extent with the reasons for the domestic diaspora and include perceptions of falling standards of education and health care, the Aids pandemic, endemic corruption and mismanagement in the public service, incompetence and the deterioration of government structures, affirmative action, unemployment or bleak job prospects, restrictive labour laws, loss of faith in the ANC-led government, high personal income tax, savings being eroded by inflation and an unstable currency, as perceived mainly by whites. However, by far the most outstanding push factor and principal reason given by emigrants for leaving South Africa is rampant crime and violence, lawlessness, the lack of physical safety and the stressful perpetual fear of crime. Most of the emigrants have been touched by crime, whether through theft, car hijackings or family or friends killed in violent criminal acts.[18]

Afrikaners, the now-disempowered ethnic minority, ruled the country almost exclusively for a period of 46 years through their political vehicle, the National Party. Their loss of political power in 1994 resulted in a loss of access to the civil service and government patronage, and of the ability to use the power of the state to promote and protect the Afrikaans language and culture.[19] According to Johann Rossouw, the chief executive officer of the *Federasie van Afrikaanse Kultuurvereniginge* (Federation of Afrikaans Cultural Societies), or FAK, the Afrikaner dream of an ethnic homeland largely came

15 BM du Toit, "Boers, Afrikaners, and diasporas" , p. 34; J van Rooyen, *The new Great Trek…*, pp.vii, 6, 101, 114, 135; E Borman, "Emigrasie onder Afrikaners vandag", *Tydskrif vir Geesteswetenskappe*, 45 (3), September 2005, pp. 388, 393, 397; T Botha & J Baxter, *The expat confessions. South Africans abroad speak out!* (New York, Jented, 2005), p. 12; G Brand, "Die Afrikaner op soek na diaspora" (Paper, Seminar of the History Commission of the South African Academy of Science and Arts, Pretoria, 30 January 2003), p. 1.

16 A Pretorius, "'n Afrikaner-diaspora? Indrukke uit Londen" (Paper, Seminar of the History Commission of the South African Academy of Science and Arts, Pretoria, 30 January 2003), p. 1.

17 BM du Toit, "Boers, Afrikaners, and diasporas", pp. 10, 12; BM du Toit, *The Boers in East Africa…*, p. 3.

18 J van Rooyen, *The new Great Trek…*, pp. vii-ix, xi, 2, 35-36, 55, 71-89, 93-107, 115, 132-133, 167; BM du Toit, "Boers, Afrikaners, and diasporas", pp. 19-20, 29-34; E Bornman, "Emigrasie onder Afrikaners vandag", *Tydskrif vir Geesteswetenskappe*, 45 (3), September 2005, pp. 393-397; T Botha & J Baxter, *The expat confessions…*, pp. 11, 13-14, 73, 81, 102; W Brümmer, "Swaels van die suide", *Insig*, 222, Desember 2006, pp. 25-26. See also e.g. "Afrikaan in Duitsland", "Die reënboognasie is weg", *Beeld*, 28 Julie 2006, Digest Number 108 (posted by akripolis@yahoogroups.com, 14 Aug. 2006).

19 J van Rooyen, *The new Great Trek…*, pp. ix, 37-38; W Brümmer, "Swaels van die suide", *Insig*, 222, Desember 2006, p. 25; M Vestergaard, "Afrikanerdoom?...", pp. 55, 105, M Vestergaard, "Who's got the map? The Negotiation of Afrikaner identities in post-apartheid South Africa", *Daedalus*, 130 (1) Winter 2001, pp. 22, 37.

to an end with the advent of the new political dispensation. The loss of this "ethnic dream" went hand in hand with the loss of a South African identity bound to place. As prospective Afrikaner emigrants were not bound to South Africa after 1994 by this dream or myth, and did not regard it as their country anymore, loosening their ties and deciding to emigrate became easier.[20]

The brain drain and emotional responses

Data analysed by various scholars point to two important implications regarding emigration. Firstly, the predominantly white emigration has resulted in a massive exodus of many professional and highly qualified persons, or "brain drain", from South Africa in what is sometimes called in newspaper reports a "white flight". These emigrants include doctors, veterinarians, engineers, accountants, business managers, teachers, scientists, nurses, farmers, clerical workers, IT specialists and artisans. According to De Lange, 841 000 whites emigrated between 1995 and 2005 alone. The white exodus, once a trickle, has turned into a steady stream and has the potential to become a flood which may hold far-reaching consequences for the South African economy. Secondly, the present white exodus is predominantly an Afrikaner emigration. Du Toit quoted news reports referring to an "Afrikaner diaspora", stating that "Afrikaners [are] now at the front of the queue for tickets out of South Africa". And according to Statistics South Africa, the emigration figures of Afrikaners have actually surpassed those of English-speaking whites.[21]

Apart from emigration destinations such as black African countries (e.g. Mozambique, which has of late become a preferred émigré sanctuary)[22], the majority of Afrikaner emigrants seem to opt for English-speaking countries such as the United Kingdom, Canada, the USA, Australia and New Zealand. Afrikaners constitute almost half of the total number of South African emigrants to countries such as New Zealand (with Auckland having become a hub of ex-South Africans by the mid-1990s), while 51% of South African doctors who emigrated to the Canadian province of Saskatchewan were Afrikaans speaking.

20 Quoted by E Bornman, "Emigrasie onder Afrikaners vandag", *Tydskrif vir Geesteswetenskappe*, 45 (3), September 2005, pp. 391, 398.

21 See BM du Toit, "Boers, Afrikaners, and Diasporas", pp. 20-22, 26, 28; J van Rooyen, *The new Great Trek…*, pp. 11, 26, 36-37, 50-51, 139, 169; E Bornman, "Emigrasie onder Afrikaners vandag", *Tydskrif vir Geesteswetenskappe*, 45, 3, September 2005, pp. 387, 393; W Brümmer, "Swaels van die suide", *Insig*, 222, Desember 2006, p. 25; J de Lange, "Immigrasie moet regkom om SA ekonomie te red – Beeld" (available at http://www.solidaritysa.co.za/Tuis/wmprint.php?ArtID=884, as accessed on 19 March 2007), p. 1.

22 W Pelser, "Mosambiek se Vilanculos: Nuwe tuiste vir Afrikaners", *Rapport*, 27 Mei 2007, p. i.

Language adaptability and cultural similarities, living standards, family ties, climate and the demand for skills were decisive in determining these emigrant destinations. The Afrikaner preference for domicile in predominantly Caucasian countries[23] corroborates du Toit's observations that they choose to settle among communities of European settlers, where their ethnicity is not questioned or challenged, and where the cultural and religious milieu more or less matches their requirements. But when identity was "facilitated" by differences in colour, religion, and (non-English) languages, the settlers maintained their ethnic associations and distanced themselves from other groups around them. Afrikaner diaspora communities in Argentina and East Africa, for instance, remained cultural and ethnic islands, whereas Afrikaner emigrants to predominantly English-speaking Caucasian and Protestant countries blend with peoples sharing similar biological, religious and cultural characteristics.[24]

The international Afrikaner diaspora and the traumatic impact it has had on family structures has stirred a lively response – the so-called *bly of gly-debat* (stay-or-go-debate) - in Afrikaner circles at home. There are probably very few contemporary Afrikaner families who do not have some or other émigré relatives abroad. Especially since the 1990s, disparaging references to the "chicken run" and accusations of emigrants being "disloyal", "unpatriotic", "cowardly" and "racist" resonated in the South African press. Arguments for or against emigration became politicised and personal. While one side questioned the loyalty and patriotism of those who were leaving, the other side pointed to the socio-political conditions that caused people to leave the country. The leftist political view is that emigrants are racists who are leaving simply because they cannot tolerate living under a black government. From an Afrikaner nationalist perspective, emigrants were regarded as traitors as they were committing "treason" against the Afrikaner people in South Africa by weakening the strength of the white population group as a whole. Consequently, so the argument goes, the reduction of Afrikaner numbers as a result of emigration will adversely affect the survival of the Afrikaans language and culture.

Others held the view that Afrikaners relinquished their right to be called Afrikaners once they live overseas and that the Afrikaans language cannot survive outside South Africa. But for many emigrants a profound sense of

23 BM du Toit, "Boers, Afrikaners, and diasporas", pp. 12, 19-22, 27-28; J van Rooyen, *The new Great Trek…*, pp. xii, 27, 38, 50-51, 139-162; T Botha & J Baxter, *The expat confessions…*, pp. 6, 18.

22 See BM du Toit, "Boers, Afrikaners, and diasporas" (Paper, SAASA Seminar 2003), pp. 10, 13-14, 43 and BM du Toit, *The Boers in East Africa…*, pp. 10-11, 33, 174.

loss – the loss of a unique sense of "South Africanness" and, in some cases, an Afrikaner culture, hence a loss of identity - is a recurrent motif. Some experience feelings of quilt "for leaving their countrymen in the lurch". A large portion of emigrants continually express their desire to return to South Africa and to make a contribution to its prosperity, but insist that life-threatening crime prevents them from doing so.[25] According to Du Toit, therefore, one finds that the Afrikaner diaspora was driven by a considerable sense of coercion. Many current Afrikaner émigrés give as the reason for their emigration the coercion deriving from fears about their personal safety and the future of their children.[26] Wasserman argues that the emigrant's recollection of origin engages with new impulses and cultural stimulation, as it is impossible to maintain an old cultural identity in isolation. Therefore a new hybrid cultural identity is composed from various points of reference.[27]

Nevertheless, those who emigrate successfully tend to recreate some sense of order, possibly by having fellow émigrés in their neighbourhood and a circle of friends visiting and socializing together, speaking the native language, joining religious and cultural groups, or, more recently, using the Internet to remain in touch. For example, Afrikaners who emigrated to New Zealand and the United Kingdom were able to re-create a sub-culture of ex-South Africans, and more importantly, a community of Afrikaners in cultural-linguistic enclaves or in certain suburbs, expatriate Afrikaans clubs, publications, Internet websites and programmes (which can also be connected to Afrikaans radio stations in South Africa), cultural festivals, barbeque gatherings, and stores that sell South African foods in an attempt to introduce Afrikaans into some schools and by creating a sense of unity and continuity through church groups and congregations. By 2000 the three Afrikaans Reformed Churches appeared to have accepted the inevitability of the Afrikaner exodus and were considering assisting emigrants by establishing congregations abroad to be headed by ministers from South Africa. By 2007, for instance, a minister from a DRC congregation in Potchefstroom was sent on an "outreach" ministry to the Perth Afrikaans Reformed Church, as there were an estimated 80 000 to 90 000 ex-South Africans living in Western Australia.

25 See J Van Rooyen, *The new Great Trek…*, pp. ix, xii, 115-116, 124-130, 136,138; BM du Toit, "Boers, Afrikaners, and diasporas", pp. 19-20, 39; T Botha & J Baxter, *The expat confessions…*, pp. 13, 51, 55; W Brümmer, "Swaels van die suide", *Insig*, 222, Desember 2006, pp. 26-27. See also H Wasserman, "Om hergeboorte te verbeel – 'n Postkoloniale beskouing van migrasie, kultuur en identiteit", E van Heerden (ed.), *Briewe deur die lug – LitNet/Taalsekretariaat-skrywersberaad 2000* (Kaapstad, Tafelberg, 2001), pp. 298, 301 and T du Plessis, "Begrip 'Afrikaner' in die smeltkroes", *Rapport*, 11 Augustus 2002, p. 16.

26 BM du Toit, "Boers, Afrikaners, and diasporas", p. 42.

27 H Wasserman, "Om hergeboorte te verbeel…", E van Heerden (ed.), *Briewe deur die lug…*, p. 302.

Little South Africa's?

These are diaspora communities which re-establish and perpetuate valued aspects of their language and culture. An Afrikaner collective memory is thus kept alive informally in social contacts, rituals of interaction such as picnics, dances, gatherings, and religious and linguistic identity, by receiving South African entertainers and sports figures, by still supporting South African sports teams and also by individuals keeping in touch with family and friends, especially through electronic mail. In this way an emotional attachment to a South African identity remains with many emigrants much longer. For a sizeable section of expatriates South Africa remains "home" for a very long time, and a considerable part of their time and energy is spent in trying to recreate a "Little South Africa" for themselves in their new country. Therefore Du Toit argues that communal boundaries – linguistic, cultural and religious – are patrolled by services offered to members, for example, through Afrikaans churches, radio programmes, library holdings and especially an Afrikaans club.[28]

To come home or not?

In contrast to the flood of Afrikaner emigration, efforts are also being made to persuade expatriates to return to South Africa, especially the *Kom Huistoe-Veldtog* (Come Home Campaign), driven by AfriForum, a subsidiary of the Afrikaans-orientated trade union Solidarity. But despite AfriForum's arguments about the "misperceptions" about an ideal life abroad and its claims of successfully persuading expatriates to return to South Africa in an effort to augment the country's dwindling skills pool, since launching the campaign more than two years ago they have succeeded in repatriating only about 1500 South Africans.[29] The process of assimilation into their host counties might be slow for some emigrants, but the fact remains that most

28 BM du Toit, "Boers, Afrikaners, and diasporas", pp. 12, 38, 42; J Van Rooyen, *The new Great Trek…*, pp. 131, 137-162, 166, 168; A Pretorius, "'n Afrikaner-diaspora?...", p. 3; "Evangelie weerklink in Afrikaans op Australiese platteland", *Kerkbode*, 9 Februarie 2007, p. 4; C van Wyk, "Australiërtjies neem nou Afrikaans", *Die Burger*, 14 Januarie 2005, p. 6; A Rademeyer, "'Blokes' en 'mates' wil Afrikaans leer praat", *Die Burger*, 22 Maart 2006, p. 9.

29 See J De Lange, "Immigrasie moet regkom om SA ekonomie te red - Beeld" (available at http://www.solidaritysa.co.za/Tuis/wmprint.php?ArtID=884, as accessed on 19 March 2007), p. 3; "AfriForum kom huistoe-veldtog. Wanpersepsies oor die lewe in die buiteland & algemene inligting oor emigrasie" (available at http://www.komhuistoe.co.za/wanpersepsies.htm, as accessed on 10 May 2007) and A Baily, "Verlore Kundigheid Kom Huis Toe", *Solidariteit*, 1, 2007, pp. 22-23.

settlers have indicated that they are happy in their new homelands and have no desire, nor any intention, to return to South Africa, except perhaps for the occasional holiday. Although many first-generation Afrikaner emigrants may tend to cling tenaciously to their culture, traditions and language, for Du Toit and Pretorius the problem lies with the second and third generations. The children of Afrikaner emigrants quickly forget or unlearn how to speak Afrikaans. Therefore the maintenance of an Afrikaner identity abroad, which depends on successive generations of "Afrikaners", is not sustainable. As the process of being different becomes harder to maintain, and when boundaries become so porous that identity cannot be maintained, then such identity fades.[30]

Efforts at redefining Afrikaner identity in post-apartheid South Africa

Loammi Wolf, a human rights specialist, correctly observed that Afrikaner identity is not a static entity which can be vacuum-packed or categorically delimited.[31]

Perspectives on the position of Afrikaners

Especially since the transformation era of the administration of President Thabo Mbeki, who introduced an accelerated programme of the Africanisation of almost all spheres of public South African life, a huge disillusionment with the new South Africa has permeated the mindset of many Afrikaners. According to a 1999 survey by Professor Lawrence Schlemmer, a respected South African sociological analyst, an alarming degree of alienation has developed between the Afrikaner community and the new political and social order since 1994. According to Schlemmer, many Afrikaners felt "switched off" and marginalised, and did not take much interest in mainstream (i.e. black) South Africa. These feelings thus correlate with the manifestations of the Afrikaner diaspora as discussed above. Schlemmer argues that Afrikaners

30 See BM du Toit, "Boers, Afrikaners, and diasporas" (Paper, SAASA Seminar, 2003), pp. 1, 37, 40, 42-43; J Van Rooyen, *The new Great Trek…*, pp. 38, 130, 137, 140, 168; T Botha & J Baxter, *The expat confessions…*, pp. 54-55, 79-81; A Pretorius, "'n Afrikaner-diaspora?...", pp. 4-5; E Bornman, "Emigrasie onder Afrikaners vandag", *Tydskrif vir Geesteswetenskappe*, 45 (3), September 2005, pp. 387-388; H Aucamp, "Hou op 'Afrikaans!' skree, *Die Burger*, 6 April 2002, p. 13; B de Villiers, "Probeer eerder dié wat not nog hier is in SA te hou", *Rapport*, 27 November 2005, p. 14; B Marais, "Dié studie verskil met Kom Huis Toe-syfers" and CF Kotzé, "Emigrante sal gewis nie terugkeer nie", *Rapport*, 22 Oktober 2006, p. xi.

31 L Wolf, "Die busreis van Afrikaner-identiteit", Bylae by *Die Burger*, 26 Mei 2007, p. 15.

had believed that, in any negotiated settlement, their representatives would drive a hard bargain and their hubris had convinced them that they alone could rule the country. Instead, they have been proven wrong on both accounts.[32]

Flip Buys, the chief executive officer of Solidarity, the trade union with the biggest Afrikaner-based worker constituency in South Africa, very aptly put these attitudes into words in an article in *Rapport*, the national Afrikaans Sunday paper. According to Buys, by 1994 the majority of Afrikaner voters were convinced of the necessity for blacks to obtain full political rights, but eventually became concerned that the political changes went further than the granting of equal rights and that the Afrikaners' own rights were under threat. Afrikaners wanted a full and equal democracy, but did not anticipate that their own democratic rights would be marginalised and that they would be structurally disempowered. They began to feel like second-class citizens themselves. They voted for the abolition of racial discrimination, but did not expect that they themselves would become a target of such discrimination. They regarded it as just that indigenous languages should reach their full potential, but were of the opinion that this could be achieved without marginalising Afrikaners. They agreed to black economic empowerment, but became concerned that black empowerment in some instances could lead to their own disempowerment. They were willing to let the ANC exiles return from abroad, but did not anticipate circumstances changing so dramatically that their own loved ones would leave South Africa in droves.

Afrikaners accepted that black history should find its rightful place in the national discourse, but did not expect to see Afrikaner history almost criminalized. Afrikaners understood the ANC's viewpoint that ANC place names and its heritage should receive greater recognition, but did not wish their own historic Afrikaner place names and heritage to be sidelined. They realized the necessity to improve black education, but protested when they began to see how the ANC government was taking control over Afrikaans education and institutions, a process that went hand in hand with anglicizing them. Buys declared that whites understood the necessity for the implementation of affirmative action, but rejected its misuse to anglicize Afrikaans institutions and bring them under black control under the pretext of striving for representativity. The White electorate exchanged minority control for a democratic legal state, but are extremely concerned that the

32 See L Schlemmer, "Factors in the persistence or decline of ethnic group mobilisation: a conceptual review and case study of cultural group responses among Afrikaners in post-apartheid South Africa" (Ph.D, UCT, 1999).

country is beginning to change into a "transformation state".[33]

The feelings of disillusionment were also aggravated when FW de Klerk, in response to the ANC's contrary opinions regarding a power-sharing cabinet as a principle in the final post-apartheid constitution, took the National Party (NP) - historically the home of the majority of Afrikaners and which had taken its white support for granted in the 1994 election - out of the then Government of National Unity (GNU) at the end of 1996. This move left the Afrikaners and the larger white community without formal political power. Soon after the withdrawal of his party from the GNU in 1996, De Klerk himself resigned from politics – a move which caused terminal damage to the NP. After the 2004 general election, and after having received a mere 250 000 votes on a national basis, Marthinus van Schalkwyk, De Klerk's successor as NP leader and a career political opportunist per excellence, committed the "ultimate treason", as it was referred to by critical writers in the Afrikaans press. Van Schalkwyk announced the demise of the NP and advised the remaining NP MPs to join the ANC as he himself accepted a cabinet post in the Mbeki administration.[34]

Strident Afrikaner reactions were already evident in 2000 when a controversial Afrikaner radio journalist, Chris Louw, caused a sensation among Afrikaners in what came to be known as the "*Boetman* debate". Louw wrote a furious letter to Willem de Klerk, a prominent Afrikaner opinion maker and elder brother of FW de Klerk. He charged Willem de Klerk and his generation of Afrikaner leaders with paternalism and political cowardice and deceit. Without ever having fought a war themselves, they had sent a younger generation of Afrikaners to war on the country's borders against ANC insurgents and into black townships to defend apartheid as a noble cause, but then collapsed when confronted with a tough ANC at the negotiating table.[35]

33 F Buys, "Afrikaners moet hul toekoms help vorm", *Rapport*, 20 Junie 2004, p. II; F Buys, "Verandering was dié party se ondergang", *Rapport*, 15 Augustus 2004, p. 20.

34 H Giliomee, *The Afrikaners…*, p. 656; WP Visser, "Coming to terms with the past and the present: Afrikaner experience of and reaction to the 'new' South Africa" (Paper, Seminar, Centre for African studies, University of Copenhagen, 30 September 2004), pp. 3-5. See also T du Plessis, "Min opsies vir 'n sterwende party", *Rapport*, 18 April 2004, p.20 and for its withdrawal from the GNU as the beginning of the eventual demise of the NP. See J Heunis, *Die Binnekring. Terugblikke op die laaste dae van blanke regering* (Johannesburg & Kaapstad, Jonathan Ball Uitgewers, 2007), p. 167.

35 C Louw, "Boetman is die bliksem in", *Die Burger*, 8 Mei 2000, p. 11 and C Louw, *Boetman en die swanesang van die verligtes* (Cape Town, Human & Rousseau, 2001). In a specific context the Afrikaans word *Boetman* can imply the belittlement of someone and expressing a low opinion of him, reflecting the superior attitude of an older man towards a younger man). Louw's critique is thus a rejection of all forms of paternalism. See also Louw's discussion of the Afrikaners' "*Boetman* reaction", C Louw, "Grootoog en die naeltjie van God", E Van Heerden (ed.), *Briewe deur die lug…*, pp. 287-296.

This uneasiness with the effects of the transformation from white minority rule to a black-controlled democratic state had a profound influence on the ethnic psyche of Afrikaners and on the discourse about the place of an Afrikaner identity in post-1994 South Africa. Buys argues that, where the importance of Afrikanerhood and identity had been overstated before 1994, it was reviled after that. At the same time, the degradation of Afrikaner identity as an integral part of their group identity undermined their loyalty to their country and the African continent.[36] This view was also echoed by Tim du Plessis, the editor of *Rapport*.[37] In the discourse on Afrikaner identity there was thus a correlation between the emotions of emigrating Afrikaners and those of their kinsfolk who chose to remain South Africans. These emotions include disillusionment, alienation, a sense of marginalisation, detachment, feelings of exclusion, "dejection", inward migration, a sense of powerlessness, and a loss of status and national identity in the post-1994 dispensation. To this could be added the apparent ideological drive and insensitivity among certain ANC functionaries to change and replace place names of particular significance in the Afrikaner cultural heritage without proper consultation or consensus.[38] Wolf refers to this phenomenon as a collective Afrikaner identity crisis.[39]

In the light of the soul-searching about their cultural and political existence in and relationship to the new South Africa, Amanda Gouws, a professor in political science at the University of Stellenbosch, asks a rather controversial rhetorical question in a newspaper column as to whether there is any other population group in the world that is so "obsessed" with its identity as white Afrikaners.[40] This identity crisis became apparent when, against the background of the negative association of the history of Afrikanerdom with apartheid,

36 F Buys, "Ons mag maar aan ons eie kant wees", *Rapport*, 15 Julie 2007, p. 20.

37 T du Plessis, "Treiter die ANC die Afrikaners?", *Rapport*, 13 Augustus 2006, http://free.financialmail.co.za/07/0209/features/efeat.htm, Digest Number 108 (posted by akripolis@yahoogroups.com, 14 Aug. 2006).

38 See e.g. H Giliomee en L Schlemmer, "Kwaad maar kwesbaar, versigtig en vervreem", *Die Vrye Afrikaan*, 16 September 2005, pp. 1, 4; A Venter, "Nasionale identiteitsvraagstukke in postapartheid-Suid-Afrika", *Tydskrif vir Geesteswetenskappe*, 39 (1), Maart 1999, p. 23; ZB du Toit, *Die nuwe Toekoms…*, pp. 74, 127, 349; "*Rapport* editor T du Plessis looks at the emergence of a new Afrikaner" and "New Afrikaner unity a call for leadership", *Mail and Guardian*, 2 March 2007, Digest Number 125 (posted by akripolis@yahoogroups.com, 3 March 2007); "'Oubaas'", Afrikaners lyk gehawend", *Die Burger*, 8 Mei 2007, p. 18; M Rossouw, "Afrikaans kry minder steun, sê Giliomee" and "Afrikaners 'glo hulle word bedreig soos ná Boereoorlog'", *Die Burger*, 1 Junie 2005, p. 7; F Buys, "Só kan Afrikaner na toekoms reik", *Rapport*, 16 Januarie 2005, p. II; M du Preez, "Changing ideas of Afrikaner/white identity" (available at http://www.litnet.co.za/seminarroom/max_du_preez.asp, as accessed on 22 July 2005), pp. 1-10.

39 L Wolf, "The rainbow blues of 'De la Rey'" (available at http://www.litnet.co.za/cgi-bin/giga.cgi?cmd=print_article&news_id=12944&cause-i, as accessed on 10 April 2007), p. 6.

40 A Gouws, "Ons beheptheid met Afrikanerskap", *Die Burger,* 24 Mei 2007, p. 10.

some prominent Afrikaner intellectuals, in an act of self-renunciation, publicly distanced and disassociated themselves from their Afrikaner ethnic identity while still maintaining Afrikaans as their language.[41] According to Giliomee and Schlemmer, it was probably in an effort to be politically correct and to limit any damage to their image and academic careers.[42] "Koos Kombuis", the stage name for the Afrikaans rock star and author André Le Roux du Toit, even absurdly announced his "resignation" from Afrikanerdom in public, while still continuing to perform and write in Afrikaans.[43]

In a vigorous polemic that was waged in the Afrikaans media, however, such utterances were severely criticised and lambasted by Afrikaners who argued that an Afrikaner identity deserved a space in the new South Africa, albeit non-racially redefined.[44] Even the respected black academic and political analyst, Sipho Seepe, advised Afrikaners to create a new (Afrikaner) identity which would encourage relations between the various racial communities. He cautioned them that by constantly seeking accommodation with, and recognition from, their new (black) political masters, they would weaken their role in the formation of a new non-racial, non-sexist, prosperous and democratic South Africa.[45]

41 See e.g. D Hefers, "Afrikaner-debat is uitgeleef, dood", *Die Burger*, 23 Junie 2002, p. 16; PF Erasmus, "Begrip 'Afrikaner' het nie bestaansreg", *Die Burger*, 23 Maart 2003, p. 25; W Esterhuyse, "Rassisme die eintlike gevaar", *Die Burger*, 13 April 2005, p. 14; A van Niekerk, "Kyk vorentoe, vat hande", *Die Burger*, 21 April 2005, p. 20; A van Niekerk en W Esterhuyse, "Nuwe nasionale identiteit is nodig", *Die Burger*, 16 Mei 2005, p. 8; P de Vos, "Afrikanerskap is nie a-polities nie", *Die Burger*, 26 April 2005, p. 20; P de Vos, "Nie veel swart Afrikaners", *Die Burger*, 17 Mei 2005, p. 13; "Die wysgere stamp koppe", *Rapport*, 27 Februarie 2005, p. vi; A de Vries, "Neo-Voortrekkervrou", *Insig*, Mei 2007, pp. 52-53; H Giliomee, *The Afrikaners…*, p. 616; A van Niekerk, "Oor die wegbly van die jollie bobbejaan", http://www.litnet.co.za, 26 January 2005 (posted by akripolis@yahoogroups.com, 7 Feb. 2005).

42 H Giliomee en L Schlemmer, "Kwaad maar kwesbaar, versigtig en vervreem", *Die Vrye Afrikaan*, 16 September 2005, p. 4.

43 Koos Kombuis, "You will always find me in the kitchen at parties" (available at http://www.litnet.co.za/koospens/in_the_kitchen.asp, as accessed on 3 Feb. 2006), pp. 1-5.

44 See e.g. H Giliomee, "Voetsoolvlak lewer die ware demokrate", *Die Burger*, 19 Julie 2005, p. 8; G Brand, "Wanaangepas, op die verkeerde plek, uit pas", *Die Burger*, 4 April 2007, p. 19; N Viljoen, "Bly 'n Afrikaner", *Die Burger*, 9 April 2007, p. 8; JD Coetzee, "Kan nie stam ontbind", *Die Burger*, 16 April 2007, p. 12; L Scholtz, "Hoekom ek Afrikaner is…oor ek een ís", *Die Burger*, 11 Mei 2007, p. 14; D Roodt, "Die Bôggom en Voertsek-debat" (posted by akripolis@yahoogroups.com, on 7 Feb. 2007); J Rossouw, "Hoera vir die Jollie Bobbejaan! 'n Antwoord aan Anton van Niekerk" (available at http://www.vryeafrikaan.co.za/lees.php?id=108, as accessed on 17 Feb. 2005), pp. 1-6. See also M Kriel, "Fools, philologists and philosophers: Afrikaans and the politics of cultural nationalism", *Politikon*, 33 (1), April 2006, footnote 8, p. 68.

45 S Seepe, "Laat jul STEM hoor", *Rapport*, 29 Oktober 2006, p. 23.

The Afrikaans language debate

One of the most contentious issues regarding Afrikaner identity is the status and position of the Afrikaans language. In his surveys Schlemmer found that the issue of language rights represented the one area where white Afrikaans speakers felt most threatened and ethnically marginalized, and that a sense of being discriminated against in terms of language and culture is a matter of near-consensus among them.[46] Ampie Coetzee, a retired professor of Afrikaans literature at the University of the Western Cape, aptly put these sentiments into words by stating that for Afrikaners Afrikaans is more than a language, it's a "tonguing" of identity. Putting it like this, he implied that if Afrikaners were to lose their language, they would become nothing.[47] Jaco Alant, a lecturer in languages at the Durban University of Technology, ascribes the strong links to Afrikaner identity underlying the language debate to their experience during the twentieth century of being empowered in their own anguage. This explains Afrikaners' propensity to make language an issue of identity.[48]

Although the post-apartheid South African constitution provides for eleven official languages, among others also Afrikaans, since 1994 Afrikaans has been dropped as a language of the state's bureaucracy. Central, provincial and local governments have switched to functioning virtually exclusively in English, as have the parastatals and government research institutes. There are pressures to downgrade Afrikaans within the legal system and there has been a dramatic decline in Afrikaans usage on television, while English has become the dominant television language. Afrikaans has effectively been abandoned as a language of signage, product labelling and announcements at airports and railway stations. Companies that previously ran their operations in Afrikaans are also switching to English. As part of their identity crisis and identity "dislocation", Eric Louw argues that Afrikaners not only have to come to terms with a loss of state patronage, but also face a degree of state hostility directed at their language and cultural forms.[49]

46 L Schlemmer, "Factors in the persistence or decline of ethnic group mobilisation…", pp. 153, 241-243, 318, 342, 344, 346.

47 A Coetzee, "Waarheid van taal is Engels", *Die Burger*, 16 Februarie 2006, p. 23.

48 J Alant, "Oor bemagtiging, taal en die Afrikaans-debat in die Coca-Cola-demokrasie" (available at http://www.linet.co.za/taaldebat/alant_coca_cola.asp, as accessed on 28 July 2006), pp. 1-8.

49 PE Louw, "Political power, national identity, and language: The case of Afrikaans", *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, 170, October 2004, pp. 44, 46-47, 51, 54; P Duvenhage, "Multilingualism, Afrikaans and Normative Political Theory" (Paper, International Colloquium on Multilingualism and the Media, University of Antwerpen, 30 November 2004), pp. 1, 3-5; ZB du Toit, *Die nuwe Toekoms…*, pp. 200-217, 225-227, 233-240.

The language debate in schools

But it was state pressure to convert Afrikaans schools and universities into parallel- or dual-medium institutions in order to provide access to non-Afrikaans speakers that has unleashed various forms of mobilisation from the Afrikaner community. Many Afrikaners believe that the survival of their culture and ethnic identity ultimately depends on the survival of their language, and they fear that the predominance of English, when introduced in parallel or dual systems of education, would eventually lead to Afrikaans institutions of learning becoming anglicised.

A sensational case in point was the legal battle waged over the medium of instruction of the Afrikaans-medium Primary School Mikro, in Kuilsrivier, near Cape Town. In January 2005 the Department of Education of the Western Cape Province attempted to compel the school to take in a number of English-speaking learners, arguing that the English schools in the Kuilsrivier area were filled to capacity and that Mikro had spare capacity. The Department's decision would in effect have changed the school's medium of instruction to dual medium. The school's governing board, however, acting on behalf of the Afrikaans parent community, took the Department to court to prevent the change of its language of instruction. The court ruled in favour of the governing body and stipulated that the Department could not force the school to teach learners in English. Even the Department's appeal against this court ruling failed. The Court of Appeal confirmed the ruling of the Cape Town Supreme Court that school governing bodies had a constitutional right to determine the language of instruction in their schools.[50]

Other Afrikaans schools had mixed success as "small victories" - a phrase coined by Johann Rossouw, the editor of the mouthpiece of the FAK, *Die Vrye Afrikaan*[51] – to fend off efforts at anglicisation. In Gauteng Province Hercules High, an Afrikaans high school, successfully defended its language of instruction in court,[52] but in the Northern Cape Province three Afrikaans schools were forced by the local Department of Education to introduce a dual

50 M Merton, "Mikro se uitspraak 'sege vir Afrikaans'", *Die Burger*, 19 Februarie 2005, p. 8; M Merton en P de Bruin, "Aikona! WKOD kan skole nie dwing om Rooitaal te huisves", *Die Burger*, 28 Junie 2005, p. 1; Anon., "Mikro", *Die Burger*, 18 Julie 2005, p. 10; J Rossouw, "Onderwys: Die staat teen die gemeenskap. Die geval van Laerskool Mikro" (available at http://www.vryeafrikaan.co.za/lees.php?id=148, as accessed on 28 April 2005), pp. 1-6.

51 See J Rossouw, "Die Afrikaanse universiteit van die toekoms", *Die Vrye Afrikaan*, 17 Februarie 2006, pp. 1, 10. Rossouw used the Afrikaans term *vegbakens.*

52 H Giliomee, "Verbetering in retoriek oor rol van Afrikaans", *Die Burger*, 12 November 2002, p. 10; A de Vries, "Beheerraad skop vas oor beleid", *Rapport*, 30 Januarie 2005, p. 7.

system of instruction.[53] And in Mpumalanga Province a court case is pending on the status of Afrikaans as the only medium of instruction at Ermelo High, one of the last remaining Afrikaans high schools in that province.[54]

Universities and the medium of instruction

The most ferocious contemporary debate on language matters, however, was waged among Afrikaners themselves on the position of Afrikaans as medium of instruction at the University of Stellenbosch – an institution which is often referred to as the (historical) "cradle of nationalistic Afrikanerdom". This fierce debate initiated the mobilisation and participation of the university's Afrikaans-speaking alumni on an unprecedented scale in the post-1994 era. The debate was characterised by hardened stances, which at times amounted to personal attacks and which were reminiscent of bitter political and cultural feuds that occurred among Afrikaners in the past.

The issue became public soon after the appointment in 2002 of Professor Chris Brink as the new Vice-Chancellor of the University of Stellenbosch. According to the Higher Education Act of 1997, the Minister of Education determined the language policy of institutions of higher education. In 2002 the then minister, Kader Asmal, declared that exclusive Afrikaans-speaking universities should also make provision for parallel instruction as no student could be obstructed from enrolling at any state-funded university as a result of the language of instruction, especially in strategic subjects such as engineering and medical sciences. In addition, these universities were to provide the Department of Education with time frames for the period 2004 to 2006 in which their adjusted language policies would be implemented.[55] Consequently, under Brink's leadership the University of Stellenbosch began to adjust its language policy to one of dual Afrikaans-English instruction on undergraduate level and declared that the issue of the medium of instruction is a problem which "should not be solved but should be managed".[56]

53 J van Wyk, "Afrikaanse skole kry regshulp oor beleid", *Die Burger*, 6 September 2004, p. 6; A de Vries, "Taal-dekreet ruk skole in Kuruman", *Rapport*, 12 September 2004, p. 4; G Venter, "Gideonsbende veg vir Afrikaans in skole", *Die Wêreld*, 15 Mei 2005, p. 6.

54 W Pelser en C Fourie, "Pandor hof toe oor skool se taalstryd", *Rapport*, 11 Februarie 2007, p. 6; Anon., "Ermelo se sein", *Rapport*, 18 Februarie 2007, p. 20; Anon., "Van top-skool tot flop-skool?", *Beeld*, 17 February 2007, Digest Number 124 (posted by akripolis@yahoogroups.com, 18 Feb. 2007). See also RW Johnson, "Goodbye isiXhosa", *Prospect*, May 2006, Digest Number 92 (posted by akripolis@yahoogroups.com, 29 April 2006).

55 B Louw, "Goeie nuus vir Afrikaans", *Die Burger*, 9 November 2002, p. 13.

56 C Brink, "US-rektor stel taalvisie", *Die Burger*, 11 Junie 2002, p. 9.

Opinion formers and other intellectuals on the USA - language debate

This policy soon led to serious criticism by prominent Afrikaner intellectuals and other public figures, who stated that such a language strategy would lead to a "reckless" language displacement of Afrikaans, to the gradual anglicisation of the University and to the "suicide" of Afrikaans. These lobbyists advocated that Afrikaans should remain the University's "anchor language".[57] Professor Pieter Kapp, the chairperson of the University's convocation, representing its alumni, prophetically warned that the university's language policy "could lead to protracted language tension and turbulence on campus".[58] The matter was temporarily put to rest when Brink assured an exceptionally large meeting of the convocation of approximately 1000 alumni in 2002 that, according to the University's new draft language policy, no English-speaking student would be able to exercise a veto over the use of Afrikaans in undergraduate lectures and that the University did not intend to introduce a parallel medium of instruction as a norm. Afrikaans would remain the undergraduate medium of instruction "by default". In response to Brink's reassurances the convocation tabled a motion that the University of Stellenbosch "should be positioned as an Afrikaans-speaking university which accommodate multilingualism and not as a multilingual university which accommodates Afrikaans".[59]

However, the Stellenbosch language debate flared up again soon after and intensified when the University management approved of the Faculty of Art's 2005 decision to introduce dual Afrikaans-English medium of instruction in all its undergraduate courses. This would become the fiercest debate in Afrikaner circles on the status and place of their language in post-apartheid South Africa since 1994. The issue threatened to totally alienate the University of Stellenbosch management from the largest section of its alumni and traditional Afrikaans supporters. The debate swiftly divided people into two camps and was characterised by personal accusations, innuendo and opposing positions which became more and more intransigent. Pro-Afrikaans lobbyists, including more than eighty Afrikaans writers, academics and intellectuals,

57 See e.g. H Giliomee, "Stellenbosch moet besliste reëls instel", *Die Burger*, 18 Junie 2002, p. 10; JL Sadie, "Afrikaans by US gerelativeer", *Die Burger*, 21 Junie 2002, p. 10; L Scholtz, "Afrikaans: Trek streep nóú op Stellenbosch", *Die Burger*, 28 Junie 2002, p. 10; T du Plessis, "Baklei gerus, maar maak seker jy wen", *Rapport*, 30 Junie 2002, p. 18; J Vosloo, "Taaltwis in die skadu van die eike", *Rapport*, 30 Junie 2002, p. 19; A-M Mischke, "Drastiese taalplan", *Rapport*, 1 September 2002, p. 1.

58 T Ferreira, "Nog 'n fel aanval op US-taalplan", *Die Burger*, 1 Oktober 2002, p. 1; T Ferreira, "US teen uitgerekte taalonrus gemaan", *Die Burger*, 14 Oktober 2002, p. 2.

59 B Louw, "Taalkwessie: Maties trek saam", *Die Burger*, 15 November 2002, p. 1; Anon., "Dawie", Pragtige oorwinning vir Afrikaans en sy mense", *Die Burger*, 16 November 2002, p. 10; J Vosloo, "Matie-debat is futloos", *Rapport*, 17 November 2002, p. 6.

some of international repute, accused Brink, the university management and their supporters of a breach of trust between them and the alumni on the position of Afrikaans at the institution. The Brink camp was also accused of favouring English, the "killer language" and of putting Afrikaans on a "slippery slope to anglicisation and extinction".[60]

According to *Die Vrye Afrikaan* the Afrikaners in the Brink camp suffered from "pathological guilt" because of the apartheid past. They could only maintain the positions of power or influence they enjoyed under the new dispensation by "relativising, denying or even renouncing their ethno-linguistic identity".[61] On the other hand, the Brink camp accused the Afrikaans lobbyists of being "neo-Afrikaners", "neo-conservatives", "reactionary", and of "clinging to privileges", who with their arguments were pursuing an Afrikaner "volkstaat of the mind", or an "Afrikaner enclave" and were "yearning for a discredited past and a defunct Afrikaner nationalism".[62]

The mobilisation around the language policy at the University of Stellenbosch became even more intense when about 3000 students signed a petition, and when a circular from the convocation petitioned more than 70 000 alumni to oppose the dual-medium option.[63] Matters came to a head when a meeting of the convocation was called at Stellenbosch in November 2005. About 1200 alumni converged on the University town in what was to become the largest meeting in the convocation's history. Approximately 2600 Stellenbosch graduates from all over the world participated in the language debate and 2549 endorsed a reconfirmation of the convocation's 2002 motion that Stellenbosch University should be positioned as an Afrikaans-speaking university which accommodates multilingualism. Rossouw regarded the event as representing a co-operation between Afrikaans students and (Afrikaans) civil society on a

60 See B Breytenbach, *et. al*, "Afrikaans nou op glybaan by US", *Die Burger*, 22 September 2005; M O' Connor, "US se 'T-beleid plaas Afrikaans op glybaan'", *Die Burger*, 22 September 2005; "Dié skrywers teken almal US-beswaarskrif", *Die Burger*, 13 Oktober 2005, p. 2; P Kapp, "US 'versaak sy eie visie'", *Die Burger*, 18 Oktober 2005, p. 13; M Malan, "'Taal-tsoenami' tref beleërde Matieland", *Rapport*, 30 Oktober 2005, p. 8; E Joubert, *et. al*, "Skrywersversoek aan die US" (available at http://www.litnet.co.za/taaldebat/skrywersversoek.asp, as accessed on 13 Dec. 2005), pp. 1-7; See also H Giliomee and L Schlemmer, (eds.), *Kruispad. Die toekoms van Afrikaans as openbare taal* (Cape Town, Tafelberg, 2001); H Giliomee and L Schlemmer, *'n Vaste plek vir Afrikaans* (Stellenbosch, Sun Press, 2006).

61 J Rossouw, "Die Afrikaanse universiteit van die toekoms", *Die Vrye Afrikaan*, 17 Februarie 2006, p. 10.

62 See e.g. C Brink, *No lesser place. The taaldebat at Stellenbosch* (Stellenbosch, Sun Press, 2006); F Cloete, "Neokonserwatiewe aanslag op die psige", *Die Burger*, 30 Maart 2006, p. 18.

63 M O'Connor, "Brief oor Afrikaans aan US na 70 000 oud-Maties op pad", *Die Burger*, 28 September 2005, p. 2; M Malan, "Maties maak hul stem dik vir Afrikaans", *Rapport*, 23 Oktober 2005, p. 2; "Petisie aan die Raad van die US" (available at http://www.litnet.co.za/miniseminare/matie_petisie.asp, as accessed on 17 Nov. 2005), pp. 1-2; Anon., "High noon op Stellenbosch", *Die Vrye Afrikaan*, 18 November 2005, p. 5; Anon., "US-studentepeiling: Afrikaans toenemend geveto", *Die Vrye Afrikaan,* 19 Mei 2006, p. 5.

scale hardly seen since 1994. For others, the Stellenbosch debate represented a "turning point" for Afrikaans either to be maintained as an "academic language" or to be relegated to the status of a "kitchen language". Never before in its history were the executive of the University of Stellenbosch so severely and sharply criticised in public by its own convocation for its policies.[64] There were, of course, also those who remained aloof of the debate as they regarded both of these positions as too extreme.

The position of the Afrikaans lobbyists was strengthened when, in the wake of the 2005 meeting, four pro-Afrikaans members of the convocation were elected to serve on the council of the University of Stellenbosch, its highest governing body. Simultaneously, three "Brink supporters" were defeated in the election. It was clear that the pressure, as a result of the controversial language policy, became untenable for the University's management. Not only were all decisions regarding language since 2002 referred back to the University's Senate and Council, but a committee headed by the Afrikaner historian and newly elected pro-Afrikaans member of the Council, Hermann Giliomee, was also requested to table an alternative language plan for the University.[65]

Eventually, the unpleasantness generated by the language debate, the controversies which surrounded Brink's policies, as well as the almost untenable and massive public pressure the University management had to face on the Afrikaans language issue, were probably all contributing factors to the unexpected resignation of Chris Brink in July 2006 as Vice-Chancellor of the University of Stellenbosch, quite some time before his tenure was over. The Afrikaans press referred to Brink's "faulty vision" and speculated that his intransigent position on the university's language policy had largely estranged him from the Afrikaans-speaking community and claimed that he even began to lose the unconditional support of some of the key role players at the university.[66]

64 See Universiteit van Stellenbosch pamphlet, Vergadering van die Konvokasie, 9 November 2006, pp. 1-9; M O' Connor, "T-opsie vir US afgeskiet", *Die Burger*, 11 November 2005, p. 1; R van der Horst, "US-krisis is keerpunt vir Afrikaans se status", *Die Burger*, 21 Mei 2006, p. 23; "High noon op Stellenbosch", *Die Vrye Afrikaan*, 18 November 2005, p. 5.

65 See C Smith, "US-raad vra senaat om weer na taalbeleid te kyk", *Die Burger*, 8 November 2005, p. 1; "US-raad", *Die Burger*, 8 November 2005, p. 12; M Malan, "Verkiesing vir Maties se raad word taaloorlog", *Rapport*, 19 Februarie 2006, p. 1; M Malan, "Ons wil Afrikaans bly!", *Rapport*, 26 Maart 2006, p. 1; ZB du Toit, "Matie-rektor reik hand na Giliomee oor taal", *Rapport*, 2 Julie 2006, p. 1; Anon., "US-Afrikaans", *Die Burger*, 3 Julie 2006, p. 10; "US-rektor betrek Konvokasie-bestuur by taalproses", *US Nuus*, 30 Junie 2006 (available at http://www.sun.ac.za/news/NewsItem_Afr.asp?ItemID=10491&Zone=E05, as accessed on 24 June 2006).

66 See "Maties verloor rektor aan Britse universiteit", US Mediaverklaring, 4 Julie 2006; M Malan en P Malan, "Hy soek stil-stil werk oorsee", *Rapport*, 9 Julie 2006, p. 10; "Foutiewe visie", *Rapport*, 9 Julie 2006, p. 18; "Die geval Chris Brink" (available at http://www.vryeafrikaan.co.za/lees.php?id=615, as accessed on 24 July 2006).

Brink was succeeded at Stellenbosch by Prof. Russel Botman, the University's first Coloured Vice-Chancellor. Not only did the symbolic gesture behind his well-received appointment represent a bolder striving towards greater diversity at the university, but Botman introduced a fresh perspective to the Stellenbosch language debate by stating that "the moral basis of Afrikaans should be restored".[67] An interesting development since the advent of Botman's tenure was the founding of Adam Tas, a non-racial pro-Afrikaans student lobby, on the campus.[68] Although the issue of the University's medium of instruction is not resolved as yet, a changed atmosphere and spirit of co-operation on campus between the pro-Afrikaans lobbyists and the University management, in an effort to resolve this sensitive matter, has been noticeable.[69]

Afrikaans popular culture and the "De la Rey phenomenon"

Whereas it is mostly the middle-aged and older generations of Afrikaners who seem to be suffering a "post-(Afrikaner)-state melancholy" in terms of their cultural identity and the status of their language in the new South Africa, the younger generation of post-apartheid Afrikaners does not necessarily share the same burden as they never enjoyed state power at all.[70] According to Frieda le Roux, a youthful member on the editorial staff of *Die Burger*, her generation "were not Afrikaner nationalists with membership cards in the filing cabinets of the nearest DRC anymore", nor were they "card-carrying members" of the ANC or any other South African political party for that matter, but they were proud of the heritage of their forefathers.[71]

An irony which added weight to the arguments of Brink's opponents was the fact that he left Stellenbosch at the end of 2006 to become the Vice-Chancellor of the English-speaking University of Newcastle in Britain.

67 G Brand, "US 'wil morele basis van Afrikaans help herstel'", *Die Burger*, 9 Februarie 2007, p. 7; R Botman, "Johan Combrink-gedenklesing: 'n Perspektief op Afrikaans" (available at http://www.litnet.co.za/cgi-bin/giga.cgi?cmd=print_article&news_id=10538&cause-i, as accessed on 2 March 2007), pp. 1-3.

68 L-B Lamprecht, "Adam Tas in taalstryd", *Die Burger*, 12 Februarie 2007, p. 7; M Malan, "Maties en Tukkies op oorlogspad oor Afrikaans", *Rapport*, 11 Februarie 2007, p. 6; R Nel, *et. al*, "Die nuwe Adam Tas: Henry Cloete gesels met Roelof Nel en Jared Abels" (available at http://www.litnet.co.za/cgi-bin/giga.cgi?cmd=print_article&news_id=9989&cause_id..., as accessed on 2 March 2007), pp. 1-3.

69 See e.g. US Memorandum: Taalhersieningsproses, 19 Julie 2006; M Malan, "Wiele aan't rol vir US se nuwe taalstrategie", *Rapport*, 16 Julie 2006, p. 8; "Wye konsensus oor vertrekpunte vir hersiening van Taaldebat", *US Kampusnuus*, 1 Maart 2007. p. 1.

70 J Rossouw, "FAK as ideeskepper", *Die Burger*, 19 Julie 2007, p. 19; J Rossouw, "Understanding Afrikaner alienation", *Die Vrye Afrikaan* Intussen 5 Maart 2007, Jaargang 04, Nommer 02 (available at http://www.vryeafrikaan.co.za, as accessed on 6 March 2007).

71 F le Roux, "Één ding wat ek weier om te lees", *Die Burger*, 2 Maart 2007, p. 14.

This fresh outlook on being an Afrikaner with a non-racial identity manifested itself in particular in the rise of Afrikaans cultural festivals, such as the Klein Karoo National Arts Festival at Oudtshoorn and Aardklop at Potchefstroom,[72] and in the phenomenal explosion in the popularity of Afrikaans music. The fans of this new generation of Afrikaans music were dubbed by the media as the "Zoid generation", named after Karen Zoid, the stage name of an Afrikaans rock musician, who enjoys a considerable following.[73] According to Hermann, the younger generation of Afrikaners "want to commit politics through their artists".[74]

What took the Afrikaans community by storm and by surprise like no other cultural event since 1994 was undoubtedly the release and unprecedented success of a modern popular Afrikaans song on the Anglo Boer War leader and Afrikaner folk hero, General Koos De la Rey, sung by Bok van Blerk, the stage name of an Afrikaans rock singer, Louis Pepler. In essence, the song is a ballad about the determined and heroic exploits of the Boers against the superior force of the British Army during the war. In the face of the Boers' hopeless situation, the song calls on De la Rey, for whom they were prepared to die, to come and lead the Boers to resurrection as a nation. Van Blerk draw large crowds of Afrikaners, young and old, from all over South Africa and even abroad to his shows, which always end with a climatic finale with the singing of the De la Rey song in which the crowds join with tremendous emotion, passion and displays of patriotic fervour. Within a very short period 200 000 copies of the album were sold, which is a record for Afrikaans music. Not surprisingly, the press has dubbed the reaction to the song the "De la Rey phenomenon".[75]

What was also not surprising is that, as in the case of other prominent Afrikaner discourses, the De la Rey phenomenon soon became a contentious issue, with Afrikaner contemporaries hotly debating the merits and demerits of

72 See H van Z Kitshoff, "Die opkoms, dinamika en betekenis van die Klein Karoo Nasionale Kunstefees: 1995-2005" (Ph.D, US, 2006) and T du Plessis, "Al meer in een kraal danksy die ANC", *Rapport*, 8 Oktober 2006, Digest Number 112 (posted by akripolis@yahoogroups.com, 8 Oct. 2006).

73 See e.g. D Jordaan, "Afrikaans dans", *Die Burger*, 27 Julie 2002, p. 13; F Buys, "Só word Afrikaner weer 'n faktor", *Rapport*, 18 Maart 2007, p. 20; J Eybers, "Afrikaanse musiek breek deur", *Rapport Perspektief*, 6 Mei 2007, p. 1; P Redelinghuys, "Afrikaanse Rock. Die mag van die kitaar", *Insig*, Desember 2001, pp. 64-66; T Engelbrecht, "Hoor my lied", *Insig*, Desember 2004, pp. 26-31.

74 D Hermann, "De la Rey-geslag sê hy dink en doen nuut", *Rapport*, 28 Januarie 2007, p. 19.

75 H Retief, "Hy's 'n Bok vir die Boere", *Rapport*, 28 Januarie 2007, p. 15; Anon., "Van Blerk se 'De la Rey' verkoop soos soetkoek", *Die Burger*, 30 Januarie 2007, p. 3; H Booyens en S Ahmed, "Hoe Rey die Boere? Jil-Jil, So!, *Die Huisgenoot*, 15 Februarie 2007, pp. 14-15, 20; "De la Rey lei die Boere in Londen", Digest Number 128 (posted by akripolis@yahoogroups.com, on 18 March 2007).

the song. It has been exhaustively analysed in the Afrikaans media and it even caught the attention of respected international newspapers such as the *New York Times* as well as the *Financial Times* and *The Guardian* in Britain.[76] Analysts who were critical of the song characterised it as being "a distracting side show" to the interests of the broader South African society; Afrikaner "nostalgia" and "romanticism" and "a longing for an innocent past"; "a yearning for a more military lifestyle"; the "De la Rey hysteria"; a one-sided perspective focusing only on the cultural interests of one race and interest group; and also "an expression of frustration, uncertainty and a feeling of being marginalised which could easily develop into a new wave of Afrikaner arrogance and ethnic machismo".[77]

In the light of the controversy surrounding it and sensitive to the cultural sentiments of other groups, a rugby stadium in Pretoria, a high school in Oudtshoorn and a radio station in Namibia temporarily banned the De la Rey song from being played on their premises.[78] The ANC Minister of Arts and Culture, Pallo Jordan, even went so far as to suggest that the De la Rey song could contain a "coded message for an armed rebellion" and warned that it "could be captured by right-wingers who wanted to incite Afrikaners against the government". Jordan's claims were, however, immediately refuted by a number of prominent Afrikaner intellectuals.[79]

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76 "Song Wakens Injured Pride of Afrikaners", *New York Times*, 27 February 2007; Digest Number 125 (posted by akripolis@yahoogroups.com, 3 March 2007); A Russell, "Boer Roar", *Financial Times*, 21 July 2007 (available at http://www.ft.com/cms/s/c6b9deea-371e-11dc-9f6d-0000779fd2ac.html, as accessed on 24 July 2007); Anon., "De la Rey-debat en 'ongemaklike Afrikaners' haal voorblad van bekende Amerikaanse koerant", *Die Burger*, 28 Februarie 2007, p. 2; A Grundlingh, "Die historiese in die hede: Dinamika van die De la Rey-fenomeen in Afrikanerkringe, 2006-2007", *New Contree*, 53, May 2007.

77 See C Niehaus, "'De la Rey': a distracting side show…" (available at http://www.litnet.co.za/cgi-bin/giga.cgi?cmd=cause_dir_news_item&cause_id=1270..., as accessed on 22 March 2007), pp. 1-3; A Bezuidenhout, "From Voëlvry to De la Rey: Popular music, Afrikaner Nationalism and lost irony" (available at http://www.litnet.co.za/cgi-bin/giga.cgi?cmd=print_article&news_id=11123&cause_i..., as accessed on 2 March 2007), pp. 1-13; "Kleinboer", "De la Rey-gewildheid: 'n versugting na die militêre" (available at http://www.litnet.co.za/cgi-bin/giga.cgi?cmd=cause_dir_news_item&cause_id=1270&news_id=9562, as accessed on 2 March 2007); C Fourie, "'Tyd nog nie ryp vir 'n taalraad'", *Rapport*, 25 Februarie 2007, p. 2; A Boesak, "Ons en die Generaal", Bylae by *Die Burger*, 24 Februarie 2007, p. 4 and M du Preez, "'De la Rey draai in sy graf om…'", Bylae by *Die Burger*, 3 Februarie 2007, p. 6, respectively.

78 G Prins, De la Rey verbied op Loftus", *Rapport*, 18 Februarie 2007, p. 1; S Johnston, "'De la Rey' gaan skool laat ly", *Die Burger*, 10 Maart 2007, p. 5; H Morgan-Hollander, "De la Rey verbied in Namibië" (available at http://www.litnet.co.za/cgi-bin/giga.cgi?cmd=print_article&news_id=10936&cause_i, as accessed on 2 March 2007).

79 See e.g. "Bok 'blêr nie politiek'", *Die Burger*, 25 Januarie 2007, p. 14; A Smith, "'Daar's g'n De la Rey-kode'" and E Williamson, "'Lied laat niemand laer trek'", *Die Burger*, 7 Februarie 2007, p. 3; A Smith, "Zuma sing sy eie 'De la Rey', sê DA", *Die Burger*, 8 Februarie 2007, p. 3; H Booyens en S Cilliers, "Koos op 'n Wit Perd", *Die Huisgenoot*, 15 Februarie 2007, pp. 16-17; S Swart & A Grundlingh, "De la Rey – no cause for alarm" (available at http://www.litnet.co.za/cgi-bin/giga.cgi?cmd=cause_dir_news_item&cause_id=1270, as accessed on 22 March 2007).

For analysts who held a positive point of view on the De la Rey phenomenon, the song provided a stimulus, especially among the Afrikaner youth, for discovering their own identity, as it made them realise that General De la Rey symbolised a heroic past – a past which Afrikaners could be proud of. De la Rey thus became "a mentor on the way to cultural self-discovery".[80] For Loammi Wolf "the popularity of 'De la Rey' is probably largely the reaction of Afrikaners who feel they have had enough of Afrikaner-bashing".[81]

It is too soon to speculate whether the De la Rey phenomenon will be of profound significance for the discourse and debate in Afrikaner circles on issues such as those discussed in this article. In all probability the popularity of Van Blerk's song is of passing significance as it has no deeper political roots. A thought-provoking remark, however, was made by Gunter Pakendorf, a lecturer from the University of Cape Town's School for Languages and Literature, at a branch meeting of the South African Academy for Science and Arts, held in Stellenbosch in March 2007 to discuss the De la Rey phenomenon. Pakendorf remarked that, although the hype which was created by the Bok van Blerk followers as a result of his song was probably not intentional, it could possibly have created a *zeitgeist* (spirit of the time) for the Afrikaner youth in which they can redefine without shame about their past their identity as Afrikaners in a post-apartheid South Africa.[82]

Conclusion

More than a decade into a new democratic South Africa Vestergaard's observation that Afrikaner identity is to a certain degree in a state of flux[83] still holds true, whether they are in a diaspora or struggling to redefine their position and cultural identity and the status their language in their homeland. The propensity of Afrikaner émigrés to settle in predominantly English-speaking Caucasian and Protestant countries and in communities sharing similar

80 See e.g. M van Bart, "Die medium is die boodskap!", *Die Vrye Afrikaan*, 20 April 2007, p. 24; L Scholtz, "'De la Rey' is simbool van iets wat groter is", *Die Burger*, 1 Desember 2006, p. 12; Booyens en Cilliers, "Koos op 'n wit Perd", pp. 16-17; T Eloff, "New Afrikaner unity a call for leadership, *Mail & Guardian*, 2 March 2007, Digest Number 125 (posted by akripolis@yahoogroups.com, on 3 March 2007).

81 L Wolf, "The rainbow blues of 'De la Rey'" (available at http://www.litnet.co.za/cgi-bin/giga.cgi?cmd=print_article&news_id=12944&cause-i, as accessed on 10 April 2007), p. 10.

82 A remark by Gunter Pakendorf at a branch meeting of the South African Academy for Science and Arts, Stellenbosch, 14 March 2007.

83 M Vestergaard, "Afrikanerdoom?, Negotiating Afrikaner identity in post-apartheid South Africa" (MA, UCT, 2008), pp. 57, 138.

biological, religious and cultural characteristics, as Du Toit has pointed out, has certain implications in terms of the diaspora and redefining Afrikaner cultural identity. Firstly, it has been clearly indicated that for the majority of these persons emigration was an irreversible and permanent act of will. Secondly, the perpetual maintenance of any Afrikaner identity and the Afrikaans language abroad, especially after the first generation, is not sustainable. Therefore those émigrés are lost as far as Afrikaner identity formation is concerned, and this should be accepted as a fait accompli. Rather it seems that the future of Afrikaner cultural identity and the Afrikaans language will be determined in South Africa only (and to a lesser extent perhaps also in Namibia).

According to the respected Afrikaner intellectual and former politician, Frederik van Zyl Slabbert, in future the term "Afrikaner" will have to be associated with a new set of values which are unknown as yet, because those who wish to be Afrikaners will have to start moulding and refining those values. How this opportunity is used will determine whether there is a future for Afrikaners in the new South Africa. The challenge for those wishing to be Afrikaners is to bring about a new, common, internal process of value identification that can contribute towards a new, external ascription of what being an Afrikaner represents. Any group that would undermine the striving towards transcending values of a common South African patriotism by claiming special minority status can expect less sympathy for those minority interests from the black majority. Therefore Afrikaners would have to become a new "imagined community". They will have to apply themselves imaginatively to the task of establishing who they are in South Africa and in this process they will have to disengage their thinking from the negative aspects of their history and endeavour to create a new one.[84]

In the sacrifice Afrikaners made in 1994 by giving up their minority domination of South Africa, they had indeed largely lived up to the suggestion by NP van Wyk Louw, one of the greatest Afrikaner poets and essayists, that they had to choose between "mere survival" and "survival in justice".[85] The emphasis in the intellectual discourse among Afrikaners on their identity has

84 F van Zyl Slabbert, *Tough Choices. Reflections of an Afrikaner African* (Cape Town, Tafelberg, 2000), pp. 80-82, 85. See also M Vestergaard, "Afrikanerdoom?, Negotiating Afrikaner identity in post-apartheid South Africa" (MA, UIT, 2008), pp. 73-74.

85 Quoted by H Giliomee, *The Afrikaners…*, p. 663.

become, although at times still rigorous and heated, at least more nuanced and has shifted from a focus on exclusivity towards being more inclusive.[86] There are those Afrikaners who became contented to forsake any claims to maintaining an Afrikaner cultural identity in the new South Africa in order to pursue a living standard of material affluence but which is indicative of cultural superficialisation.[87] Where Afrikaners are, on the one hand, experiencing a sense of cultural loss, they are, on the other hand, rapidly re-constructing a new cultural frame in the emergence of cultural festivals.[88]

The almost 3 million Afrikaners are thus in a process of denationalizing and repositioning themselves as "ordinary" citizens with no more or fewer privileges than those guaranteed to their approximately 40 million fellow (predominantly) black South Africans under the country's constitution. The big debate in Afrikaner circles is how to best preserve their cultural heritage in a redefined state with a redefined nationalism. Therefore it seems as if a new kind of Afrikaans community politics and autonomy is being shaped that has emerged beyond the largely outdated politics of the past. The way that this redefined Afrikaner cultural identity will position itself in the "new" South Africa represents an integral part of the interesting social dynamics in the emergence of a new South African nationalism.

Although there are some diehards who will still nurture racist attitudes and although the process of nation building is at times tedious and trying, the overwhelming majority of Afrikaners are progressively-minded people who opted for an equal, free and just society despite all the sacrifices they had to make. After more than three hundred years on the African continent, they have become adaptable. They have learned the art of survival and know that Africa is not a place for the faint-hearted. Afrikaners are now without strong leaders or organisations, but they are rediscovering and redefining their own particular identity, one that was forged by their complex and turbulent history, and by their love of the language they speak and the harsh land in which they live. But for most of them Afrikaans as a language still remains the core symbol of their sense of place and community. The survival of Afrikaners as an ethnic, culturally defined people will probably depend on the future possibility of maintaining Afrikaans as a language of the higher

86 C Malan, "Denkendes lei nou Afrikaner", *Beeld*, 4 April 2007 (posted by akripolis@yahoogroups.com, 7 April 2007).

87 See H Giliomee, *The Afrikaners…*, pp. 607, 659, 663 and Du Toit, *Die nuwe Toekoms*, p. 327.

88 See H van Z Kitshoff, "Die opkoms, dinamika en betekenis van die Klein Karoo Nasionale Kunstefees…", pp. 83-89, 101, 123-126, 134-151, 153-163.

functions in education, especially as far as tertiary education is concerned, and in religion.

An Afrikaner cultural identity and the Afrikaans language shall be preserved in South Africa if only Afrikaners themselves will demonstrate an intrinsic desire to do so. The survival, for instance, of Afrikaans language schools and Afrikaans as a public language will also depend mainly on the tangible and financial backing from the ranks of Afrikaners and their willingness to make sacrifices in this regard. Therefore, the intrinsic determination for the survival of their cultural identity and language, more than external pressures and threats, shall influence Afrikaners' future in the "new" South Africa.

Equally crucial for the survival of Afrikaans as a language is the degree to which white and Coloured Afrikaans-speakers would be able to reconcile the predominantly bitter historical racial divide between them and to form a cultural unity to claim a respectable position for their mother tongue in post-apartheid South Africa.

In the words of Hermann Giliomee, the greatest challenge for Afrikaners and all Afrikaans speakers in the present millennium will be to nourish and replenish their love of their language and their land, and accept the responsibility of handing over their cultural heritage to the next generation. If they accept this challenge, they will become part of a new, democratic South Africa in their own special way.[89]

From a perusal of the discourse as reflected in the Afrikaans media, however, it is evident that the debate on the re-negotiation of a cultural identity for Afrikaners is still a very dynamic and on-going process which is bound to continue generating interesting and lively responses, and often heated debate, from the Afrikaner community as the creation of a post-apartheid heterogeneous and multi-cultural South African society unfolds further.

89 H Giliomee, *The Afrikaners…*, pp. 664, 666.