ENGLISH ACADEMIC LITERARY DISCOURSE IN SOUTH

AFRICA 1958-2004: A REVIEW OF 11 ACADEMIC JOURNALS

by

DEREK ALAN BARKER

submitted in accordance with the requirements

for the degree of

DOCTOR OF LITERATURE AND PHILOSOPHY

in the subject

ENGLISH

at the

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA

PROMOTER: PROF L DE KOCK

NOVEMBER 2006

Title of thesis:

ENGLISH ACADEMIC LITERARY DISCOURSE IN SOUTH AFRICA 1958-2004: A REVIEW OF 11 ACADEMIC JOURNALS

Summary:

This thesis examines the discipline of English studies in South Africa through a review of articles published in 11 academic journals over the period 1958–2004. The aims are to gain a better understanding of the functions of peer-reviewed journals, to reveal the presence of rules governing discursive production, and to uncover the historical shifts in approach and choice of disciplinary objects. The Foucauldian typology of procedures determining discursive production, that is: exclusionary, internal and restrictive procedures, is applied to the discipline of English studies in order to elucidate the existence of such procedures in the discipline. Each journal is reviewed individually and comparatively. Static and chronological statistical analyses are undertaken on the articles in the 11 journals in order to provide empirical evidence to subvert the contention that the discipline is unruly and its choice of objects random. The cumulative results of this analysis are used to describe the major shifts primarily in ranges of disciplinary objects, but also in metadiscursive and thematic debates. Each of the journals is characterised in relation to what the overall analysis reveals about the mainstream developments. The two main findings are that, during the period under review, South African imaginative written artefacts have moved from a marginal position to the centre of focus of the discipline; and that the conception of what constitutes the 'literary' has returned to a pre-Practical criticism definition, broadly inclusive of a variety of types of artefact including imaginative writing, such as autobiography, letters, journals and orature.

Key terms:

Literary discourse, discipline, English studies, peer-reviewed journals, academic article, career formation, canon formation, knowledge formation, exclusionary procedures, internal procedures, restrictive procedures, literary historiography, Practical criticism, Marxism, contemporary theory, criticism, metadiscourse, rules

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction

> Might not a science be analysed or conceived of basically as an experience … a relationship in which the subject is modified by that experience? Scientific practice, in other words, would function both as the ideal subject of science and the object of knowledge … What effect of truth is produced in that way? This would imply that there isn't *one* truth – which *doesn't mean either that this history is irrational or that this science is illusory*. Rather, it *confirms the presence of a real and intelligible history*, of a series of collective rational experiences conforming to a set of precise, identifiable rules and resulting in the construction of both the knowing subject and the known object. (Foucault 1994: 254, emphasis added)

The claim to scientific status of a discipline such as *English studies*, or for that matter any discipline falling under the general heading of the 'humanities', is certainly disputable. Nevertheless, whatever their status, such disciplines flourish in the academy, by which one understands that there are departments, academics, an ever-growing archive, sets of methods, panoplies of concepts: a fully elaborated and self-perpetuating practice.

Embedded in this practice is an agent: the *knowing subject* who, in the case of English studies, is the literary academic. Depending on the construction of the *knowing subject,* finite ranges of *known objects* are defined or definable (the options are not necessarily ever exhausted). The constructed nature of both the subject and the object does not, in my understanding, imply the irrationality or unintelligibility of either the statements on the objects, or the

discipline and all its rules *qua* practice. On the contrary, I believe that the discipline of English studies is both highly rational and intelligible. Indeed, I cannot imagine the practice going on, producing new statements, if this supposition did not hold. In discussing the discipline, there are potentially a very large number of 'true' statements about its nature and practice: a very large number, but not infinite, and not all equally true. My hope in this thesis is to present *some* truthful claims, based on valid arguments, about the nature of the discipline of English studies in South Africa.

I would like to relate a personal experience I had over ten years ago, and which might explain my initial interest in the topic of *academic discourse*. This experience led, many years and many other experiences later, to this thesis. Like all students registered for 'English' at UNISA, twice annually I received an unsolicited copy of *Unisa English Studies: Journal of the Department of English.* This journal was not required reading for undergraduates, and therefore I summarily ignored it. I do not recall the first time I browsed through a copy, but at some point, I must have done so, read a paragraph or two, and decided it was not worth the effort. Either that or the garish colours and awful jacket design kept me from paying due attention to the contents. Nevertheless, at some point, probably in 1996, I mustered sufficient courage and energy to read my first *academic* article: 'A Reading of Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*' by Stephen Meyer (1995). It was a mind-blowing experience.

Never before had I come across a specimen of discourse of this nature. What nature? I had no idea. I had read many reviews and other modes of discourse. However, whatever this was, it was not what I was used to, and it was certainly not a review of Conrad's book. It was something else. A distinct kind of writing with its own flavour, rhetorically very challenging, begging more questions than it gave answers, delightfully complex but painfully opaque. It was very

enjoyable but, at the same time, very worrying. It appeared, or perhaps this was simply my projection, to be part of a conversation, one moreover, that I was not party to. The experience was somewhat akin to listening in on the local party line in mid-conversation, not knowing who is speaking to whom, or why, and without a clue about the context. With the important difference, of course, that no one actually *speaks* in the way one does in an academic article.

My boyhood love of science fiction immediately suggested the possibility of a *parallel universe*, or as I might put it today, a *parallel discourse*: a practice which, though co-temporary with related discourses, had an independent existence. Was academic literary discourse really a parallel discourse? What relationship could such an article possibly have with literary production *out there*? Was there a fundamental disjunction between the public discourse of reviewing, and the academic article?

Reading other journals, I saw that indeed the academic articles did discuss primary texts, and quite often too. What did the authors of the primary texts think of what was written about their work? Did they or anyone else think about it? That is, apart from literary academics. I discovered later that the *academic* literary journals had very low circulations, that indeed very few people outside the academy, if anyone, read the articles. So, what was the point? This took me quite a while to discover.

Registering for an honours degree in 'English', I received lists of recommended articles for the various courses I had selected. I ordered everything on every list, even when it was not strictly required to do so. The articles in the lists ostensibly bore some relation to the courses, and I had since developed both an appetite for 'English' and for academic articles. I read them all, at first seldom comprehending

the content. I enrolled for all the theory or poetics courses available. I wanted to understand what this *parallel* discourse was really about.

The experience was extremely bewildering. I tried to find the links, the myriad connections, between the courses and the recommended reading, between the articles listed in the recommended lists and others in the same list. I became slightly paranoid: is this a conspiracy? Am I being systematically bamboozled? Links that existed were tenuous. Patterns emerged and, in the absence of real comprehension, I manufactured coherence, ignoring parts not fitting in with my understanding or with other parts of the 'same' group. My initial experience remained essentially the same: I was delighted and dismayed, entranced and enervated.

This led, eventually, to the birth of the idea for this thesis which, naturally, was much larger in its conception than in its realisation. I had initially hoped to describe the discourse of English studies, public literary discourse, and the teaching canon / teaching methodologies at tertiary level, tracing the links between them all. Only if one does not know what such an exercise entails can one conceive of it – it is an all but impossible task, as I soon came to realise. I went through a stepwise process of reducing the object of my thesis, to make it humanly manageable in a reasonable portion of lifetime. I eventually settled for a close analysis of two journals: *English Studies in Africa (ESA)* and *English in Africa (EA),* two of the longest running journals with very different orientations. I hoped to convincingly suggest that they were representative of academic discourse as well as of the discipline in South Africa, in so far as they reflect the research activities of local literary academics. In the process, unease crept into me, and a sense of the weakness of my claim of representativity flooded my senses, and so my research activities left the base of these two journals.

I went further, in search of other journals, to support or confound my suspicion that these two journals were not quite identifiable with mainstream practice. As it turns out, *ESA* is indeed fairly representative of the overall picture, and *EA* is anomalous, but I was not to discover this for a long time to come. I expanded the analysis eventually to 11 journals. I contemplated many others, but they did not seem to fit into the economy of what appeared to me to constitute a very specific and functional discourse: that of the academy, its people and its practices.

In analysing the discipline through the journals, have I been able to identify the 'set of precise, identifiable rules' which define a discipline and enable the infinite production and assessment of new statements? Have I been able to describe, minimally, the bare outlines of the nature of the particular type of *parallel* discourse I have suggested the academic journals constitute? I feel that the answer to both questions is a very tentative 'yes': to *some* degree. I make claims about the journals and the discipline based on empirical evidence, close textual analysis of academic articles, and what I hope will be taken as valid arguments. However, much more work remains to be done. What follows, then, is the result of an attempt to understand English studies in South Africa. Hopefully it was worth the effort.

Chapter 1. Disciplined Discourse

> It does not matter that discourse appears to be of little account, because the prohibitions that surround it very soon reveal its link with desire and with power. (Foucault 1971: 52)

If the academic article in the peer-reviewed journal is the gold standard of intellectual achievement and index of intellectual output of a discipline, then it is to these journals, first and foremost, that one should turn to take its measure. Since the launch of the journal *English Studies in Africa* at the University of Witwatersrand[1] in 1958, there has been steady growth in this mode of discursive output in the field. A considerable number of journals have been launched since, though several have been discontinued. In this thesis, it is the discipline of English studies, as manifested in the discourse published in academic journals over the period 1958-2004, that forms the object of analysis. By tracing developments in this facet of the discursive practice of English literary studies, and by delimiting the rules of procedure for its formulation, I hope to come to a better understanding of its link to non-discursive practices of social power structures, its roles and functions, and its possible futures.

Both the discipline of English studies and research in the field in South Africa predate the period under review. Additionally, the academic article is not the only form of research output. However, primarily for practical and pragmatic reasons, this thesis confines itself to the academic journals only. More specifically, the English-language articles published in the following 11 academic journals are analysed:

---

[1] The journal was issued 'under the auspices of our South African universities' according to the foreword by then Chancellor of the University of Witwatersrand, Richard Feetham (1958).

English Studies in Africa (47 volumes, University of Witwatersrand, 1958-2004); *Unisa English Studies: Journal of the Department of English* (33 volumes, UNISA, 1963-1995); *UCT Studies in English* (15 Issues, University of Cape Town, 1970-1986); *English in Africa* (31 volumes, ISEA, 1974-2004); *Literator: Journal of Literary Criticism, Comparative Linguistics and Literary Studies* (25 volumes, PUvCHO / North-West University, 1980-2004); *English Academy Review* (24 volumes, English Academy of Southern Africa, 1980-2004); *The Journal of Literary Studies / Tydskrif vir Literatuurwetenskap* (20 volumes, SAVAL, 1985-2004); *Current Writing: Text and Reception in Southern Africa* (16 volumes, University of Natal / University of KwaZulu-Natal, 1989-2004); *Pretexts: Literary and Cultural Studies*[2] (12 volumes, University of Cape Town, 1989-2003); *Alternation* (11 volumes, CSSALL, 1994-2004); and *scrutiny2* (9 volumes, UNISA, 1996-2004). These are reviewed in the thesis with the aim of characterising both the discourse and the discipline in South Africa.[3]

Until 1958, there were no academic journals focusing exclusively or predominantly on English language and literature. This is not to say there were no regular forums in South Africa for publishing formal or academic work in English on such matters. AC Partridge, co-founder and first editor of *English Studies in Africa (ESA)*, mentions three other important forums at the time, namely

---

[2] The subtitle of *Pretexts* has seen minor variations over the years: in 1989 it was 'Studies in Literature and Culture'; for the period 1990-1998, the subtitle was 'Studies in Writing and Culture'; for the period 1999-2003, the subtitle was 'Literary and Cultural Studies'.

[3] In this thesis, the 11 journals will be referred to repeatedly. For ease of reference, the following abbreviations will be used: English Studies in Africa (*ESA*); Unisa English Studies: Journal of the Department of English (*UES*); UCT Studies in English (*UCT*); English in Africa (*EA*); Literator: Journal of Literary Criticism, Comparative Linguistics and Literary Studies (*Literator*); English Academy Review (*EAR*); The Journal of Literary Studies / Tydskrif vir Literatuurwetenskap (*JLS*); Current Writing: Text and Reception in Southern Africa (*CW*); Pretexts: Literary and Cultural Studies (*Pretexts*); Alternation (*Alternation*); and scrutiny2 (*s2*). Nevertheless, the main titles and abbreviations will be repeated together whenever mentioned for the first time in a particular chapter.

Theoria, Standpunte and *Contrast* (1964: 139). *Theoria* is an academic journal of the Faculty of Arts of the University of Natal and was launched in 1947. *Standpunte* and *Contrast* were literary journals not directed at an academic audience *per se,* and mainly carried creative writing (particularly *Contrast*), though they also published critical reviews authored by academics. Another very interesting quarterly periodical, *Trek* saw contributions from major literary academics of the time.

Theoria: A Journal of Studies of the Arts Faculty of Natal University College was launched as an annual publication in 1947, with the following foreword by Notcutt and Findlay:

> The publication of this Journal springs from the conviction that a University Arts Faculty justifies its existence most fully, in our own country and epoch, if it seeks to promote an outlook of humane criticism in as many fields, and as many groups of people, as possible ... This Journal will try to build as many bridges as possible between the standpoint of general theory and the standpoints of scientific specialists, of workers on behalf of special causes and of the educated community generally. (1947: 2)

The main focus of the journal was at no point literary or language studies. Nevertheless, right from the outset, one or more articles on literary subjects would appear.

One of the earliest post-Second World War forums was the (mainly) Afrikaans literary journal *Standpunte* (1946–1986) which, from time to time, carried articles in English. Several striking examples are: Friedman takes a contributor to Leavis's *Scrutiny* to task for the perceived poor estimation of the work of Henry Adams in an article 'Henry Adams – A Catholic Approach' (1946: 40-47); Segal on

'Contemporary Criticism of the English Romantics' (1946: 44-55)*,* looking at the status and value of romantic poetry; Van Heyningen 'A Performance of "The Flies" by Jean-Paul Sartre' (1948: 46 – 54) gives a close reading of the text and reviews a performance of the play; Partridge 'The Condition of SA English Literature' (1949: 46-51), puts the case, inter alia, for greater attention to be paid in English departments to South African literary production.

The periodical *Trek* was a public forum and was not directed at an academic audience. The Marxist critic, Dora Taylor, and the literary academics and passionate campaigners for Practical Criticism, Profs. Geoffrey Durrant and Christina van Heyningen, make early contributions. In addition, some creative writers like Herman Charles Bosman and Jack Cope, inter alia, contributed articles to this periodical. Special focus journals, such as *Shakespeare in Southern Africa* and *SA Theatre Journal* have not been considered in this review primarily because it aims to describe *general* trends within the discourse. The 11 journals selected cover prose, poetry and theatre as well as cultural artefacts, rendering them relatively more representative of *general* academic production.

There are a number of bold assumptions and striking challenges implicit in such an undertaking, all of which beg the indulgence of the reader and threaten to undermine the enterprise at the outset. Inter alia, it can reasonably be objected that the sheer bulk of material under analysis undermines attempts to derive significant and insightful comment (243 volumes containing 2585 articles over 47 years). It could be argued that the omissions, gross simplifications and consequent under- or overstatement of this or that aspect of the discipline, all of which are ineluctable when summarising material of such dimension, perforce render any conclusions tentative, if not meaningless. Indeed, with increasing generality, any analysis teeters on the brink of spinning completely out of orbit.

There can be no outright dismissal of these objections, merely the admission that, not only do these perils exist, but that such analysis does violence in its inevitable lack of appreciation or attention to important aspects of the discipline. This must be so, as it runs the risk of being enthralled by its own wanton desire to see things *this or that way* and no other. This will only be mitigated to the extent that the conclusions are cogently supported and compellingly argued, and held as inevitably tentative.

Moreover, the very representativity of peer-reviewed journals in respect of the discipline could likewise be questioned. There are literary practitioners, such as Stephen Gray, who have published widely, even (it could be argued) indiscriminately, as articles of academic register by this particular academic have appeared in peer-reviewed and non-peer reviewed journals alike. Furthermore, academics in English studies in South Africa often publish abroad. Though the opposite is perhaps less common (that is, non-South African academics publishing articles in South Africa), there are a great many journals in other countries dealing with similar topics and, particularly over the last two decades, on postcolonial literature in Southern Africa. It must be admitted, too, that the 11 journals selected for analysis have not always been subject to systematic 'peer-reviewing' as practised today.

In addition, not all the journals have been officially accredited by the Ministry of Education for research grant purposes. Such accreditation officially marks out a journal as a research journal, at which point there can be no confusing it with its distant relative, the literary journal. Nevertheless, the basis for selection is not the accreditation status, nor whether the journal has always been peer-reviewed or not. It is the *academic* basis, that is, the fact that the journal was launched and maintained by literary academics and was by

and large dominated by academics in terms of contributors, that has been used as the criterion for selection.

Literary journals have been excluded not because their content is not 'academic' in the sense of not being intellectual, but because it has been assumed that their basis outside of academia and the structure of their audience (the literary public *per se* as opposed to academics), render their content non-representative of the discipline of English studies as practised in the academy. For these reasons, I will be referring to the 11 journals as 'academic' journals rather than 'peer-reviewed' or 'accredited' journals. Nevertheless, it must be emphasised that the editors of all the 11 journals applied vetting procedures involving peers in the selection of articles. In addition, the use of 'academic' is not here meant to connote 'intellectual' in contrast to a non-intellectual discourse outside the academy. Rather, the term 'academic discourse' for the purposes of this thesis will be defined as the academic articles written by academics and meant for consumption by other academics and published within the dedicated forums designated to such ends.

The current of discourse on literary matters is torrential. This analysis focuses only on a narrow stream of that discourse: the academic stream. In addition to the already mentioned non-peer reviewed or public literary journals as well as content published in other forums such as the internet and newspapers, there are monographs, anthologies, conference papers and lectures. In addition to other forms of secondary discourse, 'literary discourse' includes primary discourse, that is, imaginative literature itself in all its manifestations, be it oral literature, prose, theatre, poetry and so on, written or unwritten. Hence, the objection that the selected object of analysis is too vast could be countered with the exact opposite objection: that it is too narrow, and hardly representative of the discourse at all, never mind the discipline.

These objections are apposite and cannot be entirely dismissed, nor would I attempt to do so. My focus on the above-mentioned journals does not derive from an unshakeable conviction that they indeed represent the discipline of English studies, or that they constitute the highest and most rarefied forms of discussion within larger debates on imaginative output – far from it. Nor, more narrowly, would I contend that the said journals represent English academic literary discourse *per se*. I do claim, however, that academic journals are a major forum of *academic* literary practice. Though a transparency of language is assumed (that is, speech uttered by addressors is taken *literally* and not *figuratively*) no comprehensively mimetic relationship between English Academic discourse and the discipline of English studies in South Africa is assumed: what objects academics feel compelled to analyse, the repertoire of tools used in analysis, and what topics become current at any one moment, all come to characterise *part* of the *practice* of the discipline at that time.

It remains partial because, while the discourse in academic journals can be said to embody important enunciations of the discipline, the record remains incomplete. Not all discourse within the discipline is manifested in articles and some articles are not published. Moreover, in looking at such research outputs, we might arrive at a more or less accurate characterisation of one facet of the discipline. While this might tell us part of the story of the discipline, it will certainly miss other facets, such as other discipline-related activities undertaken by practitioners (teaching, mentoring, literary competitions, non-academic literary forums, community work). Hence, any claims to the completeness or unmediated representativity would be entirely unsupportable. The conclusions that will be drawn must be tentative: it will never be possible to cover all the output of any discursive practice in pursuit of defining it. Setting aside the question of the desirability of such an undertaking, its Sisyphean dimensions

are immediately apparent. Nevertheless, I would maintain that it is a plausible supposition that the 11 selected journals are significantly emblematic of a very important facet of the discipline, and that it is not only possible to derive meaningful insights about the discourse and the discipline through analysis of the content of the selected journals, but that it is also possible to make valid claims as to their nature.

It is important to draw attention to the contingent nature of the relationship between academics and these journals. In this chapter, before launching into the analysis of the journals in subsequent chapters, I will be elaborating in some detail on two very important properties of this particular stream of discourse. First, I will claim that there are several specific functions of this discourse which render it significantly different from other kinds of literary discourse; second, I will claim that, as it constitutes discourse emanating from the academy, it is rule-bound in ways that non-academic discourse is not.

Even where the content of this stream of the discourse bears similarities with content of other streams, its specificity and significance derives to a considerable degree from certain functions which set it apart from those other streams. In what follows, I will be venturing several speculations as to the function of this particular stream of academic discourse within the larger current of literary discourse. Certain functions specific to academic journals, I believe, set the enunciations published in them apart from the same or similar enunciations in other forums, thus justifying their isolation for analytical purposes from the wider literary discourse. On my reading, there are three main discernible objective functions specific to academic journals which, for present purposes, are summarised under the following broad headings, namely: 1) career formation; 2) knowledge formation; and 3) canon formation. I will deal briefly with each of these below and hope to show that these functions render this

particular discourse sufficiently specific to justify its treatment as a separate and significantly bounded stream of discourse.

Among other forms of academic output, the academic journal arguably plays the most important role in the formation and development of academic careers. While the 'publish or perish' axiom may not in reality always apply, the imperative, within the logic of the university and the discipline, to undertake and publish research output is ineluctable: it is generally not an option, academics must publish. There may well be exceptions where academics who have gained a reputation as excellent lecturers will be awarded professorships in spite of low levels of academic output or output of an indifferent quality. However, the exception proves the rule: that academic careers are based primarily on research records.

The peer-reviewed journal is not the only forum for such research outputs. Indeed, in addition to academic articles, there are monographs, anthologies, conference papers and full-length books recognised by peers as academic in nature (as opposed to popular), and as research outputs. Nevertheless, in terms of numbers, the journal article is the most common, and moreover, ideas or propositions for monographs, anthologies and books are often first mooted or first versions of the texts appear in journal articles. While I recognise that this may not always be the case, it appears reasonable to assume that one can profile with an acceptable degree of accuracy the general developments in research undertaken in a discipline by tracing the trends in academic journals.

Related to the function of career formation, the publication of research on the objects of the discipline constitutes the formation of knowledge within the discipline. Over time, a body of knowledge on the objects falling within the purview of the discipline is thus built up. In all activities of the practising academic, whether in developing

curricula or course content, lecturing or undertaking research, it is to this body of knowledge that one turns as one of the main resources. It may reasonably be objected that the literary academic turns to many sources, not merely peer-reviewed output (whether in the form of the academic article, monograph and so on). Among other sources, there is primary literary discourse as such, that is, the imaginative output which constitutes (for the most part) the primary object of the discipline. Naturally, these objects play a major role; however, in terms of the discipline as such, the objects of the discipline do not constitute the knowledge within the discipline: they do not constitute speech emanating from the academy. Without extant secondary discourse, it is all but impossible to construct curricula, develop course content or write a lecture. Of course, in research, the academic gaze often falls on new objects never before scrutinised, and thus the process of knowledge formation begins.

Another source (or set of sources) is non-academic secondary discourse, that is, reviews in newspapers or review articles, analyses, even in-depth research, published in non-peer reviewed forums, such as literary journals or the internet. While popular reviews are seldom cited in peer-reviewed articles, the status of what might be considered more serious work published in non-peer reviewed forums is difficult to assess. Suffice it to say that, as a general rule, academics resort to such sources less often to support arguments made in academic articles published in peer-reviewed journals. Such a practice points to sensitivity to the status or authority of such speech. In instances where this general rule is not applied, it is due to the status of a particular academic. Where someone with an impeccable reputation as a academic publishes an article on, say, the internet, the citation-value, if you will, remains high. Nevertheless, it is still the peer-reviewed forums which establish academic reputations in the first instance. Hence, it would seem reasonable to conclude that the peer-reviewed

journal plays a major role, perhaps *the* major role, in knowledge-formation within the discipline.

It might be objected that the model of knowledge which sees each successive publication within the discipline as the advancement of knowledge, increasing the stock of know-how incrementally over time, refining and improving it, constantly moving the frontiers further and further back, expanding the horizon of the discipline, is hopelessly outmoded. For example, some may take the view that the very considerable volume of academic articles, monographs and conference papers on Olive Schreiner, as opposed to any other South African author, does not therefore constitute a greater, more precise and profounder exposition of this author than discourse on any other author. Setting aside the question of the quality of research output (that is, more does not always mean better), some would take issue with the very concept of 'knowledge' implied in such a view. Cornwell describes an alternative model of knowledge:

> In the epistemology of postmodernism 'knowledge' and the 'truth' which it purports to reveal are viewed as historically contingent ... The radicalism of this challenge to the authority of rational or 'empirical' discourse is nowhere more apparent than in the domain of the natural sciences, where 'new discoveries' in science are seen to be the product of new discourses, of metaphoric re-descriptions of the world, rather than of new insights into the intrinsic nature of the world. The history of science becomes a history of symbolisation patterned by the shifting requirements of hegemonic ideology. (Cornwell 1989: 3)

The natural sciences operate in the empirical context of natural phenomena, while the humanities operate in the non-empirical context of cultural phenomena. Taking Cornwell seriously, new inventions in

natural science, such as a new drug, could be regarded as the product of a new discourse, a metaphoric re-description. Such a conclusion appears counter-intuitive, even absurd. In the humanities, however, the fact that one works through the medium of language, such an 'epistemology of postmodernism' (if that's what it is), cannot be summarily dismissed. It would at times seem as though the history of literary studies is little more than the history of metaphoric re-descriptions.[4]

Be that as it may, for all intents and purposes it would seem to me that the literary academic works on a 'realist' model of knowledge, even a non-theoretical one, which does not routinely question the nature of 'knowledge' or 'truth', but works on the assumption that, more or less, language and the analytic tools at his / her disposal can be used to describe cultural phenomena. Academic articles contain many statements which are made confidently and presented (implicitly or explicitly) as reasonably held. If there is any one thread which runs through (almost) all the articles, it is the implicit assumption that it is possible and meaningful to make knowledge or truth claims on the objects under purview. To hold the opposite view must be to lapse into silence.

This is not to suggest that literary academics are philosophically naïve. It is the rare academic who presents a claim as irrefutable. On the other hand, ideas are not routinely presented as either entirely contingent or permanently disputable. The implicit model of knowledge used in practice encapsulates the belief in the potential to build up a body of verifiable knowledge and stock of truth claims which, while subject to revision, are valuable in themselves, and can be regarded as 'in the true' (to borrow a phrase from Foucault) in terms of the discipline. Claims are usually relativised as either more

---

[4] See also Leon de Kock, " 'Naming of Parts', or, How Things Shape Up in Transcultural Literary History". *Literator* 26 (2) 2005: 1-15.

true, more to the point, better argued, more relevant, and so on. As a general rule, academics do not explicitly or implicitly claim a privileged vantage point or insights which are unavailable, or potentially unavailable, to others.

In the academy, the term 'true' has some use, whether we are postmodernists, or not, and if we are, regardless of what sort of postmodernists we are. We accept that there are reasonable generalisations which may be supported by the evidence. The statements I or any other academic make about this or that object are of course the result of particular claims and are, hopefully, particular insights. Such claims and insights should be defended on a case-by-case basis against plausible alternative or rival claims. There can be no claim to infallibility, but neither are claims based on nothing, or that in every case, the opposite claim is just as true or consistent with the non-controversial evidence.

Without labouring the point further, it would seem to me that literary academics share a common faith in a general model of knowledge which sees each successive publication within the discipline as the advancement of knowledge, increasing the stock of know-how incrementally over time, refining and improving it, constantly moving the frontiers further and further back, expanding the horizon of the discipline. To hold a contrary view and at the same time to participate in formation of new knowledge in the discipline is thinkable, though this would perforce involve a particularly cynical approach to the practice. Evidence of this is the investment which the discipline has in the maintenance of the divisions which separate this privileged discourse, discourse which carries a premium (in citation value, academic credential value, constitution of the map of the discipline), from the world of discourse outside the academy, and which constitutes the 'knowledge' of the discipline.

Thirdly, there is the function of canon formation. The literary canon has been defined as denoting 'those authors whose works, by cumulative consensus of authoritative critics and scholars … have come to be widely recognised as "major"' (Abrams 1988: 20). While it is almost certain that literary academics in South Africa would not agree on the exact compilation of the list of 'major' Southern African authors (not to speak of English authors) nor on their ranking in such a list, it would be conceded that, should such a list be drawn up, JM Coetzee, Nadine Gordimer, Olive Schreiner, Pauline Smith, Bessie Head, Alan Paton, HC Bosman, Athol Fugard, and Sol Plaatje, among others, would certainly find a place there.[5] It will further be conceded that, though no such explicit list exists, it is a certain fact of academic life that the literary canon exists. It manifests itself in the formation of the curricula, specifically in the drawing up of reading lists in undergraduate courses, both in terms of primary works and secondary discourse, and in the choice of research subjects. For it is a fact that, in the normal course of academic business, the inclusion of a primary author in the curriculum goes hand in hand with the existence of research material on the given author, in turn a function of the literary academy's assessment of the importance of an author.

Chapter 2 of this thesis will show, in presenting the trends in selection of the work of primary authors as the subject of academic articles, that popular genres are by and large ignored and that only a select number of South African authors have had the privilege of persistently falling under the academic gaze. I am insisting on designating canon formation a 'function' of the academic journal, as opposed to a mere effect: in the humanities, the research journal is

---

[5] This order of the names in this list is based on the number of occasions the artist in question has been the focus of an academic article - see Appendix, Section 1.11 'South African Imaginative Objects', Table 3: 'SA Artists – Number of Focus Occasions Per Artist'. (Note: the use of the term 'artist' in this thesis is discussed on page 41 below.)

fundamentally embroiled in the process of defining the purview of this gaze.

While it is true that the purview of objects has widened to include oral literature, and that proponents of cultural studies have written academic articles on non-literary subjects, and while it may be that the influence in academia of the literary canon is declining, it still holds true that the creation and maintenance of a literary canon, or scope of objects proper to the discipline, is a function of academic journals. This statement may be criticised as axiomatic since, as the literary canon is largely the province of the literary academic and has barely a presence outside of academia, it stands to reason that what literary academics believe to be 'major' will, for their own purposes, be major. On the one hand, humble academics may feel that the sphere of influence of the English studies department hardly reaches beyond the bounds of the university facilities, in which case talk of a literary canon does not have much or any significance outside of the academy. On the other hand, in the past, both proponents and detractors of the English department have chosen to view the impact on society of literary works, the effects on the university curricula on students, and the purported conservatism of literary academics, as being of profound consequence for society.

I find neither of these conjectured positions compelling. While it may be true that the literary academic has precious little influence on what imaginative works the general public buy or consume, it is certainly true that *The Story of an African Farm* by Olive Schreiner would not still be in print were it not for the fact that literary academics have paid relentless attention to this author. The same can be said for many marginal authors, or genres for that matter, which survive because of their inclusion in the literary canon. Moreover, while it is not unthinkable, it is certainly very rare for any literary prize to be awarded without consulting literary academics. The process of

establishing literary reputations, the designation of an author as 'serious' and deserving of laudation, appears to be a function of academic attention paid to an author (that is, inter alia, academic articles published on the author's work), as opposed to mere volume of sales.

Furthermore, it seems reasonable to state that, since authors in particular, in learning their trade, whether they aspire to literary stardom or merely to have something, anything, published, will look to the literary canon for examples of good writing. In this and other ways, it can be assumed that academics do influence literary production through the mechanism of the literary canon. I will not attempt to show the importance or ineluctability of this process. My point here is simply to establish that the academic journal, the forum for publishing serious secondary discourse on (mostly) primary imaginative work, plays an important if not major role in canon formation.

Hence, the secondary discourse, represented by the 11 academic journals which constitute the main platform for publication of research in English studies in South Africa, is differentiated from non-academic literary discourse and primary literary discourse in its functions of career formation, knowledge formation, and canon formation. However, I would add that this list of functions is not assumed to be exhaustive, though I would claim that they are fundamental to the discipline. All the same, the fault lines which separate academic literary discourse and other modes of literary discourse are certainly not unbridgeable.

Another extremely important property of academic discourse is its subordination, within the academy and by virtue of the fact that it emanates from the academy, to a set of rules specific to disciplines. According to Foucault, a discipline is 'defined by a domain of objects, a set of methods, a corpus of propositions considered to be true, a play

of rules and definitions, of techniques and instruments' (1971: 59). I will be advancing the view that certain rules structure the domain of English studies, delimiting the potential of what could possibly be said by practitioners in the field at any one point in time. These rules are myriad and potentially contradictory, implicit and explicit, and change over time – but in no simple manner and certainly not at the behest of any one individual, or at least not instantaneously.

Hence, they have a certain life of their own, independent of individuals who nevertheless use, maintain, and change the rules in practising the discipline. In other words, the agency of the practitioner is not thereby entirely subsumed; nor is the practitioner entirely free to make any statement whatsoever. I am not here referring to a formal censorship of any kind, although the discipline of English studies in South Africa has indeed felt the hot breath of the censor down practitioners' necks (this issue is specifically addressed in Section VI of Chapter 3 below). Rather, I am referring to forms of control of production of academic discourse not encoded in any act of law. These rules do not announce themselves, but rather become embedded in practice, institutions, in the accretions to the archive. Potential influences are infinite; yet, the very stubbornness and inertia of institutionalised practices, such as academic disciplines, point to a highly significant, though not all-determining, existence of patterns of production.

These points will be easily granted, as they hardly represent contentious claims. The fact that there are rules to which academics are bound in production of statements might well be accepted. Infinitely more complicated and potentially contentious is the description of what those rules might be. I will make an attempt to outline a *non-exhaustive* and generic list of procedures / rules which I believe academics are subject to in the production of new statements on the objects of the discipline.

The following relies heavily on Michel Foucault's description of a generic set of procedures operative in the control and production of discourse outlined in *The Order of Discourse* (1971). I aim to identify the procedures applicable to the discipline of English studies, respectively to delineate their development over time, and to speculate on their nature and function. In so far as this thesis assumes that there exists a set of procedures for discursive production in English studies in South Africa, and thereby implies a certain coherence, a rigidity and constancy of characteristics, in short an identity, it runs directly counter to the suggestion by Rory Ryan that literary studies is not really a discipline at all as it is effectively a licence to speak on just about anything, using any methodology desired, and, in short, is not rule-bound (1998). What I refer to as 'English studies' is referred to in Ryan's article more broadly as 'literary studies' (20), though the reference is to the same practice: the discourse of the English department at tertiary level. The claim to disciplinarity is contested by Ryan who states that 'the discipline has no disciplinary centre, one marked by context-free rule-governance. Its position within the university is thus inappropriate' (24). I will be claiming, on the contrary, that the discipline of English studies is indeed rule-bound, in fact significantly so, and that its claim to disciplinarity is at least as strong as that of other disciplines in the humanities. For now, though, I will venture a considerable number of possible types of procedures which potentially regulate production of statements within the discipline.

In *The Order of Discourse*, Foucault describes three broad sets of procedures for the control and production of discourses, namely: exclusionary procedures (relating primarily to the general rules for exclusion of statements), internal procedures (relating to classification, ordering, and distribution of statements) and restrictive procedures (relating primarily to the application of the discourse by individuals)

26

(1971: 52-64). Note that some licence has been taken here in grouping these procedures under the above headings which, though suggested in Foucault's text, are not explicitly presented as such. It is hoped that the somewhat schematic application of these concepts will contribute to the clarity of the presentation of this analysis. In what follows, I will be paraphrasing sections of Foucault's essay, attempting to adapt his conceptual framework in order to describe at least part of the set of procedures which might exist in the production of the academic articles constituting the object of my analysis.

Turning first to exclusionary procedures, in sum these cover: prohibitions (on what topics may or may not be spoken about); the division of madness (maintenance of a division, in this case between a rational and self-conscious secondary speech or commentary about licensed irrationality in the primary discourse of imaginative writing); and the will to truth (even if shifting or highly modifiable, this relates to a maintenance of rules to establish 'true' as opposed to 'false' accounts of the proper objects of analysis of the discipline).

Regarding exclusionary procedures, Foucault appears to be referring to generic structuring principles, situational rules and rules delineating the proper field of objects of the discipline. He advances the hypothesis that, for most discourses, there exist sets of prohibitions (1971: 52). At any one point in time or during a period, a discourse will permit only a certain range of topics or objects that may or may not be spoken about. My analysis of the English literary discourse has revealed significant silences, shifts and sallies in certain topic areas and ranges of objects, such as the silence regarding political causes of the crises in pedagogy in the 1950s to late 1970s (see Section II of Chapter 3 below), and discussions on oral art and cultural studies (see Sections III and IV of Chapter 3 below). There appears to be compelling evidence that the discipline of English studies is structured by sets of such prohibitions, none permanent, but still seemingly

27

influential in a given period and functioning as forms of taboos on objects or topics.

The division of madness is described by Foucault as an exclusionary procedure operative in the production of new statements in the discourse of madness (1971: 52-53). No claim is made to the effect that this procedure applies to literary studies, but it would seem to me that there is an intriguing parallel between the discourse on madness and the discourse on imaginative writing. Given that this procedure relies on the maintenance of a division, in this case between a rational and self-conscious secondary speech or commentary made by authorised representatives (psychologists / psychotherapists) about the licensed[6] irrationality in the talk of their subjects, the insane, it seems plausible to me that just such a structuring mechanism exists in the discipline of literary studies. I am not here trying to establish a facetious correspondence of doctor / literary academic to insane / author. What is compelling is the structuring of the relationship between the literary academic and the author. In both cases, the implied *originating* agency resides in the doctor / literary academic authorised to interpret the subject-less insane speech / imaginary work: agency is imputed to the patient / author at the very moment in which the utterances are interpreted and significance attributed by the doctor / literary academic.

I believe that this division is a fundamental structuring mechanism in literary studies, ensuring the strict division between primary (imaginative) discourse and secondary (critical) discourse. As with mad speech, which by definition is irrational / untrue /'fictional', it is necessary for the doctor / literary academic to listen intensely to

---

[6] The discourse of the insane is here 'licensed' in the dual sense of being both institutionally *permitted* (within a particular institutional space and relationship – between doctor and patient), and discursively *authorised* (the meaningless babble of the agent-less subject is converted, temporarily and under strict rules and conditions, into potentially significant enunciations of an identity, an agent).

the mad (fictional) discourse to uncover its 'truth'. The interpretation of fiction, invested as it is presumed to be with desire and vested with terrible power / significance, is the eternal task of the doctor / academic, forever entranced by this potentiality, and bound to listen / read attentively to discern the subterranean truth. If Gordimer can say 'nothing I write in ... factual pieces will be as true as my fiction' (quoted in Trengrove-Jones 2000: 95), I would offer that, for the literary academic, it is precisely the ambiguity of the status of the fictional statement that makes the factual statement a *necessity,* and gives the literary academic his / her *raison d'etre.*

Imaginative writing has potentially no boundaries, is licensed to break all rules, whether of syntax, semantics, genre or any other convention. Academic or factual writing certainly does not enjoy these freedoms. Its relationship to the primary discourse turns precisely on the fact / fiction axis, and it is bound to establish strict procedures for arriving at the truth about its subject. The speech of the literary academic is valorised and has immediate currency. However, this speech remains dependent on a discourse (imaginative) which is held on the one hand to lack currency (it can never count as a document of factual record), but on the other hand it is felt to hold a hidden truth, or wisdom, even genius, or some other value which makes it necessary to pay it such attention, and it is the job of the academic to uncover this hidden truth, to reveal its genius, to discover its value, and thus establish its significance both in itself and to the discipline. It matters little if the literary academic selects as the object of analysis an African market, a marathon, or the performance of oral poetry, the structure remains the same: the academic's role is to determine the significance of the disciplinary object, be it an imaginative artefact or a cultural phenomenon.

The existence of the division is evident when confronted with an example of discourse which attempts to bridge this divide. We

perceive this, I believe, when we read what is referred to as *narrative scholarship,* where the two discourses, the rational literary critical genre and a fictional or narrative genre, are combined. Julia Martin's 'On the Sea Shore' presents a reading of cultural artefacts (an information sheet and a planning document issued by the Information Department in Flevoland) via a combination of historical fact, fictional narrative, and theory (2005). While an article such as this makes interesting and even more pleasurable reading than the run-of-the-mill academic article, due to the fact that it falls out of type (it is neither academic writing nor fiction), it is not possible to place: what should one do with it? I would suggest that, though interesting, because it violates the division academic discourse / imaginative discourse, its status must remain ambiguous, and therefore beyond the pale: dissolving this dichotomy means erasing a difference which defines the literary academic's role as interpreter.

Another exclusionary procedure operative on academic literary discourse is the will to truth. According to Foucault, all disciplines have sets of procedures which, though ever changing, are fundamental to its practice: procedures for determining which statements are 'true' and which are 'false'. I believe it will be granted me that there are mechanisms within the discipline for sorting the 'truer' from the 'less true' accounts. On my understanding, these take the form of a wide variety of vetting mechanisms. The most obvious example is the peer-review system for inclusion or exclusion of good or bad academic writing. However, this is a somewhat low-threshold gate-keeping mechanism, a minimum standard for entry into the large arena of academic debate where not all accounts are rated as equal. In other words, getting into print in the appropriate forum is not a sufficient condition for recognition of statements as true. This is merely the beginning, the first step in an undoubtedly longer and sophisticated process of assessment of the statements as pertinent to the discipline.

That certain statements come to be taken as the given orthodoxy on a particular subject is evident; however, the process by which this happens is not. It may be countered that there is no formal announcement of a winner, no clear-cut consensus, and this I must concede. Nevertheless, I believe that it is reasonable to hold that there exists within the discipline a wide range of procedures which turn on the true / false (or rather: truer / less true) dichotomy and by which different or competing accounts become ranked. It appears possible that, even where speech has been 'authorised' as legitimately belonging to the discipline (makes it appearance in the appropriate formats and forums), it is possible that it comes to bear the leper's mark, and is ignored, and thereby effectively excluded. The implicit ranking of academic articles is intimated by the frequency of citation: articles regarded as 'seminal' are cited often, while articles regarded by peers as containing incorrect propositions are not.

Hence, the above exclusionary procedures appear to exist in the discipline of English studies. While the rules and principles brought into play are far from transparent or may not seem at all tangible, the effects are very real. The silencing of speech in the discipline is all the more effective for not having a definable agent who enacts the procedure or censoring action.

I now turn to the second cluster of procedures outlined by Foucault, namely internal procedures (1971: 56-61). In sum, these are: the commentary principle, the author principle and the disciplinary principle. The commentary principle appears to be self-evidently pertinent to the discipline of English studies, as it inheres in the maintenance of the respective roles of primary and secondary discourse, the fundamental structuring mechanism mentioned above. According to Foucault, this principle is paradoxical. On the one hand, commentary or secondary discourse confirms the dominance of the primary canonical texts over commentary, by coming second

temporally, and by deferent referral to the primary text. On the other hand, it arrogates the right to define the significance of the primary discourse through saying what the primary discourse really or finally means. The division of fact and fiction mentioned above appears to support the reversal of the hierarchy. Indeed, in practice, commentary made on primary texts is seldom deferent.

The author principle is described as an organising principle for grouping texts, implying a unity and origin of meanings (Foucault 1971: 58-59). In terms of the discourse of literary academics (secondary discourse), the attribution of statements to a particular academic quite evidently functions as a partial index of truthfulness. I believe that the reputation or standing of a particular academic may, of itself and on certain occasions, be a significant supporting element, though never a sufficient condition, for the valorisation of statements within the discipline. It seems reasonable to conclude that in the humanities – as opposed to the natural sciences which have a larger repertoire of procedures for validation of statements – the weight of a literary reputation may play an important role in rendering statements 'true' even when not backed by copious evidence or argument.

In terms of authors of primary texts, the application of the author principle by literary academics to order or aid interpretation of primary texts, appears to depend on the chosen approach. In the application of the author principle as an organising principle for grouping texts, the literary-historiographical approach would almost certainly employ the principle. In the interpretation of individual texts, the author's ideas, biographical information, or entire *oeuvre*, are generally less likely to be used by literary academics applying a postmodernist approach.

Foucault refers to the third set of internal procedures as informed by the *disciplinary principle*. 'For there to be a discipline' he

says, 'there must be a possibility of formulating new propositions *ad infinitum'* (1971: 59). However, there is some complexity with regard to the disciplinary principle. Though the above two principles are at times operative in the general academic literary discourse (particularly in secondary discourse on primary objects), the disciplinary principle is opposed to the commentary principle in so far as it sets the rules for production of the not-already-said, and opposed to the author principle is so far as the discipline is defined as an anonymous system of procedures over a domain of objects of its own designation (that is, it is not bound by the author principle either in organisation of its objects, or in its rules of interpretation). The disciplinary principle is the *productive principle*, that is, it comprises the rules for construction of new 'true' statements. As opposed to the commentary principle, which elucidates *what is already there*, the disciplinary principle informs *what is not yet there*, the determining set of conditions for the *not already said.*[7] A central assumption of this thesis, and what I aim to show, is that English studies in South Africa has the properties of an academic discipline. That is, it is productive, but such production is subordinate to sets of rules. Hence, it has a certain independence.

I would move now to the third broad group of procedures for controlling and delimiting discourse, namely restrictive procedures (Foucault 1971: 61-64). These relate to modes of authorisation of representatives of the discourse (individuals). Examples of such

---

[7] The typological scaffolding one uses to analyse discourse, as I have undertaken here in applying Foucauldian terminology, is perforce schematic and at times overly neat. While the cogency and compelling nature of the commentary and disciplinary principles appear evident, and contrasting them starkly highlights the opposing impulses they appear to be informed by, they are nevertheless, in practice, coextensive and even complementary. While the impulse informing the commentary principle may well be that of the desire to utter the last word on the subject, and close off debate, and the impulse, in the academic context, to continue, *ad infinitum,* to produce new statements may well inform the disciplinary principle, it nevertheless holds that the two principles are complementary in so far as *what is already there* informs *what is not yet there.* (I thank Prof. Nick Meihuizen for this insightful comment.)

restrictive procedures are: speech rituals; societies of discourse; doctrinal groups; and systems of appropriation of the discourse.

Speech rituals fix the efficacy of words of individual representatives: who may speak, when, to whom, how, where, and what they are to do about it or with it. Foucault talks of certain rituals on circumstances of authorised speech which I would include under the general heading of speech rituals. Whatever the content of speech, its inclusion as authorised within the bounds of the discipline will be a function not only of the position of the author but also the mode of delivery. In English studies, as with most other academic disciplines, there appear to be certain set formats and forums required in order for speech to be recognised as authoritative, or as a necessary preliminary in the process of acceptance of the speech as properly belonging to the discipline. Such authorisation does not automatically result in the endorsement of the speech, it merely results in its allowability. This is clearly the case with all academic disciplines including English studies, where we see a range of specific formats (review, review article, article, lecture, tutorial, dissertation, thesis, anthology, monograph) and forums (tutorial, examinations, peer-review boards, examination councils, senate committees, conferences) which each have their own rules attached to them.

Societies of discourse would refer to the principle of membership of the group permitted or authorised to generate discourse within the discipline. Membership itself is not sufficient for all statements by the member to become instantly authorised. However, the discourse of non-members is excluded. Producers of discourse are not disqualified merely for uttering nonsense. The inadmissibility of the speech would be ascribed to the instance of discourse and not the individual, and does not disqualify the member from making future, true statements, although this may well effect the standing of the individual. That this principle exists in the discipline of English studies

appears self-evident. A professorship or academic degree in the humanities (usually literary studies, but not exclusively), once awarded, would amount to recognition of membership within the group. Lectureships, research grants, or space in academic journals, are not generally awarded to those who do not hold the appropriate qualifications. Acceptance of the discourse of non-members as belonging to the discipline is very rare: established authors of primary texts are, however, sometimes licensed in this way, though this is exceptional. Nadine Gordimer is a case in point, since a number of her articles have been accepted for publication in academic journals. I know of no case of anyone losing membership, so to speak, or having subsequent articles refused owing to the perceived low quality of a previous article.

Turning now to doctrinal groups, Foucault describes these as formed through allegiance to 'one and the same discursive ensemble' (1971: 63). Unlike a society of discourse, which has a limited membership, any number of adherents can join or leave the doctrinal group, and it is therefore, in a sense, a 'virtual' group, not having fixed boundaries. In addition, again unlike the society of discourse, false statements or statements which are in contradiction with the jointly held doctrines of a doctrinal group, constitute a heresy and grounds for exclusion of the member. In societies of discourse, as described above, membership is not questioned in the event of an errant non-conforming statement, hence a society of discourse could not qualify as a doctrinal group. Literary academics who make statements which are not regarded as being 'in the true' in terms of the discipline have their speech ignored, but do not lose their membership.

On the other hand, at first sight at least, it may appear that there are similarities between doctrines and disciplines. After all, a discipline as such does encompass a set of methods and a corpus of propositions held to be true and which define it. That is, both doctrines

and disciplines exclude certain statements as not belonging to them due to the non-alignment of those statements with propositions held to be central. What distinguishes a discipline, however, is that the status of the speaking subject is not called into question in the event of an errant or non-conforming statement. It is the statement which will be excluded, not the individual who makes it.

In the case of doctrines, however, both the statement and the speaking subject are implicated in the event of a non-conforming statement. This would seem to follow from the fact of membership depending on this allegiance: the speaking subject can be debarred from membership in the event of non-allegiance to the doctrinal ensemble, or set of beliefs. So it would seem that, as a procedure for controlling or delimiting discourse, it is not meaningful to speak about doctrinal groups in the literary academy.

I would like to immediately contradict myself, though it will be necessary to qualify my statements somewhat. If a doctrine is a 'manifestation and instrument of a prior adherence to a class, a social status, a race, a nationality, an interest, a revolt, a resistance or an acceptance' (Foucault 1971: 62-63), and if the jointly held discursive ensemble need not necessarily be consciously held, but implicit, it might be possible to conjecture the existence of such groups, even within the literary academy. Be that as it may, it is certainly the case, and I will go on to specifically address this in Section I of Chapter 3 below, that academics have accused each other of just such allegiances, and have called the propositions of fellow academics into question indirectly: through the imputing to the speaking subject of such a prior allegiance. In this way, a certain short-circuiting of discourse takes place or is in any event attempted. By this I mean that, instead of confronting or taking issue with the actual propositions made in an academic article, the propositions are dismissed or brought into question on the basis of the speaking subject's purported

allegiance to a particular group (race, nationality, social status, class, interest group).

The last set of procedures I would like to discuss is the system of appropriation of the discourse along with knowledge and power attached thereto. According to Foucault, '[a]ny system of education is a political way of maintaining or modifying the appropriation of discourses, along with the knowledge and powers they carry' (1971: 63-64). There are very detailed and specific procedures for the awarding of degrees, jobs and titles which function as licence to participate in academic debate, become a member of this particular society of discourse, and enjoy attendant benefits. Suffice at this point to emphasise that, at the very entry point into the academy, there is a very significant delimiting procedure: a ticket into the arena of academic literary debate is anything but free, and freedom-of-speech cards must be left at the entrance, for collection when you leave again. The procedures for having your speech recognised as assimilable into the discipline are myriad and cumbersome.

Prior to concluding this chapter, I would like to say a few words about how I see the status or possible status of my claims. I do not believe that, where remarks about culture, art or its attendant practices are concerned, anyone in the academy can do more than offer cogently argued claims. Alternative views are always available, and where powerful, or plausible, must be engaged. All one can offer regarding the claims one thinks are right, or best supported, are the reasons for making the claims and, should alternative reasons for other claims be offered, reply to those reasons, and to the arguments they are taken to support, as they arise. In literary studies, I feel, nothing about truth or what truth means divides one from one's opponent. The nature of truth is not my subject, and nor in the main is it the subject of other literary academics. What I am concerned to offer is a theory, or several theories, and hopefully some insights into what the practice of

academic journals in South Africa during a certain period might tell us about the discipline of English studies.

Chapter 2. Broad-strokes: Beginnings, Turns and Returns, Closures

In this chapter, I will be outlining the main trends in the academic discourse represented by the content of the journals. It behoves me to hedge my statements with provisos, as all the descriptions below are subject to a wide range of qualifications. This might, though, lead to a general cluttering of the text, and repetition. Therefore, at the outset, the main disclaimers applicable to all the statements below are that: they are partial in the sense that they describe some and not all characteristics of the journals; the discourse I am describing has a multivalency I cannot fully capture; and the labels used, for all their cogency or degree of uncontested content, have a tendency to essentialise and are always open to dispute.

The first section below attempts to define the broad parameters delimiting the discourse prior to the launch in 1958 of the first dedicated English academic literary journal, namely *English Studies in Africa.* It traces the demise of *wide reading*[8] after the Second World War and the rise of *close reading* thereafter which, though perennially challenged by Marxist critics and by exponents of contemporary theories in the mid-1980s onwards, still retains dominance. Broadly understood, *close reading*, or the illumination of imaginative artefacts through detailed analysis, has been the prevailing practice in academic

---

[8] As opposed to the term 'close reading', the phrase 'wide reading' was never applied as a term of art *per se*. In this thesis, 'wide reading' connotes the earlier practice of studying periods of literature and, in pedagogical practice, of requiring students to acquaint themselves with facts on, and the content of, a wide number of texts. The move from 'wide' reading to 'close' reading is decried by Hall as the negative consequence of the adoption of the Practical Critical approach after 1945, which gradually led to the abandoning of *extensive* reading in favour of *intensive* reading (Hall 1958). Taking the opposite view, Durrant celebrates the move away from what he sees as the superficial reading of a wide number of texts (and reading about other texts indirectly through studying literary histories), to the close and in-depth reading of exemplary tests (Durrant 1947).

literary discourse in South Africa for the last five to six decades. The return to dominance of the prior practice of *wide reading* does not appear at all likely, either as a pedagogical or critical practice (the definitions of both 'wide' and 'close' reading will be discussed in more detail in this section). Nevertheless, literary historiography ('wide reading') represents a substantial, if minority, share in the academic discursive output represented by the 11 journals.

The second section outlines the broad trends evinced in an analysis of the content of the journals in the period 1958–2004. Though challenges to the reigning orthodoxy abound, it was not until the mid-1980s that a sea change in content of the journals was brought about by the widespread take up of contemporary theory into South African English academic literary practice. In the criticism evident in these journals, the clearest trajectory in terms of chosen objects of analysis is the increase in academic work focusing on South African imaginative production and the decline in attention paid to non-African canonical works. This is by far the most important and clearest development in academic discourse over the period, and is singled out for separate and detailed treatment in Chapter 4 below.

In addition, there is an important widening of the scope of objects falling under the academic gaze to include orature and non-literary objects. In terms of thematic foci, there are a number of major topics, such as education, which have been a perennial concern to literary academics, though the form of treatment itself reveals important shifts. Chapter 3 below will give a more detailed analysis of a number of the key topics.

The third section profiles the 11 journals. These descriptions, being part stories of a part story, are perforce less indicative of trends than the cumulative analysis of the articles of the foregoing section. If nothing else, the particular stories they tell serve as an important

antidote to the chimera of a single story. The individual histories of the journals are rich and in themselves immensely interesting. For want of space and time, their treatment here is cursory and in many respects deficient. They serve as a constant reminder to the reader (and the writer) that, ultimately, the sense of capturing the 'essence' of various fields of discourse is illusory

The fourth section focuses on the voice of the editor. The voice is seldom heard, and the traces left by the actual published content are seldom a compelling indication of an important bias on the part of the editor. Indeed, and inter alia, the general policy frameworks within which the journals are constituted at inauguration tend, more than the influence of an editor, to determine content. Nevertheless, though rare, there have been important editorial interpolations in the discourse. In addition to serving as engaging 'windows' or 'snapshots' of a particular moment in the discursive history under review, they are often (though not always) highly emblematic of trends revealed in the foregoing analyses.

However, before launching into the discussion, I need to draw attention to certain terms which will be used in particular in Sections II and III below, but also subsequently throughout this thesis. A statistical analysis of the articles in the 11 journals was carried out, and this is attached to this thesis as an appendix. For the purpose of the analysis, all the articles in the journals were classified as belonging to one of the following five categories: Criticism (Articles Discussing up to 4 Artists); General Articles on Literary Objects; Metadiscursive; Thematic; and General Articles on Cultural Phenomena (non-literary).

The majority of articles fall within the definition of Criticism used in the analysis, that is, articles discussing the work of artists. Any article discussing or purporting to discuss the work of a maximum of four artists was classified under this heading. I use the term 'artists'

advisedly, as it is meant to cover originators of any kind of cultural object, whether oral art, film, opera, autobiography, poem, play or fictional prose, inter alia. Peripheral mention of other artists was not taken into consideration. The ostensible focus of the articles discussing the work of artists is usually announced at the beginning of the article. It is this statement which was taken as definitive no matter what the article finally ended up discussing. If no such statement was made, the text was analysed to discover the literary objects discussed in it, if any.

The Criticism group of articles was further defined as belonging to one of the following twelve sub-categories: SA Artists – Imaginative Written Objects; SA Artists – Imaginative Oral Objects; Other African Artists – Imaginative Written Objects; Non-African Artists – Imaginative Objects; Authors of Autobiographies; Biographical Objects; Authors of Popular Imaginative Written Objects; Film and Documentary; Journals, Diaries, Letters, and Journalism; Children's Literature; and Others.

The category General Articles on Literary Objects describes any articles discussing *more than four* literary objects. 'Literary' is understood here and applied throughout the analysis in its broadest sense as any form of writing and includes autobiography, biography, popular genres, travel writing, journal, letter, diary and other epistolary writings, and transcribed oral art. Articles assigned to this group were further classified under one of the following 5 sub-categories: General – SA Imaginative Objects; General – Non-African Imaginative Objects; General – Popular Objects; General – African Objects; and General – Orature.

The Metadiscursive category covers any article discussing concepts, tools and approaches to any discipline (mainly literary studies, but not exclusively). No articles discussing or purporting to discuss any work of artists were assigned to this category, no matter

whether the discussion was theoretical or whether it also discussed concepts, tools and approaches. Discussions on literary historiography, the South African canon, and cultural studies fall under the Metadiscursive heading, unless the discussion is of a very general nature, in which case it is classified as Thematic.

Hence, the Metadiscursive category covers specific discussions on: critics and philosophers (such as Jacques Derrida, Saul Bellow – as critic, WEB Du Bois, Michel Foucault, Paul Gilroy, Walter Pater, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Paul Ricoeur, Stephen Spender, Dora Taylor, Thomas Taylor, Ludwig Wittgenstein, Raymond Williams, among others); theories (such as applied linguistics, the black Atlantic, cyberspace, cognition, deconstruction, feminism, narratology, post-colonialism, postmodernism, poststructualism, psychoanalysis, phenomenology, romanticism, semantics, semiotics); and anything of a generally theoretical nature, as opposed to merely topical (such as memory in narratives, romanticism and religion, the relationship between media and culture, analysis of register, value judgements in criticism, what constitutes a 'classic', the nature of truth and meaning, 'Woman' as sign in the South African colonial enterprise, et cetera). Discussions on literary terms such as the 'pastoral' and 'tragedy', 'metaphor', the 'modern grotesque' were also assigned to the Metadiscursive category.

The category General Articles on Cultural Phenomena covers articles on non-literary phenomena or cultural practices, or non-literary objects without an author or by more than four authors. Hence, photos in an anonymous photo album, folktale texts in South African and nationalist discourses, the Nazarites in KwaZulu-Natal, private girls' schooling in Natal in the apartheid era, advertising, the Cape Town Ladies' Bible Association, Disneyland and the Globe theatre, food and thought, the African marketplace, Bantu dances, black urban popular culture in the 1950s, consumer magazines for black South Africans,

the Lovedale press, the media, and the like, were classified under this heading.

The definition of Thematic is primarily a negative one. Articles assigned to this category were all those which were *not assignable* to the other four primary categories mentioned above. Well over half of the articles in this category can be grouped under two broad sub-headings: pedagogy (teaching methods, curricula, Outcomes Based Education, education policy, et cetera) and philology (language policy, discussions on linguistics, grammar, dialects, history of language, usage, bilingualism et cetera). Other articles defined as Thematic range very widely from general discussions on censorship, the CNA literary award, the relationship between the Church and State, colonialism, academic freedom, research funding, South Africa's 'little magazines', trends in publishing, tribalism, speculation on what expatriate writers will do once they return to South Africa, and the like.

An additional analysis was carried out on the articles which fell within the Criticism category. These articles were analysed and placed in two sub-categories according to the 'closeness' of the reading. Depending upon the position of the object, the articles were classified as either 'Object to the fore' or 'Theory to the fore'. Where the object of analysis was in the foreground, the approach to the object was categorised as 'Object to the fore'. Where the discussion of the object was merely ancillary and the object appeared to fall into the background, the approach to the object was categorised as 'Theory to the fore'. That is to say, the degree of *closeness* of the readings of the objects was classified.

These two sub-categories are the least objective of all the categories mentioned above. Nevertheless, it is relatively easy to identify extreme cases where either the object is obviously at the centre of the analysis (usually marked by paraphrasing and extensive

direct quotations of the primary text), or the object is discussed briefly and / or only to elucidate a point and is otherwise entirely peripheral to the main thrust of the article. However, many discussions on literary objects fall somewhere in between these two extremes, making it very difficult to decide whether the primary text (object) is at the centre of the discussion (and indirectly thereby accorded a degree of insularity or autonomy), or whether it is simply used to elucidate a different (if related) point. Generally speaking, where the analysis is marked by a generous number of quotations from the primary object, it was deemed to position the object in the foreground of the analysis. These sub-categories were conceived of much later in the process of analysis of the articles and were certainly not part of the original scheme.

Originally, I had hoped to classify the articles in terms of approach to literary objects, using categories such as 'postcolonial', 'feminist', 'Marxist', 'postmodern', 'structuralist' and so on. I found myself becoming quite helplessly entangled in strings of adjectives, since very few articles attracted less than two or three or even more such labels. I began to question the term 'close reading' generally ascribed to the Practical Critical approach.

It struck me that some articles employing terminology loosely describable as evincing a Practical Critical approach, were not particularly 'close' in the sense that the object of analysis became, at times, entirely peripheral to the discussion. Likewise, articles employing contemporary theories at times evinced a remarkable loyalty to the primary text, implicitly according it primary corroboratory status in interpretations. In any event, the 'closeness' of readings appeared to me to be as good an index as any of the position of the disciplinary objects in the practice of academic criticism, and might highlight certain differences in orientation of the 11 journals, and critical practice over time. However, remarkably, with almost two-thirds of all articles of Criticism foregrounding the object, and no

surprising differences between journals or significant developments chronologically, 'close' reading appears to be an embedded practice.

I

A review is necessary that *combines criticism of literature with criticism of extra-literary activities*. We take it as axiomatic that concern for *standards of living* implies concern for *standards in the arts*. … *Scrutiny*, then, will be seriously preoccupied with the movement of modern civilization. … Where literary criticism is concerned we can be immediately *practical and political*. (Knights 1932: 2-5, emphasis added)

I wouldn't want to write off practical criticism or close reading of poetry dogmatically. … [T]here is a question of what 'closeness to the text' means. [In the very obvious sense of *reading closely*] *all theorists* would want to say that they *are close readers*. What they would want to add, however, is that there are other kinds of closeness. What is 'closeness'? A meticulous analysis of a particular metaphor, or a very rich understanding of a text's ideological context? Perhaps to talk about 'illuminating' a text is better than talking about 'closeness' – this gives better a sense of lighting up a text from different angles, from behind and underneath and against, as it were, not just face-on. (Eagleton interviewed by Wood 1992: 6, emphasis added)

Francis Mulhern documents the rise and impact of Practical Criticism and the method of *close reading,* as promoted by Leavis and his followers, in his detailed study: *The Moment of 'Scrutiny'* (1979). The journal ran from 1932 to 1953 and was the primary conduit through which the ideas and methods of *Practical Criticism* would impact upon critical practice, the curricula and teaching methods at all levels (primary, secondary and tertiary) in the United Kingdom and

beyond. In the manifesto, which appears in the inaugural number of the journal and part of which is quoted above, Knights advocates an approach to the study of literary artefacts which 'combines criticism of literature with *criticism of extra-literary activities'*. In its turn, the New Historicism and contemporary literary theories would promote various approaches in the practice of 'illuminating' texts. In fact, the *close reading* of texts from *different angles* could describe a very wide range of approaches, from all the foregoing to Marxism and including Ecocriticism.

Even proponents of formalist approaches, such as New Criticism, would baulk at the imputation of a credulous or literal 'face-on' reading, as Eagleton puts it. It is crucial at this junction to stress that very important distinctions exist between all these approaches, and that such distinctions generally stand on what kind of *extra-literary* content one should consider. These distinctions are not minor and have indeed provoked very heated debate and have often enough divided the academy. Nevertheless, when it is a matter of criticism of literary artefacts, what they do share is the procedure of close analysis of the text, albeit obliquely and from (mostly) pre-disclosed angles, in the attempt to 'illuminate' pertinent aspects from particular perspectives. It is this very commonality, that is, the shared practice of *close reading,* which distinguishes all these approaches from the earlier practice of *wide reading*. At this point, I must beg the patience of the reader while I take a short detour, the pertinence of which will not immediately be apparent. It concerns the transition, one never fully accomplished though nevertheless fundamental, from *wide reading* to *close reading*, or differently put, from *scholarship* to *academic criticism*.

The merger of the terms 'criticism' and 'scholarship' is of fairly recent origin.[9] When looking at the academic article today, if one posed the question: which articles constitute 'scholarship' and which 'criticism', the response would most likely be one of puzzlement. Would it be possible to state that 'New Light on the Descent of Shakespeare's Texts' (Partridge 1963) is scholarship, and '"The Mangled Flesh of Our Griots": music in the verse of Seitlhamo Motsapi' (Titlestad and Kissack 2004) is criticism? The question hardly makes sense, as both today would be recognised as 'scholarly'. However, the distinction at one point clearly existed. In his 1948 article 'Observations on Literary Criticism', Notcutt distinguishes between the terms as follows:

> Writing about literature can be roughly classified into *reviewing, scholarship*, and *criticism ... Reviewing* means reporting on a newly published work, and indicating enough of its manner and content to enable others to decide whether they want to read it ... *Scholarship* usually concentrates on the past, and is concerned with discovering the facts about the composition and publication of important works: determination of the text actually composed by the author; date and mode of publication, and reception by the public; the facts of an author's life, and the circumstances in which he wrote his works; construing or paraphrasing of difficult passages, tracing allusions and influences, grouping works into schools, movements and traditions; analysis of metrical rules and conventions ... In the present generation [*criticism*] has gained in depth and power by utilising sociology and psychology. The

---

[9] It is important to bear in mind that 'criticism' (of whatever nature or sophistication) of imaginative artefacts has almost certainly existed as long as humankind has produced art. However, 'scholarship' – that is, university-level discourse on literary artefacts, is of relatively recent origin. My point here is not to establish origins or to attempt to date the geneses of these practices, but to highlight a disjunction, a disjunction furthermore which, though recognisable, is as impure as it is non-absolute.

sociological approach is today superseding the old 'Hist. Lit.', by treating literature as part of the general history ... The [modern] *scholar* must not merely trace obscure contemporary allusions, but must try to reconstruct the whole world-picture of the writer, and see the world in his terms. (Notcutt 1948: 45-47, emphasis added)

The earlier and traditional scholarly approach of *wide reading*, predominantly literary-historiographical, but also philological and biographical, and commonly referred to as 'Hist. Lit.', had been challenged and was still being challenged at the time (here, the 1940s), by the 'sociological' approach, a reference to Leavis' Practical Criticism and the method generally (if confusingly) referred to as *close reading*.[10] This is not to say that when an academic wrote 'criticism' on a particular author, it automatically did not count as 'scholarship'. However, before the Practical Critics revolutionised the academy with the *close reading* approach (a process which *began* after the first world war at Cambridge), the detailed analysis of an imaginative artefact (that is, 'criticism' which is not regarded merely as sophisticated reviewing, but as fully-fledged academic writing), could count as serious research only if it answered to certain conditions. First, a 'scholarly' assessment of an author would perforce involve in-depth study of a wide range of a *certain field* of extraneous information (for example, facts on the life of the author and the circumstances in which the imaginative artefacts arose). Second, for an author to receive 'scholarly' attention, s/he had to hail from the *historically* established

---

[10] Practical Criticism is seldom referred to by its detractors in South Africa as 'sociological'. The reason appears to be that the more strictly formalist 'New Criticism' associated with American critics, such as John Crowe Ransom, among others, is often treated as synonymous with the 'Practical Criticism' promoted by Leavis which, though certainly emphasising the primacy of the text, would insist on the importance of placing the work sociologically and historically. That is, Leavis' Practical Criticism is not a purely formalist approach. One South African Academic alludes to this requirement thus: in order for a 'practical reading' to be 'successful', the 'critic should be as fully informed as the occasion requires ... he should ... select ... relevant information about ... the work and its historical and social setting' (Gillham 1977:15)

canon: 'It is not research [that is, true scholarship], whatever its educational value, when a student-critic assesses contemporary writers' (Partridge 1958: 4). In other words, only authors who had received sustained *critical* attention over several decades and who had earned their reputation among critics of repute, could come into consideration as objects for serious *scholarly* attention.

The predominant academic mode of discourse on literary artefacts in South Africa up to the second world war was 'Hist. Lit.' In 1948, when Notcutt wrote the above passage, this approach had been widely discredited and the reigning consensus among South African literary academics was that Practical Criticism must be used to revamp the curriculum (Butler 1977, Durrant 1959, Gardner 1957). Disagreements occurred as to *how much* of the curriculum should be taught using the *close reading* approach, but not *whether* close reading should be considered or not. Of the two major elements of the pre-war curriculum, that is, history of literature and philology, it was the latter, as linguistics or language training, and the percentage of the English curriculum which should be constituted by such study, which divided the academy (Butler 1977).

In post second world war South Africa, 'Hist. Lit.' was on the way out, and Practical Criticism was on the way in. The literary-historiographical approach would all but disappear from the university curriculum, except in the teaching of Old and Medieval English (Butler 1977: 8). In academic writing, Practical Criticism would later become one of the key approaches to South African literary production. Guy Butler characterises the period and his personal views on scholarship in his autobiography thus:

> [M]ost English departments in South Africa at this time
> [1948] worked on the *traditional Eng. Lit. model*, with its
> heavy *emphasis on literary history*, biographical study of

writers, dates of publication of literary turning-points, and very little detailed critical attention to the actual works in the traditional, established canon. [This model was being challenged, but] I had several difficulties with [the Practical Criticism] approach ... [F]or scholars to turn their backs on the genesis and origins of literary works struck me as simply *unscholarly.* (Butler 1991: 36, emphasis added)

From today's perspective, not according 'scholarly' status to articles because they fail to refer to the genesis or origin of the work, is unthinkable. It was the influence of Practical Criticism which brought about this change in attitude, and made it possible for sophisticated reviewing (close readings of texts) to be transformed into something which could be regarded as scholarly. Already in 1947, GH Durant could boldly declare:

University teachers of literature are nowadays much concerned to relate the study of literature to life, and to *abandon the notorious 'Hist. of Eng. Lit.'* treatment that did so much harm in the past ... Several South African universities have already broadened and liberalised their English syllabuses in order to give more attention to the background of thought and social life; and to study language as it is used, and not only in its historical aspects ... *So much is nowadays widely accepted*, and the *advocates of the older historical and philological methods have little to say for themselves.* (Durrant 1947: 3 emphasis added)

About this development, Butler admits:

> [In 1948 at the University of the Witwatersrand] [a]s a raw and highly prejudiced graduate from Oxford I was not entirely in sympathy with the Cambridge emphasis on the autonomy of the text ... Geoffrey Durrant [was] perhaps the man who more than any other [had] initiated and consolidated the close-reading practical criticism revolution in SA ... *I think that this was necessary and on balance in the interests of the subject.* [Only] Cape Town ... remained committed to the historical approach to literature and to traditional grammar and philology. (Butler 1977: 5, emphasis added)

Hence, the detractors remained and the influence of the new orthodoxy, as would prove to be the case of successor orthodoxies, was not total. The hypothesis that each particular approach will inherently, in the tendency of its vocabulary and its stock of analytical tools, perforce construct (implicitly or explicitly) its own canon, *particularly if its primary mode of operation is the detailed analysis of individual texts*, is underscored in the following insight into the particular predilections of the gaze of the Practical critics:

> If the premises [of the Eliot-Richards-Leavis approach] are complexity, 'inclusiveness', irony, paradox, ambiguity, the necessary result will not be reached with certain kinds of writing ... Because this particular method grew out of, and therefore gets the most satisfactory results from, complex work, there has been a tendency to allow the complex and 'organically conceived work of literature' to oust other kinds whose quality is not analytically so demonstrable, at any rate with the prescribed tools. James supersedes Dickens, Forster supersedes Fielding, Conrad supersedes Thackeray. (Hall 1958: 153-154)

Furthermore, the *close reading* approach led, in pedagogical practice, to the narrowing down of the number of prescribed works. This was a necessary consequence of an approach requiring intensive engagement with the text, and meant that the exposure of students to a very wide number of texts was no longer possible. As Geoffrey Durrant points out only too clearly and in the context of calls for inclusion of South African works in the syllabus:

> So much, for teacher and pupil, depends upon the emphasis that is laid upon any particular part of the syllabus, that any suggestion of a change in what one has found profitable to teach is greeted with ... defensive anxiety ... What must be left out ... must always be painful to contemplate. (Durrant 1959: 62)

While it may be the case that the *wide reading* approach, with all its facts and figures, was a much duller subject to both teach and to take classes in, the *close reading* approach, in its turn, had critical and pedagogical implications of its own. In the case of pedagogy, it resulted in a serious limitation on the number of imaginative artefacts one could cover during the undergraduate degree. With some justification, Hall criticises the pedagogical consequences thus:

> By forcing the early acquisition of 'critical discrimination' and 'critical judgement', it is *easy to turn out prigs*. I have known all too many graduates whose three years' study provided them with a detailed knowledge of a score (or less) of novels ... and who entertained on the basis of this little learning the confident notion that they were now possessors of an absolute critical equipment, proof against any kind of intellectual, moral or aesthetic humbug. They compensated for their absence of knowledge by an ardent devotion to principle

... [T]hey had become skilled illiterates who could connect nothing with nothing. They had no idea of how little they knew (many could not place major authors within half a century, or worse), and possess in consequence none of the humility which knowledge should induce … They had acquired, in short, a neat Calvinistic code which pandered to the natural human desire for simplification and to the delusive search for ultimate standards in aesthetics and morality. (Hall 1958: 156, emphasis added)

It must be noted that, in spite of the fact that as a *critical* practice, Practical Criticism was by and large superseded by contemporary literary theories beginning in the early to mid-1980s, its influence is nevertheless still found in *pedagogical* practice. To this day the undergraduate curriculum over a three-year period is organised around twenty or so texts. However, these texts are closely studied using, it must be conceded, a very wide palette of critical approaches. Nevertheless, speaking personally, as a product of such training, I readily admit to being just the prig described by Hall. On completing my undergraduate degree in the mid-1990s, I was no more than the skilled illiterate he describes, confident in making observations on just about any imaginative artefact that fell under my purview, yet having no understanding whatsoever of the *literary historical* context of any of the works studied, nor for that matter in possession of any detailed knowledge of extra-literary context, whether economic, social, philosophical, linguistic or any other.[11]

---

[11] It is a revealing impact of the *close reading* orthodoxy that, even in courses where something resembling a 'history' is taught, it is through the narrow selection of primary material collected into anthologies or 'readers'. The prejudice in favour of the *primary* work, fact or fiction, has become axiomatic. Secondary works providing surveys or overviews of literary periods, economic or social conditions, or similar indirect discussions, are by and large missing from the curriculum (middle and old English being exceptions, since the reading and understanding of such works is all but impossible without secondary explicatory literature on formal, literary, and socio-historical aspects of the texts).

This section has raised or pointed to a plethora of issues, many of which might well deserve more detailed examination. The point I would like to emphasize at this stage, however, is a misleadingly simple one: that the approach to the *academic* study of imaginative works individually, in detail, and, as it were, *directly* or at first hand, is of relatively recent origin (beginning after the second world war), and is today well entrenched both in *critical* and *pedagogical* practice in academia.

II

The species of 'academic discourse' referred to as the 'article', is constantly developing, changing form over time. One of the more obvious developments is the increased formalisation of register and structure. Articles published in the 1950s or 1960s do not resemble their more 'rigorous' correlates a generation later, regimentally structured as these are in the strict overview / analysis / conclusion framework and festooned with references.

This development corresponds with an increased depersonalisation, the general self-effacement of the author of the latter-day article, which is generally not found in the forebear. Certainly, the relatively more personal and informal style of earlier articles is not in evidence today. However, apart from general form, there are a wide number of developments over the period 1958–2004. Generally, changes have occurred within the various *type of articles* published, the choice of *objects for analysis*, and the *approach* to the objects analysed in the articles.

The appendix to this thesis gives the results of a statistical analysis carried out on the eleven journals using the categories described in the introductory section of this chapter. This section presents the interpretation of the overall results of the analysis, that is, the cumulative results of the analysis of all the articles under review. The categories applied can be justifiably criticised for their lack of specificity and for their simplicity. I would submit that they should ultimately be judged by the value of the insights achieved through their application.

Undeniably, though, a surprising amount of information flows from even such a simple analysis, though certainly much caution must

be exercised in interpreting the results due to the sweeping and all-embracing nature of the categories employed. Only those outcomes whose significance is indicated by striking turns are discussed below, and in appropriately broad terms. The ensuing discussion will present the interpretation of the results of the analysis in the sub-sections of 'Chapter IV: Analysis' of the Appendix.

An unsurprising development is the growth in the number of articles published annually. Taking the collective output of the 11 journals under review, the numbers of articles published annually rose from around 10 articles per year in the late 1950s and early 1960s, to around 110-120 in the mid-1990s, stabilising at more or less this level from that point through to 2004. The curve is rising and by all appearances production will continue to increase. In the period under review, 2585 articles were published in the journals. A single volume of one journal may comprise from one to four numbers issued in the course of a year. The overall average number of articles per volume is ten. The noteworthy exception is *Alternation* with an average of 25 articles per annum, all the more striking due to the fact that the second placed in terms of output, *Current Writing (CW)*, has published just over 13 articles per annum, that is, half the output of *Alternation*.

Looking at the breakdown of articles according to the five categories (Criticism, General Articles on Literary Objects, Metadiscursive, Thematic and General Articles on Cultural Phenomena), it is clear that Criticism dominates as the main type of article published in the journals (62% of all articles, see Section 1.5 of the Appendix). A detailed analysis of the articles of Criticism will be given below in which I will discuss changes in the types of objects selected. Suffice it to say at this point that the fact that almost two-thirds of articles constitute readings of mostly imaginative objects, it would appear that this practice is the *primary* research activity of

literary academics, and that it is likely to be a fundamental element in the identity of discipline, the 'what we do' of the discipline, its core.

In addition, over two-thirds of these readings are what I would define as *close* readings, regardless of the theory applied (see Section 1.7 of the Appendix). This impression is bolstered by the fact that, over time, there are no major deviations in the proportion of *close* to *not close* readings, or in the proportion of articles of Criticism to other types of articles (see Sections 1.7 and 1.6). Nevertheless, there does appear to be a moderate downturn in the proportion of articles of Criticism to other types of articles and a moderate increase in the proportion of *not close* readings, though the dominant position of *close* Criticism does not appear to be facing any fundamental challenges. The conclusion appears justified that, as regards its core activity of close readings of imaginative objects, the discipline of English studies has not witnessed fundamental change.

Turning to the second largest type, Metadiscursive articles, comprising around 16% of all articles in the sample, there are important developments in evidence. Recalling that this category covers any article discussing concepts, tools, theories of all varieties, theorists, critics, philosophers, and literary terminology, it is unsurprising that there has been a relatively constant proportion of such articles throughout the period under review (see Section 1.6 of the Appendix). However, in terms both of articles in the Metadiscourse and Criticism categories, broadly speaking, the following three clusters of approaches appear to be delimitable: Literary historiography (pre-1950s); Practical Criticism (1950s–early 1980s); Contemporary theory (early 1980s to date).

The first category, Literary historiography, falls outside the frame of reference of this thesis, and is evident primarily as a foil in debates on Practical Criticism: while it casts a significant shadow, it does not have a definitive presence and, moreover, cannot be said to

have a strong identity. It is characterised primarily by diachronic analysis. Practical Criticism, on the other hand, has definable theorists (Richards, Leavis, Eliot) and vocabulary (irony, ambiguity, complexity, organicism). Contemporary theories cover a very wide range of approaches to disciplinary objects, and include eco-criticism, feminism, gender theory, narratology, reader-response theory, structuralism, postcolonialism, poststructuralism, psychoanalysis, and semiotics.

Marxism is not included in this list, though it certainly is present in this period, as it has an older genesis from the perspective of the discipline, dating back in South Africa to at least the 1940s. In addition, though literary historiography and Marxism were far from mainstream practices during the ascendancy of Practical Criticism (1950s to 1970s), they still enjoyed, and continue to enjoy a place in academic journals. Although never a mainstream practice, Marxist criticism is interesting if for no other reason than the longevity of this approach in academic discourse, and the fact of its application even in the early 1940s (in forums such as *Trek*). In addition, though only true up to a point, from the mid-1940s onwards, literary historiography was largely influenced by academics of Marxist persuasion; *English in Africa (EA),* launched in 1974, became its main flag-bearer.

The ambit of metadiscursive debate covers a very wide territory, by my count some 210 distinguishable themes or theorists. The most common sixteen sub-categories are, in order of priority: Postmodernism / Poststructuralism; Literary historiography; Cognition theories; Ethnographics; Narratology; Postcolonial Theory; Practical Criticism; South African artefacts (theorising about, appropriate approaches, evaluation, canonisation); Poetics (Aristotle, Plato, Coleridge); Psychoanalysis; Translation; Feminism; John Ruskin; Language theories; Marxism; and Democratisation of culture. From 1958–1976, the three most common metadiscursive topics were Practical Criticism, Poetics and John Ruskin. The latter half of the

1970s sees Marxist theories and Literary historiography increasingly discussed, and the end of the 1970s sees the first signs of the coming explosion onto the scene in the 1980s of contemporary theories. The dominant metadiscursive sub-categories in the 1980s were Postmodernism / Poststructuralism, Feminism, Literary Historiography, Narratology, and (metadiscursive discussions on) South African artefacts. The period 1990-2004 sees the domination of the sub-categories: Poststructuralism / Postmodernism; Postcolonialism; Literary historiography and Cognition theories.

Thematic articles, representing just over 13% of all articles, constitute the third largest group of the five types of articles. In my analysis, over 100 themes inform discussions in this group. This could be further broken down, no doubt. By far the two most important themes are *pedagogy* (teaching methods, curricula, Outcomes Based Education, education policy, and others relating to teaching of English language and literature) and *philology* (language policy, discussions on linguistics, grammar, dialects, history of language, usage, bilingualism et cetera), together making up over fifty percent of all articles in this category (approximately two-thirds of which fall under the first heading, pedagogy).

Other themes, in order of priority, are: literary journals ('little magazines'), literary studies in South Africa, liberalism, academic freedom, and censorship / writers' freedom. Pedagogy and philology are perennial themes and are substantially represented throughout the period under review. In the period 1980-2004, there are discussions from time to time on literary studies and liberalism. From 1990-2004, literary journals, academic freedom and censorship augment this list. Chapter 3 below will take up several of the above themes in greater depth, in the hope of gauging at least some of the significance of certain developments within this group.

With regard to pedagogy, some important developments should be mentioned in this general introduction. (Section II of Chapter 3 will discuss this topic in more depth). Generally speaking, although 'pedagogy' has proven to be a dominant and perennial topic in the Thematic group, there has been a significant shift in approach. It is noteworthy that the advent of democracy (1994) was discussed overtly in most journals, with articles debating various impacts on the discipline and its practice in the wake of this event. In reading the journal articles in the 1960s and 1970s, key socio-political events, for example Sharpeville in 1960 or the Soweto uprising in 1976, do not have even the slightest resonance in any Thematic articles.

In this period, standards of English language are discussed, without mention of the Bantu Education act or government policy. Articles in the 1960s and 1970s might typically discuss the low standards of English, the language component in the English studies undergraduate curriculum, and the advisability of including South African authors in reading lists. Politics and contemporary theories would be decidedly absent in these two decades. In the 1980s, government education policy would come in for criticism, the poor training of teachers would be decried, and the need to revise parts of the curriculum at tertiary level to render them more relevant would be cited. The 1990s would see this general trend pick up in scale, and the reference to political or social context would become pervasive rather than exceptional.

Negatively, the foregoing development could be interpreted as the story of the dismantling of the ivory tower and destruction of an old, traditionalist ethos. Positively, it could be interpreted as the story of growing courage, increased willingness to point out and frankly name the issues and take up (figurative) arms, and go back to the drawing board to reinvent the discipline. Both characterisations are

caricatures, and perhaps the truth lies somewhere in-between these two poles.

Or perhaps not. Perhaps, in proportion, there are as many pusillanimous academics relative to the bold and brave today as there have ever been. I would suggest that the tower still stands, its ivory adornments replaced by material more in keeping with the time, its artillery upgraded and updated, procedures renovated, and the range of licensed targets modified. What has shifted is the practically ineffable plethora of perceived relevant considerations, understandings of causal relations, rules for debate, and repertoires of acceptable rhetorical stratagems.

General Articles on Literary Objects constitute only 8% of all articles. Although relatively less significant, this type of article can be found in a more or less constant relation (in terms of volume) throughout the period and would seem to constitute an important, if minor, strand of research output in the discursive field of literary studies.

On the other hand, General Articles on Cultural Phenomena (non-literary), constitute only 1% of all articles, signifying the relative unimportance and possibly the general rejection of such artefacts as a legitimate object of literary academic focus. This view is bolstered by the erratic appearance of such articles, the (relatively rare) publication of articles from other disciplines, and the separating out of cultural studies from literary studies proper.[12] However, it must be pointed out that certain objects which might be said to fall within the ambit of cultural studies (film, popular genres), are to be found in the Criticism

---

[12] Michael Chapman notes in 2000 that, at the University of Kwa-Zulu-Natal: 'English Studies has been divided into three tracks: literature, language (grammar, creative writing, editing), and culture (interpreting forms of popular expression)' (45).

group. Hence, final judgement must be suspended until examination of the breakdown of the range of objects in the Criticism group.

As stated above, articles of Criticism constitute around 62% of all articles in the journals over the period 1958-2004. Section 1.8 of the Appendix presents a breakdown of this group in relation to the chosen object or objects of analysis, using 12 sub-categories. These break down as follows:[13] Non-African Artists of Imaginative Objects (almost 48%); South African Artists of Imaginative Objects (almost 35%); Other African Artists of Imaginative Objects (almost 7%); Autobiography (3%); Journals / Diaries / Letters / Journalism (almost 1,5%); Travel and Mission Writing (0,7%); and South African Oral Artists (almost 0,5%).

All the foregoing (making up over 95% of the objects analysed) would fall within what I would describe as a pre-Practical Criticism (*literary-historiographical*) definition of 'literature', and on such a definition would constitute proper objects of analysis. Applying the *Practical Criticism* definition of literature, or in any event the definition emerging from the actual application of this approach, only *imaginative* works could conceivably fall within the proper purview, nevertheless still constituting just under 90% of the total. However, objects falling within the purview of *Cultural studies*, that is, forms of popular expression such as Film and Documentaries and Popular Imaginative Written Objects (genre fiction, such as detective, science-fiction or romance), together constitute just under 2% of focus occasions.

---

[13] Note that the percentages in this paragraph refer to 'focus occasions' and not articles; articles focusing on up to four artists of objects were included in this group. Hence, the statistics refer to the *artists*, and not the *articles*. For example, if in 1 article, the fiction by Daniel Defoe is compared with that of JM Coetzee, this would constitute two focus occasions: 1 focus occasion of a non-African artist of an imaginative object and 1 focus occasion of a South African artist of an imaginative object.

On a chronological analysis which ignores the three largest groups,[14] it is the categories Autobiography, Journals / Diaries / Letters / Journalism, Travel and Mission writing and South African Oral Artists which have a significant and growing presence from the 1990s onwards. Objects of cultural studies do not appear to have been assimilated into the discipline. Although imaginative written objects dominate (90%), a wider *literary-historiographical* understanding of 'literature', which includes autobiography, travel writing, diaries, and orature, inter alia, appears to have become accepted by the discipline as constituting its proper domain of objects.

Turning to the three largest groups in the Criticism category (together constituting just under 90%), namely Non-African (48%), South African (almost 35%) and Other African artists of imaginative works (almost 7%), there have been very significant developments *over time* (see Section 1.9 of the Appendix). Non-African artists have moved from a position of almost absolute dominance, accounting for between 80-100% of the objects of Criticism scrutinised annually in the period 1958–1973, to around 20% in the period 2000–2004. This decrease is inversely reflected in the increase in attention to South African imaginative artists, rising above 50% for the first time in 1996, and more or less maintaining this level on average through to 2004.

This reflects the respective long-term trend lines: gradual decrease in attention to imaginative work by Non-African artists, and gradual increase in attention to imaginative work by South African artists. The position of other African artists is less clear. There has been reasonably constant attention paid to work by such artists from 1974 to 2004, but no particular trend is in sight, neither increasing nor decreasing. Certain years have seen up to 20% of focus occasions on objects by artists in this group, but the average of around 10% appears to have become the invisible 'ceiling' level.

---

[14] Non-African, South African and African imaginative written objects.

A breakdown of the South African artists in this group will be given in Chapter 4 below. In the non-African category, approximately 345 artists come in for attention over the period in 892 focus occasions. Looking only at artists whose work forms the focus in at least 10 articles, we have in order of literary period (priority order of artist in parenthesis): Middle English (Chaucer), Elizabethan (Shakespeare); Augustan (Pope); Romantic (Wordsworth, Austen, Blake, Byron, Shelley, and Keats); Victorian (George Eliot); Modern (Conrad, Yeats, TS Eliot, Lawrence); and Realist (James).[15]

Shakespeare alone accounts for over 10% of all focus occasions in the Non-African group, and the six Romantics mentioned here collectively account for just over 10% as well. The four Moderns mentioned here collectively account for just over 9%, James alone accounts for just under 3%, Chaucer and George Eliot around 2% and Pope over 1,5%. This indicates the centrality of Shakespeare, particularly in the first three decades under review, and the abiding (if waning) importance of the Romantics and the Moderns. Interest in Chaucer as a focus of academic articles appears to have dissipated entirely, while interest in James is a recent phenomenon (since the 1990s).

In the Other African group, of the 46 artists discussed in this group, the work of only six accounts for over 50% of focus occasions: Achebe and Ngũgĩ account for 12% each, Soyinka, Armah and Marechera account for around 8% each, and Lessing accounts for about 6% of focus occasions in this group. The attention paid to the

---

[15] One must always bear in mind the fact that, while a particular artist may at times appear to be favoured generally, there is always the possibility, in statistical analyses such as the one supporting these findings, of mistaking an anomalous research interest of a single prolific scholar for a general trend. With this caveat in mind, though, it is a sobering thought that it is precisely the work of energetic individuals which fills the archives and, collectively and over time, comprises the stock of statements on the ostensible objects of the discipline.

first four (Achebe, Ngũgĩ, Soyinka and Armah) has been abiding and interest continues. Interest in Marechera arose in the 1990s and continues into the 2000s, while interest in Lessing seems to have abated, perhaps only temporarily. Dangarembga is also a noteworthy artist, whose work has received more attention than most in this category, with the exception of the six artists already mentioned.

General Articles on Literary objects, at 12% of total articles, is a small but substantial group and worthy of closer analysis. In interpreting the results, however, it must be recalled that the only shared characteristic among the articles in this group is the simple fact that they overtly discuss more than four artists' work. One thinks immediately of surveys (Namibian literature, Afrikaans literature, Poetry of the 70s, South African prison literature), but there are a great variety of other articles which are highly selective and do not have a direct survey intention (representations of TRC in South African fiction, metaphysical influences in American poetry, the moral theme in Zulu literature). Section 1.10 of the Appendix gives a detailed breakdown of the group according to the type of objects discussed. The five sub-categories and their proportionate representation within this group are as follows: South African Imaginative Objects (50%); Non-African Imaginative Objects (29%); Orature (11%); Other African Imaginative Objects (8%); and Popular Objects (2%).

I would like to propose the hypothesis that survey-type articles are a (rough) index of future research agendas. There would seem to me to be a logical connection between undertaking an initial overview prior to moving on to a closer examination of a domain. If true, then the choices of objects in this group are of greater significance than their statistical representation might suggest. In any event, this hypothesis appears partially supported when a comparison is made between the breakdown for the Criticism group (Section 1.8 of the Appendix) and General group (Section 1.10) respectively. Non-

African Imaginative Objects constitute almost 48% of the Criticism group, but only 29% of General Articles, and South African Imaginative Objects constitute only 35% of the Criticism group, but 50% of the General group. This would suggest (if the hypothesis has any validity) that, in terms of research agendas in the period 1958–2004, Non-African objects were in relative decline and research on South African objects was increasing. Indeed, this is confirmed in the chronological analysis (Section 1.9).

However, while such links might be reasonably posited, there is no *necessary* link between surveys and subsequent research. All the same, the stark contrast of the breakdown of object type in the Criticism and General groups respectively (1.8 and 1.10), raises questions. For example, apart from the already mentioned disjunction in respective representation in the groups of Non-African and South African objects, how do we explain the strong representation of Orature in the General group?

The first and most obvious explanation is the absence of an author in most works of Orature (the Criticism group contains only oral objects where an author is named). Hence, discussions of Xhosa orature or Zulu praise poetry and the like will always fall into the 'General' category. This is a partial explanation only, because it is nevertheless the case that transcripts of oral performances are attributed to the performer. Hence, it appears justifiable to reach the tentative conclusion that research on Orature is set to continue and to grow in importance. Moreover, its acceptance as an appropriate disciplinary object and its small though significant presence on the research agenda of the discipline is suggested by the above analysis. By contract, research on Popular Objects appears to be insignificant.

III

English Studies in Africa (*ESA*) was launched by the Department of English at the University of Witwatersrand, under the editorship of AC Partridge in 1958. It is the longest-running English studies journal in South Africa, and still sees regular production of two numbers per annum. Its articles represent just over 1/5th of all articles under review, seeing contributions from academics from all over South Africa and occasionally from abroad. The breakdown of type of article (Criticism, General Articles on Literary Objects, Metadiscursive, Thematic and General Articles on Cultural Phenomena) mirrors the overall profile of content (see Appendix, Section 1.5, Table 1). Hence, the overall conclusions relating to all the journals in the foregoing section apply *mutates mutandis* to *ESA*.

However, with nearly three-quarters of articles falling into the Criticism category, and with almost twice as many Thematic articles as Metadiscursive articles, the journal appears to assume a specific character or flavour, if you will. With the exception of the Criticism and Thematic groups, there is no particular pattern. Topics in the Metadiscursive group very seldom recur, the General Articles on Literary Objects and General Articles on Cultural Phenomena, such as there are, are similarly random: very rarely is the same or similar topic discussed twice.

The Thematic group reveals a dominant tendency to contain articles dealing with issues falling under the pedagogy and philology headings (over 60%). In the Criticism group, *ESA* reflects a relative bias in favour of Non-African imaginative objects (72% compared to the overall figure of 48%), and the relatively low representation in this group of South African imaginative written objects (17% compared to the overall figure of almost 35%).

With 95% of objects in this group comprising imaginative work (poems, plays, fictional prose), the conception of the 'literary' would seem to be decidedly that of Practical Criticism. Within the Criticism group, Shakespeare stands head and shoulders above all others, with over 10% of all focus occasions on objects by this author. Other authors individually receiving more attention than any single South African author are: James, Wordsworth, TS Eliot and Conrad (over 2% each). The only South African author to have formed the focus on more than 2% of occasions in this period was Alan Paton. In the Other African group, Chinua Achebe receives attention on just over 1% of focus occasions.

However, a note of warning: the impression created here of a journal whose content reflects a narrow conception of the 'literary' (poems, plays, fictional prose), an orientation towards the English 'greats', a thematic preoccupation with its own practice (pedagogy, philology), and a general lack of interest in all else, though telling, may be misleading.

Lest we come to hasty conclusions, it must be pointed out that the data examined covers a period spanning almost five decades, seven editors,[16] and forty-seven volumes. A pattern of shifts appears to emerge when dividing up and analysing the data in four distinct periods:[17] Period 1 (1958-1970); Period 2 (1971-1983), Period 3 (1984-1995) and Period 4 (1997-2004). Chronologically, in each succeeding period, Non-African objects lose their dominant position (88%, 82%, 75%, 36%); South African objects gain prominence (11%, 13%, 16%, 48%); and Other African objects rise in significance (1%,

---

[16] The editors in chronological order in the period under review (from 1958-2004): AC Partridge; F Mayne; P Segal; BD Cheadle; GF Hartford; GI Hughes; and V Houliston.
[17] Random periods were selected until the four listed here were settled on, opportunistically, as they give the starkest contrasts.

5%, 9%, 16%). These shifts are stark and the results of this analysis reveal or at least adumbrate major changes in orientation in this journal.

The periods in which authors of the most commonly analysed works fall, serve to indicate shifts in research agendas and possibly also constitute a rough index of canonical positions. The seven most common non-African authors see the main concentration of attention fall in single or multiple periods: Conrad (Period 1); TS Eliot (Period 2,3); Austen, James, Wordsworth (Periods 1,2,3); and Shakespeare and Yeats (all periods). Noteworthy South African authors are Paton and Schreiner (all periods), P Smith (Periods 1,2,3) and JM Coetzee (Periods 3,4). The only African author whose works come in for consistent scrutiny in this journal is Achebe.

The Chancellor of the University of the Witwatersrand, Richard Feetham, opens the first issue in 1958 thus:

> The title boldly proclaims that those who are responsible for launching this new periodical look forward to establishing by its means *contact with teachers of English*, not only in South Africa, but in *all parts of the continent of Africa* where the English language is used and studied ... 'English Studies in Africa' may thus have a far-reaching influence in helping to *uphold*, and maintain, *high standards* in the *use and teaching of the English language*, and to *stimulate* the study of *English literature*, in many widely distributed centres. (np, emphasis added)

These statements can be said to characterise fairly accurately the general thrust of the journal in Period 1 (1958–1970). If under English literature is understood the English Canon plus James and Conrad, we find it well represented at almost 90% of critical articles

focusing on the works of such artists in this period. The one important qualifier regarding the founding statements concerns the intention to reach out to the entire continent of Africa. The odd contribution from an academic in an African university outside South Africa is an exception proving the rule that contributors are South African academics in the first place, followed by American and European academics in the (distant) second place. Volumes go by without mention of an African author or literary theme, although African authors are not entirely ignored. On the rare occasion that they are included, they are almost exclusively South Africans, and the darling is Pauline Smith, with attention paid also to Roy Campbell, Alan Paton, Nadine Gordimer, Olive Schreiner, and Thomas Pringle.

The March 1970 issue, dedicated to South African writing (publication of the proceedings of the conference of the *English Academy of Southern Africa* held at Rhodes University on 7–11 July 1969), is anomalous in this respect. Here, indeed, we see the first signs of change on the horizon, a *gradual* switch in criticism away from literary objects of the Western canon towards objects closer to home. In terms of Thematic articles, standards in language use, education, curricula (tertiary and secondary) turn out a major preoccupation in this period.

Periods 2 and 3 (1971 to 1996) bring a shift, but not a dramatic one: 82% and 75% respectively of articles of Criticism still focus on objects by Non-African authors. However, it appears that the growing importance of both South African and Other African authors becomes consolidated in this period. From 1986 onwards, articles focusing on South African or African authors begin to dominate, representing an average of just over half the articles. In Period 4 (1997–2004), there is a dramatic orientation towards South African and African authors; the majority (64%) of articles of Criticism fall to objects in this group.

Importantly, African authors become a significant presence – not only West African authors, but also Kenyan and Zimbabwean, among others. Reflecting on the opening statements in the first number in 1958 and the vision of reaching out to Africa, contributions from academics in African universities become more frequent in Period 4 and appear set to become a standard feature.

Unisa English Studies (UES) was established by the Department of English at UNISA in 1963 and ran for 33 years. It was discontinued in 1995.[18] In terms of overall output of articles, it is second only to *ESA*, accounting for just over 15% of all articles produced in the 11 journals in the period under review (1958–2004). In addition, contributors were academics from universities across South Africa which facts, taken together, rendered this forum both representative and a significant platform for literary debate. From 1963–1970, the publication is subtitled 'Bulletin of the Department of English', and indeed it does not have the form and feel of an academic journal, though many of the articles appearing in it during this period are nevertheless of academic register. After 1970, its subtitle changes to 'Journal of the Department of English', bringing with it an altogether more serious look and academic tone. Nevertheless, its genesis as a forum of communication between the professorate and the student body leaves its trace on the journal throughout its existence, and we witness content consciously directed at the student body. However, it becomes primarily a forum for academic articles.

The breakdown of type of article (Criticism, General Articles on Literary Objects, Metadiscursive, Thematic and General Articles on

---

[18] The final number ends with the following unsigned statement appearing on the title page of *UES*: "*Unisa English Studies* is being discontinued after this issue. Copies of a new journal, *scrutiny2,* will be available [also] to persons who are not registered in the Department of English," (Vol XXXII, no 2, September, 1995). Hence, although the journal *scrutiny2* is the institutional successor, it was not intended as a continuation. Indeed it shares little else with the precursor other than the institutional setting, and the two journals are therefore treated in this analysis as independent of each other.

Cultural Phenomena) mirrors the overall profile of content (see Appendix, Section 1.5, Table 1) with the exception of Thematic articles which, at only 2% of all *UES* articles, is remarkably low. It would appear that *UES* generally did not function as a platform for academic discussion on the discipline or other topics. Three-quarters of articles fall into the Criticism category. The second largest category is Metadiscursive articles (15%). Unlike *ESA*, where no pattern emerges in the analysis of this group, in the case of *UES*, articles on poetics (Aristotle to Coleridge), Practical Criticism and John Ruskin constitute almost one-third of Metadiscursive articles. However, the remaining two-thirds are widely dispersed and evince no distinctive features.

Within the Criticism group, *UES* reflects a major bias in favour of Non-African imaginative objects (the highest proportion of all 11 journals – 90% compared to the overall figure of 48%), and one of the lowest representation of South African imaginative written objects (8% compared to the overall figure of almost 35%; only comparable in this respect to *UCT*). In addition, with only 1% of Other African objects as a focus of articles of Criticism, the only other journal with lower attention paid to such objects is *UCT* at 0%. With an astounding 98% of objects in this group comprising imaginative work (poems, plays, fictional prose), the conception of the 'literary' is by far the most restrictive.

Objects authored by Shakespeare constitute almost 8% of all focus occasions. Other authors individually receiving attention were: Pope and Keats (just over 3% each), and Blake, Byron, Chaucer, Conrad and Wordsworth (between 2-3% of focus occasions). No South African author has his or her work read in more than 1% of focus occasions, though Schreiner and Bosman come close. In the other-African group, Achebe and Ngũgĩ receive attention on two occasions each. In terms of these three sub-groups (Non-Africans, South

Africans and Other Africans), there are no significant developments in proportionate attention paid to objects by origin of author. In this respect, *UES* stands out as bucking the overall trend of increasingly favouring objects by South Africans over time. Unsurprisingly, then, but nevertheless worthy of note, there is remarkable continuity over time in choice of authors.

In light of the above, it may come as a surprise to note that *UES* made early and important contributions to the debate on the application of contemporary theories to literary objects. The publication of papers read at the 1978 Modern Criticism Symposium in volume XVI(2) on semiotics, hermeneutics, language theory, phenomenology, narratology, Marxist literary theory, and aesthetic theory, is the earliest such infusion into the discourse (as represented by the 11 journals). Though *UES* was most resolutely not a launching pad or platform for contemporary theories, an important catalyst for later developments in the discourse in this direction were the contributions, appearing consistently from 1978–1990, by Rory and Pam Ryan. These were annual surveys of articles on literary aesthetics, literary theory and critical methodology, covering contemporary literary theories. It can reasonably be conjectured that these surveys played an important role in introducing new theories into the discourse in South Africa. In addition, in the last five years of its existence (1990–1995), a number of articles engage with contemporary theory through readings of literary objects.

UES is also noteworthy for the fact that, quite consistently throughout its existence, it paid some attention to South African imaginative output, with articles appearing on other African artists very infrequently. South African poets were the clear favourites and indeed the perennial champions of this journal. It is noteworthy that although South African imaginative work and contemporary theories were not major concerns of *UES*, its consistent if narrow focus on

local poetic production and its surveys on contemporary theory constitute very important if not primary legacies.

Nevertheless, the primary mode of criticism in *UES* remained a generally formalist version of 'close reading,' following the Practical Criticism and New Criticism vocabularies and orientations. By 1995, this fact, and the historic predisposition towards Non-African canonical authors, rendered it distinctly outmoded in the company of its more modish analogues; in this sense, its redundancy had been decreed, and this year saw its final issue.

UCT Studies in English (*UCT*) was launched in 1970 under the auspices of the English Department of the University of Cape Town and was discontinued in 1986. The opening statement gives the following declaration of intent:

> *UCT Studies in English* is being sponsored by the Department of English (Language) [at] University of Cape Town, and will concern itself mainly with the teaching interests of the Department: *English Language and Medieval Literature*. It is intended for a scholarly audience. It will appear at least once a year ... The contributors to the first issue are all members of our Department, but we hope and expect that this journal will become *more than a house organ*. To this end we shall welcome contributions from the international community of scholars. (Roberts 1970: np, emphasis added)

The proclaimed primary concerns of the journal, namely English language and medieval literature, turn out not to be substantially represented in the journal. Articles concerned with issues on or related to English language come to just over 8%, though these range widely from 'Surfer's English' (Boxall 1970) to 'Errors in English' (McMagh 1976), and no specific pattern is observable. The

situation is similar with articles on medieval literature, with over 9% of content represented by such objects. Again no pattern is discernible – only Chaucer's work comes up for scrutiny on more than one occasion, in point of fact, exactly twice. One issue which stands out, and which content-wise has no affiliation with the other issues, is Issue 7 of 1977 which contains the Association of University English Teachers of South Africa (AUETSA) conference papers from the inaugural meeting of this body in January 1977.

The articles published in *UCT* constitute only 3% of the total articles under review. Moreover, with only 72 articles over 15 volumes, *UCT* produced both the lowest average annual output and one of the lowest overall outputs of the 11 journals. The breakdown of type of article (Criticism, General Articles on Literary Objects, Metadiscursive, Thematic and General Articles on Cultural Phenomena) mirrors the overall profile of content (see Appendix, Section 1.5, Table 1), with the exception of General Articles on Literary Objects which is relatively lower than the average. Two-thirds of articles fall into the Criticism category. The second largest category is Thematic articles (18%), where the overall pattern is reflected: pedagogy and philology are the dominant themes. Metadiscursive articles (13%) are widely dispersed and no pattern emerges. The only chronological development worthy of note is the fact that Thematic articles appear before 1978, and Metadiscursive articles after 1976. After 1978 there is no article at all discussing pedagogical or philological issues. While the turn to self-analysis of the field and theoretical concerns at the end of the 1970s might explain the appearance of Metadiscursive articles, there does not appear to be any explanation for the disappearance of Thematic articles.

Within the Criticism group, *UCT* reflects a major bias in favour of Non-African imaginative objects (the second highest proportion of all 11 journals – 88% compared to the overall figure of 48%, and *UES*

at 90%), and one of the lowest representations of South African imaginative written objects (8% compared to the overall figure of almost 35%; only comparable in this respect to *UES*). In addition, *UCT* has the distinction of being the only journal in the group with not a single article on Other African objects. With 96% of objects in this group comprising imaginative work (poems, plays, fictional prose), the conception of what constitutes a 'literary' object is clearly confined to imaginative work (a minor part of this comprises transcribed old English orature). Objects authored by Shakespeare constitute just over 10% of all focus occasions in articles of Criticism. No other author receives attention on more than two occasions.

UCT failed to attain its own stated objective of escaping its genesis as a departmental organ: contributors were and remained mostly in-house. Over its 17-year lifespan, only 15 numbers appeared. As stated above, relative to the other journals and taken as a whole, *UCT* is statistically insignificant. Its significance is of an emblematic nature, as it stands at the extreme end of a number of axes: it is the smallest in terms of number of articles; it is the most insular in terms of contributors (all other journals evince a healthy mix in this respect); it shares with *UES* the least articles on objects by South African authors; and is the only journal to have paid absolutely no attention to other African artists. It is important to recall that volume is not all, and that even relatively small journals could well carry weight far beyond the confines of their covers. However, there does not appear to be evidence to suggest that this journal exercised an influence of any significance on the wider discourse and developments therein (that is, over and above the anomalous Issue 7).

Launched in 1974, and published by the Institute for the Study of English in Africa, Rhodes University, *English in Africa* (*EA*), evinces a consistency in policy and content, and therefore, a clearer identity, than any of the other journals under review, all the more

78

remarkable considering its 30-year-plus lifespan and the numerous editors who have presided over policy. The opening editorial declares the scope of the journal as follows:

> We intend to print articles on English writing and the English language in collections of primary material … check-lists of work in progress; and book reviews in areas germane to our fields – English as a language of Africa, and the African Experience expressed in English. (Anon 1974: 1)

With regard to the intention to print articles on English writing in Africa, *EA* stuck to this founding intention with tenacity. Pedagogical or philological concerns were not a preoccupation of this journal. Just over 87% of the articles focus on imaginative works by artists from South Africa or Africa. None of the other journals in the group can match the persistent and pervasive attention paid to Southern African literary production by this journal. In this respect, it contrasts starkly with equally long-running journals such as its near namesake, *ESA*, and *UES.*

The agenda of *EA* could be said to be a 'recovery' one, that is, to research and expose hitherto un-researched southern African authors and literature, and thereby to write or construct the history of southern African letters. *Alternation* (founded in 1994)*,* the explicit agenda of which is to elaborate such a history, provides an interesting contrast to *EA*. It would appear that *EA* has contributed substantially to the formation of the archive and orthodoxy on South African works, whereas *Alternation* has taken a different course (see the discussion of the latter journal below). Although the infusion of contemporary theories has had an impact on *EA*, this development is much less obvious than in the case of *Alternation,* where contemporary theories are at the fore of debate.

Articles published in *EA* represent approximately 11% of the total articles under review, a fairly substantial amount even if relatively thinly spread.[19] The breakdown of type of article (Criticism, General Articles on Literary Objects, Metadiscursive, Thematic and General Articles on Cultural Phenomena) mirrors the overall profile of content (see Appendix, Section 1.5, Table 1). Three-quarters of articles fall into the Criticism category. Unusually, the second largest category is General Articles on Literary Objects (12%), followed by Metadiscursive (7%) and Thematic articles (6%). General Articles on Literary Objects focus almost exclusively on South African or African objects. Interestingly, there are no significant patterns (repeated themes) in the Thematic and Metadiscursive groups. However, the concerns in almost all articles in either of these two groups are oriented around South African and African issues. One might expect (as I expected) an orientation in the Thematic group towards pedagogy, and an orientation in the Metadiscursive group towards literary historiography and the South African canon and, indeed, these issues arise, but not consistently enough to warrant the conclusion that this journal is *characterised* by such discussion. Chronologically, we see a moderate tendency over time towards increased domination of articles of Criticism, and a growing though minor presence of Metadiscursive articles, and no Thematic articles since 1996. It seems fair to conclude that, unlike journals such as *EAR*, *Alternation*, *Pretexts* and *s2*, *EA* does not generally function as a platform for debate, though it is certainly an outlet for discussion.

Within the Criticism group, a major bias appears in favour of South African imaginative objects (the highest proportion of all 11 journals – 68% compared to the overall figure of 34%), the highest representation of other African imaginative objects (19% compared

---

[19] Journals such as *JLS* (launched 1985) and *Alternation* (launched 1994) show similar overall volume of articles published at 12 and 11% respectively, though both of these have had considerably shorter runs than *EA*.

with the overall figure of 6%), and the lowest representation of Non-African imaginative written objects (5% compared to the overall figure of almost 48%).

In terms of criticism, *EA* can justifiably be characterised as the most Afro-centric journal of the 11 journals under review. In addition, although an article of Criticism might focus on imaginative works, the literary-historiographical conception of what constitutes the field of the 'literary' is evident in references made to any kind of writing of an artist (letters, diaries, biographical information). This is not to suggest that this conception of the field is dominant, only to point out that this general tendency appears to set this journal apart from the others. Having said this, however, with only 5% of articles focusing explicitly on 'Other' objects (film, orature, journals), it would still appear reasonable to conclude that the operative definition of the literary (or in any event the understanding of what is 'literary'), is for the most part confined to imaginative work (poems, plays, fictional prose), even if such works are sometimes read alongside factual or other types of writing.

Objects authored by JM Coetzee constitute over 7% of all focus occasions in articles of Criticism. Other noteworthy authors are: Gordimer (almost 5%); Schreiner, Head, Smith and Paton (in order of priority; all over 3%). In the Other African group, Ngũgĩ (3%), Soyinka and Armah (over 2% each) are the most important. In the Non-African group, no single author has any significant representation. Over time, there are no significant trend lines in terms either of authors or types of objects, except for a slight increasing tendency since 1986 to focus on Other objects. Unsurprisingly, but nevertheless worthy of note, there is remarkable continuity over time.

Craig MacKenzie in his editor's note in 2004, sums up several of the main defining features of the journal:

This issue celebrates the thirtieth anniversary of *English in Africa*'s inception in 1974 ... Appropriately, it features a series of articles that go to the heart of what English in Africa has attempted to do from the start: *publish detailed research on unexplored areas in African literatures in English ...* Valerie Letcher's extensive bibliography of white southern African women writers who published works between 1800 and 1940 exemplifies another aspect of *English in Africa*'s research profile over the years: *providing reliable* (and largely unobtainable) *hard data on African writers and writing.* (MacKenzie, 2004: np, emphasis added)

This appropriately sums up the realised aims of a journal whose identity has been remarkably strong and uniquely consistent.[20]

The journal *Literator: Journal of Literary Criticism, Comparative Linguistics and Literary Studies* (*Literator*) was launched in 1980 under the auspices of the Department for Languages at the Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education, now, after a merger in 2004, the North-West University. The following observations concern only the English-language articles of this journal which are not inconsiderable, representing about 7% of the total in this review.

The breakdown of type of article (Criticism, General Articles on Literary Objects, Metadiscursive, Thematic and General Articles on Cultural Phenomena) mirrors the overall profile of content (see Appendix, Section 1.5, Table 1). Over two-thirds of articles fall into

---

[20] When describing this journal as having a 'strong identity' and of being 'consistent' I mean to suggest that, relative to the other journals under review, there has been a strong correlation between the editorial policy and the content, as well as a high degree of consistency in the type of content over time (in this case three decades).

the Criticism category. There is a fairly even spread of articles among the other main categories: Thematic (11%), Metadiscursive (11%) and General Articles on Literary Objects (10%). Articles relating to pedagogy or philology make up almost 50% of the Thematic group, thus representing general focal issues for this journal. The metadiscursive group does not, however, show any distinctive patterns, and the same can be said about the General Articles on Literary Objects. Chronologically, we see a moderate tendency over time towards increased domination of articles of Criticism, which runs counter to the slight tendency of decline in overall proportion of such articles over time.

Within the Criticism group, *Literator* appears to match the overall breakdown very closely: Non-African imaginative objects 44% (overall 47%); South African objects 37% (overall 34%), Other African objects 3% (overall 6%). A unique feature of *Literator* is the diversity of the Other category, covering objects of orature, film, autobiography, biography, popular genres, letters, opera, music, comic strips and children's literature. This intimates a very broad conception of the 'literary', of the proper objects of the discipline.

Attention to a variety of artists appears fairly thinly spread, with no artist representing more that 4% of focus occasions. In order of priority, and taking all artists into consideration, the following receive attention on between 3-4% of occasions: Fugard, Head, and Shakespeare. Over time, objects falling in the general Other category (which appear for the first time in 1992) and objects in the Other African category (which appear for the first time in 1997) become a consistent if minor presence. Apart from these two developments, there are no noteworthy shifts in selection of type of objects for critical attention.

The *English Academy Review* (*EAR*) emerged in 1983 with the publication of 'volume 1' under the auspices of the *English Academy of Southern Africa* (Academy); however, this review includes the volumes published without numbers in 1980, 1981 and 1982. *EAR* is unique for at least two reasons. First, it is an academic journal founded and produced outside a university or institutional structure (all the other journals under review have their origins in university departments, centres or institutes attached or linked to universities).[21] Second, *EAR* was never *launched* as such, but emerged from the annual report of the academy, morphing gradually into the form of a journal in the years preceding the publication of 'volume 1' in 1983. The Academy itself was established in 1961 as a non-profit association with the overriding aim to:

> [M]aintain and propagate in Southern Africa the best standards of English reading, writing and speech. (Anon 1962b: 1)

Since its inception, the *Academy* has organised a wide array of activities, conferences, and issued a variety of publications. Interestingly, there does not appear to be a substantial link between the activities or policy of the Academy and the content of the journal. There are no inaugurating statements or overt policy objectives in *EAR*. However, in 1982, the first statement resembling anything like an editorial policy appears on the inside cover:

---

[21] Although the overall point holds that *EAR* as an academic journal published by an independent *association* is an anomaly, the statement that all the other journals under review are institutionally based should not be construed as suggesting that they are all institutionally *embedded* or *supported*. In discussions with John Higgins, editor of *Pretexts*, I discovered that this journal, though published 'under the auspices' of the University of Cape Town, had no resources available for salaries for professional or support staff and that, after an initial grant to launch the first number, financing for publication had to be sourced externally; eventually the journal was published independently and commercially in the UK by *Carfax Publishers Ltd*. The general point must be emphasised that each journal has a different story of origin. Indeed, there does not appear to be a standard pattern.

The *English Academy Review* provides a critical forum for divergent views about aspects of English in Southern Africa. The Review welcomes *any articles* or letters replying to *anything* which appears in its pages. (Anon, 1982: inside front cover, emphasis added)

Though *EAR* certainly constitutes a 'forum for divergent views', this hardly resembles anything like a programmatic statement, and does not make any reference to the *Academy's* mission. Indeed, although the influence of editors of academic journals is generally all but invisible (even if very real), due seemingly to the absence of a founding credo, the individual editors seemingly had a larger part in shaping the journal.

This impression is garnered in part from an analysis of content, though more so in the distinctly different feel and look of the journal during the tenure of a particular editor. In this respect, though sharing with almost all other journals the wide range of contributors and the heterogeneous content (*UCT* being the exception), broad as these usually are, it lacks a definition of scope or intention. Hence, its treatment (of the collective statements appearing between its covers from inception to 2004) as a *single story,* to a certain extent beggars belief. Nevertheless, however amorphous it might be, the emergence, through analysis of the articles, of a particular story, a dotted line of differences, allows the tentative tracing of a red line linking its constituent parts and setting it (partly) apart from its analogues.

Articles published in *EAR* represent approximately 7% of the total articles under review. The breakdown of type of article (Criticism, General Articles on Literary Objects, Metadiscursive, Thematic and General Articles on Cultural Phenomena) diverges significantly from the overall profile of content (see Appendix, Section 1.5, Table 1). Articles of Criticism constitute less than 50% of content,

a characteristic it shares only with *Pretexts*, *Alternation* and *s2* (the other 7 journals all have Criticism as a dominant category). Thematic articles are strongly represented (32%), a characteristic shared only with *Alternation* (31%).

The third-largest category is General Articles on Literary Objects (11%), focusing mainly on South African objects. Unusually, Metadiscursive articles (second-largest category overall) falls in fourth place at only 9%. General Articles on Literary Objects focus almost exclusively on South African or African objects. In the Thematic group, three-quarters of articles focus on pedagogical or philological issues: *EAR* is clearly a platform for debates on teaching and language issues. No pattern is observable in the Metadiscursive group. Chronologically, there are no significant tendencies – over the longer term, the proportions between the five generic types of articles listed above remain roughly proportionate.

Within the Criticism group, a major bias appears in favour of South African imaginative objects (53% compared to the overall figure of 34%), the representation of Other African objects equals the overall result (6%), and Non-South African imaginative objects are relatively, but not significantly, under-represented (30% compared to the overall figure of almost 48%). Over time, it would appear (contrary to the overall trend) that Non-African objects are maintaining a significant presence. Although focus on imaginative work predominates (90%), there is an important range of other objects which come up for scrutiny: film, autobiography, mission writing, journals, popular genres, and orature. The conception of the 'literary' does, however, appear in the main to be confined to works of the imagination.

The selected range of objects is wide with few authors significantly represented. The only two authors whose work is subject to analysis in more than 3% of focus occasions are Serote and Smith.

Unsurprisingly then, there are no significant trend lines in terms either of authors or types of objects.

The *Journal of Literary Studies / Tydskrif vir Literatuurwetenskap* (*JLS*) was launched in 1985 by SAVAL (South African Society for General Literary Studies) under the auspices of the University of South Africa. In terms of volume of articles, its output is significant at 12% of the total articles under review. The journal was the flag-bearer of contemporary theory, constituting the primary forum for its introduction and dissemination in South Africa.

Certainly, the influence of theory cannot be attributed to *JLS* alone; nevertheless, the arrival of the journal provided a discursive space, and signalled a new path, or rather paths. In a matter of a few years, it left the approaches and content of a journal such as *UES* looking dated and out of touch. The Editorial which introduces and inaugurates the *JLS*, the only editorial in this journal incidentally which makes explicit reference to its purpose and policy, sets the scene:

> *JLS* is the first literary-theoretical South African journal devoted to the study of literature across language boundaries. It is the mouthpiece of SAVAL (the South African Association of General Literary Studies), an organisation which, like the journal, aims at providing a forum to serve the theoretical investigation into the nature and study of literary texts of a variety of origins. Within a South African context emphasis is placed on the literatures of the indigenous languages; within an international context, an attempt is made to accommodate modern and classical languages. The most important sources for discussion in *JLS* will nevertheless be contemporary, international and local currents within literary theory. (Anon 1985: 1-2)

Unsurprisingly, then, *JLS* leads in terms of the percentage of its content focused on metadiscursive debate which, at 32%, is higher than any of the other journals under review and twice the overall result (16%). The breakdown of type of article (Criticism, General Articles on Literary Objects, Metadiscursive, Thematic and General Articles on Cultural Phenomena) diverges from the overall breakdown only in terms of Metadiscursive articles (see Appendix, Section 1.5, Table 1) which has a strong presence (a feature shared with *CW*, *Alternation*, *Pretexts* and *s2*).

In order of priority, the main headings under which the articles in this group could be placed are: postmodernism / poststructuralism, literary historiography, narratology, and postcolonialism. It is important to recall that the metadiscursive category here does not contain articles of Criticism which apply any or more of these theories. The articles in the metadiscursive group constitute pure theoretical discussions, that is, articles which do not mention literary objects or do not overtly make use of literary objects in presenting positions.

Articles of Criticism constitute 55% of content, in most of which contemporary theories are applied. Thematic articles are weakly represented (5%), and General Articles on Literary Objects are below the overall result (6% compared with 8% of all articles under review). Within the Thematic group, approximately half of the articles are concerned with issues relating to pedagogy. However, *JLS* does not appear to be a platform for debates on teaching issues. Chronologically, the two most important though moderate trends are the gradual proportionate increase in articles of Criticism, and the appearance from 1997 onwards of General Articles on Cultural Phenomena. Interestingly, and worthy of note in particular with regard to *JLS* where this shift is significant, in articles of Criticism, the object

has moved to the fore in analyses, particularly since 1997, and theory – though still present – has retreated.

Within the Criticism group, *JLS* reflects the overall results remarkably closely. Non-African objects are analysed in 45% of focus occasions (overall this figure is 47%); South African objects 38% (34%), and Other African 6% (6%). The Other group is significantly diverse (autobiography, popular genres, film, journals and testimonials), though the main focus is on poetry, plays and fictional prose. Over time, it would appear that, in accordance with the overall trend, South African and African objects are increasingly the focus in articles of Criticism.

The selected range of objects is wide with few authors significantly represented. The only author whose work is subject to sustained analysis is JM Coetzee, with work by him coming up for scrutiny on over 10% of focus occasions. No other author receives this much attention. Authors whose work is analysed in between 3-4% of focus occasions are: Mda, Conrad, Poe and Shakespeare. Poe was the focus of a special issue in the late 1980s and has not since been the focus of attention. Some sustained attention has been paid to Mda's work in the 2000s. Apart from these two authors, though, there are no noteworthy developments other than the ones already mentioned above.

The journal *Current Writing: Text and Reception in Southern Africa* (*CW*) was launched in 1989, as the organ of the Department of English, University of Natal (now the University of KwaZulu-Natal). Its main contribution (together with *EAR* and *EA* in particular) to the discourse is the promotion and development of a body of authorised

opinion on Southern African imaginative works of recent origin.[22] Its mission in this respect is outlined in the preface to the first number:

> *Current Writing* aims to supply what its editors perceive as a lack in the journal field: a periodical devoted specifically to Southern African writing of the last 20 years ... [I]t is increasingly recognised that Southern African works need to be considered in terms of their national origin. (Anon 1989: i-ii)

This describes the ambit of objects accurately, as work by South African artists is indeed the focus of this journal. The articles account for 8% of the total under review which is reasonably substantial for a journal that was launched only in 1989. The breakdown of type of article (Criticism, General Articles on Literary Objects, Metadiscursive, Thematic and General Articles on Cultural Phenomena) diverges from the overall breakdown only in terms of Metadiscursive articles (see Appendix, Section 1.5, Table 1) which have a strong presence (a feature shared with *JLS*, *Alternation*, *Pretexts* and *s2*), representing 28% of articles in this journal. Unlike *JLS*, though, this group evinces no dominant themes other than the generally shared characteristic of being informed by contemporary theory. Articles of Criticism constitute 56% of content.

Thematic articles represent 11%, and there is likewise no particular or discernible pattern. *CW* does not appear to be a general platform for debates on teaching or other issues. General Articles on Literary Objects are below the overall result (5% compared with 8% of all articles under review), and focus predominantly on South African

---

[22] By 'authorised opinion' I mean the orthodoxy or orthodoxies on and about certain objects; the primary mechanism of authorisation of opinion is the peer-review. What I am suggesting here is that the steady accretions to the archive of statements of a certain origin (the academy, literary academics), lead to the development of orthodoxy on the objects of inquiry.

artefacts. Chronologically, there are no discernible trends as yet and though sometimes erratic, there appears to be a generally stable relationship between types of content over the longer term.

Within the Criticism group, *CW*, together with *EA, EAR, Alternation* and *s2,* see South African imaginative artefacts represented in more than 50% of focus occasions in articles of Criticism. Although Non-African imaginative artefacts form the focus on only 10% of occasions, Other African imaginative artefacts appear relatively neglected at 5%. What is very striking, however, is the fact that *CW* has the lowest percentage of articles of Criticism on *imaginative* work. Taking articles of Criticism, if one adds up the three categories of South African, Other African and Non-African imaginative objects, the outcomes are as follows for the above-mentioned journals: *EA* (92%); *EAR* (89%); *Alternation* (72%), *s2* (80%); and *CW* (65%).

Hence, *CW* is the only journal with a *strong* tendency (greater than 25%) towards articles of Criticism on non-imaginative objects. In this group, we have autobiography (13%), Orature (3%), Journals / Diaries / Letters (3%); Travel and Mission Writing (2%), and many others: music, church hymns, serialised popular novels, collaborative autobiography, scientific writing, journalism, paintings, photography, radio plays, and political writings. Clearly, this is proof of an absorption into literary *academic* practice of objects not generally regarded (by the other journals) as properly belonging to the 'literary' or to the ambit of appropriate disciplinary objects.

The substantial presence of autobiography in this journal, and its presence in others, indicates the established position of this field within the discipline of literary studies. The status of the other Other objects listed above is not quite so clear. It would seem to me, as indicated by its presence across journals and over time, that the

position of Orature is sufficiently established, if minor. Paintings, for example, do not appear set to become disciplinary objects for literary academics.

The selected range of objects is wide with few authors significantly represented. The only author whose work is subject to sustained analysis is JM Coetzee, with work by him coming up for scrutiny on over 6% of focus occasions. No other author receives this much attention. Authors whose work is analysed in between 3-4% of focus occasions in this journal are: Gordimer and Mda, No significant developments regarding choice of objects of authors are apparent other than the relatively recent emphasis on Mda.

Pretexts was launched by the Arts Faculty of the University of Cape Town in 1989, and may have seen its final issue in 2003.[23] It is distinguished from other journals in the number of its international contributors: though almost all the other journals are quite unquestionably open forums domestically, they appear relatively insular internationally in comparison to *Pretexts*. The opening paragraph declares the intention of the journal:

> [To] encourage *research, discussion and debate* in both *literary* and more broadly cultural criticism in South Africa. We hope to help foster the development of an *interdisciplinary criticism*, one which ... questions and extends the current boundaries of existing literary studies ... In addition to essays on literary works we therefore also welcome those which deal with film, television and the visual arts, the discourses of race and gender, history and politics, and those which examine

---

[23] In a conversation with the editor, John Higgins, it was confirmed that no issue would be published in 2004, but that there were tentative plans for the re-launch of the journal in 2005/2006, though probably under new editorship.

questions of representation in legal and philosophical writing. (Higgins 1989: 1-2)

This policy would appear to have been borne out in practice. The journal does indeed show a bias in favour of cultural studies, and multi-disciplinary approaches are the order of the day. The articles published in *Pretexts* account for only 3% of the total under review which, with an average of around 6 articles per annum, is relatively low (only *s2* shows a lower overall and annual output in the period up to 2004). The breakdown of type of article (Criticism, General Articles on Literary Objects, Metadiscursive, Thematic and General Articles on Cultural Phenomena) diverges significantly from the overall breakdown (see Appendix, Section 1.5, Table 1). *Pretexts* shows a strong tendency to publish Metadiscursive articles (26%); articles of Criticism are not dominant (only 43%); and there is a moderate tendency to publish General Articles on Cultural Phenomena (9%). Moreover, there is a moderate tendency to publish Thematic articles (13%), and General Articles on Literary Objects (9%). Hence, its profile is most similar to that of *Alternation*. Unlike *Alternation* with 275 articles, however, *Pretexts* saw only 76 articles published in the period under review, which fact perforce renders statistical analyses of this journal relatively unreliable. Trends must be sought in an analysis of articles within these generic types to discern patterns, if any.

In the Metadiscursive group, other than sharing the property of employing contemporary theories, no particular theme or theorist is repeatedly discussed or analysed, though (at a push) one could argue that Raymond Williams is a minor theme. In the Thematic and two General groups, the position is more or less the same: there is no discernible pet theme, field of objects or cultural phenomena which stand out sufficiently to allow one to confidently pronounce on a distinctive characteristic of the journal. This lack of definition, it must be emphasised, could well be the deliberate result of a policy to

93

promote *wide* debate on a *multitude* of issues, and founded on the assumption that all disciplines and fields are significantly connected: the interdisciplinary imperative.

Within the Criticism group, unlike the younger generation of journals (*CW*, *Alternation*, *s2*) which all see greater than 50% of the articles in this group focusing on South African imaginative artefacts, *Pretexts* focuses mostly on Non-African artefacts (46%). This is striking, especially given the trend in the 1990s and early 2000s towards South African and African objects. The three sub-categories of Non-African Imaginative Objects, South African and African Imaginative Written Objects, together represent 80% of articles of Criticism (which in turn constitutes the largest category at 46% of articles of this journal).

My original perception that this journal was *the* cultural studies journal in relation to the other 10 journals under review appears not to be accurate – *CW* clearly has that honour (see above). It would certainly be wrong to categorise this journal as retrograde, reminiscent of a former type of journal, since the prevalence of contemporary theory militates against such a hasty conclusion. At 19%, the Other category is not insignificant, and many objects would certainly qualify as falling within the ambit of Cultural studies: film, travel and mission writing, advertising, media, Van der Kemp's Xhosa grammar, paintings, self-portraits and prefaces. Nevertheless, in terms of South African literary studies as well as Cultural studies, the contribution (in terms of volume) is minor. At this point, I should hasten to remind the reader that volume is not all. In terms of authors, few have their works analysed more than once. The only authors whose work is subject to repeated analysis are Schreiner (3 articles) and Shakespeare (2 articles).

Launched in 1994 from its base at the University of Durban-Westville (now the University of KwaZulu-Natal), *Alternation* is the journal of the Centre for the Study of Southern African Literature and Languages (CSSALL). The unique characteristic of this journal is the strong postmodernist bias combined with a vibrant, if complex, nationalism. The introduction of the inaugural issue sets the agenda in remarkably strident terms:

> The Centre was established at the beginning of 1994 ... with the purpose of promoting an *interdisciplinary* study of the great variety of southern African literatures and languages ... It is ... remarkable that well into the last decade of the twentieth century an *inclusive literary history* of southern Africa has yet to be published. Now that the *critical demolition of oppressive literary paradigms has been largely accomplished ...* we need to move 'beyond the fragments' to attempt ... an *embracing survey*. The CSSALL sees this as its first major research task, but ... points to ... the sheer impossibility of doing so from the angle of a single discipline. … A proper transformation is not only a mater of what (content) we read, but more importantly, how (theory) we read ... [O]ur *democratic, non-racial and non-sexist postcoloniality* – positions our re-readings of this region's literary history; but we also need to be alive to the *limits* of such a discourse *of nationalism*, of what is 'other' to the national, of the *irreducible heterogeneity* of our *common humanity*. (Wade 1994: 1-7)

The spellbinding resoluteness of these statements compare only with the opening statements of *ESA* in 1958, and the editorials in *EAR*. This inaugural statement appears to be a manifesto for a thoroughgoing postmodernist literary practice for a prescribed range of objects: southern African literature in oral or written form in whichever language (though the language of the journal is exclusively

English). While this vision appears to have held sway in the first years of the journal, an analysis of the content of the journal indicates a radical change of direction.

The articles published in *Alternation* account for an astounding 11% of the total under review which, with an average of around 25 articles per annum, represents the highest annual output (*s2* shows an average of around 5 articles per annum, and the average for all journals is 10 per annum). The breakdown of type of article (Criticism, General Articles on Literary Objects, Metadiscursive, Thematic and General Articles on Cultural Phenomena) diverges significantly from the overall breakdown (see Appendix, Section 1.5, Table 1). *Alternation* shows a strong tendency to publish Thematic articles (31%) and Metadiscursive articles (29%); articles of Criticism are not dominant (only 30% – the lowest share of this type of article in all the journals, and the only journal in which this is not the main type of content); and there is a moderate tendency to publish General Articles on Literary Objects (10%).

In the Thematic group, articles addressing pedagogical or philological matters together constitute just over 50% of articles, indicating a major preoccupation of this journal. Clearly, *Alternation* functions as an important platform for debates on teaching and language issues. In the Metadiscursive group articles range very widely across subjects and disciplines, and there is no clearly dominating topic or theory. However, articles on cognition theory, linguistics and, to a lesser extent, literary historiography, do constitute strong emphases. General Articles on Literary Objects is a relatively small group, but with 28 articles it is nevertheless substantial: over half the articles in this group focus on South African artefacts, and just under a third focus on Orature, indicating important emphases. Articles such as: 'Dimensions of Change Detection within the Phenomenon of Change Blindness' (Maree 2003); 'Memory, Media

96

and Research: Mnemonic Oral-style, Rythmo-stylistics and the Computer' (Conolly 2002); and 'The Liminal Function of Orality in Development Communication: A Zimbabwean Perspective' (Chinyowa 2002); reflect the astounding diversity.

Within the Criticism group, 56% of articles focus on South African imaginative written objects, 9% on Other African imaginative written objects, and only 7% on Non-African imaginative objects. Taken together, the focus on imaginative artefacts represents 72% of articles of Criticism – a relatively low level, but significantly higher than its closest analogue in the group, *CW*, at 65%. The range of objects selected does not appear to justify the conclusion that *Alternation* is following a Cultural studies agenda. Nevertheless, there is a moderate if disparate array of objects which might fall within this ambit: popular genres (1%) and Others (8% – photo-essays, paintings, comics, historical figures, popular magazines and the like). Objects which one would class rather as belonging to an earlier, literary-historiographical, conception of the 'literary', such as autobiography (9%) and journals / diaries / letters / journalism (8%), have a significant presence. This would appear to be in line with the general intention of the journal to construct a Southern African literary history.

In the 2000s, though, there has been a very significant increase and dominance of Thematic and Metadiscursive articles, combined with a gradual decrease (in the Criticism group) from 1994–2004 away from articles on South African authors. The variety of Metadiscursive articles, many of which hardly touch on issues relating to Southern African literary history, indicate a significant departure, even loss of vision. Significantly, too, the work of very few authors is analysed more than once, and only Alan Paton comes up for scrutiny in more than 2% of focus occasions.

The journal *s2* was launched in 1996 under the auspices of the University of South Africa (UNISA), replacing *Unisa Studies in English*. Due to the relatively short run under review (nine volumes), there is little that can be stated with confidence regarding trends. What sets it apart from the other journals is the *readerly* quality and diversity of its contents. The editorial policy in the inaugural number reads thus:

> The journal places emphasis on theoretical and practical concerns in English studies in southern Africa. Unique southern African approaches to southern African problems are sought. While the dominant style will be of a scholarly nature, the journal will also publish some poetry, as well as other forms of writing such as the interview, essay, review essay, conference report and polemical position. (Anon 1996: inside front cover)

The balancing of theoretical and practical concerns appears to have been realised in the subsequent numbers. The content reflects this in terms of the issues (pedagogical, philological) and style (provocative, unique).

The articles published in *s2* account for only 2% of the total under review. In addition, with an average of around five articles per annum in the period 1996-2004, it shows the lowest annual and overall output of the 11 journals under review. As with *Pretexts* and *UCT*, all results have to be interpreted with particular caution due to low numbers of articles. In a space of 2-3 years, a different picture might emerge from the same type of analysis. Nevertheless, as the above analysis has shown, each journal is in one way or another distinctive, which is mildly surprising considering the fact that many if not most literary academics in South Africa publish across the journals.

The breakdown of type of article (Criticism, General Articles on Literary Objects, Metadiscursive, Thematic and General Articles on Cultural Phenomena) diverges significantly from the overall breakdown (see Appendix, Section 1.5, Table 1). In accordance with the overall picture, the main type of content is articles of Criticism (40%). In all other types, it diverges from the overall pattern: Metadiscursive articles have a strong presence (26%), while Thematic (21%) and General Articles on Cultural Phenomena maintain moderate positions.

In the Metadiscursive group, apart from the fact that articles here are generally informed by contemporary theories of one sort or another, there is no key theory or theme which characterises the group. However, in the Thematic group, articles touching on pedagogical or philological issues almost form the exclusive focus of this group. General Articles on Cultural Phenomena (photos, urban culture, popular music) do not evince a particular pattern or focal point.

Within the Criticism group, 63% of articles focus on South African imaginative written objects, 11% on non-African imaginative objects, and only 4% on Other African imaginative written objects. Taken together, the focus on imaginative artefacts represents 78% of the articles of Criticism – a relatively low level but still high. No objects of orature are analysed. Approximately a fifth of all focus occasions fall to JM Coetzee, but no other author stands out. No specific trend or characteristic is discernible from an analysis of articles on Other objects. Generally speaking, contemporary theories are applied to contemporary authors, predominantly South African and predominantly those producing works of poetry, plays and fictional prose. No discernible chronological developments are apparent (as yet).

IV

The thumbprint of the editors of academic journals on the content is all but imperceptible. As a general rule, one looks in vain for a defining characteristic which is directly attributable to the editor. The conjecture might stand that editors do indeed influence content in multifarious ways, notwithstanding the peer-review process, the generally open platform for articles from contributors of all persuasions, and the right to reply convention. However, evidence of such influence is hard to come by, and harder still to present in anything resembling a compelling argument. Even where one finds a match between the concerns of the editor and the content of the journal, as may be in the case of John Higgins and *Pretexts*, it is not possible to distinguish the intentions of the contributors from the intentions of the editor. This impression is bolstered by the general multivalency of the content of almost all the journals, and there are multiple instances of contributions which almost certainly do not accord with the views or position of the editor. While it may seem artificial, one must distinguish between editorial policy and the editor. Most journals have explicit editorial policies, even if these usually take the form of terse statements in inaugural issues. When comparing type of content published with the founding statements, there is usually a strong correlation between content and editorial policy, growing weaker with the passage of time.

It is a general rule that editorial policies are not renewed, and that editors do not provide their personal opinions on the contents of individual numbers. Prescriptive statements are rare and when made, are singly authored, diminishing their possible representativity in respect of the discipline. Nevertheless, they often are symptomatic of their times and, following the analysis above of the primary developments in the discourse represented by the 11 journals, I would

argue that they constitute unique windows on, or discursive snapshots of, the otherwise abstract description of trends given above.

There are four such snapshots described below, placed in chronological order. The first dates back to 1958 with a remarkable extended editorial in the inaugural issue of the journal *ESA*. The second brings us forward to 1985, where *JLS* announces its particular agenda in respect of contemporary theory and its place in literary studies in South Africa. The third is really a series of editorial interludes played out between 1989 and 1995 in *EAR*. The last instance of a major editorial proclamation is instanced in *Alternation* in its founding number in 1994. While these examples may be emblematic of the literary discourse, they do not themselves represent the discourse of editors: most editors confine their interventions to short, terse statements of policy, or make no statements at all.

ESA provides us with just such a window in a lengthy editorial by Partridge, aptly sub-titled 'English Scholarship: A Transmutation of Species':

A new journal of English studies can be justified only by the purpose it has to serve. The task of 'English Studies in Africa' will be to *serve the English language on the continent*, and to *promote* the study of the *best English literature*, wherever it is written. A great tradition in the hands of a minority group, as the English-speaking people happen to be in Africa, must give tangible evidence of the will of the group to survive. The sponsors of this journal invite other universities in Africa to *co-operate in declaring the aims and vigour of their purpose* … To mobilize and make articulate the ideals for which English culture ... has always been an undertaking beset with peculiar difficulties. The English inheritance has demonstrated, for centuries, its individualism and its desire for

self-determination ... Diffusion of culture carries with it both strength and weakness. There is a *danger*, now, that *rival English-speaking cultures,* evolved in different continents, may press their claims to recognition at the expense of the parent tradition itself. *English is one heritage ...* The hiving-off of satellite English-speaking cultures, with *local dialects and ideologies*, *would be unfortunate* for the amity and understanding in which the richness and diversity of a culture reside ... One of the special objects of 'English Studies in Africa' will be the *improvement of standards and techniques in English education ...*

The sensible scholar ... has ... *avoided unswerving allegiance to Eliot or Richards or Leavis.* The sponsors of this journal hope to allow for the uses of diversity, and to show that the schools of Oxford, Cambridge, London, Harvard and Yale are, in reality, complementary …

[T]he main emphasis in literary studies ... is on the *continuity* of the *spirit of man*, his function as *torchbearer of a stable morality* and acknowledged aesthetic values ... Is there any valid reason why sensibility should be contaminated by theory or principle? Without some scheme of general principles, young intelligences flounder in a subjective morass; critical judgement becomes obscure, whimsical or chaotic ...

The flood of ideas set in motion by the *new critical liberalism* cannot now be contained. It must, therefore, be scrutinized with the utmost vigilance. Literature should not be surrendered to the doctrine-mongers, any more than to the mental and moral or other scientists ... Literature as training of the mind, is a means, not an end; a discipline that enriches, not a substitute for the eternal verities. While learning must ever be grateful for the specialist, the future of English studies would be brighter if a workable *integration of language and literature* could be found ... There is a current impression that the

scientific acumen required for linguistics is alien to the aesthetic and critical gifts needed for the study of literature. The time has come to review this dichotomy ... and encourage the mutual dependence of the two disciplines. (Partridge 1958: 1-8)

Very much a sign of the times, the preoccupation with language issues and standards in English (meaning the Queen's English), is foregrounded. In indirect reference to debates on the undergraduate curriculum, significantly, the need to include language training is justified in terms of maintenance of standards, the integrity of the language, and the special role (by virtue of its minority status and the burden of the cultural inheritance) of English-speaking South Africans as guardians of a tradition.

Partridge is neither of the old school, nor entirely of the new. He would not advocate a wholesale adoption of the Practical Criticism ethos which would see *close reading* of twenty or more texts placed at the heart of the curriculum, if not *become* the curriculum. Neither would he advocate a return to the historiographical approach. He would, though, wish to occupy some of the tertiary territory with philological or language study. He is by no means campaigning against the triumvirate of Richards, Leavis and Eliot, only advocating a mixed curriculum where the future literary critics receive a strong dose of linguistic training in addition to the literary fare.

The Leavisite notion of the solitary literary man as a luminary responsible for representing and preserving both moral and aesthetic values in an age of dissolution, tallies well with the sense here of a literary community besieged. Moreover, these values will derive from the best English literature, *wherever written*; this turns out to be the English Canon, with a smattering of American and continental authors. This is in part because work written in *English* which is not

immediately recognisable as *linguistically* of the exact same ilk as production in England, will fall short of the mark. Hence, a line is drawn in the sand, its coordinates determined by, inter alia, linguistic criteria: objects on this side are potential subjects for analysis, objects on the other side are not.

The kind of explicit programme so remarkably presented by Partridge was not to be seen again for more than two decades. Not until twenty-seven years later, in the Editorial which inaugurates the *JLS*, do we see anything resembling such a clear and bold agenda:

> *JLS* is the first literary-theoretical South African journal devoted to the study of literature ... the journal ... aims at providing a forum to serve the theoretical investigation into the nature and study of literary texts of a variety of origins. Within a South African context emphasis is placed on the literatures of the indigenous languages; within an international context, an attempt is made to accommodate modern and classical languages. The most important sources for discussion in *JLS* will nevertheless be *contemporary*, international and local currents within *literary theory*.
>
> In the first place *JLS* wants to promote the systematic or so-called 'scientific' study of literature in its many forms. Although the emphasis will therefore fall on theoretical, methodological and research matters, 'scientific' is used here in the widest sense of the word. There are obvious differences in connotation between the terms *'literatuurwetenskap'* (science of literature, especially connected to the German 'Literaturwissenschaft') and *literary studies* (broadly connected to the Anglo-American approach to 'criticism'). As the name of the journal indicates [,] we accept that a reconciliation between these two opposing assumptions regarding the study of literature is possible. We even feel that it

is *desirable,* because the extreme of a sterile 'scientific approach' can be just as dangerous to the dynamic study of literature as the other extreme of vague subjectivism. (Anon 1985: 1-2)

As alluded to above, *JLS* was to become the primary conduit through which contemporary literary theories were introduced into English academic literary discourse in South Africa. It is not the mere existence of an extended editorial piece which makes the above statement remarkable. In the context of the type of discourse appearing in *ESA*, *EA*, *UES* and *UCT*, the programme announced here was ground-breaking. The dichotomy presented between a science of literature and literary studies *qua* Anglo-American criticism (New Criticism), might be questioned for a number of reasons, starting with problems of definition.

Nevertheless, in the South African context, it makes consummate sense. The reigning literary-critical orthodoxy from the late 1940s through to the 1980s in South Africa could reasonably be described as informed predominantly by the New Critics, or in any event as strongly formalist. However we wish to understand the 'science of literature', whether as a latter-day incarnation of literary historiography, comparative literary studies or as the application of contemporary theory to reading works of art, such non-formalist approaches stand quite clearly in opposition to the New Critical approach and, particularly, offend the *pedagogical* orthodoxy of the kind of close reading this approach applied.

For this reason, and standing at a pivotal point as it does, the above editorial statement, I believe, is much more than a policy statement: it announced the advent of a new programme for literary studies in South Africa. The following quotation succinctly captures

what appears to me to lie at the heart of the rift in the academy around the mid-1980s:

> So the break from New Criticism (a practice not devoid of theory) and the move into theory proper is marked by a move into linguistics and a break from aesthetics. This *may be why so many critics considered theory detrimental to the reading of literature*, since 'reading' and 'literature' are intertwined not only with aesthetics but with aesthetic *appreciation.* To remove this as a grounding critical consideration was by some accounts *tantamount to the annihilation of reading* as we had known it. (Lentricchia and DuBois 2003: 34, emphasis added)

The tension between literary critics in favour of more formalist approaches, and those in favour of contemporary theory, certainly played itself out on very many levels and in many contexts. At the level of academic discourse, battle lines are rarely drawn as starkly as in a series of interludes prefacing or appending the content of *EAR*. The following exemplary editorial interpolations and exchanges testify to a latent enmity among implacable opponents, and hint at tectonic activity astir in the house of literary discourse. In 1989, the new editor of *EAR*, Ivan Rabinowitz, introduces an editorial section into the journal, and breaking with the tradition of editorial self-effacement, makes the following startling pronouncements:

> This issue of the *Academy Review* confirms that recent work has created fresh perspectives from which traditional attitudes about literary and cultural production may be viewed. If a theme is discernible, it is that the process of analysis and critique continue to *resist reduction into settled orthodoxies. For some*, the materialist transformation and realignment of values in *contemporary literary studies* signals an *alarming*

106

trend ... for *others*, eclecticism in literary studies offers an opportunity to *resist* the assured but mystified 'common sense' of *traditional approaches ...* Many forces are at work in literary and cultural criticism in South Africa, and the quarrels of the critics are likely to remain unresolved. It is part of the purpose of the *Academy Review* to *register the impact of such forces.* (Rabinowitz 1989: iii)

The reference to 'fresh perspectives' refers to the wave of contemporary theories introduced into the discourse in the mid-1980s. Competing camps are distinguished: those for whom the purported changes in values being brought about by the application of such theory is undesirable (an 'alarming trend'), and those for whom it is a positive development. The lack of a common thread in the multifarious approaches is here presented as a virtue: the eclecticism itself is a guarantee against 'reduction into settled orthodoxies' and enabling them to 'resist the … "common sense" of traditional approaches'. In the editorial of the subsequent volume, these points are further underscored, and are worth quotation at length due to the unusually frank presentation of positions and the window on this particular development in the discourse: an ascendant and confident new order in an exchange with an outgoing 'traditional' order:

South African literary culture is no longer the preserve of imported verities and the doctrine of the unchanging human heart. As criticism rids itself of the lies inscribed in its traditional vocabularies, the lies that present themselves as universal truths, it remembers the mendacious consequences of its history and discovers that there is more to literary representation than meets the myopic, colonial eye. Critical discourse, it seems, is losing its self-righteousness and its smugly prescriptive, neoclassical face. Many of the articles in this issue of *Academy Review* are concerned with the

reassessment of established views. They are many-sided and various, yet their shared ground forms a context of reference which *opposes* the wilful assurance of *those who refuse* to contemplate the controversial impact of *theory* and philosophy on critical thought and practice. (Rabinowitz 1990: iii, emphasis added)

The claims made in this statement are unequivocal and strident. The formalists are depicted as 'myopic', 'colonial', 'self-righteous' and 'smug'. Proponents of contemporary literary studies (here, those advocating use of theory in readings of literary objects and militantly anti-formalist) are placed in implacable opposition to 'those who refuse … theory'. The process of instantiation of a new orthodoxy would not go unchallenged. Lionel Abrahams responds caustically in a letter published in *EAR* thus:

As a critic of an unfashionable orientation, I feel insulted and grossly offended on behalf of many writers I admire by the abusiveness of your editorial note in EAR 7. You attribute to an entire generation of your critical forebears 'lies … mendacious consequences … self-righteousness', a 'smugly prescriptive … face', myopia and other ills. When my head has cooled I shall decide whether to comment at more length on the implications of your gauche tirade (this in a less arcane journal than EAR) or to dismiss it as an attempt at undergraduate provocativeness in the form of a departmental fashion note. (Abrahams 1991: 123)

The self-characterisation as 'a critic of an unfashionable orientation', while certainly ironic, is nevertheless indicative of the embattled position of formalists in this period. In addition, while there is some truth in the imputation of fashionableness to the new orthodoxy of non-formalism, contemporary theory would prove

anything but ephemeral. The editor would parry this thrust in the same volume:

> I have been informed that orthodox literary culture in South Africa is still the preserve of imported verities and the doctrine of the unchanging human heart. Practical critics who are proud of their jargon, their 'literary values', and their aversion to something called 'literary theory' are as effusive as ever about the integrity of the free-floating aesthetic text, the transmuting power of art, the finely organized energy of the sympathetic imagination and the way in which art rises above local and transitory problems by transmuting them into finely crafted texture and resonantly universal, timeless structures of language and image ... In short, I have been informed that New Critical mumbo jumbo is all we need to know … Is it all we need to know? (Rabinowitz 1991: iii)

The opposing camps are here depicted as formalist versus non-formalist approaches to literary studies. There is an all but invisible mergence of 'Practical Criticism' with 'New Criticism'. To be fair, for the purposes of the argument these could reasonably function as synonyms. Nevertheless, it behoves us to recall that proponents of the former approach would hardly see their practice as 'transmuting [literary objects] into finely crafted texture and resonantly universal, timeless structures of language and image' or 'free-floating aesthetic text[s]'. This merger of Practical Criticism with New Criticism appears thorough, with the name 'Leavis' coming to stand as a synecdoche for all formalist evil:

> At a time of ideological contention, of radical disagreement and lost tracks, no source of information and experience should be shut out willingly. Stranded late-

Leavisites should reckon as a deficit their lack of interest in contemporary allegories of reading. (Rabinowitz 1992: iii)

Nevertheless, in spite of the confidence in the declarations on the ascendancy of theory, there is a prescient note on the future 'decline' of theory:

Although some critics and academics have continued to indulge in the belated pursuit of post-isms and post-ities, the influence of theory has waned ... This augurs well for the future of literary studies. There is no longer any danger that the business of criticism might be stifled by the posturings of disaffected intellectuals who have tried to draw us away from the ways of feeling, behaving and believing that make up our true cultural inheritance. (Rabinowitz 1993: iii)

Following the rules of register of an editorial (formal, serious, and literal), one might interpret these statements as something of a recantation of a former position in these pronouncements, an admission perhaps of excess, of having gone too far into one direction. It is more likely, however, that these statements are ironic. In 1995, Nigel Bell takes over as editor. His approach and statements give the strongest indication, at this level of the discourse, of the decline in popularity of theory. The pendulum appears to swing back, and the 'universal verities' of the 'critic of unfashionable orientation' return, with the name of Leavis invoked, for the first time in almost two decades, in *support* of a position:

It is our humanity, not our cultural uniqueness, that our university education should emphasise ... To secede, in a sense, from the 'Western' tradition of humane learning is surely, in this country, to impoverish our intellectual resources, and limit the university's capacity to perform its role as 'a centre of

human consciousness: perception, knowledge, judgement and responsibility' (Leavis). (Bell 1996: 2)

Unsurprisingly, then, an attack on theory was soon to follow. In 1997, we have an unprecedented harangue against theory:

Critics of theorists are apt to observe that the alleged opacity and muddle do not appear to disqualify the work of those who traffic in them from serious consideration. On the contrary, these ... tend to enhance professional standing. (Bell 1997: 2)

Lionel Abrahams' indictment of theory as merely a new fashion is echoed in the disparagement of proponents of theory, here accused of expedience, of hopping onto the bandwagon merely to 'enhance professional standing'. Nevertheless, though clearly an opponent of theory, the editor sardonically concedes:

Clearly, though, whatever the perversity, obscurity, or downright foolishness of one piece of theoretical argument or another, theory isn't going to go away, and we must learn to take from it whatever we may find genuinely illuminating in our own critical practice. (Bell 1997: 3)

The analysis of the content of journals and the tendencies in approaches to literary objects, would support the general implication flowing from this statement. To wit, 'theory isn't going to go away' and though metacritical discussions and articles on non-literary objects are increasingly less frequent, the eclectic application of theory in readings of primary literary objects is on the rise. If it is imagined that the 'stranded late-Leavisites' and 'eternal verities' had been put paid to by the new orthodoxy of contemporary literary studies, the confident (and hilarious) tone of the following pronouncement indicates, if

nothing else, and notwithstanding the defeatist posturing, the very *possibility* of raising the question of universals:

> These days, defending 'truth' as one's academic Grail against relativists and other varieties of suspicious hermeneuts is like wandering up to a firing squad during their tea-break and handing out leaflets against gun-ownership and capital punishment ... Our present concern ... is with the possibility of there being truths that are unassailable in any context, any culture; objective truths independent of ritual, ideology or dogma, truths that, if not discoverable in their irreducible essence, are at least apprehensible to honest minds inquisitive and assiduous enough to go in search of them. (Bell 1998: 2)

The agenda (if it is one) is to rescue 'truth' and assail all gainsayers in academia. A quotation from George Steiner followed by a resounding endorsement, is followed by this remarkable indictment:

> Whoever, for whatever motives – *patriotic, political, religious* and even *moral* – allows himself even the slightest manipulation or adjustment of the truth, must be stricken from the roll of scholars. (Bell 1998: 5)

These statements stand in provocative contrast to pronouncements less than a decade earlier by an editor of the same journal:

> As criticism rids itself of the *lies* inscribed in its traditional vocabularies, the *lies* that present themselves as *universal truths*, it remembers the *mendacious consequences* of its history and discovers that there is more to literary representation that meets the myopic, colonial eye. (Rabinowitz 1990: iii)

112

It is not necessary to take up a position in favour of one view or the other in order to recognise the fundamental differences in philosophical orientation: on the one hand, the belief in a transcendent truth in literature which renders secondary any 'patriotic, political, religious and even moral' considerations and, on the other hand, the view that ontological moorings are not merely chimerical, but essentially maleficent ('mendacious consequences' of 'universal truths').

While the unique editorial interpolations between the covers of *EAR* should primarily be read as the opinions of the authors, they appear to be emblematic of wider trends. From the early 1980s to the mid-1990s, the widespread diffusion throughout the discourse and the consequent general ascendancy of contemporary literary theory, is evident in the majority of articles published in this period. If the upsurge of articles of Criticism in the late 1990s and early 2000s can be read, to some extent at least, as flight from theoretical speculation to the re-fetishisation of the book / poem / play, then the general irritation with theory and endorsement of the text *as text* (as opposed to political or moral statement), is captured in the overall tendency of Nigel Bell's statements.

In 1994, though, theory still held considerable purchase, and the onset of a re-fetishisation of the poem, play or prose fiction (if conceded), was not yet in evidence. This was a pivotal year in the history of South Africa: the first democratic elections took place, and change was afoot everywhere. It also saw the launch of a remarkable academic literary journal: *Alternation*. Its specificity lies in the apparent contradiction in its mission which inheres, on the one hand, in an endorsement of the non-formalist literary approaches which had so successfully challenged settled orthodoxy and the Western canon in

late apartheid, and, on the other hand, the construction of a South African canon.

Marxist literary criticism had for a good five decades inveighed first against the Practical Critics and then against the proponents of 'post' theories, and had always championed local production. In the 1940s and 1950s, Marxist critics had implicitly and explicitly argued against the rising orthodoxy of Practical Criticism. In the early 1970s, it emerged as an important oppositional discourse. In the 1980s, the wave of contemporary theories, while not side-lining Marxist discourse, usurped its position as major opposition to the then critical orthodoxy variously referred to as Practical Criticism, 'Leavisite', or New Criticism. In the early 1990s, however, though never a major movement in terms of academic literary discourse, it had lost most of its cachet with the turn of events elsewhere in the Communist world. Its presence is likely to be felt well into the future, but it is unlikely to become the primary critical orthodoxy.

It was not, however, the Marxists who had fundamentally altered the landscape of academic literary discourse. It can be stated without exaggeration that it was contemporary theory which toppled the dominance of the broadly formalist approaches which were applied in most articles between 1958 and the early 1980s. In particular, up until 1994 in any event, the emphasis placed on the patriotic, political, religious and even moral considerations within such non-formalist approaches to reading (as opposed to the formalist emphasis of the primacy of the inherent 'truth' of the text), earned contemporary theory the badges of relevance and credibility. That is, at the launch in 1994 of *Alternation,* contemporary theory was at the crest of its wave of influence. Ironically, the desire to merge this current of discourse with the ever-growing stream of discourse on South African literary production, would crash on epistemological grounds.

Published at a pivotal historical moment, the programme is outlined in exquisitely emblematic terms, providing as it does a striking parable about literary criticism under apartheid (just ended), and presenting the agenda of its antidote, this journal:

> [T]he discourses of colonialism and apartheid have led to the radical 'segmentation of South African literature and literary studies' ... A developing segregationist logic institutionalised the separation of the various languages and literatures of the region, dissolving that earlier rapprochement between Afrikaner and English and reinforcing the marginalisation of the literatures and languages of the black majority. Within the privileged white universities, the dominant ethnic discourses of Afrikaner nationalism and an Anglo-colonial liberalism functioned to reproduce this literary apartheid, and it is therefore unsurprising that an emergent *radical intelligentsia* launched a *political critique* of these *hegemonic ideologies*, which in the case of English Studies, led to a *sudden intensification of interest in South African writing* (both white and black) ... It is nevertheless remarkable that well into the last decade of the twentieth century *an inclusive literary history of southern Africa has yet to be published*. Now that the critical *demolition of oppressive literary paradigms* has been largely *accomplished* ... we need to move 'beyond the fragments' to attempt ... an embracing survey. The CSSALL sees this as its first major research task, but ... points to ... the sheer impossibility of doing so from the angle of a single discipline … As a literary critical movement, 'liberal humanism' (Leavis, New Critics) died decades ago elsewhere in the world, and yet it has ironically been preserved in South Africa by the apartheid regime, which kept liberalism in place in the (white) universities as the appropriate non-radical ethnic ideology of the white English-speaking community. While

many within this discourse imagined themselves to be participating in a radical de-colonization of English Studies by paying serious attention to South African writings, ... such intellectually vacuous incorporationist readings simply reinforced the colonizing ambitions of an Anglo-liberalism. A proper transformation is not only a matter of what (content) we read, but more importantly, how (theory) we read ... What we now need, as South Africa emerges into postcoloniality, is not the perpetuation of literary-critical orthodoxies of either Left (Marxism) or Right (Afrikaner Nationalism, Liberalism), and least of all some romantic-organicist construction of an 'essential' national identity, but a vibrant theoretical experimentalism impatient with all dogmatisms … The title of this journal – Alternation – is of course open to a variety of interpretations and contains many theoretical echoes. I will conclude by drawing attention to two signifieds: the other nation – our democratic, non-racial and non-sexist postcoloniality – positions our re-readings of this region's literary history; but we also need to be alive to the limits of such a discourse of nationalism, of what is 'other' to the national, of the irreducible heterogeneity of our common humanity. The Alternation between these two meanings provides something of a direction and a warning to future studies. (Wade 1994: 1-7, emphasis added)

The domination of the literatures of only two of the languages of South Africa, and the subjection, inter alia, of the literatures of the other nine official languages, is ascribed first and foremost to the dual evils of apartheid and Anglo-Colonial liberalism. Under 'liberalism' the author understands 'colonialism', 'Leavis', 'Practical Criticism', 'New Criticism', or any formalist approach to literature. Marxist criticism of the English department (the 'political critique' of 'hegemonic ideologies' by the 'radical intelligentsia') in the 1970s is

116

credited with resulting in a 'sudden intensification of interest in South African writing', though (it is implied) unsuccessfully, as it evidently did not result in an 'inclusive literary history of Southern Africa'. Contemporary theory of the 1980s gets a much better scorecard: it is credited with the 'critical demolition of oppressive literary paradigms' which, on this sanguine assessment, 'has been largely accomplished'. If Marxism is on the left, and liberalism (together with apartheid) is on the right, then it follows that contemporary 'post' theories are at the centre.

These characterisations verge on becoming caricatures. On some level, one has to accept the rhetorical contingency which necessitates such simplification, and taking cognisance of this, interpret the passage generously and avoid lapsing into parody. Ten years after its founding, though much ground has been covered, the goal of an *inclusive literary history of Southern Africa* remains elusive. Debate in *Alternation* continues to have a highly theoretical bias and tends towards the surveys or metacritical debates as opposed to criticism of imaginative work *of any form.* Ironically, however, and in spite of its declared aims, it is not *Alternation* which blazes a trail for South African literature: as a general trend among *all other* academic journals since 1994, academic attention to South African literary production is on the rise.

Chapter 3. The Chosen Few: Themes Exercising the Academy

In this chapter, I will be examining seven themes characterising aspects of the discourse and shedding light on elements of the practice of the discipline, even while they do not and can never be presented as being *identical* with the discipline of English studies: their *representative* value is limited. These themes are: the trope of the 'Essa', pedagogy, oral art, cultural studies, academic freedom, and state-sponsored censorship. What literary academics considered pertinent topics to be discussed in *their own forums*, adumbrates (if only vaguely, but still) certain contours of the discipline in South Africa. Hence, this chapter, concerned only with a circumscribed field of *thematic articles*, seeks to establish some of the lineaments of the productive economy of English studies.

The admittedly oblique question I am posing here is whether or not certain debates conducted by literary academics *in academic articles* point to the existence or otherwise of procedures for the control and production of statements within the discipline. Beginning with exclusionary procedures, most pertinent are prohibitions not on what can and cannot be said, but the domain of objects about which things can be said within the bounds of the discipline.

My analysis in Chapter 2 above indicates the scope of primary texts forming the objects of analyses of articles falling in the Criticism group. In spite of the initial nebulous appearance of the focus or areas of focus of the journals, there are distinct and de-limitable patterns regarding the ambits of these areas. In the Thematic group, it is far less clear what the possible rules or principles of selection of topics could be. For example, an analysis of academic discourse in the 1950s and 1960s appears to point to a silence on things political, a taboo on even

mentioning the current political context whether in discussions on literary artefacts or in general debates on the discipline and, surprisingly, even in debates on pedagogy, an electrically politicised topic in South Africa.

Such *exclusionary* procedures pertain primarily, or perhaps simply most obviously, to the fixing of the terrain of appropriate primary objects, a site of much contestation. The boundaries of the discipline, almost always barely visible, partially rise to view in the analysis of discussions on oral art and the debates on cultural studies. Clearly, these objects present a challenge to the academy, as their status as proper disciplinary objects is not settled.

In terms of internal procedures for control and production of discourse, the articles falling into the Thematic group appear free of the commentary principle, that is, the rule of discourse requiring the distinction between primary and secondary discourse as objects of discussion. When embarking on discussions on topics considered to be pertinent, literary academics have (relative to discourse on primary texts) freedom to stray wide of the traditional domain of objects of the discipline, or in any event, such discourse is not anchored to the disciplinary objects.

It follows too, that the author principle, as an organising and interpretive imperative, is not operative in this section of the discourse either. This is so because, in a sense, the themes are 'un-authored', or not routinely attached to a specific individual, although factions take up definable positions within discussions.

There is some complexity with regard to the disciplinary principle. Though the disciplinary and author principles are at times operative in the general academic literary discourse (particularly in secondary discourse on primary objects), the disciplinary principle is

119

opposed to the commentary principle in so far as it sets the rules for production of the not-already-said, and opposed to the author principle in so far as the discipline is defined as an anonymous system of procedures over a domain of objects of its own designation (that is, it is not bound by the author principle either in organisation of its objects, or in its rules of interpretation).

Is the disciplinary principle not irrelevant in this secondary section of the discourse, as the thematic debates (such as those on pedagogy or philology) were not concerned with the ostensible objects of the discipline (usually primary canonical texts)? Debates about censorship, for example, certainly do not constitute propositions directly implicating the discipline. Does it follow that there were or are no limits on the kinds of topics which could be presented for discussion at the highest level of discourse of the discipline (the academic forums)? Are there no internal procedures for maintaining disciplinary boundaries when it comes to thematic debates?

Although the resources on which academics could draw for producing discourse is *infinite* or in any event limited only to what can be said in language, the kite strings linking the potentially unwieldy or *undisciplined* debates to the root base of the discipline are adumbrated nowhere else more clearly than in their *ostensible* relevance to the primary concerns of the discipline, generally (and in view of the discipline for the greater part of the period covered), the *boundary of the university*. In other words, a tenuous, and certainly changing, principle of *relevance* to the discipline as they concern practitioners within the walls of tertiary institutions and as they touch on what is regarded as pertinent to the practice of English studies.

The potential to discuss an infinite range of topics, in those sections of the discourse where the discourse is dislodged from its supposed domain of objects, is not realised. Why this is the case may

be gleaned in examining the extant practice, where the archive may reveal some outline of the proscriptions on appropriate topics, and what may be said about them.

The restrictive systems comprising rules for control over production of discourse relating to the *speaking subject* are sometimes overt, sometimes covert. There are clusters of rules pertaining to processes of authorisation of individuals who may speak on behalf of the discipline. These include rules on conduct, ethics, and, primarily, the important matter of where and when (the appropriate forums) and who may speak. For example, disciplines with tertiary institutional status have purchased that status by adhering to a strict set of rules on procedures for awarding membership to the specific society of discourse (in this case, the community of literary academics).

Developments with regard to interdisciplinary studies have perhaps blurred the lines dividing societies of discourse which can be seen in the sharing by disciplines of their forums (conferences, academic journals, with literary academics publishing in history journals, anthropologists publishing in academic literary journals and so on), and in interdisciplinary studies. Nevertheless, in particular with regard to the accreditation rules for universities as such, and the awarding of degrees, primarily post-graduate degrees, there are usually minimum entry requirements for participation as a speaking subject in the named forums, regardless of the discipline.

There are rare exceptions. In the case of academic literary journals, 'important' writers of primary texts, such as Nadine Gordimer or Miriam Tlali, whatever their academic credentials, have been allowed to participate in the academic forums in their capacity as literary luminaries. Such exceptions confirm the general rule, though, that an academic degree, preferably a literary one, is required to enter into the debate at tertiary level.

Doctrinal aspects, that is, in this instance and using the Foulcauldian understanding of restrictive systems of a doctrinal nature, have arisen where validity of statements has been questioned on the grounds of social position, class, race, gender or nationality of the speaking subject. There are some indications that certain doctrinal principles have been invoked, implicitly or otherwise, as a rhetorical strategy to debunk arguments of opponents, that is, to dismiss statements as 'untrue' at least partly in reliance on a purported doctrinal alliance. This is not an altogether surprising development, given the history of South Africa, though its admission runs counter to most academic epistemologies. This will be discussed in the first section below.

I

Perhaps one of the most inscrutable of tropes to make a recurring appearance in English academic literary discourse has been the 'Wessa' – White English Speaking South African, or alternatively and equivalently, the 'Essa' (hereafter 'Essa'). The term has been mobilised alternately to positively characterise a section of the English-speaking population (and by direct implication certain of their representatives among the literary academics), or to call the statements of purported representatives of this class into question on the basis of a supposed *affiliation*, by implication, to a certain set of beliefs (doctrine), imputed to this class. In what follows, I will first outline in greater depth my interpretation of the Foucauldian notion of doctrinal groups and how they function within discourse. (I will be referring to the 'Essa doctrine' prior to explaining the sets of beliefs which appear to me to be imputed to this group). Then I will move into a discussion of the term Essa itself, ending with examples of the application of this trope in South African literary discourse.

In certain instances, the mode in which the term Essa has been mobilised resembles, in some respects, the functioning of a doctrine and the implied existence of a doctrinal group. A certain set of beliefs and body of principles, that is, a doctrine, has been imputed to those purportedly belonging to this group. Foucault describes a doctrinal group as formed through allegiance to 'one and the same discursive ensemble' (1971: 62-63). Whether through self-description, or more commonly, through imputation, it has been asserted that a certain section of the white English population is beholden to the Essa doctrine. A doctrinal group is further defined by Foucault as a non-formal type of grouping which may have any number of adherents or members. One can join or leave the group and it is therefore, in a sense, a 'virtual' group, not having fixed boundaries. There are no

entry requirements – one need not even be aware that one holds to the doctrine: it may be imputed to you on the basis of a perceived concord between your statements and the doctrine. One signals one's adherence through making statements which conform to the purported jointly held doctrines. 'False' statements are those statements which contradict the doctrines and constitute a form of heresy. One is excluded from the doctrinal group on the basis of one's 'false' statements.

Such a grouping contrasts with societies of discourse, such as that of literary academics, where membership is not questioned in the event of an errant or non-conforming statement. The most serious consequence for literary academics who make statements which are not regarded as being 'in the true' in terms of the discipline, is for their speech to be ignored. Once a member of the literary academy, one's statements cannot in the main be used to expel you. By contrast, in doctrinal groups, it is the statements themselves which determine membership of the group or not. One could counter, of course, by saying that in point of fact, all disciplines hold to a certain set of truths and each discipline has procedures for establishing concord of statements with the existing orthodoxy. Foucault expands on the definition of doctrinal groups thus:

> In appearance, the only prerequisite [for membership of a doctrinal group] is the recognition of the same truths and acceptance of a certain rule of (more or less flexible) conformity with the validated discourses. If doctrines were nothing more than this, they would not be so very different from scientific disciplines, and the discursive control would apply only to the form or the content of the statement, not to the speaking subject. But doctrinal allegiance puts in question both the statement and the speaking subject, the one by the other … Doctrine binds individuals to certain types of

enunciation and consequently forbids them all others. (Foucault 1971: 62)

A discipline as such does encompass a set of methods and a corpus of propositions held to be true and which define it. That is, both doctrines and disciplines exclude certain statements as not belonging to it due to non-adherence with propositions held to be central. What distinguishes a discipline, however, is that the status of the speaking subject is not called into question in the event of an errant or non-conforming statement. It is the statement which will be excluded, not the individual who makes it. In the case of doctrines, however, both the statement and the speaking subject are implicated in the event of a non-conforming statement. This would seem to follow from the fact of membership depending on this allegiance: the speaking subject can be debarred from (virtual) membership in the event of non-allegiance to the doctrinal ensemble, or set of beliefs.

It might therefore seem that, as a procedure for controlling or delimiting discourse, it is not meaningful to speak about doctrinal groups in the literary academy. However, if a doctrine is a 'manifestation and instrument of a prior adherence to a class, a social status, a race, a nationality, an interest, a revolt, a resistance or an acceptance,' (Foucault 1971: 64) and if the jointly held discursive ensemble need not necessarily be consciously held, but implicit, it might be possible to conjecture the existence of such groups, even within the literary academy.

In the case of what I will refer to as the Essa doctrine, academics have accused each other of just such allegiances, and have called the propositions of fellow academics into question indirectly: through the imputing to the speaking subject of such a prior allegiance. In this way, a certain short-circuiting of discourse takes place or is in any event attempted. By this I mean that, instead of confronting or

taking issue with the actual propositions made in an academic article, the propositions are dismissed or brought into question on the basis of the speaking subject's purported allegiance to a particular group (race, nationality, social status, class, interest group).

Essa is not an innocent or mere descriptive category, but one carrying considerable ideological baggage. Identifying oneself or someone else as an Essa is to be aligned with a certain set of 'common' values, affiliations, and loyalties (Banning 1989). To indicate statements as issuing from an Essa is by that act to link the interpretation of the statements with the status of a speaking subject. It thus potentially functions as an invalidation or validation mechanism, and potentially as a restrictive system exercised over statements made in the name of the discipline. Historically, in literary academic discourse in South Africa, there are a number of surrogates with the same function, namely: liberal, Christian, and conservative. Using these labels to describe the speech of a literary academic generally has the same effect: to highlight the status of the speaking subject in relation to, and important for, the interpretation of the speech.

When any one of the labels 'Essa', 'liberal', 'Christian', or 'conservative' is attached to a non-white speaker, it is invariably negative, and tantamount to calling all statements of that individual into question on the basis of an implied bad faith: *batting for the wrong side*. When attached to a white speaker, it may be positive or negative, depending on the tendency of its application. This is to say, the Essa is impliedly white, and those non-whites adhering to Essa doctrines are racially disloyal. However, not all white people are Essas. In an article containing negative representations of Essas, conservatives, or (white) liberals, the white academics Kelwyn Sole and Peter Horn are clearly excluded from these designations, while Stephen Watson and Guy Butler are clearly included (Narismulu 1998). The label 'liberal' is also attached to the non-white writer,

126

Richard Rive, though, and while the author is not in sympathy with liberals, pains are taken *not* to characterise this particular academic and writer in too negative terms, although Njabulo Ndebele is depicted favourably as 'left of Rive' (Narismulu 1998: 197).

Regarded positively, and at the extreme end of representations, the Essa inhabits a non-nationalist and hence relatively 'objective' position, lodged between an aggressive Afrikaner nationalism at one pole, and an African nationalism at the other pole, with both possessing opposing and contradictory desires and designs. In this position, the requirement to play the role of arbiter or referee is a socio-historical imperative. The referee must ensure respect for 'liberal' values, namely: individualism, human rights, private property, rule of law, non-violence and fair play, in political as well as cultural spheres. Additionally, due to the special position of English as a world language, the minority native-speakers of the language in South Africa (in the academy) carry the particular burden of ensuring continued intelligibility, guaranteeing a common linguistic base for communication and, by inference, social harmony. English cultural artefacts are implicitly presumed to be infused with such values but are, in any event, exemplary of the best use of the language and therefore indispensable as benchmarks for English language usage. Local varieties of English are to be tolerated, but should not endanger intelligibility (that is, should not depart significantly from the norm); local cultural artefacts are to be given a degree of importance, but always in relation and never to the exclusion of the 'mother' tongue or its cultural artefacts, the English canon (Alexander 1997; Butler 1960, 1970a, 1970b, 1985, 1991; Enslin 1997; Foley 1991, 1992, 1993, 1997; Knowles-Williams 1971; O'Dowd 1989; Rive 1983; and Wright 2001).

One must note that the Essa 'liberal' connotes a distinctly *monoculturalist* agenda; and in the South African context is opposed to

127

Marxism and contemporary literary theories. This becomes clear when comparing the use of the word 'liberal' in an American context. Elizabeth Fox-Genovese is able to point to the 'liberal' who 'bears a heavy responsibility for multiculturalism's conquest and occupation of the curriculum' (1999: 56), that is, quite the opposite use of the term.[24] The South African political analogue to the American 'liberal' is the 'progressive'; in literary studies, the champions of a multiculturalist agenda could generally be found among the proponents of contemporary theories, such as postcolonialism, poststructuralism, and feminism. In addition, Marxist critics in South Africa, such as Kelwyn Sole and Nicholas Visser, have generally been proponents of widening the curricula. 'Liberals' have been ascribed the exact opposite position, that is, those who stand for the maintenance at the core of the curriculum of a distinctly English canon.[25] The main proponent of the positive role of the Essa has been Guy Butler, with Andrew Foley a more recent defender of the cultural role of the 'white liberal' (Foley 1991, 1993).

Paul Rich has recently defended the role of the Essa as, in a sense, the *keeper of the (liberal) faith* during apartheid, and he reads the instantiation of a liberal democracy as vindication of Essa values: 'they acted as a small white humanitarian conscience during the dark era of white racial oppression of the majority in South Africa' (1997: 15). Confirming the imputation of this role to white primarily English speakers, he avers:

> [I]t is unlikely that liberals as such will have the same
> identity that they had a generation ago at the height of
> apartheid domination … [T]hey face the prospect of gaining

---

[24] For use of the term 'progressive' by a South African academic in generally the same sense in which the American academic Fox-Genevese uses the term 'liberal' see Visser 1990: 74.

[25] Kissack has used the term 'liberal' to describe those in favour of multiculturalism, this time in discussions of the new curriculum in South Africa (2001), though such use appears anomalous.

greater numbers of black adherents and the disconnection of
liberalism as a political creed from its historic colonial roots.
(Rich 1997: 17)

The correctness or otherwise of this statement is not at issue
here. It is not my purpose here to defend either the positive or the
negative representations of the Essa. What the discourse by defenders
and, especially, detractors of a supposed Essa creed shows, is the
formation (for rhetorical purposes) of a particular doctrine which
implicates the speaking subject and his or her statements.

The clarity of the main tenets of the creed and open defences
by adherents, together with the failure of liberal politics exemplified
by the liquidation of the South African Liberal Party in 1968 (Rich
1997: 1), rendered it a fairly easy target for detractors. Mike
Kirkwood's coinage of the term 'Butlerism' (1976) to describe and
denounce the creed of the effete and apolitical 'liberal' academic,
became an effective rhetorical strategy, functioning as a short-cut for
debunking of the intellectual output of speaking subjects to which this
term, or its various analogues (Essa, liberal, conservative, Christian),
could be made to stick. As Isabel Hofmeyr succinctly puts it:

[I]n terms of liberal historiography, English South
African ideologues ... have seen culture in a peculiar way.
Culture ... becomes a ... task of spreading elitist and highly
evaluative assumptions with strong Eurocentric overtones. It is
precisely these attitudes which have gone into the formation of
a selective South African literary tradition – a tradition based
on elitist, evaluative and often racially exclusive assumptions,
which combine to celebrate those writers which mesh in
comfortably with this worldview. I find it no coincidence that
writers for example, like Paton and Schreiner, both orthodox

liberals, should be remembered as the 'greatest' or most well known South African authors. (Hofmeyr 1979a: 60)

Whatever the merits of Kirkwood's or Hofmeyr's analyses, the negative characterisations of Guy Butler and seemingly, by inference, the entire literary academy other than Marxist critics, as English-speaking white liberal ideologues, amounts to the inference of an allegiance to a particular doctrine which, *ipso facto*, renders all the affected speaking subjects and all statements they have ever made profoundly suspect. Such opposition could be regarded as legitimate, recalling that a discipline as such encompasses sets of methods and a corpus of propositions held to be true and which define it and that, within disciplines, such methods and propositions are scrutinised as a matter of course and sometimes, as in the foregoing case, are radically called into question.

Are Kirkwood and Hofmeyr's assertions simply a challenge to the reigning orthodoxy of the discipline? Indeed they are. However, recalling too that what distinguishes a discipline from a doctrine is that the status of the speaking subject is not called into question in the event of errant or non-conforming statements, the tendency of the attack points to the possibility of the argument constituting much more than a mere challenge to a supposed position. In the proposition of an Essa doctrine we have, it would seem to me, something far more specious than the straightforward proposition of alternative methods and propositions. What we see here and elsewhere is the calling of the speaking subject into question: not a mere debunking of a particular view, but an attempted dismissal of all statements from further consideration by subjects who show allegiance to a supposed Essa doctrine.

Just as 'liberal' academics such as Butler could be dismissed, so too could 'liberal' fiction. In 1979, Robert Green could boldly state:

130

'There is now no place for "liberalism" in South Africa; it is a bankrupt ideology' (53), concluding that Nadine Gordimer's *A World of Strangers* is a failed novel, though it is redeemed (merely) as a valuable social record of liberalism. Stephen Watson in 1982 could not be as sanguine in his reassessment of *Cry, the Beloved Country* which, in his view, 'fails both as fiction and as social document' (43).

Literary artefacts which found the label 'white liberal realism' stuck to them, would be dismissed as *passé* (Rich 1985: 78). The liberal as easy target or chief whipping boy can further be seen in the denunciation of Athol Fugard by Nicholas Visser. Here, apart from what Visser believes are the 'liberal' failings in the text itself, we find an indictment of Fugard through the imputation of the Essa creed to the approving audience:

> Standing ovations are customarily directed toward playwrights and are usually reserved for opening nights. Subsequent standing ovations, if there are any, are typically directed toward the actors. Neither convention accounts for the impassioned standing ovations that nightly accompanied the first South African runs of *My Children! My Africa!* In a curious way these ovations were directed towards the audience itself: those applauding so enthusiastically were responding to what they saw to be an *affirmation of their own social and political positions and values*'. (Visser 1993: 486, emphasis added)

What is profoundly salient here is the manner in which the discourse of the speaking subject (the author of the play) is brought into question on the basis of its approval by a group purportedly subscribing to what Visser makes clear is the Essa doctrine. An indictment such as this is far-reaching in its implications for both the interpretation of the text as well as the author, since these are rendered

suspect by inference to both of questionable *positions and values*. This audience is unquestionably represented as liberal English-speaking South African, and allegiance to it constitutes nothing less than being on the wrong side of history:

> When the definitive social history of South Africa in the 1980s comes to be written, one of the questions that will have to be answered will be how it came about that *so many English-speaking white* South African*s were induced ...* into *unquestioning acceptance* [of] the *many excesses of Afrikaner Nationalism.* (Maughan-Brown 1987: 53, emphasis added)

Hence, Essas shared not only a responsibility for the social situation of most South Africans, they were directly complicit in the sustaining of it. Whether this is factually correct, oversimplification, nonsense or straightforward mystification is irrelevant to my specific aim: my interest here lies in the apparent efficacy (or in any event the belief in the legitimacy of the attempt) to dismiss speech of certain speaking subjects as, in a sense, beyond the pale *because of an imputed doctrinal allegiance*.

A more recent example of the mobilisation of the Essa trope to dismiss the discourse of certain literary academics can be found in Priya Narismulu's article on 'resistance art' (1998). Interestingly, the advent of democracy and embracing of what is termed 'liberal ideology', particularly in the political sphere, seemingly renders the use of the term 'liberal', as a term of abuse, problematic. Narismulu's characterisation of the Essa or liberal dovetails neatly with the negative description above; however, the writer coins the term 'conservative liberal' to recoup the purchase of its historically pejorative connotations. An additional reason for the coinage appears to be the difficulty in characterising non-white 'liberal' literary academics such as Richard Rive or Njabulo Ndebele, whom the author

strives to cast in a positive light while denigrating white academics through an affixing to them of the labels Essa and 'conservative' liberal. Stephen Watson, placed here in the company of purported Essa compatriots such as Chapman, Ullyatt and Livingstone, is thus labelled, and his discourse thereby summarily dismissed. Watson's own writing on 'liberalism' evinces a decidedly dim view of the 'liberal tradition'. Writing in 1983, this literary academic takes the following position on key Essa figures:

> [O]n the evidence of recently published volumes by poets like Guy Butler, Chris Mann, Christopher Hope and others, it would appear that the liberal tradition is still flourishing today – and with what I consider to be the same disastrous consequences for poetry. (Watson 1983: 13)

The Essa academics are represented as of a piece, and no consideration is made for differences of view *between* or *among* the individuals implied to subscribe to the doctrine or, for that matter, the relative merit of statements made by the same individual. Narismulu employs the rhetorical strategy of imputing race and class allegiance (white bourgeoisie) to dismiss the (white) critics of so-called 'protest literature'.

> [The] moral right [to judge protest poetry] was simply assumed by *some critics* who reproduced the restless and alienated character of western poets and other artists … This is evident in the critical work of the most prominent *representatives of this tradition* … Lionel Abrahams and Stephen Watson … [in this text] focus will be on Stephen Watson who, in the mid-to-late 1980s, exemplified the *dominant liberal position* on South African poetry … Watson's problem is located in his *own marginality* … Watson responds to his own *cultural and political alienation* from the majority

133

of South Africans … Watson's comment reveals the fears that drove the neo-*colonial coterie* to undermine the work being produced … Watson's proprietorial attempts to control discursive space closely resembles the invective of *reactionary minorities* who believed that their privileges were unfairly threatened by the impending socio-political shifts. Born just after the Bantu Education Act (1953) took effect on his black contemporaries, Watson demonstrates little grasp of its impact. (Narismulu 1998: 201-204, emphasis added)

It may be reasonably countered that the above citation, in its tendentiousness, is not generally representative of most articles published in academic journals, and this I readily grant. There are many more examples of articles with more balanced and nuanced discussions of views on local art. What is evident is the mobilisation of the label 'conservative (white) liberal' in an attempt to dismiss the statements *and* the literary academic. The use by Chapman of the term 'Soweto Poets' is implied to have been a purely expedient use of an 'internationally-recognisable name' and inaccurate due to the fact that only one of the poets in the publication by Chapman carrying this title was in fact from Soweto (Narismula 1998: 195). Be this as it may, the explanation for this is given as follows:

> … Chapman, Leveson and Paton's *group interest* seems to *prevent them* from *accounting for* the impact of *other* cultural *traditions* in their construction of the development of South African poetry. The statements of Leveson and Paton and Chapman suggest that they could only imagine their readership to be *conservative liberal white English-speaking* South African*s like themselves.* (Narismulu 1998: 195, emphasis added)

Thus, through the imputing to the speaking subject of such a prior allegiance, a certain short-circuiting of discourse takes place or is in any event attempted. Instead of confronting or taking issue with the actual propositions made by the academic, the propositions are dismissed or brought into question on the basis of the speaking subject's purported allegiance to a particular group (race, nationality, social status, class, interest group). It is rather more than *ad hominem*: it is the (attempted) silencing of the speech, rendering it inadmissible or of no account, of the speaking subject through dismissal of all his or her statements as irredeemably enthralled to a discredited doctrine.

II

If the critics are right in saying that the educational policy for non-Europeans should 'in no respect' differ from that of Europeans, are the restrictions by means of which the European minority entrench themselves against the non-European majority to be abolished? Must the Natives, just as rapidly as the European taxpayers can afford, be trained as clerks, typists, attorneys, teachers, etc. simply to be left like that although there are no posts for them to fill? (Eyssen 1953: 4070)

The above citation, drawn from a speech on the *Bantu Education Act* delivered in September 1953, succinctly elucidates, albeit obliquely, the ineluctability of the political, social and economic implications of education policy. The machinery which develops and implements such policy, sets the general conditions of possibility of a pedagogical practice. The mundane function of the English department has historically been to turn out graduates sufficiently proficient in English to fill a wide number of posts for which this form of education (the degree in English) is ostensibly suited, such as teaching, journalism, civil service, editing, advertising or other posts where proficiency in the English language is considered imperative. It is unsurprising, then, that discussions relating to pedagogy have been a major and constant theme in academic journals from inception through to the present day.

There is a wide range of potential issues which fall under the general rubric of 'pedagogy'. Over time, the approaches to this theme, the areas of emphasis, and the interpretations of problem issues, reveal marked differences in approach. I will endeavour, in what follows, to outline the changes in approach which appear to me to be

characteristic of the discourse and which characterise the discipline, in respect of this topic at a certain point, or over a certain period, of time. It is important to note that this is by no means an attempt to describe the history of pedagogy in the English department, nor a general discussion of education policy. It is the *academic discourse* I seek to characterise, and thereby the discipline, not the English department and pedagogical practice as such, nor (in any detail) the extant political context.

In the main, there is a marked detachment from politics in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s in academic articles. Massive changes in the teaching landscape brought about by apartheid policy and in particular the *Bantu Education Act* and its subsequent amendments are not remarked upon in discussions of pedagogy in these forums. From the early 1980s onwards, this changes dramatically, and analyses relating to pedagogy tend to implicate government policy and action. Detailed examples will be given below to illustrate this trend. For now, by way of illustrating the general attitude (in respect of the academy), I will present briefly a few quotations.

WH Gardner's report *The Teaching of English through Literature,* based on findings of a study tour conducted in England and Europe between January 21 and June 25 1953 (funded by the Department of Education and published in 1957, that is, during a period of dramatic change in education policy in South Africa) is highly emblematic of the emphases of the academy regarding pedagogy during this period. After stating that tertiary education would be improved by admitting only those of the 'highest natural ability', Gardner remarks that:

> Apart from the *big question* of non-European education (which I cannot broach now) there are still many Europeans who, though desirous and worthy of university education, are

excluded by *lack of means.* (Gardner 1957: 165-166, emphasis added)

One might be tempted to impute chauvinist or even racist views to authors of statements such as these, due to what may appear to be their tendentious nature. However, I feel the drawing of such easy inferences would be hasty and even inaccurate. Of course, literary academics being first and foremost members of the general body politic are just as likely as any other social grouping to contain representatives from across the political spectrum. However, what the above citation succinctly illustrates is three of the main concerns of Gardner's report which are, judging from reviews of the report by academics and the content of articles on pedagogy, highly representative of the general concerns: standards of education, English language use, and financing of education (funding of infrastructure, tuition, and resources).

The reference made to non-European education is striking. This 'big question' is not addressed in this report or in academic discussions on pedagogy, and discussion of education policy is generally avoided. The causes of poor standards in education are never traced to the politicians. It would appear that either the forum of the academic journal was not considered an appropriate platform for discussions of government policy, or that literary academics did not see the analysis of such contextual factors as falling within their *brief* as academics. On balance, the latter interpretation appears more likely. With regard to policy, a reviewer of the report in *English Studies in Africa* endorses the views presented, and emphasises the following recommendations:

Professor Gardner suggests that the Union government's department of Education can *best help* by encouraging *individual initiative and experiment* ... It is

suggested that faculties deserve more liberal *financial support*, as a means of *delivering them from* dependence on a large number of *students of poor quality ...* [He] emphasizes the importance of beautiful surroundings, and expresses the hope that more *money will be made available* for the improvement and upkeep of university buildings. (Lloyd 1958: 224, emphasis added)

Hence, the academy is fettered in achieving its pedagogical aims not by the politicians nor by poor policy, but by insufficient funding and 'students of poor quality'. If not unreasonably, then perhaps unseasonably, literary academics wished to focus on the tasks assigned to them. The academy does not appear to be, or does not represent itself to be, otherwise threatened. As Gardner succinctly states, 'if universities are to fulfil to the utmost their proper functions, they must continue to enjoy their *present freedom and autonomy* in all academic matters' (Gardner 1957: 165).

The matter of academic freedom and censorship will be returned to below, where it appears that, indeed, during this period the academy enjoyed a very wide degree of academic freedom and in the main did not cross swords with the censor regarding its choice of literary objects. In any event, judging from discussions in the journals on pedagogy, as far as the content of the curriculum, methods of teaching or tools of analysis were concerned, the literary academic had to contend with other literary academics, not politicians.

In a certain sense there is a paradox in the inversion which took place in the late 1980s and early 1990s: as the country moved towards democracy and the general populace looked forward to enjoyment of untold freedoms, literary academics began to feel previously unknown pressures with regard to, inter alia, the Africanisation of the curriculum. When external pressures (public policy, private sector,

social) began to be felt intimately, that is, in the literary academic's backyard (literary objects, teaching methods, even tools of analysis), we see the literary academic reacting to these external influences in discussions of pedagogy in the academic journals.

In the period roughly between the mid-1950s to the end of the 1970s, in terms of pedagogy, academic literary attention is paid to a wide range of issues, though it generally focuses on content of curricula or teaching methods and tools. In this period, debates on the curricula will generally turn on the balance of language and literature training (that is, how much of the English studies curriculum should be dedicated to language studies and how much to literature) (Gardner 1957), and on whether or to what degree literary artefacts produced locally should be prescribed reading in a curriculum dominated by the traditional English canon (Durrant 1959).

Debates on teaching methods and tools will tend in this period (mid-1950s-1970s) to focus on examination techniques, lecture versus tutorial, and the value of essay writing versus textual response. Very generally, two camps are discernible: 'Hist. Lit' advocates and the 'Practical critics'. The former group were by no means proponents of the dull 'second-hand' study of literature (literary histories), philology or literary biography, though they saw elements of value in the old Oxford curriculum. They endorsed the emphasis on studying contemporary work and the Practical Criticism 'close' reading approach (with its emphasis on textual-based examination technique, and predisposition towards the tutorial), yet felt that some training in the history of the English language, philology or linguistics and in literary history (with its emphasis on essay-based examination technique, and predisposition towards the lecture) were valuable and should to some extent be retained. On the other hand, the 'Practical critics' such as Geoffrey Durrant would, on the extreme end of the spectrum of opinion, advocate the teaching of English entirely through

literature, and through primary works, not through 'second-hand' accounts (Bennet 1958; Butler 1960, 1970a; Durrant 1947, 1958; Gardner 1957; Hennelly 1958).

AC Partridge conceives the academic journal he edits and co-launches in 1958, *ESA,* as catering both for the literary academic at university level, and for teachers of English at secondary or high school level as a resource (Partridge and Birley 1964). *UES* is launched in 1963 and begins to take form, initially as a bulletin, later as a journal, its content provided by academics, but aimed, likewise, at a dual audience, literary academics and students.[26] Articles on examinations argue in favour of scrutiny-of-passage type questions and against essay-type questions (Durrant 1958). LT Bennet expresses general agreement with this position, but nevertheless argues in favour of retaining the essay-type question as he feels that some contextualisation of the literary artefact is necessary; the essay-type question is seen as favouring historiographical analysis (Bennet 1958).

AD Hall takes issue with what he interprets as the inherent aesthetic contained in the scrutiny-of-passage approach, and his is a rather lonely protest against the Practical Critical approach in teaching and examination (1958). In a discussion on appropriate approaches for teaching literature at secondary schools, we find an endorsement of treating the literary object independently 'to avoid the danger of investing literature with associations that in some way hinder the student from reaching a book's deeper meaning' (Hennelly 1958).

A Lloyd endorses the general compromise reached by most English departments of the day, to incorporate the Practical Criticism or 'close' (deep and direct) study of a select list of exemplary texts,

---

[26] For example, a spate of articles in the 60s addressed to students focusing on practical criticism, see *Unisa English Studies* (Anon: 1964a, 1964b, 1964c, 1965, 1967).

while yet retaining some linguistics and history of the English language and literature (1958), and as such is fairly representative of the general approach of most South African universities (the University of Natal's Department of English was uncompromising in expelling the old and introducing an almost entire Practical Criticism-based curriculum).

There are comparatively fewer articles dealing with philological matters (language in written or spoken form, grammar, language teaching, and the like). The relative lack of frequency is an index of the marginal importance to literary academics of this issue. *UES* carries an article titled 'The Teaching of English as a Second Language' which makes for very odd company among the usual fare of this journal (Anon 1966). In the late 1950s and in the 1960s, AC Partridge and others touch on the subjects of language teaching, grammar, and pronunciation, albeit obliquely (Branford 1965; Brettell 1958; Hennelly 1958; Mayne 1959; Partridge 1962a, 1962b; Scarnell Lean 1959).

This peripheral treatment of language issues continues in the 1970s, though there are a few noteworthy articles (Boxall 1970; Boyd 1977; Cozien 1971; Fielding 1974; Lennox-Short 1977; McMagh 1976). In a general review of the English department and its concerns, Butler perceives a neglect in particular of the problems of second-language English speakers, specifically mentioning problems faced by African students, and comes to the assessment that '[l]anguage studies proper have no champion [at university level]' (Butler 1977: 7).

The 1980s register a sea change in approach to pedagogical issues. Irene Thebehali in 'Teaching English in Soweto' indicts the Bantu education system as 'evil' (1981: 44) and, citing 'appallingly low standard of English' for drop-out and failure rates (47), the article concludes that '[u]ntil bold steps are taken by the universities to

142

completely revolutionise the teaching of English at black schools and teacher training institutions, it is difficult to perceive how damage can be repaired' (47). John De Reuck reflects on bridging programmes to aid students from disadvantaged backgrounds (1981), while Harold Holmes, in a felicitously titled essay, 'Looking back on the English Scene', cites the decline in teaching of grammar as one of the reasons for a drop in standards (1983: 119). Parenthetically, but tellingly, he adds that '(I have not touched on the problem of the millions of illiterate people in our country. *This is not really an 'English' problem,* and non-formal education seems to be the most viable solution.)'(120, emphasis added).

Indeed, in terms of the discipline, education and literacy *outside the walls of the academy* do not appear to be considered *relevant* in the sense that it is not generally considered that these issues fall to the literary academic to discuss. Mphahlele's plea in 1984 for the English establishment to 'create English syllabuses and massive language and literature programmes' is not taken up in academic discourse represented by these journals (1984: 104).

In an unusually forthright opening line, Malcolm McKenzie suggests that: 'It would take a rare imagination to know what happens inside the head of our President [PW Botha]' and goes on to focus on, among other topics, teaching grammar through literature and effective methodologies for teaching English (1987: 227). The emphasis on the language component, and on preparation of non-native speakers for English courses and for university in general, is set to become a major issue in the 1990s and onwards. In a sense, the generally resistant attitude of literary academics towards a language component in the English studies curricula will be seriously challenged in the 1990s due, in large part, to the Bantu education policy and the consequent low English language competence of students.

In 1989, Peter Randall, in 'The Educational Past and the Preparation of South African Teachers', looks at the need to adapt the curricula of teachers, particularly at English universities, to reflect the socio-political context and 'the dominant values of society' (1). In the English department, loss of (political) innocence of the literary object (in particular in the wake of the avalanche of contemporary theoretical approaches introduced into South African discourse in the mid-1980s, as discussed in Chapter 2 above), and the release of Nelson Mandela in 1990, set off an unprecedented proliferation of debate on teaching methodology and curricula at tertiary level.

Teaching English Literature in South Africa: Twenty Essays appeared in 1990, reflective of the wide-scale importance placed by most proponents in the discipline on reviewing teaching practice, mainly the curriculum (1990). The topic comes up at conferences, and is discussed widely in essays in all academic literary journals prior to the 1994 elections, and subsequently too. In general, when literary academics turn to writing about educational issues, whether government policy, standards, or transformation of university structures or departments in catering for new demands, the debate is intense, well-researched, intellectually challenging, and socially and politically contextualised. This contrasts fairly starkly with the genteel tone, unrushed register of (it has to be said) rather unchallenging articles on pedagogical issues appearing in journals in the 1950s through to the end of the 1970s (this assessment does not relate to other content of the journals).

This change in style and approach is reflective of a general professionalisation of *academic writing* (a gradual and increasing formalisation of register, use of theoretical concepts and elaborate referencing), the seriousness of the challenges faced in educational reform, the upheavals caused by the transformation of higher

education both during late apartheid and after 1994, and the interdisciplinary ethos of contemporary theory.

Many articles ask searching questions, some calling core disciplinary assumptions into question (Ryan 1998), others calling into question what skills 'English' training is supposedly providing (Orr 1996, Switzer 1998). There is, in a sense, a loss of innocence. Or in any event, the calm assurance of presiding over or partaking in an established discipline evaporates, and no assumption, not even the assumption of the right of residence in the academy, is debarred from scrutiny.

One possible interpretation of the academy's new willingness to take on political and economic interests in debates on what in effect constitutes the heart of the discipline, the curriculum, is the overt or covert pressures brought about by the advent of democracy, and even before – in the anticipation of radical social and political upheaval, to make English studies more *relevant.* Politically, this has taken concrete form in calls to Africanise the curriculum. Economically, business interests have become more vocal about their needs.

The debates continue with tenacity into the new century. Not much can be said with any certainty regarding the current approach to this topic. What can be ventured, perhaps, is that in the *pedagogical turn* in English studies, the 'relevance' criterion has been exponentially expanded in terms of *disciplinary boundaries*. This does not mean to say that *anything* can now be said relating to this topic. The rule of relevance to the academy's concerns (that is, *within the boundaries of the academy*) appears not to have been dislodged. Nevertheless, socio-political causes are now routinely addressed when questions of pedagogy are debated.

The choice of objects of oral art for analysis by literary academics represents an interesting development and challenge to the domain of objects of the discipline of literary studies. The mere fact that works of oral art are made subject to such scrutiny in these forums constitutes an implicit interrogation of the boundaries of the discipline. Not only is the traditional canon directly addressed, but also its very assumptions regarding what constitutes a literary artefact are called into question. In this case the presumption that, in its genesis, the literary artefact is always a written 'text', is challenged.

In addition to producing academic work on new objects (from the point of view of the discipline), direct calls have been made to include oral art as an appropriate object of study in the discipline. Nevertheless, judging only from the number of articles on oral art appearing in the journals under review, such calls did not result in significant numbers of conversions to a new orthodoxy: discourse on oral art would seem to constitute a minor practice in academic literary discourse.

There have been a number of articles calling for the inclusion of such objects within a more broadly and nationally conceived canon of literature. Interestingly, well before this debate surfaced, Jeff Opland was publishing articles on oral forms in literary journals. Trawling through the journals between 1958 and the mid-1980s, I find that Opland's articles make odd company among the usual fare appearing in this period (his first article touching on the topic of orality appeared as early as 1970). It is important to recall, however, that the study of oral art constitutes the objects of analysis of a number of disciplines: anthropology, ethnography, linguistics and the study of African languages. It appears, however, to have been an anomalous

choice for a literary academic prior to the apparent opening up of the domain in the late 1980s.

The explanation for the early appearance of such articles can be traced to Jeff Opland's interest in old English poetry. In the first issue of *UCT Studies in English (UCT)*, Opland speculates on the oral origins of early English poetry (1970). In *English Studies in Africa (ESA)*, Opland compares Anglo-Saxon and Bantu Oral poets (1971), and draws lessons from African oral traditions in the study of the European middle-ages (1973). Opland's work continues apace, though mainly in other journals or in book form, and focusing primarily on Xhosa oral art such as poetry and literature, for example praise poems (1993), Xhosa oral poetry (1995), and Xhosa literature in newspapers (1996).

In 1979, Isabel Hofmeyr would inveigh against a purported liberal orthodoxy and argue in favour of an alternative model of South African literature that would include oral art, inter alia:

> The history of South African literature is not a tale of the literary endeavour of a small fraction of its people. It *should include* the modes and discourses of all South Africans, be that discourse *oral*, be it in newspapers, archives, magazines and pamphlets. (1979a: 44, emphasis added)

Clearly, the argument in favour of attention to such oral discourse, *qua* imaginative artefact, among literary academics, is tied up with debates on the establishment of a South African canon, and the presumption that any such canon should be as representative as possible. The exclusion of oral forms from the curriculum and the literary academic purview is severely criticised. Michael Vaughan views the English department as implicated in the perpetuation of what

147

he deems to be a deleterious distinction between the oral and written forms of literature:

> The predominance of oral literature in Southern Africa and the nature of the relationship between literature and politics in the sub-continent raise ideological and methodological questions that English Departments have not fully confronted – as indicated by the *normative concept of the text* implicit in practical criticism. The elitism of this concept, in the Southern African context, is revealed in its methodological unsuitability for dealing with oral literature (so that oral literature tends to become material for Social Anthropology or African Studies rather than the English Department). (1982: 43)

This assessment, in so far as it points to the fact that the domain of objects of English studies has for the most part been textual, at least since the wide-scale take up of the Leavisite Practical Critical approach (from around the late 1940s in South Africa), appears correct. However, there does appear to have been a belated, if mild, response to calls for the inclusion of oral literature. There is evidence of more attention being paid to oral forms in the last 10 years or so, though in general the textual bias seems to have endured in spite of the decline of Practical Criticism and the rise of contemporary literary theory in literary discourse. In 1995, Isabel Hofmeyr felt able to conclude:

> [T]hose that complain of the lack of attention to oral literature often come from English departments ... [I]n university *African language departments* it provides a mainstay of teaching and research ... Indeed, if one examines the history of African intellectual production in South Africa, there has been a *consistent stream of scholarship on oral literature ...*

148

[T]he depth and richness of [the] ongoing debate on oral literature ... sometimes surpasses in volume and quality the debate on written literature. (1995: 134, emphasis added)

Hofmeyr would seem to be implying here that the English department has ignored, at its own peril and loss, important local artefacts. Be that as it may, the general imputation that this type of object has generally not found a firm if any hold in the discipline appears to be reflected in the content of the journals. However, mainly from around the mid-1990s to date, there appears to be more attention to oral art in academic literary journals: see Alant 1994; Brown 1994a, 1995, 1997a, 1997b; Biesele 1995; Buthelezi and Hurst 2003; Hofmeyr 1994, 1995; Hurst 1999; Gunner 1995, 2003a; James 1995; Jeursen 1995; Kaschula 1993; Kromberg 1994; Malungana 1999; McAllister 1988; Mojalefa 2002; Muller 1995; Neser 2000; Opland 1993, 1995, 1996; Rice 1985; Turner 1994; and Van Vuuren 1994, 1998.

Attention to oral objects, though minor, appears to be gaining and holding ground, as suggested in the analysis under Section II of Chapter 2 above. Nevertheless, there does not appear to be sufficient evidence (in literary journals) to suggest that literary academics are turning in *significant enough numbers* to these objects to allow one to conclude with a high degree of confidence that its presence in the discourse constitutes a definitive widening of the domain of disciplinary objects.

Moreover, the view that such forms should not fall within the purview of the literary academic, and that the maintenance of a strict distinction between oral and written forms of literature is necessary, has been mooted (Thorold 1994). Relatively speaking, as the next section suggests, other 'non-literary' objects, such as autobiographies, have received more sustained treatment by literary academics, and

even appear to have been incorporated into the disciplinary field to the extent that their presence hardly appears anomalous any longer, and is not being challenged.

IV

That a journal [*Current Writing*] emanating from a
Programme of English Studies should deal with the *analysis of
texts* – rather than *literature or Literature* – should need no
explanation; no restating of Eagleton's once-provocative
claims for the justifiable *textuality* of even the most banal *bus
ticket*, nor any overcautious reminder that despite post-
structuralist insistence on the rampant textuality of the world,
to refer in the same breath to *spaces, buildings, films*,
interviews and *publicity brochures* as 'texts' is not to invoke a
fact, but to use a figure of speech ... There is by now a sense in
which the *textuality of the world*, however we define the term
'text', is *an established convention*, and *Current Writing*
editors have in fact *always* encouraged contributions which
move between traditional conceptions of the literary – the
detailed interpretation of individual texts … [and] a *variety of
cultural products and practices*, whether evidently *literary*, or
autobiographical, or *oral*, or what some might classify as
popular culture. (Murray 2002: iii, emphasis added)

By all appearances, in South Africa, judging from the content
of *Current Writing (CW),* but also all the other academic journals
under review, the 'textuality of the world' is *not* 'an established
convention' in departments of English. The domain of objects of the
discipline is still populated in the main by the literary artefacts of the
imaginative and written kind. Nevertheless, the convention of the
written text has been challenged, and it is probably not an exaggeration
to state that the presumption that literary academics should focus
attention only on imaginative output has been refuted.

151

The study of oral artefacts is mentioned in the quotation above, together with autobiographical works and products or practices of popular culture, as examples of the types of objects of cultural studies which have presumably been conventionalised as appropriate objects for English studies. I find this far too sweeping a generalisation, not least because it is highly questionable to group such diverse artefacts under a generic heading such as 'cultural studies'. There are important distinctions between oral artefacts, autobiographies, popular *texts* (film, genre fiction) and *non-textual* 'popular' or practices (bus-tickets, spaces, buildings, sports events).

Oral forms, particularly poetry, appear to have a longer history and an earlier genesis as objects of analysis in academic discourse than either autobiographical or popular objects / practices. Oral objects, as a focus for academic attention, appear to be relatively easier to delimit and support than autobiographical or popular objects / practices. Transcriptions of oral forms (mainly poetry) are a more or less clearly defined type of discourse which, though not generally falling within the purview of the discipline using the Practical Critical approach, comes for the most part in the recognisable form (for the literary academic) of a *written* text. Moreover, its long and sustained, if minor, presence in the academy is a matter of record (see foregoing section, and Section II of Chapter 2).

However, though autobiographical objects are relatively easy to define, their academic pedigree is more difficult to establish than the study of oral forms. Nevertheless, analysis of the articles in the 11 journals gives a very strong indication that autobiographical objects have been subsumed into the purview of the discipline, as subsequent discussion will show. On the other hand, popular objects / practices appear to have neither a strong or relatively incontestable definition, nor a firm toehold in the academy.

The current of academic discourse on autobiographical objects is fairly substantial, and constitutes a greater and more consistent focus for literary academics in South Africa than either oral or popular forms, products or practices. It is also a relatively recent phenomenon, becoming a real presence in the journals from the early 1990s onwards. While many articles on autobiographies can be found in *CW*, the fact that such articles appear in most journals, although a weak index due to the high permeability of journal boundaries, is nevertheless an indicator of a general and wide acceptance among the literary academic community of this practice, and these artefacts, as proper objects for the discipline (see also Section II of Chapter 2 above).

The inaugural volume of *CW* carries an article on Bloke Modisane's *Blame Me on History* (Ngwenya 1989). Thereafter, there is a significant and consistent focus on issues related to, or specifically on, autobiographical writing: Chapman 1995; Coullie 1991; Daymond and Lenta 1990; Daymond 1991, 1993, 1999; Farr 2000; Gititi 1991; Govinden 2000, 2001; Gready 1995; Gray 1990; Griesel 1991; Jacobs 2000a, 2000b; Koyana 2002; Coullie 2001; Medalie 2000; Meyer 2000; Ngwenya 2000; Nussbaum 1991; Nuttall 1996; Rosenberg 2000; Ryan 1993; Schalkwyk 1998; Shear 1989; Thale 2000; Van Wyk Smith 1991; Wisker 2000; and Wylie 1991. Seldom, though, is there attention paid to *biographical* writing, though there are some exceptions: Kossick 1993, Conradie 1998, and Stobie 2004.

Turning now to popular objects or practices, a number of very diverse non-traditional objects are selected for analysis in the journals. Brown examines the 'film text' of *Mapantusula* (1994b), Pridmore examines the reception of an historical figure, Henry Francis Fynn (1994). Many other forms are analysed too: collections of letters, diaries, memoirs, journals or travelogues (Coetzee 1995, 2000; Couzens 1992; Driver 1995; De Reuck 1995; Fourie 1995; Haarhoff

153

1989; Hunter 1994; Jansen 1998; Lenta 1992; Penn 1993; Putnam 2002; Ryan 2001; Sienaert 1998; Van Wyk Smith 1997; Woodward 1995, 1998); popular magazines and print media (Murray 1994; Laden 2001; Dunton and Mokuku 2003; Couzens 1976); periodicals such as 'Trek' (Sandwith 1998); missionary records and narratives (De Kock 1994, 1995); occult discourses in the press (Bourgault 1997); Zulu cultural practices (Muller 1994); documentaries (Maingard 1997); literacy events (Stein and Slonimsky 2001); painting and photography (Nuttall and Attwell 2001); autoethnography (Jeursen and Tomaselli 2002); literary tourism, tourist venues or tourism campaigns (Robinson 2002, Du Plessis 1987; Bass 2002); radio plays (Gunner 2003b); a 'linguistic' reading of a fees crisis (Consterdine 2001); advertising campaigns (Janks 1998; Mokuku 2000); music (Allen 2002, 2004; Nyairo 2004; Viljoen 2004); film (Bertelsen 1999; Graham-Smith 2004; Fiske 1976; Whittock 1978); sculpture (Rankin 1976); comic strips (Tiffin 1999); pageants (Merrington 1999); cultural practices at private girls schools in Natal (Ryan 2004); concentration camps (De Reuck 1999); and maps (Stiebel 2002). (This list is fairly comprehensive of such articles appearing in the journals under review, but is certainly not exhaustive).

Although most of the articles focusing on a 'popular product or practice' which appear in the journals are predominantly non-literary, the popular *written* product is not ignored entirely.[27] Young adult writing is examined (Mitchell and Smith 1996), the African romances of Rider Haggard (Stiebel 1997, 1998, 2001), children's books (Jenkins 1999, 2001, 2003), 'hunting' literature (Wylie 2001) and

---

[27] Chapman reflects on the meaning of 'popular fiction' in relation to Mtutuzeli Matshoba's short stories, inter alia, and comes to the open-ended conclusion that the category (in respect of African writing) is 'problematic' (1999). In this thesis, I use the category of 'popular writing' narrowly to designate only certain popular imaginative genres such as detective, thriller, mystery, fantasy, science fiction, romance, adventure novels (and variants such as digger / mining novels) and work targeted at specific sections of the population such as children or young adults (boys or girls).

detective or mystery novels (Peck 1995; Van der Linde 1996). These are relatively recent articles, although there are examples of earlier work on popular fiction such as Isabel Hofmeyr's survey of early mining novels (1978), and a treatment of boys' adventure stories (Couzens 1981).

Representations in popular fiction have also come up for scrutiny: war, the 'Masai' and 'Bushmen' (Maughan-Brown 1983, 1987; Voss 1987); women and romance (Bunn 1988); the hero in Boer War fiction (Rice 1985); and borders (Stotesbury 1990). More recently, a special issue of *ESA* was dedicated entirely to the topic of popular literature in Africa, where Ogola looks at a serialised fiction column in a Kenyan newspaper (2002), and the South African writer Joel Matlou, by inference a 'popular' writer, is examined by Maithufi (2002).

Nevertheless, the shift Ryan speaks of 'from an object-based, to an event-based epistemology' to reap a 'richer and more reliable source of knowledge than things viewed as static, discrete and stable' (Ryan 1996: 32), that is, one version of the utopian promise of cultural studies to provide a non-elitist and non-subjugating pedagogy, does not appear to be borne out in terms of a corresponding shift in focus in the journals.

In 2000, Michael Chapman, a literary academic and prolific contributor to the journals under review, feels able to conclude that 'English Studies, whatever its modifications over the last two decades, still *locates its core in the value of a book culture*' (45, emphasis added). Cultural studies appear to have been accommodated, but not assimilated: 'English Studies has been divided into three tracks: literature, language (grammar, creative writing, editing), and culture (interpreting forms of popular expression)' (45).

Hence, the text, as book, has been retained, though the price that has been paid is the sacrificing of institutional space to accommodate the new (sub?) disciplines. The view that the *imaginative* artefact (poem, play, fictional prose) is still central to the discipline, even while the purview has been enlarged to include autobiographical and, to a lesser extent, oral artefacts, appears to be supported by the statistical analysis carried out (see summary of main findings in Section II of Chapter 2, and detailed results in the Appendix).

V

Academic freedom does not appear to be a topic to which literary academics in South Africa have paid much attention in the journals under review. Nevertheless, the issue is discussed fairly frequently from around the early 1990s. It is mainly Higgins (1995, 1998, 2000a, 2000b, 2000c, 2003), editor of *Pretexts*, who champions the cause of academic freedom, and many of the articles discussed in this section are written by him or appear in the journal under his editorship. Nevertheless, responses to the issue cut across disciplinary boundaries, the most significant discussion occurring in the exchange between the literary academic Higgins and the sociologist Du Toit (2000a, 2000b).

Moreover, in terms of the literary journals, the topic is also not confined to *Pretexts*. Articles on this topic appear in *s2* (Higgins 2000c)*, EAR* (Higgins 1998; Moodie 1997) and *Alternation* (Moran 1998)*. Hence, the very fact that the topic is tabled, so to speak, points to its significance to academic literary discourse in general. However, its specific significance at the dawn of the 1990s for English studies, it would seem to me, lies in the advent of certain previously unknown *external* pressures on the *domain of objects* and *sets of methods* of the discipline.

The importance of the concept of academic freedom to the discipline becomes clearer once we analyse in more depth what in practice academic freedom entails. Obtaining a clear definition is anything but clear-cut. The 'Programme for the Transformation of Higher Education' (hereafter 'Government Programme') which lays down the policy framework for all tertiary institutions, and directly impacts upon English departments and thereby the discipline, defines academic freedom as follows:

The principle of academic freedom implies the absence of *outside interference*, censure or obstacles in the pursuit and practice of academic work. It is a precondition for *critical*, *experimental* and *creative thought* and therefore for the *advancement of intellectual inquiry* and *knowledge*. Academic freedom and scientific inquiry are fundamental rights protected by the Constitution. (Department of Education 1997: 13, emphasis added)

In this definition, it is the *scholarly* activities of the academic which are emphasised. That is, the freedom of the academic to undertake whatever research he or she wishes in pursuit of advancement of knowledge in the discipline without *outside* interference. Hence, in principle, for research purposes, no academic should be bound to select certain types of *objects* over others, nor should there be a restriction on the *methods* used in analysis of the same. There is no express right to free selection of objects for the purposes of teaching or, put another way, the right of academics to freely construct the curriculum as they see fit, is not given in this definition. Interestingly, Moodie's understanding of what claims fall under the concept 'academic freedom' contrasts in important ways with the definition given in the Government Programme:

[F]irst, the claim to freedom for individual academics in their teaching and research, which can be labelled 'scholarly freedom'. Second is the claim to freedom in decision-making by academics as groups (the profession, the professorate, academic departments and faculties, etc.), which can be labelled 'academic rule'. The third claim is to freedom from external interference in the running of universities and other institutions of higher education, which is customarily referred to as 'institutional autonomy'. (Moodie 1997: 10)

158

The definition of academic freedom in the Government Programme would appear to be very similar to what Moodie refers to as 'scholarly freedom', except in so far as Moodie includes 'teaching' within this definition. However, in addition to the principle of 'academic freedom', the Government Programme includes several other key principles worthy of note, namely 'Institutional Autonomy' and 'Public Accountability':

> The principle of *institutional autonomy* refers to a *high degree* of self-regulation and administrative independence with respect to … *curriculum, methods of teaching*, research, establishment of academic regulations … The principle of public accountability implies that institutions are answerable for their actions and decisions to … governing bodies and … broader society … [I]nstitutions receiving public funds should be able to report how, and *how well, money has been spent* … should *demonstrate* the *results* they achieved … should *demonstrate* how they *have met* national *policy goals and priorities*. (Department of Education 1997: 13, emphasis added)

If we take Moodie's account of 'academic freedom' as comprising the three claims of 'scholarly freedom', 'academic rule' and 'institutional autonomy', then it appears that the Government Programme does not endorse full autonomy. In respect of 'scholarly freedom', the right to conduct research without hindrance or dictate of any sort appears to be upheld, while this unrestricted right does not appear to be extended to teaching. In respect of 'academic rule' and 'institutional autonomy', restrictions are imposed, rendering both subservient to political policy and economic imperatives. Moodie would appear to support the approach taken by the government, going

yet further to suggest that research, too, should not be entirely free of restrictions:

> [Scholarly freedom should] not confer a right on each individual to teach, publish, or carry out research into whatever (s)he feels like. Teaching must take place within an *agreed curriculum* and meet *minimum standards* of *competence* and *relevance.* (Moodie 1997: 12, emphasis added)

The Department of Education, then, appears to propose a narrower definition of academic freedom, allowing a formal freedom to conduct research on objects of choice without interference, but stopping short of a licence to 'teach, publish, or carry out research into whatever [the academic] feels like'. Looking at another definition of academic freedom, in 'Paying Lip-service to Academic Freedom', Higgins summarises the TB Davies four-part definition thus: 'freedom from external interference in (a) who shall teach, (b) what we teach, (c) how we teach, and (d) whom we teach' (2000c: 9). Parts (a) and (c) would appear to fall within Moodie's description of 'academic rule' and the Government Programme's principle of 'public accountability', where the Government Programme affords a 'high degree' of autonomy to universities. Parts (b) 'what we teach', that is the curricula, and (c), 'how we teach', that is teaching methods, appear to fall under both Moodie's and the Government Programme's understanding of 'institutional autonomy' where, likewise, the Government Programme affords a 'high degree' of autonomy. Interestingly, TB Davie's definition does not explicitly endorse an unrestricted right to pursue research on anything the academic desires.

The final or exact definition of 'academic freedom' is not at issue here. What is striking, and what is pertinent from the perspective of this thesis, is the potential impact on the discipline. If a discipline is 'defined by a domain of objects, a set of methods, a corpus of

160

propositions' (Foucault 1971: 59), it becomes immediately apparent that any of the 'academic freedoms' defined above (in the Government Programme, Moodie, Higgins), all *potentially* bear upon the very identity of a discipline. An entirely unrestricted right to research is unlikely to ever have been a reality in practice. Nevertheless, if the curriculum is made subject to public policy or economic imperatives, this must at some point impact upon research, as there is undoubtedly a link between research agendas and the curriculum.

In a sense, the present thesis rests upon the assumption that academic freedom is an oxymoron: the academic is not free, and cannot be free in the sense that to participate in the practice of a discipline is to enter into a particular rhetorical game, to delve into a myriad (if finite number) of discursive procedures, many of which are barely discernible and some entirely inscrutable. This is not to suggest that one has no agency, only that such agency is limited. It is also not to suggest that all kinds of curtailments on academic activity are equal nor that they are ineluctably disenabling: precisely the opposite – if it were not for the procedures, production of discourse in the discipline would be an impossibility. A discipline without a defined domain of objects, without a set of methods for ascertaining the correctness of claims on those objects, without certain assumptions or propositions of truth, would not be a discipline: it would be an incomprehensible jumble of unanchored and equally correct or incorrect statements.

The existence of rules or procedures, I believe, is not something to be deplored as such. It seems to me that the *delimitation of the rules* applying to the practitioners within a discipline is necessary not in order to emancipate ourselves from such rules, but to assess their effects, so as to retain, amend, or expel those rules not conducive to whatever ends we define. The postulation of a discipline as a rule-bound activity is the lesser task: the greater difficulty arises in defining the rules.

The emphasis of the above definitions of academic freedom, particularly that of the Government Programme, is placed on freedom from *outside* interference. In respect of research, the negative definition – freedom *from* and not *to* – might be said to suffice for the individual (as opposed to a collective), as the academic would in principle (and ideally) be answerable to him or herself, in terms of his or her own codes, convictions and beliefs. In terms of institutional autonomy, an unrestricted freedom is not afforded by the Government Programme and neither is it clear that, even if free of *outside* interference, an academic would be free of *internal* interference: for *collections of individuals* there will perforce exist more or less elaborate rules. For institutions, the Government Programme stresses accountability at various levels (public policy, governing bodies, society) and economically (providing value for money) which limit or potentially limit institutional autonomy. Du Toit usefully distinguishes between *external* accountability and *internal* accountability in discussions of the curriculum, within developments over two decades at *UCT*:

> [T]he abolition of professors as permanent heads of department (HODs) and the modularisation of the curriculum through the introduction of semester courses [began at the start of] the 1980s. Over time these had major consequences for the meaning of academic accountability for decisions on *what* may be taught. … To the extent that such accountability was still predominantly understood as an *internal* accountability, i.e. in disciplinary terms and subject only to the judgement of academic peer review, it went unnoticed that in different ways this form of accountability was actually being significantly attenuated. (Du Toit 2000b: 118)

Hence, the traditional prerogative of professors to determine *what* to teach, subject only to peer-review, has been eroded from *within* the institution. No doubt there are many variants in the decision-making rules and procedures for deciding on curricula. These rules and procedures might fall under what Moodie above refers to as 'academic rule' and which, as far as they are conducted within the confines of the institution, are conducted entirely free of *outside* interference. It would appear that there is an important distinction to be made between *research* and *teaching*, at least in terms of what the Government Programme suggests about the unrestricted nature of the former (endorsed as a constitutionally guaranteed freedom), and the necessarily constricted nature of the latter (accountable at several levels, internally and externally).

This thesis, focused as it is on the *research outputs* of academics published in *peer-reviewed* journals, would seem to be concerned rather with the domain of objects falling under the gaze of the *researcher* than the *teacher* (curriculum): this is indeed the case. In respect of research, I suggested above that it may suffice (in the above discussion) to talk of the freedom from *outside* interference of the *individual* as opposed to the *institution*. Indeed, to talk of internal interference does not make sense in the case of the individual, whereas it certainly does in the case of an institution.

However, I risk in this representation of the individual as 'free agent' the undermining of the basic underlying assumptions of my analysis, that is, that the individual as academic involved in research, is not free in any unmediated sense. The kinds of rules and procedures I have been at pains to try to trace are those which, in a manner of speaking, are 'internal' to the discipline, and are outlined in Chapter 1 above. The question I would like to turn to now is where, within the map of rules laboriously described by Foucault, do imperatives

deriving from *outside* the university (public policy, economic), and *inside* the institution ('academic rule', 'internal accountability'), fall?

Foucault proposes that there exist clusters of 'exclusionary', 'internal' and 'restrictive' systems in the production of discourse (1971). I will highlight here briefly those mechanisms which appear most pertinent in the discussion on 'academic freedom' in this section. First, 'exclusionary' procedures: these do not refer as such to the world outside the institutional space in which the discourse is conducted (the university), but rather to those rules which generally define the borders of the discourse.

Worthy of note here are the prohibitions and taboos excluding certain objects or topics from discussion within a particular ensemble or ensembles of discourse. Such prohibitions and taboos potentially apply to the curriculum or types of speech on objects of the discipline. Some of these imperatives might derive, whether by written policy or in actual practice, from, for example, the Government Programme and its principles of public accountability (answerability for all actions) to 'governing bodies, institutional community and … broader society … money [well] spent … national policy goals and priorities' (Department of Education 1997: 13).

Note that Foucault does not distinguish between what Du Toit calls 'internal' as opposed to 'external' rules. Hence, Foucault implies that prohibitions and taboos on objects or topics may derive from many sources, and his 'exclusionary' procedures do not appear to be construable as institutionally situated, or if so, than not only. Under the cluster of rules falling under the heading of 'exclusionary' in Foucault's terms, I would include *inter alia* the rules referred to by Moodie above as 'academic rule' (1997: 13), and which Du Toit discusses as 'internal accountability' (2000b: 18).

The third cluster of 'restrictive' procedures referred to by Foucault as those pursuant to the 'will to truth' concerns mechanisms for distinguishing 'true' from 'false' statements. The most obvious and traditional procedure in the academy is the peer-review system. All research outputs are systematically reviewed by peers. Hence, in terms of the discipline, discourse is constrained by a certain threshold requirement: not all statements by academics are automatically validated. The procedure of course continues even after peer approval. In that sense, the peer-review mechanism is a minimum threshold requirement and statements fall very generally 'in the true' of the discipline if passed.

Not all statements which have passed the peer-review requirement are held as equally 'true' or always 'true'. Some academic articles are regarded as 'seminal' and become widely influential. One possible though crude index of the relative importance of articles, or relative 'truth' status of the claims made in them, is the number of times the article is cited by peers. By this measure, Ndebele's article 'The Rediscovery of the Ordinary: Some New Writings in South Africa' (1986) can be regarded as highly influential and a fundamental contribution to knowledge in the discipline. Not all articles receive this kind of attention, in spite of passing the 'peer-review' threshold.

There is clearly an ongoing and highly intricate process within the society of discourse of literary academics whereby articles are assessed and implicitly ranked on a scale say of most truthful to least truthful. Embedded in this process will be a very large number of assumptions, norms and standards. Each new contribution to the discipline will be assessed against these and found more, or less, wanting. These are not static, and are not easily discernible.

It would appear from the above analysis that one implicit assumption in the discipline is that *film* artefacts do not fall within its

domain of objects while *autobiographical* artefacts seemingly do. It does not follow automatically that, through inclusion of the artefacts, all *methods* of analysis will be accepted as *valid* nor that all *propositions* will be accepted as *correct / true*.

When it comes to the curriculum, though, according to Du Toit, 'the rise of academic managerialism over the last 15 to 20 years' has impacted on the professorate's right to determine what is taught, a matter which was traditionally subject only to peer review for quality assurance (2000b: 86 and 124). Du Toit comments on the shift from internal accountability to external accountability for development of the curriculum thus:

> [T]he curriculum in higher education, especially as development in the *outcomes-based (OBE)* policy discourse, does indeed imply a radical shift towards developing forms of *external accountability* along with new systems of quality assurance. As such it is part and parcel of the 'new vocationalism' and the general stress on linking the programmatic objectives and outcomes of academic programmes in higher education with specific professional fields. (2000b: 115)

This implies a number of pressures on academics to align the curriculum – 'what we teach' – with education policy objectives and economic imperatives. There are of course numerous links between research and teaching at tertiary level, not least the fact that both functions are often carried out by most academics. If new forms of *external* accountability have supplemented the 'quality control' mechanism of the *internal* accountability of the peer-review system, implicit in these new forms are *vetting* procedures for inclusion or exclusion of objects in the curriculum which previously were the prerogative of the members of this particular society of discourse to

166

determine. If research and teaching can be regarded as entirely independent of each other, the external forms of 'quality control' which impact on the curriculum and (to an extent) the methods of teaching, do not impinge in any way upon the academic's 'free' choice of object for research (and therefore would not effect the objects selected for academic analysis in the journals under review). However, this is clearly an untenable supposition.

I postulated in the opening chapter three functions of academic journals: knowledge formation, career formation, and canon formation. At its most rudimentary, selection of objects for the curriculum depends on an existing archive of propositions on those objects. This is not to say that it is inconceivable to prescribe works which have no history of academic discourse behind them, but it is to say that this is barely practicable. In terms of careers, as alluded to above, though tenuous, there is a link between the ostensibly 'free' choice of research objects and teaching: one is generally, if tenuously, guided in such selection by current teaching practices and the objects prescribed therein or thought to be relevantly related thereto.

More profoundly, though inscrutably, the selection of new objects or subjects for research (which is linked to development of new orthodoxy and thereby evolution of the canon) is guided by a wide array of considerations. This goes deeper than the simply fashionable. The external determination of 'what we teach' impacts directly on the more or less invisible procedures for vetting or validating research outputs:

> [Internal accountability no longer suffices due to the] undermining (of) the internal authority of knowledge, displacing this authority onto various social actors and groups. Knowledge is no longer considered internally valid on its own terms. Validity … must now be confirmed by external

167

stakeholder groups … The role of academic authority and of expertise is also thereby put into question. (Johan Muller cited in Du Toit 2000b: 115)

Hence, the perception here of an interference in the very procedures of validation of knowledge within the discipline in the case where the curriculum is made subordinate to 'external' imperatives (policy or economic). Be this as it may (I am not attempting here to discuss the relative advantages or disadvantages of Outcomes Based Education or pressures to Africanise the curriculum, inter alia), what I hope to have at least adumbrated here is the existence of admittedly complex mechanisms for establishing the truth value of propositions both within traditional peer review and peer assessment processes, and also in the matter of gaining entry into the game of validating external actors, mainly in the shape of education policy makers.

In terms of the TB Davie formula for academic freedom as meaning institutional and disciplinary autonomy to decide on 'who shall teach, what we teach, how we teach, and whom we teach' (Higgins 2000c: 9), it is specifically 'what we teach' (the curriculum) and 'how we teach' which are potentially affected by calls to Africanise the curriculum, Outcomes Based Education (OBE) and the Government Programme. I have suggested that any such 'external' rules potentially supplement or even directly conflict with or replace some of the 'internal' rules which determine validity of propositions within the discourse (with specific reference to the prohibitions on objects or topics and the validation procedures which *begin* with the peer-review). It would appear that such 'external' rules impinging upon the discipline are of relatively recent origin. During approximately the first half of the apartheid era, it would seem that (within the TB Davie formula) it was primarily 'whom we teach' that was affected:

168

In the 1950s … the academic self-government within the university [was] still based on the acceptance of the authority of academics vis-à-vis even senior university administrators … This is no longer the case following the rise [in South Africa since the 1980s] of the new academic managerialism … [T]he 1959 Extension of University Education Act took control over [the universities'] admissions policy … this was an infringement of academic freedom in the specific sense of freedom in decision-making on *who* shall be taught. (Du Toit 2000b: 88-90)

In terms of the sets of procedures described by Foucault on the production of discourse, the apartheid government's interference with admission policy amounts to supplementing the large stock of rules determining membership of the 'society of discourse'. Any intervention in the rules determining such membership amounts to an intervention into the constitution of the literary academic community. Part of the machinery for production of discourse within the discipline relates to 'who' may make pronouncements on the objects of the discipline or comment (authoritatively) on the relevant topics falling within the ambit of the discipline.

In the first instance, there are entry requirements to the university as such, then an apprenticeship (a number of years of study), followed by a stringent set of explicit and implicit requirements in the assessment of knowledge which, if successfully met, obtains for the applicant the licence to speak in the name of the discipline (a tertiary level degree in English studies). It is clear that the apartheid government's interference with admissions policy had an impact on

the process of entry into the 'society of discourse' of literary academics.[28] This is only part of the story, though.

In his 1957 report, which reflects on and gives recommendations for pedagogy in general and the English studies curriculum specifically, Gardner's concerns regarding admission policy are primarily addressed to the financing of student fees, and ensuring the highest standards in the quality of those admitted. Additionally, there are some telling asides about how the Government *could do more* in support of the discipline (the emphases falling mainly on infrastructure and resources) (Gardner 1957: 165-166, emphasis added). The bulk of the report (addressed to the rest of the literary academic community) deals with what is clearly regarded as an entirely 'internal' affair: the matter of the curriculum ('what we teach') and pedagogy ('how we teach'). The apartheid government did not, it appears, venture into this part of the academic's jurisdiction.

Evidently, the number of constraints and rules impinging on who gets admitted extend considerably beyond explicit government policies (which is not to downplay their importance). I explicitly mention or suggest only three types: racist admission rules (apartheid government policy); financing rules and constraints (government budgetary rules and policy on financing tertiary education, 'internal' university rules and policy on financing tertiary education, rules or extant conditions on access to financing by student body); and minimum knowledge requirements at entry ('standards', matriculation grades, entrance examinations). However, even if these hurdles are overcome, the road to entry into the society of discourse is long and

---

[28] Important to note that 'prior to these externally imposed restrictions the absolute and proportional number of black students … had been miniscule' (du Toit 2000c: 89). This points to a wide range of possible constraints on entry into the discipline, beginning with a host of conditions, which applied equally to all academic disciplines (race and class prejudice, economic barriers, education policy and practice at all levels).

arduous. 'Whom we teach' clearly has an impact on 'Who shall teach': the students of today become the teachers of tomorrow.

There are two points I would like to underscore here. First, that there are a wide variety of implicit and explicit rules determining production of discourse within the discipline: my aim is to raise awareness of *some* of them and to point to their complexity – I am certainly not able to carry out the momentous and finally impossible task of enumerating all of them.

Second, that the 'freedom' for practitioners to determine 'whom we teach' and 'who shall teach' was (partially) limited from the 1950s onwards by the apartheid government, and that this relatively low or even imperceptible level of interference in the practice of the discipline continued until the rise of managerialism in the early 1980s. Thereafter, the 'freedom' of practitioners to determine 'what we teach' (the curriculum) and 'how we teach' (teaching methods) becomes less an 'own' affair and increasingly a matter which non-members of the literary academic community become entitled to influence.

VI

I would like in this last section of this chapter to touch on the issue of censorship. This entire thesis could be said, in effect, to be a discussion of various kinds of censoring mechanisms. After all, for example, exclusion from the society of discourse of literary academics really amounts to a veritably insurmountable barrier to having one's statements on the objects of the discipline *counted* as 'true / assimilable' – this is tantamount to a form of censorship. Moreover, mere membership does not mean one is automatically taken seriously, that one's statements are assessed as falling 'in the true' of the discipline, of being worthy of inclusion in the stock of 'true' propositions belonging to the discipline – such potential exclusion of statements is tantamount to a form of censorship.

I would endorse such a view, and I would add that mechanisms for silencing or debunking propositions are not *necessarily* debilitating, in fact, I would venture the opposite. The policing of the objects of the discipline, its methods and its truth propositions: this enables the *legitimate* production of statements recognisably belonging to the discipline, and in an important sense gives life to the discipline. The rules determining such production come in explicit and implicit forms, and the only certain thing to be said about them is that they are *myriad* (even if finite) and *changing*. By comparison, the public forms of censorship by appointment of civil servants to act as literal police, is as unsubtle as it is unsophisticated.

There has been explicit, government sponsored forms of censorship, and these struck at the heart of literary production *if not at the heart of academic literary discourse.* Judging from the academic articles in the journals under review, the literary academic community did not pay much attention to the topic of censorship. Why this is so is

not at all obvious. In any event, it cannot be put that either *academic* discourse (the secondary discourse in terms of literary objects) or *literary* discourse (primary discourse) were unaffected – quite the contrary. The former, however, was certainly less affected than the latter. For the most part, academic writing does not appear to have been subject to *direct* state censorship as such. However, it was certainly affected by it. According to Merrett:

> The two salient laws are the Publications Act (1974) and the Internal Security Act (1982) ... In general terms the Publications Act dictates restrictions upon storage conditions, type of borrower and condition of loan ... The effect of the latter is, however, more sweeping since *all* the work of the banned and 'listed' persons and proscribed organizations theoretically vanishes from the library shelves ... Among the problems is that fact that when academics are separated from crucial literature they are often unable even to ask the vital questions which ignite the important research, and abdicate in advance through imagining, rightly or wrongly, that particular lines of enquiry will result in bibliographic dead ends. (1986: 2-5)

This raises several questions: how many research projects and articles were thus affected? How many times were decisions on objects of analysis or bibliographic sources changed in order not to provoke the censor? How large was the impact? The answers to these questions cannot be established with any certainty. A reasonable assumption is that some academics consciously avoided such objects or sources. In any event, there does not appear to be evidence in the articles contained in these journals to suggest any active subversion of the rules.

However, there appears to have been one case where an academic literary article was directly affected by the censor. Gareth Cornwell's article, 'Evaluating Protest Fiction', has the distinction of being the first and seemingly only such article in the journals under review. The editors had the wisdom and the courage not to erase the traces of this absurd intervention: the article is printed with the offending quotations blacked out. There is a double violation – the defacing of the article and the erasure. It is important to underscore that it is not the lines authored by the academic, Cornwell, that are censored, but the quotations of banned authors. Quotations of Alex La Guma, Dennis Brutus and Lewis Nkosi are literally blacked out (Cornwell 1980).

Regarding primary discourse, many prominent authors, including Nadine Gordimer, Es'kia Mphahlele, André Brink, Miriam Tlali inter alia, have at one point or other been subjected to the power of the censor. The direct and indirect impact of censorship on authors is debated in a round table discussion with the first three of these authors, and published as 'South African Writers Talking' in *English in Africa* (De Villiers 1979).

The impact of overt and covert censorship, both prior to the 1963 Publications and Entertainment Act as well as provisions in post-1994 acts, is discussed in detail in *The Muzzled Muse* (De Lange 1997). De Lange points to a wide range of 'literary' objects among the many items which were banned, any of which *potentially* could have fallen under the gaze of the literary academic. Undeniably, literary production (the primary discourse) was deeply affected. Therefore, it is surprising that the topic of *censorship,* or any related issue, is not taken up within the literary academic journals. Manganyi does address, albeit obliquely, state censorship in his article, 'The Censored Imagination' (1979), but the first in-depth treatment appears much

later: 'Censorship in South Africa' by JM Coetzee (1990b, see also 1990a).

Examining the objects generally falling under the gaze of the academic from the 1950s through to the late 1970s, one sees that these were for the most part authored by non-indigenous writers, poets and playwrights. Academic articles on indigenous authors remained in the minority even in the 1980s. As indicated in the previous chapter, and as will be discussed in depth in the next chapter, the most important trend in terms of the objects of the discipline has been the ever-increasing attention paid to indigenous artefacts.

A statistical analysis does not reveal a sudden or radical movement, but a curve beginning in the 1950s, showing almost no interest in local production, growing gradually towards the current situation in the 2000s, where the majority of selected objects for academic analysis in the journals are indigenous. Without exaggeration or imputation of ulterior motives, it can be reasonably suggested that one of the reasons for what appears to be lack of concern in the literary journals about censorship in the 1970s and 1980s, can in considerable part be attributed to the fact that the arc of the gaze of the censor and that of the literary academic for the most part described different objects.

Chapter 4. The Rise of South African Literary Studies

> Will South African Literature – if we concede that such a thing does or might exist – ever flourish without some serious academic attention? In every single South African university there is at least one trained mind giving most of its attention, year in and year out, to Afrikaans literature … In all South African universities there is not one academic devoted to the study of South African writing in English. (Butler 1970a: 16)

This chapter looks at the growth in attention paid in the journals to South African artefacts. Whether or not such attention is conducive to cultural production in general is not in question here. There certainly exists a relationship, no doubt complex but nevertheless (at least partially) delimitable, between the activity of academics and the activity of the producers and consumers of 'literature', however defined. This analysis, however, confines itself to the academy, to the evident increase over time of *academic* attention to objects produced in South Africa, and the apparent link between such attention and development of the academic and teaching canons.

The rise of South African literary studies is not the story of a smooth and steady development over time. Nevertheless, a chronological approach in an analysis of this development is justified by the fact that there is a clearly definable and linear trajectory, and we can trace the bumpy ride from obscurity to centrality over a period of roughly half a century. In order to delineate any such shifts, it is necessary to divide up this trajectory into sections and describe each section, in the hope that a reasonably cogent and compelling story will emerge. Such units can be justified only in expedient terms, since the

various trajectories each have their own temporal and spatial nodal points. I have chosen to use the convention of the 'decade': the 1960s, the 1970s and so on, for the sake of convenience of arrangement, although the decades themselves often do show markedly distinctive (though evolving and hardly discontinuous) trends. It could be countered, rightly, that a five-year or 15-year periods could be used in such an analysis to equal effect. Perhaps so, but a one-year or 30-year period clearly would not suffice: a year in the life of the academy is too short, three decades on the other hand is too long – two, sometimes three generational shifts may have occurred in such a period.

The first dedicated *English studies* journal in South Africa begins in 1958. However, though the material is patchy and the discourse thin, I have attempted to outline some academic activity in relation to South African production prior to this date. Hence, Section I below looks at the period from around 1940 through to the end of the 1950s. The sections which follow will confine analysis to individual decades: Section II – 1960s, Section III – 1970s, Section IV – 1980s, Section V – 1990s, and Section VI – 2000-2004. Again, I am not suggesting that developments are inherently decadal.

Dividing the field up in such a way is a purely expedient exercise, and it is ultimately justifiable only by the insights generated by the analysis. However, the first section below differs considerably from the subsequent sections in the felt necessity to provide the general academic or disciplinary context from which South African literary studies would later emerge.

I

A national literature is slowly unfolding in South
Africa, but one cannot inaugurate such a literature as one opens
a flower show. A nation and its literature are not so painlessly
born. (Durrant 1959: 64)

The story of English studies in South Africa is, inter alia, one
of the gradual re-adjustment of the gaze of the academy, seeing the
purview of academics move from an 'English only' set of texts
towards its augmentation by American, then South African and
African texts, and finally, towards a context in which South African
texts dominate the field *as objects of analysis* in articles focusing on
artefacts. This particular story can be reasonably dated as beginning in
the early 1940s when it appears that academic attention began to turn
towards South African production.

The level of interest among the academic community in local
output is difficult to gauge though it is possible to say with some
certainty that the debate was not a superficial one. In any event, the
timing was not propitious. The heightened interest coincided with the
installation during this period of the practice of presenting for literary
study a 'short list' of the best exemplars of imaginative writing in
English. Geoffrey Durrant, quoted above, appears to have been one of
the main proponents of an approach which would come to be known as
Practical Criticism.

The adoption and adherence to the tenets of *Practical
Criticism*, the first signs of the introduction of which can be traced
back to 1926, but which in any event had fully 'arrived' in 1946 to
varying degrees depending on the university (Penrith 1972), brought
with it the critical and pedagogical implications of the method of
'close reading'. Penrith dates the transition from the historical

approach to the Practical Critical approach at South African universities as unfolding in the period from 1930 to 1950. As early as 1947, in the first issue of *Theoria,* Durrant felt able to proclaim that:

> University teachers of literature are nowadays much concerned to relate the study of literature to life, and to *abandon the notorious "Hist. of Eng. Lit." treatment* that did so much harm in the past … [However] by attempting too much within a limited time we may fail to achieve the "discipline of letters" which should be one of our aims … [In a course such as the Cambridge English Tripos] students commonly give all their time for three years to the study of literature. Consequently they may give much attention to philosophical, religious, historical, social and other questions which are adjacent to the study of literature, and they can do this and still have some time left over for the *direct study of imaginative writing*. South African students … give only a comparatively small part of their time to literature, while on the other hand they make a formal study of History, Philosophy, etc., as a part of their degree course ... A knowledge of philology, of "background", of literary history, of bibliography or of poetic theory is valuable for literary studies only as apparatus, and there is no point in assembling the apparatus if we never learn to use it. (Durrant 1947: 3-5, emphasis added)

A conception of literary studies as primarily about literary history is here depicted as merely adjunctive to the established disciplines of economics, society, or philosophy. A reversal of this position is proposed, placing the study of literary objects at the centre of the discipline and assigning the adjunct role to the older, more established disciplines, which would henceforth function 'only as apparatus'. In a statement which appears to be nothing less than the South African version of a declaration of independence of English

studies as a separate discipline, Durrant proposes that 'the study of literature has a right to exist as a separate branch of study, and not as a subsidiary (or "applied" branch) of history, psychology, philosophy, philology, etc.' (Durrant 1947: 4). This method led (albeit gradually) to the centring of the *imaginative* work (poem, play, fictional prose) in both criticism and pedagogical practice, whereas the historical approach employed a very wide definition of the term 'literature' (imaginative works, but also diaries, letters, pamphlets, autobiographical and biographical writing and so on).[29]

It also led to a radical restriction on the number of literary objects studied in the undergraduate curricula through the insistence of intensive reading of a select number of exemplary primary texts. Previously, the practice of teaching literature in part through secondary sources containing a range of surveyed samples and facts on primary objects, led to students being introduced to a very wide range of literary objects, albeit most of them indirectly. Penrith refers to this development as that of the 'versatile scholar being superseded by the specialist' (1972: 109).

From the late 1940s onwards, the ascendant Practical Critical approach marks a departure from the prior literary-historiographical approach on at least three fundamental points. First, it introduces the imperative to examine the imaginative work closely and in its entirety as an indivisible whole (the insistence on 'heresy of paraphrase', the outlawing for serious examination by academics or for use in the

---

[29] For example, a publication in 1941 edited by AC Partridge, entitled *Readings in South African English Prose,* contains many items which would readily be recognised, today, as 'literary': imaginative writing, in this case in the form of short stories. However, such 'literature' comprises a surprisingly low percentage of the 276-page volume. In addition, the publication contains a very wide array of non-fictional *writing,* ranging from descriptions of nature, extracts from journals, letters, biographies and memoirs, as well as a 'philosophy' essay on the topic of the 'mind' by JC Smuts. Hence, 'prose' and 'literature' are not employed in this publication as synonymous with 'imaginative work' or fiction. This is an eminently literary-historiographical understanding of what constitutes the field of the 'literary'.

classroom of 'secondary' readings such as summaries, extracts, or any 'tampered' texts).

Second, associated with this 'close' reading methodology, it insists on the literary object as the primary evidential source for making claims about its nature; thus, while allowing the use of any manner of extra-textual information, interpretations not supportable with reference to the text itself are disallowed.

Third, among the array of valued aesthetic properties, it insists that, in one way or another, the work of literature constitutes an *exemplary application of the English language,* thus dismissing out of hand any texts which represent sub-optimal application of the language or whose textual innovations are not explicable in reference to 'standard' English, with the concomitant imperative to study the work in the original (heresy of translation).

The ascendance of Practical Criticism effectively foreclosed a historical approach to literary studies (that is, an approach which allows considerations of *place* and *time* in critical, research and teaching practice), as well as a comparative approach (which in the South African context would require both the literary-historiographical definition of 'literature' and the allowability of studying works in translation). Hence, the proponents for the formation of a South African literary canon, or academics turning to these objects, would come up against a resistance rooted in the very definition of the discipline in this and subsequent periods.

It would be an all but insurmountable challenge to conceive the appropriate terms for, and to carry out an analysis of, the impact on *public discourse* of the particular layer of academic discourse constituted by the 11 academic journals under review. While it is not only possible, it is even probable, that the discussions in these journals

had implications far beyond the narrow confines of the English departments in which they were conceived, academic discourse is certainly not a *public* discourse.

This view is justified in part by what could be generally characterised as the effective insularity of the journals: the contributors and readership primarily comprise literary academics. This view is further justified, if the assumption is accepted, on the grounds that the primary significance of these journals can be seen to lie in their implications for academic practice, or what has been referred to in the first chapter above as the three functions of knowledge, career, and canon formation, which it is assumed these journals fulfil. In any event, it is the relationship between the journals and the discipline of English studies that is the primary concern of this thesis.

The journals under review in this thesis begin in 1958 with the launch of the first English studies peer-reviewed journal in South Africa: *English Studies in Africa (ESA).* (The occasional article by literary academics appears in the humanities journal *Theoria,* which was launched in 1947, and which are taken into account in this review.) If one were to trace the developments in choice of artefact for scrutiny in academic articles, 1974 would appear to be a watershed date for South African artefacts.

This development was, however, a direct result of the inauguration of the academic journal *English in Africa (EA)*, dedicated entirely to local production. While highly significant, the launch of a journal does not in itself constitute the instantiation of a branch of study, even if its coming into existence can be reasonably assumed to have significantly fostered such production. Furthermore, taking this date as a beachhead for South African production is misleading for at least the following two reasons.

First, in overall volume, academic articles constitute a 'thin' discourse in the 1950s through to the mid-1970s, and this renders their representative value relatively low. While it can be reasonably assumed today, I propose, that the hundred plus academic articles published annually in peer-reviewed journals are more or less representative of academic activity in the discipline and opinion in the academy, the absence of such a forum prior to 1958 (and the relatively low numbers of articles and journals prior to the mid-1970s) means that the extant discourse of those times, such as exists in the archives, cannot provide a similar level of confidence in its representative nature. Having said this, I nevertheless feel that it is justified to conclude that the early articles which do appear are highly indicative of certain attitudes and responses to suggestions on, inter alia, the value of studying South African artefacts.

Second, there is evidence in other sources that, prior to 1958, serious consideration was given by scholars and literary critics to the topic of local imaginative output and its worthiness or otherwise for academic attention. It is not my intention here to provide a comprehensive overview of work on South African literary production. It is my aim, though, to show that the attention paid to South African works in these journals from the mid-1970s onwards was neither a new nor a sudden reorientation within the discipline, and that it is part of an older debate.

Moreover, although the criticism of a generally Marxist or materialist persuasion of what is viewed as a conservative and reactionary academic class becomes louder from the mid-1970s through to the late 1980s, it appears that these debates had less impact on orientations within the discipline than that of the take-up of contemporary literary theories in the mid-1980s. While a relatively small group of Marxist critics appears to have elaborated materialist critiques of South African production fairly consistently since the days

of Dora Taylor in the periodical *Trek* in the 1940s, and a number of literary academics continued to do this through to the 2000s, a materialist approach does not appear to have become mainstream practice.

It must be noted, however, that approaches derivative of Marxism in terms of the tools used in socio-political analyses (as in feminist or postcolonial criticism), have had a wide-ranging impact on pedagogical and critical practice in South Africa, influencing orientations in terms of the objects of the discipline.

As early as 1941, Dora Taylor began publishing literary criticism on South African imaginative work in the Cape Town periodical *Trek.* Her approach is primarily materialist and the artists whose works she analyses are names easily recognisable today, even if her own work is virtually unknown. Writing in 2002, Sandwith claims that '[a]part from brief references in two surveys of South African historiography, Dora Taylor has virtually disappeared from the historical record' (6). Many authors discussed by Taylor are immediately recognisable owing to consistent academic attention paid to them, albeit decades later, namely: Schreiner, Mofolo, Dhlomo, Plaatje, Abrahams, Campbell, Plomer, Millin, Van der Post and others. She turns her attention, too, to a number of authors hardly discussed since then in academic journals: Wulf Sachs, J Grenfell-Williams and Henry John May, inter alia.

Sandwith (2002: 15) avers that 'Taylor's work on African literature is one of the first attempts in South Africa to give serious attention to this … fiction, poetry and drama'. Sandwith's assessment appears to be accurate. The contribution of Taylor is described by Sandwith (2002: 14) as '[bringing] to the South African literary scene dominated at the time [1940s] by the perspectives of South African Leavisites', the principle defenders of which she claims to have been

Geoffrey Durrant and Christina van Heyningen, 'an emphasis on material context'.

Interestingly, a debate between Durrant, Van Heyningen and Taylor takes shape over several issues of *Trek*, in which each side implicitly defends their respective approaches to literary works. The register of Taylor's articles could be described as 'academic' in so far as they go further than mere reviewing of the texts and represent intellectually challenging analyses. Be that as it may, it is clear that academics entered into serious discussions about South African production in the 1940s, though it would still be decades before local artefacts were formally accepted within the fold of the discipline.

One of the earliest pleas for greater attention by academics to South African literary production was made by Partridge in 'The Condition of SA English Literature' (1949), in which he implicates literary academics in a neglect of local production:

> At the moment English literature is under a greater disability than Afrikaans. It does not seem that our *Universities*, places where wits should be freed and judgments liberalized, are shouldering their *burden of responsibility towards* South African *English literature*. In the main they apply the technique of Nelson towards it, and pretend that it *does not exist*; or they *fear* that some *concession to it in the syllabus* will result in the selling of the priceless heritage of English literature by "traitorous clerks". (Partridge 1949: 50, emphasis added)

Partridge is here accusing the universities in South Africa of being remiss in respect of South African literature, and the accusation that literary academics are not 'shouldering [this] burden of responsibility' is a clear indictment. However, the article is in general

185

diffident and hardly constitutes a strident call for changing research agendas or for re-organising the curriculum. The very care taken not to offend established opinion is striking. The general consensus at the time, it would seem, is represented in this article by Greig who, Partridge suggests, has:

> … argued plausibly that "subjects" do not condition the character of a literature … that what character a literature has *derives* mainly *from the language* in which it is written; and that consequently works written in South Africa in English must be regarded as a part of English literature. (Partridge 1949: 46, emphasis added)

However, Partridge adds that '[t]his seems to me to be an academic rather than a practical point' (1949: 46), propounding the need to study such objects in spite of the apparent consensus that extant works do not merit such attention. Nevertheless, the fact of an awareness or consciousness that South African output was poorly or not at all served by the academic community is noteworthy. It would still take a few decades before significant numbers of academics would begin to pay serious attention to local production.

It could be argued that Partridge's view might well have been an eccentric one to hold within the academic community at the time. Nevertheless, it is significant that the future founding editor of *ESA* and co-founder of the *English Academy* held this view at a time at which it appears barely thinkable to include such objects in the curriculum or to propose them as serious objects for research.

The conferences held by university departments of English in 1946, 1948 and 1951, where matters of perceived importance were up for discussion, were striking in terms of the sheer omission of debate on the topic of South African literature. One key theme upon which

186

general consensus reigned was the need to abandon 'the traditional practice of teaching "periods of literature" in a broad historical manner' and apply instead the 'direct method' of 'thorough, honest and critical reading of a sufficient number of great representative works' (Gardner 1957: 49). Although there was agreement on placing 'great works' at the centre of the curriculum, opinion was divided as to how much attention to pay to extra-textual information and on language training:

> Everyone agrees that *some* 'factual' knowledge – historical, biographical and general 'background' knowledge – is essential if any given masterpiece of literature is to be understood, both in its original setting and as a communication to man 'for all time'; but there is at present, in this country … a considerable difference of opinion as to how much of this general background knowledge should be imparted. (Gardner 1957: 51)

The felt need, in founding a separate discipline, to subordinate the claims of the established disciplines (philosophy, history, psychology, philology) has been noted above. The debate here is clearly about whether the 'Hist. of Lit.' approach, associated primarily with Oxford, as opposed to the Practical Criticism school associated with Cambridge, should be allowed to continue prevailing, as it had done for a considerable period before this time (WH Gardner 1957, CO Gardner 1958, Goldman 1958, Mulhern 1979).

In privileging a circumscribed set of objects for analysis, a claim was staked for this discipline. I would like to suggest here that the 'Hist. of Lit.' approach, with its wide definition of objects (fiction but also writing purporting to be factual, such as journals, diaries, letters, autobiographies, and so on) borrowed methods and propositions from many disciplines. As a result, it was not perceived

as sufficiently distinguishable to supply the conditions for constituting a full discipline in its own right, that is, a domain of objects, a set of methods and a stock of 'true' propositions on a clearly defined 'own' field.

Practical Criticism, on the other hand, supplied these: a clearly defined domain of objects (imaginative: prose, plays and poetry) which were not, or not easily, claimable by another discipline, an own method ('close reading', that is, direct and intensive study of individual literary artefacts applying certain formal criteria for analysis), and several propositions held to be true (such as the indivisibility of the literary artefact).

If this somewhat schematic and exaggerated summary of the earlier 'Hist. of Lit.' approach, and its successor the Practical Critical approach, be granted me for my narrow purposes here, it becomes apparent that South African literary artefacts are not inevitably or necessarily excluded in either orientation to the discipline. Why, then, in the 1940s and 1950s, did the academics (largely of the Practical Criticism persuasion, though several key academics, such as AC Partridge (1959: 1) and Guy Butler (1991: 96), were not full converts) all but ignore local artefacts? It would seem to me that the impact of the Practical Critical approach on the study of South African literary production by academics was dramatic. The reasons are manifold and complex.

First, indeed, there was no bar on the possible eventual inclusion of a South African work in the discipline's domain of objects *if* it could be counted among the 'great works' of imaginative output in English: the very definition of the discipline enabled this. I see this assumption structuring the debates in this period: whenever discussions turned to South African literature, it was either to decry or defend its value in reference to the great works.

Second, while it is hardly inevitable that the absence of South African output in the university curricula would lead to the eschewing of such objects in research, there is certainly a connection, if complex and temporally disjoined, between the development of the academic archive and teaching practice. Without a body of *authorised* knowledge on certain objects, the construction of university-level courses on such objects is all but inconceivable, or in any event, impracticable.

Third, I would aver that, had the Practical Critical approach not been adopted, the study of South African objects would have come about much sooner, and to a greater extent. This is so, I believe, not because the 'Hist. of Lit.' is inherently egalitarian or democratic, far from it. The division of the field into periods, genres, styles and so on, and the definition of exemplary works (whether in terms of the period, technique, theme or whatever aspect the literary historian chooses to focus on), is an inherently comparative process requiring many normative judgements.

Hence, though the criteria might differ greatly, both 'Hist. of Lit.' and 'Practical Criticism' are evaluative and selective. The reason I believe South African artefacts would have been paid more attention by academics if the Practical Criticism (later evolving into the New Criticism) had not obtained dominance is because of the kind of questions put to the objects selected for disciplinary treatment.

The Practical Critics would ask of a work whether it is exemplary in terms of certain internal a-historical properties (complexity of style and language, 'organic wholeness', irony, paradox, ambiguity), implicitly or explicitly comparing the artefact to its coevals and exemplars from previous ages, whether from the same geographical space or not. Moreover, the importance of style and

189

language precludes or renders highly problematic any examination of texts in translation or texts where the use of the English language is considered less than virtuoso.

As Hall (1958: 155) demonstrates, in applying these criteria 'James supersedes Dickens, Forster supersedes Fielding, Conrad supersedes Thackeray'. Even if South African artefacts displayed the desired properties, the field of competition extends to the entire English-speaking world, and is timeless. Applying the criteria strictly, let's say objectively, would likely not see a single South African artefact counted in the top twenty 'great' works (although JM Coetzee's *Disgrace* might, now, be in with a chance under these hypothetical terms, since it has received unequalled metropolitan ratification).

If undergraduate curricula were constructed on these grounds, South African students of English studies might never encounter literary works produced in the country. It would appear that, as far as local production was concerned, after the wide-scale acceptance of the Practical Critical approach, this was indeed the consequence in South Africa: 'great' works from the English canon (of which only a few could be prescribed due to time limitations resulting from the 'close reading' or direct and intense approach) occupied the curriculum (middle and old English continued to be taught using the historical approach).

The 'Hist. of Lit.' approach is not easily characterised and would seem to defy definition. It is here posited as an approach because I believe its effects in pedagogical and critical practice, and the relationship which it encodes between academic and artefact, contrast so starkly to that of its successor orthodoxy – Practical Criticism – that this characterisation is justified.

In the first instance, for the literary historian, the range of artefacts generally regarded as falling in the domain of disciplinary objects is significantly wider than merely the imaginative: letters, diaries, biographies, and many other types of writing, all potentially fall within his/her purview. In the second instance, the lower general threshold requirement of *historical* significance as opposed to *literary* significance, exponentially increases the sheer number of objects potentially up for academic scrutiny. Perforce, artefacts are not treated as hallowed, hypostasised texts, and even when imaginative literary artefacts are singled out for particular attention, the act of placing large numbers of artefacts historically, inevitably distends the connection between the artefact and the academic.

The above tentative characterisation appears to be justified on a perusal of even a small number of relatively recent literary histories (Chapman 1996; Gérard 1981, 1986; Gray 1979; Heywood 2004; Van Wyk Smith 1990). Although imaginative works may constitute the main kind of text scrutinized, the primacy which the Practical Critical approach accords the literary artefact is not in evidence. This is not to deny imaginative objects (fictional prose, plays, poems) were key objects and organising principles within the literary-historiographical approach to the discipline, only to suggest their relative status.

Adherents of Practical Criticism accord primacy to the imaginative object: this status is not generally subverted by the academic commentator or her commentary – the uniqueness, indivisibility, and value of the selected exemplary works are constantly asserted (Durrant 1981, Van Heyningen 1963). By comparison, the literary historian inserts and subsumes the objects of the discipline into his / her discourse. While the literary historian might well use the same vocabulary as the Practical Critic (irony, ambiguity and so on), a Conrad could conceivably be discussed quite comfortably on the same page as a Thackeray, and both potentially could be defined as

exemplary for a wide range of possible reasons, whether on philosophical, religious, historical, social, formal (theme, style, language, plot structure, genre) or any other grounds.

As with the historian, data is fodder for the academic canon. In other words, the literary artefact is generally decentred in the literary-historiographical approach. The Practical Critics assert the primacy of the text, centring it. (With the introduction of contemporary theory in the 1980s, the primacy of the literary academic and his / her discourse is reasserted, and the literary artefact is again decentred.)

A literary-historiographical approach does not put to the South African literary artefact the question of inherent value, or in any event, not only. Any number of exemplary properties or significances, whether historical, political, psychological, or formal, might suffice for it to draw the attention of the literary academic of such persuasion. For example, Ian Glenn decries (in his introduction to the 1987 edition) the almost total silence of South African critics (academic or otherwise) on Daphne Rooke's best-selling novel, *Mittee*, published in 1951, a work of some social and political significance by almost any measure (Rooke 1987: 1-2).

This is a silence which almost certainly would not have occurred at the time if the academy espoused the literary-historiographical approach. What I hope to have indicated, if not in any conclusive or absolute sense 'proven', is that South African artefacts might well have received more attention in the 1940s and 1950s if the literary-historiographical approach had been the dominant one. Adherents of Practical Criticism were, I suggest, locked into a certain logic of an approach and a concomitant gaze which, while it did not explicitly disqualify local production, so constricted the domain of objects as to virtually exclude the possibility of South African literary studies being taken seriously by academics.

The 'Conference of Writers, Publishers, Editors and University Teachers of English' in 1956 marks a turning point. For the first time, on a tertiary-level forum (that is, one in which literary academics took part), South African literary production was openly debated (*Proceedings* 1957). According to the Proceedings:

> Those who opposed the inclusion [of South African production in the English literature course] did so on the following grounds: that such a practice might lead to some loss in the value of a literature course (local writers might displace Shakespeare, Milton and others) … and that local writers might be rated above their worth. (53)

Haresnape decries this position as 'conservative' (1988: 42-43). It would seem to me that (from the perspective of a discursive analysis of the discipline) it mattered little or not at all whether the academics were 'conservative', however one understands the term. Haresnape's discussion of the position of Philip Segal is a case in point: the latter's disinclination to accept South African authors into the curriculum did not preclude a highly supportive attitude and significant level of engagement in promoting local production (47). More pertinently, it would seem to me that subscribing to the Practical Critical approach bound the literary academic – and even more so under the stringent 'organicism' of the New Criticism – to approach disciplinary objects in a certain way. South African objects were not necessarily excluded: they could eventually be included if they could be shown to measure up to the particular and stringent aesthetic criteria defined by the approach.

On the other hand, the literary-historiographical approach would seem to inform the dissenting opinions at the conference, represented by Butler and Howarth. The categories and terminology of

the literary historian, and the capacity of this approach to invent new typologies to describe the lie of the literary land, presents little difficulty in responding to the phenomenon of new literatures. For this reason, it is possible for Howarth to conceive of a 'Place in University English Studies' for 'Indigenous Literature' (Haresnape 1988: 43) precisely because (applying this approach) it is a conceivable object for disciplinary analysis.

In addressing the material problems faced by the practising poet in South Africa (Haresnape 1988: 43), Butler enunciated a set of statements entirely inassimilable in the Practical Critical definition of the discipline: apart from the questionable status of the selected objects (South African poets and poetry), external contextual factors are ultimately not allowable for interpretative and evaluative purposes. However, the literary historian, somewhat voraciously, allows for a very liberal conception of allowable evidence: in elucidating the significance of an artefact, much like the historian or cultural anthropologist, any facts are potentially useful and garnered for interpretative application, subject only to presenting a cogent case in demonstrating their relevance.

The positions presented by, and the representations of Butler in relation to the discipline and local production, are intriguing for a number of reasons. He is depicted as a champion of South African imaginative output and among the first vocal literary academics to openly advocate the inclusion of such works in the curriculum and research agendas (Haresnape 1988). Haresnape represents Butler as anti-colonial and in antagonistic relation to culturally chauvinist positions:

> [Butler] rejected the Eurocentric cultural attitude of 'colonials' who sought to transplant the metropolitan ways to Africa without reference to the local. Butler remarked: [at the

194

1956 conference] "I am not attracted to the notion of maintaining white civilization, of forming a cultural laager. Our job is not self-preservation, it is creative, catalytic, dynamic; …" His approach to … South African literature in English was implicit in this affirmation; it constituted a study to be taken seriously. (Haresnape 1988: 43)

Butler's own position in respect of the reigning orthodoxy at the time, that is Practical Criticism, is ambiguous. On the one hand, he avers that the Cambridge school had brought in a valuable innovation to the study of literature. On the other hand, he held the view that the study of literary history should not be abandoned:

Most English departments in SA at this time [1948] worked on the traditional Eng. Lit. model, with its heavy emphasis on literary history … A group of critics in Cambridge [Practical Critics] had demonstrated conclusively that the products of this type of literary study were incapable of answering simple questions on the meaning of poems whose praises they had parroted … It seemed to me that they made an *unarguable case* for *close reading*, for attention to the words on the page: the study of verbal technique – which as a would-be poet I found interesting and chastening … I had several difficulties with this approach. Certainly works of art have integrity and some can be enjoyed and appreciated with little or no attention to biography or history or the Zeitgeist … but for scholars to *turn* their *backs on the genesis and origins of literary works* struck me as simply *unscholarly*. (Butler 1991: 96, emphasis added)

Nevertheless, in 1977, in a review of developments in English departments in South Africa since 1948, Butler avers that the 'close-reading practical criticism revolution in SA … was necessary and on

balance in the interests of our subject' (1977: 5). In the same article, the following assessment is made on the small concessions in some curricula with regard to local artefacts: 'So far our African setting has resulted in minor innovations in the syllabus, but no one would call them revolutionary' (9).

It would seem to me that the tension caused by the competing demands of the two approaches, that is the unpopular literary-historiographical approach (mix of non-formal and formal) and the dominant Practical Critical approach (primarily formal), is reflected in Butler's attitudes. It would seem too, though, that as long as the Practical Critical approach remained ascendant, the struggle to include South African artefacts in the domain of objects of the discipline would remain fraught.

In Haresnape's account of the above-mentioned 1956 conference, the very idea of South African literary studies was received with scorn by most academics (1988). However, the conference appears to have been the catalyst for the first academic journal dedicated to English studies locally: *English Studies in Africa (ESA)*. According to AC Partridge, *ESA* 'began at the behest of the Inter-University Conference held in Johannesburg in July, 1956' (Partridge and Birley 1964: 139).

In the opening editorial, the founding editor appears to make a whole-hearted endorsement of the Practical Critical approach with its direct and intensive study of the 'great' works of English literature, conceived of as a single, timeless 'heritage':

> The task of *English Studies in Africa* will be to … promote the study of the best English literature, wherever it is written … There is a danger, now, that rival English-speaking cultures, evolved in different continents, may press their claims

196

to recognition at the expense of the parent tradition itself. English is one heritage. (Partridge 1958: 1-2)

However, Partridge shares with Butler a certain level of scepticism with regard to the Practical Critical approach and demonstrates a belief in the need to retain elements of language study in the English studies curriculum. With reference to the split in opinion on the purpose of English studies (primarily between literary historiography and Practical Criticism), he states:

> Disparate views on the purpose and methods of English studies have made reform tentative and difficult. These divisions stem from England itself, and have often been militant, since the orthodoxy of the earlier generation of English professors was challenged by a group … at Cambridge … The sensible scholar, realizing that the wallet of doctrinal disillusion at time's back is certain to bring compromise, has, so far, avoided unswerving allegiance to Eliot or Richards or Leavis. The sponsors of [*English Studies in Africa*] hope to allow for the uses of diversity, and to show that the schools of Oxford, Cambridge, London, Harvard and Yale are, in reality, complementary. (Partridge 1958: 1-2)

Hence, in respect of Practical Criticism, Partridge's position is more equivocal than it at first appears. As could well be expected, the journal focused primarily on artefacts produced abroad. It is noteworthy, nevertheless, that 1958 saw the publication on an article on Roy Campbell (Krige), and in 1959, Thomas Codjoe (Hopkinson) and Olive Schreiner (Heard) receive academic attention, too.

What the above discussion on the South African literary academics' relation to local artefacts in the 1940s and 1950s aims to show, albeit obliquely, is that the mere fact of existence of this

production constituted a challenge to the academy. This challenge was debated, argued over, and responses, if slow, unobliging, and feeble, were formulated: the seeds, if you will, were planted. The primary constraining factor was the Practical Critical approach and its definition of the domain of objects of the discipline; the primary enabling factor was a response informed by the older, in some opinions more conservative, literary-historiographical approach to disciplinary objects.

II

The establishment of a Republic and the withdrawal from the British Commonwealth at the beginning of the 1960s lent natural impetus to the drive by several South African literary academics to focus academic attention upon South African literary objects (Haresnape 1988: 45). Arguably, as a response to the establishment of a Republic, the English Academy of Southern Africa ('English Academy') was set up in July 1961, dominated by literary academics – almost all heads and senior academic staff of English departments were full members (the only exception being University of Cape Town), though membership was drawn also from departments of history and education, inter alia (Anon 1962b: 14).

The declared aim of the English Academy was to 'maintain and propagate in Southern Africa the best standards of English reading, writing and speech' (Anon 1962a: i). Its main activities concerned language usage and language training at other than tertiary level. Nevertheless, the high-level involvement of literary academics and the instituting of literary prizes for local production arguably constituted an impetus for the gradual acceptance by the academic community of a need to pay serious attention to South African artefacts.

The 'Thomas Pringle' Award for the best articles in English in 'journalism (editorials, feature writing, reporting and criticism of literature and the fine arts)' (Anon 1962b: 12) was the first such prize to be instituted. This award was later expanded also to creative writing – the 1976 award went to Sipho Sepamla for a short story. This was followed in succeeding years by the administration by the English Academy of the 'Olive Schreiner Prize' for poetry (notably awarded in 1974 to Oswald Mtshali for *Sounds of a Cowhide Drum*) (Ullyatt

1975: 5), previously administered by the Akademie vir Wetenskap en Kuns (Anon 1979: 5).

When a definitive history of the English Academy is eventually written, it will undoubtedly show its vital contribution, inter alia, in bringing English literary academics to the coalface, so to speak, of South African literary production. From the inauguration of the English Academy in 1961, it would seem to me, it becomes merely a question of time before the disciplinary boundaries are relaxed, and local objects fall under the scrutinising gaze of the academic, a precondition for its introduction into the discipline.

There are relatively few academic articles in the journals in the 1960s focusing on South African or African artefacts, though there is a noteworthy level of attention. In any event, it would appear that at least a handful of literary academics no longer applied what Partridge once referred to as the 'technique of Nelson towards [South African literature], …pretend[ing] that it does not exist' (1949: 50).

Arguments differ as to why attention should be paid by academics to local output. An examination of some of the reasons put forward sheds light on the identity of the discipline at the time. In what follows, I will briefly outline the justifications suggested by three proponents, namely: Girling, Jacobson, and Butler. In 1960, Girling provides an overview of local literary production in 'Provincial and Continental: Writers in South Africa', expressing the need to examine local production on psychological (identification) or patriotic grounds:

> The novelists in their successes, the poets in their struggles, are showing the way to a single indigenous way of living, and expressing a single loyalty to the land in all its appearances and to the people in all their guises … Their confidence may be expressed in a phrase: they are Africans,

200

not Europeans. In the course of time, we other South Africans will cease to regard ourselves as European provincials, and will commit ourselves to Africa, the land we have chosen. (1960: 118)

In 1961 in an article published in *ESA*, Dan Jacobson, a South African writer whose works academics would discover later, makes an exceedingly diffident call for the inclusion of American prose as an object of analysis in departments of English studies in South Africa (Jacobson 1961). The arguments advanced, though, would apply likewise in defending the case for the inclusion of South African imaginative work in the curriculum. The tentative delivery of the argument suggests that the author is conscious of the significant degree of resistance that exists at the academy, and the argument is rhetorically astute, perhaps strategically so.

The grounds for making space for other works, and thus excluding some English works, is the latter's 'foreignness' to South African students, and one of the grounds given for including American literature is the fact that 'a literature is not a matter of the writings of certain individual men of genius, but ... an expression of the society out of which the genius arises' (59). Both of Jacobson's arguments would apply equally for the inclusion of South African writing in the syllabus.

In 1969, in his summing up of a conference on the place of South African writing in the curriculum, Butler concludes:

> I'm not trying to boost South African stuff because it is South African. I simply say that here is a community which is going to get a literature because their writers are determined to get it for them … you can't stop this process of acclimatization. The point of the conference is the extent to which and the

201

manner in which educational systems can guide, aid and abet this force to aid the process. (Butler 1970b: 189-190)

Whatever the merit of the various positions on why South African output should be seriously considered by academics, whether for reasons of identity (Girling), whether the 'foreignness' of works prescribed is not conducive to the study of literature or whether such study is really about how a certain society expresses itself (Jacobson), or whether the development of a local literature is inevitable anyway and the university does ill to ignore it (Butler), all the arguments are doomed to failure if the terms in which the discipline is constructed render the arguments invalid. The domain of allowable disciplinary objects described from the perspective of Practical Criticism bars from consideration any objects failing its criteria for inclusion. These criteria are complex and not much can be said about them with absolute certainty or accuracy; however, the criteria clearly do not include nationality, identity, or the representative value for a particular society, as appropriate considerations in deciding on the inclusion within the discipline of literary artefacts.

Nevertheless, these calls to prioritise the indigenous are in part heeded. The future South African canon begins to take shape in the 1960s. In 1960, *English Studies in Africa* publishes articles on Nadine Gordimer (Abrahams), Alan Paton (Baker), and Thomas Pringle (Hall). However, it is Pauline Smith who receives the most attention (Eglington 1960; Haresnape 1963a, 1963b, 1966). General reviews of local production include: South African literature in 1960 (Girling), and 1968 (Dett); and South African poetry in 1966 (Povey) and 1969 (Dett). From 1963, the quarterly *English Studies at UNISA Bulletin*, from 1967 titled *Unisa English Studies*, dedicated for the most part to 'great' works from the United Kingdom, publishes articles on South African poets (Beeton 1968a, 1968b, 1968c) and begins in 1969 to publish South African poetry, including poems by Oswald Mtshali.

As far as South African production is concerned, the 1969 conference entitled: 'South African Writing in English and its Place in the School and University', is a landmark event. It was organised by the English Academy and the conference proceedings were published in *English Studies in Africa* 13(1), the second conference to be organised by this association (the first held in 1966 was on 'English as Communication') (Butler 1970a: 11). Never before had the topic been raised in an academic forum so explicitly and as the central theme for debate. The then president of the English Academy in his opening address on the purpose of the conference stated:

> South African writing in English … You will, I am sure, have noticed the non-committal modesty of the phrase. Writing, not Literature. We are reasonably sure that there is a body of writing which can be called South African. We are not sure whether it deserves the title Literature. At what point does a body of writing become a literature? When it contains ten, or three hundred, or three thousand works of internationally acknowledged merit? Or when a group of advanced eccentrics claim the title for whatever body of writing does exist? At what point did, say, Irish, or Afrikaans, or American literature *arrive?* Or is there only one literature in English? (Butler 1970a: 12, emphasis and ellipsis in original)

These sentiments are a re-iteration of previously held positions. Arguably, a literary-historiographical approach to literature would view the 'arrival' of its disciplinary objects (that is, the sufficient and necessary condition for a discursive practice applying this approach) immediately once a 'body of writing' is de-limitable. The significance of the objects might include its 'merit', but lack of merit however measured would not *necessarily* debar the objects from its purview: the literary historian finds significance in a wide range of factors

(elements of form, origin, influence and so on). The Practical Critical approach, however, applied narrower criteria: this position, and the answer to Butler's arguments in favour of the study of South African 'writing', is well represented at this conference by Segal's contribution:

> … our first concern in school and university is to introduce pupils and students to as much as we can of the *total* tradition through which and by which they live … Can we find time to study books which … will make it necessary to drop out of our course a play of Ben Jonson's, a novel of Jane Austen's, a major work of modern criticism or poetry? (Segal 1970: 176-177)

In other words, the 'great works' should remain at the centre of English studies, conceived as a singular tradition not divisible into regions or national units, and incapable of enlarging its understanding of significance beyond specific formal criteria inherent in the artefact itself. If the conference did not mark a sea-change in the constitution of the domain of objects of the discipline, the papers given on South African artefacts, the significance of the purpose of the conference in which literary academics from across South Africa participated, a number of papers reviewing the South African novel, short-story and the fiction of Nadine Gordimer and Alan Paton, and the ensuing debates and activity on the topic, marked a certain shift in attitudes in comparison with the 1956 conference (Haresnape 1988: 46).

III

The 1970s saw more regular and concerted attention paid to South African output. The two existing journals of English studies, *English Studies in Africa* (*ESA*) and *Unisa English Studies* (*UES*), were augmented by *UCT Studies in English* (*UCT*) in 1970 and *English in Africa* (*EA*) in 1974. *EA* evinced a literary-historiographical approach and focused almost exclusively on South African production. Key events in the decade were the following conferences: the 'Poetry 74' Conference; the 1976 'South African Prose Conference'; the 1978 'Modern Criticism Symposium'; and the 'Association of University English Teachers of South Africa' (AUETSA) conferences which were held annually beginning in 1977. The AUETSA conferences constituted the first regular forum for debates by literary academics on issues relating to tertiary-level English studies (Haresnape 1988: 49).

The academic articles focusing on local production in this period were significant. *ESA* published articles on Herman Charles Bosman (Gray 1977b), Athol Fugard (Woodrow 1970), Nadine Gordimer (Callan 1970a, Green 1979), Alan Paton (Callan 1970a, 1976; Cooke 1979), Sol Plaatje (Couzens 1971), William Plomer (Herbert 1979), Olive Schreiner (Wilson 1971, Marquard 1979a), Pauline Smith (Wilhelm 1977), Vincent Swart (Leveson 1979), and on fictional prose (Sands 1970), the short-story (Maclennan 1970), poetry (Beeton 1970, Harnett 1970, Van Wyk Smith 1976), oral poetry (Opland 1971, 1973), non-fictional prose (Butler 1970c, 1970d; Callan 1970b), and media (Couzens 1976).

UES continued its practice of publishing South African poetry throughout the decade, dedicating the entire third number of the 1970 volume, and most of the second number of 1974, to local poetic output. The practice of publishing poetry is not in itself remarkable;

what makes this practice noteworthy is the fact that the forum is *academic* and its appearance here signifies its *pertinence to the academy*. In addition, annual reviews of periodical literature begin for the first time to list articles focusing on the work of South African and African artists. Articles appeared on Douglas Blackburn (Gray 1976), Roy Campbell (Beeton 1972), Robert Greig (Mabin 1974), Ruth Miller (Chapman 1979b), Adèle Naudé (Pereira 1974), Mike Nicol (Ronge 1974), Thomas Pringle (Adey 1978), Olive Schreiner (Beeton 1978), and Pauline Smith (Beeton 1973).

The decade's two new journals appear diametrically opposed at first sight: *UCT* purports to focus mainly on medieval English literature (this is its founding intention, but this is later broadened to include other periods and literatures as well), while *EA* focuses on literary production in English in South Africa. However, both work on a pre-Practical Criticism definition of literature, that is, one which encompasses not only poetry, plays and fictional prose, but other forms of literature as well, such as orature, journals, polemics and so on. In addition, since the literary-historiographical approach informs medieval studies as well as the historical reconstruction and the writing of literary history in South Africa, both *UCT* and *EA* shared the historical method or, better stated, *methods*.

Among the 11 journals under review, *EA* has arguably made the most substantial contribution to the academic archive on South African output. In the 1970s, there were a number of special issues on South African authors containing both introductions by academics and primary material by the author. These were: Vol 1 No 1 - Olive Schreiner (1974); Vol 2 No 1 – RRR Dhlomo (1975); Vol 3 No 2 - Sol Plaatje (1976); Vol 4 No 2 - HIE Dhlomo (1977); and Vol 5 No 1 - Douglas Blackburn (1978).

Articles of criticism appeared on works by Douglas Blackburn (Gray 1978), HIE Dhlomo (Visser 1974, 1977), RRR Dhlomo (Couzens 1975), Athol Fugard (Houch 1978), Nadine Gordimer (Lomberg 1976), Stephen Gray (Rice 1977), Dan Jacobson (Baxter 1978), Arthur Nortje (Chapman 1979a), Sol Plaatje (Couzens and Willan 1976, Gray 1977a), Olive Schreiner (Rive 1974, Gray 1975, Wilhelm 1979a), WC Scully (Marquard 1978), Pauline Smith (Haresnape 1977a), as well as discussions on South African literature (Couzens 1974, Wilhelm 1978a), Anglo-Boer war poetry (Van Wyk Smith 1974), African poetry (Mphahlele 1979), South African black poets of the 1970s (Rive 1977, Emmett 1979), and the mining novel in South African literature (Hofmeyr 1978).

UCT did not publish articles on South African authors in regular issues in the 1970s. However, the proceedings of the inaugural AUETSA conference in 1977 was published as Issue 7 of September 1977. The title of the conference was 'The Business of Criticism' and, apart from the published papers by Butler (a review of developments in English departments in South Africa) (1977), Haresnape's paper on Pauline Smith (1977b), and Voss's discussion on approaches to the South African novel (1977), there is not much in the way of critical work on local production.

Only two published articles from the conference deal directly with its ostensible theme: The Business of Criticism. Both are revealing as they represent the then reigning approach to the discipline (Practical Criticism) which effectively locked out South African artefacts from further consideration, or in any event made the entry requirements too stringent for any such works to qualify. With reference to the 'popular' method of Practical Criticism, Gillham suggests:

[T]he approach designated 'Practical Criticism' ... aims to make the reader or critic fully aware of the possibilities of the work in hand. In order to be successful the critic should be *as fully informed as the occasion requires*. If the work demands it he should be able to select from his knowledge the relevant information about the composition of the work and its historical and social setting. (Though one must add that the *really great works* have the habit of providing their own *relevant information.*) ... He should, in every way, be able to realise the *unique nature of the work* being studied, and in order to do so make a unique experience of his critical act. [H]e must be able to give his reasons for *refusing* to acknowledge *greatness* in the work. Just as there is no critical science or critical method that can be brought to the critical encounter, there are *no fixed critical criteria* which can be used to determine the greatness of the work; the work will itself suggest the criteria it is to be judged by. (Gillham 1977: 15-16)

As discussed in previous sections, while at first one might fail to see the subterfuge of 'no fixed critical criteria', closer examination reveals that certain criteria are not acceptable. The primacy and uniqueness of the 'work in hand', while seemingly giving absolute licence to draw on any source of extra-textual information, is anything but such a licence: such external information is subordinate to the condition of assisting in realising the 'unique nature of the work'. When one does not have the wherewithal to recognise 'greatness', one must justify this shortfall by looking not to the work, but to oneself: one must explain one's 'refusal of its greatness'.

Seemingly unable or unwilling to identify the *appropriate* critical criteria, the second article on the 'business of criticism' in this issue of *UCT Studies in English* is revealing in what it outlines as

inappropriate criteria. In his article titled 'Inappropriate Critical Criteria', the author outlines clearly what such criteria are:

How much time, if any, should we give in our English Departments to the criticism and teaching of South African and African English Literature … there is absolutely no reason why literary criticism should or should not concern itself … with such works, provided, of course, that they are written in English and that they *are* literature … Many books by African writers have a great deal of political, psychological, sociological or anthropological interest – and, judged by those criteria, are "good", or at least interesting – but are lacking in language skill of the highest order i.e. are mediocre, or even failures, as works of literature. They don't really make us see what the author saw and feel what he felt in the way that Jane Austen and Dickens do. If in our departments we have to balance the profit against the loss, what do we do? In my purist view, there can be no serious doubt: our concern is with literature, not with politics or anthropology or what-have-you, and if the works are inferior or negligible as literature they have no place in our curricula. The same applies to inferior works by local authors, black and white, whom patriotic sentiment or neighbourly partisanship might urge us to consider … Too often, when works are prescribed for study … they are chosen on … irrelevant criteria: political or anthropological interest, or merely for the, perhaps praiseworthy, but non-literary and irrelevant, reason, that it is right for students to take an interest in all aspects of life on the continent on which they live … 'relevance', – what a loathsome word! – is political not literary … one of the most infuriating of all the false, non-literary criteria that bedevil the study of literature … Commitment! What a word! Personally I

would like to see all its users "committed" to purgatory – or worse. (Harvey 1977: 54-55)

It is not possible to assess how prevalent these views were. What both articles drive home is how this particular approach, which I have been referring to all along as 'Practical Criticism' or the 'Practical Critical approach', defines a particular understanding of the discipline, and is embedded in the very conception of the appropriate domain of objects and related methods.

I have not found starker presentations of the Practical Criticism position than those represented above by Gillham and Harvey. They are highly emotive and somewhat unguarded statements, significantly exposing the authors to criticism, particularly from a current, 'privileged', vantage-point. The statements seem to suggest a certain sense of embattlement, an exasperation born of the need to explain what should be obvious to all but apparently is not. My aim here is not to lampoon these positions or the literary critics who held them. Without wanting to suggest absence of agency on the part of literary academics, I do want to suggest that there is a certain inevitability or set of pre-determined outcomes arising from particular conceptions of disciplines, not that those outcomes are at all clear when starting out.

Seen in this light, it is perfectly conceivable that literary academics of all political persuasions could be found who endorse such views *given the acceptance of this definition of the disciplinary domain.* Indeed, there may be many today who hold similar views, that is, that certain aesthetic criteria are – even if changing from generation to generation – sufficiently stable to be regarded as universal, and that wide consensus can be reached on what is 'great' literature and what is not.

If one subscribed to this understanding of the discipline, or attempted to engage in discussions where such premises are accepted, arguing for the inclusion of South African works on 'inappropriate criteria' ('relevance', 'national interest', 'commitment'), would render the argument lost before it began. In such a situation, only two options remain open to the disaffected: either re-invent the criteria (develop different criteria for assessing 'greatness'), or change the mechanics of the discipline: re-describe the relevant domain of objects, define new methods of analysis, and formulate a set of truth propositions for a new approach to the discipline.

In his summing up of the situation in English departments in South Africa in 1977, Butler concludes that '[s]o far our African setting has resulted in minor innovations in the syllabus, but no one would call them revolutionary' (1977: 9). Educated at Oxford where the approach to literature was historical and the curriculum contained substantial study of the English language, his sympathy for the Practical Critical approach, dominant in South African English departments at the time, is conditioned by what Butler perceives to be a need to re-introduce or devote greater space in the English studies curriculum to language studies as well as South African and African literature in English (Butler 1960, 1970a, 1970b, 1977, 1991). At the AUETSA conference in 1977, all indications are that his position was a minority one.

Nevertheless, as we have seen above, though a minor practice (in terms of volume of academic articles), the serious study of South African literary artefacts, which began as a trickle in the 1960s, turned into a small though significant stream in the 1970s. The 1978 and 1979 AUETSA conference papers provide further proof of scholarly work on these artefacts. Papers on South African authors were presented at both conferences on general themes (approaches to South African poetry, formation of national literatures, general overviews), and

specific papers were presented on Alan Paton (Thompson 1979), William Plomer (Wilhelm 1978b), Olive Schreiner (Wilhelm 1979b), William Charles Scully (Marquard 1979b), Pauline Smith (Hutchings 1979), Es'kia Mphahlele (Hodge 1979), and John Coetzee (Wood 1979).

The 1978 Modern Criticism Symposium, from which a selection of papers appeared in *UES* (Vol 16 No 2 of the same year), marks an important event: the introduction of contemporary theory, the full impact of which would see its fruition in the mid to late 1980s. Semiotics, narratology, hermeneutics, Marxism, phenomenology, and Adorno on aesthetic theory were all discussed as possible alternative approaches to literary artefacts.

With the exception of Marxism, these approaches would share with Practical Criticism a generally a-historical view of artefacts, and analysis would be primarily synchronic. In addition, with the exception of aesthetic theory (depending on which one of many), these approaches would differ from Practical Criticism in respect of the artefact: the work of art would *not* be placed at the centre of the new approaches. Practical Criticism elevates the artefact by insisting on its unity, subordinating all external information to the primary source of facts – the work itself. Even commentary by Practical Critics is rendered secondary, derivative of the primary work. The relationship of the critic to the object is profoundly diffident. Not so with the other approaches which might likewise regard the object as a source of information, yet evince a tendency to prioritise method over object and, potentially, regard facts sourced externally as of greater importance in the interpretation of the text than the text itself, or in any event, accord no primacy of status to text-sourced evidence.

The literary-historiographical approach has the same effect as that of contemporary theory: the artefact is decentred. However, the

literary historiographer's relationship to her objects (of which there is a finite set, even if the domain covered is much more extensive than that of the Practical Critic), while far from diffident and certainly more domineering than that of the Practical Critic, does not quite result in a complete reversal of roles, where the literary artefact becomes secondary and the commentary becomes primary. While it is certainly not always the case, I would argue that the hallmark of the contemporary theoretical approaches to the primary text is that the literary artefacts do become secondary and commentary does become primary: artefacts become ingredients, as it were, in a variety of experiments to prove the validity or otherwise of certain recipes or theories.

The 'Poetry 74' conference saw Mike Kirkwood launch a critique of the literary establishment, coining of the phrase 'Butlerism' (after Guy Butler) to identify the literary academy's purported approach: liberal, patronising, falsely conceiving of itself as a benign 'buffer' between strident Boer and Black nationalisms, while its members, once stripped of their 'false consciousness', are revealed as co-conspirators in class domination.

Haresnape avers that this conference constituted the first occasion at which that 'the legitimacy of the subject [of South African poetry] was taken completely for granted' (1988: 48), and seemingly the first identifiable victory for proponents of South African artefacts, such as Butler. Ironically, at the very point of ascendance, the earlier, pioneering proponents of South African production, such as Butler, come under scalding attack. Isabel Hofmeyr characterises the proponents of South African production as promoters of a baneful 'English South African Culture Theory':

> Culture [for the English literary academics] becomes
> the missionary-like task of spreading elitist and highly

evaluative assumptions with strong Eurocentric overtones. And it is precisely these attitudes that have gone into the formation of that selective South African tradition mentioned above – a 'tradition' based on elitist, evaluative and often racially exclusive assumptions, which combine to celebrate those writers that mesh in comfortably with its worldview … like Alan Paton and Olive Schreiner … both orthodox liberals … should be remembered as the 'greatest' or most well-known South African authors. As with most tradition-builders, the practitioners of South African literature have attempted to pass off their class-based tastes. (Hofmeyr 1979b: 43)

Hofmeyr's approach is a Marxist one, viewing literature as 'embodying social relationships' (44) and arguing that literature should be viewed primarily as 'mediat[ing] the world view of their authors and their respective classes' (46). My present purpose is not to support or refute this approach. My aim is delineation of the developments in the discipline of English studies, as reflected in the journals under review. For (legitimate) rhetorical reasons, some elements of the above argument are exaggerations. All indications are that, by the end of the 1970s, South African literary studies was still in its infancy: the number of critics and the number of articles hardly indicate a highly significant practice. More importantly, the 'South African tradition' (even if it could be said to have existed at this time in anything resembling a concrete form for an active discursive community, academic or otherwise), had not made an impact on the English studies curriculum: courses containing South African artefacts were very much ancillary to the core curriculum.

If South African literature was being used to 'pass off … class-based tastes', then the number of the recipients of these tastes was small (and arguably from the same class anyway). However, the primary confusion here appears to me to be the conflation of 'Butler'

(champion of South African artefacts and supporter of the literary-historiographical approach) with mainstream opinion in the academy which held a view of literature as constituted by 'great works', the qualities of which were not bound to time or place, and certainly did not include South African production.

The 'tradition-builders' Hofmeyr refers to were undertaking much of their work in the face of very significant opposition, even disparagement, from their colleagues. In any event, South African literary studies at the time was not a mainstream activity. If the aesthetic criteria used by some scholars of South African literature resembled those applied by Practical Critics, it cannot reasonably be held that the objects chosen were inevitably 'liberal': could Campbell, Coetzee, Dhlomo, Gordimer, Miller, Mphahlele, Mtshali, Plaatje, Plomer, Scully, Smith, (and a dozen or so other poets), all of whose work had been the subject of academic attention, be said to be liberal? If by liberal is meant 'not Marxist', perhaps the answer could be given in the affirmative, otherwise quite categorically not. The a-historical approach under fire here is that of Practical Criticism, and in broad terms, Hofmeyr's characterisation of this approach is accurate.

Such criticism of the academy would become more vociferous in the 1980s. However, Hofmeyr's voice is noteworthy as it represents an opposing if minority view,[30] and an open attack on the mainstream practice of the discipline at the close of the 1970s, the last decade in which the Practical Critical approach would dominate.

---

[30] Gardner's report on the conference described the response to Hofmeyr's paper as follows: 'Most of the participants at the Conference seemed not to agree with many of Ms Hofmeyr's emphases; but almost everyone … found her paper stimulating and challenging' (1979: 88).

IV

The 1980s saw Practical Criticism come under severe attack by Marxist critics and, most effectively, from critics applying contemporary literary theories: as dominant approaches in the journals, Practical Criticism and literary historiography would wane, and the application of contemporary theory would wax greatly. Three of the four existing academic journals, *English Studies in Africa* (*ESA),* *Unisa English Studies* (*UES*) and *English in Africa* (*EA*) would contribute a steady stream of output throughout the decade, while *UCT Studies in English* (*UCT*) would see its final issue in 1986.

Two new academic journals would emerge at the start of the decade: *Literator: Journal of Literary Criticism, Comparative Linguistics and Literary Studies* (1980) (*Literator*) and *English Academy Review* (1983) (*EAR*), followed in the middle of the decade by a third: *The Journal of Literary Studies/Tydskrif vir Literatuurwetenskap* (1985) (*JLS*). The end of the decade would see the addition to the field of two more: *Current Writing: Text and Reception in Southern Africa* (1989) (*CW*); and *Pretexts: Studies in Literature and Culture* (1989) (*Pretexts*).

The total cumulative level of output in these journals would start the decade at around 40 per annum and reach almost 80 per annum by the end of the 1980s. The association of university teachers of English, AUETSA, which began in 1977, would meet every year, and see the papers presented grow substantially in number and also in percentage focusing on local artefacts.

The academic activity in this decade was of profound importance for South African literary studies. There were substantial accretions to the archive of academic discourse on South African

artefacts. In order of number of articles appearing in the 11 journals, the output of the following local artists was scrutinised: sixteen articles appeared on JM Coetzee; eight on Athol Fugard, seven on Olive Schreiner, and six each on Nadine Gordimer, Alan Paton, Mongane Wally Serote and Pauline Smith. Five articles appeared on Es'kia Mphahlele, and four articles each appeared on Bessie Head and Thomas Mofolo. In addition, many more South African artists received attention in one or two articles in the 1980s (see Appendix for quantitative statistics).

The AUETSA conference became a regular annual event in the 1980s, justifying Gardner's impression already after the third annual conference in 1979 that 'AUETSA has become a part of the South African socio-intellectual scene' (1979: 85). In comparison to the journals as a whole, the proportion of papers (as a percentage of the total papers presented) focusing on South African artefacts or on related issues (such as the curriculum, pedagogy, methods and approaches to such artefacts) was significantly higher (in 1983, the majority of papers).

This forum was a very significant platform for debate by literary academics on South African artefacts and directly related issues (curriculum, pedagogy). Though many of the papers were subsequently published in the academic journals under review, it does not follow that all conference papers are subsequently published. Hence, the activities of literary academics as reflected in the AUETSA papers are not directly mirrored in the (arguably) more representative forum of the English studies journal, if for no better reason than the fact of the overall volume of papers in the latter is higher, hence statistics derived from them are relatively more telling. Nevertheless, it appears to reflect a shift from the situation in the 1970s, where attention to South African work is more exceptional, to a situation in the 1980s where it seems to have become a matter of course and at the

centre of debate. In any event, an examination of the AUETSA debates in the 1980s appears to reinforce David Bunyan's impression in 1987 that:

> The acceptance of South African English literature as a separate and valid subject for study in its own right has by now been all but achieved; its 'in principle' acceptance is hardly even a recent phenomenon. (67)

The AUETSA forum would also serve as a platform for criticism of the 'English department' and for debates on new approaches to South African production. If at the 1979 conference, Isabel Hofmeyr's critique of the mainstream orthodoxy in the academy (Hofmeyr 1979a) was a lone voice which 'almost everyone … found … challenging' (Gardner 1979: 88), by the early 1980s, the number of such critics willing to openly challenge the establishment had grown.

Three papers are presented at the 1982 conference, constituting Marxist-oriented indictments of the English department and what is perceived to be its primary approach to literary objects: Practical Criticism. The same papers are subsequently published in *Critical Arts* in 1984 (Green 1984, Visser 1984, Vaughan 1984). Self-styling the group as a small troupe of traitorous clerks and embattled iconoclasts unwelcome in the 'establishment', in his paper 'The Manifesto and the Fifth Column', Green states:

> 'Pure' critical practice claims to limit itself to the essentially literary; ideological criticism works within the practice of literary criticism to betray the very concept of 'the literary'. It is a fifth column within the realm of literature, exposing the ideological implications of the 'purest' concepts within that realm, destroying the false independence they have

218

been given from the movement and moment of historic flux. (1984: 14)

In this article, there appears to be some exaggeration and overstatement of the purported mainstream of literary academics, here lampooned as 'purists'. Nevertheless, as a general characterisation of Practical Criticism as applied by its South African proponents, the general thrust of the critique appears sufficiently accurate. Green imputes to such practitioners the belief in timeless and universal aesthetic qualities exemplified in certain 'great' works, and the assertion of the primacy of the text over secondary corroboratory sources in procedures of interpretation. He presents the alternative antidote as 'ideological criticism', the main aim of which is to expose the 'purest' concepts as historical constructs and as serving certain interests, that is, their ideological nature:

> To the extent that ideology serves to legitimise the contradictions in a particular ideological moment, literature and the reading of literature … partake of the concealment, for they are, in themselves, ideological. …. [I]deological criticism works towards revealing their ideological nature and the ways in which they participate in ideology. Both the historical subject and the historical reconstruction of that subject … must be made to reveal their manifestoes. (Green 1984: 14)

The operative word here appears to be 'concealment': the implication is that the practice of literary academics, literature itself, and readers of literature, results in a form of deception or self-deception. Taken together, literary practice results in the (political, economic, social, cultural) status quo appearing natural and therefore pre-ordained. The hidden manifesto of the literary establishment is to maintain the existing power relations. Insurgent agency here is imputed to progressive literary academics, while 'literature' is

(ironically) a mute (if contaminated) substance which has traditionally been given voice (significance) – in a deliberately selective and manipulative manner – by hidebound literary academics in order to create the illusion of the concept of the 'literary'. The readers - whether students or the wider public influenced by this ideology - are, essentially, agent-less dupes whose status as victims is 'concealed' from them.

My aim here is not to caricature the Marxist approach, but to succinctly draw the outlines, in broad strokes, in order to understand more clearly its implications (if generally applied) for the discipline. Recalling the generic elements constituting a discipline, that is, a domain of objects, set of methods, and corpus of truth propositions (Foucault 1971), it seems clear that English studies would look radically different if this approach were applied.

Among the propositions of a Marxist (or here 'ideological') approach to literature is that cultural production is inevitably implicated in the establishment and maintenance of usually unequal economic relations. Among its methods is a hermeneutics of revelation, that is, an interpretative strategy of uncovering the hidden power relations. Its domain of objects (in Green's application) is derivative (when negative): all objects which Practical Critics hold up as exhibiting 'literary' qualities. When positive, a specific aesthetics is applied in delimiting the domain of objects in application of this approach, as will be shown below.

The thrust of Michael Vaughan's article, 'A Critique of the Dominant Ideas in Departments of English in the English-Speaking Universities of South Africa' (1984), is essentially the same as that of Green. Vaughan's critique, however, is targeted explicitly at Departments of English and the literary academics purportedly constituting the mainstream or majority. To these academics, Vaughan

imputes the promotion of liberal humanist values which implicitly support the (political, economic, social and cultural) status quo:

> The primary, or foundational concept is that of a universal aesthetic order. This is then built upon, interpreted or recognized, in the light of the values of liberal humanism … the *practical* or technical application of liberal humanist values and ideas to the recognition of the universal aesthetic order is achieved by means of a specific approach, or method. This method is 'practical criticism' (37) …What is the actual practice of Departments of English … like? The backbone of all syllabuses, and the mainstay of research projects is an unchanging grid of 'great writers', drawn from Britain and North America, and from the years between the late fourteenth century and the present. It's on this grid that you'll find the exponents of significant sub-categories of the universal aesthetic order that provides the over-arching rationale of departments of English. (40)

While the syllabuses were in large part as described by Vaughan, that is, constituted by the study of 'great writers', as I have endeavoured to show above, since the 1960s and increasingly throughout the 1970s, South African literary artefacts were selected for research work by literary academics. In so doing, academics borrowed vocabularies from Practical Criticism, among other approaches. Though some of these objects, the work of Alan Paton and Olive Schreiner most obviously, could be shown to support 'liberal humanist' values, as a general descriptive term of either the literary academics or South African artefacts, 'liberal humanist' is as imprecise as it is inaccurate.

The 'actual practice' of English departments was varied, and those in the vanguard of the academic campaign for inclusion of South

African artefacts (Guy Butler primarily) were not whole-hearted supporters of the Practical Critical approach and subscribed, with the medievalists, to the study of the history of literary expression, orature, journals and other forms of writing. Many of them no doubt held divergent views, too, on all manner of things. Vaughan does not define further the 'significant sub-categories' referred to in the above passage. For, let's say legitimate, rhetorical purposes, he has subsumed the disparate elements which make up the syllabus, from components of medieval studies through to the Leavisite canon of modern literature (Lawrence, Keats, Shakespeare), into an 'overarching rationale' for English departments.

On my analysis, however, the approach informing medieval literary studies, that is, the literary-historiographical approach, on the one hand, and that informing the modern literary canon according to the Leavisian Great Tradition, and the annals of Practical Criticism (later, the New Criticism), on the other hand, are not complementary: the syllabus is a patchwork of different approaches, potentially incongruent and containing internally contradictory elements (without any simple one-to-one mutual exclusivity pertaining).

Nevertheless, where it seems to have mattered in the view of literary academics, that is, in the modern or contemporary component of the English studies curriculum, Practical Criticism appears to have dominated as the primary approach applied both in the selection of prescribed works and in the teaching thereof. However, for Vaughan's purposes, the English department is conceived of monolithically, and he goes to considerable lengths to merge the partially overlapping approaches practised in the academy, that is, those of Practical Criticism and literary historiography:

> [O]rientation towards universality and timelessness
> does not mean that the historical context of literature is

completely ignored … History is always to be reckoned with, in one way or another. With regard to literary *scholarship*, a heavy emphasis is placed upon research into historical minutiae. I hope I will not seem in contradiction if I say that one of the great virtues of the methodology of practical criticism – in the moment of this methodology's struggle against heavily historicist scholarship – is the way in which it restored … the evaluative dynamic of reading! … a scholarship focussed upon minutiae … actually *subserves* the concept of a universal aesthetic order: it is in no way an historically active and critical scholarship, but a subservient scholarship. (1984: 39)

However, literary historiography, as a primarily descriptive (though also inevitably evaluative) practice, unlike Practical Criticism, is not significantly circumscribed in its categories: in both synchronic description (form, myth, structure) and diachronic description (which is potentially unlimited: developments in genre, theme, character, representation, reception, or developments in artefacts from the perspectives of psychoanalysis, politics, history, geography, economics, philology), its stock of categories is immense.

The vocabulary of Practical Criticism (irony, ambiguity, paradox, 'organicism') is limited for the most part to a synchronic analysis of form, not because it excludes extra-textual information, but because it centres the text as primary source of corroboratory data in interpretation. Thus, as Vaughan correctly points out, when Practical Critics 'contextualise', such contextualisation, whether historical, social, economic, or political, is subservient to the text as primary source.

Arguably, the diachronic approach (for example, history of the pastoral form or history of reception) arrogates against universal or

223

essentialist aesthetics. Vaughan goes on to propose an alternative programme for the English department based on a Marxist aesthetics:

> I am not arguing for a non-evaluative approach to literature. I recognise aesthetic evaluation as an integral feature of all literary experience … What is at issue … is the way in which aesthetic evaluation is to be understood: to what purposes it is to be referred. In our Departments of English … aesthetic evaluation is referred … to the existence of a universal (and hence timeless) aesthetic order. … Priorities in research and teaching are decided in this way … In place of aesthetic ideas which are referred to universality, to timelessness or to human nature (or to 'English literature', or to the 'Great Tradition'), we need … completely different concepts of aesthetics … the challenging concepts need to be *historical* ones: ones, that is, that recognise the imbrication of aesthetic issues with social and political forces. (Vaughan 1984: 38)

In this passage, Vaughan proposes a new method of approach to a new or differently conceived domain of objects, thus constituting a (potential) re-definition of the discipline. As we have seen above, negatively, all objects proposed by Practical Critics as 'great' are seen as potential objects in an approach which would seek to uncover hidden power relations concealed in the object. Positively, that is, the objects which Vaughan's version of a materialist aesthetics would celebrate as exemplary are those which expose relations of power and reveal them as historical (and therefore not inevitable), and he sees such potential artefacts in the Black Consciousness poetry of the 1970s (1984: 45). In addition, he suggests that the 'modernist novels' of JM Coetzee, in so far as they represent a refusal or debunking of liberal humanism, are exemplary objects.

Nick Visser's paper, 'The Critical Situation and the Situation of Criticism' (1984), reiterates the general Marxist position, though it goes further in placing Practical Criticism historically. This approach, in his view, 'began to make headway in the fifties, gained ascendancy in the sixties, and came under attack in the seventies' (2). Visser depicts the acceptance of South African literary artefacts into the syllabus as a grudging and piffling concession made entirely in the methodological terms of the reigning orthodoxy, that is, the academy merely enlarged the domain of objects to include a few token works of liberal humanist hue:

> … South African English departments have hurriedly cobbled together a South African Great Tradition – Pringle, Schreiner, Plomer, Campbell and so on – constituted by those works and authors most readily assimilable to the analytical methods developed by the New Critics. Not surprisingly, this is but a shadow of the Great Tradition … What is in fact revealed is the partial, radically selective nature of practical criticism … In English departments throughout the country, people are now doing what their noisy colleagues were pressing them to do just ten or twelve years ago – teaching South African literature, giving papers on South African writers, publishing articles on selected South African texts. All too late. (Visser 1984: 4)

At the time of writing the above article (1982), Nick Visser began his tenure as editor of *EA*, a primarily literary-historiographical journal also dedicated to recovery and reprinting of literary artefacts of a very wide range (letters, polemics, short-stories). The academic work done in the 1960s and 1970s on South African artefacts cannot be described universally as informed by the New Critical or Practical Critical approaches, even if vocabularies from proponents of these approaches were employed. The very emergence of this stream of academic discourse is informed by the literary-historiographical

approach: these objects were by and large not assimilable within a Practical Critical approach.

The domain of objects of Practical Criticism, if not static, placed a heavy emphasis on a limited range of aesthetic criteria, and not being either time – or country-bound, had free reign over a large domain of potential new objects. Moreover, due to its emphasis on close and in-depth reading as a *pedagogical* practice, it was limited to a few dozen exemplary texts, and hence set the goalposts extremely high, too high for most South African works to reach the syllabus.

Arguably, none of the authors mentioned by Visser in the above quotation would qualify in a selection procedure dictated by purely Practical Criticism criteria. It is literary historiography which admits considerations of place and time (in this approach, these aspects are 'relevant'), as well as form, among many other things, which accounts for the grudging acceptance of South African artefacts into the curriculum and onto the research agenda.

Visser's statement that this acceptance is 'all too late' is a rhetorical ploy: the point he wants to underscore is that new *methods* (and not merely new objects) are what is now (1982) demanded by disaffected colleagues (1984: 4). Although '[m]any will bristle at the suggestion that practical criticism is in decline' (6), he avers that various new methods are in ascendancy: 'structuralism, semiotics, reception aesthetics, feminist literary criticism and so on. Practitioners of all these various modes can be found in our English departments' (7). Of the many new modes gaining ascendancy, one is likely to replace Practical Criticism as the dominant mode: 'the one that seems to be moving most strongly towards reorienting literary studies in this country … comprises sociology of literature generally and Marxist literary criticism in particular' (8).

By all appearances, and judging from the journals under review, this prediction failed to materialise. Though the number of Marxist-oriented literary scholars is not small (Hofmeyr, Maughan-Brown, Sole, Visser, Vaughan, Green), the number of articles endorsing or applying a Marxist-oriented approach is not significant as a proportion of the whole. In fact, it is almost impossible to say which *one* mode came to 'replace' Practical Criticism, though it can be said with some certainty that this approach was indeed *dis*placed *from its position as dominant mode*. The Practical Critical vocabulary and its tendency to treat the object as a unity, centring it as primary reference source in corroborating interpretations, never entirely disappears. Visser diagnoses the decline of this approach thus:

> [T]he faltering of practical criticism must be seen as part of the general crisis of confidence in liberal thinking dating from the late sixties and early seventies. In its inability to influence significantly actual power relations, in its failure to grow into a broadly based mass-movement … in its implicit commitment to social control rather than general liberation, in its characteristic translations of economic, social and political matters into moral and individualist terms, liberalism revealed itself to be incapable not only of generating a reordering of South African society but even of making that society explicable. It could produce neither change nor an analysis of the structures and relations that made change so difficult. (1984: 7)

In presenting the Practical Critical approach in essentially humanist terms, as ascribing to generic values of freedom, equality, tolerance, and secularism, and as assigning to individual human beings a special place in the general scheme of things, it would seem to me that Visser's account is generally accurate. In addition, the embracing of what can be described as post-humanist approaches (deconstruction,

poststructuralism, feminism, in so far as the text – and individual – is decentred and demoted in analyses), from the early 1980s onwards, can reasonably be explained, at least in part, as a response deriving from the crisis in confidence described by Visser.

The absurdity of teaching Shakespeare under the protective arbour of academe during a time of extreme political and social crisis, was something Marxist critics did not hesitate to point out to their colleagues (as Visser, Vaughan and Green do in the above articles). However, the conflation of the discipline of English studies with a 'liberalism' (committed to 'social control rather than general liberation'), appears to me to be a radically over-determined account of the operation of either public or disciplinary discourses and the interplay between the two.

My primary intention here is a delimitation of the discipline of English studies as reflected in one of its many facets: articles in academic journals. In these terms and for my purposes, it appears to me that Visser's account of the decline of Practical Criticism is inaccurate, or at least partially so. However, this is not to say that the rhetoric employed by him for strategic purposes of gaining ground against the still-dominant approach of Practical Criticism (in 1982), is inappropriate. On the contrary, in interpreting the journal articles, I have endeavoured to remain sensitive to the intentions of the authors and the context in which they write, using for my purposes only those elements which appear relevant in terms of the development of the discipline.

Contemporary literary theories (poststructuralism, deconstruction, psychoanalysis, feminism, postcolonialism, semiotics, narratology, inter alia) began entering the literary academic discourse more or less with the 1978 Modern Criticism Symposium. At first sporadic, the number of papers discussing new approaches grew

steadily in the early 1980s, both in the journals and at the AUETSA conferences, sufficiently so, it would seem, to warrant a journal dedicated to literary theory: *JLS*, launched in 1985.

When applied in readings of literary artefacts, these theories do not appear in 'pure' or identical forms: a feminist approach applied by one literary academic will as a matter of course (readings being highly individualistic) differ from that of another, and may borrow terminology from other approaches (Marxism, Practical Criticism, and so on), as well as theoretical propositions (postcolonialism, deconstruction, and so on). There is an undeniable eclecticism which enters the discourse during this period, rendering classification highly contestable. However, by the end of the decade, the dominant approaches of the 1970s (Practical Criticism and literary historiography) had all but vanished *in 'pure' and easily identifiable forms.*[31]

In any event, if the Practical Critical terminology and the centring of the text did not disappear entirely, these elements were incorporated in ways that were at times not immediately apparent in the applications of contemporary theories. It does seem to me, however, that it can be generally asserted that the Practical Criticism, literary-historiographical, and contemporary theoretical approaches can be usefully compared, as the latter grouping, though containing highly disparate theories, has certain striking implications from the perspective of the discipline. By way of comparison and elucidation, I will examine three articles all published in 1985, each more or less representative of the approaches thus grouped.

---

[31] Relatively speaking, of course, since even if it is possible to assert that there were two main approaches in the 1960s and 1970s (Practical Criticism and literary historiography), no two academics applied identical interpretative or commentary strategies.

Michael Chapman, in a conscious strategy to apply the terms of Practical Criticism in the new context of an ascendant panoply of what is referred to in the article as 'new theory' (1985: 159), presents a close reading of two poems, by Douglas Livingstone and Mafika Gwala respectively. The vocabulary is self-consciously (Chapman admits as much) Leavisite. Livingstone's poem *Under Capricorn* is described thus: the 'poem is truthful to its own intention', 'a vivid expression of being alive', 'reveals in-built tensions'. Gwala's poem *Getting off the Ride* is described thus: 'inner contradictions … a strength', 'arousing us emotionally', 'statements are … poetic statements, concrete and complexly "real"'. Chapman's reading is more complex than I am suggesting, as he makes attempts at introducing Marxist terminology, identifying 'silences': 'sensitiveness … might [be] evidence of a "trivial moral space" in Livingstone' (157), and 'ideological gaps': 'Black Consciousness … tended to favour forms of cultural revitalization (the invocation … to the 'spirits of ancestors') rather than … economic analyses on the factory floor' (158). Chapman declares his intentions in presenting this reading as follows:

> In this article I have suggested a radical-liberal consideration of connections between artistic and critical response. I have not advocated a revolution of the existing *paradigm of literary studies*, which depends on our *agreeing to accord privileged status to certain works …* I have argued for a greater sense of both specificity and flexibility within the basic object of knowledge; for a critical engagement with the fact of our own time and place, and with a variety of texts and theoretical directions … new theory, while a powerful ally, is also a problematic one in attempts to extend ranges of literary interest. (Chapman 1985: 159, emphasis added)

In other words, maintaining the centrality of the artefact is proposed, and the unity of the work is insisted upon, even while accepting the greater impingement on the work (and the literary critic) of the extra-textual dimensions of politics, economic, and social environment in reading and *appreciating* the artefact. In terms of the discipline, this proposal constitutes a widening of the domain of objects in tandem with the introduction of new or additional aesthetic criteria (methods of interpretation and evaluation) to enable the assessment of new kinds of objects (such as resistance poetry, in this case). It turns out that, of the two generic Marxist approaches outlined, Chapman finds only one assimilable:

> … some tendencies within Marxism are usefully assimilable, particularly the insights of formalists … other tendencies are ultimately inassimilable, principally in their insistence on identifying, and taking strong positions about, conflicting forces in … observable social reality which all writing, in its content, is supposed to reflect, or even to mediate … There can be little attention given, in good faith, to the intentionality, the self-declaring interpretation of those works which do not subscribe to supportive moral and social views … the real possibility is that, *having freed ourselves* of a *moral-humanism* distinctly unaware of its own circumscriptions, we may put in its place a Marxism which, while certainly aware of its intentions, is dogmatic in its belief of superior historical knowledge. Any attempt to institute a critique of so-called bourgeois culture as the primary purpose involves not just diversity of approach; rather it signals a fundamental rejection of the dominant paradigm of literary studies. (Chapman 1985: 159)

The 'moral-humanism' referred to in the passage is that of Practical Criticism. Arguably, the reading of the two poems provided

by Chapman is a thoroughgoing 'moral-humanist' one, of which it does not appear that he has 'freed' himself. In any event, the unity and intentional source is located in the poem itself (a 'poem is truthful to its own intention'). The celebration of an aesthetic property, such as moral complexity which Chapman finds in both poems (the 'in-built tensions' in Livingstone's and 'internal contradictions' in Gwala's poem), is distinctly New Critical.

While there is no significant evidence in the text of a borrowing or application of Marxist formalist vocabulary, Chapman's assertion that such 'tendencies' are 'usefully assimilable' in such an approach appears reasonable, since the centrality of the artefact is not thereby challenged. Hence, what he refers to as the 'dominant literary paradigm' which would 'accord privileged status to certain works', is not threatened.

Chapman characterises an inassimilable Marxist 'tendency' as one which would de-centre the artefact. Here the approach (as Chapman depicts it) would be dogmatic in its insistence that the artefact reflect and take politically pre-defined positions on 'conflicting forces in … observable social reality' or 'even to mediate' that social reality. That is, art as entirely subservient to a political agenda. The evaluation of the artefact would not be referred to its own intentions (that is, assessment would not be made on the degree to which the artefact is able to convey its inherent intention), but be assessed in terms of the degree to which it subscribes 'to supportive moral and social views'.

Such a decentring of the artefact, Chapman appears to suggest, would be the death-knell of literary studies. Indeed, a Marxist tendency of this sort would reduce literary artefacts to an adjunct of social or political studies. Nevertheless, a Marxist position such as the one represented by Michael Vaughan above which would propose a

distinctive Marxist aesthetics, would define a specific domain of literary objects and a method (analytical vocabulary) quite distinct from that proposed by Chapman. Ironically, such a position would not contradict Chapman's belief in the need to accord 'privileged status to certain works', even though in this instance a list of such works may be constituted by an entirely or very different set of artefacts from the ones which Chapman's (hybrid) brand of Practical Criticism might prefer.

Cherry Clayton, on the other hand, discusses the work of Olive Schreiner applying a distinctly literary-historiographical approach (1985). No close readings of passages are offered, no interpretations of Olive Schreiner's work *per se*, and there is no sign of a materialist analysis. Instead, the article examines the bio-literary criticism of Schreiner, reaching the assessment that a 'cursory view of the extant Schreiner biographies indicates problematic areas in the handling of a colonial woman writer's life' though '[s]ome of the problems of Schreiner biography have fallen away as more material has become public or accessible' (33). Clayton concludes that:

> In the biography of a writer the writing, both as an act and product, should be central. Literature should be both the instrument in and the aim of the clarification of the life. Both fantasy and autobiography need to be brought into relationship with the fiction, free of any *a priori* moral or historical disapproval. (1985: 34)

The reading of literary artefacts through biography or autobiography, while it certainly represents *a* literary-historiographical approach, does not constitute *the* literary-historiographical approach. In the above passage, and more fully throughout the article, Clayton proposes elements in a methodology of reading primary works through

biography and autobiography. In her view, in so doing, the writing (the primary work) should be privileged.

The domain of objects of the literary-historiographical approach is extremely wide, but not infinite. The literary historiographer borrows her methods from history studies, but has developed a significant vocabulary specific to the approach, or rather approaches, constituting a wide range of typologies for both synchronic and diachronic description of 'literary objects' broadly understood (imaginative literary objects – as is the case in Practical Criticism, but also diaries, journals, scientific writing, biography, autobiography, letters, journalism, and orature, inter alia).

The literary-historiographical approach, being primarily a descriptive science, has no prescribed set of vocabularies nor (at the outset) a teleology: each practitioner of the approach must re-invent the goal of the description. Clayton's goal is to reverse the order of interpretative emphasis: the biographers who have seen shortcomings in Schreiner's fiction through reading the life back into the work (placing interpretative emphasis on factual text sources), should subordinate the biographical detail in illumination of the writing (placing interpretative emphasis on fictional text sources) (1985: 33-36).

In Clayton's reading, psychoanalysis and Jungian theory are employed in support of a pre-eminently intertextual approach, one in which, in this case, Schreiner's 'fiction can illuminatingly be read as a symbolic conflict between opposing selves: her life is transformed into narrative both in her avowedly autobiographical writing and in her fiction: "every great work of fiction is simply an interior life in novel form"' (Clayton 1985: 34).

One might find just about any theory and any text employed in a literary-historiographical approach. What characterises this approach, I would argue, is its *decentring* and *demoting* of the literary text, employment of diachronic analysis, and flexible requirements as to types of evidence (one can source relevant corroboratory evidence from anywhere). In spite of Clayton's avowed aim to confer primacy to the literary text, as I hope to show, the general tendency of literary-historiographical analyses is the opposite: to decentre the primary work.

First, in an important sense, the artefact does not constitute the central object of analysis, or in any event, the attention it receives is a far cry from that received by the artefact when applying the Practical Critical approach – there is no prioritising of the primary text. If, in a particular reading, the status accorded to it (degree of importance, degree to which it anchors the analysis) is markedly higher than that of the other forms of discourse which are referred to (other texts, contextual information, theories), the volume of its voice is relatively reduced, as it is generally crowded out by the commentary and the substantial cumulative presence of other texts mentioned in a typical literary-historiographical analysis, such as Clayton's. Unlike Practical Criticism which deliberately centres the text, the literary artefact here has no predefined or privileged status.

Second, the primacy accorded to the literary artefact as main corroboratory source in justifying any interpretation of the text which we find in Practical Criticism, is entirely overthrown: it may or may not be regarded as telling the truth about itself, and even if conceded, any interpretation based on internal evidence is radically bracketed pending external evidence to the contrary. The authenticity of facts derived from usually vast tracts of material used to *substantiate* the claims of the literary historiographer is a matter of debate and argument by the commentator. What is clear, though, is that the facts

serve the literary critic, and the literary critic does not serve the literary artefact.

In comparison to the Practical Critical approach, where the commentary on the primary artefact is rendered secondary, always subject to revision in a more perceptive appreciation of the internal message of the text, the literary-historiographical approach usurps the position of the primary text, telling us what the artefact fails to communicate or elucidating the text's significance, a significance which is not observable in the text itself, but which needs mediation by the literary critic, drawing on a wide range of sources but always dependent on the insightfulness of the literary critic.

Another important difference can be discerned in what I would call the baggage, what the literary critic brings to the table *prior* to analysing the text. The literary historiographer, particularly in her incarnation as a factographer, comes to the text with a panoply of typologies and research methods, and these no doubt contain their own hidden tendencies. However, the primary mode of operation, I would argue, is an initial willy-nilly search for order, for patterns, and a generally *ex-post* imputation of a unity, a teleology which in a sense is invented anew by each literary historiographer in plotting a course on her map of the literary terrain. The Practical Critical approach comes considerably loaded with a pre-defined set of requirements, an elaborate and elaborated aesthetic code. Complexity, irony and paradox are not found in every text, and new texts not measuring up to its codes will be excluded from the stable.

However, how could one differentiate a literary-historiographical approach from one informed by any one or number of contemporary theories? After all, the literary historian has no qualms about drawing on any theory whatsoever in her pursuit of mapping the territory. The most obvious difference (the only exception

being Marxist approaches. An approach informed by Marxism has not been designated a contemporary theoretical approach due to the long-standing track record in South Africa of Marxist-oriented criticism) is the generally *synchronic* form of analysis common to contemporary literary theories, as distinguished by a mix of synchronic and diachronic analyses in literary-historiographical approaches.

Another important difference is the *baggage* I mentioned above: the postcolonial, poststructural, feminist, semiotic, and structuralist approaches all come to the text not merely with a set of methods, but with an inherent teleology. In all other respects, the contemporary literary theory approaches to literary artefacts share with the literary-historiographical approach the *decentring* and *demoting* of the primary text, radically sidelining the texts (which become mere ballast for the literary critic), and usurping the position of the primary text, rendering it secondary to the discourse of the literary critic.

However, as with the Marxist approach advocated by Vaughan and discussed above, it is conceivable that a partial re-centring of the text occurs when proponents of an approach define an aesthetics, that is, criteria to delimit a set of objects (out of the vast sea of possible objects), and elevating them through celebration of a particular set of aesthetic properties. Whether these properties are regarded as constituted historically or as essential to the artefact is less important than the outcome of such a practice once instantiated: it works towards the creation of a canon.

Cathy McDonald, in 'The Semiotics of Disguise in Seventeenth-century Spanish Theatre' (1985), elaborates a *semiotic* reading of literary artefacts, in this case two Spanish plays, namely: *Life is a Dream* by Calderon de la Barca, and *The Deceitful Trickster of Seville* by Tirso de Molina. In an important sense, the choice of artefacts is incidental, even if carefully selected for the purpose: the

criteria of choice are entirely attributable to the aim they are made to serve, that is, to demonstrate the efficacy of the theory:

> The purpose of my study is to examine the disguise in terms of the sender-message-receiver transaction … This semiotic approach, would hopefully help clarify the manner in which the disguise event is transmitted and the levels of communication which are operative in the transaction, both of which, in turn, would lead to an improved understanding not only of the disguise event itself but also of its relevance to the meaning of the play under examination. (McDonald 1985: 58)

Hence, an examination of the transition mechanisms in a communication-transaction model is being made on a discrete semiotic element, the disguise event, in the hope that it will clarify (reveal) the element and process more clearly. It will *also* show the relevance of the semiotic element to the *meaning* of the play. This is a clear example, perhaps an extreme one, of the secondary status of the artefact in such readings. Here, it is the theory and the discourse of the literary critic which is being served by the artefact, not the other way round: the erstwhile primacy of the text is not in evidence.

What the examination in this article does for the play is, in point of fact, something which will be done for the theory: in the collateral aim of elucidating the *meaning* of the play, importantly, it is relevance of the theory to the interpretation which will be shown, not the relevance to the interpretation of the theory. Though this is by no means necessarily the case in all readings, the general sidelining of the text which is a hallmark of synchronic approaches employing contemporary literary theories, generally opens a space for the central role in the reading played by theory, if for no other reason than the necessity to fill the gap where the text once was and in the same

movement, to justify such usurpation (proving the theory proves the theory's right to assume centrality).

V

The 1990s saw English academic studies firmly in the grip of a variety of contemporary theories. A wide variety of approaches, generally following a synchronic analysis of boundary-less texts which had gained ascendancy in the mid- to late-1980s, was prevalent. Visser's prediction, made in 1982, that Practical Criticism would be replaced by Marxist and social criticism (1984), turned out to be incorrect. Much to the dissatisfaction of the Marxist-oriented scholars such as Kelwyn Sole, postcolonial, postmodern, poststructural and feminist approaches had gained dominance. Sole would later in the decade propose the demise of the 'posts' (1997). In those articles focusing on literary objects, the major shift appears to be the predominance, for the first time, of South African or African literary objects over non-African objects. While artefacts previously marginalised appear to shift away from the margins to be included in the authorised domain of disciplinary objects (autobiography, travel writing, diaries and journals), literary objects move somewhat to the fore in analyses. That is, while contemporary theories of a very wide range are used in analyses, there is a discernible tendency for readings of objects to become relatively closer, and slightly more detailed.

More academic journals than ever before published academic articles in this decade. Of the 10 journals publishing in the 1990s, *UES* would cease publication in 1995 after 33 years of existence. Two of the 10 journals were newcomers: *Alternation*, which was launched in the same year as the first democratic elections were held in South Africa (1994), and *scrutiny2 (s2)*, which was the institutional successor to *UES*, launched in 1996. The others were journals which ran throughout the 1990s: *ESA, EA, Literator, EAR, JLS, CW*, and *Pretexts*. The total cumulative level of output of approximately 100 journal articles a year (attained early in the 1990s), would be

maintained throughout the decade, rising gradually to around 120. The annual meeting of university teachers of English, AUETSA, which began in 1977, continued, and additional conferences were held to discuss specific issues related to the discipline.

While cultural studies made inroads, as discussed in Sections II and III of Chapter 2, and Sections III and IV of Chapter 3, the volume of articles on objects of Cultural studies (textual, such as popular genre fiction, or non-textual, such as sporting events) did not appear to represent a serious challenge to the general tendency to select poems, plays or fictional prose as objects for analysis. All the same, and taking all articles which discuss literary objects into consideration (no matter how briefly), the academic archive saw a very considerable number of new accretions to the archive, and an important increase in breadth and diversity.

In the category of articles focusing on South African literary objects, JM Coetzee receives most of the attention (29 articles), though the relative lack of attention given to Nadine Gordimer (6 articles) in the previous decade is significantly redressed (14 articles). Significant attention is paid also to: Olive Schreiner (13), Bessie Head (10) Herman Charles Bosman (8), Sol Plaatje (8), and seven articles each on Breyten Breytenbach, Athol Fugard, Alan Paton, and Pauline Smith.

Although the following artists received relatively less attention, the attention paid to them demonstrates the breadth of imaginative artefacts covered, marking an important development in the variety of the domain of objects in this period: Es'kia Mphahlele, Arthur Nortje, Pieter Fourie, Perceval Gibbon, Elsa Joubert, Zakes Mda, Sarah Gertrude Millin, Miriam Tlali, Laurens van der Post and Ivan Vladislavić. Also worthy of mention are: Peter Abrahams, Mark Behr, WHI Bleek, Harold Bolce, Aegidius Jean Blignaut, Elleke Boehmer,

241

Belinda Bozzoli, Dennis Brutus, Roy Campbell, Sydney Clouts, HIE Dhlomo, John Conyngham, Jeremy Cronin, WA de Klerk, Hannah Dennison, AW Drayson, Dominee Du Toit, Ahmed Essop, Jeanne Goosen, Peter Horn, AC Jordon, Mazizi Kunene, C Louis Leipold, Douglas Livingstone, Lindiwe Mabuza, Ingoapele Madingoane, Sindiwe Magona, Nelson Mandela (autobiography), Chris Mann, John Mateer, Mtutuzeli Matshoba, Joan Metelerkamp, Rian Milan, Naboth Mokgatle, Seitlhamo Motsapi, Credo Mutwa, Mbulelo Mzamane, Elizabeth Ncube, Njabulo Ndebele, Mike Nicol, Lewis Nkosi, Farah Nuruddin, William Plomer, Jan Rabie, Richard Rive, Karel Schoeman, Francis Carey Slater, Wilma Stockenstrom, CM van den Heever, Etienne van Heerden, Petronella van Heerden, Marlene van Niekerk, and Harriet Ward.

Other objects not traditionally falling within the purview of literary academics take up a significant amount of space even if they do not threaten to displace imaginative artefacts such as poems, plays and fictional prose. As discussed above, in Chapter 3 Sections III and IV, autobiography receives considerable attention, while orature, popular imaginative artefacts (such as romances, hunting fiction, detective novels), factual writing (journals, diaries, travelogues, collections of letters), and cultural practices or other objects (music, painting, sculpture, comic strips, concentration camps) also receive attention. AUETSA conferences see an ever-increasing predominance of papers on South African artefacts of all kinds. In a sense, the 1990s saw the entrenchment of South African studies in the English Academy.

In 1992, Bernth Lindfors undertook a survey of prescribed reading at South African universities in order to try to determine the *existing* teaching canon:

My aim was to discover which African authors and which books by those authors were prescribed reading in English courses taken by South African university students. What, in other words, was the instructional canon in Anglophone African literature studies in South Africa? (Lindfors 1996a: 5)

His conclusions were that 'African literature on most campuses is still a marginalised step-daughter of traditional EngLit, which remains the queen mother of all its undernourished Anglophone offspring' (6). Ranked more or less in order of frequency of prescription, the authors whose works are prescribed for the most number of courses at various levels of study were: Fugard, Gordimer, Coetzee, Paton, Mphahlele, Head, Schreiner, Serote, Abrahams, La Guma, Plaatje, and Ndebele. African authors prescribed most often were Ngũgĩ, Achebe and Soyinka.

In Chapter 1 above, I conjectured a link between the curriculum and academic articles, stating inter alia that, albeit with a temporal delay, the curriculum would of necessity be linked to the archive of authorised statements on the disciplinary objects. This is a reasonable assumption, I believe, although it is necessary to qualify it by adding that this link is not a direct one, that is, the curriculum is by no means a simple mirroring of academic discourse. All the authors listed by Lindfors had received steady and increasing attention in the academic journals for several decades. Although not a major point, it is nevertheless indicative of the indirectness of the relationship between the teaching canon and the academic canon that, although Coetzee had received more attention than either Fugard or Gordimer, on Lindfors' ranking, he is placed third in the teaching canon of 1992.

Most noteworthy, however, is the fact that, of the authors whose works were prescribed, all had received considerable attention

for some period of time in the South African academic journals under review. As previously stated, though intellectually conceivable, it is impracticable to prescribe works of authors on whom no academic peer has produced authorised statements. I would go further, though, and say that a fundamental principle, the disciplinary principle, requires that authorised peer-reviewed statements on objects recognised (by peers) as falling within the domain of objects of the discipline is necessary before a work can be prescribed. In other words, the academic or critical canon precedes and underwrites the teaching canon.

Coullie and Gibbon take issue with Lindfors, seeing his view of the canon and the very concept of 'canonicity' as outdated and inapplicable in a modern curriculum:

> Upon reading Lindfors's paper … one might be forgiven for thinking that the last thirty years of theoretical developments, conceptual shifts and political challenges in the field of literary studies had passed him by without notice … Canonicity is in contention in literary studies throughout the world … [H]is concern … is … to dis-establish the dominance of traditional EngLit. However, what he would like to see, it would seem, is its replacement with an alternative 'African canon'. (Coullie and Gibbon 1996: 15-16)

Quoting Toril Moi, Coullie and Gibbon aver that 'the point is not "to create a separate canon" … but "to abolish all canons" ' (17). In his reply to this critique, Lindfors takes issue with what he sees as Coullie and Gibbon's misconception of canonicity as 'something stable, fixed, rigid, immutable and therefore intrinsically conservative and coercive' (23), arguing rather that 'any literary canon is inherently unstable, dynamic and ever-evolving, that over time every canon mutates' (ibid.). Lindfors suggests that:

[A] teaching canon will always be undergoing revision and renewal … no literature curriculum stands a chance of becoming permanent … Times change, values change, people change, so the texts assigned in literature courses will also inexorably change. In that sense – the sense of eternal flux – the syllabus is always up for grabs … But the grabbing, to have any authority, should be a collective activity … After all, South African literature is not what you think it is or what I think it is; it is what South African teachers and critics in concert think it is. It is a communal set of discursive practices that defines a field. (Lindfors 1996b: 23-34)

This view of how the 'canons' (in the loose sense used by Lindfors) are formed and changed, appears to coincide with my analysis of how 'domains of objects' of the discipline are defined, analysed, and developed. One reading of the above exchange might see the Coullie and Gibbon response to Lindfors, in their disavowal of 'canonicity' and insistence that regarding prescribed works as constituting a canon is outmoded, as merely a tactic to retain prescribed British texts:

… we are in complete accord with Lindfors's insistence that 'traditional EngLit' should be dethroned, but many would argue that this does not mean that it should be utterly ostracised … Why would English departments want to encourage such parochialism? Surely our students deserve to be able to meet with their peers at European and American universities and not be utterly ignorant of literatures in English produced out of Africa? (Coullie and Gibbon 1996: 19)

Lindfors answers this contention by speculating whether, in such hypothetical meetings of peers abroad, the South African student

245

would be able to converse intelligibly about South African or indeed African literary production in English, and imputes an inherent orientation towards the West to Coullie and Gibbon (Lindfors 1996b: 26). In his reply, Lindfors takes up each point raised by Coullie and Gibbon except one which, from the point of view of this thesis, is perhaps the most pertinent:

> Lindfors is promoting a deeply conservative view of literary studies that privileges the *content* of curricula over approaches and methodologies, and so elides any examination of approach and its informing ideology. The effect is to discount the efforts of those English departments that have attempted a far more radical transformation of the curriculum than merely substituting one set of canonical contents for another. (Coullie and Gibbon 1996: 17, emphasis in original)

It can be argued that, by exposing in turn the inherent conservatism of the positions which Coullie and Gibbon occupy, Lindfors adequately responds to this criticism. However, this would be to ignore the view that the discipline could be re-defined as being about the *approaches and methodologies* rather than the ostensible objects. On this view, it is not important which texts are prescribed, or whether they are cultural practices rather than texts: the objects, whichever or whatever they are, are not understood as constitutive of the discipline *per se* but merely opportunities, in a sense, to demonstrate and teach the efficacy of the critical tool kit of the discipline.

Such a view is not confined to Coullie and Gibbon. In what he proposes as the possible core task of the discipline, Higgins suggests that *critical literacy* should be the primary pedagogical aim of the discipline of English studies, rather than the teaching of core texts (1992). It would seem to me, however, that taken to its extreme, this

would result in a form of intellectual belly-gazing, in the sense that if we accept the possibility of an object-less discipline (or put another way, a discipline definable entirely independently of its objects), the primary focus of the discipline would be on its own tools of analysis.

In other words, the result would be a permanent form of meta-analysis, the discussion and refining of the approaches and methodologies of the discipline, applicable, as they would have to be, on any object regardless of type. The canon, it would seem to me, following Lindfors' loose definition, is an inevitable and necessary consequence of the ongoing practice of the discipline. If we reduce the discipline to simply a set of analytic techniques, techniques moreover which are shared by most disciplines, its very identity as an independent discipline is endangered.

(For discussion on the curriculum still based around core texts, see inter alia, the discussion of the undergraduate curriculum in Attwell 1997; for the contention that postcolonialism has led simply to a pluralist reordering of the curriculum see Sole (1997: 147); and Kissack (2001) on multiculturalism and criteria for selection of key texts.)

VI

The five-year period from 2000–2004 saw academic articles focus on literary objects to a similar degree to that of the 1980s and 1990s. In the application of contemporary theories, though, while far from seeing a retreat of theory in the sense that the literary object moves into the foreground, there does appear to have been a move towards more eclectic and less arcane application of theory in readings of literary objects. South African imaginative artefacts dominate, and autobiography retains a constant presence.

The primary focus of articles mentioning imaginative artefacts is again JM Coetzee (24 articles), with significant attention also paid to: Zakes Mda (12), Nadine Gordimer (9), Bessie Head (7), Roy Campbell (6), Achmat Dangor (6), RL Peteni (6), Herman Charles Bosman (5), André Brink (5) and Alan Paton (5). Some attention is paid to: Breyten Breytenbach, Ivan Vladislavić, Phaswane Mpe, Es'kia Mphahlele, Sol Plaatje, Mongane Wally Serote, Marlene van Niekerk, and Zoe Wicomb. Attention is also paid to: SM Burns-Ncamashe, Justin Cartwright, K Sello Duiker, Christopher Hope, Anne Landsman, CT Msimang, Njabulo Ndebele, Arthur Nortje, Margaret Poland, Thomas Pringle, Olive Schriener, Paul Slabolepszy and Pauline Smith.

No fundamental shifts that were not already evident in the second half of the nineties appear to have occurred. If anything, important developments appear to have been consolidated. These are: the prevalence of the use of a wide variety of contemporary theories in an often eclectic manner and the widening of the domain of authorised objects, though not generally venturing further than objects falling under the literary historiographer's gaze (fictional prose, plays, poetry, autobiographies, diaries, journals, letters, orature).

Chapter 5. Conclusion

On 2nd December 1998, at the Baxter Theatre, Cape Town, Kelwyn Sole was awarded the Thomas Pringle Award for the best literary article written in 1997 for his 'South Africa Passes the Posts' published in *Alternation*. This award was established in 1962 by the *English Academy*, and was originally conceived in order to 'honour the writer of the best articles in English in various categories of journalism' (Anon 1962b: 12). Taking the category of journalism under review here, that is, the *academic* literary article, this event signals the approbation by peers of one of over one hundred peer-reviewed articles published in 1997, singling it out as the best one.

On the one hand, one has the minimum threshold requirement, if one is to publish in the journals, of passing through the peer-review process: usually two peers review and approve, request amendments, or reject an application for publication of an article. Understandably, attaining this minimum threshold does not automatically result in the statements contained in the article being accepted by academic peers. On the other hand, ideally conceived, we have the maximum threshold, where one attains full acceptance of all one's statements by one's peers, where one's speech becomes fully assimilated into the discipline, becomes *orthodoxy*.

I do not mean to imply that the award of a prize means attaining status – far from it. What I would like to imply is that Sole's article lies somewhere between these two poles, and is not merely regarded by peers as acceptable for publication purposes. It is regarded more highly. For such an award does indeed label the article, and its statements, as more *significant* than the rest of the articles in the same category.

It is thinkable that all the articles crossing the minimum threshold in 1997 could be ranked from best to worse, with Kelwyn Sole's article in pole position. A complex voting system could be conceived, all literary academics could make their own lists, positions could be compared, points awarded, and an overall list established reflecting the collective views of the entire literary academic discursive society. Such an exercise is thinkable, but even if it could be done, it is unlikely ever to take place. Does it follow, then, that if no such *explicit* procedure for ranking peer-reviewed articles or statements exists, then no *implicit* procedure exists either?

We must answer this question quite emphatically in the negative. For what is it that literary academics do when they are engaged in intellectual activity? Does such activity not involve the sorting and sifting, accepting and rejecting, amending and adapting, of a plethora of statements on objects of the discipline? I submit that there are many implicit lists, and certainly definable factions within any discursive society with their own ensemble of 'true statements', of appropriate methods, of *orthodoxy*.

The minimum threshold of the peer-review process and awards for the 'best' articles (for which there is unlikely ever to be consensus within the fractious community of literary academics), are merely the tip of the iceberg, the barely visible part of a much more complex web of rules and procedures for *ranking* of statements, of assimilating new 'truths' on the objects of the discipline.

By way of recapitulation, I would like to return to where I started, to *The Order of Discourse* in which Foucault describes three broad sets of procedures for the control and production of discourses, namely: exclusionary procedures (relating primarily to the general rules for exclusion of statements), internal procedures (relating to classification, ordering, and distribution of statements) and restrictive

procedures (relating primarily to the application of the discourse by individuals) (1971: 52-64).

Turning first to exclusionary procedures, these cover: prohibitions (on what topics may or may not be spoken about); the division of madness (maintenance of a division, in this case between a rational and self-conscious secondary speech or commentary about licensed irrationality in the primary discourse of imaginative writing); and the will to truth (even if shifting or highly modifiable, this relates to a maintenance of rules to establish 'true' as opposed to 'false' accounts of the proper objects of analysis of the discipline).

Regarding exclusionary procedures, on my interpretation, Foucault is referring to generic structuring principles, situational rules and rules delineating the proper field of objects of the discipline. He advances the hypothesis that, for most discourses, there exist sets of prohibitions (1971: 52). At any one point in time or during a period, a discourse will permit only a certain range of topics or objects that may or may not be spoken about. The overwhelming variety of articles published in the journals might seem to imply that no rules exist, that the platform, if only open to a prescribed group, gives absolute licence to authorised speakers to say whatever they like.

This is evidently not the case: no-one has *carte blanche* to say whatever he or she wishes on these official platforms. I believe that my analysis of academic discourse has highlighted the patterns and adumbrated the borders of the discipline: allowable topics, appropriate objects. Therefore, it would seem to me that it is reasonable to conclude with a very high level of certainty that prohibitions on permissible topics and range of objects implicitly exist. What I have not been able to delineate, what is perhaps impossible to delineate, are the exact rules at any one time determining which statements may stand, and which are beyond the pale.

The division of madness is described by Foucault as an exclusionary procedure operative in the production of new statements in the discourse of madness (1971: 52-53). Foucault makes no claim that this division applies to literary studies, but it would seem to me that there is an intriguing parallel between the discourse on madness and the discourse on imaginative writing. Academic literary discourse is certainly intimately bound to imaginative production. All disciplines are indebted to their fields of objects in the sense that the very existence and definition of such fields, so to speak, *found* the disciplines. But objects of literary studies are special: they are fabulations, non-factual accounts, and at times, incomprehensible.

The literary academic endeavours to make factual, true, insightful and *truthful* observations about these errant objects. One senses the precariousness of the status of such a discipline and its position in the academy: there is something almost embarrassing about its very existence. However, if one accords some strange power, a profoundness, genius, to imaginative work, then, when applying the right tools and skills, the literary academic can unravel the mystery, solve the puzzle, pan the current for nuggets of high literary value, make *truthful* observations.

Hence, it does not appear too far-fetched to imply that the division of madness indeed structures the discipline of literary studies. The very ambiguity of the fictional statement, the mad uncontrolled speech flowing from the imagination, makes the factual statement a *necessity,* and gives the literary academic his / her *raison d'etre.*

Another exclusionary procedure operative on academic literary discourse is the will to truth. According to Foucault, all disciplines have sets of procedures which, though ever changing, are fundamental to its practice: procedures for determining which statements are 'true'

and which are 'false'. I believe it will be granted me that there are mechanisms within the discipline for sorting the 'truer' from the 'less true' accounts, even if these procedures are for the most part tacit, unwritten. On my understanding, these take the form of a wide variety of vetting mechanisms. The most obvious example is the peer-review system discussed at the outset of this chapter. However, crossing this threshold is only the beginning and constitutes merely the first step in an undoubtedly longer and sophisticated process of assessment of the statements as having validity for the discipline.

Orthodoxy, the body of 'right' opinion, on the objects of the discipline, is not stable. Nevertheless, it is not subject to fickle changes and, following fierce intellectual combat, the slow coagulation and setting of opinion is not fast to change. While there most certainly must be an element of chance, a randomness within the process of developing, settling, and dissipating of orthodoxy, it is undoubtedly deliberate, guided, and intentional: there are agencies behind it, even if outcomes are far from predictable.

There is no simple instrumental link here. One does not get up of a day and decide that one will influence opinion about an author or works in a certain way, and set about this task following a precise set of procedures. In the case of JM Coetzee, one can certainly trace the development of orthodoxy, its shifts as proponents and opponents entered the fray, struggling over interpretations and approaches to his work, as momentum gathered and as an ever-increasing number of academics turned their gaze onto his objects. It would seem to me, however, that the trajectory of any body of opinion will trace different paths, and that outcomes are never certain.

Hence, the above exclusionary procedures, operative in the service of the will to truth, appear to exist in the discipline of English studies. While the rules and principles brought into play are far from

transparent or may not seem at all tangible, the effects are very real. The silencing of speech in the discipline is all the more effective for not having a definable agent who enacts the procedure or censoring action. No speech is overtly debarred, no statements are ever decreed as unorthodox, as not belonging to the discipline.

However, many articles are destined to be ignored. It could hardly be otherwise: there is simply too many of them. For discourse to have any shape and coherence, for it to be possible to distinguish true from untrue statements (more true / less true) so that a body of opinion can be constructed and an identity conferred, exclusionary mechanisms must arise.

I will turn now to the second cluster of procedures outlined by Foucault, namely those he refers to generally as internal procedures (1971: 56-61). In sum, these are: the commentary principle, the author principle and the disciplinary principle. The commentary principle appears to be self-evidently pertinent to the discipline of English studies, as it inheres in the maintenance of the respective roles of primary and secondary discourse, the fundamental structuring mechanism justifying the production of academic literary statements (secondary discourse) on imaginative literary statements (primary discourse).

According to Foucault, the commentary principle is paradoxical. On the one hand, commentary or secondary discourse confirms the dominance of the primary canonical texts over commentary, by coming second temporally, and by deferent referral to the primary text. On the other hand, it arrogates the right to define the significance of the primary discourse through saying what the primary discourse really or finally means. The division of fact and fiction mentioned above appears to support the reversal of the hierarchy. Indeed, in practice, commentary made on primary texts is seldom

254

deferent and, from the vantage point of the academy, is certainly more important. Paradoxically, though, according to Foucault, the commentary principle strives to say the final word on the primary text, to say what the text forgot to say or did not say clearly enough.

However, this description of the commentary principle would seem no more than a re-description of the will to truth, the drive to produce *the* interpretation which forever sets aside all doubts. As the will to truth is a fundamental driver, so the commentary principle informs discourse on primary objects. Nevertheless, the commentary principle (informed by a drive to prevent more talk by stating the 'final' word) appears useful in helping us understand the disciplinary principle (informed by a drive to produce more talk). Before discussing the disciplinary principle, I would first like to return to the author principle.

The author principle is described as an organising principle for grouping texts, implying a unity and origin of meanings (Foucault 1971: 58-59). In terms of the discourse of literary academics (secondary discourse), the attribution of statements to a particular academic quite evidently functions as a partial index of truthfulness or validity and is certainly an organising principle (for collections of essays, for cross-referencing).

In terms of authors of primary texts, the application of the author principle by literary academics to order or aid interpretation of primary texts, appears to depend on the chosen approach. In the application of the author principle as an organising principle for grouping texts, those texts informed by the literary-historiographical approach would almost certainly employ the principle in organising, discussing and interpreting primary texts.

In the interpretation of texts by reference to the thoughts, ideas, or habits of the author, the postmodernist approach would be less likely to attribute significance to texts based on the facts about the author, or to approach a body of work by an author as necessarily internally coherent.

Foucault refers to a third set of internal procedures as informed by the *disciplinary principle*. 'For there to be a discipline,' he says, 'there must be a possibility of formulating new propositions *ad infinitum'* (1971: 58). However, there is some complexity with regard to the disciplinary principle. Though the above two principles are at times operative in the general academic literary discourse (particularly in secondary discourse on primary objects), the disciplinary principle is opposed to the commentary principle in so far as sets the rules for production of the not-already-said, and opposed to the author principle in so far as the discipline is defined as an anonymous system of procedures over a domain of objects of its own designation (that is, it is not bound by the author principle either in organisation of its objects, or in its rules of interpretation).

The disciplinary principle is the *productive principle*, that is, the rules for construction of new 'true' statements. As opposed to the commentary principle, which elucidates *what is already there*, the disciplinary principle informs *what is not yet there.* A central assumption of this thesis, and what I aim to show, is that the domain of English studies in South Africa has the properties of an academic discipline. That is, it is productive, but such production is subordinate to sets of rules: it is not free and not random. Though this thesis has not been able to describe these sets of rules in detail, it would seem to me that the foregoing analysis has shown that more or less rigid procedures for the production of new statements certainly exist in the discipline.

I would move now to the third broad group of procedures for controlling and delimiting discourse, namely restrictive procedures (Foucault 1971: 61-64). These relate to modes of authorisation of representatives of the discourse (individuals). Examples of such restrictive procedures are: speech rituals; societies of discourse; doctrinal groups; and systems of appropriation of discourse.

Speech rituals in English studies, as with other academic disciplines, are necessary in order for speech to be recognised as authoritative, or as a necessary preliminary in the process of acceptance of the speech as properly belonging to the discipline. Such authorisation does not automatically result in the endorsement of the speech, it merely results in its allowability: the forum of the academic journal clearly constitutes one of the speech rituals within the discipline.

Societies of discourse would refer to the principle of membership of the group permitted or authorised to generate discourse within the discipline. Clearly, the literary academic community constitutes such a society, and the statements in the peer-reviewed articles in the journals constitute a major component of the discourse. Discursive boundaries are ruptured from time to time, and cross-publication among journals of various disciplines does occur. For the most part, only academics may publish in the journals.

The minimum threshold of the peer-review mechanism does constitute a barrier, but not a major one. The primary barrier to entry into this particular discursive arena is membership in the society of discourse of literary academics. Membership is gained through obtaining an academic degree. Once a member, one cannot be debarred or have one's speech curbed through expulsion. In this sense, all disciplines are constituted by societies of discourse.

Doctrinal groups, on the other hand, by definition and at first glance would appear to have no place in the academy. Foucault describes these as formed through allegiance to 'one and the same discursive ensemble' (1971: 63). Unlike a society of discourse, which has a limited membership, any number of adherents can join or leave the doctrinal group. Unlike a society of discourse, false statements or statements which are in contradiction with the jointly held doctrines of a doctrinal group, constitute a heresy and grounds for exclusion of the member.

In societies of discourse, one cannot be excluded on this basis. Literary academics who makes statements which are not regarded as being 'in the true' in terms of the discipline, may have their speech ignored, but do not lose their membership. However, if a doctrine is a 'manifestation and instrument of a prior adherence to a class, a social status, a race, a nationality, an interest, a revolt, a resistance or an acceptance' (ibid: 64), and if the jointly held discursive ensemble need not necessarily be consciously held, but implicit, it would seem that such groups exist even within the literary academy.

I have sought to demonstrate the existence of doctrine-like patterns of behaviour, where the speech of fellow academics has been called into question on the basis of a purported adherence to a class, race and an interest: the WESSA, or White English Speaking South African. It would appear that this trope has been mobilised in academic discourse to invalidate statements, or the very least, to call them into question on this basis.

The last set of procedures I would like to discuss is the system of appropriation of the discourse along with knowledge and power attached thereto. According to Foucault, '[a]ny system of education is a political way of maintaining or modifying the appropriation of discourses, along with the knowledge and powers they carry' (1971:

64). These procedures refer to the laborious process of gaining membership to a society of discourse. This thesis has not examined this process in detail.

In conclusion, I feel I must emphasise that Foucault's terms constitute merely a typology, a network of concepts, for describing the evident existence of sets of generic procedures for the production of discourse. My intention in this thesis has not been to expose a scandal, not to evoke indignation at the discovery that discourse is not free, that a lot has to happen for a statement to have any consequence, any significance, for it to enter into the 'true'. The fact that there are gate-keeping mechanisms, that there are forms of censorship far more effective than any state-sponsored apparatus, appears to me not merely to be a brute reality, a necessary cost extracted in order that discourse not be ignored, but the very price of significance itself.

What does the future hold for academic literary journals in South Africa (and through them, the discipline)? In terms of approach, contemporary theories do not appear to be losing popularity although the general impression, not easily supported by citation, is that the use of contemporary theory is increasingly eclectic and that the literary object is moving to the foreground of attention in academic articles. In addition, although not statistically significant, the appearance of articles with scant reference to, or overt use of, theory is certainly in evidence, although it is too soon to call it a trend.

In terms of literary objects, the future dominance of South African *imaginative written* objects would appear to me to be a virtual foregone conclusion. Having said that, the status of autobiography and orature as 'literary' objects appears to have become unquestionable: such objects are fully accommodated within the present ambit of 'proper' objects of the discipline. Popular objects and non-literary

cultural phenomena, while present, are marginal and it appears likely
that this will remain the case.

Select Bibliography

I Academic literary journals

English Studies in Africa, 47 volumes, University of Witwatersrand, vol 1 (1958) – vol 47 (2004).

Unisa English studies: Journal of the Department of English, 33 volumes, UNISA, vol 1 (1963) – vol 33 (1995).

UCT Studies in English, 15 Issues, University of Cape Town, Issue 1 (1970) – Issue 16 (1986).

English in Africa, 31 volumes, ISEA, vol 1 (1974) – vol 31 (2004).

Literator: Journal of Literary Criticism, Comparative Linguistics and Literary Studies, 25 volumes, PUvCHO / North-West University, Jaargang 1 (1980) – Jaargang 25 (2004).

English Academy Review, 21 volumes, English Academy of Southern Africa, 1980, 1981, 1982 and vol 1 (1983) – vol 21 (2004) .

The Journal of Literary Studies / Tydskrif vir Literatuurwetenskap, 20 volumes, SAVAL, vol 1 (1985) – vol 20 (2004).

Current Writing: Text and Reception in Southern Africa, 16 volumes, University of Natal / University of KwaZulu-Natal, vol 1 (1989) – vol 16 (2004).

Pretexts: Literary and Cultural Studies, 12 volumes, UCT, vol 1 (1989) – vol 12 (2003).

Alternation, 11 volumes, CSSALL, vol 1 (1994) – vol 11 (2004).

scrutiny2, 9 volumes, UNISA, vol 1 (1996) – vol 9 (2004).

II Works cited

Abrahams, L. 1991. Letters. *English Academy Review* 8: 123

Abrahams, L. 1960. Nadine Gordimer: the Transparent Ego. *English Studies in Africa* 3(2): 146-151.

Abrams, MH. 1988. *A Glossary of Literary Terms, Fifth Edition*. Holt, Rinehart and Winston: Florida.

Adey, AD. 1978. 'Ephemerides', on its 150th anniversary. *Unisa English Studies* XVI(1): 10-12.

Alant, J. 1994. Towards a Linguistic Definition of Orality. *Alternation* 1(1): 42-51.

Alexander, PF. 1997. Literary Liberalism: the *Voorslag* Trio in Political Retrospect. *Current Writing* 9(2): 21-35.

Allen, L. 2002. Seeking the Significance of Two 'Classic' South African Jazz Standards: Sound, Body, Response. *English Studies in Africa* 45(2): 91-108.

Allen, L. 2004. Music, film and gangsters in the Sophiatown imaginary: featuring Dolly Rathebe. *scrutiny2*. 9(1): 19-38.

Anon. 1962a. The English Academy of Southern Africa. *Introductory Brochure*: i-x. (Holdings of the African Studies Library UCT)

Anon. 1962b. The English Academy of Southern Africa April 1962. *Introduction, Minutes of Inaugural Meeting, Progress Since Inaugural Meeting, List of Members*: 1-16.

Anon. 1964a. Practical Criticism. *Unisa English Studies* Bulletin no.1: 27-28.

Anon. 1964b. A Note on Practical Criticism. *Unisa Engish Studies* Bulletin no.2: 37-42.

Anon. 1964c. An Exercise in Practical Criticism. *Unisa Engish Studies* Bulletin no.3: 9-14.

Anon. 1965. F.R. Leavis's The Great Tradition. *Unisa English Studies* Issue no.1: 33-45.

Anon. 1966. The Teaching of English as a second language. *Unisa English Studies* Bulletin no.1: 58-62.

Anon. 1967. Approaches to Textual Analysis. *Unisa Engish Studies* Issue no.4: 70-73.

Anon. 1974. Editorial. *English in Africa* 1(1): 1

Anon. 1979. Proceedings of the English Academy of South Africa 1979 (African Studies Library, UCT Cape Town).

Anon. 1982. *English Academy Review* 1982: inside front cover.

Anon. 1985. Editorial. *Journal of Literary Studies* 1(1): 1-2

Anon. 1989. Preface. *Current Writing* 1(1): i-ii.

Anon. 1996. Editorial Policy. *scrutiny2* 1(1/2): inside front cover.

Attwell, D. 1997. Teaching Colonial Discourse in South Africa. *Alternation* 4(2): 210-220.

Baker, S. 1960. Paton's Late Phalarope. *English Studies in Africa* 3(2): 152-159.

Banning, Y. 1989. Ghosts with Ears: The WESSA in Contemporary Drama. *English Academy Review* 6: 19-27.

Bass, O. 2002. Adventure, Paradise, Indigenous Culture: 'The Kingdom of the Zulu' Campaign. *Current Writing* 14(1): 82-105.

Baxter, C. 1978. Political Symbolism in *A Dance in the Sun. English in Africa* 5(2): 44-50.

Beeton, DR. 1968a. New Voices – Some Contemporary South African Poets and their work. *Unisa English Studies* 2: 23-39.

Beeton, DR. 1968b. New Voices – Some Contemporary South African Poets and their work. *Unisa English Studies* 3: 57-86.

Beeton, DR. 1968c. New Voices – Some Contemporary South African Poets and their work. *Unisa English Studies* 4: 47-78.

Beeton, DR. 1972. Roy Campbell. *Unisa English Studies* X(3): 43-51.

Beeton, DR. 1973. Pauline Smith and South African literature in English. *Unisa English Studies* XI(1): 35-50.

Beeton, DR. 1978. A notable South African pamphlet : Olive Schreiner's little known 'A Letter onthe Jew'. *Unisa English Studies* XVI(1): 13-15.

Beeton, R. 1970. Concern and Evocation: Some Aspects of South African English Poetry since the War. *English Studies in Africa* 13(1): 125-138.

Bell, N. 1996. Editor's Notes *English Academy Review* 13: 1-3.

Bell, N. 1997. Editor's Notes *English Academy Review* 14: 1-5.

Bell, N. 1998. Editor's Notes *English Academy Review* 15: 1-5.

Bennet, LT. 1958. Examinations in English – two points of view. *English Studies in Africa* 1(1): 31-37.

Bertelsen, E. 1999. "Serious Gourmet Shit": Quentin Tarantino's *Pulp Fiction*. *Journal of Literary Studies* 15(1/2): 8-32.

Biesele, M. 1995. "Different People Just Have Different Minds": A Personal Attempt to Understand Ju/'hoan Storytelling Aesthetics. *Current Writing* 7(2): 1-18.

Bourgault, LM. 1997. Occult Discourses in the Liberian Press under Sam Doe: 1988-1989. *Alternation* 4(2): 186-209.

Boxall, RCL. 1970. Surfers' English. *UCT Studies in English* Issue 1: 25-39.

Boyd, H. 1977. Word and Sense: Language Studies and Literary Criticism. *UCT Studies in English* Issue 7: 122-130.

Branford, WRG. 1965. The Grammarian's Resurrection. *English Studies in Africa* 8(2): 135-156.

Brettell, NH. 1958. Schoolmaster. *English Studies in Africa* 1(2): 149-150.

Brown, D. 1994a. Oral Poetry and Literary History in South Africa. *Current Writing* 6(2): 165-180.

Brown, D. 1994b. The Film as Text (or Panic in the Lecture Theatre): Teaching Strategies for *Mapantsula. Current Writing* 6(1): 29-42.

Brown, D. 1995. Orality and Christianity: The Hymns of Isaiah Shembe and the Church of the Nazarites. *Current Writing* 7(2): 69-96.

Brown, D. 1997a. Black Consciousness, Tradition and Modernity: Ingoapele Madingoane's "black trial". *Current Writing* 9(1): 1-26.

Brown, D. 1997b. Poetry, History, Nation: The Praises of Shaka kaSenzangakhona. *English in Africa* 24(1): 7-36.

Bunn, D. 1988. Embodying Africa: Woman and Romance in Colonial Fiction. *English in Africa* 15(1): 1-29.

Bunyan, D. 1987. The South African Fernando Pessoa. *English in Africa* 14(1): 67-105.

Bunyan, D. 1987. The South African Fernando Pessoa. *English in Africa* 14(1): 67-105.

Buthelezi, M and C Hurst. 2003. A Brazilian Theatre Model Meets Zulu Performance Conventions Westville Prison – The Case in Point. *Current Writing* 15(1): 123-134.

Butler, G. 1961. English in South Africa, 1960: 5. The Language of the Land. *English Studies in Africa* 4(1): 87-92.

Butler, G. 1970a. *The Purpose of the Conference* Opening Address by the President, Preofessor F. G. Butler. *English Studies in Africa* 13(1): 11-19.

Butler, G. 1970b. *University Symposium* Summing Up by Guy Butler. *English Studies in Africa* 13(1): 189-190.

Butler, G. 1970c. Non-Fictional Prose with special reference to Early Diaries and Reminiscences in English. *English Studies in Africa* 13(1): 221-234.

Butler, G. 1970d. Readings at Bathurst of Diaries Written in the District. *English Studies in Africa* 13(1): 241-250.

Butler, G. 1977. Some Random Observations on the Teaching of English in South African Universities since 1948. *UCT Studies in English* Issue 7: 2-11.

Butler, G. 1985. English and the English in the new South Africa. *English Academy Review* 3: 163-176.

Butler, G. 1991. *A Local Habitation: An Autobiography 1945-90.* Cape Town, David Philip – Creda Press.

Callan, E. 1970a. The Art of Nadine Gordimer and Alan Paton. *English Studies in Africa* 13(1): 291-292.

Callan, E. 1970b. New United States Keys to Old South African Diaries. *English Studies in Africa* 13(1): 235-240.

Callan, E. 1976. Alan Paton's "Apartheid and the Archbishop": An Allegory of the Christian Way. *English Studies in Africa* 19(1): 39-48.

Chapman, M. 1979a. Ruth Miller - the last poems, *Unisa English Studies* XVII(2): 40-44.

Chapman, M. 1985. Literary Studies in South Africa: Contexts of Value and Belief. *English Academy Review* 3: 145-162.

Chapman, M. 1995. Mandela, Africanism and Modernity: A Consideration of *Long Walk to Freedom. Current Writing* 7(2): 49-54.

Chapman, M. 2000. Rebranding English till It Hurts. *English Academy Review* 17: 44-54.

Chapman, M. 1979b. Arthur Nortje: Poet of Exile. *English in Africa* 6(1): 60-71.

Chapman, M. 1996. *Southern African Literatures.* London: Longman.

Chinyowa, K. 2002. The Liminal Function of Orality in Development Communication: A Zimbabwean Perspective. *Alternation* 9(1): 46-56.

Clayton, C. 1985. Olive Schreiner: Life into Fiction. *English in Africa* 12(1): 29-39.

Coetzee, C. 1995. Two versions of a journey into the interior. *Pretexts* 5(1-2): 66-83.

Coetzee, JM. 1990a. Censorship and polemic: the Solzhenitsyn affair. *Pretexts* 2(2): 3-35.

Coetzee, JM. 1990b. Censorship in South Africa. *English in Africa* 17(1): 1-20.

Conolly, J. 2002. Memory, Media and Research: Mnemonic Oral-style, Rythmo-stylistics and the Computer. *Alternation* 9(2): 156-178.

Conradie, P. 1998. The Story of Eva (Krotoa): Translation Transgressed. *Journal of Literary Studies* 14(1/2): 55-66.

Consterdine, R. 2001. The UDW Fees Crisis of May / June 2000: A Linguistic Analysis 8(2): 56-69.

Cooke, J. 1979. "A Hunger of the Soul": "Too Late the Phalarope" Reconsidered. *English Studies in Africa* 22(1): 37-44.

Cornwell, G. 1980. Evaluating Protest Fiction. *English in Africa* 7(2): 51-70.

Cornwell, G. 1989. Race as science, race as language: A preliminary enquiry into origins. *Pretexts* 1(1): 3-17.

Coullie, JL and T Gibbon. 1996. Saints and Sinners in the Canonisation of African Literature: A Reply to Bernth Lindfors. *Alternation* 3(1): 15-21.

Coullie, JL. 1991. 'Not Quite Fiction': The Challenges of Poststructuralism to the Reading of Contemporary South African Autobiography. *Current Writing* 3(1): 1-23.

Coullie, JL. 2001. The race to be hero: race and gender in Roy Campbell's *Light on a dark horse. scrutiny2* 6(2): 3-16.

Couzens, T and B Willan. 1976. Solomon T. Plaatje, 1876-1932: an introduction. *English in Africa* 3(2): 1-6.

Couzens, T. 1974. The continuity of black literature in South Africa before 1950. *English in Africa* 1(2): 11-24.

Couzens, TJ. 1971. The Dark Side of the World: Sol Plaatje's *Mhudi. English Studies in Africa* 14(2): 187-204.

Couzens, TJ. 1975. Introduction. *English in Africa* 2(1): 1-8.

Couzens, TJ. 1976. The Black Press and Black Literature in South Africa 1900-1950. *English Studies in Africa* 19(1): 93-100.

Couzens, TJ. 1981. "The old Africa of a boy's dream" – Towards Interpreting Buchan's "Prester John". *English Studies in Africa* 24(1): 1-24.

Couzens, TJ. 1992. Galsworthy Meets a Cosmic Spirit in South Africa. *English Academy Review* 9: 22-35.

Cozien, M. 1971. What the Surfers are Saying. *UCT Studies in English* Issue 2: 24-30.

Daymond, MJ and M Lenta. 1990. Workshop on Black Women's Writing and Reading: Boitumlo Mofokeng, Thandi Moses, Sanna Naidoo, Lebohang Sikwe, Veni Soobrayan and Nomhle Tokwe. *Current Writing* 2(1): 71-90.

Daymond, MJ. 1991. On Retaining and on Recognising Changes in the Genre 'Autobiography'. *Current Writing* 3(1): 31-41.

Daymond, MJ. 1993. Seizing Meaning – Language and Ideology in the Autobiographies of Ellen Kuzwayo and Emma Mashinini. *Journal of Literary Studies* 9(1): 24-35.

Daymond, MJ. 1999. Imagining the Worst: Fictional Exploration and Autobiographical Record in Doris Lessing's *Walking in the Shade* and *Mara and Dann,* and in Dan Jacobson's *Heshel's Kingdom. English Academy Review* 16: 81-90.

De Kock, L. 1994. Textual Capture in the Civilising Mission: Moffat, Livingstone, and the Case of Tiyo Soga. *English in Africa* 21(1-2): 33-58.

De Kock, L. 1995. Reading History as Cultural Text. *Alternation* 2(1): 55-78.

De Kock, L. 2005. 'Naming of Parts', or, How Things Shape Up in Transcultural Literary History. *Literator* 26 (2): 1-15.

De Lange, M. 1997. *The Muzzled Muse: Literature and Censorship in South Africa.* Utrecht: Utrecht Publications in General and Comparative Literature.

De Reuck, J. 1981. Bridging Programmes – a personal View. *English Academy Review* 1981: 48-51.

De Reuck, J. 1995. Women on the Frontier: Self-Representation of the Conqueror: Which frontier? Conqueror of what? *Current Writing* 7(1): 34-45.

De Reuck, J. 1999. Social Suffering and the Politics of Pain: Observations on the Concentration Camps in the Anglo-Boer War 1899-1902. *English in Africa* 26(2): 69-88.

De Villers, A. 1979. South African Writers Talking: Nadine Gordimer, Es'kia Mphahlele, André Brink. *English in Africa* 6(2): 1-23.

Department of Education. 1997 (August 15). Education White Paper 3: A Programme for the Transformation of Higher Education. *Government Gazette* 386(18207): 1-57.

Dett, VS. 1968. New South African Literature – 1967 – A Critical Chronicle. *English Studies in Africa* 11(1): 61-70.

Dett, VS. 1969. *New Coin Poetry* (the first 14 numbers) 1965-1968. *English Studies in Africa* 12(1): 65-76.

Driver, D. 1995. Lady Anne Barnard's *Cape Journals* and the concept of self-othering. *Pretexts* 5(1-2): 46-65.

Du Plessis, M. 1987. Space, Story and History: Reading Gold reef City. *English Studies in Africa* 30(2): 105–114.

Du Toit, A. 2000a. Critic and Citizen: The Intellectual, Transformation, and Academic Freedom. *Pretexts* 9(1): 91-104.

Du Toit, A. 2000b. From Autonomy to Accountability: Academic Freedom under Threat in South Africa? *Social Dynamics* 26(1): 76-133.

Dunton, C and M Mokuku. 2003. 'The Black is a Brother': Discursive Strategies of Intervention by the Pioneer Independent Press in Colonial Lesotho. *Pretexts* 12(2): 145-164.

Durrant, GH. 1947. Notes on Teaching of Literature. *Theoria* I: 3-7.

Durrant, GH. 1958. Examinations in English – two points of view. *English Studies in Africa* 1(1): 27-30.

Durrant, GH. 1959. Two Review. *Standpunte* XII(4): 61-65.

Durrant, GH. 1981. Struggling with the Question of How to Live – Teaching Literature in the University. *Theoria* LVI: 25-39.

Eglington, C. 1960. "Quaintness" in Pauline Smith. *English Studies in Africa* 3(1): 48-56.

Emmett, T. 1979. Oral, Political and Communal Aspects of Township Poetry in the Mid-Seventies. *English in Africa* 6(1): 72-81.

Enslin, P. 1997. Contemporary Liberalism and Civic Education in South Africa. *Current Writing* 9(2): 77-90.

Eyssen SH. 23 September 1953. Member of Parliament for Heidelberg debate on the Bantu Education Bill. *HANSARD:* 4070.

Farr, VA. 2000. 'Making this book is a strange thing to me': *Singing Away the Hunger* and the Politics of Publishing in collaborative Autobiography. *Alternation* 7(1): 125-144.

Feetham, R. 1958. Foreword. *English Studies in Africa* 1(1): *np*.

Fielding, ML. 1974. An Examination of Noun Phrases in Selected Conversations of Fifteen-Year-Old Children *UCT Studies in English* Issue 5: 63-76.

Fiske, I. 1976. The Business of Dying in Bergman's *Cries and Whispers* Issue 6: 53-57.

Foley, A. 1991. The White English-Speaking South Africans. *English Academy Review* 8: 15-29.

Foley, A. 1992. Liberal Democratic Values and a Changing South Africa. *Pretexts* 4(1): 53-66.

Foley, A. 1993. A Poetry of Dread. *Unisa English Studies.* 31(1): 23-35.

Foley, A. 1997. Fugard, Liberalism and the Ending of Apartheid. *Current Writing* 9(2): 57-76.

Foucault, M. 1971. The Order of Discourse, in *Untying the Text: a Post-structuralist Reader,* Ed. R Young, London, Routledge: 52-64.

Foucault, M. 1994. Power: the Essential Works of Foucault 1954-1984, Volume Three. Ed. JD Faubion, trans R Hurley and others. Avon, UK: Bath Press.

Fourie, F. 1995. A "New Woman" in the Eastern Cape. *English in Africa* 22(2): 70-88.

Fox-Genovese, E. 1999. "Ways of thinking", or the curriculum without content: an American view. *English Academy Review* 16: 56-59.

Friedman, JH. 1946. Henry Adams – A Catholic Approach. *Standpunte* 1(3): 40-47.

Gardner, C. 1979. Conference Report: University English Evolves: A Review of the July 1979 Conference of the Association of University English Teachers of Southern Africa (AUETSA). *English in Africa* 6(2): 85-89.

Gardner, CO. 1958. The English School at Oxford. *English Studies in Africa* 1(1): 38-42.

Gardner, WH. 1957. *The Teaching of English through Literature*. Report No. 9, Pretoria: National Council for Social Research, Department of Education, Arts and Science.

Gérard, AS. 1981. *African Language Literatures: An Introduction to the Literary History of Sub-Saharan Africa.* Washington D.C.: Three Continents.

Gérard, AS. 1986. *European-Language Writing in Sub-Saharan Africa.* 2 Vols. Budapest: Akadémiai Kaidó.

Gillham, DG. 1977. Critical Approaches. *UCT Studies in English* Issue 7, 1977: 12-18.

Girling, HK. 1960. Provincial and Continental: Writers in South Africa. *English Studies in Africa* 3(2): 113-118.

Gititi, G. 1991. Self and Society in Testimonial Literature: Caesarina Kona Makhoere's *No Child's Play: In Prison Under Apartheid. Current Writing* 3(1): 42-49.

Goldman, M. 1958. The Cambridge School of English Studies. *English Studies in Africa* 1(2): 95-101.

Govinden, B. 2000. Space and Identity in Jayapraga Reddy's Unpublished Autobiography, *The Unbending Reed* and her *On the Fringe of Dreamtime and Other Stories. Alternation* 7(1): 178-200.

Govinden, D. 2001. *Coolie Doctor:* Woman in a Man's World. *Current Writing* 13(1): 22-48.

Graham-Smith, G. 2004. 'Halt in Love with easeful Death': The Sex / Death Dialectic and the Eroticization of the Aids Virus. *scrutiny2.* 9(1): 28-34.

Gray, S. 1975. Schreiner's Trooper at the hanging tree. *English in Africa* 2(2): 23-38.

Gray, S. 1976. Douglas Blackburn - unknown writer, unknown work. *Unisa English Studies* XIV(2): 44-51.

Gray, S. 1977. Bosman's Marico Allegory: a Study in Topicality. *English Studies in Africa* 20(2): 79-94.

Gray, S. 1977. Plaatje's Shakespeare. *English in Africa* 4(1): 1-6.

Gray, S. 1978. Douglas Blackburn: Journalist into Novelist (1857-1929). *English in Africa* 5(1): 1-7.

Gray, S. 1979. *Southern African Literature: An Introduction.* Cape Town: David Philip.

Gray, S. 1990. The long eye of history: four autobiographical texts by Peter Abrahams. *Pretexts* 2(2): 99-116.

Gready, P. 1995. The Witness: Rian Malan's *My Traitor's Heart* and Elsa Joubert's *Poppie. Current Writing* 7(1): 88-104.

Green, M. 1984. The Manifesto of the Fifth Column. *Critical Arts* 3(2): 9-19.

Green, R. 1979. Nadine Gordimer's "A World of Strangers": Strains in South African Liberalism. *English Studies in Africa* 22(1): 45-58.

Griesel, H. 1991. Text and Expressions of Being at Mboza. *Current Writing* 3(1): 50-56.

Gunner, L. 1995. Remaking the Warrior? The Role of Orality in the Liberation Struggle and in Post-Apartheid South Africa. *Current Writing* 7(2): 19-30.

Gunner, L. 2003a. 'Those Dying Generations at their Song': Singing of Life, Death and AIDS in Contemporary KwaZulu-Natal. *English Studies in Africa* 46(2): 41-56.

Gunner, L. 2003b. Exile and the Diasporic Voice: Bloke Modisane's BBC Radio Plays 1969-1987. *Current Writing* 15(2): 49-62.

Haarhoff, D. 1989. Literary Ivory: The Nineteenth-Century Travelogue in Namibia and Victorian Priorities. *English Academy Review* 6: 42-60.

Hall, AD. 1958. Examinations in English (III) *English Studies in Africa* 1(2): 151–163.

Hall, AD. 1960. Pringle, Somerset and Press Freedom. *English Studies in Africa* 3(2): 160-178.

Haresnape, G. 1963a. Pauline Smith and the Place of her Inspiration. *English Studies in Africa* 6(1): 70-76.

Haresnape, G. 1963b. Pauline Smith and Arnold Bennet. *English Studies in Africa* 6(2): 144-148.

Haresnape, G. 1966. A Note on Pauline Smith's Presentation of Country Life. *English Studies in Africa* 9(1): 83-86.

Haresnape, G. 1977. Barriers of Race and Language – Pauline Smith's Critique of a Rural Society. *English in Africa* 4(1): 40-46.

Haresnape, G. 1977. Pauline Smith's "Desolation" – And the Worthwhile African English Literary Text. *UCT Studies in English* 7: 99-103.

Haresnape, G. 1988. The Battle for the Books: The Evolution of the Academic Criticism of South African Literature in English 1956-1976. *English Studies in Africa* 31(1): 41-49.

Harnett, R. 1970. New Voices. *English Studies in Africa* 13(1): 139-154.

Harvey, CJD. 1977. Inappropriate Critical Criteria. *UCT Studies in English* 7: 37-57.

Heard, D. 1959. Olive Scheiner and Death. *English Studies in Africa* 2(1): 110-117.

Hennelly, J. 1958. Teaching English in the High School. *English Studies in Africa* 1(2): 144-148.

Herbert, M. 1979. The Early Writings of William Plomer: Some New Material. *English Studies in Africa* 22(1): 13-26.

Heywood, C. 2004. *A History of South African Literature.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Higgins, J. 1989. Editorial. *Pretexts* 1(1): 1-2.

Higgins, J. 1992. Critical Literacies: English Studies Beyond the Canon. *Journal of Literary Studies* 8(3/4): 193-208.

Higgins, J. 1995. Responses to Said and Taylor: Critical Literacy or the Canon? *Pretexts* 5(1): 179-90.

Higgins, J. 1998. Academic Freedom and the Idea of a University. *English Academy Review* 15: 7-23.

Higgins, J. 2000a. Academic Freedom and the University. *Cultural Values* 4(3): 352-373.

Higgins, J. 2000b. Academic Freedom in the New South Africa. *Boundary 2: An International Journal of Literature and Culture* 27(1): 97-119.

Higgins, J. 2000c. Paying lip-service to academic freedom. *scrutiny2* 5(1): 4-15.

Higgins, J. 2003. From Academic Analysis to Apparatchik Thinking: A Reply to André du Toit. *Pretexts* 12(2): 191-198.

Hodge, NM. 1979. Mphahlele's "Mrs Plum" and the Craft of Shorter Fiction, in *Association of University English Teachers of South Africa (AUETSA) Papers 1978*, Bloemfontein: University of the OFS:

Hofmeyr, I. 1978. The Mining Novel in South African Literature. *English in Africa* 5(2): 1-16.

Hofmeyr, I. 1979a. South African Liberalism and the Novel, in *Association of University English Teachers of South Africa (AUETSA) Papers 1979,* Durban: University of Durban-Westville: 58-64.

Hofmeyr, I. 1979b. The State of South African Literary Criticism. *English in Africa* 6(2): 39-50.

Hofmeyr, I. 1994. Oral History as Farce? – Oral History as a Changing Phenomenon. *Journal of Literary Studies* 10(1): 31-56.

Hofmeyr, I. 1995. Making Symmetrical Knowledge Possible: Recent Trends in the Field of Southern African Oral Performance Studies. *Current Writing* 7(2): 133-144.

Hofmeyr, I. 2001. Metaphorical Books. *Current Writing* 13(2): 100-108.

Holmes, H. 1983. Looking back on the English Scene. *English Academy Review* 1: 115-120.

Hopkinson, T. 1959. Thomas Codjoe: A West African Eccentric. *English Studies in Africa* 2(1): 34-47.

Houch, B. 1978. Fugard's Tsotsi: The Missing Novel. *English in Africa* 5(2): 74-80.

Hunter, E. 1994. "Only a Minor Star:" The Marriage of Agnes and John X. Merriman. *English in Africa* 21(1-2): 77-92.

Hurst, C. 1999. Izimbongi, Images and Identity: Interpreting Two of the Later Praise Poems of Elizabeth Ncube. *Current Writing* 11(1): 1-19.

Hutchings, GJM. 1979. *The Beadle* – Pauline Smith, in *Association of University English Teachers of South Africa (AUETSA) Papers 1978*, Bloemfontein: University of the OFS: 77-85.

Jacobs, JU. 2000a. Cross-cultural Translation in South African Autobiographical Writing: The Case of Sindiwe Magona. *Alternation* 7(1): 41-61.

Jacobs, JU. 2000b. Reconciling Languages in Antjie Krog's *Country of My Skull. Current Writing* 12(1): 38-51.

Jacobson, D. 1961. The American Novel and English Studies in South Africa: A Suggestion. *English Studies in Africa* 4(1): 58-62.

James, D. 1995. Oral Performance of Northern Transvaal Migrant Women. *Current Writing* 7(2): 97-116.

Janks, H. 1998. Reading Womanpower. *Pretexts* 7(2): 195-212.

Jansen, E. 1998. The Discourse of Difference in *Reisbrieven uit Afrika en Azie* (1913) by Dr Aletta Jacobs: A Dutch Feminist's Perspective on South Africa and the Dutch East Indies. *Journal of Literary Studies* 14(1/2): 102-115.

Jenkins, E. 1999. How Ostriches Ruled the Roost in Early Children's Books Set in South Africa. *English in Africa* 26(1): 17-32.

Jenkins, E. 2001. Is *Platkop's Children* a Children's Book? *English in Africa* 28(2): 135-140.

Jenkins, E. 2003. Nudity, Clothing and Cultural Identity in Some South African Children's Books. *English in Africa.* 30(1): 87-102.

Jeursen, B and KG Tomaselli. 2002. Romancing the Kalahari: Personal Journeys of Methodological Discovery. *Current Writing* 14(1): 29-58.

Jeursen, B. 1995. !Khwa and Mensturation in Narratives of the / Xam Bushmen. *Alternation* 2(2): 40-54.

Kaschula, RH. 1993. *Imbongi* in Profile. *English in Africa* 20(1): 65-76.

Kirkwood, M. 1976. The Colonizer: A Critique of the English South African Culture Theory, in *Poetry South Africa*, Eds. P Wilhelm and JA Polley, Johannesburg: Ad Donker, 103-133.

Kissack, M. 2001. Combating Consensus: The Value of Conflict and Controversy for Literary Education in South Africa. *English Academy Review* 18: 87-99.

Knights, LC and D Culver. 1932. A Manifesto. *Scrutiny: A Quarterly Review* 1(1): 2-5.

Knowles-Williams, G. 1971. The English Academy of Southern Africa. *Unisa English Studies* 9(4): 21-22.

Kossick, S. 1993. Non-Fiction, Faction and Feminism: Recent Biographical Writings by Women. *English Academy Review* 10: 83-90.

Koyana, S. 2002. 'Why are you Carrying Books? Don't you have children?' Revisiting Motherhood in Sindiwe Magona's Authobiographies. *English Studies in Africa* 45(1): 45-56.

Krige, U. 1958. Roy Campbell as Lyrical Poet: some quieter aspects. *English Studies in Africa* 1(2): 81-94.

Kromberg, S. 1994. Worker *Izibongo* and Ethnic Identities in Durban. *Journal of Literary Studies* 10(1): 57-74.

Laden, S. 2001. Consumer magazines for black South Africans: Toward a cultural economy of the South African (print)media. *scrutiny2* 6(2): 3-16.

Lennox-Short, A. 1977. The Teaching of Writing Skills:1.General Principles. *UCT Studies in English* Issue 7: 131-139.

Lenta, M. 1992. Degrees of Freedom: Lady Anne Barnard's Cape Diaries. *English in Africa* 19(2): 55-68.

Lentricchia, F and A DuBois (eds). 2003. *Close Reading – The Reader*. Durham and London: Duke University Press.

Leveson, M. 1979. Vincent Swart: The Poet and the Poetry. *English Studies in Africa* 22(1): 27-36.

Lindfors, B. 1996a. African Literature Teaching in South African University English Departments. *Alternation* 3(1): 5-14.

Lindfors, B. 1996b. Interrogating the Interrogators: A Reply to Coullie and Gibbon. *Alternation* 3(1): 22-29.

Lloyd, A. 1958. The Teaching of English through Literature *English Studies in Africa* 1(2): 217–225.

Lomberg, A. 1976. Withering into the Truth: The Romantic Realism of Nadine Gordimer. *English in Africa* 3(1): 1-12.

Mabin, J. 1974. On 'The Biography of an Ordinary Man', *Unisa English Studies* XII(2): 64-65.

Mackenzie, C. 2004. Editor's Note. *English in Africa*, 31(2): *np*.

Maclennan, D. 1970. The South African Short Story. *English Studies in Africa* 13(1): 105-124.

Maingard, J. 1997. *Fruits of Defiance*: Narrating Popular Consciousness. *Current Writing* 9(1): 55-67.

Maithufi, S. 2002. Image and Text in the Stories of Joel Matlou. *English Studies in Africa* 45(2): 13-32.

Malungana, SJ. 1999. The Relevance of Xitsonga Oral Tradition. *Alternation* 6(1): 37-54.

Manganyi, NC. 1979. The Censored Imagination. *English in Africa* 6(2): 24-32.

Maree, DJF. 2003. Dimensions of Change Detection within the Phenomenon of Change Blindness. *Alternation* 10/2: 183-201.

Marquard, J. 1978. W.C. Scully: South African Pioneer. *English in Africa* 5(2): 28-43.

Marquard, J. 1979. Olive Schreiner's "Prelude": The Child as Artist. *English Studies in Africa* 22(1): 1-12.

Marquard, J. 1979. The Use of Formulaic Devices and Stereotypes in the Work of William Charles Scully, in *Association of University English Teachers of South Africa (AUETSA) Papers 1978*, Bloemfontein: University of the OFS: 70-76.

Martin, J. 2005. On the Sea Shore. *scrutiny2* 10(1): 70-77.

Maughan-Brown, D. 1979. Black Literature Debate – Human Beings Behind the Work. *Contrast* 12(4): 86-95.

Maughan-Brown, D. 1983. The Noble Savage in Anglo-Saxon Colonial Ideology, 1950-1980: 'Masai' and 'Bushmen' in popular fiction. *English in Africa* 10(2): 55-78.

Maughan-Brown, D. 1987. Images of War: Popular Fiction in English and the War on South Africa's Borders. *English Academy Review* 4: 53-66.

Mayne, F. 1959. Consonance and Consequence. *English Studies in Africa* 2(1): 59-72.

McAllister, PA. 1988. Political Aspects of Xhosa Beer Drink Oratory. *English in Africa* 15(1): 83-96.

McDonald, C. 1985. The semiotics of disguise in seventeenth century Spanish theatre. *Journal of Literary Studies* 1(1): 57-77.

McKenzie, M. 1987. Critical Linguistics and Practical Stylistics: Teaching the People's English Instead of the Queen's English. *English Academy Review* 4: 227-246.

McMagh, P. 1976. Errors in English. *UCT Studies in English* Issue 6: 58-63.

Medalie, D. 2000. 'Such Wanton Innocence': Representing South African Boyhoods. *Current Writing* 12(1): 41-62.

Merrett, C. 1986. Censorship: The Challenge to South African Universities. *Theoria* 66: 1-11.

Merrington, P. 1999. "State of the Union": The "New Pageantry" and the Performance of Identity in North America and South Africa, 1908-1910. *Journal of Literary Studies* 15(1/2): 238-263.

Meyer, S. 1995. A Reading of Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness.* Vol XXXIII (2): 27-32.

Meyer, S. 2000. Intersubjectivity and Autobiography: Feminist Critical Theory and Johnny Masilela's *Deliver us from Evil – Scenes from a Rural Transvaal Upbringing. Alternation* 7(1): 97-124.

Mitchell, C and A Smith. 1996. More than Just a Love Story: Investigating the Literary and Social Signficance of the Young Adult Novel in South Africa. *Alternation* 3(2): 173-183.

Mojalefa, MJ. 2002. The verse-form of Northern Sotho oral poetry.

Literator 23(1): 85-95

Mokuku, M. 2000. 'The Native Customers of To-day is More Intelligent that the Native Customer of a Few Years Ago': Reading the Early-Twentieth-Century Press in Colonial Lesotho. *Pretexts* 9(1): 51-62.

Moodie, GC. 1997. Academic Freedom and the Transformation of Higher Education. *English Academy Review* 14: 9-16.

Moran, S. 1998. Academic Exchanges. *Alternation* 5(1): 215-239.

Mphahlele, E. 1979. The Voice of Prophecy in African Poetry. *English in Africa* 6(1): 33-45.

Mphahlele, E. 1984. Prometheus in Chains: The Fate of English in South Africa. *English Academy Review* 2: 89-104.

Mulhern, F. 1979. *The Moment of 'Scrutiny'.* Oxford, NLB: Western Printing Services Ltd, Bristol.

Muller, C. 1994. Nazarite Women, Ritual Performance and the Construction of Cultural Truth and Power. *Current Writing* 6(2): 127-138.

Muller, C. 1995. *Chakide* – The Teller of Secrets: Space, Song and Story in Zulu *Maskanda* Performance. *Current Writing* 7(2): 117-132.

Murray, S. 1994. *Tribute* and Attributed Meaning – Reading 'the magazine'. *Current Writing* 6(2): 63-76.

Murray, S. 2002. Ideas en Route: Texts, Travel, Tourism. *Current Writing* 14(1): i-xx.

Narismulu, P. 1998. 'Here be Dragons': Challenging 'Liberal' Constructions of Protest Poetry' *Alternation* 5(1): 191-214.

Ndebele, N. 1986. The Rediscovery of the Ordinary: Some New Writings in South Africa. *Journal of Southern African Studies* 12(2): 143-157.

Neser, A. 2000. Mediating Oral Autobiography: Ways of Reading Nthunya's *Singing away the Hunger* and Zenani's "And So I Grew Up". *Current Writing* 12(2): 71-84.

Ngwenya, TH. 1989. The Ontological Status of Self in Autobiography: The Case of Bloke Modisane's *Blame Me on History. Current Writing* 1(1): 67-76.

Ngwenya, TH. 2000. Ideology and Self-Representation in *The Calling of Katie Makanya. Alternation* 7(1): 145-162.

Nixon, R. 1985. Reception Theory and African Oral Literature: The Question of Performance. *English in Africa* 12(2): 53-62.

Notcutt, B and JN Findlay. 1947. Foreword. *Theoria* 1(1): 2.

Notcutt, B. Observations on Literary Criticism. *Theoria* 2: 45-52.

Nussbaum, FA. 1991. Autobiographical Spaces and the Postcolonial Predicament. *Current Writing* 3(1): 24-30.

Nuttall, S and D Attwell. 2001. Visual Representations of Reading in Suth African Painting and Photography. *Current Writing* 13(2): 80-99.

Nuttall, S. 1996. Reading and Recognition in Three South African Women's Autobiographies. *Current Writing* 8(1): 1-18.

Nyairo, J. 2004. 'Reading the referents': the ghost of America in contemporary Kenyan popular music. *scrutiny2* 9(1): 39-55.

O'Dowd, MC. 1989. In Defence of Conservatism – Up to a Point. *English Academy Review* 6: 98-111.

Ogola, G. 2002. Mapping Texts: Imagining Audiences in Popular Fiction. *English Studies in Africa* 45(2): 47-62.

Opland, J. 1970. Oral Origins of Early English Poetry. *UCT Studies in English* Issue 1: 40-54.

Opland, J. 1971. *Scop* and *Imbongi* – Anglo-Saxon and Bantu Oral Poets. *English Studies in Africa* 14(2): 161-178.

Opland, J. 1973. African Phenomena Relevant To A Study of The European Middle Ages: Oral Tradition. *English Studies in Africa* 16(2): 87-90.

Opland, J. 1993. "Scop" and "imbongi" IV: reading prose poems. Comparative Literature 45(2): 97-120.

Opland, J. 1995. The Image of the Book in Xhosa Oral Poetry. *Current Writing* 7(2): 31-48.

Opland, J. 1996. Xhosa Literature in Newspapers 1837-1909, in *Rethinking South African literary history*, Eds JA Smit et al, Durban, Y Press, 110-126.

Orr, M. 1996. 'It's a dirty job, but someone's got to do it': Skills Teaching in Departments of English'. *scrutiny2* 1(1/2): 37-42.

Partridge, AC (ed). 1941. *Readings in South African English Prose.* Pretoria, JL van Schaik Ltd.

Partridge, AC and R Birley. 1964. The Function of a Critical Journal. *English Studies in Africa* 7(2): 139-147.

Partridge, AC. 1949. The Condition of SA English Literature. *Standpunte* 4(16): 46-51.

Partridge, AC. 1958. Editorial: English Scholarship: A Transmutation of Species. *English Studies in Africa* 1(1): 1-9.

Partridge, AC. 1959. Editorial: Young Men in a Hurry. *English Studies in Africa* 2(1): 1-5.

Partridge, AC. 1962a. The Teaching of English: A Guide to the Parts of Speech. *English Studies in Africa* 5(1): 66-77.

Partridge, AC. 1962b. The Teaching of English: Suggestions for the Language Course. *English Studies in Africa* 5(2): 209-217.

Partridge, AC. 1963. New Light on the Descent of Shakespeare's Texts. *English Studies in Africa* 6(2): 186-190.

Peck, R. 1995. The Mystery of McClure's Trekkersburg Mysteries: Text and Non-Reception in South Africa. *English in Africa* 22(1): 48-71.

Penn, N. 1993. Mapping the Cape: John Barrow and the First British Occupation of the Colony, 1795-1803. *Pretexts* 4(2): 20-43.

Penrith, MC. 1972. *A historical and critical account of the teaching of English Language and Literature in English-medium universities in South Africa, with particular reference to the University of Cape Town and the South African College*. MA thesis, Cape Town: University of Cape Town.

Pereira, E. 1974. Time, memory and Adèle Naudé. *Unisa English Studies* XII(2): 23-24.

Povey, JF. 1966. Memory and its Wound: A Comment on South African Poetry. *English Studies in Africa* 9(1): 61-71.

Pridmore, J. 1994. The Reception of Henry Francis Fynn c. 1824 – 1992. *Current Writing* 6(1): 57-72.

Proceedings of a Conference of Writers, Publishers, Editors and University Teachers of English. 1957. Johannesburg, University of Witwatersrand.

Putnam, W. 2002. André Gide's Congo Journey: The Making of *Homo performans. Current Writing* 14(1): 59-81.

Rabinowitz, Ivan. 1989. Editorial. *The English Academy Review* 6: iii.

Rabinowitz, Ivan. 1990. Editorial. *English Academy Review* 7: iii.

Rabinowitz, Ivan. 1991. Editorial. *English Academy Review* 8: iii.

Rabinowitz, Ivan. 1992. Editorial *English Academy Review* 9: iii.

Rabinowitz, Ivan. 1993. Editorial *English Academy Review* 10: iii.

Randall, P. 1989. The Educational Past and the Preparation of South African Teachers. *English Academy Review* 6:1-12.

Rankin, E. 1976. The Emperor's New Head: Notes towards an Historiography of the Pedimental Sculptures of the Parthenon. *English Studies in Africa* 19(1): 49-54.

Rice, M. 1977. The National Neurosis: A Critical Study of Stephen Gray's Local Colour. *English in Africa* 4(1): 55-63.

Rice, M. 1985. The Hero in Boer War Fiction. *English in Africa* 12(2): 63-82.

Rich, P. 1985. Liberal realism in South Africa. *English in Africa* 12(1): 47-82.

Rich, P. 1997. A New South African Liberal Conscience. *Current Writing* 9(2): 1-20.

Rive, R. 1974. Introduction. *English in Africa* 1(1): 3-14.

Rive, R. 1977. Black Poets of the Seventies. *English in Africa* 4(1) 47-54.

Rive, R. 1983. The liberal tradition in South African literature. *Contrast* 14(3): 19-31.

Roberts, G. 1970. Foreword. *UCT Studies in English* Issue 1: *np*, inside front cover.

Roberts, S. 1982. A Confined World: a Rereading of Pauline Smith. *UCT Studies in English* Issue 12: 38-45.

Robinson, M. 2002. Reading Between the Lines: Literature and the Creation of Touristic Spaces. *Current Writing* 14(1): 1-28.

Ronge, B. 1974. The poetry of Mike Nicol. *Unisa English Studies* XII(2): 143-144.

Rooke, D. 1987. *Mittee.* Diep River, Cape: Chameleon Press.

Rosenberg, G. 2000. Auto / Biographical Narratives and the Lives of Jordan Ngubane. *Alternation* 7(1): 62-96.

Ryan, P. 1993. Singing in Prison – Women Writers and the Discourse of Resistance. *Journal of Literary Studies* 9(1): 57-68.

Ryan, P. 2001. Plain Women and Ladies in a Strange Country. *Alternation* 8(1): 6-27.

Ryan, P. 2004. "College Girls Don't Faint": The Legacy of Elsewhere. *Journal of Literary Studies* 20(1/2): 25-47.

Ryan, R. 1996. The Social Life of Literature: Cultural Studies, Cultural Ethnography and the Future of Literary Studies. *Journal of Literary Studies* 12(1/2): 1-39.

Ryan, R. 1998. Executioners of Mystery. *scrutiny2* 3(2): 20-26.

Sands, R. 1970. The South African Novel: Some Observations. *English Studies in Africa* 13(1): 89-104.

Sandwith, C. 1998. The Moment of *Trek*: Literary and Political Criticism in the South African English Periodical Press, 1941-1947. *Current Writing* 10(1): 17-38.

Sandwith, C. 2002. Dora Taylor: South African Marxist. *English in Africa* 29(2): 5-27.

Scarnell Lean, P. 1959. Spoken English and the Training of Students in Public Speaking. *English Studies in Africa* 2(1): 126-129.

Schalkwyk, D. 1998. The Rules of Physiognomy: reading the convict in South African prison writing. *Pretexts* 7(1): 81-96.

Segal, P. 1946. Contemporary Criticism of the English Romantics. *Standpunte* 1(4): 44-55.

Segal, P. 1970. The Place of South African Writing in the University. *English Studies in Africa* 13(1): 175-180.

Shear, K. 1989. Depictions of Childhood in South African Autobiography, with Particular Reference to the 1920s. *English in Africa* 16(1): 39-70.

Sienaert, M. 1998. A Semiotic Response to Space in South Africa: Indigenous Rock Art and Colonial Travelogues as Marginal "Writing on the Earth'? *Alternation* 5(2): 43-50.

Sole, K. 1997. South Africa Passes the Posts. *Alternation* 4(1): 116-151.

Sole, K. 1998. Acceptance Speech for Thomas Pringle Award. *English Academy* 15: 353-356.

Stein, P and L Slonimsky. 2001. Knowledge, Authority and Identity in Home Literacy Events: A Case Study From Gauteng. *Current Writing* 13(2): 66-79.

Stiebel, L. 2002. A Treasure Story: Thomas Baines's 'Map to the Gold Fields of South Eastern Africa' 1877. *English Studies in Africa* 45(1): 1-18.

Stobie, C. 2004. 'Biopia' in biography: Representations of Bisexuality in Selected South African Lives. *scrutiny2* 9(2): 35-52.

Stotesbury, JA. 1990. The Function of Borders in the Popular Novel on South Africa. *English in Africa* 17(2): 71-90.

Switzer, L. 1998. The challenge of university teaching in the new South Africa: an outsider's perspective. *scrutiny2* 3(2): 3-19.

Thale, T. 2000. Community and Narration in Emma Mashinini's *Strikes have Followed me all my Life*. *Alternation* 7(1): 163-177.

Thebehali, I. 1981. Teaching English in Soweto. *English Academy Review* 1981: 44-47.

Thompson, JB. 1979. Poetic Truth in *Too Late the Phalarope*, in *Association of University English Teachers of South Africa (AUETSA) Papers 1978*, Bloemfontein: University of the OFS: 86-89.

Thorold, A. 1994. Towards an Anthropology of Writing in Southern Africa. *Alternation* 1(1): 52-57.

Tiffin, J. 1999. Digitally Remythicized: *Star Wars,* Modern Popular Mythology, and *Madam and Eve. Journal of Literary Studies* 15(1/2): 66-80.

Tillyard, EMW. 1958. The Muse Unchained: An Intimate Account of the Revolution in English Studies at Cambridge. London: Bowes and Bowes.

Trengrove-Jones, T. 2000. Reviews - Nadine Gordimer: Reflections on the Place of Writing in South Africa Today. *Current Writing* 12(1): 95-98.

Turner, N. 1994. A Brief Overview of Zulu Oral Traditions. *Alternation* 1(1): 58-67.

Ullyatt, AG (ed). 1975. The English Academy of Southern Africa: Annual Review. Johannesburg: English Academy of South Africa.

Van der Linde, G. 1996. Rationality and Knowledge in Complex Systems: The Case of Stanislaw Lem. *Journal of Literary Studies* 12(3): 275-296.

Van Heyningen, C. 1948. A Performance of 'The Flies' by Jean-Paul Sartre. *Standpunte* 3(9): 46–54.

Van Heyningen, C. 1963. Manifest for a Group of English Literature Teachers. *Theoria* XXI: 52-57.

Van Vuuren, H. 1994. Forgotten Territory: The Oral Tradition of the /Xam. *Alternation* 1(2): 57-70.

Van Vuuren, H. 1998. '//Kabbo's Intended Return Home' (1873) and *The Conversion: Death Cell Conversations of 'Rooizak' and the Missionaries – Lydenburg 1875*: Marginalised Early South African Testimonies. *Alternation* 5(2): 51-57.

Van Wyk Smith, M. 1974. Poetry of the Anglo-Boer War: Anatomy of a Research Project. *English in Africa* 1(2): 33-43.

Van Wyk Smith, M. 1976. Kipling and Kiplingson: Some Poetry of the Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902). *English Studies in Africa* 19(1): 19-38.

Van Wyk Smith, M. 1990. *Grounds of Contest: A Survey of South African English Literature.* Cape Town: Jutalit.

Van Wyk Smith, M. 1991. Waiting for Silence; or, The Autobiography of Metafiction in Some Recent South African Novels. *Current Writing* 3(1): 91-104.

Van Wyk Smith, M. 1997. Romancing the East Cape Frontier: Prelude to the South African High Romance of Empire. *English in Africa* 24(2): 1-14.

Vaughan, M. 1982. Ideological Directions of Southern African Literature. *English in Africa* 9(2): 41-64.

Vaughan, M. 1984. A Critique of Dominant Ideas in Departments of English. *Critical Arts* 3(2): 35-51.

Viljoen, M. 2004. Ideology and textuality: speculating on the boundaries of music. *scrutiny2* 9(1): 68-87.

Visser, N. 1984. The Critical Situation and the Situation of Criticism. *Critical Arts* 3(2): 2-8.

Visser, N. 1990. Towards a Political Culture. *Pretexts* 2(1): 69-77.

Visser, N. 1993. Drama and Politics in a State of Emergency: Athol Fugard's 'My Children! My Africa!' *Twentieth Century Literature: a scholarly and critical journal* 39(4): 486-502.

Visser, NW. 1974. H.I.E. Dhlomo (1903-1956): the re-emergence of an African writer. *English in Africa* 1(2): 1-10.

Visser, NW. 1977. Introduction. *English in Africa* 4(2): 1-2.

Voss, AE. 1977. A Generic Approach to the South African Novel in English. *UCT Studies in English* 7: 110-121.

Voss, T. 1987. The Image of the Bushman in South African English Writing of the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries. *English in Africa* 14(1): 41-66.

Wade, J. 1994. Introduction. *Alternation* 1(1): 1-7.

Watson, S. 1982. *Cry the Beloved Country* and the Failure of the Liberal Vision. *English in Africa* 9(1): 29-44.

Whittock, T. 1978. Film: Art and Artefact. *English Studies in Africa* 21(1): 51-60.

Wilhelm, C. 1977. The Style of Poverty: the Language of Pauline Smith's Little Karoo. *English Studies in Africa* 20(2): 65-78.

Wilhelm, C. 1978. Trends in Recent English Fiction and Criticism in South Africa. *English in Africa* 5(2): 17-27.

Wilhelm, C. 1978. William Plomer: *The Devil-Dancers*, in *Association of University English Teachers of South Africa (AUETSA) Papers 1978*, Bloemfontein: University of the OFS: 19-31.

Wilhelm, C. 1979. Olive Schreiner, Child of Queen Victoria: Stories, Dreams and Allegories. *English in Africa* 6(2): 63-69.

Wilhelm, C. 1979. Olive Schreiner: Child of Queen Victoria: Stories, Dreams and Allegories, in *Association of University English Teachers of South Africa (AUETSA) Papers 1978*, Bloemfontein: University of the OFS: 64-69.

Wilson, E. 1971. Pervasive Symbolism in *The Story of an African Farm. English Studies in Africa* 14(2): 179-186.

Wisker, G. 2000. 'No World as Yet for What She has Done': Re-memory and Revisioning in Bessie Head and South African Women's Autobiographical Writings. *Alternation* 7(1): 5-28.

Wood, J. 1992. Terry Eagleton in conversation with James Wood. *Poetry Review* 82(1): 4-7.

Wood, WBJ. 1979. Disintegrating Vision and "the liberating creative act": John Coetzee's *Dusklands*, in *Association of University English Teachers of South Africa (AUETSA) Papers 1978*, Bloemfontein: University of the OFS: 114-119.

Woodrow, M. 1970. South African Drama in English. *English Studies in Africa* 13(2): 391-410.

Woodward, W. 1995. Marginal Midwifery: Hannah Dennison and the Textualising of the Feminine Settler Body in the Eastern Cape, 1834-1848. *Current Writing* 7(1): 18-33.

Woodward, W. 1998. Dis / Embodying Transcendence in the Early-Nineteenth: Ann Hamilton, Mary Moffat, the London Missionary Society and God. *Journal of Literary Studies* 14(1/2): 80-101.

Wright, L. 2001. Obituary: Guy Butler 21 January 1918 – 26 April 2001. *Current Writing* 13(1): 1-6.

Wylie, D. 1991. Autobiography as Alibi: History and Projection in Nathaniel Isaacs's *Travels and Adventures in Eastern Africa* (1836). *Current Writing* 3(1): 71-90.

Wylie, D. 2001. Elephants and Compassion: Ecological Criticism and Southern African Hunting Literature. *English in Africa* 28(2): 79-100.

Appendix:

Analysis of English Language Articles in 11 Academic Literary Journals in South Africa 1958 - 2004

Table of Contents

I. Introduction

This appendix forms an integral part of the thesis *English Academic Literary Discourse in South Africa 1958-2004: A Review of 11 Academic Journals,* and contains detailed statistical analyses in support of certain claims in the thesis. The analysis was carried out with the aim of obtaining a better understanding of the patterns and trends in academic literary journals in South Africa over the period 1958 to 2004. To this end, a set of categories were developed and applied to the English language articles contained in 11 journals, which will hereafter be referred to using the following numbers and abbreviations:

1. *ESA*   *English Studies in Africa*, 47 volumes, University of Witwatersrand, vol 1 (1958) – vol 47 (2004).

2. *UES*   *Unisa English studies: Journal of the Department of English*, 33 volumes, UNISA, vol 1 (1963) – vol 33 (1995).

3. *UCT*   *UCT Studies in English*, 15 Issues, University of Cape Town, Issue 1 (1970) – Issue 16 (1986).

4. *LIT*   *Literator: Journal of Literary Criticism, Comparative Linguistics and Literary Studies*, 25 volumes, PUvCHO / North-West University, Jaargang 1 (1980) – Jaargang 25 (2004).

5. *EA*   *English in Africa*, 31 volumes, ISEA, vol 1 (1974) – vol 31 (2004)

6. *EAR*   *English Academy Review*, 21 volumes, English Academy of Southern Africa, 1980, 1981, 1982 and vol 1 (1983) – vol 21 (2004).

7. *JLS*   *The Journal of Literary Studies / Tydskrif vir Literatuurwetenskap*, 20 volumes, SAVAL, vol 1 (1985) – vol 20 (2004).

8. *CW*   *Current Writing: Text and Reception in Southern Africa,* 16 volumes, University of Natal / University of KwaZulu-Natal, vol 1 (1989) – vol 16 (2004).

9. *PRE*   *Pretexts: Literary and Cultural Studies*, 12 volumes, UCT, vol 1 (1989) – vol 12 (2003).

10. *ALT*   *Alternation*, 11 volumes, CSSALL, vol 1 (1994) – vol 11 (2004).

11. *s2*   *scrutiny2*, 9 volumes, UNISA, vol 1 (1996) – vol 9 (2004).

II. Methodology

The methodology used consisted primarily in the categorising of the articles in the journals according to a limited range of pre-defined broad categories, and the subsequent analysis of the articles in pursuit of identifying patterns and trends. Synchronic and diachronic statistical analyses were made using as data the number of articles and artists defined according to the selected classifications.

The first step consisted in the development of categories which could be applied with reasonable ease and with a degree of objectivity. The categories are given below in Section III, and the results of the analysis in Section IV. The definitions are specific to this analysis and key to understanding the interpretations which follow. They also indicate the limits of possible interpretations, as the patterns which emerge are intricately linked to the selection and definition of the categories and the application of the same. A high degree of caution in all interpretations of the results must be exercised.

It must be further emphasised that there are undoubtedly errors in the data. There are many possible reasons for this, among which are the fact that the classification of the articles, collection and entry of the data in large excel spreadsheets, was carried out by me personally over a two-month period at multiple locations. Fatigue, data-entry errors, technical problems (loss of data), and errors of judgement will collectively account for mistakes in the outcomes. Nevertheless, great care and effort was taken to minimise errors, and it is hoped that their number is not statistically significant.

Certain states and tendencies appear in the analyses. The interpretations of these states and tendencies have been classified

according to their evident strength or weakness hierarchically as follows:

- √ Dominant (where applicable >50%)
- √ Strong (where applicable 25-49%)
- √ Moderate (where applicable 5-24%)

The interpretations are contained in tables which immediately precede the representation of the analyses in graphic form. Care has been taken to limit the readings of the data to the bare minimum and most obvious. Generally, each sub-section of the analysis begins with the overall results, and then proceeds successively to the results of each journal.

The Appendix is not meant to constitute the primary interpretative narrative. No in-depth comment is therefore provided in this text. Nevertheless, summaries of results are given, and from time to time annotated with cautionary remarks where it is deemed appropriate to do so.

III. Categories

1.1 List of primary categories and sub-categories

Thematic

Metadiscursive

General Articles on Literary Objects

- √ *General: SA Imaginative Objects*
- √ *General: Non-African Imaginative Objects*
- √ *General: Popular Objects*
- √ *General: African objects*
- √ *General: Orature*

General Articles on Cultural Phenomena (non-literary)

Criticism - Articles Discussing up to 4 Artists (Criticism)

- √ *SA Artists: Imaginative Written Objects*
- √ *SA Artists: Imaginative Oral Objects*
- √ *Other African Artists: Imaginative Written Objects*
- √ *Non-African Artists: Imaginative Objects*
- √ *Authors of Autobiographies*
- √ *Biographical Objects*
- √ *Authors of Popular Imaginative Written Objects*
- √ *Film & Documentary*
- √ *Journals / Diaries / Letters / Journalism*
- √ *Others*
- √ *Children's literature*

1.2 Definitions

Only the content of the journals defined or definable as 'articles', and not content of any other type (letters, replies to editor or articles, poems, short-stories, review essays, reviews), were classified according to the categories given below.

All articles were classified as belonging to *one* of the following primary categories:

- √ **Thematic**
- √ **Metadiscursive**
- √ **General Articles on Literary Objects**
- √ **General Articles on Cultural Phenomena (non-literary)**
- √ **Criticism - Articles Discussing up to 4 Artists**

1.2.1 Thematic

The definition of Thematic is primarily a negative one. Articles assigned to this category were all those which were *not assignable* to the other four primary categories mentioned above. Well over half of the articles in this category can be grouped under two broad sub-headings: pedagogy (teaching methods, curricula, Outcomes Based Education, education policy, et cetera) and philology (language policy, discussions on linguistics, grammar, dialects, history of language, usage, bilingualism et cetera). Other articles defined as Thematic range very widely from general discussions on censorship, the CNA literary award, the relationship between the Church and State, colonialism, academic freedom, research funding, South Africa's 'little magazines', trends in publishing, tribalism, speculation on what expatriate writers will do once they return to South Africa, and the like.

1.2.2 Metadiscursive

The Metadiscursive category covers any article discussing concepts, tools and approaches to any discipline (mainly literary studies, but not

exclusively). No articles discussing or purporting to discuss any work of artists were assigned to this category, no matter whether the discussion was theoretical or whether it also discussed concepts, tools and approaches. Discussions on literary historiography, the South African canon, and cultural studies fall under the Metadiscursive heading, unless the discussion is of a very general nature, in which case it is classified as Thematic. Hence, the Metadiscursive category covers specific discussions on: critics and philosophers (such as Jacques Derrida, Saul Bellow – as critic, WEB Du Bois, Michel Foucault, Paul Gilroy, Walter Pater, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Paul Ricoeur, Stephen Spender, Dora Taylor, Thomas Taylor, Ludwig Wittgenstein, Raymond Williams, et cetera); theories (such as applied linguistics, the black Atlantic, cyberspace, cognition, deconstruction, feminism, narratology, postcolonialism, postmodernism / poststructualism, psychoanalysis, phenomenology, romanticism, semantics, semiotics); and anything of a generally theoretical nature, as opposed to merely topical (such as memory in narratives, romanticism and religion, the relationship between media and culture, analysis of register, value judgements in criticism, what constitutes a 'classic', the nature of truth and meaning, 'Woman' as sign in the South African colonial enterprise, et cetera). Discussions on literary terms such as the 'pastoral' and 'tragedy', 'metaphor', the 'modern grotesque' were also assigned to the Metadiscursive category.

1.2.3 General Articles on Literary Objects

Any articles *discussing the literary objects of more than 4 artists* ('literary' is understood here and applied throughout in its broadest sense as any imaginative writing as well as autobiography, biography, popular genres, travel writing, journal, letter, diary and other epistolary writings, as well as oral art forms) are included in this category. Articles assigned to this group are further classified under one of the following 5 sub-categories:

- √ *General: SA Imaginative Objects*
- √ *General: Non-African Imaginative Objects*
- √ *General: Popular Objects*
- √ *General: African Objects*
- √ *General: Orature*

General: SA Imaginative Objects

All articles on more than 4 South African artists of imaginative objects (plays, poems or fictional prose) were assigned to this sub-category.

General: Non-African Imaginative Objects

All articles on more than 4 non-African artists of imaginative objects (plays, poems or fictional prose) were assigned to this sub-category.

General: Popular Objects

All articles on more than 4 artists of any nationality of genre fiction were assigned to this sub-category. By 'genre fiction' is understood the following: science fiction, detective, thriller, romance (for young girls), boys (adventure), and Children's fiction.

General: African Objects

All articles on more than 4 non-South-African African artists of imaginative objects (plays, poems or fictional prose) were assigned to this sub-category.

General: Orature

All articles on more than 4 oral artists were assigned to this sub-category.

1.2.4 General Articles on Cultural Phenomena (non-literary)

The category General Articles on Cultural Phenomena covers articles on non-literary phenomena or cultural practices, or non-literary objects without an author or by more than four authors. Hence, photos in an anonymous photo album, folktale texts in South African and nationalist discourses, the Nazarites in KwaZulu-Natal, private girls' schooling in Natal in the apartheid era, advertising, the Cape Town Ladies' Bible Association, Disneyland and the Globe theatre, food and

thought, the African marketplace, Bantu dances, black urban popular culture in the 1950s, consumer magazines for black South Africans, the Lovedale press, the media, and the like, were classified under this heading.

1.2.5 Criticism - Articles Discussing up to 4 Artists

Any article discussing or purporting to discuss a maximum of 4 artists were classified under this heading. Peripheral mention of other artists was not taken into consideration. (The ostensible focus of the articles which discuss artists is usually announced at the beginning of the article. It is this statement which is taken as definitive even when the article itself turns out to be discussing in greater depth a different article. If no such statement is made, the text is analysed to discover the literary objects discussed, if any). This group is further defined as comprising the following 12 sub-categories:

- √ *SA Artists: Imaginative Written Objects*
- √ *SA Artists: Imaginative Oral Objects*
- √ *Other African Artists: Imaginative Written Objects*
- √ *Non-African Artists: Imaginative Objects*
- √ *Authors of Autobiographies*
- √ *Biographical Objects*
- √ *Authors of Popular Imaginative Written Objects*
- √ *Film & Documentary*
- √ *Journals/ Diaries / Letters / Journalism*
- √ *Others*
- √ *Children's literature*

SA Artists: Imaginative Written Objects

All articles on 4 and fewer south african artists of imaginative objects (plays, poems or fictional prose) were assigned to this sub-category.

SA Artists: Imaginative Oral Objects

All articles on 4 and fewer south african artists of oral objects were assigned to this sub-category, such as Dinuzulu, son of Cetshwayo (izibongo), Bongani Sitole (imbongi), Nongenile Mazithahu Zenani (Xhosa oral narrator), or Elizabeth Ncube (Ndebele praise poet from Zimbabwe).

Other African Artists: Imaginative Written Objects

All articles on less than 4 non-South-African African artists of imaginative objects (plays, poems or fictional prose) were assigned to this sub-category. Most commonly this category includes articles on the work of Achebe, Armah, Soyinka and Ngũgĩ (in this order).

Non-African Artists: Imaginative Objects

All articles on less than 4 non-African artists of imaginative objects (plays, poems or fictional prose) were assigned to this sub-category. Most commonly, this category includes articles on the work of Shakespeare, Conrad, Wordsworth, James, Yeats, TS Eliot, Austen, Chaucer, Blake, Pope, and many more.

Authors of Autobiographies

This category includes articles on the autobiographies of Abrahams, Magona, Mphahlele, and others (almost all of South African origin).

Biographical Objects

This category includes articles on the biographies of Bessie Head, Chris Hani and others.

Authors of Popular Imaginative Written Objects

This sub-category includes articles on Science fiction (Ballard, Bear, Delaney, Le Guin), thrillers (Forsyth), detective fiction (McClure, Christie, Lem), romance (Odaga), and boys' fiction (Buchan).

Film & Documentary

This sub-category includes articles on films by Bergman, Campion, Lynch, Rozema, Hogarth (documentary), and others.

Journals/ Diaries / Letters / Journalism

This sub-category includes articles on Lady A Barnard, WHI Bleek, H Ward, D Reitz and others.

Others

This sub-category captures other objects which are not categorised above, such as operas, comic strips, and historical figures (such as James Barry, a doctor), and the like. These differ from general cultural phenomena as the objects have an identifiable author.

Children's literature

This sub-category includes articles on authors of Children's books, such as Slingsby and Sibiya.

1.3 Position of the Object

The approach of the literary academics in the articles falling under the fifth category above, that is 'Criticism - Articles Discussing up to 4 Artists (Criticism)', are further classified according to the position of the object of analysis as either:

- √   Theory to the fore
- √   Object to the fore

That is to say, the degree of *closeness* of the readings of the objects. These two sub-categories are the least objective of all the categories mentioned above. Nevertheless, it is relatively easy to identify extreme cases where either the object is obviously at the centre of the analysis (usually marked by paraphrasing and extensive direct quotations of the primary text), or is discussed briefly and / or only to elucidate a point entirely peripheral to the primary literary text. However, many discussions on literary objects fall somewhere in between these two extremes, making it very difficult to decide whether the primary text is at the centre of the discussion (and indirectly thereby accorded a degree of insularity or autonomy), or whether it is simply used to elucidate a different (if related) point.

IV. Analysis

1.4 Overview

Summary

√   Strong tendency for output of articles to increase over time (long-term)

√   Total of 2585 articles appear in the 11 journals over the entire period

√   Low volume journals (3.UCT; 9.PRE; 11.s2) have low statistical significance when reading their results individually.

Academic Articles per Journal

Academic Articles: Annual Output
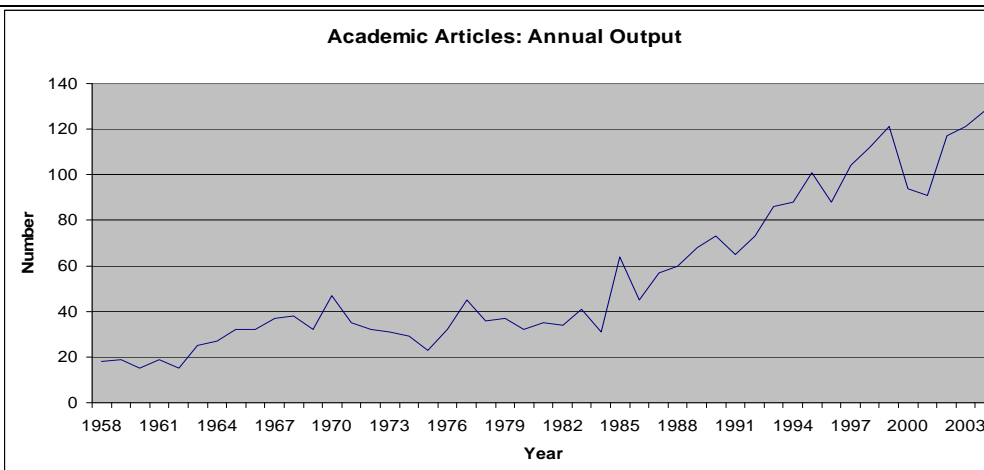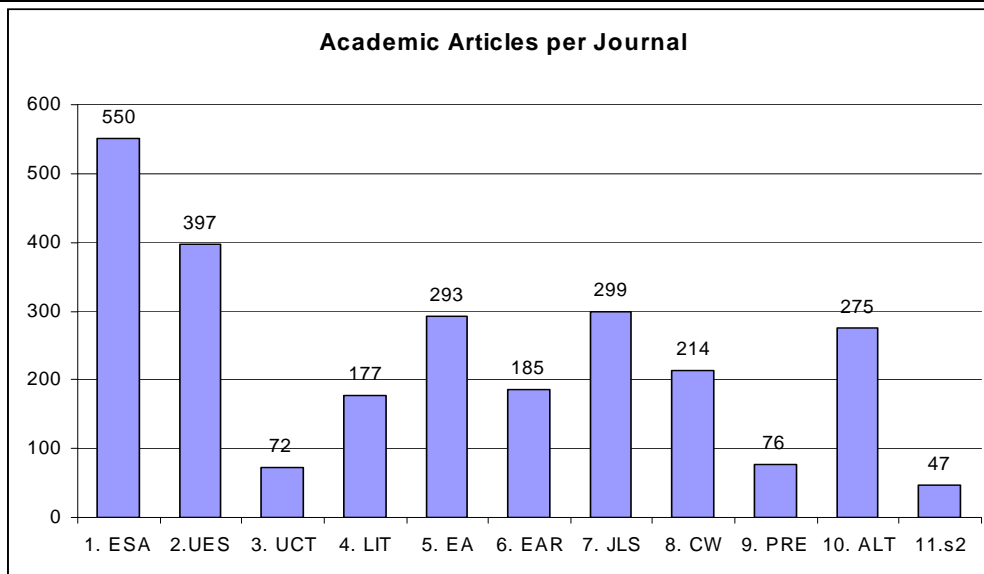
1.5 Analysis according to Type

Summary	
OVERALL	√ **Criticism - Articles Discussing up to 4 Artists is the dominant content**
1. ESA	√ **Criticism - Articles Discussing up to 4 Artists is the dominant content**
2. UES	√ **Criticism - Articles Discussing up to 4 Artists is the dominant content**
3. UCT	√ **Criticism - Articles Discussing up to 4 Artists is the dominant content**
4. LIT	√ **Criticism - Articles Discussing up to 4 Artists is the dominant content**
5. EA	√ **Criticism - Articles Discussing up to 4 Artists is the dominant content**
6. EAR	√ **Strong Presence of Criticism - Articles Discussing up to 4 Artists** √ **Strong Presence of Thematic Articles**
7. JLS	√ **Criticism - Articles Discussing up to 4 Artists is the dominant content** √ **Strong Presence of Metadiscursive Articles**
8. CW	√ **Criticism - Articles Discussing up to 4 Artists is the dominant content** √ **Strong Presence of Metadiscursive Articles**
9. PRE	√ **Strong Presence of Criticism - Articles Discussing up to 4 Artists** √ **Strong Presence of Metadiscursive Articles** √ **Noteworthy Moderate presence of articles on non-literary cultural phenomena**
10. ALT	√ **Strong Presence of Criticism - Articles Discussing up to 4 Artists** √ **Strong Presence of Thematic Articles** √ **Strong Presence of Metadiscursive Articles**
11. S2	√ **Strong Presence of Criticism - Articles Discussing up to 4 Artists** √ **Strong Presence of Metadiscursive Articles** √ **Noteworthy Moderate presence of articles on non-literary cultural phenomena**

Table 1: Journal Articles Per Type - Status

	Thematic Articles	Metadiscursive Articles	General Articles on Literary Objects	General Articles on Cultural Phenomena (non-literary)	Criticism - Articles Discussing up to 4 Artists
OVERALL	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	-	Dominant
1. ESA	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	-	Dominant
2. UES	-	Moderate	Moderate	-	Dominant
3. UCT	Moderate	Moderate	-	-	Dominant
4. LIT	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	-	Dominant
5. EA	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	-	Dominant
6. EAR	Strong	Moderate	Moderate	-	Strong
7. JLS	Moderate	Strong	Moderate	-	Dominant
8. CW	Moderate	Strong	Moderate	-	Dominant
9. PRE	Moderate	Strong	Moderate	Moderate	Strong
10. ALT	Strong	Strong	Moderate	-	Strong
11. S2	Moderate	Strong	-	Moderate	Strong
Interpretation key: Dominant (>50%); Strong (25-49%); Moderate (5-24%)					

.

OVERALL: Articles According to Type

- Thematic Articles 13%
- Metadiscursive Articles 16%
- General Articles on Literary Objects 8%
- General Articles on Cultural Phenomena (non-literary) 1%
- Articles Discussing up to 4 Artists 62%

1. ESA: Articles According to Type

- Thematic Articles 13%
- Metadiscursive Articles 7%
- General Articles on Literary Objects 8%
- General Articles on Cultural Phenomena (non-literary) 0%
- Articles Discussing up to 4 Artists 72%

2. UES: Articles According to Type

Thematic Articles — 2%
Metadiscursive Articles — 15%
General Articles on Literary Objects — 8%
General Articles on Cultural Phenomena (non-literary) — 0%
Articles Discussing up to 4 Artists — 75%

3. UCT: Articles According to Type

Thematic Articles — 18%
Metadiscursive Articles — 13%
General Articles on Literary Objects — 4%
General Articles on Cultural Phenomena (non-literary) — 0%
Articles Discussing up to 4 Artists — 65%

4. LIT: Articles According to Type

- Thematic Articles 11%
- Metadiscursive Articles 11%
- General Articles on Literary Objects 10%
- General Articles on Cultural Phenomena (non-literary) 0%
- Articles Discussing up to 4 Artists 68%

5. EA: Articles According to Type

- Thematic Articles 7%
- Metadiscursive Articles 6%
- General Articles on Literary Objects 12%
- General Articles on Cultural Phenomena (non-literary) 0%
- Articles Discussing up to 4 Artists 75%

6. EAR: Articles According to Type

Thematic Articles
32%

Articles Discussing up to
4 Artists
48%

Metadiscursive Articles
9%

General Articles on
Cultural Phenomena (non-
literary)
0%

General Articles on
Literary Objects
11%

7. JLS: Articles According to Type

Thematic Articles
5%

Metadiscursive Articles
32%

Articles Discussing up to
4 Artists
55%

General Articles on
Literary Objects
6%

General Articles on
Cultural Phenomena (non-
literary)
2%

19

8. CW: Articles According to Type

Thematic Articles
11%

Metadiscursive Articles
28%

General Articles on
Literary Objects
5%

General Articles on
Cultural Phenomena (non-
literary)
0%

Articles Discussing up to
4 Artists
56%

9. PRE: Articles According to Type

Thematic Articles
13%

Metadiscursive Articles
26%

General Articles on
Literary Objects
9%

General Articles on
Cultural Phenomena (non-
literary)
9%

Articles Discussing up to
4 Artists
43%

10. ALT: Articles According to Type

Articles Discussing up to
4 Artists
30%

Thematic Articles
31%

General Articles on
Cultural Phenomena (non-
literary)
0%

General Articles on
Literary Objects
10%

Metadiscursive Articles
29%

11. s2: Articles According to Type

Thematic Articles
21%

Articles Discussing up to
4 Artists
40%

Metadiscursive Articles
26%

General Articles on
Cultural Phenomena (non-
literary)
11%

General Articles on
Literary Objects
2%

1.6 Analysis according to Type - Chronologically

Summary	
OVERALL	√ Criticism - Articles Discussing up to 4 authors have dominated (over 50%) throughout the period under review, with the exception of two years (1971 and 1981) √ Appearance and moderate increase of Articles on Non-literary Cultural Phenomena since 1996; however, there is some evidence historically of articles on such phenomena, although relatively few √ Relative volumes of articles in all other categories remains roughly proportional throughout the period
1. ESA	√ Moderate recent development since 2002: appearance of articles on non-literary cultural phenomena
2. UES	√ Sometimes erratic, but generally stable relationship between types of content over the longer term
3. UCT	√ Sometimes erratic, but generally stable relationship between types of content over the longer term
4. LIT	√ Moderate tendency over time to move the balance of articles in favour of Criticism - Articles Discussing up to 4 Artists
5. EA	√ Moderate tendency over time towards increased domination of Criticism - Articles Discussing up to 4 Artists, and an emerging though minor presence of Metadiscurive Articles, and no Thematic Articles since 1996.
6. EAR	√ Sometimes erratic, but generally stable relationship between types of content over the longer term
7. JLS	√ Strong tendency towards Criticism - Articles Discussing up to 4 Artists, and away from Metadiscursive Articles. √ Moderate tendency over the last 10 years to publish Articles on Cultural Phenomena (non-literary)

8. CW	√ Sometimes erratic, but generally stable relationship between types of content over the longer term
9. PRE	√ Low number of articles renders results difficult to interpret. There appears to have been a moderate tendency towards General Articles on Cultural Phenomena (the last issue appeared in 2003)
10. ALT	√ Dominant tendency since 2002 in favour of Metadiscursive / Thematic articles and away from Criticism - Articles Discussing up to 4 Artists
11. S2	√ Low number of articles renders results difficult to interpret. There appears to be have been a moderate tendency towards General Articles on Cultural Phenomena and Criticism - Articles Discussing up to 4 Artists

OVERALL: Articles According to Type - Chronologically
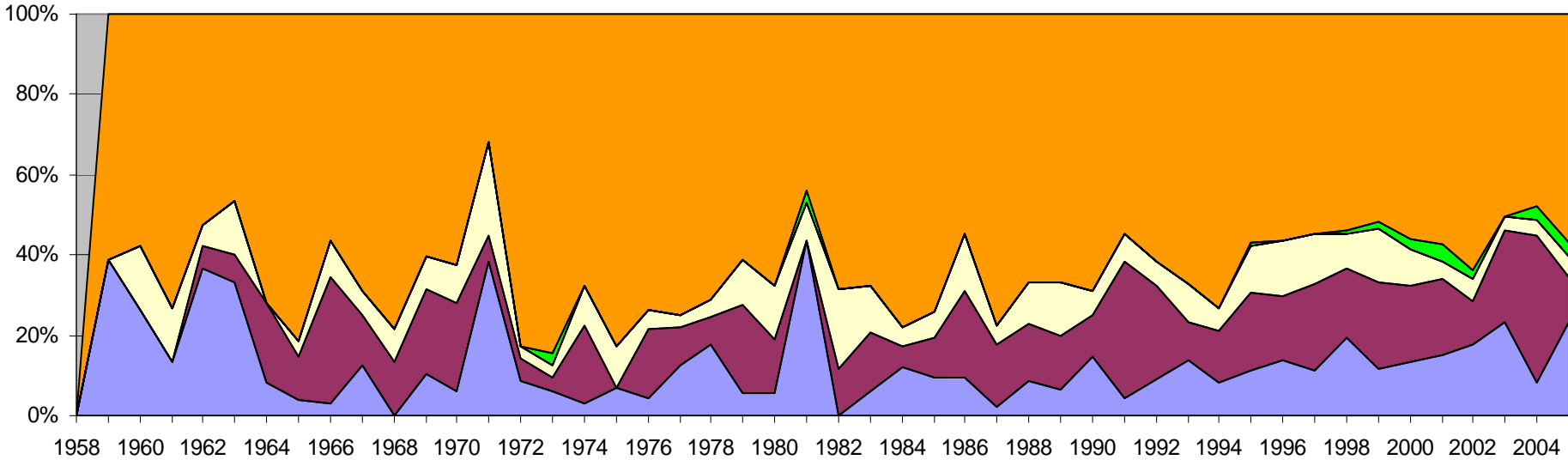
Legend:
- ☐ Thematic Articles
- ■ Metadiscursive Articles
- ☐ General Articles on Literary Objects
- ■ General Articles on Cultural Phenomena (non-literary)
- ■ Articles Discussing up to 4 Artists

1. ESA: Articles According to Type - Chronologically
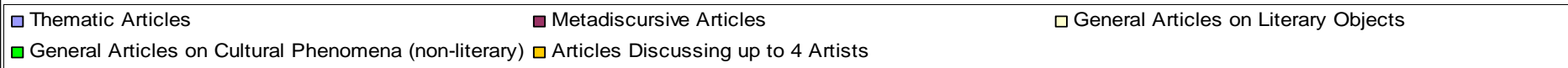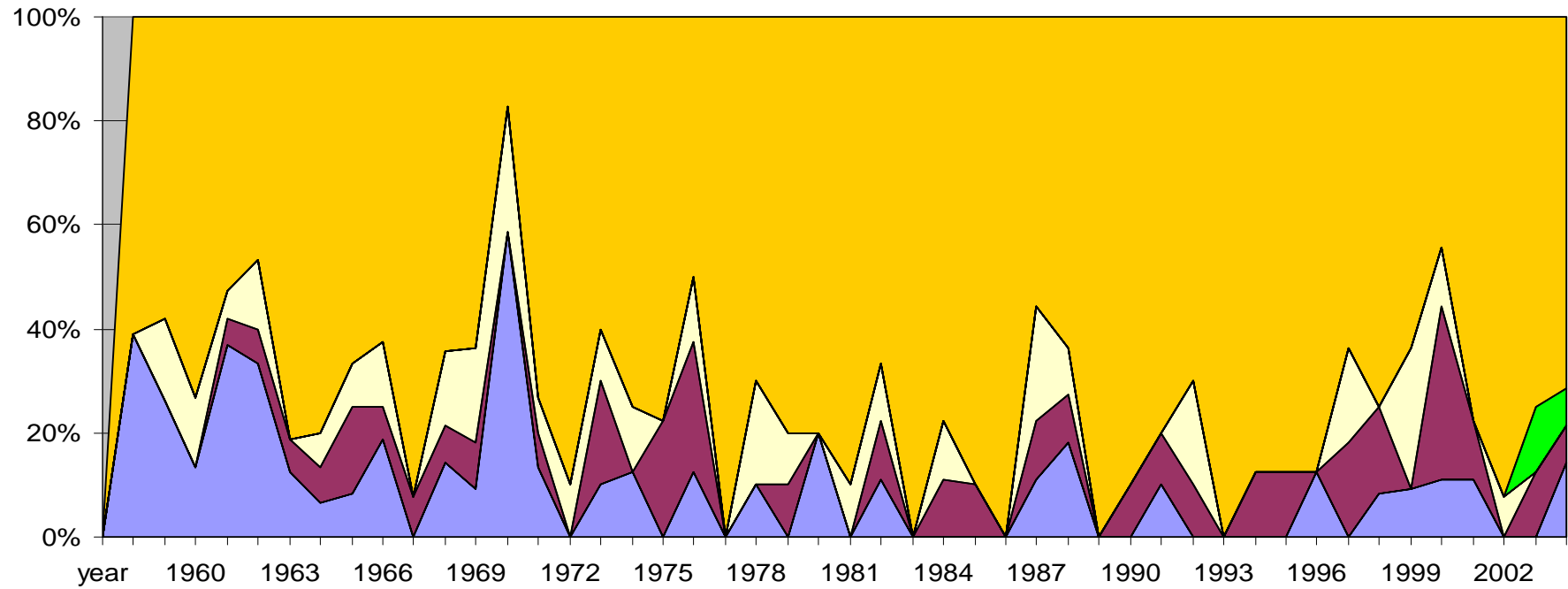
Legend:
- Thematic Articles
- Metadiscursive Articles
- General Articles on Literary Objects
- General Articles on Cultural Phenomena (non-literary)
- Articles Discussing up to 4 Artists

2. UES: Articles According to Type - Chronologically

Legend:
- Thematic Articles
- Metadiscursive Articles
- General Articles on Literary Objects
- General Articles on Cultural Phenomena (non-literary)
- Articles Discussing up to 4 Artists

3. UCT: Articles According to Type - Chronologically

Thematic Articles   Metadiscursive Articles   General Articles on Literary Objects

General Articles on Cultural Phenomena (non-literary)   Articles Discussing up to 4 Artists

4. LIT: Articles According to Type - Chronologically

Thematic Articles   Metadiscursive Articles   General Articles on Literary Objects

General Articles on Cultural Phenomena (non-literary)   Articles Discussing up to 4 Artists

27

5. EA: Articles According to Type - Chronologically

Legend: Thematic Articles; Metadiscursive Articles; General Articles on Literary Objects; General Articles on Cultural Phenomena (non-literary); Articles Discussing up to 4 Artists

6. EAR: Articles According to Type - Chronologically

Legend: Thematic Articles; Metadiscursive Articles; General Articles on Literary Objects; General Articles on Cultural Phenomena (non-literary); Articles Discussing up to 4 Artists

28

7. JLS: Articles According to Type - Chronologically

Legend:
- Thematic Articles
- Metadiscursive Articles
- General Articles on Literary Objects
- General Articles on Cultural Phenomena (non-literary)
- Articles Discussing up to 4 Artists

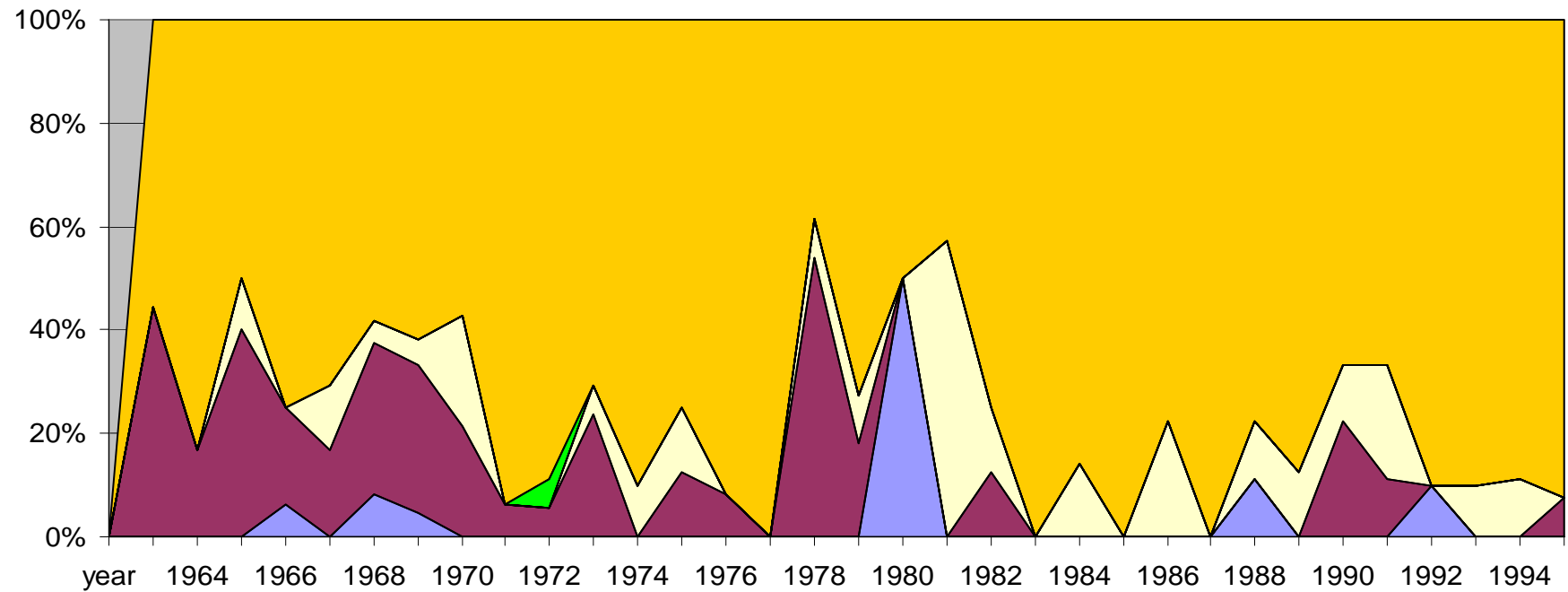**8. CW: Articles According to Type - Chronologically**

Legend:
- Thematic Articles
- Metadiscursive Articles
- General Articles on Literary Objects
- General Articles on Cultural Phenomena (non-literary)
- Articles Discussing up to 4 Artists

29

9. PRE: Articles According to Type - Chronologically

- Thematic Articles
- Metadiscursive Articles
- General Articles on Literary Objects
- General Articles on Cultural Phenomena (non-literary)
- Articles Discussing up to 4 Artists
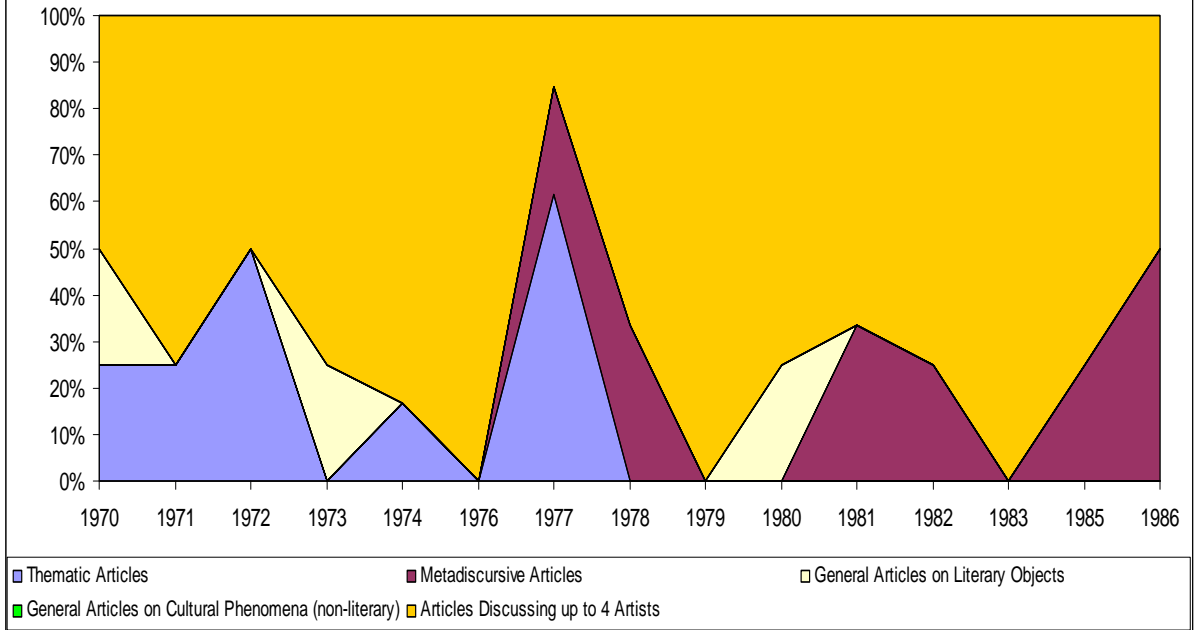

10. ALT: Articles According to Type - Chronologically

- Thematic Articles
- Metadiscursive Articles
- General Articles on Literary Objects
- General Articles on Cultural Phenomena (non-literary)
- Articles Discussing up to 4 Artists

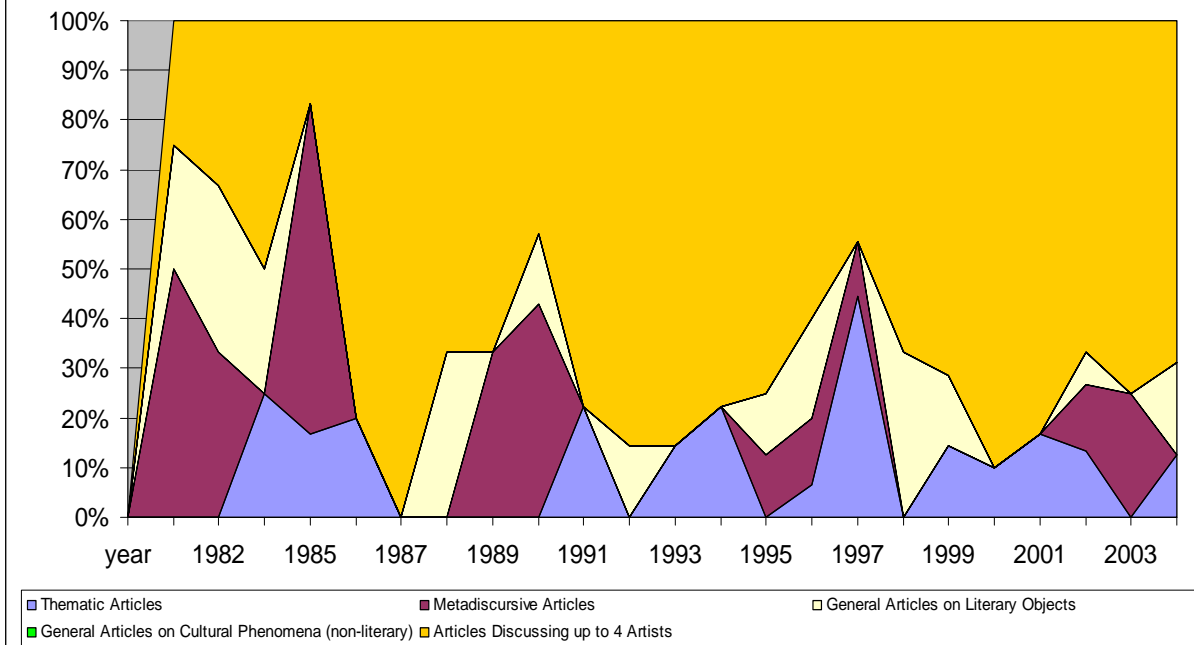**11. s2: Articles According to Type - Chronologically**
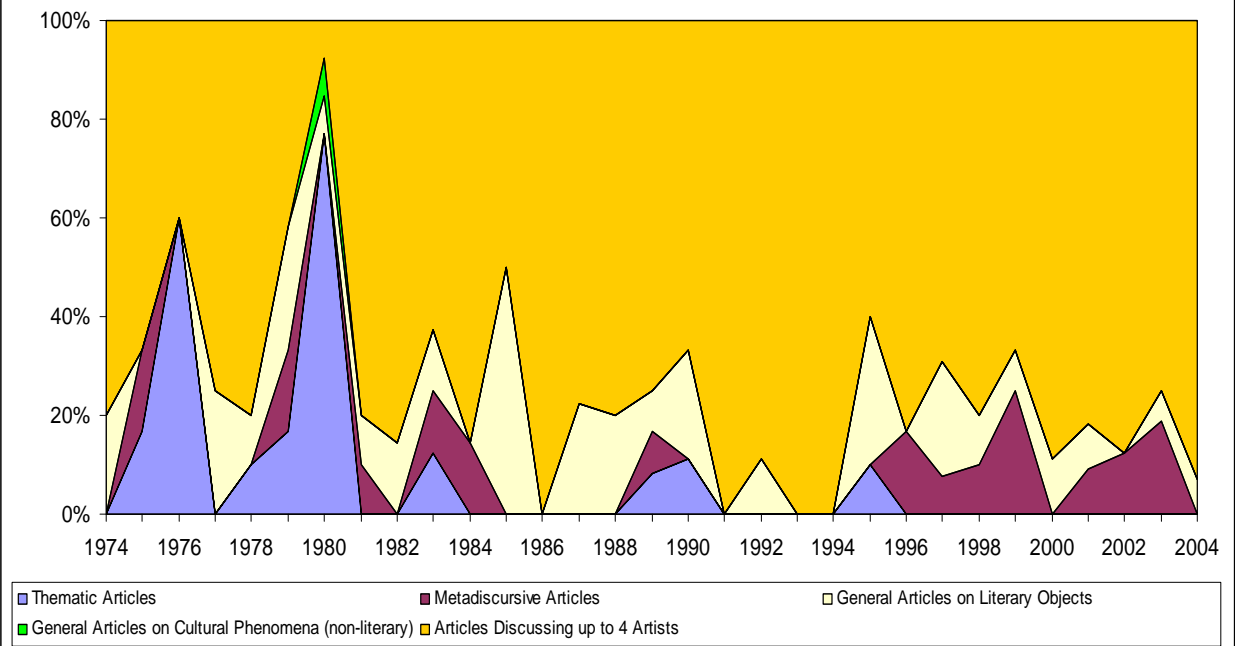
Legend:
- Thematic Articles
- Metadiscursive Articles
- General Articles on Literary Objects
- General Articles on Cultural Phenomena (non-literary)
- Articles Discussing up to 4 Artists

1.7 Position of the Object

The following analysis was made of Criticism - Articles Discussing up to 4 Artists, which represents 62% of all the articles. *Note: years in which no such articles appear, or in which no numbers of the journal were issued, are taken out of the data series to avoid gaps in the charts.*

Summary	
OVERALL	√ Dominant tendency (67%) of all objects are in the foreground of readings; this domination is reflected in ALL the journals, where in no case is the Object to the Fore less than 50%. √ Moderate tendency for Theory to move to the fore in readings since 1990.
1. ESA	√ Reflects the overall pattern
2. UES	√ Reflects the overall pattern
3. UCT	√ Reflects the overall pattern
4. LIT	√ Although Object to the Fore dominates (over 50%), the Theory to the Fore group has exceeded 50% on some occasions and is in any event more represented in this journal than others
5. EA	√ Reflects the overall pattern
6. EAR	√ Reflects the overall pattern
7. JLS	√ **Moderate tendency for the Object to move to the fore since 1995**
8. CW	√ Reflects the overall pattern
9. PRE	√ Not statistically significant, but reflects overall pattern
10. ALT	√ **Moderate tendency for the Object to move to the fore since 1995**
11. S2	√ Not statistically significant, but reflects overall pattern

OVERALL: Position of Object of Analysis

Legend: ☐ Theory to the fore ☐ Object to the fore

OVERALL: Position of Object of Analysis (%)

Legend: Theory to the fore ■ Object to the fore

1. ESA: Position of the Object

Legend:
- Object to the fore
- Theory to the fore

2. UES: Position of the Object

Legend:
- Object to the fore
- Theory to the fore

3. UCT: Position of the Object

4. LIT: Position of the Object

5. EA: Position of the Object

Object to the fore
Theory to the fore

6. EAR: Position of the Object

Object to the fore
Theory to the fore

38

7. JLS: Position of the Object

Legend: Object to the fore, Theory to the fore

8. CW: Position of the Object

Legend: Object to the fore, Theory to the fore

39

9. PRE: Position of the Object

10. ALT: Position of the Object

11. s2: Position of the Object

1.8 Analysis of Criticism - Articles on up to 4 Artists

This group constitutes 62% of total articles. The base of analysis is the total of *1870 focus occasions* on artists in 1580 articles. It is the first number (the number of times an artist's work formed the focus of analysis) which is the base for all calculations. For example, Shakespeare's work is the focus of analysis in 91 articles and. JM Coetzee's work is the focus of analysis in 70 articles. Together they account for 8.6% of the total of 1870 focus occasions.

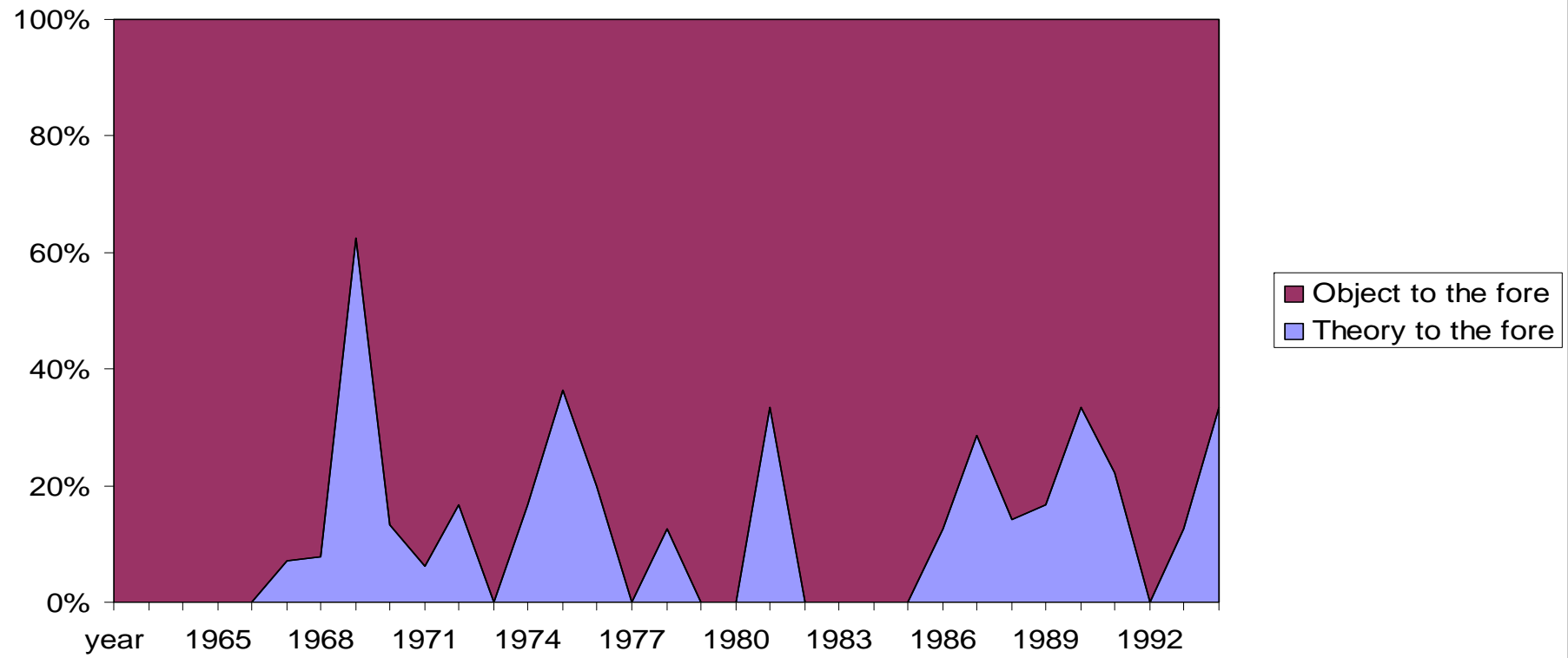| Summary	
OVERALL	√ Dominant position of poetry, plays and fictional prose: almost 79% of all Articles on up to 4 Artists focus on such works √ Strong position of non-African imaginative objects: nearly 48% of all articles in this category √ Strong position of South African imaginative objects: nearly 35% of all articles in this category √ Moderate position of autobiography: although only constituting 3%, autobiography as an object of analysis is the most significant type of object in the 'Other' category (that is, non-imaginative objects).
1. ESA	√ Reflects the overall results
2. UES	√ Reflects the overall results
3. UCT	√ Reflects the overall results
4. LIT	√ Reflects the overall results
5. EA	√ **Dominant presence of imaginative objects by South African artists**
6. EAR	√ **Dominant presence of imaginative objects by South African artists**

7. JLS	√	Reflects the overall results
8. CW	√	**Dominant presence of imaginative objects by South African artists**
	√	**Moderate presence of Autobiographical objects and 'Others'**
9. PRE	√	Reflects the overall results
10. ALT	√	**Dominant presence of imaginative objects by South African artists**
	√	**Moderate presence of Autobiographical objects and 'Others'**
11. S2	√	**Dominant presence of imaginative objects by South African artists**
	√	**Moderate presence of Autobiographical objects and 'Others'**

OVERALL: Artists Discussed in Articles on up to 4 Artists

Non-African Artists: Imaginative Objects
47.70%

Other African: Imaginative Written Objects
6.63%

SA Artists: Imaginative Written Objects
34.60%

Other
11.07%

SA Artists: Imaginative Oral Objects
0.48%

Authors of Autobiographies
2.99%

Biographical Objects
0.27%

Authors of Popular Imaginative Written Objects
0.75%

Film & Documentary
1.23%

Travel & mission w riting
0.70%

Journals/ Diaries / Letters / Journalism
1.44%

Others
3.05%

Children's literature
0.16%

1. ESA: Artists Discussed in Articles on up to 4 Artists

Non-African Artists: Imaginative Objects
72%

Other African: Imaginative Written Objects
6%

SA Artists: Imaginative Written Objects
17%

Other
5%

SA Artists: Imaginative Oral Objects
0%

Authors of Autobiographies
2%

Biographical Objects
0%

Authors of Popular Imaginative Written Objects
0%

Film & Documentary
0%

Travel & mission writing
0%

Journals/ Diaries / Letters / Journalism
1%

Others
2%

Children's literature
0%

45

2. UES: Artists Discussed in Articles on up to 4 Artists

Non-African Artists: Imaginative Objects
90%

Other African: Imaginative Written Objects
1%

SA Artists: Imaginative Written Objects
8%

Other
2%

SA Artists: Imaginative Oral Objects
0%

Authors of Autobiographies
0%

Biographical Objects
0%

Authors of Popular Imaginative Written Objects
0%

Film & Documentary
0%

Travel & mission writing
0%

Journals/ Diaries / Letters / Journalism
0%

Others
1%

Children's literature
0%

3. UCT: Artists Discussed in Articles on up to 4 Artists

Non-African Artists: Imaginative
Objects
88%

SA Artists: Imaginative Written
Objects
8%

Other
4%

SA Artists: Imaginative Oral Objects
0%

Other African: Imaginative Written
Objects
0%

Authors of Autobiographies
0%

Biographical Objects
0%

Authors of Popular Imaginative Written
Objects
0%

Film & Documentary
2%

Travel & mission w riting
0%

Journals/ Diaries / Letters / Journalism
0%

Others
2%

Children's literature
0%

47

4. LIT: Artists Discussed in Articles on up to 4 Artists

Non-African Artists: Imaginative Objects
44%

SA Artists: Imaginative Written Objects
37%

Other
19%

SA Artists: Imaginative Oral Objects
1%

Other African: Imaginative Written Objects
3%

Authors of Autobiographies
1%

Biographical Objects
1%

Authors of Popular Imaginative Written Objects
1%

Film & Documentary
6%

Travel & mission w riting
0%

Journals/ Diaries / Letters / Journalism
2%

Others
3%

Children's literature
1%

5. EA: Artists Discussed in Articles on up to 4 Artists

Other African: Imaginative Written Objects
19%

SA Artists: Imaginative Oral Objects
1%

Non-African Artists: Imaginative Objects
5%

Authors of Autobiographies
2%

Biographical Objects
0%

Authors of Popular Imaginative Written Objects
1%

Film & Documentary
0%

Travel & mission writing
2%

Journals/ Diaries / Letters / Journalism
1%

Other
12%

SA Artists: Imaginative Written Objects
68%

Children's literature
0%

Others
1%

6. EAR: Artists Discussed in Articles on up to 4 Artists

Non-African Artists: Imaginative Objects
30%

Other African: Imaginative Written Objects
6%

SA Artists: Imaginative Written Objects
53%

Other
10%

SA Artists: Imaginative Oral Objects
1%

Authors of Autobiographies
4%

Biographical Objects
0%

Authors of Popular Imaginative Written Objects
1%

Film & Documentary
1%

Travel & mission w riting
1%

Journals/ Diaries / Letters / Journalism
1%

Others
2%

Children's literature
0%

7. JLS: Artists Discussed in Articles on up to 4 Authors

Non-African Artists: Imaginative Objects
45%

Other African: Imaginative Written Objects
6%

SA Artists: Imaginative Written Objects
38%

Other
12%

SA Artists: Imaginative Oral Objects
0%

Authors of Autobiographies
3%

Biographical Objects
0%

Authors of Popular Imaginative Written Objects
2%

Film & Documentary
2%

Travel & mission w riting
0%

Journals/ Diaries / Letters / Journalism
1%

Others
3%

Children's literature
0%

8. CW: Artists Discussed in Articles on up to 4 Authors

Non-African Artists: Imaginative Objects
10%

Authors of Autobiographies
13%

Others
12%

Other
14%

SA Artists: Imaginative Written Objects
50%

SA Artists: Imaginative Oral Objects
3%

Other African: Imaginative Written Objects
5%

Authors of Popular Imaginative Written Objects
0%

Biographical Objects
0%

Film & Documentary
1%

Travel & mission w riting
2%

Journals/ Diaries / Letters / Journalism
3%

Children's literature
1%

52

9. PRE: Artists Discussed in Articles on up to 4 Artists

Non-African Artists: Imaginative Objects
46%

Other African: Imaginative Written Objects
10%

SA Artists: Imaginative Written Objects
26%

Other
19%

SA Artists: Imaginative Oral Objects
0%

Authors of Autobiographies
2%

Biographical Objects
0%

Authors of Popular Imaginative Written Objects
0%

Film & Documentary
2%

Travel & mission writing
7%

Journals/ Diaries / Letters / Journalism
2%

Others
5%

Children's literature
0%

10. ALT: Artists Discussed in Articles on up to 4 Artists

Authors of Autobiographies
9%

Other African: Imaginative Written
Objects
9%

SA Artists: Imaginative Oral Objects
0%

Non-African Artists: Imaginative
Objects
7%

Biographical Objects
2%

Authors of Popular Imaginative
Written Objects
1%

Film & Documentary
0%

Travel & mission writing
0%

Journals/ Diaries / Letters / Journalism
8%

Other
25%

SA Artists: Imaginative Written
Objects
56%

Others
8%

Children's literature
0%

11. s2: Artists Discussed in Articles on up to 4 Artists

SA Artists: Imaginative Oral Objects
0%

Other African: Imaginative Written Objects
4%

Authors of Autobiographies
5%

Biographical Objects
0%

Authors of Popular Imaginative Written Objects
0%

Film & Documentary
5%

Travel & mission w riting
5%

Journals/ Diaries / Letters / Journalism
0%

Others
5%

Children's literature
0%

Non-African Artists: Imaginative Objects
13%

Other
19%

SA Artists: Imaginative Written Objects
63%

1.9 Analysis of Criticism - Articles on up to 4 Artists - Chronologically

Summary	
OVERALL	√ Strong declining tendency in focus occasions on imaginative objects by non-South-African artists √ Strong rising tendency in focus occasions on imaginative objects by South African artists √ Moderate rising tendency in articles focusing on 'other' artists
1. ESA	√ Reflects overall results
2. UES	√ Non-South African objects dominated until the folding of this journal in 1995.
3. UCT	√ Non-South African objects dominated until the folding of this journal in 1986.
4. LIT	√ Reflects overall results
5. EA	√ Reflects overall results, though SA objects have always dominated in this journal
6. EAR	√ Reflects overall results, although Non-SA objects appear to retaining a strong presence.
7. JLS	√ Reflects overall results
8. CW	√ Reflects overall results, though SA objects have always dominated in this journal
9. PRE	√ Reflects overall results
10. ALT	√ Reflects overall results
11. S2	√ Reflects overall results

OVERALL: Articles on Artists by Type of Object - Chronologically

Legend: □ SA Artists: Imaginative Written Objects ■ Other African Artists: Imaginative Written Objects □ Non-African Artists: Imaginative Objects □ Other

1. ESA: Articles on Artists by Type of Object - Chronologically

■ SA Artists: Imaginative Written Objects ■ Other African Artists: Imaginative Written Objects □ Non-African Artists: Imaginative Objects □ Other
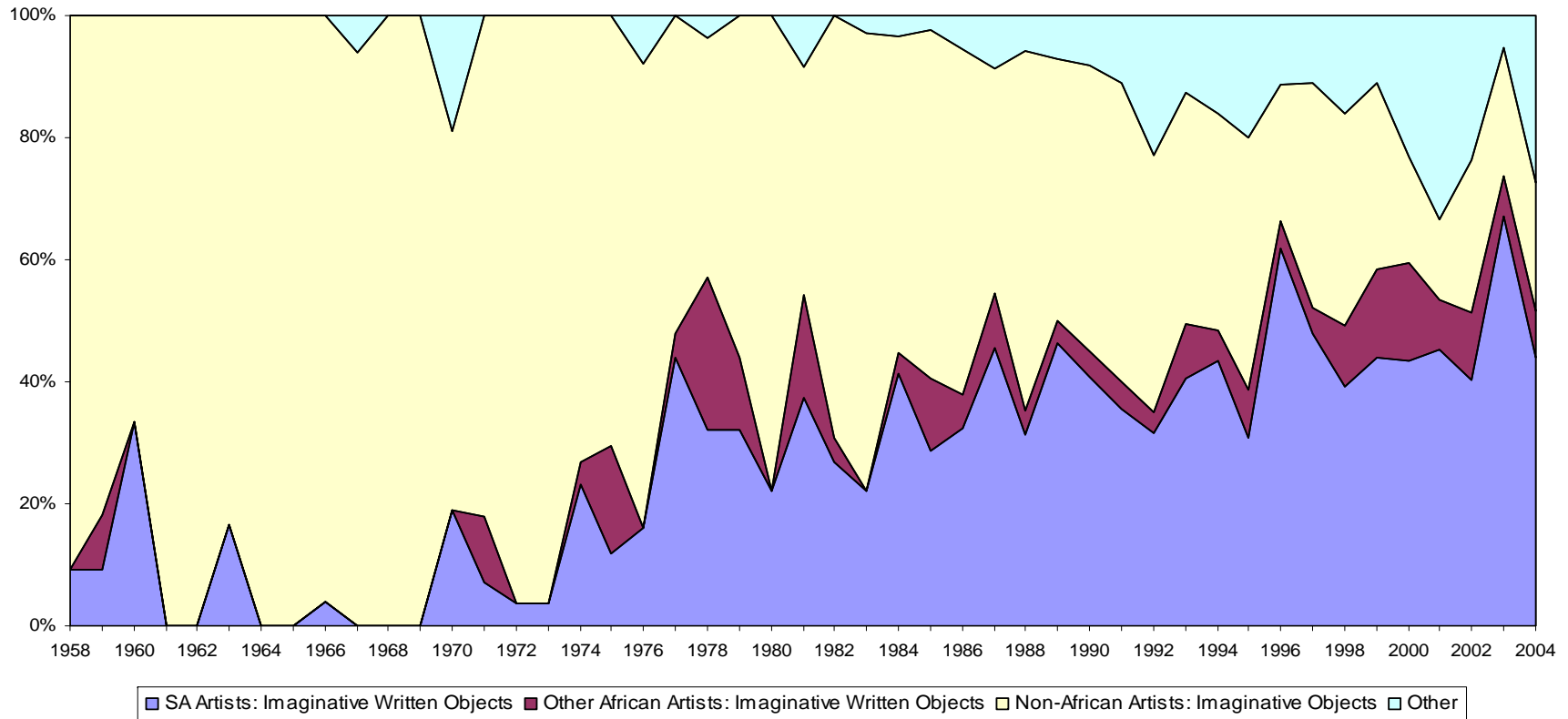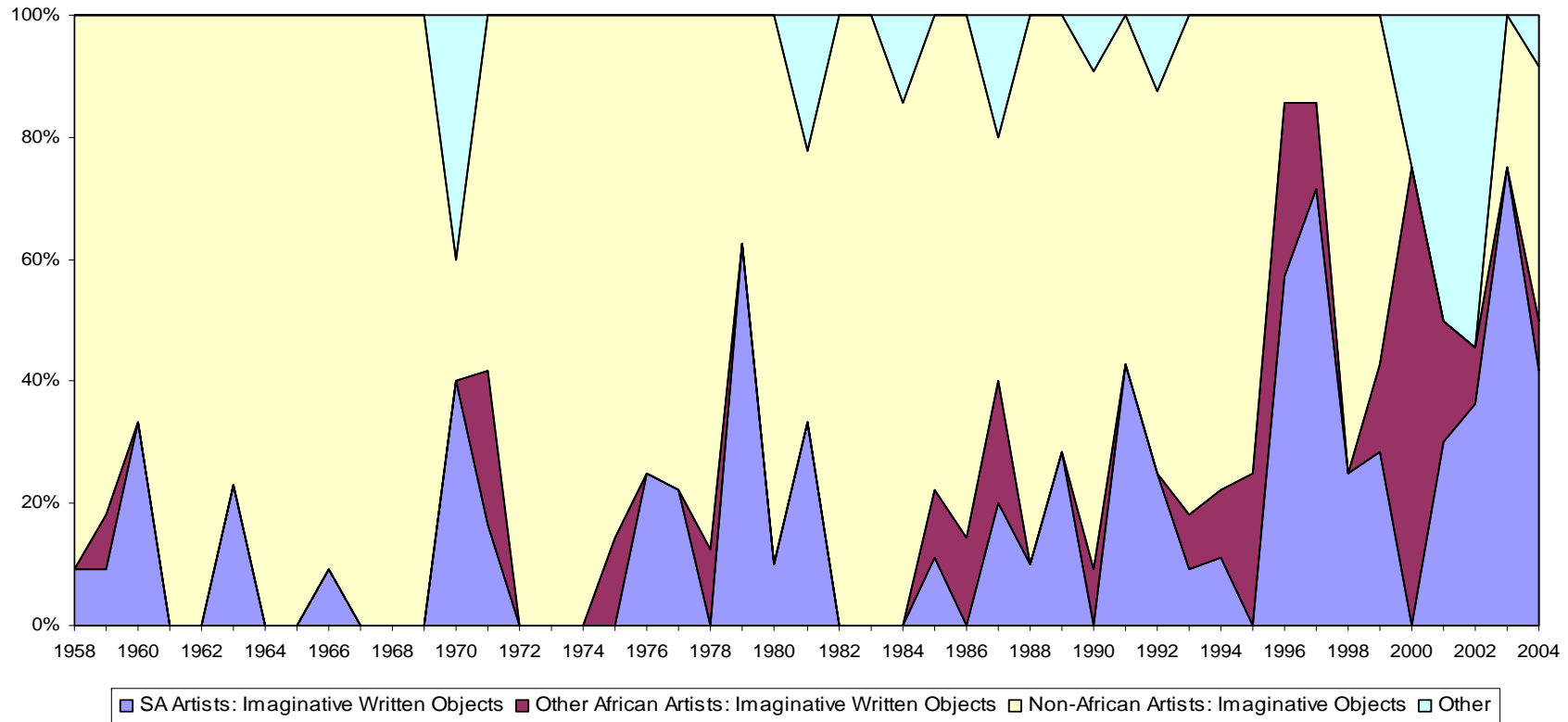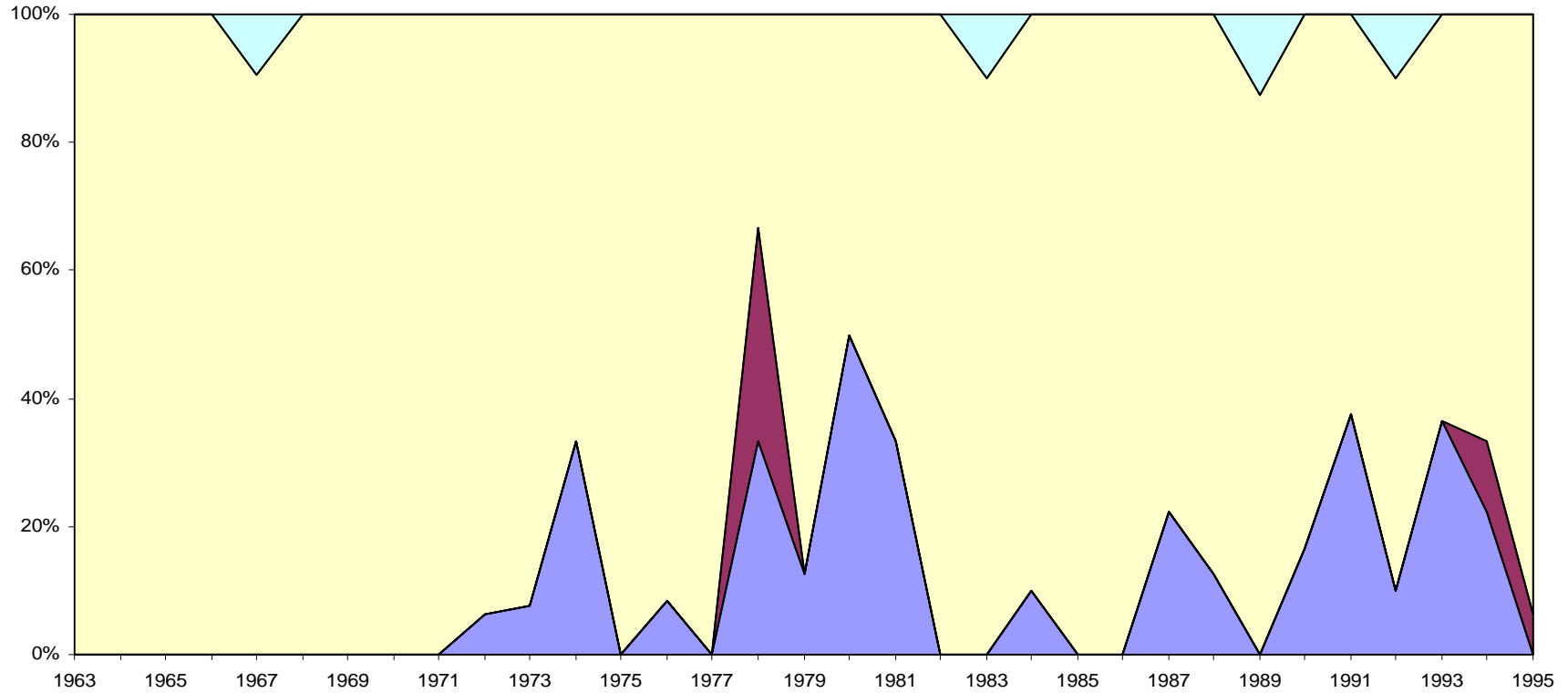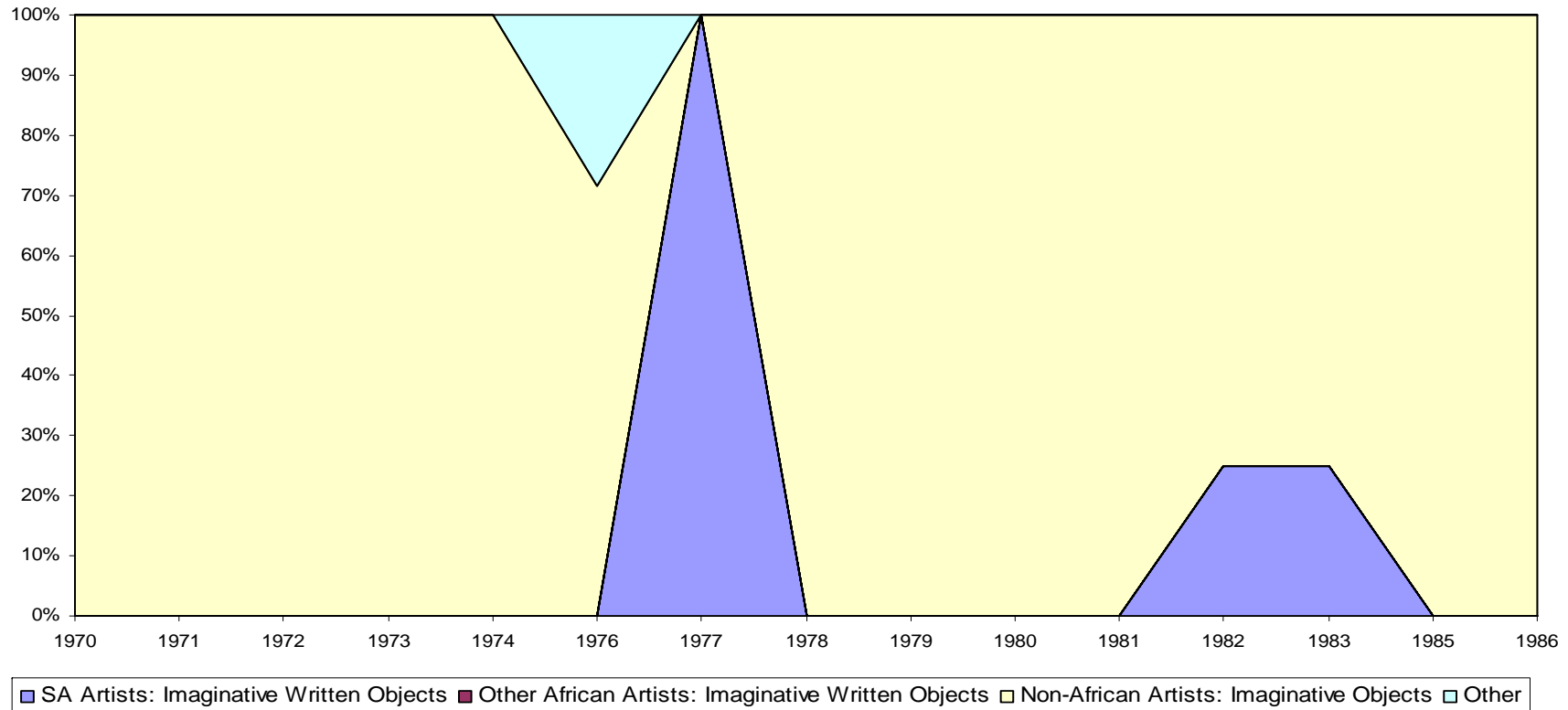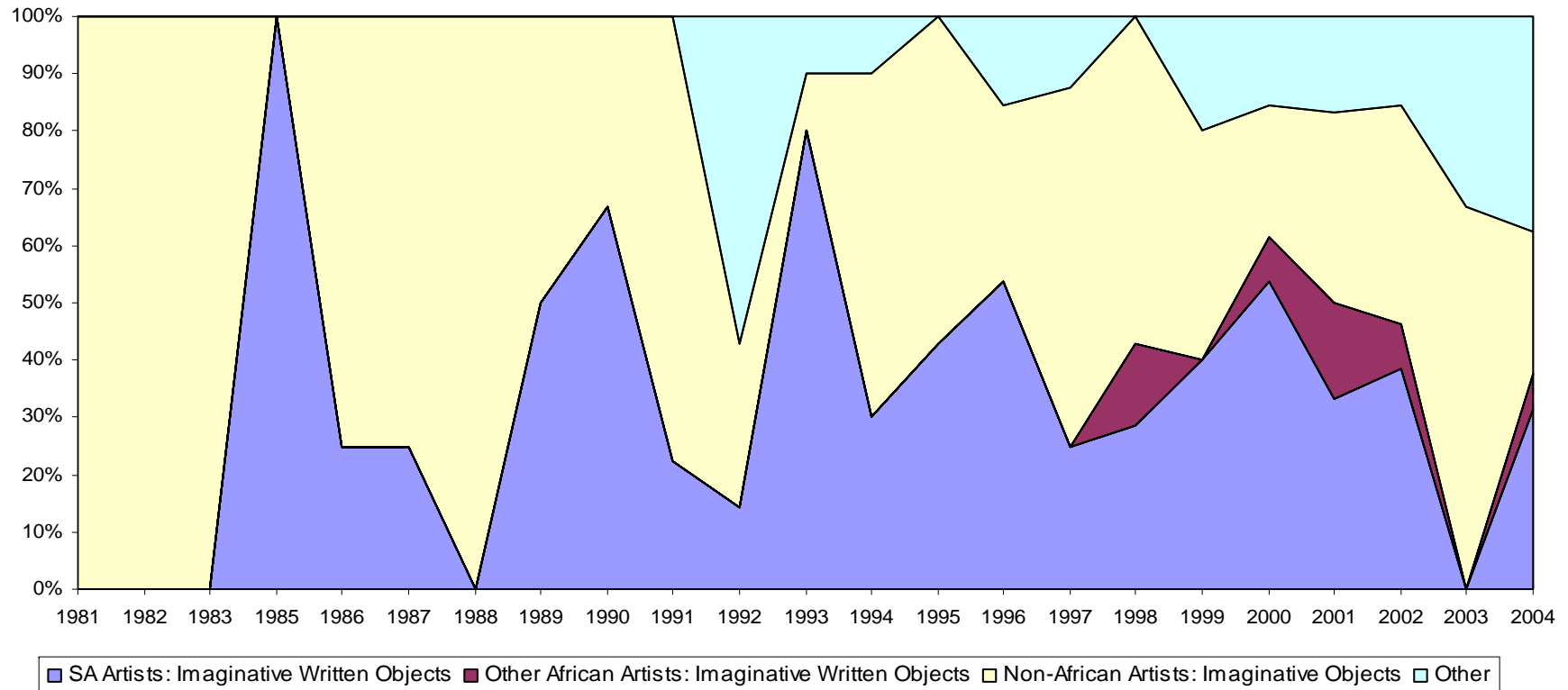
2. UES: Articles on Artists by Type of Object - Chronologically

3. UCT: Articles on Artists by Type of Object - Chronologically

□ SA Artists: Imaginative Written Objects ■ Other African Artists: Imaginative Written Objects □ Non-African Artists: Imaginative Objects □ Other

60

4. LIT: Articles on Artists by Type of Object - Chronologically

Legend: ■ SA Artists: Imaginative Written Objects ■ Other African Artists: Imaginative Written Objects □ Non-African Artists: Imaginative Objects □ Other

5. EA: Articles on Artists by Type of Object - Chronologically

SA Artists: Imaginative Written Objects ■ Other African Artists: Imaginative Written Objects □ Non-African Artists: Imaginative Objects □ Other

6. EAR: Articles on Artists by Type of Object - Chronologically

Legend:
- SA Artists: Imaginative Written Objects
- Other African Artists: Imaginative Written Objects
- Non-African Artists: Imaginative Objects
- Other

7. JLS: Articles on Artists by Type of Object - Chronologically

■ SA Artists: Imaginative Written Objects ■ Other African Artists: Imaginative Written Objects □ Non-African Artists: Imaginative Objects □ Other

8. CW: Articles by Artists by Type of Object - Chronologically

Legend: SA Artists: Imaginative Written Objects · Other African Artists: Imaginative Written Objects · Non-African Artists: Imaginative Objects · Other

9. PRE: Articles on Artists by Type of Object - Chronologically

Legend: SA Artists: Imaginative Written Objects ■ Other African Artists: Imaginative Written Objects □ Non-African Artists: Imaginative Objects □ Other

10. ALT: Articles on Artists by Type of Object - Chronologically

Legend:
☐ SA Artists: Imaginative Written Objects ☐ Other African Artists: Imaginative Written Objects ☐ Non-African Artists: Imaginative Objects ☐ Other

11. s2: Articles on Artists by Type of Object - Chronologically

Legend: SA Artists: Imaginative Written Objects — Other African Artists: Imaginative Written Objects — Non-African Artists: Imaginative Objects — Other
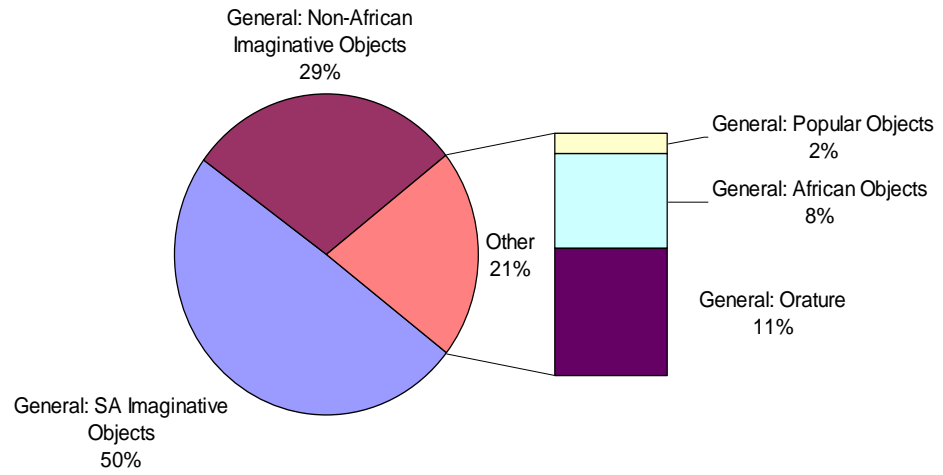
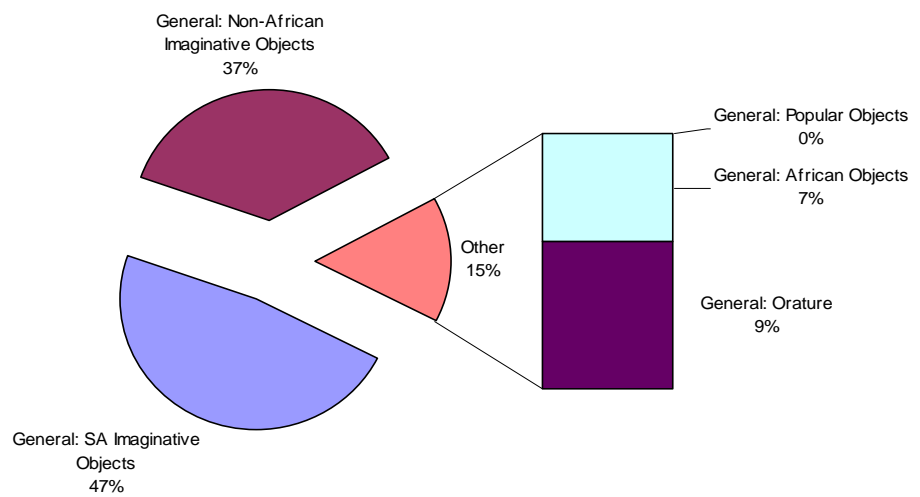## 1.10 Analysis of General Articles on Literary Objects

This category constitutes only 12% of the total articles. Even so, the analysis of this group is interesting because the survey type article is usually a precursor of future study (many of the articles in this group are surveys of a larger number of literary objects) and may therefore anticipate research agendas.

Summary	
OVERALL	√ Dominant position of SA imaginative objects √ Strong position of Non-African imaginative objects √ Moderate position of Orature √ Moderate position of African imaginative objects
1. ESA	√ Reflects the overall results
2. UES	√ Dominant position of Non-African imaginative objects
3. UCT	√ **Not analysed – only 3 articles**
4. LIT	√ Strong positions of both SA and Non-South African imaginative objects √ Moderate position of Popular objects
5. EA	√ Reflects the overall results √ Moderate position of Popular objects
6. EAR	√ Reflects the overall results
7. JLS	√ Reflects the overall results √ Moderate position of Orature
8. CW	√ Reflects the overall results √ Strong position of Orature
9. PRE	√ Strong position of Non-South African imaginative objects √ Moderate position of Popular objects
10. ALT	√ Reflects the overall results √ Strong position of Orature
11. S2	√ **Not analysed – only 1 article**

OVERALL: General Articles on Literary Objects (12% of total)

General: Non-African Imaginative Objects
29%

General: SA Imaginative Objects
50%

Other
21%

General: Popular Objects
2%

General: African Objects
8%

General: Orature
11%

1. ESA: General Articles on Literary Objects (46 articles)

General: Non-African Imaginative Objects
37%

General: SA Imaginative Objects
47%

Other
15%

General: Popular Objects
0%

General: African Objects
7%

General: Orature
9%

2. UES: General Articles on Literary Objects (30 articles)

General: Non-African
Imaginative Objects
77%

General: Popular Objects
0%

General: African Objects
0%

Other
0%

General: Orature
0%

General: SA Imaginative
Objects
23%
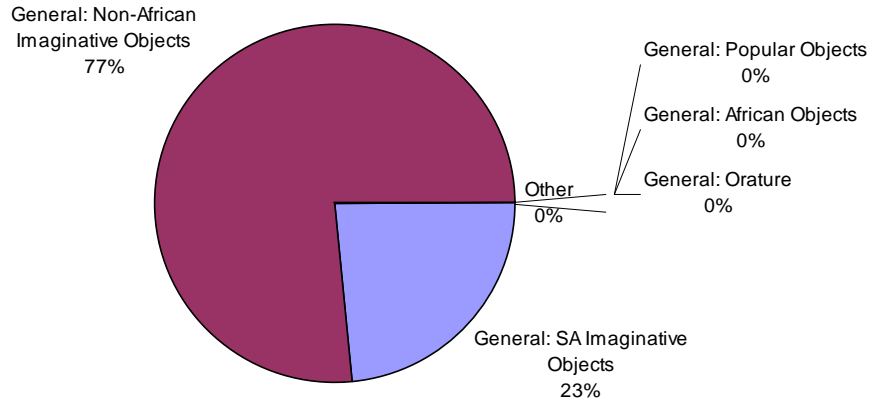
4. LIT: General Articles on Literary Objects (18 articles)

General: Non-African
Imaginative Objects
39%

General: Popular Objects
6%

General: African Objects
6%

Other
22%

General: Orature
11%

General: SA Imaginative
Objects
38%
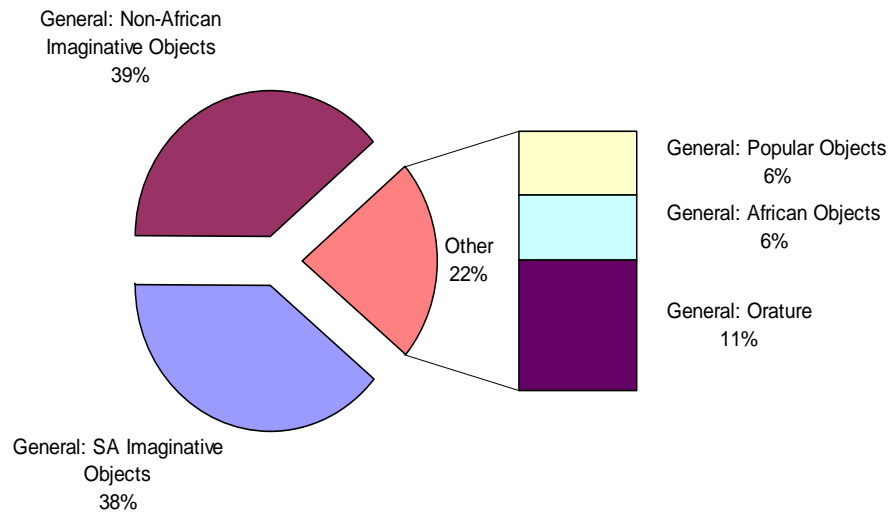
5. EA: General Articles on Literary Objects (36 articles)

General: African Objects
11%

General: Orature
11%

General: Non-African Imaginative Objects
6%

Other
11%

General: Popular Objects
6%

General: SA Imaginative Objects
66%
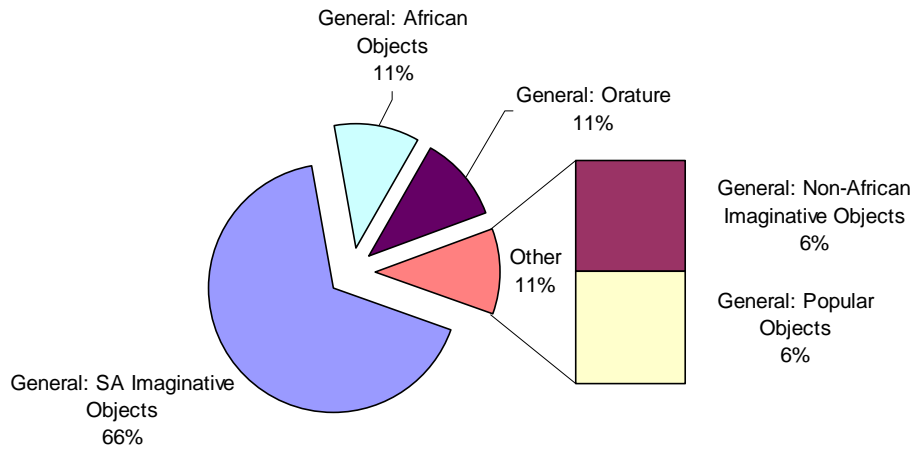
6. EAR: General Articles on Literary Objects (20 articles)

General: Non-African Imaginative Objects
20%

General: Popular Objects
0%

Other
20%

General: African Objects
15%

General: Orature
5%

General: SA Imaginative Objects
60%

72
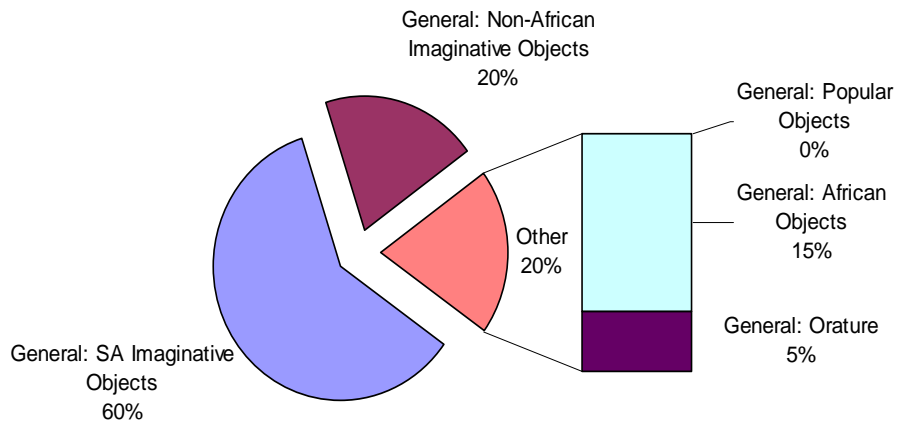
7. JLS: General Articles on Literary Objects (19 articles)

General: Non-African
Imaginative Objects
21%

General: Popular
Objects
0%

General: African
Objects
5%

Other
11%

General: Orature
5%

General: SA
Imaginative Objects
69%

8. CW: General Articles on Literary Objects (10 articles)

General: Non-
African Imaginative
Objects
0%

General: Orature
30%

General: Popular
Objects
0%

Other
20%

General: African
Objects
20%
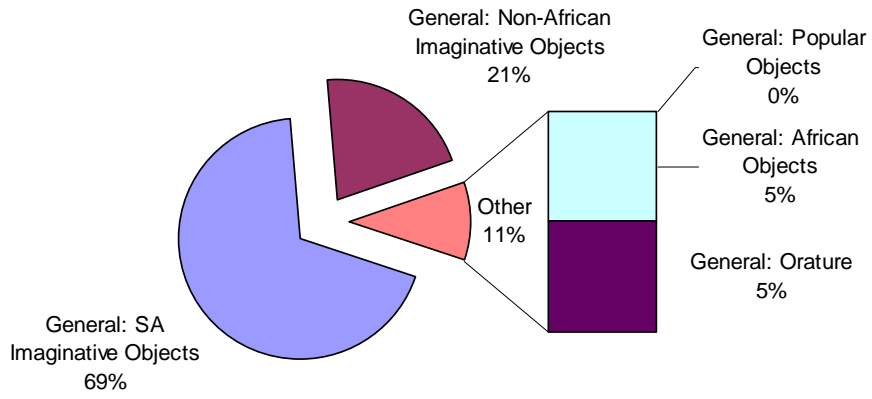
General: SA
Imaginative Objects
50%
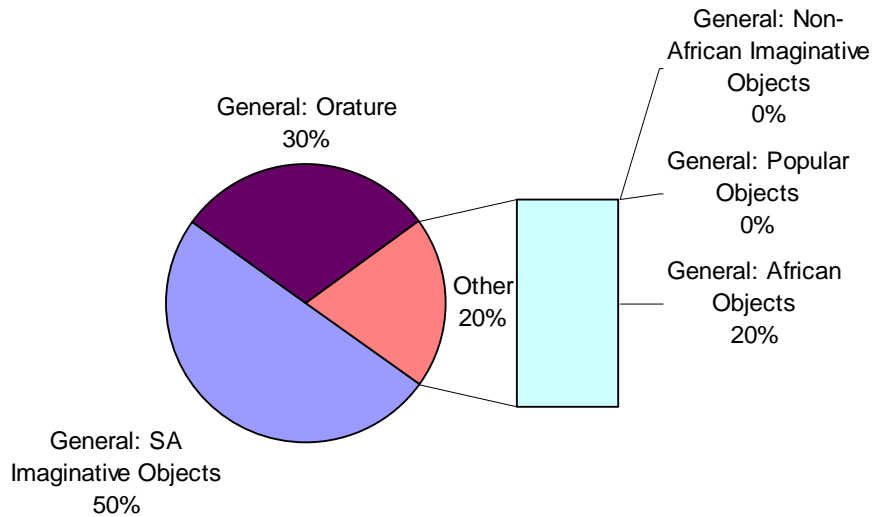
9. PRE: General Articles on Literary Objects (7 articles)

General: African Objects
29%

General: SA Imaginative Objects
14%

Other
29%

General: Popular Objects
14%

General: Orature
0%

General: Non-African Imaginative Objects
43%
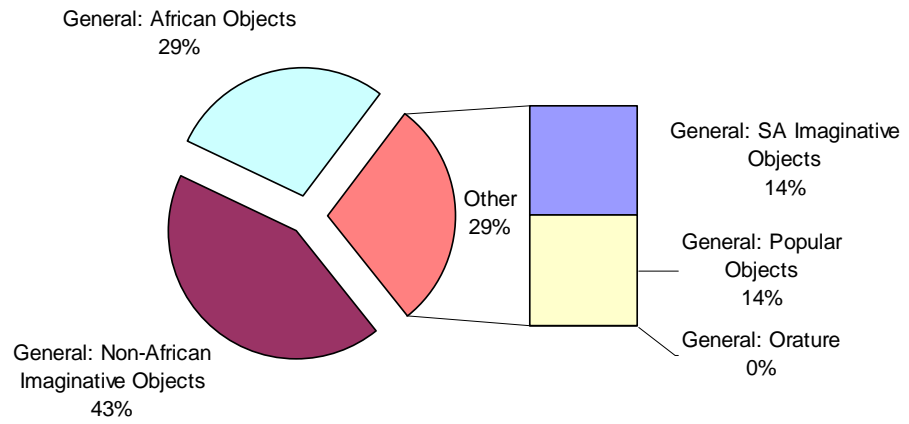
10. ALT: General Articles on Literary Objects (28 articles)

General: Orature
29%

General: Non-African Imaginative Objects
7%

Other
14%

General: Popular Objects
0%

General: African Objects
7%

General: SA Imaginative Objects
57%
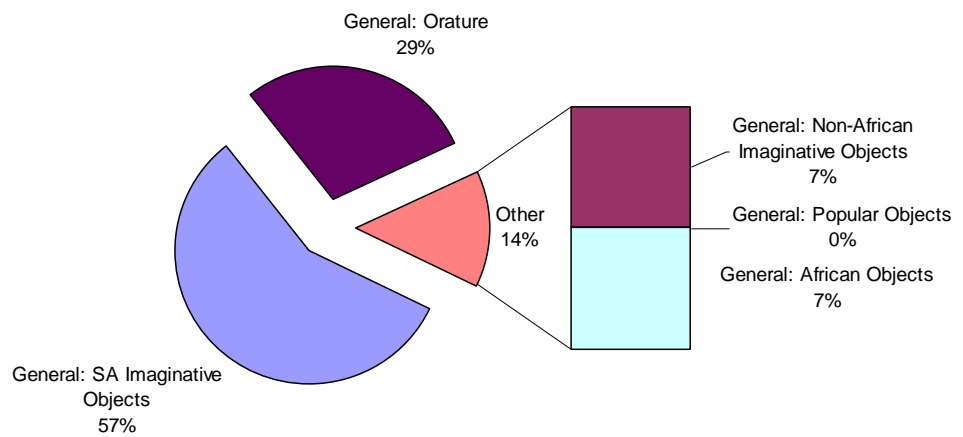
1.11 SA imaginary objects

Summary
√   Dominant trend towards focus on South African artists
√   Emergence of a South African canon, with a sustained (over 4 decades) and high number of articles (over 20) focusing on (in the following order): JM Coetzee; Gordimer; Schreiner; Smith; Head and Paton.
√   The work of a total of 193 South African artists forms the focus of articles on 647 occasions, most of them only once or twice
√   Ratio of focus occasions to number of artists is relatively constant in a decade to decade comparison

SA Artists: Focus Occasions
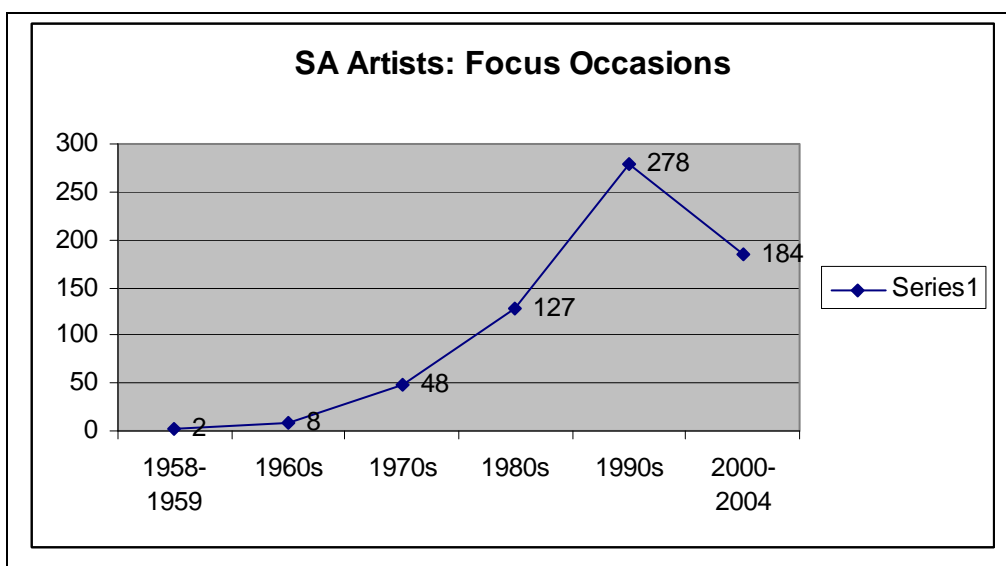
Table 2: Longevity – Authors forming the focus of an article in 4 or 5 decades

Campbell, R	5
Gordimer, N	5
Paton, A	5
Pringle, T	5
Schreiner, O	5
Smith, P	5
Blackburn, D	4
Bosman, HC	4
Coetzee, JM	4
Nortje, A	4
Plaatje, S	4
Serote, MW	4

Table 3: SA Artists – Number of Focus Occasions Per Artist

1960s		1970s		1980s		1990s		2000s		OVERALL	
Smith, P	5	Schreiner, O	7	Coetzee, JM	16	Coetzee, JM	29	Coetzee, JM	24	Coetzee, JM	70
		Smith, P	4	Fugard, A	8	Gordimer, N	14	Mda, Z	12	Gordimer, N	32
		Dhlomo, HIE	3	Schreiner, O	7	Schreiner, O	13	Gordimer, N	9	Schreiner, O	30
		Plaatje, S	3	Gordimer, N	6	Head, B	10	Head, B	7	Smith, P	24
				Paton, A	6	Bosman, HC	8	Campbell, R	6	Head, B	21
				Serote, MW	6	Plaatje, S	8	Dangor, A	6	Paton, A	21
				Smith, P	6	Breytenbach, B	7	Peteni, RL	6	Bosman, HC	17
				Mphahlele, E	5	Fugard, A	7	Bosman, HC	5	Fugard, A	17
				Head, B	4	Paton, A	7	Brink, A	5	Mda, Z	17
				Mofolo, T	4	Smith, P	7	Paton, A	5	Plaatje, S	15
				Bosman, HC	3	La Guma, A	6	Breytenbach, B	4	Serote, MW	13
				Campbell, R	3	Brink, A	5	Vladislavic, I	4	Campbell, R	12
				Clouts, S	3	Pringle, T	5	Mpe, P	3	Mphahlele, E	12
						Rooke, D	5	Mphahlele, E	3	Breytenbach, B	11
						Mphahlele, E	4	Plaatje, S	3	Pringle, T	11
						Nortje, A	4	Serote, MW	3	Brink, A	10
						Fourie, P	3	van Niekerk, M	3	Nortje, A	9
						Gibbon, P	3	Wicomb, Z	3	La Guma, A	7
						Joubert, E	3	Burns-Ncamashe, SM	2	Vladislavic, I	7
						Mda, Z	3	Cartwright, J	2	Dangor, A	6
						Millin, SG	3	Duiker, K Sello	2	Joubert, E	6
						Serote, MW	3	Hope, C	2	Mofolo, T	6
						Tlali, M	3	Landsman, A	2	Peteni, RL	6
						van der Post, L	3	Msimang, CT	2		
						Vladislavic, I	3	Ndebele, N	2		
								Nortje, A	2		
								Poland, M	2		
								Pringle, T	2		
								Schreiner, O	2		
								Slabolepszy, P	2		
								Smith, P	2		

76