Change, organisational culture and the development of the South African Military Academy to 2009

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Abstract

This article investigates the impact of change and organisational culture on the growth and development of the South African Military Academy. It explores the impact of Nationalist Party rule since 1948 and black majority rule since 1994 on the institutional culture of the South African military and how that influenced the development of the Military Academy. This is intertwined with an investigation of the nature and impact of the diverging military and academic subcultures at the Academy. The article contends that, together with the historical exclusion of blacks and women from the military, the marginalisation of white English-speaking citizens by Nationalist Party rule denied the Academy the exploitation of a significant portion of the country's human resource potential in the interest of institutional development. The same happened with the introduction of racial quotas and the marginalisation of whites since 1994. The Military Academy has, furthermore, historically been too reflective of the organisational culture of the South African National Defence Force and its predecessors instead of informing that culture to meet the challenges of military professionalism. The Academy has a potentially vital educational role to play in the South African and Sub-Saharan African militaries, but requires some changes in its organisational culture to fulfil that mission.

Keywords: South African Military Academy, organisational culture, military culture, military education, Stellenbosch University.

Disciplines: Military History, Industrial Psychology.

Introduction

The South African Military Academy was born and bred in or between diverging organisational cultures and subcultures. In the political sphere, it was conceived in a Nationalist Party culture but created in a Union Defence Force (UDF) where elements of the former United Party culture and South Africa's colonial past were still lingering on. It was, in fact, inserted on the fault line between Afrikaans and English-speaking white subcultures. With South Africa's transition to democracy in 1994, the Academy had to transform itself

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out of a white, male, Eurocentric organisational culture into to a more collectivistic culture to face the new socio-political landscape. The Academy has, furthermore, historically been caught up between the rigid military subculture on the one hand and the liberal, intellectual university subculture on the other, which created friction in the domain of both the staff and student subcultures.

The aim of this article is to determine the impact of change and organisational culture on the growth and development of the South African Military Academy to 2009. It provides, firstly, a brief theoretical introduction to organisational culture as background. Thereafter it explores the impact of organisational culture and change on the development of the South African Military Academy since its inception in 1950. This includes an investigation of the nature and impact of the diverging military, academic and student subcultures at the Academy. The article concludes with a brief reflection upon the future role perception of the Military Academy and consequent changes required in its organisational culture. Given the paralysing bureaucratic processes in getting access to restricted official sources and to obtain security clearance for the publication of the research results, the authors have relied almost exclusively on media reports for information on the most recent events. These media reports are mostly from the Afrikaans press, since these events enjoyed hardly any coverage in the English press.

The nature and functions of organisational culture

Organisational culture can be described as a set of assumptions, beliefs, norms and values that guide the conduct of the members of an institution.[1] How the members of the institution perceive the organisational culture and how their perception creates or shapes the pattern of assumptions, beliefs, norms, values and expectations is also part of this concept.[2] More specifically, organisational culture includes:[3]

- routine behaviours when people interact;
- the norms shared by work groups throughout the organisation;
- dominant values, such as 'product quality' or 'type of leadership';
- the philosophy guiding an organisation's policies toward its employees and customers;
- 'the rules of the game' for getting along in the organisation or the 'ropes' that newcomers must learn; and
- the atmosphere emitted by an organisation through its facilities and the way in which members of the organisation interact with clients and one another.

Various subcultures may exist within any given organisational culture. The dominant culture expresses the core values shared by the majority of the organisation's members, while

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1.   J.R. Gordon, *Organisational Behaviour: A Diagnostic Approach* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2002), 374; P.H. Wilson, 'Defining Military Culture', *The Journal of Military History*, 72, 1 (2008), 14.

2.   J.R. Gibson, J.M. Ivancevich and J.H. Donnelly, *Organisations Behaviour, Structure, Processes* (London: Irvin, 1997), 30.

3.   D. Hellriegel, J.W. Slocum and R.W. Woodman, *Organisational Behaviour* (Ohio: South Western College Publishing, 1998), 546.

subcultures develop to reflect the collective values and perceptions of specific subgroups within the organisation.[4]

Organisational culture provides consistency in an institution by integrating diverse elements into a coherent set of assumptions, beliefs, norms, values and consequent behaviours. In fact, the consistency, adaptability, and member involvement in an organisation's culture, and the clarity of its mission can predict organisational effectiveness. Managers therefore use organisational culture to support the organisation's strategy, prescribe acceptable ways to interact with external consistencies, guide staffing decisions, set performance criteria, select appropriate management styles and enhance the performance and success of the organisation.[5]

Wilson emphasises that 'institutions do not develop in a vacuum'.[6] Every institution originates and develops within a particular socio-political and economic context which legitimates its existence, defines its mission and shapes its development and organisational culture. The availability of ample resources, including proper budgetary provision, plays a key role in the sustained development of all institutions. The mission of an institution - and the importance that the founding authority attaches to that mission - determines its budget and resource allocation.[7] Military institutions, like all institutions, Wilson continues, 'depend on the interaction of their members who are guided by informal customs and procedures, as well as explicit written norms'.[8] Individuals may, furthermore, be members of more than one institution at the same time,

> *creating possible conflicts of loyalty, as well as transmitting culture from one to the other.*[9]

Military academies are a case in point here, since academic staff members operate within both the military and the academic domain and may even hold appointments within the military and at a civilian university at the same time. Cadets or junior officers at such institutions have to cope with the military culture as well as the university and student subcultures.

Wilson asserts that the 'substitutability' of an institution's members is vital to its survival: the institution must be able to replace its members continually through external recruitment. He argues that 'substitutability is a cultural construct since it derives from what those selecting new members perceive as desirable or essential qualities in new recruits.'[10] Wilson also emphasises that the interaction between the members of an institution

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4. S.P. Robbins, *Organisational Behavior: Concepts, Controversies, Applications*, 10th ed (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 2003), 596.

5. Gordon, Organisational Behavior, 377-8.

6. Wilson, 'Defining Military Culture', 16.

7. *Ibid*, 16-18, 35-6.

8. *Ibid*, 15.

9. *Ibid*, 16.

10. *Ibid*, 28.

can change over time, creating discrepancy between underlying assumptions and formal rules… [which] has been viewed in negative terms as "inefficiency" or "corruption", yet is an integral part of institutional development.[11]

Challenges of a changing organisational culture

Organisational culture can function as a safety network to protect and guide an organisation. It can bring workers and managers from diverse backgrounds together in a cohesive team to focus on the same goals. A changing organisational culture can, however, also create challenges in an organisation:

- The philosophy guiding change requires integration of and commitment to the multiple goals of the organisation, from which comes the willingness to change when necessary.[12] If change is forced on an institution by a national political wave or driven by a sub-culture (e.g., military or academic in the case of a military academy) it destroys an integrated approach and creates resistance in members who cannot see the advantages of such change.
- Product quality, e.g. the end product of an education process or the quality of the students, can be compromised if organisational change destroys the level of expertise required to educate, empower and train the students.[13]
- The organisational atmosphere needs to be safe, constructive and well-managed to facilitate successful organisational change. An atmosphere where experts are threatened by transformation will contribute to work insecurity, lack of commitment and disloyalty. Ideally, the organisational atmosphere should be characterised by caution, optimism and a shared sense of purpose.[14]
- Organisational culture should provide consistency so that members may feel safe, supported and free to perform their duties, e.g. to educate students, conduct research and to make a contribution to the broader community.[15]
- Since institutions, including military institutions, do not develop in a vacuum, their leadership may represent the political wave of the day. A change in leadership may therefore create uncertainty and force changes insensitive to existing institutional norms and values.[16]
- Individual orientation creates the possibility for continuously redesigning the focus of an institution such as a military academy (at one point more military orientated, and at another more academic freedom orientated) and the format of its academic offer (from a degree to a programme or a certificate).[17]

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11.   *Ibid*, 15-16.

12.   E.H. Schein, *Organizational Psychology* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1988), 249.

13.   Robbins, Organisational Behavior, 635.

14.   Hellriegel, Slocum and Woodman, *Organisational Behaviour*, 589.

15.   Schein, Organizational Psychology, 187.

16.   Wilson, 'Defining Military Culture', 15.

17.   Schein, Organizational Psychology, 79.

- In a military academic institution power struggles may develop between the military and academic ethos, between subcultures (e.g., army and air force), between leaders (e.g., the military commander and the academic head), between political waves (e.g., white culture and African culture) with the result that more energy is spent on in-fighting rather than positioning the institution to achieve its vision and mission.[18]
- Forces for change, forces against change or forces that represent the political wave of the day can destroy the focus, culture, success and expertise of an institution. This could become a cyclical process which paralyses institutional development with every change of leadership.

Institutions and their proprietors should consider these challenges to organisational culture persistently and manage them with vision and dedication from top to bottom and from bottom to top to ensure sustained institutional growth and development.

The historical challenges of organisational culture at the Military Academy

Disparaging external and internal organisational cultures and subcultures hampered the development of the South African Military Academy from its inception in 1950. The first impediment was the circumstantial inability of the Military Academy to develop a significant own organisational culture to establish itself as a credible military-academic institution. The first obstacle was financial starvation, which ruled out a prestigious, independent institution after the example of the Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst or the United States Military Academy, West Point. The Academy consequently opened its doors as a subservient arm of the South African Military College under the academic supervision of the University of Pretoria. The Military College dominated the fledgling Academy completely, which produced a paralysing conflict between the military and academic subcultures. The College staff and the rest of the largely academically uneducated UDF officer's corps resented the Academy's perceived lack of military culture and marginalised it to the extent that it was threatened with disestablishment even before a single graduate had emerged from it. Defence Minister F.C. Erasmus saved it from ruin by relocating it to Saldanha Bay, 1 500 km from the antagonists at the Military College and Defence Headquarters (DHQ), as an independent military unit under the academic auspices of Stellenbosch University.[19]

The second impediment stemmed from what could be loosely termed 'political culture'. South Africa's culture of gender and racial discrimination excluded women and black (non-white) South Africans from the UDF[20] and hence from the Military Academy. Change in the Union's political culture shrunk the recruitment pool further. Prior to 1948 the perceived Britishness of the UDF marginalised the Afrikaner in the South African military to some degree. After 1948 the 'Afrikanerisation' of the UDF under National Party rule in turn marginalised English-speaking citizens in the military and inhibited their enrolment at the Military Academy. The alignment of the Academy with an Afrikaans university (initially the University of Pretoria and subsequently Stellenbosch University) obviously contributed to this

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18.   *Ibid*, 250.

19.   See G.E. Visser, 'Neither Sandhurst, nor West Point: The South African Military Academy and its Foreign Role Models', *Historia* 46, 2 (2001), pp. 387 - 404.

20.   See Union of South Africa, South Africa Defence Act, Act No. 13 of 1912, art 7.

process.[21] The exclusion of women and blacks, together with the alienation of English speakers, shrunk the recruitment pool of the Academy significantly and arguably robbed the UDF and the Academy of some potentially good officer's material, which by extension possibly impacted negatively on the development of both institutions.

The marriage of the student and military subcultures resulting from the Military Academy's affiliation with a civilian university did not create significant challenges. Minor friction reportedly occurred on the odd occasion between the military students and their male counterparts on the campus of the University of Pretoria, but no conflict was ever officially reported. While the Academy was temporarily (1956-57) housed on the campus of Stellenbosch University to await the construction of its facilities at Saldanha Bay, minor clashes did occur between the military and student subcultures. This friction disappeared when the Academy relocated to Saldanha. Sound social relations developed with the main campus in time and the Academy students participated enthusiastically in the annual student carnival and other social events at Stellenbosch. This was inspired particularly by the severe short supply of female company at far-off Saldanha. The Afrikaner cultures of the two institutions obviously rendered such interaction natural and easy.[22]

Although the Academy acquired its own premises and independent status at Saldanha, it failed to cultivate an organisational culture to lend it the image and standing of a Sandhurst or West Point. Persistent financial constraints produced an unimpressive building complex in the mid-1950s and has restricted its facilities to the bare minimum ever since. The Academy's mission has, furthermore, historically been too narrow to make it a mainstream institution of the Defence Force: a degree has never been a prerequisite for a commission. There have always been alternative, easier routes to officership. Hence, DHQ never accepted full ownership of the Academy, which facilitated its development into a military university rather than a true military academy.[23] Under these circumstances the old friction between the military and academic subcultures re-surfaced from time to time.

Many senior officers regarded the Academy lecturers, appointed mostly from the civilian sector, and the Dean and Commanding Officer of the Military Academy, who held the rank of colonel, as 'civilians in uniform' and hence as a thorn in the flesh of the organisational culture. In 1967 DHQ took steps to right-dress the organisational culture of the Military Academy. It split the command post and inserted a line officer with the rank of brigadier (currently brigadier-general) as commanding officer at the top. Over the next few years DHQ stepped up military discipline and regimental routine and took to task every factor perceived to work against the military culture. In April 1970 it ruled that lecturers would in future still be appointed as officers to enjoy the service benefits of the Permanent Force, but would perform their task in civilian dress. Serving lecturers were given a once-off choice to

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21.   See G.E. Visser, 'Image and Identity in Military Education: A Perspective on the South African Military Academy', *Society in Transition: Journal of the South African Sociological Association*, 33, 1 (2002), 176-7.

22.   See G.E. Visser, Civilian-military Interaction on the Matie Campus: The 'Battle of Wilgenhof', 1957', *Scientia Militaria*, 37, 2 (2009), 82-106.

23.   Visser, 'Image and Identity in Military Education', 175; SANDFA, CG C43 D81, CGS/GPT/1/3/1/1 vol 2, preliminary report of Board of Officers w.r.t. cadet training, n.d.; SANDFA, CG C43 D81, CGS/GPT/1/3/1/1 vol 3, QMG – CGS, 27 April 1954; A. Esterhuyse, 'Educating for Professionalism: A New Military for a New South Africa', *Scientia Militaria*, 34, 2 (2006), 36; D. Christian, interview with G.E. Visser, Saldanha, 19 January 2009.

serve in uniform or not. The Commanding Officer of the Academy could even force lecturers who, in his estimation, did not comply with military standards, to wear civilian dress.[24]

The 'demilitarisation' of the academic staff achieved the opposite of what DHQ intended: the students regarded the lecturers in civilian dress as second-rate officers, which undermined their authority, and hence the maintenance of discipline. This fuelled the conflict between the sword and the pen which had already been aggravated by the splitting of the command between the Dean and the Commanding Officer, and the elevation of the Military Training Branch to the same hierarchical level as the Faculty. By mid-1970 two strongly polarised subcultures emerged in an 'us' versus 'them' relationship between the Faculty and the Military Training Branch. The two subsystems operated in 'watertight' compartments and the students were caught somewhere between them, which had a negative influence on their motivation and performance. This unhealthy organisational culture prevented the Military Academy from achieving its overarching, holistic aims with regard to junior officer development and sabotaged the sustained development of the institution.[25] To resolve this dilemma, the lecturers were put back into uniform in 1977.[26] Predictably, the perceived lack of a military culture remained, however, and continued to undermine the credibility of the Academy as a military institution. This perpetuated DHQ's historical *de facto* refusal of complete ownership of the Military Academy and prevented them from taking its sustained development seriously. In fact, the institution remained under constant threat of disbandment right up to the advent of the 'new' South Africa in 1994.[27]

Democracy and Transformation

The socio-political and economic context within which military and other institutions function changes over time, which often redefines the organisational culture of such institutions. In 1990, with the new, democratic South Africa almost a reality, DHQ made an attempt to make the student body more representative of the South African population in terms of race and gender. Having been an exclusively white, male institution since its establishment, the Academy admitted women (three) and so-called 'coloured' (one) students for the first time in 1978 and 1979 respectively. DHQ, however, suspended the admittance of women the very next year, inter alia due to lack of suitable accommodation in a male dominated environment, while very few candidates from the 'other population groups'

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24. SANDFA, Minister of Defence (Botha) (hereafter MVB) 164, 'Verslag oor die Militêre Akademie Deel I' [Report on the Military Academy Part I] (hereafter: Malan Report), 28 February 1969, 64-5; SANDFA, CG C55 D129, KG/REG/6/4/9/6, Chief of Personnel (hereafter C Pers) – Chief of Staff (hereafter COS), 1 December 1969; See also SANDFA, CG C55 D129, KG/REG/6/4/9/6, C Pers – Officer Commanding (hereafter OC) Mil Acad, etc, 27 April 1970; SANDFA, Mil Acad (Gp 3) 61, G/PLANS/3/6 vol 1, minutes of Mil Acad planning conference, 30 April 1970.

25. SANDFA, CG C55 D129, KG/REG/6/4/9/6, OC Mil Acad – COS, 26 April 1973; Mil Acad Archives, report on Mil Acad by Lt. L.J. du Toit, March 1974, 148-50, 179; SANDFA, Mil Acad (Gp 3) 158, G/TRG/6/2/0 (Confidential) vol 4, OC Mil Acad –CSP, 29 July 1974.

26. SANDFA, Mil Acad (Gp 3) 74, G/TRG/6/15 vol 1, Second-in-Command (hereafter 2IC) Mil Acad – L.J. Erasmus, etc., 23 March 1977.

27. Visser, 'Marrying Sparta and Athens: The South African Military Academy and Task-orientated Junior Officer Development in Peace and War', *Journal for Contemporary History*, 27, 3 (2002), 195.

enrolled at the Academy. Women were re-admitted in 1991, and the first significant effort was made to recruit more students from the 'non-white' communities. The first-ever African students enrolled at the Academy in 1991. DHQ also endeavoured to diversify the staff component of the Academy.[28] These actions meant that for the first time since its inception, the process of membership substitution was altered to the extent that the Academy would be unable to perpetuate its long-standing white, male, Afrikaans/Afrikaner, culture and Eurocentric tradition. As in 1950, politico-ideological change was once more the driver of organisational culture in the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) and at the Military Academy. The political views of the Afrikaans and English sectors of white society had moved closer together by the eve of the twenty-first century[29] and the underlying tensions were now between black and white.

After South Africa's transition to democracy in 1994 the newly constituted SANDF obviously wanted to change the organisational culture of the Military Academy to break with its *apartheid* past and to 'represent the new democratic ethos' as soon as possible.[30] This meant, firstly, reshaping its dominant white, Afrikaans-speaking staff and student bodies to meet the Department of Defence's (DOD) racial quotas of 64,68% blacks, 24,35% whites, 10,22% coloureds and 0,75% Asians.[31] Gender representivity was also a priority, but the DOD set no quota for women.

By 2009 the undergraduate residential student body of 314 was still 30% below the target of 450 set in 1990. Despite transformation pressure from above, reshaping the staff and student components at the Military Academy took comparatively long. Given South Africa's historical educational injustices, it was much easier to diversify the wider SANDF than the Military Academy because of the academic requirements involved regarding both Faculty staff and the student body. Better career opportunities for historically-disadvantaged groups opened up by the new political dispensation certainly also contributed to the shortage of suitable candidates.[32]

28. G.E. Visser and I. Van der Waag, 'Military Academy – 50 years of officer education in SA', *SALUT*, 7, 4 (2000), 54.

29. Giliomee, *The Afrikaners: Biography of a People* (Cape Town: Tafelberg, 2003), 661.

30. N.C. Madlala-Routledge, address at Faculty of Military Science Awards Ceremony, Saldanha, 9 December 2003 (http://www.polity.org.za/article/madlalaroutledge-faculty-of-military-science-awards-ceremony-09122003-2003-12-09, accessed 25 February 2009).

31. Department of Defence, Defence in Democracy: South African White Paper on Defence as Approved by Parliament, May 1996 [and] South African Defence Review as Approved by Parliament, April 1998. (Pretoria: Department of Defence, 1998), 80.

32. Mil Acad Archives, Mil Acad annual reports; K.I. Theletsane, 'Developing a Conceptual Model for Transformation at the South African Military Academy: The Ubuntu Approach' (MA thesis, Stellenbosch University, 2007), 100-109.
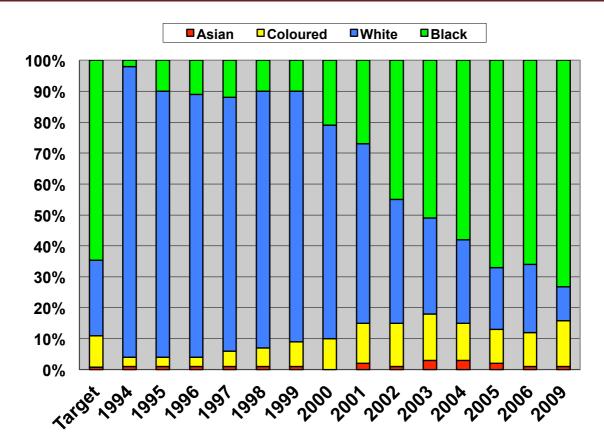
**Figure 1: Racial composition of Military Academy student body
1994 - 2009**

Figure 1[33] illustrates, the transformation of the student body was very slow from 1994 to 1999, but picked up significantly from 2000. By 2009 the Asian component (1% vs target of 0.75%) was in line with the DOD quota, while whites (11% vs target of 24,35%) were significantly under-represented. Blacks (73% vs target of 64,68%) and coloureds (15% vs target of 10.22%) were both significantly over-represented. About 35% of the student body were women, predominantly black. The reason for white under-representation is the same as for the under-representation of English-speakers during the previous dispensation: the cultural dominance of the black majority makes whites feel uncomfortable in the SANDF, while the racial quotas make them see no future for themselves in the military.[34] Once again organisational culture is robbing the Academy and the SANDF from much-needed human potential that could make a valuable contribution to the development of both institutions.

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33.   Mil Acad Archives, Mil Acad annual reports; K.I. Theletsane, 'Developing a Conceptual Model for Transformation at the South African Military Academy', 105.

34.   See for example P. Groenewald, 'Lekota Reason for Few Whites in SANDF', media release by Freedom Front Plus, 7 February 2007 (http://www.vf.co.za/english/media.asp?language=e&offset=1140&id=690, accessed 2 March 2009).
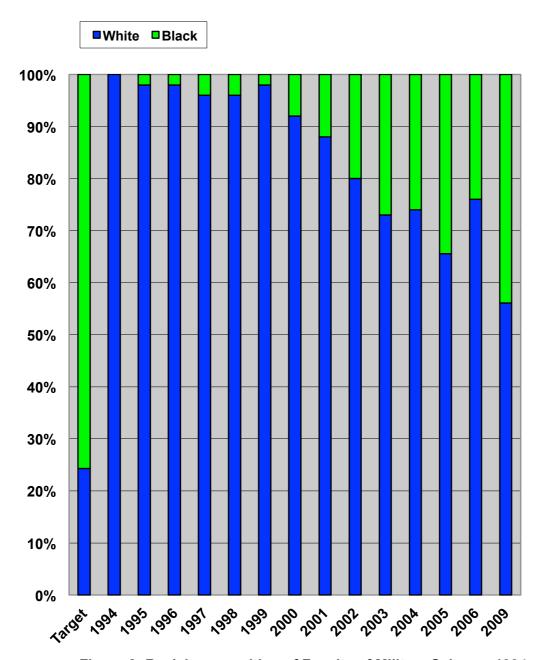
Figure 2: Racial composition of Faculty of Military Science, 1994 - 2009

As can be seen in Figure 2,[35] the racial transformation of the Faculty staff has progressed much slower than that of the student body since 1994. The racial transformation of the overall staff component of the Academy has naturally also progressed much slower than that of the student body, but a little faster than that of the Faculty.

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35.   Mil Acad Archives, Mil Acad annual reports; K.I. Theletsane, 'Developing a Conceptual Model for Transformation at the South African Military Academy', 107.
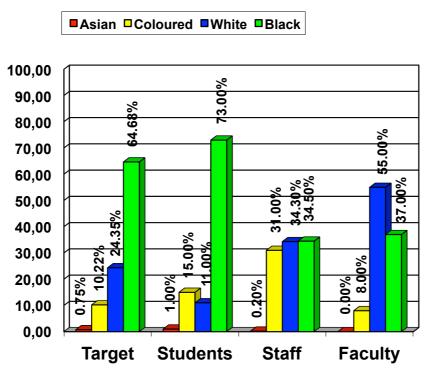
Figure 3: Overall racial transformation profile of Military Academy, 2009

As figure 3[36] shows, both the overall staff component (186 members) and Faculty (49 lecturers) still lagged significantly behind in 2009 in terms of the racial quotas, because the natural turnover of staff (resignations, retirement, etc.) is obviously very slow compared to the three-yearly substitution of the student body. The slower transformation of the Faculty staff arises from the academic profiles involved, better job opportunities elsewhere and a paralysing appointment procedure. About 35% of the academic staff were still white, Afrikaans-speaking males in 2009, while 25% were women (predominantly white). The transformation profile could, however, improve significantly if the existing vacancies (20 of the 68 lecturing posts = almost 30%) could be filled with suitable candidates from the designated groups.

However slowly the change in the organisational culture of the Academy had occurred in accordance with membership profiles, that change had been fundamental. The first such change was the disappearance of the Afrikaans language when English became the official lingua franca[37] of the SANDF in 2000. Another important change in the organisational culture of the Academy, specifically the Faculty, is its partial 'civilianisation'. Provision was made in 1985 for lecturers to join either in uniform (Permanent Force), or as civilians.[38] The first civilian lecturer (Computer Information Systems), appointed in 1986, was also the first

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36.   Mil Acad Archives, Mil Acad name lists.

37.   Anon., 'Ngubane Questions SANDF Language Policy', *Cape Times*, 30 April 2000 (http://www.capetimes.co.za/index.php?fSectionId=3531&fArticleId=qw957109261445B245#, accessed 12 March 2009).

38.   SANDFA, Mil Acad (Gp 4) 12, MA/103/1/8/2/3 vol 12, Chief of the South African Defence Force (hereafter C SADF) Policy Directive 1/69/84, 1 June 1985.

female lecturer at the Academy.[39] Subsequently women also joined in uniform. In 2009 62% of the Faculty was in uniform. Only 6,25% of the uniformed members (i.e., less than 4% of the Faculty) were women. A more fundamental change regarding civilianisation concerns the Dean. Holding the parallel appointment of Second-in-Command of the Military Academy from the early 1980s,[40] the Dean had always been in uniform, holding the rank of colonel, but in 1995 that position was opened to civilians as well in an effort to strengthen the academic ethos of the Faculty.[41] A (white) civilian, female academic, Dr M.E. Kotze, served as Acting Dean in 1999,[42] before the first (male) civilian Dean, Prof D.J. Malan, was appointed in September 1999. Prof Malan indeed strengthened the academic ethos of the Faculty and it saw a marked increase in its research output and general scholarly activities.[43] This, together with the infusion of civilian academics, strengthened the university culture of the Academy vis-à-vis its military culture significantly.

The transformation of the organisational culture of Stellenbosch University has progressed much slower. Whereas blacks (mainly Africans) had already dominated the Academy's student body since 2002,[44] the student body at Stellenbosch was still 73% white, 13% coloured, 12% black and 2% Indian by 2006.[45] Afrikaans also remained the dominant language on campus.[46] The difference in student culture based on race made social interaction with the main campus, inter alia during the annual carnival, less spontaneous and enthusiastic than before.[47] However, the rather exclusive white, Afrikaans character of Stellenbosch is changing irreversibly. Stellenbosch University elected its first black (or so-called coloured) Rector, Prof. Russel Botman, in December 2006.[48] By 2008 almost 69% of the student body was still white, but only 55% (all races) was Afrikaans-speaking.[49]

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39.   Military Academy, *Military Academy Annual 1986*, 35, group photograph of lecturing and other staff members.

40.   SANDFA, Mil Acad (Gp 4) 10, MA/103/1/8/2/3 vol 7, OC Mil Acad – CSP, 9 March 1982.

41.   G.E. Visser, P.H. Kapp en J.S. Kotze, 'Die Dekaan van die Militêre Akademie in Historiese Perspektief', *Historia*, 44, 2 (1999)', 324-5.

42.   In 2002 she became the first female to be promoted to professor at the FMS. (M. van Rooyen, 'Ruimte vir Vroue', *Weslander*, 22 November 2002, 12.)

43.   N.C. Madlala-Routledge, address at Faculty of Military Science Awards Ceremony, 9 December 2003.

44.   See K.I. Theletsane, 'Developing a Conceptual Model for Transformation at the South African Military Academy', 105.

45.   M.-M. Gwatyu, 'Militêre Akademie sal Taalbeleid moet Hersien', *Die Burger*, 2 February 2005, 2; Anon., 'Dit is die Feite', 2; G. Coetzee, 'Meer as Helfte Swart Studente by Drie HAU's [histories Afrikaanse Universiteite]', *Die Burger*, 18 August 2006, 6.

46.   Anon., 'Dit is die Feite', *Die Burger*, 5 February 2005, 2.

47.   Elements of this lack of enthusiasm seem to be illustrated by P-F. Theron, 'Referendum oor MILAK val Plat', *Die Matie*, 30 July 2008, 1.

48.   M. O'Connor, 'Botman maak Geskiedenis', *Die Burger*, 9 December 2006, 1.

49.   J.P. Landman, 'Demografie sal US se Lotsbestemming Bepaal', *Die Burger*, 12 March 2009, 14; Stellenbosch University, 'Statistical Profile' (http://www.sun.ac.za/university/Statistieke/statseng.html, accessed 12 March 2009).

Management 'purge' to mend organisational culture

Similar to the Nationalist Party government's quest to rid the UDF of its colonial past when it came to power in 1948, the ANC government pursued its mission to rid the SANDF of its *apartheid* past aggressively when it took over in 1994. Given the hierarchical nature of the military, its organisational culture is enforced from the top down. In the fledgling SANDF where the former SADF culture prevailed, this certainly created potential for conflict. However, the organisational culture at the Military Academy changed comparatively slowly after 1994, inter alia because a black Commandant (commanding officer) was not appointed until 2001 and the Dean remained white until 2006. During his tenure (January 2001-January 2004), the first black Commandant, Brig. Gen. L.S. Mollo, pushed race and gender transformation as hard as he could in staff appointments, but generally followed a pragmatic approach in the face of a scarcity of black applicants and found a good *modus vivendi*[50] with the predominant white Faculty. The emerging new organisational culture met with little if any opposition and facilitated the sustained development of the Military Academy to meet the multicultural educational needs of the transforming SANDF.[51]

The organisational culture at the Military Academy changed drastically when the second black Commandant, Brig. Gen. T.Z. Manyama, arrived in 2004. His perceived abrasive management style and controversial measures to rid the Faculty of white dominance and Eurocentric sentiments evoked much tension, which soon erupted in the Afrikaans media.[52] The spirit of collegiality and cooperation that had existed under Brig. Gen. Mollo was reportedly replaced by suspicion and mistrust under his successor. Whereas the former originated from the 'more moderate'[53] African National Congress (ANC)/Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK) camp, Brig. Gen. Manyama came from the more radical Pan Africanist Congress (PAC)/Azanian People's Liberation Army (Apla) camp. He was perceived as having no regard for white people and allegedly treated white Faculty members and guest lecturers brusquely, subjecting them to embarrassing, humiliating situations. With the assistance of a few black confidants Brig. Gen. Manyama, according to media reports, carried on an autocratic management system fraught with nepotism and maladministration in which suspicion and paranoia ruled supreme. He accused white Faculty members of

> *employing underhand methods to marginalise black people, to deny them the opportunity to study at the Academy and to perpetuate the imbalances of the past in a cunning way.*[54]

He, furthermore, seemed to insinuate that white lecturers failed black students deliberately and unfairly, stating bluntly:

> *The Defence Force spends time, money and effort to recruit the best cream of performers in the country for tertiary education at the Academy, and God in Heaven above, the best become the worst failures at the Military Academy. The question is why?*[55]

50.   Anon., 'Miltêre Akademie', *Die Burger*, 22 November 2007, 22.

51.   Z. Ekron, 'Saldanha "in Twee oor Ras" ', *Die Burger*, 25 August 2004, 2; H. Uys, 'Storm oor Hoof', *Weslander*, 26 August 2004, 1; T. Neethling, *et al*, 'US-fakulteit nie Betrokke', *Die Burger*, 27 November 2007, 16.

52.   Anon., ' "Rasse-kookpot" Broei', *Die Burger*, 24 August 2004, 1.

53.   Uys, 'Storm oor Hoof', 1; Ekron, 'Saldanha "in Twee oor Ras" ', 2.

54.   Z. Ekron, 'Minister "Moet Ingryp by Akademie" ', *Die Burger*, 2 September 2004, 2.

The fact of the matter is that the Academy had, due to weaknesses in the recruitment and selection processes, indeed not been receiving the 'cream of the crop',[56] as will be indicated below.

Against this background Brig. Gen. Manyama pursued affirmative action relentlessly to achieve the racial quotas set for the SANDF, with no regard for academic considerations. This was to some extent facilitated by the inevitable dominance of the military culture in decision-making at management level ever since the allotment of the top post at the Academy to a line officer in 1967. If black candidates could not be found to fill vacancies in the Faculty, such posts remained unoccupied. Pleas from the predominantly white Faculty Board to fill vacancies in the interest of individual workloads, teaching excellence and research outputs were simply dismissed as resistance to transformation.[57] Stellenbosch University was powerless in this regard, since it could only make recommendations with regard to the academic suitability of candidates, while the final decision to appoint or not rested with the SANDF. These factors contaminated the organisational culture to the extent that a number of white lecturers left the Academy in utter frustration. Some black Faculty members allegedly also resigned because they found the prevailing organisational culture and threat to the academic ethos unacceptable. A total of six lecturers left the Academy in the course of 2004, bringing the number of Faculty vacancies to 13 (12 of them lecturers) by the end of that year.[58] Good career opportunities for black academically qualified personnel admittedly abound in the transforming South African society and black Faculty members often move simply for financial gain.

Even if Brig. Gen. Manyama pursued a personal ideological agenda as alleged, there was also mounting pressure from the DOD and DHQ to push transformation at the Academy harder, particularly with regard to the staff component. Deputy Minister of Defence, Mluleki George, was 'alarmed at the slow pace of transformation at the Military Academy'.[59] Amidst the allegations of resistance to transformation at the Academy, Defence Minister Mosiuoa Lekota allegedly gave specific instructions that the transformation plans of the DOD had to be strictly adhered to.[60] Lekota, furthermore, apparently taking the Commandant's allegations at face value, claimed that there were white lecturers who overlooked black

55.   C. Schumann, 'US Rector Receives coveted Honorary Title', *Weslander*, 30 September 2004, 16. See also J.G. Greeff, 'Minister should Investigate Complaints at Academy', *Weslander*, 14 October 2004, 4.

56.   G.A.J. Van Dyk, 'Cream of the Crop: A Profile Analysis of Students at the South African Military Academy' in G.A.J Van Dyk, ed, *Strategic Challenges for African Armed Forces for the Next Decade* (Stellenbosch: Sun Press, 2008), 313-32.

57.   E. Gibson, 'R1 miljoen lê Ongebruik in Militêre Akademie se Geldlaai', *Die Burger*, 26 January 2005, 1.

58.   Anon., ' "Rasse-kookpot" Broei', 1; Uys, 'Storm oor Hoof', 1; Ekron, 'Saldanha "in Twee oor Ras" ', 2; Z. Ekron, 'Minister "Moet Ingryp by Akademie" ', *Die Burger*, 2 September 2004, 2; E. Gibson, 'Akademie-lede Gedreig', *Die Burger*, 19 November 2004, 1; M.-M. Gwatyu, 'Militêre Akademie moet Gerehabiliteer word - Asmal', *Die Burger*, 17 February 2005, 8.; Anon., 'Militêre Akademie', *Die Burger*, 13 April 2005, 14.

59.   Anon., 'Transformation too Slow', *Weslander*, 9 September 2004; Ekron, 'Saldanha "in Twee oor Ras" ', 2.

60.   M.-M. Gwatyu, 'Berigte oor Rassespanning by Akademie Halfgebak, sê Lekota', *Die Burger*, 9 September 2004, 2.

students possessing the potential to teach at the Academy (upon completion of their studies) on purpose.[61] The fact is that nobody at the Academy seems to have disputed the urgent need for transformation, but the plea was, as Landman[62] has recently argued with regard to transformation in the agricultural sector, that equity must be carefully and responsibly balanced against efficiency to take the Academy forward. However, the perceived radical, anti-white organisational culture pushed down from the top allegedly divided and polarised the Academy along racial lines which even manifested in limited violence amongst the student body.[63] All these events created an unhealthy organisational culture at the Academy that hampered its functioning, tainted its image and undermined its credibility as an institution of higher education.[64]

The Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Defence, chaired by Prof Kader Asmal, intervened in January 2005 to resolve matters at the Military Academy. The Committee found that it appeared as if several senior officers at the Academy, presumably some of Brig. Gen. Manyama's confidants, were not properly qualified for the functions entrusted to them. It concluded, furthermore, that there was confusion regarding the military and academic functions of the Academy. This, on occasion, led to a verbal confrontation between the Rector of Stellenbosch University, Prof Brink, and Brig. Gen. Manyama, because the latter used his

> *military authority to sweep academic decisions [i.e., regarding the appointment of lecturers] from the table.[65]*

The Committee concluded that the Academy students were negatively affected by the fact that vacancies remained unfilled in the name of affirmative action. By April 2005 there were reportedly already 21 vacancies in the Faculty, mostly lecturers.[66] Asmal observed that

> *Qualified black people do not drop from the sky; you must train them.[67]*

Hence perpetuating vacancies in the name of affirmative action was not acceptable. The Committee concluded that the situation at the Academy

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61.   J-J. Joubert, 'Lekota Vat *Die Burger W*eer oor Rasstorie', *Die Burger*, 15 September 2004, 2.

62.   J.P. Landman, 'SA benodig Meer as Een Landboubeleid', *Die Burger*, 26 Februarie 2009, 18.

63.   Several incidents were reported to the police and the SA National Defence Union (SANDU) where white students were threatened (sometimes with death), intimidated or even attacked by black students. In one such incident a white student was assaulted by three masked black students on the premises of the Military Academy. Brig. Gen. Manyama and his confidants allegedly covered up the seriousness of the racial tensions at the Academy. However, in a letter to the Afrikaans newspaper, *Die Burger*, an anonymous Military Academy student claimed that there was no 'boiling over' of racial tensions at the Academy and that the majority of students got along well. (Anon., ' "Rasse-kookpot" Broei', 1; Ekron, 'Saldanha "in Twee oor Ras" ', 2; Uys, 'Storm oor Hoof', 1; Anon. ('Militêre Akademie-student'), 'G'n Kookpot by Akademie-studente', *Die Burger*, 26 August 2004, 17.

64.   See Esterhuyse, 'Educating for Professionalism, 23.

65.   M.-M. Gwatyu, 'Komitee vind Militêre Akademie Meestal "Skoon" ', *Die Burger*, 20 January 2005, 2; E. Gibson, 'Asmal Kwaai in Verslag oor Militêre Akademie', *Die Burger*, 12 April 2005, 1 (author's translation from the original Afrikaans).

66.   Gibson, 'Asmal Kwaai in Verslag oor Militêre Akademie', 1.

67.   Gwatyu, 'Militêre Akademie moet Gerehabiliteer word' (author's translation from the original Afrikaans). See also T. Mtshali, 'Military Academy under Fire for failing to produce Report', *Cape Times*, 17 February 2005, 5.

had reached a turning point and a process of rehabilitation must be started between the Academy, the DOD and Stellenbosch University… to investigate leadership qualifications.[68]

Amongst the wide-ranging recommendations tabled by the Committee was, furthermore, the implementation of a personnel development plan to address the racial quotas and achieve a 'cultural transformation' of the Military Academy'.[69]

A year later, in April 2006, DHQ and Stellenbosch University issued a joint statement that Brig. Gen. Manyama had been recalled to Pretoria with immediate effect, while the Dean, Prof Malan, had been seconded to the main campus of Stellenbosch University.[70] There was no controversy around the widely respected and very capable Dean,[71] but it became imperative, in the words of Chief Human Resources Support of the SANDF, Maj. Gen. L.S. Mollo, that

the culture at the Academy be transformed to enhance both the military and the academic ethos of the institution

in the face of the

tense relationship... between the leadership of the Academy… that ultimately would have been to the detriment of the military scholars.

He stressed that the SANDF and Stellenbosch University were unanimous in their decision

to introduce fresh leadership on both sides in order to move the Academy forward as renowned institution of military training in Africa.[72]

The SANDF appointed a white naval officer, R. Adm. (JG) D. Christian, as the new Commandant on 12 April 2006,[73] while Stellenbosch University seconded Dr E.L. van Harte, a so-called 'coloured' woman, to the Faculty of Military Science as Interim Dean with effect from the same date.[74] The Faculty Board subsequently duly elected Dr (later Prof) Van Harte as Dean. This intervention calmed the waters significantly and created an

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68.   Gibson, 'Asmal Kwaai in Verslag oor Militêre Akademie', 1 (author's translation from the original Afrikaans). See also M.-M. Gwatyu, 'Militêre Akademie "het Keerpunt Bereik" ', *Die Burger*, 17 June 2005, 9.

69.   Gwatyu, 'Militêre Akademie "het Keerpunt Bereik" ', 9.

70.   Marketing and Communication Section Stellenbosch University, 'Change of Leadership at Military Academy Saldanha, press release issued 4 April 2006 (http://sun025.sun.ac.za/portal/page/portal/Marketing_Communication/Media/Tab214548/Media%20Release%20-%20Military%20Academy.doc, accessed 25 February 2009).

71.   See for example letter of former Dean - J.C. Kotzé, 'Fouteer met Dekaan', *Die Burger*, 13 April 2006, 18.

72.   Marketing and Communication Section Stellenbosch University, 'Change of Leadership at Military Academy Saldanha, press release issued 5 April 2006 (http://www.sun.ac.za/News/NewsItem_Eng.asp?Lang=2&ItemID=9895&Zone=AEX, accessed 06 April 2006).

73.   M. O'Connor, 'Vlootkaptein lei nou Akademie', *Die Burger*, 13 April 2006, 8.

74.   Marketing and Communication Section Stellenbosch University, 'Change of Leadership at Military Academy Saldanha, press release issued 5 April 2006 (http://www.sun.ac.za/News/NewsItem_Eng.asp?Lang=2&ItemID=9895&Zone=AEX, accessed 06 April 2006).

organisational culture more conducive to institutional development, particularly the enhancement of the academic culture and ethos.[75] The appointment of a female Dean at the same time promoted gender sensitivity in a historically male dominated organisational culture. In 2009 Brig. Gen. L. Yam succeeded R. Adm. (JG) Christian, which meant that for the first time ever the entire top structure of the Academy (Commandant, Chief of Staff, Chief Military Instructor, Dean and Secundus Dean) was black, which promoted the top-down transformation of the organisational culture.

These changes do not mean that all problems disappeared. Vacancies in Faculty have risen rather than declined[76] and remain a serious challenge to service delivery and institutional integrity. In 2007/2008 negative media coverage emanating from the alleged involvement of a senior officer at the Academy (not a Faculty member) in culpable homicide (on a charge of which he was arrested in his office at the Academy), sexual harassment and other forms of conduct unbecoming, rocked the Academy once more. Perceived reluctance from the SANDF to act against the individual in question impacted negatively on the organisational culture in that the impression was created that the SANDF is soft on crime and discipline.[77] Such incidents, amidst incessant media reports of incompetence, crime and corruption at the highest levels of government and domestic politics,[78] create confusion amongst young officers regarding professional and institutional norms and values, which impairs their socialisation in their professional milieu.

The Academy's organisational culture and its future role perception

The primary element of the Military Academy's role perception for the future is its responsibility to suitably train and educate young officers to institutionalise military professionalism in the SANDF. As a university degree might well become a prerequisite for all SANDF officers in, hopefully, the not too distant future,[79] the organisational culture of the SANDF could be expected to become more conducive to accepting full ownership of the Military Academy and supporting its future development. The upward progression of post-1994 Academy graduates in the structures of the SANDF should also support this process by gradually dispelling the prevalent anti-intellectual institutional culture[80] in the SANDF. The

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75.   See for example letter Neethling, *et al*, 'US-fakulteit nie Betrokke', 16 and C. Nelson, 'Fakulteit lewer Puik Werk', *Die Burger*, 28 November 2007, 16.

76.   Vacancies are a serious challenge in all government departments. According to the Democratic Alliance there were some 36 000 vacancies in government departments by December 2009 – 8,9% of the total. Ironically, in terms of the situation at the Military Academy, the picture looks even worse when the security departments (police, correctional services and defence) are taken out of the equation. (C. Claassen, 'Derduisende poste oop in staatsdiens', *Die Burger*, 9 December 2009, 2.)

77.   E. Gibson, 'Seks-bom ruk Mag', *Die Burger*, 21 November 2007, 1; E. Gibson, 'Akademie weer in Kollig', *Die Burger*, 5 March 2008, 10; D. Liebenberg, 'Hoë by Militêre Akademie wéér in Sop na hy nie Hof toe kom', *Die Burger*, 1 April 2008, 2.

78.   See inter alia C. Nelson, 'Die stand van demokrasie in Suid-Afrika: 'n kritiese perspektief', *LitNet Akademies*, 7, 1 (2010), 61-98.

79.   Esterhuyse, 'Educating for Professionalism, 26, 31.

80.   See Esterhuyse, 'Educating for Professionalism, 39.

Academy should continue to shape its organisational culture, militarily and academically, to meet the demands of professional excellence and become indispensable to the SANDF.

The current student selection process at the Military Academy presents a challenge to its organisational culture and its future role perception. The Academy is not in a position to market itself at schools and other institutions for recruitment purposes. Instead, it has to select its students from candidates already enrolled in the SANDF. A recent empirical study exposed vulnerabilities in the leadership profile of the students, as well as in their psychological profile to be academically successful and become competent military leaders.[81] This will undermine the institutionalisation of academic excellence in the organisational culture of the Military Academy and the eradication of anti-intellectualism in the SANDF. Achievement of these aims obviously also requires proper staff selection – lecturers, military instructors and support staff.

Africa has an acute shortage of institutions for higher military education. In Mediterranean Africa, the only such institutions are found in Egypt and Tunisia.[82] In Sub-Saharan Africa the South African Military Academy is the only institution of its kind. Hence, there are strong expectations for the Academy to play a leading role on the African continent. Former Deputy Defence Minister, Ms N.C. Madlala-Routledge, asserted in 2003 that the DOD's approach to peacekeeping on the continent 'recognises the causes of conflict in Africa to be developmental in nature' and hence embraces the concept of 'developmental peacekeeping' in which education, including military education, is of the utmost importance, and for which the Military Academy is

> *our best resource… to help us rebuild our country and our continent.[83]*

Hence, the Faculty's current mission statement reads 'to empower members of the DOD and the African security community through professional military education to manage current and future security challenges effectively'.[84] This requires the Military Academy to dedicate itself to the internalisation of military ethics and the highest standard of military professionalism. The DOD and Stellenbosch University should streamline the functioning of the Military Academy between them to create a vibrant organisational culture to optimise military education. This includes the DOD providing adequate financial resources to empower the Military Academy for its envisioned continental mission.

Conclusion

The Military Academy was born in an era of political change, affirmative action and transformation in 1950 and is reliving a similar process since 1994. Political priorities, conflicting organisational cultures and subcultures, together with a narrow mission and an

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81. See Van Dyk, 'Cream of the Crop', 313-32.

82. G.E. Visser and A.J. Esterhuyse, 'Africa and the Internationalisation of Military Education: A Role for the South African Military Academy?', unpublished paper presented at the first international conference of the School for Human Resource Development, Faculty of Military Science (South African Military Academy), Stellenbosch University on 'Strategic Challenges for African Armed Forces for the Next Decade', Saldanha, 16–18 September 2008.

83. N.C. Madlala-Routledge, address at Faculty of Military Science Awards Ceremony, Saldanha, 9 December 2003 (http://www.polity.org.za/article/madlalaroutledge-faculty-of-military-science-awards-ceremony-09122003-2003-12-09, accessed 25 February 2009).

84. Stellenbosch University: Quality Development Plan, December 2007, Appendix 7.

insufficient budget, have historically undermined its progressive development into an institution of national admiration and international standing. The Academy's narrow mission and perceived lack of military culture have prevented the Defence Force from accepting full ownership of the institution and fund and resource it accordingly. The historical exclusion of blacks and women and the marginalisation of white English-speaking citizens denied the Academy the exploitation of a significant portion of the country's human resource potential in the interest of sustained development and institutional excellence. The same happened with the introduction of racial quotas and the marginalisation of whites since 1994. However urgent and indisputable the need for transformation is, it should be responsibly balanced against efficiency to take the Academy forward in the twenty-first century.

The Military Academy has historically been too reflective of the organisational culture of the SANDF and its predecessors, instead of informing that culture to meet the challenges of military professionalism. There are excellent opportunities for the Military Academy in the twenty-first century to become a coveted national and continental educational asset to address developmental needs in the rebuilding of the country and the African continent in the aftermath of *apartheid* and colonialism. This requires DHQ to, finally, accept full ownership of the Academy, fund and staff it properly, manage it soundly and groom its organisational culture to make it a vibrant, continuously self-renewing instrument of superb higher military education and training that informs professionalism in the SANDF and other African defence forces.