

**THEORISING INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE THROUGH A HISTORICAL
ANALYSIS OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA AND A CASE
STUDY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF THE FREE STATE**

by

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in the
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Faculty of Education

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Declaration

I, Joseph Bazirake Besigye, declare that the thesis: Theorizing Institutional Change Through a Historical Analysis of Higher Education in South Africa and a Case Study of the University Of The Free State, submitted for the qualification of Doctor of Philosophy at the University of the Free State is my own independent work.

All the sources that I have used have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

I further declare that I have not previously submitted this work at another university or faculty to obtain a qualification.



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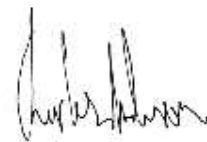
Theorizing Institutional Change Through a Historical Analysis of Higher Education in South Africa and a Case Study of the University of The Free State

by

Joseph Besigye Bazirake

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Abstract

This study sought to understand higher education change by drawing from the theoretical premises of institutional change. The study relied on an exploration of the bounded context of South African Higher Education. Therein, the case example of the University of the Free State was used to demonstrate the intricacies of higher education institutional processes that significantly cut across various contextual bounds. The design of the study was located within the pragmatic paradigm and drew from its corresponding abductive form of reasoning. This chosen design explored a blend between a historical and case study approach. It also relied on documentary sources for historical analyses.

It emerged from the study that higher education institutional change ought to be cognizant of the often conflated institutional/organisational overlap in higher education studies. This recognition was in line with the advancement of a layered institutional change proposition in which the analyses of this study considered three institutional layers. Firstly, the evolutionary perspective was applied to the analysis of the changing socio-political premise of the South African polity and represented the meta-institutional layer of this study. Secondly, the design perspective was applied to the study of the changing policy framework of South African higher education and represented the macro institutional layer. Lastly, the equilibrium perspective was applied to the analysis of the changing institutional processes at the University of the Free State. The University's context represented the micro-institutional layer of this study.

This study analysed the historical institutional change trajectories that linked the evolving socio-political context of the South African polity to the design of South Africa's higher education policies and to the varying equilibrium positions at the University of the Free State. The study determined that studies in Higher education and change ought to consider a layered institutional approach in which the transitions within higher education establishments are analysed across a network of institutional relationships. Also, the study recommends that historical trajectories are more significant in the analyses of change when considered as departure points, rather than as path-dependent determinants of institutional change processes.

Keywords

Design view; Equilibrium perspectives; Evolutionary view; Higher Education studies; Historical analysis; Institutional change; Organisational change; South African Higher Education; Theories of change; University of the Free State.

Dedication

This work is dedicated to my beloved newlywed wife, Crystal Rutangye-Bazirake.

The physical separation during the first year of our marriage (which happened to be the final year of writing this thesis) has been a significant strain on both of us. I thank you for the support and understanding, despite our inability to be together due to the *Covid-19* travel restrictions. We have endured shared loneliness, and yet apart, we continue to nurture this bond of a lifetime. I dedicate the rest of our lives to working for our successful marriage.

Mukwano, ebilungi bili mumaaso, nga Mukama ye mubeezi waffe!

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“Prof. Nel, may your death provide the impetus for me to see our dream through, as a way of honouring your life. Amen”

RIP Prof. W. Nel

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List of acronyms

ANC	:	African national congress
ANSB	:	Afrikaanse Nasionale Studentebond
ASB	:	Afrikaanse Studentebond
BTF	:	Broad Transformation Forum
CHE	:	Council on Higher Education
CNE	:	Christian National Education
CNO	:	Christelik Nasionaal Onderwys
DEIC	:	Dutch East India Company
DET	:	Department of Education and Training
DRC	:	Dutch Reformed Church
GC	:	Grey College
GUC	:	Grey University College
HE	:	Higher Education
HEQC	:	Higher Education Quality Committee
HES	:	Higher Education Studies
NCHE	:	National Commission on Higher Education
NECC	:	National Education Crisis Committee
NEED	:	Need for Education Elevation and Development
NEPI	:	National Policy Investigation
NP	:	National Party
NPHE	:	National Plan for Higher Education
NUSAS	:	National Union of South African Students
OECD	:	Economic Co-operation and Development
OFS	:	Orange Free State

RDP	:	Reconstruction and Development Programme
RQ	:	Research Question
SA HE	:	South African Higher Education
SABC	:	South African Broadcasting Corporation
SANSCO	:	South African National Student Congress
SAPs	:	Structural Adjustment Policies
SASCO	:	South African Student Congress
SASO	:	South African Students' Organisation
TC	:	Transformation Committee
TF	:	Transformation Forum
TPTT	:	Transformation Plan Task Team
UCGH	:	University of the Cape of Good Hope
UCOFS	:	University College of the Free State
UCT	:	University of Cape Town
UFS	:	University of the Free State
UNISA	:	University of South Africa
UOFS	:	University of the Orange Free State
U(O)FS	:	University of the (Orange) Free State
UoTs	:	Universities of Technology
UWC	:	University of the Western Cape
WITS	:	University of Witwatersrand

CHAPTER I

1.0 INTRODUCTION: THEORISING HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE

1.1 The general context of institutional change in higher education

The institutional change context of higher education (HE) is agreeably complex. This is because the HE field encompasses within it several processes that seek to balance change and adaptation to local, regional and national interests; and all this, amidst global pressures (Altbach, Reisberg & Rumbly, 2009; Vaira, 2004; Carnoy & Rhoten, 2002). The complexity of the higher education field also relates directly to the diversity of the stakeholders and the multiple interests that they represent.

Therefore, HE is not only a complicated field to analyse, but one whose change parameters are also difficult to anticipate or predict. Vaira (2004) presents this complexity within his perspective on institutional change in HE, which he notes, is often embroidered in a framework of historical, structural and cultural circumstances that form the basis for its institutionalisation processes. These qualities ensure that HE institutional change manifests as an interplay of processes which cut across several internal and external institutional constraints, thus requiring comprehensive approaches in its study.

Nonetheless, higher education has always stood out as a vital repository and defender of culture and as an agent in cultural change (Johnstone, Arora & Experton, 1998). In the same way, the field of higher education also acts as a critical driver for national aspirations of economic growth and the pursuit of collective goals. As such, Johnstone et al. (1998) argue that the appeal of higher education remains closely linked to the public interest, regardless of whether institutions are publicly or privately owned, or are publicly or privately financed.

It is vital to note, therefore, that the global higher education system and its practices are in constant transition, due to the multitude of interests that arise from within its varied contexts. This multiplicity of interests has, in turn, resulted into ongoing challenges of leadership, owing to the way that higher education institutions expect to adapt to changes in their context and as they alter their purpose simultaneously (Drew, 2010; Kezar, Carducci & Contreras-McGavin, 2006). Such anticipated adaptations are often confronted by a discrepancy between the changing societal realities amidst higher education institutional continuities, as Gornitzka, Kogan & Amaral (2005) indicate. At the same time, higher education institutions are often caught between the web of demands to respond to their changing social contexts, and yet they continue to draw their stability from the safety net provided by their age-long traditions, as Shapiro (2005) argues.

In his extensive and highly instructive study of higher education and change, Ansell (2008) focused on its variants across the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries. His study demonstrated how higher education systems fall within general categories that are not only difficult to transition from but are also highly politicised. Ansell's study generally categorised higher education systems across three broad possibilities: 1) partially private systems, 2) mass public systems, and 3) elite systems. Arguably, the transitions across these three systems are often driven by highly politicised mechanisms that Ansell refers to as a 'trilemma' of concerns, which have implications on the trajectories for higher education change. This trilemma of concerns relates to how various higher education systems measure along with the three extreme positions of mass enrolment, full public subsidization and total public spending. Whereas Ansell focused on how to differentiate higher education systems based on the variances in their enrolment and public funding modalities within OECD countries, his study opens up to a critical enquiry that this study ventured to undertake. The question of how the lens of institutional change theories — where the institutional structures

and their rule systems influence an establishment's change parameters — can be used to understand changes in the overlapping contexts within the higher education system was thus, considered for this study.

The enquiry in this study sought to understand the change modalities of HE systems, mainly, in institutional terms and as an interplay between internal and external systemic elements. This study conceived the potential benefit that the insights into HE change processes could benefit from the deliberations located within institutional change theorisation. The study acknowledged the premise of institutional change in higher education systems as an interconnected process that operates within various networks. The study's starting point was a consideration that higher education change processes demonstrate considerable variations, owing to the way that the socio-political circumstances of a given polity mediate the networks within each context.

This study is set apart from most studies in higher education that often cover a limited conceptual scope, and as illustrated by Teichler's (2000), tend to operate primarily on a problem-driven basis. It is this problem-driven approach that Fumasoli and Stensaker (2013) critique in their argument that despite the number of multi-disciplinary studies conducted within higher education, they barely engage with its conceptual evolution as a field. Nevertheless, as Fumasoli and Stensaker further note, HE research has distinguished itself as an applied field. It seeks to address the needs of policymakers who coordinate the national system level, as well as academic leaders, managers and administrators who work towards the efficiency and effectiveness of higher education establishments. This study advances an approach that engages with the HE institutional dimension of change that cuts across the practitioners and the contexts within which they operate.

1.2 The African context of higher education and institutional change

Across the African continent, it is significant to note that the existing HE setups sprouted from institutionalised educational processes that emerged from colonial-era extensions of primary and secondary schooling levels. It is from this historical context that the setting of the contemporary African University manifests within dynamics and tendencies that are not easy to analyse (Zezeza, 2009). With the growing calls for the liberation of Africa's education structures from the dominion of 'Eurocentric' knowledge systems as noted by Higgs (2012), the pursuit for higher education contextual relevance in Africa remains at odds with the desire to align itself with global trends. These realities have furthered demands for more functional alterations to HE systems across the African continent, with far-reaching implications on the mechanics of enrolment, access and the control of HE establishments (Varghese 2013; Teferra & Altbachl 2004).

Sherman (1990) took note of the changing trends of African higher education by attributing them to an increase in demand owing to the upsurge of qualifying students, who originate from the already robust and highly expanded primary and secondary school levels across the continent. This increase in demand to partake of higher education has, for instance, been a significant stimulus for expanded university access that has gradually resulted in changes in the size and nature of the demographics that higher education serves.

This recognition of Africa's higher education institutional complexities is not new. At the 1972 Accra HE conference, there was a call on African universities to not only commit to the provision of knowledge for its own sake but also to support the pursuit of knowledge aimed at the improvement of African conditions (Yesufu, 1973). Similarly, Wandira's (1977) historic proposals for the reform of African higher education advanced the need to adopt a form of flexibility in the way that HE institutional spaces operate across the African continent. In his view, this was to allow for the contextual variations across the continent to find expression

within a diversity of possible HE formations aligned with their appropriate form and purpose within the varied contexts. Such was Wandira's call for a 'truly African university' (1977: 22); a university expected to arise and draw inspiration from the African environment itself. More recently, the 2015 Declaration and Action Plan for African HE set out with a mission to develop a high quality, massive, vibrant, diverse, differentiated, innovative, autonomous, and socially responsible higher education sector in Africa. This declaration aimed at positioning the HE sector at the centre of the production of the necessary human capital for the continent's goals such as inclusive and sustainable development; democratic citizenship; and repositioning the continent as a major global actor.

It is, therefore, no wonder that when Sawyer (2004) located African HE within its context, he did so on the premise that each state would take the responsibility to play a crucial oversight role, especially if the quality standards of HE are to remain uncompromised. Sawyer admonishes the expanded access to HE across the African continent, whose impetus has been in line with the adoption of global massification trends that have led to persistent overcrowding and an increasingly questionable HE quality standard. At the same time, Cloete and Maassen (2015) note that the HE setup in Africa still struggles with an inherent level of elitism, which has resulted into an incongruence with the immediate local context, despite ongoing attempts towards expanded access. The elitism that defies HE's allegiance to its local context, and the massification that compromises its standards are only examples to suggest the potentially contradictory indicators for HE change expectations in Africa, to which the socio-political context play a significant driving force.

The expansion of the private sector in Africa has contributed to the recontextualisation of its HE framework and aided broader access to its diverse populace and groups that would have been otherwise excluded (Cloete & Maassen, 2015). However, the privatisation of African universities was criticised by Mamdani (2008), who, while considering the case of Makerere

University in Uganda, noted the failure to distinguish privatisation from commercialisation. He argued that the interests of the public were not prioritised in the neoliberal turn of the African university arrangement, in favour of the market forces. Similarly, Zeleza (2016) traces a shift in African HE that emerged from the 1990s through the World Bank's imposed structural adjustment policies (SAPs). The SAPs resulted in the reduction of support to social sectors, including higher education in this push for economic liberalisation that in turn led to the rise of for-profit private HE institutions in Africa.

Despite the expansion of the private sector in African HE provision alongside the growing cost-sharing inclination of the traditionally public HE establishments, state mechanisms remain critical in the direction of HE and its enabling policies. As such, several new players within the HE scene continue to emerge, while continuities and changes within its structures solidify the place of HE within the plethora of continually changing expectations across the continent.

This overview provided from within the African context, therefore, strengthens this study's choice for considering HE institutional change as a network of systemic processes that cut across multiple socio-political contexts, players and the nature of rules within which they operate. The institutional framing of this study also takes note of the role of historical institutional processes that affect ongoing systemic processes of change in HE. In Africa, this is even more discernible by the way that the continent's colonial histories have had implications on the structuring of its HE system. As this study set out to understand change processes through an institutional change theoretical lens, the placement within the African context gave rise to a specific focus on the South African example that was analysed historically as part of the HE institutional change theoretical premise of the study. Part of the rationale for this choice emerges from the country's long and stark history of colonial, apartheid, and liberation contexts in which its socio-political circumstances have often laid out varying HE institutional processes across different historical periods.

1.3 The systemic context of HE institutional change in South Africa

The South African context provides a melting pot for illustrating the systemic linkages of higher education institutional change as has been historically experienced in varying degrees across the rest of the continent. The country's lengthy and well documented colonial history that was followed by a blend of multiple settler patterns and the tragic experimentation with the apartheid system of racially and ethnically inspired separateness provides for this contextual appropriateness. By the time South Africa ushered in democratic governance in 1994, it had experienced over half a century of systematic racial segregation under the apartheid political dispensation. Centuries before that, it had experienced an entangled overlap of colonial, postcolonial, migration and settlement patterns that formed a coalescence of historical experiences that are arguably representative of most of the rest of the African continent - albeit in varying contextual forms. The fact that the South African setting offers a one-stop location for one to look at the transcendence of various historically relevant socio-political premises made it a worthy context for this study.

This study is in line with Wolpe's (1995) description of the South African Higher Education (SA HE) system as being held in the historical context of a dual but integrated system. SA HE is motivated, as he notes, by a relatively advanced political economy, which is, at the same time, located within a social order of a historical colonial setup and perverse backwardness. This context provided a broad spectrum within which this study explored the intersection in the historical interplay between various social and political forces in the institutionalisation process of the HE.

In contemporary times, South Africa has exhibited a significant commitment towards the transformation of its higher education framework as part of the bid to institutionalise a new social and economic post-apartheid order (Badat, 2010). Quite crucially, Higher education transformation in South Africa receives significant attention in the country's socio-political

remodelling, and this offers a critical edge in studying how its change imperatives can be institutionally understood. In the post-apartheid period, priority has been placed on the expansion of democratic practices into all public spheres through a state-steering mechanism, and the extension of the democratic ethos in South African Higher Education seeks to create a balance between institutional autonomy and public accountability (Hall, Symens & Luescher, 2002; Hall & Symes, 2005). It follows that the state in South Africa has recognisably played a pivotal role in the framing of SA HE, as argued by Cloete and Muller (1998) and Olivier (2001). It is from this point of departure that institutional framing in higher education change premises takes the mechanisms of the state into account for this study by theorising institutional change through a historical analysis of the dynamic South African higher education historical context.

This study comes at a time of expectation for unprecedented changes within South Africa's HE institutional setup; thus, there has been a relentless focus on attempts towards the transformation of institutional profiles in order to fit within the ethos of the new democratic post-apartheid South Africa. The massive studies conducted by the Council on Higher Education (CHE, 2004; 2007; 2016) describe how SA HE gradually responds to the challenges of social equity, economic and social development as well as the contribution of higher education in building and consolidating democracy in South Africa. These CHE reports undoubtedly offer a helpful reflection on South Africa's post-apartheid HE state of affairs. However, there remains a glaring gap around how the problematics of change in SA HE frameworks can be understood and engaged with, especially in as far as it relates to the institutionalisation processes that emerge from the state.

Such are the kinds of dynamics that Jansen (2004) highlights in his view that the changing landscape of SA HE institutions had been held amidst a continuity in the organisational and staff profiles within the first post-apartheid decade. Jansen's assertions can be explored further

within the understanding of SA HE's embeddedness in the changes and continuities in South Africa's historical and social-political contexts, as undertaken in this study. Jansen notes that there have been numerous changes that need to be taken into account when dealing with South Africa's HE institutional frame. These include: 1) size and shape; 2) meaning of accountability; 3) nature of higher education providers; 4) character of student distribution and characteristics; 5) the organisation of university management and governance; 6) the roles of student politics and organisation; 7) the models of delivery in higher education; 8) the value of higher education programs; 9) the nature of the academic workspaces. These are helpful parameters for reflecting on the change in SA HE as they encompass the depth of institutional considerations within HE that also directly link to the policy directions and state structures. This impasse begs the question as to how the SA HE institutional landscape can be reconsidered and understood within the disparity of change and continuity in the interconnected institutional framework of the state and the policy frame of SA HE.

Within the South African example, therefore, it is noted that the post-1990 emphasis on reforms in the mechanics of SA HE was fuelled by the high expectations in the constructive role that education plays in advancing justice and equitability in societies of such perverse historical inequalities, just as the South African example demonstrates with its colonial and apartheid histories (Fiske & Ladd 2004; Walker & Unterhalter, 2007; Le Grange, 2011). Based on these histories, Le Grange (2011) attributes the kinds of challenges that HE in South Africa continues to face as owing to a broader crisis of humanism; where the racial disparities in which SA HE was also absorbed within the machinations of the apartheid state as a means to legitimize segregation. As a result, she notes that racism remains one of the structural issues that higher education systems in South Africa still have to engage with, where historical aspects of discrimination still wield themselves in various higher education praxis. The critical question that ought to be asked, given the historical state of affairs in SA HE, relates to how the

anticipation for change within the institutional context of HE as an embedded entity within the changing socio-political context of South Africa unfolds. It, therefore, remains critical to understand how the mechanics of change in the HE context relate to the historical configurations of colonialism, migration, language and racial bigotry that culminated into various historical trajectories in South Africa. To understand how this historical social-political context reflects upon SA HE arguably gives rise to a deeper understanding of institutional approaches to studying change in higher education as advanced by this study.

This study's undertaking is underlined by the consideration that HE can and often does, manifest as a multi-faceted entity that engages with a multiplicity of individual, organisational and institutional stakeholders. These stakeholders participate within the HE frame as part of the dynamic contextual reach that shifts from local, regional, national and global relationships through which system of higher education experience symbiotic relationships across various contexts. South Africa offers an important site for the exploration of change in higher education as an institutional enterprise, considering that its historical frame is a combination of varied socio-political experiences that are unmatched by any other context in recent times. The multiplicity of South Africa's historical socio-political experiences arguably offer an emblematic setting that can be essential in providing a locus for studying various social-political aspects. This study makes use of these unique historical features of South Africa to explore how institutional change applies as a theoretical premise for understanding change in higher education.

The historical analysis in this study therefore broadly considers the linkages across the South African socio-political context and the SA HE body of laws since 1874, when the first phase of HE institutionalisation took root with the establishment of the University of the Cape of Good Hope. This study's historical analysis stretches from 1874 to 2010 to provide for the inference of institutional change theorisation over an extended period. While this study

acknowledges the importance of the freshly evolving aspects of change as exhibited by the ‘must fall’ movements and other dynamic student protests in the decade between 2010 and 2020, the approach of the study emphasises a historically situated analytical premise for institutional change. It does, in effect, provide a foundational premise for the further analysis of the more contemporary aspects of institutional change in SA HE. As such, the applied historical timeline supports the aim of this study that sought to explore how institutional change theories can help us to understand the historical SA HE change processes between 1874 and 2010.

Considering the broad premise of the SA HE context, however, the study further focused on the University of the Free State (UFS) as a single case example. This focus contributed to the exploration of a more nuanced approach to understanding the conceptual underpinnings of HE institutional change, within the complexity of the connections that it entails. The methodology chapter of this study expounds the justification for the focus on SA HE and the UFS. It explains how this study benefitted from a pragmatic approach in order to draw reasonable inferences from the context of an individual case. As such, the SA HE institutional framework and the UFS case offered an appropriate local context of analysis for this study in the advancement of institutional change theories into studying change in the HE field.

1.4 The UFS case within broader HE institutional change theorisation premises

The institutional layout of SA HE and the specific case of the UFS offers a compelling premise for engaging in a historical analysis of the change process in HE that straddles over various internal and external institutional dynamics. This choice for a single case of the UFS within the SA HE context addresses a fundamental gap that was identified by Badat (2009) in his engagement with the theoretical tenets of institutional change in post-1994 SA HE. While taking note of the paradoxical scene of HE transformation in the new democratic South Africa, Badat contends that institutional change in SA HE emerged out of the simultaneous pursuit by

government and progressive social forces for values and goals that, however, are often in conflict with each other (Badat, 2009: 462). This position, he argues, resulted in contradictions that required considerable trade-offs, where some values, goals and strategies have historically taken precedence over others. Badat also draws from Cloete et al. (2002) to claim that most changes within SA HE entities in the post-1990 period did not only emerge from centrally driven government policies. He argues that the post-1990 changes were also as a result of an elaborate interface across policies, societal and market forces, as well as unexpected institutional responses.

Badat further argues that there is evidence of more forces than the state and government as identifiable external actors in SA HE. This argument has been instructive in the choice of this study to not only engage with the socio-political dynamics and the policy frameworks in HE institutional change but also with their interface within a localised case example of the UFS. This study also acknowledges that other external forces are at play in HE institutional change processes, as increasingly exhibited by the globalisation and internationalisation of the HE sphere. However, this study delimits state-led processes as the meta-level for institutional change in order to maintain a manageable scope of analysis. The basis for this position is the understanding that state structures mediate between local and international forces of change and that any significant institutional changes in sectors like HE are filtered by what would be admissible within the socio-political underpinnings of the state. This study considers that the intersecting histories of socio-political variables tied to race, ethnicity, language, religion, colonialism and apartheid are identifiable with the trajectories of institutional change as they emerged from within the historical context of SA HE and the UFS. With the help of the emergent historical analysis of institutional change in the SA HE and the UFS illustrations, therefore, this study explored the conceptual dimensions of HE institutional change that circumnavigate various internal and external dynamics within state bounds.

Considering that HE institutional change in this study was framed within its alignment with the changing socio-political context in South Africa, a case example of the UFS provided a general overview of the praxis within an individual university establishment. The insights from the UFS provided for the basis of a comprehensive historical analysis that supported a more focused examination of its institutional change processes between 1990 and 2010 period. The attention on institutional change within the UFS in the 1990–2010 period offered the opportunity to conduct, by using historical and archival documentary sources, a more in-depth historical analysis of how the UFS emerged from its apartheid history. In this way, this study contributed to new perspectives in the understanding of institutional change in the HE field through the lens of institutional change theories within the selected context of SA HE and the UFS.

1.5 Purpose of theorising HE institutional change

This study responds to the notable deficiency in scholarship on higher education as a subject of inquiry which, for instance, Maton (2004) critiques for its paradox as a field that keeps enormous repositories of literature on other fields but remains inadequately examined in and of itself. As such, this study draws from the theoretical premises of institutional change in order to trace the intricacies within the HE field through the SA HE illustration and the UFS case example. The study extends the use of institutional change theories to studies on HE in a bid to expand on scholarship that seeks, through an institutional change lens, to understand the complexities of change that the field of HE has come to epitomize.

Unlike most other studies of change, the merit of the approach of this study is its engagement with the importance of history in studying change (Sydow, Schreyogg & Koch 2005). By acknowledging the importance of historical insights and analyses, the approach of this study extends engagements in HE scholarship to identify the interdependencies in the variabilities of

institutional change that Steinmo (2008) locates in the relationship across individuals, context and rules.

By using the UFS as the local context for the historical analysis of how a HE establishment in South Africa responds to the unequivocal socio-political dynamics that surround it, this study demonstrates the importance of a detailed exploration of HE institutional change, and in context. It does not, however, mean that the UFS case is representative of the overall experiences of all HE establishments in South Africa. Instead, its unique historical circumstances, as unveiled in this study, ensure that the aspect of individuality in the analysis of institutional change in HE is not taken for granted. The UFS is thus considered as an individual case, acting in alignment with established SA HE institutional processes that can be traced in its historical socio-political contexts of change.

This study thus locates the historical institutional premises at the UFS within the SA HE historical progression tied to the evolutions of the South African state itself. This study, therefore, demonstrates the importance of understanding the (dis)engagement with institutional change theoretical perspective in such a field as HE that cuts across the socio-political context, individuals and rules.

1.6 Research focus

This study typifies Shapiro's (2005) insights on studies in HE that consider the necessity of understanding it as a field that is closely knit in a symbiotic relationship with its societal context. In this regard, considering that societies are frequently in what Shapiro refers to as a 'state of construction' and are thus continually changing, higher education institutional frameworks also need to be examined based on their historical and contextual embeddedness within their continually changing societal realities.

The focused historical analytical engagement within SA HE for this study begins with the creation of the University of the Cape of Good Hope (UCGH) in 1873. The focus then zooms in on the UFS case example, with an eventual concentration on the institutional change insights from the 1990 to 2010 period. This approach offered the necessary space to understand the normative implications of historical processes on constituent institutional change aspects that relate to HE. Nonetheless, the use of historical approaches in this study duly upheld necessary precautions. These heeded Kay's (2005) warning; where she notes that historical studies of change tend to locate themselves along with the premises of 'path dependence' in what turns out as an understanding of predetermination of future institutional processes. Besides its merits in understanding policy development over time, Kay notes that path dependence within historical approaches presents the following limitations: 1) an over-concentration on explaining stability rather than change; 2) the inability to point out decision-making over time, and 3) the confusion within the normative implications of historical processes that are in turn left unexplored.

This study transcends the limitations identified by Kay (2015) by providing for an engagement that caters for analyses that draw patterns from the historical institutional build-up of state-level policies and their translation within the SA HE frame. The study, therefore, contributes to a focus on institutional change scholarship through considerations of HE change as a nexus of contexts; something that does not often receive its due scholarly focus.

1.7 Research problem

Institutional theorists have, for a long time, been preoccupied with the task of explaining institutional change and stability in organisations, as Seo and Creed (2002) note. It is this kind of interest that prompted this study to venture into expanding the theoretical premises of institutional change into the dynamic field of HE studies. The rationale for this advancement lies in the consideration that the process of institutional change encompasses the ways that

societal functions can be understood to be structured and governed amidst the realities of a rapidly changing world (North 1990, 1993). The HE institutional framework, as noted from the emerging discussions in this study, is invariably tagged to the varied social-political contexts, which in turn determine the nature of rules and the way that individuals operate within HE establishments.

Nevertheless, this link in the analysis of institutional change within HE has not often received sufficient attention, despite the constant charge on the role of HE in the changing local, national and global contexts. On the one hand, institutional change can be considered in terms of purposefully designed frameworks that are implemented in a centralized way. On the other hand, institutional change can present itself as resultant from a process in which new institutions periodically emerge, owing to the competition between new institutional forms and the already existing institutional frameworks (Kingston & Caballero, 2009).

In his study, SA HE change processes have been examined within the understanding of institutional change theories in order to draw reasonable inferences about the intricacies of HE change processes from within the South African context. The historical transitions in the South African context provide for the exploration of change in HE in line with the way that Loomis and Rodriguez (2009) describe institutional change; as a supplantation of old models that is followed by the production of new ones. This study thus takes note of the historical institutionalists' approach that considers individuals as decision-makers whose basis for their decisions factors in both the context and the available rules (Steinmo, 2008), and extends this form of reasoning about institutional change to studies in HE and change.

This study, therefore, addresses an identifiable shortcoming of HE change research that limits itself to explorations of changes and continuities that focus on the coping mechanisms in respect to the changes in the HE environment (Benjamin et al., 1993) or in offering prescriptive

models for coping with this changing environment (Lindquist, 1978). However, Greif (2006) identifies institutions as devices of rules, beliefs, norms and organizations that invariably generate regularity of social behaviour. In this case, a theoretical consideration of institutional change as a premise of enquiry in higher education change, as conducted in this study, amounts to a significant expansion of this field.

This study is a worthy undertaking as it provides for a way to consider the problematics of higher education from within the theoretical knowledge of what institutional change entails. Also, the historical analytical approach adopted in this study is even more pertinent within the example of the SA HE change processes, which have historically been in a constant state of transition through colonial, apartheid and democratic socio-political dispensations. As noted by Badat (2009), any adequate theorisation on Higher education institutional change processes in South Africa would need to undertake an overall analysis of the character of the social-structural, political, economic, social and ideological conditions of SA HE. It is noted here though that whereas Badat's (2009) study focuses on post-1994 SA HE institutional change, he provides helpful insights on the kind of breadth required to study change in Higher education institutional frameworks. Nonetheless, the need to recognise HE change problematics within their deeper institutional and historical analytical frame as advanced in this study is not to understate Badat's (2009) own acknowledgement of the co-existence of both continuities and change in post-apartheid SA HE. By drawing from the historical analysis of the institutionalisation of HE in South Africa, a connecting thread in establishing a fundamental premise of understanding HE institutional change that links the context, individual and rules, emerges.

As such, the specific case of UFS can be conceptualized across dual identities as an organisation and institutional entity, while being both an agent and a structure in the way it relates to the institutional frame of HE in South Africa. This conceptualization is significant in

delimiting the place of individuals in theorising HE institutional change; whether such individuality manifests in the form of organisations or as human agents. The organisational and human agency differentiation in HE change studies have received fair coverage, particularly by Kezar (2001), who premiered studies on organisational change at the institutional level in the context of HE. Kezar argues that HE occupies a unique position where it ought to respond to its ever-changing environment. This study takes this argument further by considering HE as a constituent of the broader societal context within which it is located. The study thus advances institutional change theorisation as the more credible approach in understanding HE changes, rather than the organisational focus on isolated individual HE establishments.

1.8 Research Aim

The primary aim of this study is to identify and analyse how institutional change theories help to understand SA HE change processes through a historical analysis of SA HE, and a case study of the UFS.

1.8.1 Research Question

How can institutional change theories help us to understand SA HE change processes in the historical period of 1873 to 2010?

1.8.2 Subsidiary questions

1. What are the salient constituents of HE institutional change theories?
2. Which trajectories can be identified in academic studies and policy documents of SA HE as important in driving change between 1873 and 2010?
3. In emerging from its apartheid history, how did institutional change happen at the UFS between 1990 and 2010?

1.8.3 Research Objectives

The primary objectives of the study are outlined as:

- to analyse the salient constituents in international higher education institutional change theories;
- to identify, through a historical analysis, the trajectories in academic studies and policy documents of SA HE as important in driving change from 1873 to 2010; and
- to explore how change happened at the UFS in its emergence from the apartheid history between 1990 to 2010

1.9 Disciplinary location and the value of the study

This study is located within the academic discipline of higher education studies (HES). It straddles between what Tight (2002) identified as the ‘system policy’ and the ‘institutional management’ subthemes of the discipline. As such, the study falls squarely within Bitzer and Wilkinson’s (2009) specific addendum to Tight’s categorisations of the discipline of higher education, in which they classify ‘Higher Education transformation in South Africa’ as a standalone sub-field of HES. The undertakings of this study, therefore, contribute to widening the scope of the nature and extent of studies in the field of HES by expanding its reach into engagement with how the theoretical tenets of institutional change can contribute to a frame of analysis for understanding change imperatives of the field. The undertaking of this study contributes to the emergence of a crosscutting scholarship in HE and change in which theories of institutional change are the premise of engagement.

This study also fits within what Teichler (2000) considers as the need for research in HE to be self-reflective. In this study, the engagement with the institutional change requirements of higher education stands out as a contribution to this self-reflection on HE’s conditions that Teichler acknowledges as an imperative for the awareness that HE as a field needs in order to develop more convincing research work.

The approach adopted in this study is, therefore, not only beneficial for the expansion of the field of HES. It also presents a helpful frame of reference for institutional planners and other HE and institutional change-inclined researchers from diverse scholarly inclinations. Most importantly, this study brings on an additional set of perspectives for those who are directly involved with the precarious institutional framework of South African higher education. It provides an alternative perspective in the context of understanding HE change parameters that can also contribute immensely to the ongoing debate on how the SA HE institutional setup can transcend its colonial and apartheid legacies.

1.10 Chapter Summary

This first chapter has set out the scene of this study as an undertaking for the understanding of how institutional theories of change apply to the HE context of change. The chapter contextualised the premise of this HE institutional change study within a historical analysis of the SA HE systemic change premises from 1873 to 2010. The chapter further introduced the UFS as an institutional establishment within SA HE that offers a localised perspective in the HE institutional change frame. The chapter, therefore, paid attention to the overall framing of HE as a multi-faceted field whose context, legal framework and agency dimensions need to be examined across multiple networks. As such, this chapter laid the groundwork for the contribution of this study to the expansion of the self-reflexive research undertakings within the field of HE, through an examination of its underlying institutional change theoretical premises in the SA HE context and the UFS case example.

CHAPTER II

2.0 ORGANISATIONAL AND INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE: A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

This chapter conceptualises institutions and how institutionally based theories of change can apply to the study of change in the field of higher education (HE). The chapter unfolds by offering clarity on the varied dimensions and meanings of institutional frameworks, and how the conceptual premises of institutional change can support a systemic study of change in the disparate- yet institutionally driven- field of HE. As such, this chapter examines available literature on the institutional dynamics of formation, stability and change. It also examines the institutional power dynamics as expressed in the agency and structural dimensions of institutions. This chapter also provides an invaluable exploration of the intersection between institutional and organisational fields, particularly in the context of HE.

2.2 Defining institutional and organisational arrangements

In order to engage with how institutional change theorization lends itself to change in HE, this study was grounded in a clear conceptual understanding of the premise of institutions and institutional change. Worth noting, however, is the range of connotations with which the ‘institution’ as a concept conjures in both academia and regular application. One also finds an apparent disjuncture in references to institutions, particularly in the overlapping inferences that relate to institutional premises and organisational setups. The diversity of debates concerning the relationship between institutions and organizations challenges whether their overlap constitutes an interplay that spells out a symbiotic relationship between them as North (1993) and Hodgson (2006) interrogate. Other debates are even more closely linked to the prevailing situation in the HE context, where references to HE institutions tend to conflate both the

physical establishments (such as universities) and the abstract dimensions (the systemic legal frame). Such an overlap is found in Jongbloed, Maassen and Neave (1999), whose study of change considers organisational adaptation in higher education as their primary premise and who admonish the overreliance on organisational theory in the majority of HE institutional scholarship.

In understanding institutional and organisational arrangements, various debates are engaged in this literature review chapter in order to establish the necessary conceptual clarity for laying out this study's institutional change theorisation premise, particularly as it relates to the HE field.

2.2.1. Institutions as social-rule systems

In general, institutions are commonly referred to as humanly devised constraints that structure human interactions and impose form and consistency on human activities that reduce uncertainty through providing for ordered thought, expectation, and action (North, 1990; 1991; Hodgson, 2006). While endorsing this rule-based view of institutions, Hodgson cautions against simply categorising institutions as conglomerations of rules and constraints, particularly within the intense distinction with which North's rule-based definition of institutions entails. Hodgson then argues that institutions ought to be understood as durable systems that do not only find credence in the social rules that structure social interactions but are also part and parcel of the same rules. In other words, much as institutions can be understood as rules, by the same measure, rules also ought to be understood as institutions (Greif and Kingston, 2011). In this way, institutions are not to only signposts for social interactions, but their embeddedness in the social-rule structures themselves also forms a part of those interactions.

Whilst working within the rule-based view of institutions, Ostrom (2005) developed a framework that considered rules across four hierarchical levels. He categorised institutional rules as follows: 1) operational rules that are used for day-to-day interactions; 2) collective-choice rules that rank higher than operational rules and are, as such, used to decide on operational rules; 3) constitutional rules that rank higher than collective choice rules and are the premise for choosing which constitutional rules apply; and 4) meta-constitutional rules which are rules that institutions fall back to in order to determine constitutional rules. These hierarchies of rule-systems within institutions indicate an intricately layered relationship within which institutional rules receive their credence; that is, institutional determinants can often be found outside the context of a given institutional arrangement.

It is following from the identity of institutions within a hierarchical system of rules that Becker (2011) recognises institutions as meta-structures due to their socially deterministic nature. This insight needs to be understood in line with Hodgson's (2006) earlier caution, where he maintains a similar argument as Aoki (2001) to emphasise that institutions are stable and shared systems of beliefs that govern expected behavioural patterns of the members of society. This idea considers that society is equipped to predictably respond to varied situations in an expected and accepted manner owing to its institutional make-up. The institutions as a rule-system perspective, therefore, provides for a way to consider rules as system-wide connections that enable societies to operate in generally predictable ways.

2.2.2. Institutions as regimes in equilibria

Owing to institutions' role in producing predictable and reliable behavioural patterns, they operate as embodiments of socially acceptable and collectively enforced expectations of the behaviour of various actors (Streeck and Thelen, 2005). For Greif and Kingston (2011), in their consideration of institutions as self-enforcing mechanisms, they note that rules are only as

significant as the behavioural patterns that they motivate. As a result, rules serve as crucial means of coordination that motivate people's behaviour in what Grief and Kingston consider as institutions in equilibria.

As such institutional premises occur as outcomes of purposefully designed rules in a collective-choice process in a way that Streeck and Thelen (2005) liken to regimes. They argue that like regimes, institutions are only legitimate to the extent of their enforcement by the society within which they are embedded. Likewise, Greif (2006) identifies institutions as devices of interrelated but distinct components of rules, beliefs and norms, which form the basis for society's organization and invariably generate regularity of social behaviour. These attributes indicate that institutions and rules are not neutral, but rather, intended to accomplish specific purposes as perceived by those with the power and authority to institute them. Along this line of thought, it is also essential to take note of Bush's (1987) description of institutions as a set of socially prescribed patterns of correlated behaviours, where society, by and large, is comprised of a set of various institutional systems.

Here, institutional frameworks are considered to inhabit the space of interaction that exists between, on the one hand, the rule-makers who set and modify the rules, and on the other hand, the rule-takers, who comply with the rules as they exist. Streeck and Thelene (2005) emphasize the relevance in distinguishing between rule makers and rule-takers to understand how institutions evolve, regardless of whether the actors involved in this process change over time. In other words, rules can evolve to a point where the original rule-makers are no longer able to change them. At such a point, the lines between rule-makers and rule takers become blurry. Therefore, institutions may rely on actors with the 'rulemaking' mandate at a given time, enmeshed within an institutional structure that then often precedes such actors at a later time. Therefore, institutions can evolve to become the regime through which a given society operates, forming a cultural fabric of a social system that becomes part and parcel of the identity

of that system. Cultural fabrics often endure, even after the utility of the rules of the regime from which they emerged have ceased to be relevant.

Hence, the two perspectives of institutions as rules and institutions as regimes are united by what Greif and Kingston (2011) consider as a functionalist perspective of institutional rules. They note that regardless of how institutional rules emerge, they remain in the service of the interests of their creators. This functionalist perspective, therefore, means that institutions as rules are deeply entrenched in the hands of individuals who have the authority to create and change them. The dynamics of institutional rules, though, play out differently depending on whether such authority is primarily centralised (formal) or decentralised (informal) within an institutional arrangement.

2.2.3 Institutional attributes: formal and informal institutional arrangements

North (1990, 1991; 1993) defines institutions as human devices that constrain the structure of political, economic and social interaction. He also points explicitly to the different ways that institutional formations may manifest based on whether they are embedded in formal rules or informal constraints. This position gives rise to a critical insight into institutional arrangements, which operate within a continuum of formal and informal institutional attributes.

The contrast between formal and informal institutional attributes was expounded by North (1990) who distinguished institutions based on the extent to which they are guided by centralised frameworks (formal institutions) or whether they are dependent on collective choice processes (informal institutions). He argues that the deliberately designed official laws and regulations constitute of formal institutions. In contrast, informal institutions find expression through norms and cultural transmission. Similarly, Stacey and Rittberger (2003) argue that formal institutional arrangements have their enforcement provided for by law, while Nelson and Winter (1997) consider that informal institutional arrangements are only enforceable

through social norms or organisational routine and memory. Therefore, while informal institutional arrangements have a framework of shared power distribution across the group members in a more egalitarian manner, formal institutions have authority vested in a specifically chosen subgroup that administers a form of central authority (Redmond, 2005).

As such, North (1990) recognises that the evolution of rules and norms operate differently under formal and informal institutional expressions. On his part, Redmond (2005) elaborates on this difference by noting that for formal institutions, where provisions for change are explicit in the law, institutional change is more likely to take on an evolutionary path. In the cases where necessary legal provisions for change are not explicit in the internal provisions of the law, Redmond notes that revolutionary change is more likely, as the system will remain rigid until its overthrow. Similarly, Stacey and Rittberger (2003) consider that since the parties in informal institutions have no legal bound, they can only rely on political sanctions that carry negligible legal force. In contrast, the parties in formal institutions rely on established rules that can be enforceable by a third-party system (judicial body) in case of a breach.

The aspect of a third party is an essential institutional dynamic to take note of, as such a party ought to possess the kind of authority that would allow for it to issue binding legal sanctions in case institutional breaches arise. Nonetheless, Streeck and Thelen (2005) note that institutions, regardless of their level of formality, are still bound by some form of sanction that regularly results into the expectation for a third (or other) party to step forth in case of breaches in institutional expectations. They thus argue that the expectation for interventions of third parties in institutional disputes is what separates institutions from other forms of societal arrangements.

In most cases, therefore, both formality and informality operate side by side and North (1990) captures this relationship through his theory of institutional change. He argues that the changes

in formal rules also result in corresponding changes in informal rules, which then give rise to a new equilibrium position. For North, informal rules are thus extensions of formal rules and the change in the latter lends itself to a corresponding change in the former. Roland (2004) considers a contrary view. He notes that since informal rules are constantly changing, albeit slowly, they are capable of changing to the point when they are no longer compatible with the existing formal rules. In that case, Roland considers that formal rules tend to periodically cave into the need to fit within the changing informal constraints and will thus result in abrupt changes to account for this. Regardless of the origin of institutional change, however, Lowndes and Lempriere (2018) provide a reconciliatory position in this debate by noting that all institutional formations combine both formal rules and informal conventions. Moreover, as they argue, this determines why institutions operate the way that they do; where institutional structures and processes operate side by side with the established and routinized practices.

Nonetheless, both formal and informal rules, along with the mechanisms of their enforcement form the core of the institutional structure within which agents operate (Greif & Kingston, 2011). This insight then sets us on another trail to understand how the dynamics of agency and those of structure operate within institutional arrangements

2.2.4 Institutional agency and structure

Shepsle (2006) considers institutions as scripts that name the actors and their behavioural options. The options provide a prescribed sequence in which the actors make choices based on a wholesome expected outcome from all other actors' choices as well. Shepsle premises institutional actors as the starting point for understanding the way that institutions operate. Mahoney and Thelen (2010) on their part, consider institutions as instruments of distribution that have a bearing on power distribution. This power distribution occurs within an interplay between institutional agency and structure. This interplay, however, presents a dilemma: on the one hand, there is an underlying expectation for the agency to conform to the structural

constraints within a given institutional field, and yet, on the other hand, such institutional structures owe their durability to the actions prompted by agents. In other words, actors are bound by the same structures which, as agents, they have an implicit responsibility to set up, maintain or even change. Nonetheless, regardless of each actors' inclinations, their expected behaviour within institutional structures will tend to override their personal preferences (Streeck & Thelen, 2005), and this demonstrates the constraining nature of institutional structures.

This impasse between agency and structure in institutional fields is what Greif and Laitin (2004) consider in their deliberations on institutions as primarily human-made and nonphysical elements that are, even so, exogenous to each individual, and yet at the same time, generate behavioural regularities. Before that, Knill and Lenschow (2001) had interrogated this impasse between structures and agency from the institutional formation standpoint. They pondered on whether institutional and normative structures provided relevant meaning in the formation of actors' preferences, or if these structures only impacted on behaviour by providing a context for strategic action, without influencing human preferences. They resolved this contemplation on the structure and agency power-plays within institutions with a caution against scholarly undertakings that group institutional change literature within two oppositional demarcations of either structure-based or agency-based approaches. Here, it follows that different starting points for the explanation of institutional change can emerge, depending on the vantage point of a researcher; that is, whether structure-based or empirical-based frameworks are the researcher's starting point.

To their credit, Knill and Lenschow (2001) prioritise a complementary approach that links structure-based and agency-based analytical approaches. This study benefits from this perspective, as it relied on a historical analysis of change in SA HE with an exploration of structural components of institutional change along with agency-based motivations for change.

This position proved to be essential for this study, owing to the multiplicity of forces at play within the higher education field. It was also the most pragmatic standpoint for this study, considering that the institutional nature of the higher education field heavily relies on policy guidelines to spell out the institutional premises on which entities like universities operate, as noted by Redmond (2005). Besides, this interplay between agency and structure in deciphering institutional formation and change also extends to individual HE establishments. As such, these establishments, such as universities, manifest a dual personality: as actors within a wider HE structural frame and as separate structures, with the possibility of several other actors operating endogenously within them.

This study's vantage point thus allows for the acknowledgement of the expressions of both agency and structure within considerations for institutional change theorisation. As such, it is cognizant of the formation, endurance and change parameters that are at play within institutional arrangements and takes proper account of the mutual reinforcement across the power-plays in institutional agency and institutional structures.

2.2.5 Understanding institutional formation and stability in institutional arrangements.

Redmond (2005) notes that just as there are variations in institutional arrangements based on the extent of the attributes of their formality, so are there different ways in which institutional formation, stability and change can manifest across these attributes. As such, Redmond links institutional formation, stability and change to a given system's alignment with either the formal or informal institutional attributes. These positions are described in the write-up that follows.

i) Institutional formation

Lowndes and Lempriere (2018) define institutional formation as the process in which new "rules-in-use and their supporting narratives" are established (p.3). Their view of institutional

formation is such that it crosses over from the formalised space, where the rules ‘in use’ are the sum of the rules that actors apply (as opposed to just existing in a form), are created. By being ‘in-use’, rules allow for the development of narratives around them that in turn, enable them to become self-reinforcing.

Redmond (2005) thus identifies four aspects of institutional formation whose parameters differ across formal and informal institutions. These are: (1) the general purpose; (2) negotiation; (3) explicitness in formulation and dissemination of rules; and (4) prior consideration of mechanisms of compliance, or insurance. It follows, therefore, that for formal institutional arrangements, these four parameters are defined centrally. In contrast, for informal institutional arrangements, there is a form of a decentralised premise for how consensus across these premises would be recognised. It becomes apparent therefore that the understanding of institutional arrangements in terms of the extent of their formality also complements the character of institutions as systems of endurance; where rules, norms and institutionalised procedures provide relative scaffolding for the way that social life is structured.

Similarly, Lowndes and Lempriere (2018) argue that because institutions are not standalone entities, and continuously rely on relationships with other institutions, three different propositions for institutional formation can be identified: 1) institutional formation as a nested phenomenon, influenced by multi-level relationships between constitutional, governmental and operational rules; 2) institutional formation as an embedded phenomenon, influenced by temporal and spatial contextual effects; and 3) institutional formation as an animated phenomenon, influenced by actors’ interventions, interpretations and contestations (p. 6). This emphasis on the interconnections across contexts and with the interplay between actors and structures in institutional formation is crucial for this study’s considerations of the theoretical tenets of institutional change in HE.

It is also significant to note that while Berger and Luckmann's (1966) argued that an analysis of the historical processes of a given institutional arrangement provided the best understanding of the institution's formation, Lowndes and Lempriere (2018) present a counterargument. They note that the explanation for institutional formation needs to go beyond the way that Berger and Luckmann framed it in terms of path-dependency as the default historical premise for analysing institutional processes. Lowndes and Lempriere advance the need for the understanding of institutional formation within considerations of 'spatial contingency', where they argue that though the past may have implications on the process of institutional formation, attention ought to be paid to the concurrent relationship across institutions, considering that no institution stands alone. Nonetheless, the understanding of the underlying aspects of institutional formation is an essential basis on which the interpretation of both stability and change can be engaged with and is therefore relevant for this study's undertaking.

ii) *Institutional stability*

North (1990) when commenting on the economic dimension of institutions notes that their stability serves an economic sense, whereby, the complex set of formal rules and informal constraints make for institutional change to be a costly endeavour. As such, he considers that within the complex interaction between formal rules and informal constraints as well as the way they are enforced ensures that institutional stability is maintained as a mundane structuring of daily activities. Here, it is essential to note that institutions, as society's building-blocks, tend to be more attuned to the maintenance of social order in terms of institutional stability. Nonetheless, as Greenwood et al. (2008) warn, their invariable manifestation and expectation thereof, for repetitive social behaviour should not be taken for granted.

Lindner (2003), on his part, asserts that one ought first to consider the sources of institutional stability if one is to explore the possibilities of institutional change. Lindner identifies the following mechanisms that are necessary to be underscored in the reproduction and

stabilisation of institutional settings: (1) the bargaining power of the anti-change coalition; (2) the interdependence between policy sub-fields; (3) the costs of switching to another institutional setting; and (4) the ability to accommodate pressure for change through minor adaptations. Notably, each of these reproduction mechanisms also directs us to their inherent consideration as points of vulnerability. In this case, when any of the aforementioned institutional reproduction mechanisms become weaker, then institutional change is likely to come about.

As a result of the adeptness to stability and the associated cost implications of change, the way that life is structured presents a natural bias for institutional setups to be more attuned towards stability than change. As argued by Mahoney and Thelen, (2010) as well as Scott, (2008, 2010) the persistence of institutional forms, owing to their posturing towards continuity, tends to make it easier to focus on explaining institutional continuity rather than institutional change. As such Ostrom and Basurto (2011) go on to note that most of the analytical tools used in the social sciences tend to be better suited for the study of the static nature of institutions rather than change.

The understanding of institutional change, as mentioned above, along with the dimensions of institutional formation and stability made for an important starting point for the study.

2.2.6 Locating change within institutional arrangements

Despite the noticeable general tendency for studies to focus on institutional formation and stability, Streeck and Thelen (2005) argue that a specific focus on studying institutional change is necessary. As they note, structural constraints interrupt the continuity of institutional setups and thus make the discourse of change a fundamental component of studying the sustainability of institutions. In similar regard, Redmond (2005) notes that a new analytical framework is needed to cut across the study of both stability and change in institutions. His proposed

framework follows along with Berger and Luckmann's (1966) consideration for developing key institutional insights based on the understanding of historical institutional formation processes. Likewise, Ostrom and Basurto (2011) set out to search for analytical tools for studying the dynamism of institutional change. Their primary focus was on the way that rules and norms evolve, and this became a key component for their attempt towards creating a general theory of institutional change.

The discussion that follows engages with the theoretical tenets of institutional change and how these can be linked to the HE field.

2.3 Theorising institutional change

It is helpful to note that a study of institutional change of the nature that was undertaken for this study would be incomplete without being premised within the preceding discussion on institutional arrangements. It then follows that a further understanding of the mechanisms of institutional change would be essential in this study's attempt to interpolate institutional change theorisation to the HE field. The subsequent discussions are therefore to enable a more grounded understanding of institutional change, its dynamics and the various approaches that have been levelled to its undertaking.

2.3.1 General premises for theorising institutional change

Greif and Laitin (2004) note that the sources of institutional change may be traced either within institutional environments (endogenous processes) or outside of the institutions (exogenous shocks). However, different combinations of endogenous and exogenous aspects of change will, no doubt, be able to co-exist. Accordingly, institutional change happens when the behaviour associated with an institution is no longer able to reproduce itself. This process might take on abrupt forms owing to responses to a crisis that disturb the equilibrium that had been previously provided by old behaviour (and provides a premise for an evolutionary change).

Typically, however, institutional change is not to be expected to be a linear progression, owing to the resilient and persistent nature of institutional setups as noted in earlier discussions. In some cases, as Greif and Laitin (2004) note, change might be simply a matter of refinement; where change happens as a result of new institutional forms that organically evolve to replace existing ones.

Correspondingly, Mahoney and Thelen (2010) posit that theorising institutional change requires that scholars step beyond explaining change along the dualistic lines of exogenous shocks and environmental shifts. Instead, as they argue, one needs to check for the kinds of institutional properties that allow for change to happen. Also, they insist that this process ought to be coupled with the interrogation of how and why some institutional properties drive actors to behave in specific ways and how agency considerations are imbued within institutional structural components. It also creates the need to discern what types of change strategies would flourish in different institutional environments as an ongoing process.

It would then be equally helpful for scholars to find out what kinds of institutional features determine the level of vulnerability to particular strands of change strategies, as a preliminary step towards theorizing the sources and varieties of institutional change. This necessity arises in situations where institutional change is seen as a consequence of actors being able to implement existing rules in new ways whenever there is space for interpretation and enforcement of such rules as argued by Mahoney and Thelen (2010). The key looming question is, however, posed by the query that DiMaggio and Powell (1991) level against processes of institutional change. They question how change eventually happens, given that institutional structures exert such a powerful influence over how people formulate their desires and how they work to attain them.

With all the different positions considered, institutional change theorisation has been broadly categorised within two linear approaches. On the one hand, its premise builds from understanding institutions as purposefully designed rules in collective-choice processes. On the other hand, it builds from the knowledge of evolutionary processes, where new institutional forms periodically emerge to compete in a constant contestation for equilibria. Within this differentiation, there is a marked interaction between the aspects of structural scaffolds and individual agency in the process of institutional change (Streeck & Thelen, 2005). Where power is in contention, the requirements for a ‘minimum coalition’ to bring about institutional change ought to be met.

In some cases, a single individual’s power may constitute the required minimum coalition (such as within dictatorial setups). In other cases, minimum coalitions necessitate collaborations across a sufficient number of parties in order to tip over the status quo to institute change (Kingston & Caballero, 2009; Greif & Kingston 2011). Institutional change can thus be understood as driven by social forces that favour it and stand to benefit from it, and opposed by social forces that would lose some benefits as a result of such a change. It is the search for the balance of power between those two polar positions that determine the kinds of dynamics that change processes will undergo (Roland, 2004).

Kingston and Caballero (2009) in their review study note that institutions can be “impediments to progress, ‘ceremonial’ outgrowths of prior technology and be negative, ‘past-preserving’ influence” (pp 166). Following this logic, institutions have internal mechanisms that are often resistant to change. As Kingston and Caballero further argue, this resistance to change may not only be attributed to the institutional participants’ emotional attachment to the status quo, but also to the possibility that change may pose a threat to those who hold wealth and power. It is owing to these unpredictable dynamics of change that this study notes that the conceptualization of institutional change cannot be considered as a generic undertaking.

Correspondingly, Kingston and Caballero (2009), while advancing the work of Aoki (2001) and Greif and Laitin (2004), explore a blend of both the evolution and design approaches to institutional change, arguing that such an equilibrium view would go beyond a mere change in the rules, but would also deal with changing expectations. Here, beyond the design view and the evolutionary approach to institutional change, a third insight emerges as a middle ground in the form of an equilibrium perspective. Such a blend is helpful, particularly concerning the theorisation of higher education change in South Africa, for which both the rules that governed its institutional field, as well as the expectations held of its institutional setup, formed a prominent premise for its systemic changes and continuities.

It is crucial nonetheless to take note of the dichotomising tendencies of institutional change theoretical premises, which either consider institutional change as a continuous micro-level process or as a large but abrupt and discontinuous process. However, following from the background knowledge on institutions and institutional change as provided thus far, it becomes apparent that the theorisation of institutional change could benefit from understanding that institutions do not exist in a vacuum. The literature so far indicates that institutions are formed and reinforced within context, and by actors (both organisational and individual actors) who occupy the given social spaces. Institutional change, therefore, emerges from toppling the dominant value systems that form the backbone of given institutional fields or as a consequence of agency interventions that can conjure the necessary kind of minimum coalition to challenge the status quo. This reasoning resonates with Kingston and Caballero's (2009) findings, following their analysis of the work of North (1990), where they significantly argue that different contexts would yield different institutional change processes due to their expected differences in their institutional makeup. By this assertion, Kingston and Caballero affirm the pliability of institutional processes, which take on different forms in differing contexts. They also acknowledge the often in-built resistance to change within institutions but are careful not

to attribute this kind of resistance to the institutional actors' emotional attachment to the status quo. They note, however, that change often manifests as a threat to the status quo itself. They thus conclude that whereas there is no consensus on how to conceptualize institutions and the process of institutional change, it remains apparent that the appropriate model for studying institutional change needs to be considered as a matter of context primarily. Nonetheless, various schools of institutional change have emerged that offer more insight on contextual dimensions of institutional change as discussed below.

2.3.2 Schools of institutional change

One of the most significant scholarship distinction in institutional change studies manifests along with two polarised traditions: 'old' and 'new' forms of institutionalism. On the one hand, old institutionalism posits that people and groups are located within broad cultural and structural contexts, thereby viewing institutional change as a product of the struggle between values and interests within an organisation. In this regard, apart from power and informal structures, the issues of influence, coalitions, and competing values are equally important in the understanding of institutional change within the old institutionalist tradition (Greenwood & Hinings, 1996; DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; 1991; and Meyer, 2008

New institutionalism, on the other hand, is premised on tackling the relationship between the actors' agency within the bounds of their social environment. It is thus hinged on the legitimacy of such actors in a routinized sense of order. New institutionalism, therefore, deals with institutional persistence; where the emphasis is placed on the regulative, normative, and cognitive aspects of institutional change. It also exhibits a marked preference for cognition over the values and moral frames in institutional change premises (DiMaggio & Powell, 1991; Greenwood & Hinings 1996). Stacey and Rittberger (2003) in their supposition of new institutionalism's premise for institutional formation and change also consider it as an agency-

based approach; where actors respond to collective action problems and learn to update institutional forms based on their repeated interaction.

A blend between ‘old’ and ‘new’ institutionalism has become a prominent feature of what has become dubbed as “neo-institutionalism” (Selznick, 1996; Greenwood & Hinings, 1996; Oliver, 1991). However, as noted by Greenwood and Hinings (1996), neo-institutionalism, does not offer sufficient parameters for analysing the internal dynamics of organisational change. They argue that it does not provide explanations for why specific organisations can implement radical changes while others cannot, even in the face of similar institutional pressures. Nonetheless, there remains a relative consensus in favour of the emergence of neo-institutionalism with the potential to provide a model of change that links the organizational context and intra-organizational (institutional) fields.

These schools of institutional change lend themselves to various approaches that are further engaged in the discussion that follows.

2.3.3 Key approaches to institutional change theorisation

Mahoney and Thelen (2010) point out that various subject-specific approaches to institutional change theorisation. These include; 1) sociological institutionalism, which focuses on the way that new actors can dismantle the dominant practices and scripts to impose their preferred alternatives; 2) rational-choice institutionalism, which recognises the importance of understanding equilibrium change within institutions; and 3) historical institutionalism, in which the emphasis is more on process rather than equilibria and therefore has an explicit bias towards focusing on institutional stability rather than change (Greif & Laitin, 2004). These are further elaborated below.

i) *Sociological institutionalism and Game theory*

Greif and Laitin (2004) recognize that game theory provides a useful analytical tool for studying self-enforcing beliefs and behaviour in a given situation albeit with a limitation of not being able to fully engage with the multifaceted relationship that exists between individuals and institutions that influence their behaviour. They note that central to endogenous institutional changes, one finds the dynamics of self-enforcing beliefs and their associated behaviour. Institutional change according to this approach is attributed to a change in beliefs, and it occurs when the associated behaviour is no longer self-enforcing, leading individuals to act in a manner that does not reproduce the associated beliefs. At the same time, when actors undermine processes, this can lead to the previously self-enforcing behaviour to loosen its hold and result in institutional change. This approach, therefore, posits that for an institution to prevail over time, the range of situations in which the associated behaviour is self-enforcing needs to be kept intact over time, whilst the reverse is valid for the sufficient conditions to bring about institutional change.

ii) *Rational-choice institutionalism and the Equilibrium view of institutions*

Farrell (2018) surmises that rational choice scholars consider institutions as structures in which rules facilitate equilibrium patterns, where the behaviour of each actor is dependent on the expected behaviour of the other actors. On their part, Kingston and Caballero (2009) advanced an understanding of institutional change based on this equilibrium view of institutions. Here, they note that institutional change is not so much about changing rules as often implied, but rather, it is about changing expectations. They argue that a new rule which does not shift the people's expectations will not affect the institutional setup. Accordingly, rules that forbid particular behaviour can only become effective when people expect others to act in respect of such rules. This effectiveness principle, based on expectations can also be measured by the level of vigilance by those who are charged with the rule's enforcement and as Ostrom and

Basurto (2011) note, a marked difference between a ‘rule-in-form’ and a ‘rule-in-use’ can be the basis of evaluating effectiveness in institutional formation. These three theoretical premises of institutional change provide a departure point for the historical institutional analysis for SA HE for this study.

iii) Historical institutionalism and path dependence theory

Path dependence is one of the most prevailing insights into the mechanics of institutional change. It engages both context and the role of history in the way that it approaches institutional change. The path dependency theory essentially fronts the argument that history shapes the future and that future decisions are never entirely independent from events of the past (Ebbinghaus, 2005; North, 1993). As a result, the path dependency theory recognises the incremental nature of change within institutional settings. It identifies institutional change as a path that originates from a past action. In this way, when actors make a choice for an institutional pathway and take up its accompanying sets of rules, the resultant path, in turn, constrains the actors and limits the ease with which they can tread alternative paths in future.

Path dependency focuses on the foundation of both institutions and organizations, whereby, as Suddaby and Greenwood (2009) indicate, the way organisations are founded, gives them their corresponding imprint in how they respond to change. North (1993) classified institutional change as an incremental and path dependant process. He specifically argued that it is owing to the competition that results from the continuous contention within organisations and institutions for scarce economic resources that organisations are forced to invest in knowledge and skills to survive. As a result, he noted that institutional change results from an incremental alteration based on the choices that organisations make from their perceived pool of opportunities. North, however, clarified that the knowledge and skills that organisations invest in result from the incentives provided by the institutional framework and as perceived by the

mental constructs of the players within organisations in their attempt to secure the maximum available pay-off.

The path dependence theory explicitly highlights structural determinism for organisations within institutional setups. It has sometimes been criticised for the way that it overplays continuities with the past at the risk of downplaying and denying the fundamental changes that result from off-path behaviour and the creation of new institutional forms (Schneiberg, 2007). In a similar respect, Ebbinghaus (2005) notes that path dependence as a theoretical approach can only operate under restrictive conditions without external intervention and it can therefore neither explain the emergence nor the change of institutions. Ebbinghaus argues for the need to transcend the fixation on path dependence in favour of considering 'path departure', as a concept that would recognise the multiplicity of other forces at play in institutional change processes. This study opened up to the perspective of path departure in the historical analysis of institutional change within the South African Higher Education context.

2.3.4 Institutional change and the organisational context

It is vital at this point to take note of another significant aspect of institutional change theorization that is relevant to this study; the place of organisations within institutional change theorisation. There are ambiguities between the conceptual application of organisations and institutions as highlighted by Stacey and Rittberger (2003), where they noted that it is crucial to steer clear of the trend that conflates organizations and institutions as synonymous. In their study of this ambiguity amongst international organisations, Stacey and Rittberger argue that one way of establishing a credible distinction between institutions and organisations is to consider organizations as a constituent of collective political actors. In contrast, institutions constitute rules as opposed to actors. To differentiate institutions from organisations (and by extension, institutional change from organisational change) therefore, one could apply the

ubiquitous metaphor of a game; where organizations can be understood as the players in the game, while institutions are themselves the rules of the game (Stacey & Rittberger, 2003, North 1990).

Hodgson (2006) in an attempt to clarify on the conceptual ambiguities that are presented around the institutional/organisational debate first agrees that institutions are, in fact, systems of established and embedded social rules that structure social interactions but also suggests that:

“Organisations are special institutions that involve: (a) criteria to establish their boundaries and to distinguish their members from non-members, (b) principles of sovereignty concerning who is in charge, and (c) chains of command delineating responsibilities within them.”

(Hodgson, 2006, pg. 18).

This description, however, still leaves a host of conceptual ambiguities in its wake, where the organisational context is not entirely divorced from the underpinnings of institutional change. It ought to be added though, that Hodgson’s approach offers some clarity on the need to separate the agency of individuals from that of organisations in institutional setups.

In other words, both organisations and individuals are recognised as players (agents) within the institutional field. At the same time, organisations also have participants (players) within them, whose agency would, in turn, give organisational fields some aspects of institutional properties as they provide for the same rules of the proverbial game to apply within organisations. Therefore, whether organisations, as players in an institutional field, will be compliant with or offer a challenge to the institutional fields, depends on the players within the organisational field itself. According to this logic, institutional change is a layered process: to one extent, organisational players themselves are the structures within which institutional change may be perceived, and thus form the macro level of institutional change. These organisations are then located within another micro institutional layer of rules within the social-political playing field.

In this study, these levels find expression through the contextualization of the socio-political level of South Africa's as an emergent polity as the meta-institutional layer of analysis. In this case, the laws and policies at the meta-level provided the demarcation for SA HE as a micro-institutional layer to operate. Within the SA HE playing field, several micro-level HE establishments, including the UFS, were players.

The need to explore the connections between organisational contexts and institutional change is even more crucial for the Field of higher education, which as Hodgson (2006) suggests, is an important site to draw meaningful analyses. Even so, institutional change scholarship is replete with anecdotes of the way that entire classes of organisations change. These kinds of organisational alterations show how the ideas that govern institutions experience a shift in their rules and practices (Halal, 2004), and in turn, influence the conduct within organisational clusters. Greenwood and Hinings (1996) for instance, argue that organizational resistance to change results from the normative embeddedness of organizations within their institutional context. Their argument also suggests that the pace of change in organisations will often vary across institutional sectors. This sectoral dependant pace of change, they note, correlates with the differences in the way sectors are structured and their level of cross-sectoral exposure to practices. Conversely, the vibrancy of their internal organisational dynamics is also a considerable determinant of their speed of change.

One can therefore locate this sectoral dependant organisational pace of change within Roland's (2004, 2008) concession that the evolutionary and revolutionary processes of institutional change link back to the speed of change. His argument posits that social norms, which are examples of slowly changing institutional configurations, often result in incremental and continuous (evolutionary) change. Conversely, the political structures of institutions are considerably fast-moving and are prone to rapid and discontinuous change and may experience revolutionary bouts of occasional large steps of change. As such, Roland considers that the

degree of centralization and power distribution within an institutional setup has implications on the nature and speed of change, thus arguing that strategically placed actors have an immense influence on institutional change processes. This view is a particularly relevant reflection on the HE field where the organisational dimension of HE establishments is mediated within a network of institutional dynamics.

2.3.5 Organisational change in shared institutional fields

Maassen and Gornitzka (1999) take note of two overriding assumptions in organisational change and organisational stability scholarship. The first is that various external pressures and demands limit organizational choice and action. The second assumption is that organizations must be responsive to their various pressures in order to survive. At the same time, Maassen and Gornitzka equally note the conspicuous lack of agreement in the literature on the organizations' capacities to react individually to changes in their environment. They also point out that there is a lack of consensus on the circumstances under which institutional environments and organisational change are coupled together.

It is owing to such incongruities that this study argues that there is an inability to generalise organisational change for different establishments, even when they might operate within a shared institutional field. Such is the dilemma of HE and institutional change, for instance, where the choice of the UFS as a case example cannot be considered to represent the experiences of all other South African HE establishments. As such, HE institutional change manifests as an interplay of socio-political institutional contexts that shape HE policy/legal frames. This interplay, in turn, influences the way that individual HE establishments change within their organisational contexts in response to the various pressures within their interaction with local, regional and global contexts as outlined below.

i) Exogenous pressure for organisational change

Exogenous pressures in organisational change are often explained by the concept of institutional isomorphism, which essentially outlines how particular productive sectors are bound to become homologous with others. This approach posits that organizations adapt to the existence of other organizations and their corresponding environmental pressures to survive. Lippi (2000) criticises the nature of isomorphism as a top-down change model that involves the adjustment of local contexts to global models through local internationalization. His critique is based on the approach's failure to explain how change is absorbed at the local level and how this affects the institutional structure. Nonetheless, he points out several dimensions of institutional isomorphism that may relevantly be applied to studying institutional change in the context of HE as elaborated further, below.

a) Coercive isomorphism

Firstly, there are instances where organisations are forced to abide by the same nature as a result of overarching regulations. In this case, organisations within a shared institutional framework tend to gravitate towards becoming similar. This tendency results from a form of implied coercion due to the expectation for conformity within an institutional field. This approach, which has been dubbed as coercive isomorphism, often results from externally instituted pressures imposed from government regulatory frameworks or through formal and informal processes that mark acceptable organisational behaviour (Di Maggio & Powell, 1983; Kondra & Hurst 2009).

b) Mimetic Isomorphism

Organisations may also be prone to imitating each other in order to shield themselves from uncertainties (Di Maggio & Powell, 1983). In this mimetic dimension of institutional isomorphism, organisations arguably copy the practices of the leading trendsetters in their field as a way of ensuring their survival. Kendra and Hurst (2009) express the necessity in exploring

the circumstances under which coercive and mimetic elements of culture may be used to overcome organisational behaviour.

c) Normative isomorphism

The third dimension of isomorphism relates to organisations that could succumb to normative pressures by engaging in measures to ensure compliance with the external regulations/guidelines. In this case, organisations may be seen to rely on professional support in order to ensure that they comply with stipulated guidelines. This professional approach ensures standardisation, which in turn enables the eventual imposition of compliance through socialisation and external legitimation. Addressing the questions at which point coercive and mimetic behaviour in organisations becomes normative may provide the clues in understanding how organisational culture drives behaviour and how culture can be changed and deinstitutionalised (Kendra & Hurst, 2009). These external pressures were analysed in relation to SA HE and the case example of the UFS in this study.

ii) Endogenous constraints of organisational change

Organisational change within an institutional field needs also to be understood as an internal organisational dynamic, where it is supported by social forces that would benefit from the change, and opposed by those that would stand to lose from it. The result is that the balance of power between these two endogenous, but divergent, forces determines the dynamics of the change process, as Roland (2004) suggests.

As a result, just like Kingston and Caballero (2009) and later, Greif and Kingston (2011) note that for change initiatives in organisations to take effect, they would necessitate a ‘minimum coalition’ that tilts the power balance towards the social forces that support the given initiative as discussed earlier in this chapter.

2.3.6 Institutional theory in organisational change

Institutional theory emphasises the influence that an organization's cultural environment has on its organizational structure and behaviour (DiMaggio & Powell, 1991). As such, institutional theory seeks to understand how cultural rules from an organisation's institutional environment shape or constrain organizational action (Scott, 2003). Institutional theory thus considers organisational culture as an essential locus for change. As noted by DiMaggio and Powell (1991), organisational change is influenced by an organisation's cultural environment on its organisational structure and behaviour. These arguments were further advanced by Kondra and Hurst (2009), who assert that the forces that shape an organisation and its behaviour are mostly external to it.

Nevertheless, for Peterson and Spencer (1990), organisational culture ought to deal with intra-organisational processes by focusing on the deeply embedded patterns of organizational behaviour and the shared values, assumptions, beliefs, or ideologies that members have about their organization or its work. In this way, institutional theory can also be understood in the ways that cultural rules from the environment may shape or constrain organizational action (Scott, 2003). Greenwood and Hinings (1996) however present a contrasting view, noting that institutional theory would not help to theorise organisational change as it is only an explanation of organisational similarity and focuses on the stability of organisational arrangements. This study thus looks beyond institutional theory and seeks for more change adept approaches in theorising institutional change in the HE setting that recognisably cuts across overlapping organisational and institutional contexts.

2.4 Institutional change theorisation in the HE context

In the context of higher education; it is worthy to note that the extent to which the conceptualisation of 'institutions' has been applied has levelled a fair share of ambiguity. This ambiguity arises from the way that educational entities have been devoted to a wide array of social functions that have also been expanded over time (Gumport, 2000). Owing to this trend,

the terms 'organisation' and 'institution' have become interchangeably used when referring to the entities that provide higher education, despite a range of counter-arguments that point towards the need to recognise the conceptual difference between them (Gumport 2000; North 1991). Whereas Gumport (2000) notes that it has become more common for colleges and universities to be called institutions, he also clarifies that this kind of conceptual overlap needs to be understood in terms of their representation of organization-wide constructs. Examples of these constructs include 'institutional leadership', 'institutional decisions' and 'institutional policies'.

At the same time, Gumport (2000) suggests that processes such as contemporary academic restructuring, for instance, ought to be viewed not only as organizational change but also as institutional change. He notes that the features that constitute institutions may as well be seen to overlap within organisations, an assertion that Roland (2004) similarly points out. Viara (2004) also acknowledges that organisations are institutional environments too, with histories, cultures and structures of their own.

Gumport, nonetheless, notes that this pervasive interchange between the two concepts of organisations and institutions within HE frameworks translates into a form of ignorance that undermines their sociological distinctiveness. Streeck and Thelen (2005), on their part, point out that organisations can only be called institutions up to the extent to which their existence and operation become, in a specific way, publically guaranteed and privileged. This character, they note, would be embedded within their recognition by the societal norms and enforcement capacities that relate to them.

With all these different institutional/organisational debates notwithstanding, it was deemed helpful to separate the institutional framework of HE from its organisational constituents, in which universities are considered, for this study. This position does not ignore the assertions

that universities can be dubbed as ‘special institutions’ as Roland (2004) and Hodgson (2006) reiterate, but rather, supports coherence in this study’s historical institutional analytical approach. In linking institutional change theorisation to the field of HE, as this study set out to do, a further note of the formal institutional basis from within which the HE institutional field operates ought to be taken. As such, besides the earlier noted institutional attributes, where HE was postured within legal frameworks as its institutional formation and stability basis, one also needs to account for the institutional connections that apply to the HE field within its varied contexts. It is also pertinent to consider the interplay of the agency and structural attributes within the field and to also locate the informal traits that are bound to operate within HE institutions, despite their primary inclination to formality.

As such, the engagements with HE change processes in this study kept track of Loomis and Rodriguez’s (2009) identification of institutional change as a premise where new models supplant older models of production. For Loomis and Rodriguez, various possibilities abound for the emergence of opportunities linked to the new institutional rules, which when seen in the context of HE change processes, may present a challenge to managers and faculties. Bearing this in mind, it is essential to take note of Daniel’s (2004) assertion that higher education institutions are exposed to a different type of environment with a different set of operational principles that facilitate change within such an environment. His observation backs the assertion that given the nature of higher education, where coercive methods and mandates would be less effective, persuasive methods are more reliable to effect institutional change. Daniel (2004) however cautions that whereas HE public authorities and institutional managers ought to devise systems of incentives to motivate individuals and institutions towards a change in attitude and behaviour, the changes in higher education have increasingly become intricately linked to changes within their external environments.

Daniel (2004) goes on to front the state as a key player in facilitating HE's incentives for change. Here, he premises his considerations on the nature of incentives that the State would have at its disposal to influence institutional change within higher education. He also notes that state-funding support for education is one of the key incentives for change, where it still exists. Daniel, therefore, contends that the state's funding capacity encumbers its ability to wield control on HE's processes of change. State-funding, in this case, would therefore have implications on whether the state would either facilitate or stimulate change. Still, this would also depend on the level of HE's dependence on the state's resources. Nonetheless, State incentives may be only used to stimulate change, especially under the circumstances when it is no longer possible for the state to claim a mandatory hold on HE institutional operations, notwithstanding the regulatory frameworks that it provides.

2.5 Organisational theories of change in the context of higher education

It is imperative to point out that most of the discursive elements of institutional change scholarship are to be found within the fields of economics, legal theory and politics as the literature that has been discussed so far indicates. Nonetheless, this study premises itself on transposing institutional change theorisation within the field of higher education as a contribution to opening up new insights to the pool of knowledge in HE scholarly undertakings.

As such, it is often the case that institutional change in a broad institutional premise like HE, tends to be considered as a process within which an entire class of organisations are altered; that is, in the way ideas that govern institutions experience a shift in their rules and practices (Inayatullah, 2005). Based on the earlier definitional parameters, the HE institutional frame for this study relates to the body of rules within which higher education entities such as universities operate. The build-up to this study also expounds on the consideration of HE as a field in the process of profound institutional change that concomitantly involves the deinstitutionalization

of its rooted policy and values frameworks, while at the same time engaging in the process of institutionalizing new ones (Vaira, 2004).

Vaira (2004) adopts the concept of organizational allomorphism as a theoretical premise that is attuned to the unique context of higher education and its underpinnings. Allomorphism, according to Vaira, “synthesizes and blends the isomorphic pressures produced by globalization processes and the local responses to them, blunting the mutual exclusivity of both” (p. 486–487). Organizational allomorphism is recognised as an approach dedicated to describing the structured organisational arrangements that arise in response to the institutional patterns in their context (Di Maggio & Powell 1983). Lippi (2000) also notes that organisational allomorphism accounts for the processes of systematic diversification that result from how local institutions engage with global content.

In seeking to understand change within higher education organisations, Kezar’s work (2001, 2012, and 2013) provides a comprehensive conceptual lens, as it synthesises work from several other organisational change theorists and adapts them to the context of HE. Kezar’s (2013) consideration that HE establishments have several unique features that warrant a distinctive approach in seeking to implement or even study its change premise is a helpful starting point to study institutional change within the South African context as provided for in this study. Kezar (2001) offers a conveniently summarised version of the different theoretical approaches to organisational change within the context of Higher education through her attempt to theorise change in the US college system. Below is an engagement with theoretical approaches to institutional change for organisational contexts, guided by six main theories of change that emerge from Kezar’s work.

2.5.1 Evolutionary theories of change

The central assumption underlying evolutionary theories of change posits that change is a response to external circumstances, institutional variables, and the environment faced by each organization (Kezar, 2001). Kezar notes that evolutionary models focus on the inability of the organizations to plan for and respond to change, and argues that they tend to 'manage' change as it occurs. The evolutionary approach is thus sometimes referred to as the environmental model. It assumes that organisations can only 'manage' the circumstances that are thrust upon them from their external environment. As a result, organisational change according to this model is unplanned, and there is an emphasis on structural adjustment as a way for organisations always to remain responsive to their external environment.

2.5.2 Teleological theories of change

Teleological theories focus on a planned model of change that assumes that organizations are purposeful and adaptive. They also assume that the motivations for organisational change are guided by their internal decisions, rather than the external environment. The models within the teleological theories consider organisational leaders as change agents. Thus, leaders' contributions are considered essential for the success of change processes. At the same time, this model also recognizes limits on individuals' agency by acknowledging that the organization's environment and resources constrain the extent to which agency accomplishments may be achieved. Additionally, individuals are expected to work within natural laws and environmental constraints and to use of these forces to realize their goals (Van de Ven & Poole, 1995).

In this approach of planned change, it is argued that organisational change is initiated when a group of participants agrees to move towards a shared organizational goal. It also relies on the

participants' ability to achieve goal consensus without group or individual biases (Van de Ven & Sun, 2011; Kezar 2001).

2.5.3 Life cycle theories of change

Life-cycle models consider that everyone in the organisation is critical to change. These models have a robust human resource component and emphasise training and staff development programs as an integral part of organisational growth. A life cycle model depicts the process of change as progressing through a prescribed sequence of steps over time (Van de Ven & Sun, 2011; Van de Ven & Poole, 1995).

2.5.4 Dialectical theories of change

Dialectical theories recognise that organisational change results from a conflict of ideologies; where change is often as a result of a clash of incompatible belief systems and approaches. Dialectical theories are an archetype of change within a pluralistic world that comprise of repeatedly colliding events, forces and contradictory value systems that compete with each other for domination and control. These forces can originate both internally or be external to the organisation (Van de Ven & Poole, 1995).

The dialectical modelling of change considers that there are often long periods of evolutionary change which are punctuated by episodes of revolutionary changes once in a while (Kezar, 2001). Within this model, organisational change is generated through the resolution of the conflict between an existing thesis (status quo) and an emerging antithesis. The synthesis between these two opposing forces creates a balance of power, which then results in organisational change (Van de Ven & Sun, 2011; Van de Ven & Poole, 1995). According to the dialectical theories of change, political processes are considered as compelling strategies for creating change. These include persuasion, informal negotiation, mediation, and coalition-building.

2.5.5 Social cognition theories of change

Social-cognition theories de-emphasize the influence of the external environment, opting instead for individual sense-making in the change process. Change is, therefore, more individualised according to this model, and will only happen when individuals realise that they need to grow, and as a result, choose to open up to learning and to change their behaviour. Social-cognition approaches foreground the importance of altering mental models, learning and constructed interaction as the premise for creating change (Kezar 2001; Kezar and Eckel, 2011).

2.5.6 Cultural theories of change

In cultural theories of change, the collective process of change is emphasised, as is the role of the leader in steering this kind of change. It involves an alteration of values, beliefs and rituals over time. Cultural models demonstrate the importance of symbolism, history, traditions, and institutional culture for facilitating change on a university campus and might help to understand the challenges of the diverse value systems that confront governance processes (Kezar 2001; Kezar and Eckel, 2011).

2.6 Synthesising the organisational change theories in HE institutional change

Whilst advocating for a combination of different approaches in studying change in the HE context, Kezar (2001; 2013) is not lost to the fact that change is a complex and multifaceted process. Instead, she notes that a synthesis of approaches is required to understand and enable it appropriately since HE has several unique features that warrant a distinctive approach in seeking to implement or even study change within the sector. To justify her argument, she considers such characteristics as the positioning of HE organisations as interdependent and yet at the same time, relatively independent from their external environment. She also notes the unique culture of the academy and the value drive therein, the multiplicity of power structures

in a loosely coupled system with a semblance of organised anarchical decision-making practices as examples of the unique features of the HE context.

Similarly, Storberg-Walker and Torracco (2004) advance a related view, underlining the proposition that the changes facing HE providers are transformational in scope and impact every level of the organization. They also point to the uniqueness of the governance structures of HE entities, pointing out its resemblance with the governance and leadership of a democratic country more than that of a typical business organization.

It is therefore suggested by Van de Ven and Poole (1995) that the advantage of using several models of organisational change is that their combined insights result in an analysis in which each approach sheds light on different aspects of organizational life. Kazer (2001) explicitly presents a case for the synthesis of multiple models in engaging with HE change, where she advances a framework that takes the distinctive organizational features of higher education into account. She nonetheless recommends that change within the HE frame can best be interpreted through cultural, social-cognition, and dialectic models. Her justification for this three-way synthesis is threefold; firstly, cultural models, with their focus on values and multiple organisational cultures, makes it an integral part of studying higher education change. Secondly, social cognition theories, when combined with cultural theories and used in combination with systems and structures, can create a richer understanding of governance. Furthermore, thirdly, the multiple facets in the higher education setting point to a dialectical approach with its strength in examining political processes.

This study thus incorporates discussions of the organisational extent of institutional change scholarship in higher education and Kezar's work on the organisational dimension of Institutional change provides a useful starting point. This study, however, expands this approach through the clarity provided from its historical analysis of SA HE institutional change

that also incorporates a university case example of the UFS, in order to demystify the ambiguities that surround the organisational context within institutional change theorisation in HE. The use of the South African context and the UFS case study is not in any way meant to typify organisational/institutional correlations. Nevertheless, through such a historical analysis that was conducted within a bounded context, critical insights on institutional change theorisation and how they reflect the HE field were explored as a scholarly pursuit. The case is made for the choice to use the South African context and the UFS case for this study's theorisation of institutional change in HE in the next chapter.

A vital component of this study was the focus on the institutional change perspectives from within the selected organisational setting of the UFS between 1990 and 2010. This period represented a critical phase in the historical context of SA HE when the shift from apartheid to the entrenchment of a democratic system in South Africa had significant implications on HE establishments like the UFS. By seeking to understand how the UFS emerged from apartheid, this timeframe provided a useful timestamp to support a deeper engagement with the premises of institutional change within a university context. The synthesis of organisational change theories, mainly, Kezar's blend of cultural, social cognition and the dialectic theories, were very instrumental insights in drawing the link to institutional change theorisation in this study.

2.7 Institutional change in the higher education context of South Africa

By considering a historical analysis of institutional change to understand the evolution of South Africa's HE context and by looking at the rule-based nature of institutional formation and change in SA HE, this study's approach is similar to what is advanced by Roland (2004). Roland not only points out the importance of empirical work to understand the interaction between different institutions but also insists on the role of history in providing a rich ground for studying institutional change. The historicised nature of this study, therefore, provides

grounds for theorising change and the SA HE context provides an appealing setting for such an undertaking.

Also, this study's approach offers a contextual translation of Vaira's (2004) concerns of the nationally bound regulatory frameworks that provide the melting point for the different fragments of the global state of higher education. By using the context of SA HE, the insights from the experiences of the UFS enabled this study to incorporate the kind of depth that has been suggested by Vaira (2004), as pertinent to understanding change within higher education's dualistic global overlap of homogeneity and heterogeneity. In simpler terms, it can be suggested that higher education as an institutional field offers a broad picture of its global connection and yet at the same time presents an array of national perspectives owing to the different individual/organisational cases. It was within this national perspective that this study concentrated on.

Furthermore, approach in this study also takes note of North's (1991) analysis, in which he argues that while organisational entities owe their existence to the opportunities provided by the institutional frameworks, organisations are distinct from institutions, and are worth interpreting separately. In the context of this study, this means that an establishment like the UFS would, for instance, stand within the SA HE institutional framework only as one of many organisational actors in that field. At the same time, the UFS as an organisational establishment in the SA HE field can also be framed in terms of its institutional properties, since it is also a site of rules within which other actors are players.

This approach, as applied by Vaira, (2004), marks a supportive framework for studying the idiosyncratic organisational/institutional context of higher education. One critical deviation from the stance of organisational allomorphism that Vaira advanced was, however, adopted in the context of this study. Whereas allomorphism as an approach tends to denote to the

relationship between the global and local context of HE, this study's context considers the national setting of SA HE as the outermost analytical layer vis-à-vis a localised context that is exemplified by the UFS case study. Considering that organisational allomorphism denotes to the response of higher education entities to the external pressures exerted on them, its framework provided a useful means of reflecting on the UFS's response to the National pressures exerted onto it until 2010.

2.8 Chapter Summary

In this chapter, the conceptual layout of institutional change was explored in order to facilitate an understanding of the institutional field and its linkage to the organisational change parameters of higher education. The chapter also locates the study of higher education within the conceptual understanding of institutional change. It has set a premise for further engagements with the application of institutional change theories to the study of SA HE and the UFS case.

This chapter has also provided a background for the methodological choices that are discussed in the next chapter, providing a roadmap of institutional change as seen through the lens of HE's organisational components. It also introduced why SA HE and the UFS became the sites for this study's historical analysis of theorising HE institutional change; a choice that is further elaborated in the chapters that follow.

CHAPTER III

3.0 RESEARCH DESIGN & METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter explains the design and research methodology of this study. It elaborates on the kind of research approach used and justifies why the chosen approach suited the study's research design. It also addresses the ontological and epistemological considerations that were involved in its undertaking. Likewise, the chapter presents the study's research paradigm, and how this translated into the choice of research design, data collection and analysis techniques. As such, the chapter explains the logical sequence that connects this study's data to the initial research question, and how the study proceeded towards its eventual conclusions. The chapter unfolds in a similar explanatory process as the way Mouton (1996) and Yin (2014) describe the prerequisites for undertaking social research.

3.2 Research approach

The research approach for this study revolved around the exploration of a philosophically inspired central question relating to how theories of institutional change can relate to the field of higher education (HE) studies. This central philosophical conundrum raised enough curiosity for the researcher, who consequently set out in the pursuit to understand how the study of the change parameters within the higher education system can benefit from the knowledge of institutional theorisation approaches. Considering that this study focused on the problematisation of change within the field of higher education, several critical methodological decisions were taken.

Firstly, the main research question for the study was: how can institutional change theories help us to understand SA HE change processes in the historical period of 1873 to 2010? This question was then broken down into three manageable sub-questions:

- i) What are the salient constituents of HE institutional change theories?
- ii) Which trajectories can be identified in academic studies and policy documents of SA HE as important in driving change from 1873 to 2010?
- iii) In emerging from its apartheid history, how did institutional change happen at the UFS from 1990 to 2010?

It ought to be noted that the study uses the representation of the systemic change processes of SA HE and the UFS in a bid to understand how HE institutional change theorisation can be understood in a bounded context. The time framing of the study was also recognisably historical and considered the institutional processes in SA HE that began with the establishment of the University of the Cape of Good Hope in 1873. The study also engaged with the various transitions in SA HE, and the UFS (first established as Grey University College in 1904) as case examples within a historical timeframe of analysing institutional change in a bounded HE context.

The research approach for this study was as an amalgam of a historical and a case study approach. This approach provided for a bounded context within which the analysis of historical data was undertaken in a bid to respond to the study's central research question. Therefore, the underlying reasoning behind this study was the ability to link seemingly disparate grounds, such as: studying institutional change in higher education through a historical analytical premise of a bounded context of SA HE and the UFS. This study proceeded to apply abductive reasoning, which was found to be philosophically enriching and yet rarely utilised in research

3.3 The case for abductive reasoning

This study's research approach drew from abduction as its primary form of reasoning in order to make reasonable connections across the curiosities of applying institutional change theories to understanding the framework of HE change. Abduction is a form of reasoning that was proposed by Charles Sanders Peirce (1839–1914), where he considered that neither the






Aristotelian philosophy of deduction nor that of induction could lead to new philosophical insights (Raholm, 2010; Eriksson & Lindstrom 1997). Peirce argued that the process of identifying the conditions that make a premise possible may sometimes depend on a familiarity with the contexts within which events occur (Wu & Stone, 2016). Through his proposed approach of abductive reasoning, the end result is not necessarily considered as a confirmation of any given theoretical approach. However, it essentially entails the process of gathering ideas that are based on observations within a context, in order to provide a plausible explanation of seemingly disparate phenomena. Abductive reasoning thereby involves contextual judgements of relevance and significance (Svennevig, 2001) and that is the frame within which it was applied in this study.

The work of Eastwood, Jalaludin and Kemp (2014) approaches abductive reasoning in three stages: 1) as a re-contextualization of phenomena that are identified within one or more abstract concepts; 2) a re-contextualization of the observed phenomena through the lens of theories as they arise from the literature, key informants and earlier theory generation; and 3) a comparison between theories. The location of abduction supports this notion as a component of the realist school of thought, which gives room for the reinterpretation and re-contextualization of HE changes—in this case, as a phenomenon within the institutional change framework. This study, therefore, applied a similar approach in the re-contextualization of higher education change through the lens of institutional change theorization and compared the different theories of change in HE as they arose within the institutional framing of this study across the case examples of SA HE and UFS.

Therefore, abduction correlated more to the historical and analytical nature of this study than either deduction or induction. This is because, as Hammond (2008) suggests, abduction offers ways of thinking that enable the possibility to draw patterns from the repeated observations over time. The choice to apply abductive reasoning is therefore not only pragmatically inclined

but is also justified owing to the divergent way that both deduction and induction proceed when applied to research processes. Firstly, deductive reasoning often starts by engaging with a literature analysis that is typically followed by identifying a research problem and then formulates a hypothesis to be tested. Inductive reasoning, on its part, deals with explanations and theories that are developed from the data collected (Sutrisna, 2009). Unlike the precepts of deductive and inductive reasoning, therefore, abductive reasoning provides a well-defined posture as a starting point in the process of theory generation. In this study, this was conducted through drawing patterns from repeated observations that emerged from the HE institutional change contexts of SA HE and the UFS. The comparative table below highlights the benefits of abduction to this study.

Figure 1: **How abduction compares to deduction and induction in research**

Inferences (Peirce,1992)	Process	Link to theory
<p>1. Abduction: Abduction is the inferring a case from a rule or a result</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rule: All the beans from this bag are white • Result: these beans are white • Case: These beans are from this bag 	Creates plausible explanations to make sense of observations for which there is no appropriate explanation in the existing body of knowledge	Does not start with an explanation, but links together to generate an order that fits the surprising facts. It is the beginning of theory generation. Abduction is, therefore, a process of gaining new knowledge
<p>Having gained new knowledge and developed a guess, one can explore its further application through deduction</p> 		
<p>2. Deduction: Deduction as a process that amounts to inferring a result, given a general rule and a given case.</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case: All These beans are from this bag • Result: These beans are white • Rule: All the bans from this bag are white 	Takes a general rule and checks what follows in a particular case	Explores the necessary consequences of a rule
<p>Make further observations to see if the rules can be applied in generalised cases as a way of seeking confirmation of the rule</p> 		
<p>3. Induction- consists of inference of a rule, given a specific case (precondition) and a result</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rule: All the beans from this bag are white • Case: These beans are from this bag • Result: These beans are white 	Looking across cases and date to create a rule or pattern	Has a theory in mind and seeks confirmation across cases. This inference involves generalisation, where reasoning is from particular instances to a general law, rule or pattern

Considering that this study set out to understand higher education change processes through the lens of institutional change theorisation, abductive reasoning offered the means to make a case for a research-worthy undertaking. As such, through applying abductive reasoning, a plausible alternate explanatory frame for the analysis of higher education institutional change has been brought to the fore as an attempt towards theory generation in its own right.

3.3.1 Merits of abductive reasoning for this study

Abduction as a form of reasoning is commonly used in historical investigations, medical diagnosis and scientific explanation, owing to its ability to reveal a richness in meaning (Eriksson & Lindstrom, 1997). Abductive reasoning was the preferred form of intellectual pursuit applied in this study to support the search for meaningful underlying historical patterns in understanding HE and institutional change. Raholm (2010) writes of the merits of such a process in providing comprehensible means to tackle complex realities and to expand scientific knowledge.

The essential merit of abductive reasoning thus follows from its posturing towards the formation of inferences that can be acceptably considered as plausible explanations, and such a process has been invaluable for this study. Hence, an additional value of abductive reasoning for this study can be found in its premise of not making claims to ‘unquestionable proof’, in the way that a deductive or inductive approach may claim to accomplish (Wu & Stone 2016). Instead, abductive reasoning provided an appropriate allowance for this study to undertake an explanatory criterion that begins with the research question. It appropriately fitted within this study’s pursuit for a plausible explanation of HE change processes through applying an institutional theoretical lens to a bounded context of SA HE and the UFS.

Another merit of applying abduction as a form of reasoning in this way is founded on its capability in opening up new ways of thinking by providing for the space to accommodate

abstract modes of thinking, from which new insights and meaningful connections emerge. This, as further explained by Eriksson and Lindstrom (1997) is in line with Peirce's logic, whereby through abduction, hypotheses may be created and whose consequences may then be elucidated logically through deduction and empirically through induction. This study does not purport to generate hypotheses, however, but brings forth theoretical propositions for further consideration.

3.3.2 Engaging with the limitations of abductive reasoning

The limitations of abduction as a form of reasoning have been considered, in part, owing to its not-so-common application in qualitative research, but also in the weakness that Lipscomb (2012) refers to as the 'fallibility problem'. Even so, through abductive reasoning, this study conceived its initial premise that institutional change theories could provide a plausible explanation for higher education change processes. For Lipscomb (2012), the value of this inference would diminish if irrefutable proof is not provided to support it. This potential fallibility was acknowledged in this study and decisively engaged by embarking on the extraction of cross-cutting historically valid observations within the bounded contexts of SA HE and the UFS. The approach in this study thus made a case for the consideration of institutional change theories in understanding Higher education change processes, not as the ultimate and singular explanation for the changes in higher education, but one that could be used as an additional facet in the way that the change processes within the field may be interpreted and analysed.

For this study, therefore, abductive reasoning provided for a form of logical reasoning that enabled the researcher to explore alternate explanations by drawing theoretical propositions from the historical observations of institutional change from the general SA HE and specific UFS contexts. However, whether or not such explanations can be picked up as working

hypotheses for further empirical attention remains plausible as Bradley et al., (2009) indicate. As such, abductive reasoning fitted within the pragmatic paradigm that was prioritised for this study, as described below.

3.4. Research paradigm

A research paradigm, according to Kivunja and Kuyini (2017), refers to the way that a researcher sees, interprets and acts within their world. Accordingly, a paradigm outlines the researcher's world view as it lays out the set of beliefs that go together and guide a researcher's actions (Wilson, 2001). A research paradigm essentially lays out the researcher's conceptualisation of the nature of existence and the methodological approaches that such knowledge is pursued in a given research undertaking and within the limits of viable criteria for validating such knowledge (Mac Naughton, Rolfe & Siraj-Blatchford, 2001).

A research paradigm, therefore, provides for the conceptual lens through which the entire research process is conducted. For example, Mackenzie and Knipe (2006) note that since it is the choice of the paradigm that sets down the intent, motivation and expectations for a given research undertaking, it is vital to point out the research paradigm as a critical formative step in the research process in order to provide a basis for the eventual choices of methodology, methods, literature and research design. It is also noted by Husén (1988) that a research paradigm will often be a matter of choice that depends on the objectives of one's study. As such, the integral relationship between the objectives of the study and the research paradigm may quintessentially be considered to be mutually reinforcing, without a particular order for which one ought to come before the other.

3.4.1 Towards a pragmatic research paradigm

The pragmatic paradigm was chosen for this study in the first instance because as an interpretative frame, it is not necessarily committed to singular philosophies of reality. Instead,

it emphasises workability that accords a fitting response to the objective of a given study. This ‘fitness of purpose’ was a fundamental consideration for this study, especially regarding the study’s location within the abductive form of reasoning.

Another reason for the location of this study within the pragmatic schema of interpretation lay in the central belief within this paradigm that reality is a continually negotiated position. As such, the best-suited research method is the one that solves the problem, and this was the rationale for applying the pragmatic research paradigm as the interpretative frame for this study. The pragmatic paradigm also appropriately linked with the abductive form of reasoning within which this study was conceived. As earlier noted, abductive reasoning prioritises the discovery of new ideas rather than the presentation of a particular mode of argument per se, for which the pragmatic paradigm was suited. The position of this study enjoys the endorsement of Charles Sanders Peirce, who as the founder of American pragmatism, stated that pragmatism was the prioritised logic of abductive reasoning (Burks, 1946; Anderson, 1986; Lipscomb, 2012).

3.4.2 Appraising the pragmatic paradigm for this study

The pragmatic paradigm was selected ahead of positivism, post-positivism, critical theory and constructivism. Even when these are the more commonly used research paradigms, none of them was suited for this study’s context. For instance: positivism and post-positivism aim at explanation; critical theory aims at critique and transformation as well as restitution and emancipation; while constructivism aims at understanding and reconstruction (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Besides the already mentioned predictable pairing between abductive reasoning and the pragmatic paradigm, pragmatism also passes the best test for its ‘fitness for purpose’ as it was better suited for building up from the curiosity of the central question of this study and its objectives.

The fundamental merit of the pragmatic paradigm to this study was found in the accommodativeness it offered. It was in the choice to pursue, among many plausible options, the theories that the study was already logically inclined, owing to an inherent judgement of trustworthiness (Iaydjiev, 2013). This choice was fitting within the frame that Peirce (1968, cited in Anderson 1986) had upheld of abductive reasoning and its accompanying pragmatic approach. He noted that the utmost benefit of abductive reasoning is in its ability to provide unsurpassed economies of money, time, thought, and energy. In other words, when the pragmatic paradigm and its associated form of abductive reasoning are taken in cohort, there is a likelihood for a given research project's economy of resources. The benefits of pairing abduction and pragmatism ensured that the researcher's energies were directed towards the primary focus of drawing inferences from the theoretical premises of institutional change within the access that was conveniently provided by the contextual frame of SA HE and the UFS case example.

The pragmatic paradigm, as a consequence, transcends beyond the raging dichotomy between positivist and constructivist paradigms on the one hand, and critical theory, on the other hand. It offers flexibility that allows for space to work with methodological approaches that are best suited for the achievement of the study objectives and within reasonable limits as suggested by Mackenzie & Knipe (2006) as well as Kivunja & Kuyini (2017). In other words, since pragmatism, as a research paradigm prioritises the research questions under investigation and proceeds to find 'what works' (Tashakkori & Teddlie 2003), it was that kind of grounding that this study on theorising institutional change in HE required.

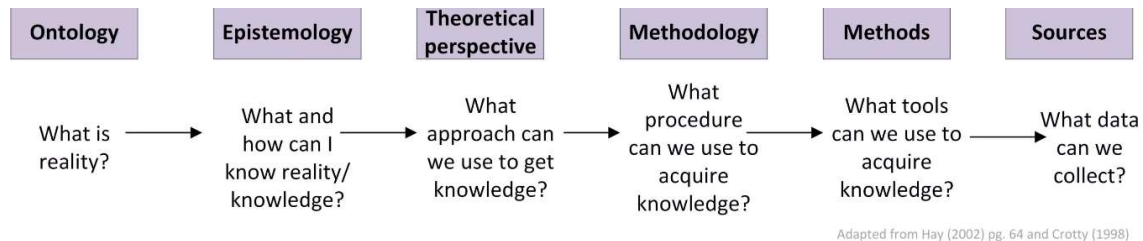
As such, pragmatism proved itself to be a gateway for theorisation practice in this study. It manifested a form of reflexivity on the practice of knowledge generation, in line with Iaydjiev's (2013) understanding. Just as it had been the experiences of Bradley et al. (2009) in their study, it was similarly established in this study that using a pragmatic approach made for quicker

contributions to both applied and theoretically meaningful research. This benefit was in contrast, as they admit, to relying on theoretical or disciplinary considerations as the starting point for research enquiries. To apply a common lingua, the pragmatic paradigm enabled the researcher to ‘think outside the box’. It enabled the kinds of unique associations that cut across the knowledge of institutional change theories and higher education change research.

3.5 Research design

In the bid to support this study’s underlying purpose of understanding how theories of institutional change can support the understanding of HE change processes the sequence of processes that Patel (2015) identified became a helpful marker.

Figure 2: The research design process (Patel, 2005)



3.5.1 Ontology

Ontology is a term that is credited to Jacob Lorhard as an application within metaphysics that refers to the ‘study of being’ (Øhrstrøm, Andersen & Schärfe, 2015). Ontology thus involves an examination of the underlying belief system of the researcher about the nature of ‘being’ and ‘existence’ (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). As such, a clear ontological basis helps to benchmark the way that a researcher makes sense of the meaning that is to be derived from their research data.

In terms of this study, the researcher considered the critical role of historical trajectories in understanding institutional formation and change. The researcher, therefore, considered the need to understand these institutional processes in order to tease out the premise of change as

a subjective undertaking in the context of understanding HE change premises. This ontological standpoint decisively recognises the researcher's stance in the way that institutional change theorisation can be inferred from the historical analyses of institutional processes. By considering the HE set up as an entity worthy of such an examination, the researcher explored the plausibility of understanding the institutional change parameters therein, through the identification and analyses the historical trajectories of change in SA HE and the UFS case example. This ontological position that considers systemic changes from institutional change perspective was the underlying benchmark for the 'nature of being' in this study. It was also accentuated by the abductive reasoning and the pragmatic paradigm within which the study was located as it exemplified that reality is negotiated continuously, debated and interpreted in light of its usefulness in new and unpredictable situations.

3.5.2 Epistemology

Epistemology refers to the philosophical underpinning of the ways of knowing. This relates to whether knowledge is acquired externally or attained from personal experience. Epistemology is closely related to the ontological premise of a particular study, as Sutriana (2009) succinctly demonstrates. She argues that the way a researcher perceives the reality (ontology) will undoubtedly influence the way they go about the processes of knowing (epistemology) as a research process. Epistemology is therefore concerned with the possibility, nature, sources and limits of human knowledge (Jupps, 2006).

The various sources of knowledge acquisition are summarised by Kivunja and Kuyini (2017) as:

- a) intuitive knowledge: by reliance on beliefs, faith and intuition;
- b) authoritative knowledge: where the basis of the research is on data gathered from books, research studies, experts, leaders in organisations and other people with authoritative

knowledge. The credibility and strength of this knowledge depend on the strength of the sources

- c) logical knowledge and rationalist epistemology: results from knowledge of truth and is based on the conviction of reason. Here, new knowledge is created by applying logical reasoning; and
- d) empirical knowledge: if knowledge is based on the sensory experiences and demonstrable objective facts, then such a study would be employing an empirical epistemology. Here, new knowledge is based on objective facts that have been established and can be demonstrated.

It is, however, not uncommon for studies to use the different knowledge sources concurrently. A researcher may use intuitive knowledge when they come up with an initial research area and the research problem. This can be followed by the process of gathering authoritative knowledge by reviewing literature and interviewing experts as sources. At the end of this knowledge spectrum, researchers may also gain logical knowledge by analysing primary data to acquire empirical knowledge. To understand the epistemological orientation of this study, one needs to look at the earlier outlined abductive reasoning within which this research was conceptualised. The considerations for abductive reasoning and the pragmatic paradigm are clear indicators of the way that this study's approach to 'knowing' was conceived. As such, the epistemological orientations of this study demonstrated the character of commitment to the research objective in a way that allowed for plausible explanations of institutional change in HE to emerge.

Therefore, the epistemological orientation of this study was underscored by the consideration that the best method is the one that solves the problem at hand. This commitment was upheld in the explorations around understanding institutional change as a premise for explaining the

change processes within higher education through a historical analysis and a case example. This study can then be categorically placed within the rationalist epistemological orientation, where logical knowledge was relied on to make relevant linkages between institutional change theorisation and HE studies.

3.6 Theoretical perspective

In seeking to theorise institutional change in HE, this study started its theoretical framing from Kezar's (2001, 2006, and 2013) 'theories of change' perspective for HE. Her theoretical perspective invariably argues for the need to highlight the distinctive nature of higher education institutions and how their unique positioning might affect the way that their change processes pan out. It is noted that Kezar's theoretical perspective, as well as Eckel's (2002) consideration of institutional change as a cultural process, indicate that change strategies in HE cannot be looked at as universal principles, but rather within context.

3.6.1 Synthesising theoretical approaches

Nonetheless, this study applied Kezar's logic of theorising institutional change through a synthesis of different theoretical approaches to change. The study expanded the institutional premise of understanding change in HE beyond the endogenous cultural processes within the HE establishments, but rather as a multi-linked process that engages both formal and informal institutional attributes. This expansion is a pragmatic expression of Kezar's appeal for the need to consider a combination of different approaches in studying change in the higher education context. Kezar acknowledges change as a complex and multifaceted process that often requires synthesised approaches in order to understand and enable it correctly.

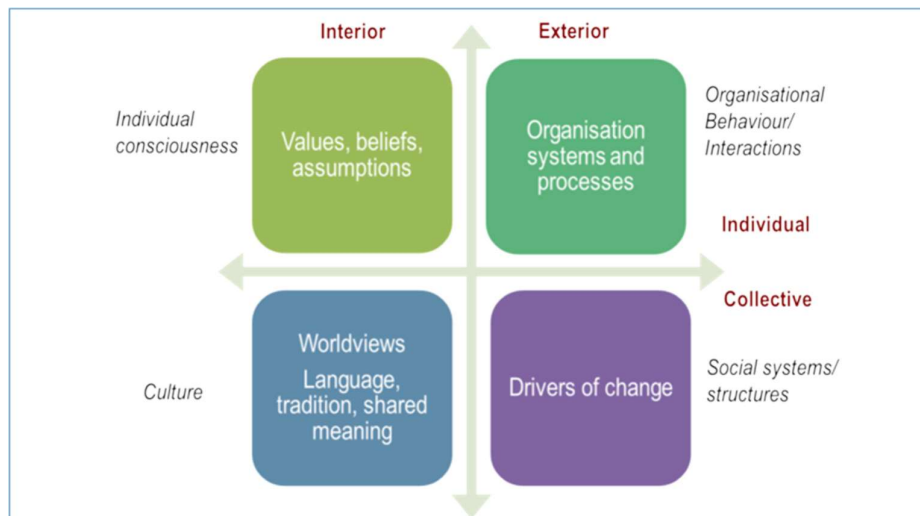
At the same time, Kezar's theoretical perspective that posits that HE has several unique features that warrant a distinctive approach in seeking to implement or even study change was adopted in this study's processual theorisation of HE. This perspective was significant to this study in

as far as it alludes to the organisational dimension of higher education as a set of interdependent entities that, at the same time: 1) exhibit a level of relative independence from their external environment; 2) have a unique culture of the academy and the value drive therein; and 3) maintain a multiplicity of power structures in a loosely coupled system in a virtual state of anarchical decision-making practices. This study, therefore, provided a theoretical perspective of institutional change in HE that also acknowledged a more comprehensive systemic undertaking of studying HE, of which Kezar's 'theories of change' perspective forms an integral part. As such, this study catered for the invaluable flexibility to engage with the different way that HE institutional change finds expression. Correspondingly, this study adopted an integral theoretical perspective as an expansion of Kezar's 'theories of change' perspective.

3.6.2 Towards an integral theoretical perspective

An adaptation of Wilber's (1996) integral theory is taken up in this study to make up for the essential linkages across individual, cultural, organisational and structural components of institutional change in higher education studies. This study's multi-faceted approach was enhanced by the integral theory that recognises four dimensions. Drawing from the perspectives of Esbjörn-Hargens (2010) and Conway (2004; 2012), two sides of the institutional change quadrant were considered as the individual and the collective. On the one hand, the interior (intentional) and the exterior (behavioural) side of the 'individual' forms one side of this quadrant. On the other hand, the interior (cultural) and the exterior (system or social) of the 'collective' forms the other half of the quadrant as expressed in the figure that follows.

Figure 3: **Integral theoretical perspective**



Source: Adopted from Maree Conway 2004;2012)

Along with this quadrant, the drivers of change derived from the historical analysis of SA HE were considered in line with the structural considerations of institutional change. Through the analysis reflected in this quadrant, the study has been able to recognise the historical build-up of institutional change in terms of some of the key actors involved and how their values, beliefs and assumptions directed the drive for institutional change. This approach was mainly applied to the analyses of the UFS rector's terms between 1990 and 2020. The institutional culture within the 'interior' of the organisational dimension of institutional change as represented by the UFS context was also examined in terms of the language, traditions and shared meaning as they pertained to institutional change. Therefore, since this study concentrated on understanding institutional change in the context of HE, the variables that the researcher paid the closest attention to were dependant on the unit of analyses at the various stages of the study. When the context was South African socio-politics, the drivers of change were identified from within the structures, and how they impacted SA HE. Where the internal processes of the UFS were reviewed, the study relied on the upper half of the quadrant. The upper half provided enabled analyses of organisational behaviour within the UFS as well as the individual

consciousness of its key actors. This demarcation has proved to be a helpful premise for locating institutional change as a multi-layered endeavour in this study.

3.7 Research Methodology

Kivunja and Kuyini (2017) note that in considering the methodology for any study, the researcher needs to be clear on how they go about obtaining the desired data and how their knowledge and understandings enable them to respond to their research question appropriately. The discussion that follows, centres on principles and procedures for conducting scientific research that as adopted from Fellows and Liu (2015)

3.7.1 Historical analysis

It is noteworthy that the historical analytical orientation of this study is similar to the approach set out by the post-modern outlook, which recognises historical work beyond the domain of what is recognised by professional historians. As noted by Jenkins (2000), while stating the post-modernist position, history is not only to be considered based on the accounts of traditional and empirical historians. The origin of historical analysis is attributed to Ranke and the German school of historians from the mid-19th century who advocated for a rigorous analysis of documents as a means of recreating the past and the perception/analysis of its patterns. Historical analyses thus emphasise the understanding of the context of the past as noted by Bricknell (2011)

As such, different kinds of secondary materials qualify to be used in historical analyses. This position is in line with Bricknell's (2011) argument that history is not always necessarily written as a truthful account of the past whereby, any account of the past can be considered as valid history in its own right when considered in context. Bricknell, however, warns that great care ought to be taken in the analysis of historical sources for any valid claim to truthfulness.

It is noted that the exercise of interpretation and drawing inferences based on historical evidence by the researcher validates the claims to truth in historical analysis. Thus, the act of interpretation in itself is considered as a fundamental component of historical epistemology, according to Gardner (2011). Gardner also notes that the process of historical analysis makes sense of the past through a disciplined examination of the traces written documents of either public or private origin.

Historical analysis, as further noted by Bricknell (2001), is a method of examining the evidence in order to understand the past. Here, a person undertaking a historical analysis would need to take care of two things according to Bricknell: 1) they ought to gain some certainty as to the facts of the past; and 2) they need to establish cause and effect between those facts to understand why things happened. It was also necessary to take note of the premise of facts and values as they arose in this study and, just as Kosso (2009) suggested, the values presented in the selected texts needed to be foregrounded, ahead of the researcher's own, in order to overcome cases of implicit bias. All forms of evidence were also considered as derivatives of the examined documents. Textual evidence was used as a means to collate sources in order to scrutinise authenticity and meaning, as recommended by Kosso (2009).

The choice for a historical analysis thus fitted within this study's ontological frame that considered change as a process rather than as an event, studied from a pragmatic standpoint. This is in respect to the fact that a representation of SA HE as a body of knowledge can be inferred from the meanings already ascribed to the events of its past, including the way that historians have studied it. The historical analysis provided a good premise for this study as it engaged with an evolving historical context of SA HE, whose ongoing interpretations have always been bound to have profound implications on the trajectories for change. The underlying transiency that SA HE change processes represented, that made for the

consideration of the pragmatic frame, lay in consideration of the past as a moving spectacle that changes over time (Gaddis, 2002). On this basis, this study was able to step beyond the representations of history as a temporal narrative of the past, just as Ballif (2014) indicates, and as such, this provided a flexible means of factoring a historical analysis into the understanding of SA HE change processes. These views influenced the nature of materials that the researcher accessed, in the theorisation of HE institutional change in this study. The researcher was then able to draw various interpretations and inferences from varied historical sources that were fitting within the pragmatic framing of this study.

3.7.2 Case study: SA HE and the UFS

As described by Gillham (2000), a case study involves a unit of human activity embedded in the real world, which can only be studied and understood in the context where it exists in the here and now; with a merger into the context so that precise boundaries are difficult to draw.

A case study is, therefore, a strategy for doing research which involves an empirical investigation of a particular contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context and using multiple sources of evidence (Robson, 1993). Case studies typically draw from a whole lot of triangulation possibilities, often combining various data collection methods such as documents, interviews and observations in order to produce descriptive, exploratory or explanatory evidence.

The case study approach, as it was applied in this study, was within a historical frame and as such, is not based on observations of the 'here and now' of the context of study as described by Gillham (2000). It also does not fit the description of Robson (1993) as an empirical investigation of a contemporary phenomenon. Instead, the historical posturing of this research required a different case approach that catered for the historical nature of the study. Here, it has been considered rightly fitting to study the progression of SA HE and the UFS within various

phases that ran through 1873 up to 2010 as a historical period, in the manner that Cadell and Cadell (2017) and Widdersheim (2018) applied the concept of a historical case study.

Cardell and Cardell (2017) note that a historical case study serves two roles: 1) it reveals the complexity of a given event and warns against oversimplification, and 2) it uses a case study as a representative example of a given problem or phenomenon. They note however that caution needs to be taken when applying the historical case study and consider to 1) avoid instant histories; 2) steer clear of simplistic predetermined 'lessons learned' and thereby avoid cases where the researcher has a deep personal involvement in order to avoid bias; and 3) avoid simplified narratives. Widdersheim (2018), on his part, uses the historical case study as a distinctive research strategy that incorporates both history and a case study. In his experience, the historical case study proved to have been more successful than either history or case study methods by themselves. This was because, as he argues, a historical case study provided the means to extend a study beyond a temporal scope, and used data and method triangulation to produce more robust knowledge. The historical case study was identified as an underutilised tool in the area theory development, and particularly in its potential application in the detailed examination and ability to test aspects that require a historical explanation that may then be generalizable to other events as George and Bennett (2005) note.

Also, the case study orientation of this research still benefits from Yin's (2003) identified the strength of the method in responding to operational links that need to be tracked over time, rather than frequencies of incidents. This is because the historical undertaking of the study considered SA HE and the UFS alike, whose change process needed to be tracked and understood over time, rather than as a collation of isolated events. The University of the Free State (UFS) as a case within the institutional frame of SA HE was also fitting the pragmatic criteria of selection of this study. The university's historical location not only offered a rich account in understanding the shift across the different phases of SA HE, but also an opportunity

to glean deep insights into understanding the stakes within a HE establishment in the processes of institutionalising change.

3.7.3 Towards a blended research design

As such, this blend of a historical and a case study approach is located within the niche of the multi-method research design. A multi-method design is identifiable with research enquiries that apply more than one technique within the same research paradigm (Morse 2003; Saunders et al., 2011; Creswell & Plano 2007) as the overlap between the historical and case study approaches indicate in this study. This research design is consistent with the deconstructive character of the pragmatic paradigm, which also advances the use of mixed methods and locates itself outside of the contentious debates between truth and reality (Yvonne-Feilzer 2010).

It is worth noting however that the multi-method design in this study is unlike Brewer and Hunter's (1988) original proposition that had advanced the multi-method approach as a synthesis between qualitative and quantitative data; a strand that has now evolved to become known as the mixed methods approach (Creswell 2003). At the same time, the multi-method design adopted in this study also operationally departs from Morse's (2003) application that emphasised the triangulation of different methods as a means of producing varied sources of evidence within the same research project. Instead, the multi-method design in this study is similar to what Kennedy (2009) considers as facilitation for a form of layered triangulation, where successive layers of data are used as a reinforcement of subsequent analyses. In this case, the findings from the historical analysis of SA HE were juxtaposed along with the historical analysis of the UFS as successive layers of data that were then used in the further analysis of the UFS' emergence from apartheid between 1990-2010.

Furthermore, the application of the multi-method approach for this study correlates with what Mingers (2001) refers to as methodological pluralism; an approach that is credited with

providing fuller engagement with the conduct of research as a multi-phase process, rather than as an event. This philosophical underpinning is in agreement with the overall approach as reflected in the pragmatic paradigm and the abductive reasoning for this study, where the change in SA HE and the UFS is considered as a process that can be understood within its institutional dimensions. This process was fittingly explored through a historical analysis of its context of change within the SA HE and UFS cases.

This multi-method research design contributed to the necessary rigour in the inquiry towards responding to the research questions by teasing out the connection between the historicised institutional change trajectories of SA HE (1873–2010) and the manifestation of institutional change within the last socio-political phase of the study at the UFS (1990–2010). This choice for the overlap between historical and case study methods, therefore appropriately fitted within the pragmatic research paradigm and its underling abductive reasoning. This design, therefore, enabled a seamless response to research questions (ii) and (iii) by providing for a premise to identify critical trajectories for change as inferred within academic studies and policy documents of SA HE and the UFS.

3.8 Methods & Sources of data

Reflections on the research methodology also require that one considers the data selection criteria, the data collection methods, as well as the analysis and interpretation of that data. In the multi-method methodology of this study, critical choices were made within the historical analytical and case study methods, as explained in the discussion that follows.

3.8.1 Criteria for Data selection and collection and analysis

The historical analytical approach adopted for this study brings into question, what would count as relevant data. As noted by Kosso (2009), not all historical facts can count as relevant data in research.

This study was thus meticulous in its use of the documentary sources as a method for collating data of historical significance to institutional change in the cases of SA HE and the UFS. In the way that data collection, selection and analysis progressed in this study, the vital issue of not falling victim of the kind of explanation bias that Mukharji & Zeckhauser (2019) explain to arise from overvaluing ones' logical pathway over acknowledging the existence of uncertainties in historical explanations was heeded. As such, whereas this study worked from the standpoint of providing plausible explanations about theorising institutional change, it remained critical throughout this study that such explanations did not become definitive explanations of the past. The criteria for data selection, collection and analysis are explained in the documentary techniques that are explained further below.

3.8.2 Documentary sources

As Monageng (2006) notes, the kinds of documents used in a documentary study may include:

1) public documents, such as government publications, policy statements, census reports, and statistical bulletins, reports of commissions of inquiry, ministerial or departmental annual reports, and consultancy reports; and 2) private documents that could be housed within civil society organisations, such as private sector businesses, trade unions and non-governmental organisations. Also, such documents may include newspapers, diaries, stamps, directories, handbills, maps, photographs, paintings, gramophone records, tapes, and computer files (Scott & Marshall, 2009).

Cohen, Manion & Morrison (2018) note that documentary sources are often divided into primary and secondary sources. While primary sources deal with evidence that was left behind by people in their past activities, that is, documents that were produced during a particular historical period of interest, secondary sources are removed from the actual events, and thus involve interpretations by people other than those who were directly involved with the period question. They also note that when historical documents are used in a study, their validity and

reliability arises from their scrutiny, in order to ensure that they are authentic, credible, representative and meaningful.

In this study, a diversity of documentary sources was relied on, mostly those in the public domain. These included both primary sources such as policy documents and institutional reports, as well as secondary sources such as published historical literature in books and journal articles. As such, the criteria of relevance that was used for the selection of historical documentary data was chiefly based on feedback from the university research librarians at the UFS. From the librarians, several historical sources that pertained to the systemic change processes of South African HE and the UFS were identified. This identification was followed through by the use of a ranking process for books and journal articles by the *EBSCOhost* database of the UFS e-library portal. The selection process was manual, and the researcher scanned through the titles of 160 articles and books for their relevance. Of those, the abstracts of 30–40 articles and books were then closely read. Only 12 of those historical texts were considered for in-depth reading, and as a result, these were heavily relied on for historical references for this study. Among these texts was the UFS centennial publication, which became the primary source of the historical information about the university.

Apart from the library, the researcher also used the university's archives in order to access reports, correspondences, committee and council minutes as well as UFS periodicals. The archivist at the *UFS' Archive for Contemporary Affairs* proved to be an invaluable source of information regarding the historical documents available that directly related to the university and its historically archived documents. The researcher, however, had two challenges in working with the archives:

- 1) the records in the archives were not digitised, and the files are also not often to be found under any identifiable subject-based headings. The researcher, therefore, had to comb through vast volumes of random files in order to find some fittingly relevant data.
- 2) It was challenging to knit together historical trends, as most of the archives available were mostly remnant documents from individual contributors and of a generic subject matter. Most key documents were also often in Afrikaans, and the researcher had to rely on external help to gauge their relevance to the study before they could be considered for selection.

Nonetheless, the researcher laid out different thematic categories for the library and archives by tackling topics such as *History of South African Higher Education; The Trajectories of Change in South African Higher Education; Change as a Theoretical Construct; Change in Higher Education Systems; the University of the Free State's Statements of Policy and Plans for Action; Higher Education Transformation; and (post)-apartheid Higher Education*. It was based on these themes that the different primary and secondary documents were selected for this study.

These thematic data categories were concurrently reviewed in the reading, whilst identifying further gaps that necessitated the researcher to find supplementary data. Here, it is necessary to point out that one of the guiding principles for the documentary analysis related to the tenets of historical research methods that go beyond considerations of the temporal narrative of the past (Ballif 2014), and thereby acknowledge the past as a moving spectacle that changes over time (Gaddis 2002). As such, a greater appreciation for the many facets of historical events, including factors of bias and prejudice that could easily cloud the researcher's analytical lens as considered by Conolly-Smith (2007) were invariably cushioned by the expansive research approach and extensive data search that was adopted for this study.

3.9 Role of the researcher

The researcher acknowledges that, as an outsider (by virtue of his origin outside of South Africa), his consideration of the South African context in this study was done so with ‘external eyes’. The researcher, therefore, maintained a delicate engagement in respect to the history of the country as it pertains to HE. Nonetheless, the researcher remained open to diverse sources of information in the deliberations around the intricacies of race and power distribution in South Africa’s historical landscape and considered the contentions of apartheid and colonialism in as far as they related to the subject of HE institutional change.

The researcher’s employment at the Institute for Reconciliation and Social Justice at the UFS (later the Unit for Institutional Change and Social Justice) however accorded him an insider status within the UFS context. It also enabled him to get more acquainted with the UFS context and to obtain first-hand experience with the prevailing post-apartheid debates within the university. At the same time, the researcher benefited from the support of the academic supervisors and other university colleagues whose close academic and social encounters with the South African historical context was beneficial to the researcher.

Furthermore, the interactions that the researcher had with UFS students between 2015 and 2019 offered additional contextual insights that are could have possibly trickled into the nature of arguments that are fronted in this study. The researcher, nonetheless, benefitted from inhabiting overlapping identities at the university as a student, a student mentor and as the course convener for the master’s program in Reconciliation and Social Cohesion. He also facilitated diversity and inclusivity training workshops with university staff at the same time that this study was ongoing. As a consequence, the researcher was able to engage with the university’s context from different angles, as he was able to interact with the university context both as a student and as a member of staff at the same time. This overlapping identity provided the researcher

with a sense of balance in the understanding of the contemporary context of the UFS, which in turn helped to provide a better contextual premise to understand the historical material that was examined for this study.

As such, although the researcher undertook this study as an outsider detached from South Africa's historical context, he also had the privileged position of conducting the study as an insider within the UFS. This positionality not only leveraged opportunities for the researcher to interact with a minimal bias to the information that was derived from within the context of the UFS but also enabled him to conduct the study within the limits of relative disinterest as would warrant acceptable levels of objectivity. The researcher, therefore, benefitted from what Yacob-Haliso (2019) refers to as the 'in-between identity', which was incredibly helpful in the historical analytical process of this study.

3.10 Research Ethics

This study establishes an axiological grounding by acknowledging the importance of a clear path of morals and ethics as an essential aspect, just as Wilson (2001) argued. Noting that this study set out to neither engage human nor animal subjects, the risk factor that would have been associated with live participants in the study was negligible. Nonetheless, attention was paid to the potential effects of a study of this nature in as far as access to private or unpublished documentary sources may have been concerned. When access to such documents, which included internal institutional reports for instance and historical email correspondences were required, access was primarily sought from the university archives wherein, such information was already considered to be in the public domain.

3.11 Chapter Summary

This chapter has demonstrated how the research design of this study revolved around the central research question of how institutional change theorisation can help to understand

change processes in HE. It has engaged with the goal of responding to the emergent specific research questions by clarifying on the basis for the selection, collection and analysis of what was considered as relevant data, similarly to what Philiber et al. (1980) recommend. The chapter has discussed the role of abductive reasoning that was definitive for this study's approach and as such, exemplified by the emergent pragmatic research paradigm. The chapter has also outlined the philosophy of this study and the methodological choices of the historical and case study that was influenced by the research design. The chapter has also engaged with the theoretical perspective of the study and introduced the integral theoretical perspective as a viable gateway to studying institutional change in the multi-faceted HE context. This chapter ties together the previous literature review chapter and the recognizably crucial discursive chapters that follow. It thus acts as the foundation for the appropriateness of the historical and case study approach that follows, in the way that it was applied to theorise HE institutional change within the context of SA HE and the UFS.

CHAPTER IV

4.0 HISTORICAL ANALYSIS OF SA HE INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE (1873–2010)

4.1 Introduction and Chapter Organisation

This chapter details the origins and the changing premises of South African higher education (SA HE). It identifies the features within which the trajectories for SA HE institutional change were inferred in this study. As such, the chapter offers insights from existing historical studies and policy documents on the change drivers for the higher education system in South Africa, whilst interrogating historical patterns and events within which its institutional change framework was denoted. This chapter debunks a historical analysis that responds to the research question: *which trajectories can be identified in academic studies and policy documents of SA HE as important in driving change between 1873 and 2010?*

The bulk of the insights in this chapter are provided by secondary literature and policy documents, as discussed in the previous chapter. Historical publications that generally pertain to education and specifically to the rise of SA HE were selected and included the works of Malherbe (1925), Metrowich (1929), and McKerron (1934). These were informative, as they were the oldest available authoritative resources on the history of education in South Africa and featured sections on the early rise of SA HE. Additionally, the ingenious works of Behr & Macmillan (1966), Stemie and Geggus (1972), Hofmeyr (1982) and Behr (1988) whose publication is located within the apartheid period also provided significant insights in the development of SA HE. Their significance was not only because they engaged with the entire history of South African education but also because their analyses used the apartheid period as their vantage point. Additional works by Badat (1999; 2002; 2006), Kallaway (2002; 2012), Moodie (1994) and Beale (1994; 2004) whose publication is located majorly within a post-apartheid South Africa also offer further reflective insights from within the transformative

context of SA HE. The identification of these works along with the South African socio-political phases within which they were published provided an additional vantage point from which the inferences for institutional change theorisation were contextualised. These considerations were activated by the abductive reasoning within which this study was set. As such, this chapter provides a basis for the derivation of reasonable inferences on which the rest of this study was constructed.

4.2 A historical analytical approach to theorising SA HE institutional change

This chapter addresses the concerns that were brought to the attention of the researcher by Kallaway (2002; 2012), who decries the tendency of several attempts to discredit the lessons from the entire history of South African education on account of its association with the apartheid period. Kallaway argues that the problematics of understanding historical change in South Africa's education systems are not only riddled with blatant fallacies but are also replete with shortcomings that undermine the historical role of tracking educational processes based on the sentiments of the challenges that the apartheid period presented. This chapter engages with the numerous trajectories of the HE system in South Africa and the different historical forces behind the progression of SA HE throughout the country's colonial processes, apartheid and the post-apartheid period.

The approach that was adopted for this study, as outlined in this chapter, reads into Kallaway's (2012) arguments by considering, as he does, that the existence of active education processes in South Africa had always been riddled with various pathways of change long before 1948. Such pathways are imperative for undertaking overall analyses of higher education institutional change and contribute to viewing the systemic processes of SA HE outside of the shadow cast solely by the apartheid period. Here, Kallaway argues that South Africa's 200-year-old education system needs to be understood outside the traditions that are bound by the assertions that everything that originates from South Africa's past ought to be abandoned. Nevertheless,

as this study demonstrates, several lessons can be gleaned from their historical record regarding the institutional change processes of SA HE.

The historical analysis in this study is neither an endorsement nor holds partial to any of the historical phases of SA HE's system changes. Instead, it presents a pragmatic case for the need to consider historical connections in seeking to understand institutional change. Indeed, as Kallaway (2012) further notes, certain historical complexities provide for a favourable premise to understand educational processes as deep-seated systems that are not only difficult to halt and change but are also unlikely to be turned around on short notice. Chick (1996) emphasised a similar point by noting, for instance, that the racial disparities in South Africa and the turn of events that ushered in the apartheid era cannot be considered in isolation, but need to be seen as part of a continuous strand of segregation that had already been a feature of South Africa since the 17th century.

The underlying emphasis for this chapter therefore supports the premise for this study by considering how historical trajectories and the emergent drivers of change are expressive of the understanding of the theoretical premises in HE institutional change. It is thus acknowledged in the historical analysis of this chapter that the need to identify the trajectories within South Africa's socio-political landscape is necessary if one is to embark on putting forward systematically derived theoretical propositions about institutional change, within this selected systemic HE contexts. The process of establishing theoretical propositions for institutional change in HE is, as a result of this, considered in this chapter within the dynamics of the evolving South African historical context.

4.3 The initiation of formal educational processes in colonial South Africa

Background knowledge of the education processes before the establishment of the University of the Cape of Good Hope - marked as the starting point for the analysis of the establishment

of higher education processes in South Africa - is essential in order to engage with the foundation from which relevant patterns within the trajectories of institutional change can be drawn. This baseline historical knowledge for this study was drawn from the initiation of formal educational processes at the Cape, with the arrival of the Dutch settlers.

It is noted that the initiation and consolidation of formalised education processes at the Cape was advanced as a strategic attempt by the Dutch East Indian Company (DEIC) to expand their business interests. This expansion was followed by the formation of Dutch settler communities, starting in 1652. While looking to preserve their religious way of life, the settlers, as indicated by Behr and Macmillan (1966: 3), came along with their tradition of a Calvinist founded religious education format. McKerron (1934: 57) notes that the first school establishment that was set up in 1663 was however not only meant to serve the children of the workers of the Dutch East Indian Company but also opened its doors to all other children of school-going age at the Cape. As such, the early pupil cohorts were often a combination of groups of learners comprised of descendants of slaves, the Khoikhoi and Europeans settlers amongst them, and with “no colour feeling” as McKerron (1934: 57) notes. In the classrooms, “white and non-white children sat side by side on the same desks” (Behr & MacMillan, 1966: 90).

As a point of emphasis, therefore, a close reading of both Behr & MacMillan as well as McKerron reveals that the first schooling format at the Cape primarily focused on the inculcation of a form of [Calvinist] religious education; the kind that was deemed purposeful in regard to the duty-bound social conformity that was propagated at the time. The educational processes, as such, mirrored the pre-existing schooling patterns of the Dutch settlers’ homeland. The education format was, therefore, a form of transplantation that was guided by the cardinal principles of the historic reformation movement that had swept across Holland (and Europe in general), in which ‘every child’ was entitled to elementary religious education (McKerron, 1934: 14-15). It was this form of educational philosophy that abounded amongst

the early settlers at the Cape, and its openness to 'every child' that allowed for access to slaves, Khoikhoi and European children alike.

The pronounced link between the religious setup and the schooling system is taken note of from these early periods. It was owing to this relationship that the administration of schools was incorporated within church structures. As such, the church minister and his elders inspected schools and also ensured that suitably qualified and well-compensated orthodox Christians taught in the schools, where religious instruction was meant to remain as a permanent fixture on the school curriculum (Hofmeyr, 1982). Nonetheless, in considering the initial growth of education processes, Behr (1978) notes that it emerged within the context of the settlers' perceived temporality of their habitation at the Cape. Such temporality is reflected within the educational setting, where initial instructors only performed an ancillary teaching role. They primarily would have arrived as sick-comforters within the church establishment, and thus had no teaching qualifications. Their only expectation as school instructors lay in their ability to conduct religious rites and to provide religious instruction.

Nonetheless, the idea of temporality by the settlers was relatively short-lived. As McKerron, (1934: 15–16) explains, once the settlers' habitation of the Cape began to be envisioned in the longer term, a Minister (of the church) was appointed in 1665 in the place of the sick comforter, and this accelerated not only the institutionalisation of the schooling system but also its associated systemic connections. As a case in point, the church Minister's appointment was followed by the formation of an ecclesiastical court that then had overall authority over religious observances and the educational establishments. Here, one can already trace the emergence of formalised schooling processes at the Cape, which were characterised by the movement towards centralised oversight and connections across the educational establishments and the church.

Notably, however, education provision continued to grow slowly. It was premised on religious instruction under the auspices of the Dutch Reformed Church (DRC). The DRC had an established Educational oversight structure which began as a 'consistory', coordinated in Amsterdam and later became the 'Scholarch' in 1714 and almost a century later, it transitioned into the Bible and School commission in 1813 (Behr, 1978; Behr & MacMillan, 1966). These earlier forms of instruction held a position of prominence for the individuals' day-to-day existence, as it was based on this instruction that one would then be deemed as an eligible member of the Dutch Reformed Church (McKerron, 1934).

4.3.1 Coupling between basic education and the church

The formal education process was conducted through confirmation classes, wherein some measure of literacy would be pursued to encourage bible reading, the recitations of articles of faith and the ability to write ones name. In this way, the basic literacy that was required for the ability to read religious texts and to uphold the Calvinist traditions of religion, culture, code of ethics, as well as the personal and social behaviour of the settlers, formed the basis of the entire educational setup (Behr, 1978; Behr & MacMillan, 1966; McKerron, 1934).

Here, the location of educational establishments within the religious institution provides the first premise of tracing educational trajectories that would be driven within the bounds of the broader societal evolution. In this case, noting that the emerging colonial and settlement project at the Cape was significantly run within the enclaves of religious observances, formalised educational processes only ensured a form of social order through the continuous cultivation of acceptable behaviour to align with the settlers' Calvinist tradition. By using the schooling system to legitimise the membership of individuals into the DRC, this provided for a mutually reinforcing interplay between the religious structure and that of basic education. This primacy of basic education procedures within the habituation process of the settlers, therefore, meant

that local churches in every settled community were tagged along with local schools, primarily to conduct catechism and confirmation classes (Behr & MacMillan 1966: 92).

4.3.2. Basic education as a private affair

It is of interest to note how this early form of education provision was considered as a private matter and out of the confines of the control of the Dutch East India Company (DEIC). The analysis of basic formal education as a private affair is considered while looking at the DEIC as the settlers' equivalent of a centralising governing authority at the Cape. By the 1714 school ordinance, therefore, which was a decisive step in the formalisation of educational processes at the Cape, schooling was considered as an "almost entirely religious affair" (McKerron, 1934: 18).

It was owing to the increasingly centralising tendencies by the DEIC however, where it was overreaching its economic interests towards instituting itself as a political force that, the settlers chose to find solace in trekking inland to get away from the increasing constraints at the Cape (Behr, 1978). This search for a better expression of individual autonomy meant that these *Voortrekker Boers* assumed an additional pride for themselves as farmers who were then able to own large chunks of land, so that "as far as the eye could reach, the land was his own" (McKerron, 1934: 59). These inland movements gave rise to the further spread of the private format of early schooling establishments. This newly acquired nomadic lifestyle of the *Voortrekkers* meant that they also had to rely on their own resources to meet their physical, spiritual and educational needs. Along with their already established firm reliance on the church for spiritual guidance and the church's tightly coupled relationship with basic educational processes, the *Voortrekkers* maintained their literacy as a vital component for their religious observances through reading their bibles. In this case, the church rendered basic education relevant in the same way as the literacy elements of basic education became the

anchors of religious sustenance. This private movement grew, owing to the move by the farmers to take on the responsibility of hiring private teachers for their children, who continued with the form of religious instruction that had been carried over from the Cape. This expansion resulted into more private schools on the farms in Stellenbosch and Drakenstein where the *Voortrekkers* had moved to, than there were at the Cape and its surrounding villages (Behr, 1978; Behr & MacMillan, 1966; McKerron 1934).

4.3.3 Contestations for early Basic education in South Africa

The first sweeping interruption of the emerging Dutch dominance at the Cape came mostly from recolonization by other Europeans. The first of these disruptions came with the initial British occupation of the Cape between 1795 and 1803. Whereas no material changes arose in the area of basic education with this first British occupation, their initial hesitancy to interfere with the way that the schools operated meant that basic education developmental processes stagnated. The British presence, no doubt, intensified the *Voortrekkers*' resolve to tread further away from the Cape to stay out of the bounds of this new colonial influence, much in the same way as they had left owing to the earlier noted growing influence of the DEIC. Following the British occupation, the Cape was then repossessed by the *Batavian* regime from 1803–1806 that had taken over the Netherlands as part of the revolutionary processes in Europe. It is noted again, that the events in Europe had a significant impact on the processes at the Cape, and the renewed zeal to expand the British Empire resulted into the second wave of British occupation from 1806. Unlike their first attempt, this second British occupation had a more far-reaching impact on the education system, with their first significant shake-up in the way that basic education was conducted, particularly under the Governorship of Sir John Cradock who took office from 1811 (Behr, 1978; McKerron, 1934).

The influence of the British occupation effectively overturned the 1714 school ordinance within which basic formal education operated up to that point and had entrenched its oversight within the confines of the church (McKerron, 1934: 18). The special educational commission was reorganised and expanded from initially consisting of the Secunde (a position next in rank to Governor), the Clergyman and the Military Captain. It was expanded to include a more diverse composition that comprised of the Governor, two members chosen by the Burgher senate and the Directors of the Orphan Chamber; two clergymen of the Dutch Reformed Church (DRC) in Cape Town, and a Lutheran clergyman (McKerron, 1934: 18). This context of the expanding British colonial influence was founded within a different view of basic education processes in which religious catechism would no longer hold utmost prominence. This new outlook was effected in just over a decade of their second occupation of the Cape through the establishment of a secular schooling system that was modelled along with the tradition of the education system in Britain at the time (Behr, 1978: 4).

By 1839, the Department of Education had been established, with James Innes Rose as the first superintendent of education at the Cape. This move ensured that the schooling system became systematically formalised. The first point of departure was the differentiation of school types into three classes, where the first-class referred to the schools that provided both primary and secondary education. In contrast, the second class only offered primary instruction. The third class schools, on the other hand, were state-aided and also provided the framework in which missionary schools could operate (Behr, 1988: 19).

Noting the low enrolment levels, however, a commission chaired by Justice EB Watermeyer set out to inquire about the state of schools in the Cape of Good Hope in order to provide for elementary education for all classes of people. The findings of this report were far from encouraging, noting for instance that the established government schools had no real connection with the people that they were meant to serve. The report also noted that a system

of segregation had penetrated the education system, where even in the absence of any forms of compulsion, the established schools were in fact in the service of the European children. It was only in the small village schools where the colour bar was not applied, and their existence provided for a form of counter-establishment of schools. It was also the findings of this commission that mission schools were ignoring the British secular provisions and continued along with aspects of bible knowledge and teaching of the Holy Scriptures, ahead of what had become the established norm of secular education to focus on reading, writing and arithmetic as essential subjects of (Behr, 1988: 20; Behr & Macmillan, 1966: 98–99).

The Watermeyer commission then recommended a gradual abolition of established school systems. It installed a system of matching grants to schools, where 50 per cent of the community contributions to the expenses on teachers' salaries were met with a corresponding contribution from the government. The resultant Act No.3 of 1865 created new classifications where 'A-schools' were for the white community, 'B-schools' were to be mission schools that would serve the 'poor white' community and coloured children, while 'C-schools' were to get full grants were to serve the indigenous communities which. (Behr, 1988: 20–21). With this Act No.3 of 1865, one can infer the beginning of the formalisation of a state-funded schooling system that was set on course for the trajectory of racial and economic segregation.

Another critical aspect to note in the early growth of the schooling systems at the Cape was the emerging trajectory of power brokerage, and how this determined the underling purpose of basic education. As such, educational practices from the initial periods were a reflection of its underlying purpose; whether this purpose was to promote religious alignments or to train essential workers. Within the structuring of these priorities for basic education, for instance, one notes that a system of private religious founded basic education protocols under the pre-eminence of the DRC eventually gave way to a more secular and centralised form of basic education conduct, following the British occupation.

4.3.4 Power brokerage and the early schooling system in South Africa

As noted earlier, the second British occupation at the Cape resulted in mechanisms for further entrenchment of a secularised and centralised schooling system. By 1820, a more consolidated focus on the stewardship of education was formalised under the governor Lord Charles Somerset, and this resulted into English Free Schools that served the purpose of strengthening the dominance of the English language at the Cape. This was augmented by the proclamation of English as the official language of the Cape Colony in 1822, a move that was then followed by a systematic Anglicisation of both the church and school systems. As a result, British dominance was consolidated across all the classes of society (Behr, 1978: 5–6; McKerron, 1934: 22). Again, one can see how the dictates of the British colonial power not only had an influence on educational establishments but by taking advantage of the tight coupling between the church and the schools; it was able to consolidate its authority over the Cape.

The appointment of a full-time education official, the Superintendent-General of Education in 1839 was followed by a grants-in-aid system to support the local schools. This effectively marked the transfer of educational processes out of the authority of the Church and into the confines of the colonial state (Behr, 1978: 5; Behr & MacMillan, 1966: 7). By 1843, education had become secularised, and the earlier forms of sectarian religious instruction had become forbidden. However, daily scripture reading was still provided for in the schools (McKerron, 1934: 64).

A further connection ought to be made here, considering that once again, just like the establishment of basic education by the Dutch settlers had been a spillover of the religious and socio-political sentiments that they had brought with them to the Cape, it was apparent that events in Europe, particularly the revolutionary sentiments that had been premised on the separation of Church and State had a grounding influence for the secularisation tendencies of the British dominion at the Cape. It is noteworthy that the culling of the church's influence in

the daily lives of the individuals had been a major revolutionary pre-occupation in Europe at the same time when educational processes at the Cape were stripped out of the church's control and financed by locally generated taxes under the British dominion (Behr & MacMillan, 1966: 7).

Another power shift in the arrival of missionaries, however, needs also to be recognised in the early organisation of basic education. The spread of missionaries by the early eighteenth century saw to their broad strategy of providing education to non-white communities, especially after the restrictive policy of *Cuius regio, eius religio* ("whose realm, his religion") in which the religion of the 'sovereign' was expected to be the religion of the people was dropped with the growing British influence (Behr, 1988: 91). Under this policy, only the DRC had been allowed to operate as the recognised religion of the 'sovereign', and yet British secularisation had paradoxically opened up space for other forms of religious organisation and missionary groups. With the opening up of religious space, however, Du Rand (1990) notes that by the 1800s almost all education for Africans was provided within missionary schools through initiatives led by mission posts that were established mainly by the London missionary society and the Rhemish Missionary society.

Other missionary societies sent either individuals or in some cases, small bands of missionaries, who would then become part of the establishment of educational outfits and medical facilities in the South African interior. These included the Paris Evangelical Mission Society (from 1829), the Berlin Mission Society (from 1834), the American Board Mission and the Church Missionary Society (both from 1836) (Behr, 1988: 92–93). The spread of the missionary establishments and the concerted expansion of the early formal structures of basic education can be attributed to the secularisation of basic education in which the DRC no longer had the monopoly over schooling operations. This contradiction could not be more telling, as the British-led secularisation simply opened up the doors for a more diverse religious power

brokerage, with the benefit of an expanded schooling system. What is also important to note is that the niche of the missionaries was mainly the African communities, for whom on top of their evangelistic role, the missionaries became agents of the extension of education services along the Orange River, *Bushmanland*, *Transvaal*, *Transkei* and other Northern territories (Behr, 1988:91–95).

Already in the early 1800s, therefore, the educational context was toying with more divergent establishments. On the one hand, there was the educational establishment that had become secularised and was mainly operational within the ranks of the settler communities. On the other hand, there was a missionary form of education that mainly catered for African communities.

4.3.5 Initial expansion of Education processes outside the Cape

Apart from the missionary education that had extended beyond the Cape, the Republics of Transvaal, Natal and the Orange Free State had also continued to establish their formats of education and schooling processes. These educational systems in the other provinces were heavily reliant on the organizational knowledge gained from the Cape (McKerron, 1934: 35). The British annexations of these provinces and ongoing squabbles between the British colonialists and the prior Dutch settlers meant that there was little in the way of a settled kind of independence for these territories until South African wars sealed their fate (Behr 1978: 3–20).

The religious dimensions in education therefore continued to play a fundamental role in the expansion of basic education, and this was backed by the growing interest of the colonial State in the way that schools were administered. For instance, in the Transvaal, the teachers were both state officials and members of the church (Mckerron 1934: 40) while in the Orange Free

State, both the advancement of religion and education were to be coordinated by the Council of the People—the *Volksraad* (Mckerron 1934: 36).

Another fundamental trajectory—perhaps more manifest in both the Transvaal and the Orange Free State—was the increased occurrence of nationalistic tendencies that were broadly expanded to educational contexts. These nationalistic tendencies were located within both the identities of religion and language as with the rise of Christian National Education (CNE) or *Christelik Nasionaal Onderwys* (CNO) that was promoted in protest of the growing secularisation and Anglicization of basic formal education at the Cape (Hofmeyr, 1982). The CNE movement expanded outside of the Cape with the growing reach of basic education processes and frontend Protestant Christianity that emphasised the use of Dutch as the medium of instruction (Behr, 1988: 97).

4.3.6 Emerging issues within the initial basic education and implication for SA HE

The continuous interplay across the three entities of the church, the schools and the State is one to be taken note of, as it underlines the vital aspects of power and purpose of basic education systems before the initiation of HE in South Africa. Notably, the schooling system not only played an instrumental role as an indicator of the prevailing socio-political power brokerage, but it was engaged as a critical pawn in the consolidation of such power.

This preliminary note is valuable in drawing initial perspectives that relate to power brokerage across the religion and the state as well as the context of colonialism within the basic education framework in which the social-political struggles were also reflected in the educational space with such contestations as religion, language and identity emerging as key reference points. Quite significantly also, contradictions persisted, and while a secularised system of education was actively pursued under British imperial power, educational expansion was also pursued through the missionary outreaches. The education of Africans also became a differentiated

system coordinated by missionary work, and such patterns give a necessary background to understanding the fragmented educational patterns that basic formal education endured in South Africa.

The reasoning behind this elaborate engagement with the progression of formal basic education processes before the initiation of HE is in the significance of acknowledging the rootedness of South Africa's education system in its primary education provision, as equally argued by Lord Hailsham (Behr & MacMillan, 1966: 5). This study's pragmatic approach to the historical analysis of SA HE, therefore, contends that the origin and formalisation processes of South Africa's basic education are essential in drawing initial inferences on the patterns of institutional change in the educational processes. They also form preliminary theoretical propositions on how the socio-political context relates to the shape and purpose of basic education processes.

Therefore, by looking at the initial rise of basic education, it is proposed that the early structuring of the basic education system in South Africa set the tone for how the later educational processes, including HE, emerged. The recognition of educational processes as systems of expression of power and cultural preservation was considered as the first points of departure in understanding the eventual drivers for SA HE. As such, later analyses of power and the culture of the SA HE setting will thus find credence in identity and representation across such aspects as religion, language, race, ethnicity and geographical attributes.

4.4 The rise of post-primary education (1829–1900)

In 1829, the first secondary establishment in the form of a college was established at the Cape. This period overlapped with the *Voortrekkers* migration towards the Northern Republics from the British controlled Cape. The critical aspect to note here is that the establishment of colleges was essentially driven by the need to produce administrative and professional personnel in

response to the rapid economic growth at the Cape. As such, the South African College was established in 1829 to build a relevant workforce. The college was therefore used as a platform for preparing students for matriculation and higher examinations of the University of London (Byrnes, 1996; Behr & Macmillan, 1966: 205).

With the rising growth in the interest for advanced education, the initial monopoly that the South African college held in the post-primary education setting was broken when the Church of England and the Dutch Reformed church established eleven colleges between 1848 and 1874. These included the Diocesan College, Rondebosch (1848), Grey College, Bloemfontein (1855), St. Andrews College, Grahamstown (1855), Grey Institute, Port Elizabeth (1856); Theological Seminary, Stellenbosch (1859), The Graaff-Reinet college (1860), Pietermaritzburg High School (1863), Gill College, Somerset East (1864); the Gymnasium (later Stellenbosch and then Victoria College) (1866); the Theologische School van de Gereformeerde Kerk, Burgersdorp (1869) and Huguenot Seminary, Wellington (1874) (Behr & MacMillan 1966: 205; McKerron 1934: 87–90)

Two key trends are worth mentioning in the above establishment of colleges: the first is their permeation across the South African region; and secondly, their foundational premise within the church structures and as a result of the extension of missionary work beyond the Cape. These colleges provided a further springboard for a heightened interest in higher education and became the sites for the experimentation of its workings. It is noted, therefore that the colleges and their role in shaping post-primary education provided the premises within which the HE system was to be nurtured. As a matter of fact, the colleges combined both the secondary level curriculum for matriculation of qualifying students. Also, they offered university-level preparations for students who attempted to undertake the exams provided by the University of London. Quite significantly, the early traces of SA HE were in the form of a centrally facilitated examination process through the University of London.

The first local structural components for the establishment of SA HE effected through the creation of the Cape public service board in 1850, which examined the candidates' fitness for public service. By 1858, a fully-fledged Board of Public Examinations was instituted, and this inched the process closer to the creation of the University system in South Africa. This board was responsible for issuing certificates in literature and science between 1858 and 1873 (Behr & Macmillan, 1966: 205; McKerron, 1934: 90).

4.4.1 The extension of post-primary arrangements into SA HE (1973–1900)

In the foundation of SA HE, the significance of post-primary colleges as the base and the state as the guarantor is essential to note. This study recognizes the 1873 University Incorporation Act—where the university space was opened up—as the official commencement of SA HE as a localised systemic establishment. Even when it has been noted in preceding discussions that university-level examinations were already being conducted through the South African College and the University of London since 1829, and by the Board of Public Examinations in 1858; the 1873 university incorporation act is significant for this study as it officially sanctioned a post-secondary level of education from within a local higher education site.

As such, with the passing of the incorporation act, 'the university' became the symbol of the regulatory framework for post-secondary, and this was immortalised through the establishment of the University of the Cape of Good Hope (UCGH). It is noted that this HE system was modelled along with the kind of structure that had been operated in previous South African college relations with the University of London. With the establishment of the UCGH, a similar examination premise as the one that was provided for through the correspondence with the University of London was provided and as such, the university arrangement translated into an examination premise and general oversight without having to take up direct responsibilities for academic instruction (Mabizela, 2002; Behr & Macmillan, 1966: 206).

The UCGH as a degree-awarding entity, therefore, came to be associated with the descriptive analogy that provided matriculates the opportunity to undertake various degree examinations after extensive preparations in South African colleges. Behr and MacMillan (1966: 206) note that there was an undue emphasis on the university as a HE structure that conducted examinations. The nature of the initial SA HE arrangement was therefore premised on ‘the university’ as a testing ground for the recognition of the aptitude and knowledge, without necessarily contributing to building that knowledge in the first place; a task that was left to the colleges. The task of offering academic instruction was, therefore in the hands of the auxiliary colleges. These colleges emerged as extensions of the post-primary colleges that, as noted earlier, had primarily been spread across the South African peninsula as a result of extensive missionary work. SA HE thus started as an embodiment of the ‘university’ as a supervisory structure that was charged with the responsibility of setting examination standards, for which the colleges then prepared students.

The governance of this first HE structure under the UCGH was conducted through a council, which was initially appointed by the Governor. Later adjustments were made in order to allow for half of the council to be elected from within the pool of its graduates. However, discontent based on representation arose, as the smaller colleges increasingly expressed their displeasure of the dominance of the regional representation of colleges from Cape Town and Stellenbosch in the university’s governing structures (McKerron, 1934: 95). The first calls for reform within the SA HE structure, therefore bring to the fore the aspect of representation and regional expression as some of the first drivers for institutional change.

4.4.2 Early contestations in SA HE (1873–1900)

The question of how the ‘university’ was to be organised was subject to much controversy amongst the different constituent colleges. Nevertheless, the issues of representation within educational processes were being driven to the fore. Whereas the South African college proposed a single-college university arrangement, Victoria College to the contrary favoured a federal university arrangement in which the autonomy of the constituent colleges would be safeguarded. Another idea was in creating an affiliation arrangement, which would mean that the various colleges would be attached to a central university was also fronted. This affiliation arrangement would have meant that a central university would set the standards and the examinations. It would also have awarded degrees, although the constituent colleges would not be part of the university as such (Behr and MacMillan: 1966: 207). Here, another driver for institutional change can be denoted in terms of the degree of autonomy within the SA HE field, across its constituent elements. Noting that at this stage, the HE structuring as a formal institutional process and guided by the legal procedures is confirmed by attempts by the constituent colleges to change the structure of SA HE by challenging the basis on which UCGH conferred authority over them.

Therefore, by 1879—only six years into the newly established HE arrangement—the model under the UCGH was starting to wane. As Behr & Macmillan (1966) and MacKerron (1934: 94) note, this trend was not unique to South Africa, as it was equally the experienced of the all other colonial HE systems that had been modelled along with that of the University of London. This scenario provides another example of how the SA HE system is interconnected on an international scale, similar to how basic formal education progressed with an ongoing appropriation of experiences from continental Europe onto the South African peninsula.

Following this standoff, Sir Langham Dale, the Superintendent General of Education, delivered a report to the House of Assembly at the Cape in 1889, recommending the establishment of a

teaching university that would be modelled along with the example of the Agricultural University of Illinois. Whereas this opened the way to give way to an alternative to the examining university of UCGH, Dale's views on higher education were also significantly tilted towards offering the white settlers a similar kind of education as would be found anywhere in Europe. He did not, however, extend similar sentiments towards the education of the 'coloureds', for whom he recommended only elementary instruction and training for manual industries (Johnson, 1993:168–169). It was also the same period that JC Rhodes revealed to the *Afrikaner board* at Kimberly that he had intentions of founding a residential teaching University of Cape Town. Rhodes' idea was to establish a university that would encourage the promotion of shared ideas and culture among both the English and Dutch students across South Africa (Behr & Macmillan, 1966; Stimie & Geggus, 1972).

All this was happening within the context of further growth of the post-primary education landscape as an indication of how rapidly the educational growth was progressing. More educational centres were initiated, most of which offered technical classes. These included the evening class centre at Salt River (near Cape Town) and other post-secondary centres in Kimberly, Uitenhage, East London, Natal, Orange Free State and Transvaal were established from 1890. Their transformation into university colleges also formed part of the significant transitions that SA HE underwent, for instance: when the school of mines was transferred from Kimberly to Johannesburg in 1903 as a technical institute, it was later to transform into the Transvaal university college (Behr & Macmillan, 1966: 207).

Nonetheless, the colonial influence on the field of higher education was not hidden from the fact that the quick progression in the field was also coinciding with the British expansion of colonial influence beyond the Cape. Such was the context, where the colonial squabbles extended into the Northern republics, in which the Dutch settlers in an attempt to maintain their

relevance within the education sphere, also provided for scholarships for students from Transvaal to complete higher education in the Netherlands (Behr & Macmillan, 1966).

In the early development of higher education, therefore, colonial confluences between the Dutch and the British continued to play out. These resulted in an Afrikaner nationalist struggle for independence as well as the systematic exclusion of the black population from accessing the same levels of education as the settler population. Nonetheless, there remained levels of collaboration between the Cape and the Northern Republics despite their colonial rivalries. For instance, provision was made in 1896 for the republics' representation on the council of the University of Cape of Good Hope; an invitation that Natal accepted in 1897 while the Orange Free State (OFS) and Transvaal stepped forward to accept the invitation in 1902. (Behr & Macmillan, 1966: 207; McKerron 1934: 93).

4.5 Shaping SA HE in the changing colonial context 1900–1945

The initial processes of the evolution of SA HE were therefore entrenched within a context of power contestations, particularly one that coincided with the consolidation of imperial rule over the South African region by the British. Having established colonial control over the Cape, and annexed the Transvaal amidst resistance in the first of a series of wars against the Zulu and the Boers,¹ the entire region was at the behest of the expanding British colonial aspirations. The second South African War² of 1899–1902 was the decisive battle in the sequence of these forced annexations. Despite the spirited resistance, the British imperial powers effectively enveloped the entire South African region within their control. Even after the establishment of colonial control over the Republics after the South African wars, these new colonies of the Orange Free State, Transvaal and Natal all demanded control of their local educational

¹ First Anglo Boer War, Accessed from, <https://www.sahistory.org.za/article/first-anglo-boer-war> on 2020/04/18

² Second Anglo Boer war, Accessed from <https://www.sahistory.org.za/article/second-anglo-boer-war-1899-1902> 2020/04/18

institutions with as much fervour as the demand for their territorial integrity (Stimie & Geggus 1972). This insistence can be read along with similar patterns of power brokerage and representation that were reflected in the control of basic education that was now playing out as a negotiating point.

As a demonstration of the power dynamics that prefaced the control of the educational field, the South African Act of 1909 mandated that higher education was to be managed nationally (centrally) by the Union government and through the Minister of Education. On the other hand, both primary and secondary education was to be administered at the provincial level (Metrowich, 1996; Behr & MacMillan, 1996). Following the 1909 Act of the Union; therefore, a precedent had been created in which, according to Moodie (1994), South African universities manifestly became statutory creatures.

Following the 1909 entrenchment of HE into the Union government's structures, the meaning and the extent of higher education was left vague and needed further demarcation. This need for specificity became even more apparent when *de facto* arguments as to whether teacher education, as a post-secondary field, would also be considered under the administrative domain of higher education or for the sake of practicality, be considered under the administrative domain of provinces, which already controlled primary and secondary education (Behr & Macmillan, 1966). As such higher education was defined by Union government in 1912, as any educational aspects that involved "everything that the provinces could not, would not or were not allowed to handle" (Stemie & Geggus, 1972: 19).

By implication, SA HE encompassed all kinds of educational undertakings in 1) technical institutions like the school of art, music, domestic science, technology and mining; 2) vocation institutions other than those provided by the provinces; and 3) continuation classes and the training of secondary and nursery school teachers. Eventually, the power to define what

constituted 'higher education' was bestowed upon the Minister of Education in the Union government by the Financial Relations Act No.5 of 1922. The Minister's power extended as far as approving the establishment of new degrees, diplomas or faculties proposed by councils of universities as well as the power to set up or close institutions of higher education (Beale, 1998: 45). This power was further extended by the Subsidies Act of 1925 so that the minister could declare any institutional arrangement as 'higher education', with the consent of the provincial authorities (Behr & Macmillan, 1966; Stemie & Geggus, 1972).

The matter of defining SA HE was later revisited by the Van der Horst commission of 1928, which recommended that the label of 'higher education' needed to be used exclusively in reference to university-level education. This commission was intended to address the problem of duplication within higher education and address the overlap between universities and technical colleges. The purpose of the commission was therefore to specify the different roles that universities and technical colleges were expected to play so that none encroached on the roles of the other. The commission also criticised the existence of an all-female college in Huguenot and the Christian inclination of the Potchefstroom college, arguing that these two formations were 'not fitting the thinking of the day' (Behr & MacMillan, 1966: 210). The actions of this commission, therefore sought to challenge some of the dualities that SA HE had come to represent.

4.5.1 Consolidating the synonymy of the University and Higher Education

Noting that SA HE had begun its operations within a university arrangement and with the UCGH at its helm, this primacy of the organisation of SA HE as synonymous with 'the university' was carried forward to the Union of South Africa. This emerged again as the looming uncertainty as to the kind of format the university was expected to adopt and was taken on as a task for the legislature. In 1913, a parliamentary select committee (the Thomson

Committee) was appointed to offer advice on the viability of the different possible university formats and its favour was in a single and robust national university (Niven, 1971). This was followed by the creation of the Lawrence Commission of 1914 which recommended that two universities be set up to pursue teaching and research; one in the south with the South African College and the Victoria College as constituent colleges and the other in the north and to incorporate the Transvaal University College, the Grey University College and the Natal University College. The committee also recommended that Rhodes University College was to be part of the south organisation initially but was at liberty to join the northern group later (Malherbe, 1937). Some of the finances for this proposal were to be drawn from the Beit–Wernher bequest of £500,000, which was then to be divided amongst the various colleges. These recommendations were, however, not put to the test, following the interruption from the First World War (1914-18). It was later considered that the setting up of a national teaching university was not the optimal choice for South Africa at the time and that the solution lay more in either single college universities or federal type of universities (Behr & MacMillan, 1966: 208).

Another decisive step towards a new university format for SA HE was taken in 1915 when the South African College proposed that it should become an independent university of its own and that the other colleges would either do likewise or join the pre-existing arrangement under an examining university. Victoria University followed suit, in line with the proposal made by the South African college. Thus, the path for the organisation of a new SA HE system that was to be entrenched within a field of independent universities was laid out (Behr & MacMillan, 1966: 208). For the first time, the individual entities within SA HE took decisive steps to determine how they were to be organised within the institutional arrangements of HE in South Africa.

This move by the South African college and Victoria College meant that a new legislative frame was to be drawn in order to accommodate a new institutional arrangement with standalone (independent) universities and teaching universities that would become affiliates of an examining university. As such, through the University Act of 1916, one finds a more specific direction for how the university landscape within the new SA HE frame was to be organised (Metrowich, 1929; Behr & MacMillan, 1996; McKerron, 1966: 96).

With the 1916 Act:

- 1) The University of South Africa (UNISA) was created as an incorporation of the pre-existing UCGH and other teaching universities that did not assume an independent status of their own.
- 2) The South African College acquired its independent status and became the University of Cape Town
- 3) Victoria College became Stellenbosch University.

This act decisively completed a dual-institutional arrangement within SA HE, with the autonomous universities of Cape Town and Stellenbosch on the one hand and a series of other colleges within a federal arrangement under UNISA. The colleges that became constituent university colleges of UNISA following this act included: Rhodes University College (Grahamstown), Huguenot University College (in Wellington), Grey University College (in the Orange Free State), Transvaal University College (in Transvaal), Potchefstroom University College (in Transvaal) and the School of Mines and Technology (in Natal).³ In terms of identifying historical institutional patterns for this study, the dual institutional arrangement is essential to take note of here. In this case, two different university-based arrangements co-existed within the context of SA HE. This aspect of dual-institutionalism was also extended to

³ ibid

the extremities of race, where a South African native college was established as an offshoot of Lovedale missionary institution at Fort Hare was created in 1916. It admitted African, Indian and coloured students who all took examinations at the University of South Africa. However, even then, the native college was not granted the status of being recognised as one of the constituent colleges of UNISA.⁴

The precedence of these events provides grounding to make the inference that premises the SA HE institutional frame as one that was organised primarily around the ‘university’ but with ability to withstand incongruous forms of dualities in the way that its institutional frame was conducted.

4.5.2 The Rise of University Autonomy in SA HE

The aspirations for autonomy became the ultimate form of expression for universities within the SA HE, and this was sought after by the constituent colleges that were operating under UNISA. This demonstration of the primacy of the university was experienced in the rapidly changing SA HE frame. Within a stretch that lasted just over three decades since the 1916 University Act, virtually all the university colleges had acquired the highly coveted status as fully-fledged autonomous universities.

In Behr & MacMillan (1966: 209–210) an outline of this move is indicated to have begun with the school of Mines in Johannesburg that became the University of Witwatersrand (1921); followed by the Transvaal University College became University of Pretoria (1930); then later Natal University College became the University of Natal (1949); Grey University College (which had become the University College of the Orange Free State from 1934) became the University of the Orange Free State (1950); Rhodes University College became Rhodes University (1951); and the University College of Potchefstroom became Potchefstroom

⁴ *ibid*

University for Christian Higher education (1951). In 1952, the native College of Fort Hare became affiliated to Rhodes University as the University College of Fort Hare to further the perpetuation of the bizarre institutional dualities, whose initial trajectories have already been identified in SA HE to have decisively taken on a racial character. At the same time, the all-female Huguenot College ceased to exist, and this marked a decisive end of the single-gender university as SA HE institutional option.

It is noteworthy that this whole changing context of SA HE was concretised within the already established long tradition of legislative authority, where each of the University had a corresponding legislative act to sanction its ascent. It is also with such trends that one begins to notice the intricacies in the historical significance of the changing SA HE landscape as premised within the evolving socio-political context of South Africa. As similarly noted by Stemie and Geggus (1972), higher education remained as a priority area for the consolidation of power, and ‘the university’ was involved in ongoing efforts to maintain its relevance.

4.6 SA HE and apartheid legislation (1950–1990)

While educational processes, including HE, were firmly located within the socio-political context of South Africa, the emergence of apartheid in the run-up to the 1950s further cemented this inference. The rise of the National Party in 1948 and its accompanying apartheid form of governance meant that the legislative-driven nature of SA HE was to endure a changing socio-political context that became definitively racially driven.

This meant that SA HE, and the university context within which it had come to be defined, was to continue in the same trend of power brokerage that had been identified in earlier educational processes. The university setting as a vital tool for state power, as Davies (1996:320) notes, was vastly shaped and maintained through the legal frame that shaped the apartheid educational

system. This expression of state power in SA HE extended to such intricacies as academic content, racial and language differences that were permissible at the different universities.

Moodie (1994), in his view of SA HE during the apartheid period, argues that the state's involvement was always informed and guided by respect for higher education and university autonomy. His argument is located within the understanding that in a *de facto* sense, universities could choose who would be admitted to their institutions as well as the language of instruction that they could use. However, Moodie in this assertion does not acknowledge how the prior socio-political trajectories had shaped SA HE to the point that what appeared as universities making their own autonomous decisions had been entrenched within their institutional setup over time. As such, apartheid legislation only emphasised aspects of segregation in SA HE that had been in formation for long before their formal expression in the apartheid laws.

4.6.1 The institutionalisation of segregation in SA HE during apartheid

Beale (1998:114) identifies the socio-political landscape in SA HE after 1948 as reflective of the expectations of the Nationalists, who were opposed to an integrated approach of open universities. They wanted to pursue an approach that curtailed Africans to the performance of manual labour in the same way as Sir Langham Dale had already fronted for the segregation of HE based on population groups in 1889 (Johnson, 1993). For Beale therefore, change in SA HE during the apartheid period was premised on the policy goals fronted from within the Native Affairs Department (NAD) whose priorities were set on segregation, political control and the differentiation of education. Beale points out that these priorities were made more explicit in the introduction of the 1957 separate university bill that was later enacted as the 1959 Extension of University Education Act and the Fort Hare transfer Act where universities were blatantly defined along the lines of language and race.

Davies (1996:321) on his part argues to the contrary, by understating the role of the State in the direction of SA HE. He argues that although the State had become a formidable authoritarian machine during the apartheid period, its capacities ought not to be exaggerated. He bases this argument on the consideration that the State's expanded bureaucracy in the 1950s challenged its competence. At the same time, the National party itself struggled to maintain electoral acceptance among its solely white constituency. He further argues that, unlike what might be commonly imagined, apartheid was not constructed according to the dictates of a singular and uncontested 'grand design' but was somewhat shaped by ideological inputs from within state departments which were not always in agreement with each other.

Whether or not one chooses to consider the apartheid state as an institutional structure that possessed absolute omnipotence over the conduct of social and economic life, one needs not to lose sight, as Moodie (1994: 1) insists, of the notion that the experience of South Africa's universities under the National Party Government was defined in large part by apartheid policies and the presence of state machinery that could be deployed at any time to ensure conformity. For universities, as noted earlier, part of this coercion was linked to the fact that as statutory entities, they heavily relied on the state's financial grants for their sustenance. These circumstances are reflective of what Moodie (1994: 29–30) similarly identifies as the state's stronghold on SA HE that lay in the control of subsidies.

James (1990) notes that the apartheid government seemed to grow in the confidence that universities would conform to the policy requirements, and sought to absolve itself from direct engagement through the imposition of institutionally monitored quotas. In the same way, institutions were then prone to self-censorship, and this became one of the ways that the state shifted responsibility to the university to impose the kinds of restrictions that the state would have had to impose (Moodie, 1994: 38). An example of this kind of self-censorship was identifiable in the so-called 'Mafeje Affair' of 1968, where the University of Cape Town (UCT)

overturned the appointment of Mr Archie Mafeje as a senior lecturer even in the absence of legislation that prohibited the appointment of 'black' staff to the ranks of 'white' universities at the time (Hendricks, 2008). Here, it can be seen that not only were the apartheid policies guarding a racially inclined institutional framework for higher education but also created a limited agency of universities that worked in alignment with the formal rules of segregation that were operating at the socio-political level.

As such, Moodie (1994) also considers the period of apartheid as one not only characterised by conflict between the state and universities. He notes that the relationship exhibited significant levels of co-operation between the state and the HE sector, backed by a state-financed university expansion from which, he notes, "all races benefited" (Moodie, 1994: 1). Moodie's assertion, again, disregards the disparities in what he considers as 'benefits' that were unevenly distributed based on race that permeated through the apartheid state into SA HE.

Davies (1996) thus argues that regardless of the public display of significant ideological differences between universities and the State, their relationship was only occasionally at odds. As such, Davies notes that conflicting demands dominated the interaction between the state and universities; where the state demanded accountability from universities, while the universities demanded their rights to autonomy from the state. A convenient state of mutual moderation between the state and universities thus emerged, where the state benefited for practical and legitimacy reasons. The universities benefited in terms of their preservation as statutory entities with access to state subsidies. Here, Davies notes that the apartheid period was rooted in legislative directions for higher education through parliamentary statutes and was a demonstration of the state's firm hand in the universities. The firm hand of the state over universities was maintained through budgetary control and with university staff considered primarily as state employees. At the same time, university governing councils also had a fair representation of individuals appointed by the government (Davies, 1996)

Bunting (2006) accounted for this connection between the state and the universities as existing within the kind of power brokerage previously identified in this study, where the positioning of universities in South Africa as legal entities essentially meant that they were creatures of the state. Bunting notes that this kind of state crafted mechanisms on which the legitimization of SA HE abounded, meant the priorities of the apartheid state also became the priorities of the universities. This tight coupling between the state and SA HE was however not short of disparities, as different universities operated within different kinds of guidelines, even when they all operated within the same SA HE institutional frame. These dualities in SA HE are explored further below.

4.6.2 The consolidation of State control over SA HE during apartheid

It is imperative to acknowledge that universities possessed a form of relative autonomy during apartheid, but this remained within the limits of historical institutional processes that became formalised with apartheid legislation. In principle, therefore, when Moodie (1994) argues that universities had the authority to determine who could be admitted to them, it is within the consolidation of pre-existing institutional dispositions that such an assertion ought to be understood. Liberal-leaning (open, English) universities like UCT and Rhodes University admitted few non-white students, most of whom were postgraduate students. In essence, therefore, as Beale (1998) notes, the idea of open universities meant nothing more than having an open admission policy, as the same universities conformed to the apartheid policies of racial separation on campus in residences, games and dances.

Other universities like Stellenbosch University, the University of Pretoria and the University of the Orange Free State (UOFS) never admitted any non-white students and essentially operated within the historical drive of Afrikaner nationalism, premising both the Afrikaans language and the white race as part of their signature identities. Similarly, even when the

University at Fort Hare was created without an upfront racial delimitation, in practice, it remained a black college (Behr & MacMillan, 1966: 213). One can therefore note that the entrenchment of SA HE within the dualities of race and language can be traced through the evolution of the educational processes in South Africa, in which the state eventually emerged as the principal driver.

Nonetheless, Davies (1996: 321) also argues that South Africa's universities were already divided along racial and ethnic lines long before the apartheid period, with racial and language demarcations along 'white' universities for English speakers (which also admitted a small proportion of 'non-white' students) and those for Afrikaans speakers (which did not typically admit 'non-white' students). All 'black' students were only allowed to attend the University of Fort Hare that had, in principle, been set aside for Africans.

The apartheid state can therefore be noted to have taken decisive control over SA HE through an avowing legal framework that dictated how higher education entities operated. An inference is however made from the progression of historical events that the rise to power of the National Party in 1948, which rode along with a wave of Afrikaner nationalism, was logically followed by a period of a carefully and systematically orchestrated racial separation that also extended to SA HE. The apartheid socio-political context revolved around the narrative of "defending White domination and economic prosperity against the threat posed by an increasingly assertive urban African working class" as Davies (1996: 322) notes. Similarly, Beale's (1998: 115) indicates that, already by 1951, the changes in the South African political landscape were starting to play out within the nature of the university establishments, owing to the concretisation of racial dichotomies in the SA HE space as per the Apartheid State. Moodie (1994: 4) notes a further concretisation of these racial dualities in SA HE where the University at Fort Hare was prohibited from admitting students from outside South Africa by 1950, and

the apartheid state no longer offered bursaries for black students to study medicine anywhere else, except at the designated and segregated Natal Medical School.

4.6.3 Statutory divisions within SA HE

The trajectory of legislative manoeuvres in education framing in South Africa has been so far explored to have been reflected both in the arena of basic education and later in the consolidation of SA HE processes. The apartheid period provided pronounced legislative implications for SA HE. James (1990) predicated the SA HE space during apartheid on the expanded use of the policy mechanisms to the extent of defining ethnic, racial and language differentiation of university establishments through State legislation. Moodie (1994:3) also takes note of the numerous legislative inquiries that were directed towards SA HE as an indication of the height of attention that the apartheid government paid to higher education. Along with Behr (1988: 25–33), they pay specific attention to the numerous public inquiries on which the policy impetus for SA HE within the 1948–1990 period was hinged. Two of these stand out in the way they influenced policies in the early years of apartheid rule (1) the Eiselen Commission (1951), and (2) the Holloway commissions (1953 and 1954); What is significant to note about these commissions of inquiry and committees is how their approach formed the normative basis in the establishments of new trends in the higher education sector as the following discussion indicates.

Firstly, the Eiselen commission's principal recommendation was that 'non Europeans' universities be divided along linguistic lines: Fort Hare for Xhosa, a new Zulu institution to serve Northern Nguni and a Sotho institution in the Transvaal to serve the Sotho community; all with oversight provided by UNISA (Beale, 1998: 142). The Holloway Commissions of enquiry, on the other hand, examined university finances, and in 1953 proposed a new funding formula that granted block grants to universities that then had considerable flexibility as to how

they used these funds. The 1954 edition of the Holloway commission, also, considered a separation of training facilities for 'Non-Europeans' at universities. Notably, this second recommendation of the Holloway commission was rejected in favour of Eiselen's strategy that emerged from his 1957 Separate University Bill, where his recommendations for dealing with the *Native question* were to create separate HE entities for non-Europeans (non-white) that would be geographically isolated from the European (white) ones.

Elson's proposal of dealing with the native question was eventually renamed as the Extension of University Education Bill and passed on 11 June 1959 (Beale, 1998: 205–206). It resulted in a statutory provision that ensured that the SA HE landscape was firmly divided based on race and ethnicity in addition to language dualities. This ran side by side with similar legislation that had arisen out of the 1953 Bantu Education Act that pertained to primary and post-primary education that was meant to limit the creation of 'wrong expectations' of achievements for the non-white population (Moodie 1994: 6; Behr, 1988: 32–34).

Such policies, therefore, meant that the non-European population was then to be given a different kind of curriculum under the guise of providing them with the kind of education that was deemed to be relevant to their place in society. It was argued that building a system of segregated higher education was to be understood as a "positive apartheid measure", where it was fronted as a strategy to assist in the development of native communities and to train their leaders. In the words of the Native Affairs Minister in 1953, Dr H.G. Verwoerd, the strategy was to ensure that they did not end up producing "Black Englishmen" who would be alienated from their native roots (Moodie, 1994: 6). It can therefore be seen that the early years of apartheid were characterised by a rampant scale of legislation frameworks that were intended to spell out, in unequivocal terms, the expected separations between white and non-white populations in South Africa. In this regard, the legislation within higher education was also

meant to conform to the layout of the apartheid society that imposed strict racial separation on the population.

Beale (1998) makes it a point to emphasise the interplay of the overall policy landscape of the apartheid state with the evolution of SA HE at the time. Here, she notes that the apartheid legislative framework provided a form of scaffolding along which SA HE policy was streamlined. Her insights imply a level of inevitability in how SA HE rolled out within the apartheid years as a consequence of the policies of the apartheid state. Policies such as the Prohibition of Mixed Marriage Act (1949), the Bantu Authorities Act (1951), The Population Registration Act (1950), the second Immorality Act (1957), The Group Areas Act (1950 and its subsequent amendments), the Bantu Self- Government Act (1959), were all part of the context within which the changes in higher education were also to be brought into alignment.

For Moodie (1994: 4), the Universities Act of 1955 is the identifiable hallmark for the SA HE changes during the apartheid period as it consolidated the existing laws relating to the powers that the government already had over universities. The Act also spelt out the previously latent authority that the universities had over whom they could include or exclude from their premises. What this meant was that through the provisions of the 1955 Act, the university councils had acquired a more explicit right to exclude non-white students. Besides, the Minister was also given the authority to withhold any proportion of payment of the financial grant intended for any university that would not have observed the provisions of the act.

The policy and legislative landscape, no doubt, was a very instrumental driver in the institutional process of SA HE during the apartheid era. From spelling out the premises of inclusion and exclusion within the HE space, the policies were able to concretise the structure of SA HE along with the dualities of race, ethnicity, language and geography. These fed into the socio-political context that was predicated along with the apartheid governance policies

that also increasingly side-lined South Africa's participation in the global community, including that of higher education. The apartheid context highlights institutional dualism as another trajectory worth further scrutiny in its impact on SA HE.

4.6.4 Dualism as an evolving institutional feature for SA HE

Having noted the racial and language dualities that had historically emerged and enveloped SA HE by the turn of apartheid, the evolution of other dualities that emerged is also worth taking note. As such, it is noted that within the religious dimension, dualities persisted in SA HE. Kallaway (2002) for instance argues that the general politics and policies of apartheid Education had been, in fact, an attempt to rebuild Christian National Education (CNE), which had arisen in the Boer Republics' resistance of British Anglicisation in the 19th century. Such was the scene where the religiously orientated universities of Potchefstroom and the UOFS were allowed to screen employees based on religion through the choice to include the conscience clause in their incorporation charter.

One of the more explicit persisting forms of dualities was in terms of the geographical and ethnic disparities that became more pronounced for SA HE during apartheid. As Chick (1996) notes, the separation of SA HE across disparate geographical and ethnic demarcations also served to legitimate the enforcement of the homelands policy. The National Party's ideological beliefs in separate development under the apartheid system of governance, led to the division of South Africa into five ethnic/racial demarcations at the beginning of the 1980s and thus creating spatial dualities for SA HE. As indicated by O'Malley(1994), the homelands had been cultivated long before apartheid; the idea of separate development had nurtured through such policies as the land acts of 1913 and 1936. These acts provided the precedence on which the Bantu Authorities Act of the early 1950s rode. Bunting (2006) outlines the different Republics that emerged to include: The Republic of Transkei carved out of part of the old Cape Province

(1976); The Republic of Bophuthatswana which was formed from part of the old Transvaal Province (1977); The Republic of Venda which was also carved out of the old Transvaal Province (1979); the Republic of Ciskei also formed from another part of the old Cape Province (1981); and the Republic of South Africa which remained with the vast majority of the landholdings of the old South Africa. In everyday language, the first four entities were known by the acronym of 'TBVC countries', euphemistically called "homelands". These were subaltern to the Republic of South Africa (RSA) which became the core.

This was perhaps one of the clearest drives towards the intention of the National Party, one that was driven by their desire to create independent countries as a way to legitimise their separate development agenda. Bunting (2006) explains it more plainly that the four 'republics' were apartheid creatures with the singular purpose of disenfranchising the majority of the citizens of South Africa. This is exemplified by the way homelands were given their institutional frameworks, including higher education, as an avenue to further the agenda of separation based on ethnicity and race. Within the administration of higher education, for instance, a distinction between 'own affairs' and 'general affairs' was one of such moves to create a separate mechanism for how higher education was to be administered in different republics. Bunting (2006) explains that the 'own affairs' were considered to be matters that accrued specifically to 'cultural and value frameworks' of the coloured, Indian, or white communities, while 'General Affairs' were coordinated at the core. Education by the 1984 constitution was considered as an 'own affair' for the whites, coloureds and Indians. As such, primary, secondary and higher education for the 'whites' was to be the responsibility of the House of Assembly (representing white voters) while that of the 'coloureds' was to be handled in the House of Representatives (representing so-called "coloured" voters) and that in the House of Delegates (representing Indian voters). This was the education management plan that was meant to be coordinated in the racially constituted Tricameral parliamentary arrangement that

did not include the representation of the disenfranchised 'African/black' majority. All forms of the Africans' educational processes were to be managed through the 'General Affairs' portfolio, with oversight of the government's Department of Education and Training (DET).

Another duality that emerged within the SA HE field was in the distinction between universities and Technikons. Technikons arose out of the Van Wyk de Vries Commission's recommendation that resulted into the Advanced Technical Education Amendment Act (Act 43 of 1979) that gave rise to colleges for advanced technical education or renamed as 'Technikons' (Pittendrigh, 1988). This distinction between universities and Technikons, according to Bunting (2006) served the National Party's naïve ideological beliefs in the existence of 'essences' as unique distinguishing features of objects from each other, and by extension, justified the separation of higher education institutions and the race groups that attended them. Based on this logic, the essence of a university was science while that of a Technikon was technology; where 'science' meant all scholarly undertakings for knowledge and knowledge's own sake, while 'technology' was concerned with activities that applied knowledge (Bunting, 2006: 37).

Bunting refers to this kind of state-centred approach by institutions of higher education as an instrumentalist one, considering that their primary purpose was to generate and disseminate knowledge for a purpose defined or determined by the State's socio-political agenda. He notes that Afrikaans institutions and Technikons exhibited the strongest of these instrumentalist qualities. This meant that the higher education frame was to be divided between the production of knowledge (in universities) and the application of knowledge (in Technikons). Such differentiations served to institutionalise another duality in the SA HE field in addition to the geographical, racial, language and ethnic distinctions that had been already institutionalised.

4.6.5 Resistance and opposition to the SA HE status quo during apartheid

Various forms of resistance arose, both internally within South Africa, as well as externally in the form of boycotts and economic sanctions to South Africa's audacious apartheid policies that galvanised racial separation in all spheres of South African life. These sanctions extended to SA HE and meant that there were progressively fewer possibilities for international collaboration for the HE establishments in South Africa. Concerning SA HE, a selective boycott was favoured internationally, ahead of the kinds of total boycotts that emerged in the 1980s in order to allow for the possibility to aid the wave of anti-apartheid support that was emerging in universities. As Hyslop, Vally & Hassim (2006) argue, these boycotts had little effect on SA HE as it was difficult for different individuals and universities to apply these international boycotts without necessarily playing into the hands of the apartheid regime's own suppressions.

The internal resistance was, however, more pronounced; whether in the form of defiance by taking advantage of legal loopholes or through open protests against the apartheid era rules. Moodie (1994:8) notes a form of defiance that existed within the SA HE set-up by liberal universities that showed a semblance of public opposition to the apartheid policies. However, their opposition related mostly to aspects of the freedoms of academic staff and students to pursue their academic work without any forms of restriction beyond the restraints imposed by the very nature of their work and the available resources. Beale (1998:215) contradicts this view, however, noting that in the open universities (which maintained an open admission policy) such as UCT, the opposition was specifically towards academic segregation- and not to racial segregation in its entirety. On the other hand, the University of Witwatersrand (WITS) was opposed to the whole 'legislative enforcement' of academic segregation on racial grounds. In essence, therefore, Beale (1998) considers that in fact, "open universities" meant nothing more than having an open admission policy, as the same universities still abided by the national

policies that necessitated segregation in social matters including residences, games and dances. Here, Davies (1996:10–11) similarly argued that the ‘liberal universities’ were essentially concerned more about their institutional rights and the academic freedoms of their staff than in tackling of the broader framework of racial segregation.

Badat (1999) presents extensive coverage of how student communities, despite the strict state policy of racial separation in universities, were able to organise themselves in opposition to apartheid and to demand equal citizenship. He notes that the structures that had been created by apartheid had resulted in fertile grounds for student protests, where black students were, for instance, enabled to use their segregated universities as bases for resistance. This was a consequence of the growing body of black students, the leadership of Steven Biko, and through the creation of the South African Students' Organisation (SASO). SASO's efforts extended beyond university campuses, and they advanced the cause of blacks (not just students) in and outside of their university campuses by coordinating nationwide protests and boycotts to the apartheid regime. By the time SASO was outlawed in 1977, the student movement had already picked up momentum, and the South African National Student Congress (SANSCO) stepped into SASO's footsteps in 1979. Through SANSCO, the traditional exclusivity of the liberation struggle was maintained. This position only changed in 1991 when SANSCO allied with the National Union of South African Students (NUSAS) to create the South African Student Congress (SASCO) as a non-racial student force (Badat, 1999).

In another more specific instance of the university as a site for resistance, Anderson's (2002) considers the pedagogical resistance of the University of Western Cape (UWC) to racial separation. He presents a compelling case of how the UWC became the first post-secondary institution to oppose the racial criteria of admissions of only coloured students in 1982, in opposition to the apartheid's education legislation. He notes however that UWC's overt opposition to racial stratification resulted into a cut in its subsidies. Using Gramsci's approach

of the transformation of the conscious as his conceptual framework, Anderson attributes the defiance approach of the UWC as a result of the creation of broad-based social movements. The irony here is that such social movements were incubated within the segregated HE entities that had been created by apartheid policies, but instead turned out to become epicentres for resistance.

As such Beale (1994; 2004) argues that the apartheid policy frameworks from 1948–1970, and that the segregated spaces that it created failed to build white South Africanism concretely, and instead resulted in the increase of black consciousness. Similarly, Badat (2002) considers the case of student politics within the apartheid period and notes that popular resistance against apartheid education and race, class and gender oppression contributed to reproduction in some cases or a transformation in others of the social relations and institution practices of apartheid.

Between 1950–1990, some of the critical markers of HE institutional processes were the consolidation of segregative practices into law. These practices resulted in a HE system differentiated along the lines of race, linguistic, ethnic and geographical disparities. It is, therefore, significant to note that the apartheid state further strengthened the formal institutional dimensions of SA HE through statutory provisions that hinged directly on what individual HE establishments were allowed to do. By 1990 therefore when the SA HE status quo began to be shaken, institutional change needed to refocus onto the formal processes of the law in as much as attention also had to be paid to the internal deinstitutionalisation processes of individual HE establishments.

4.7 SA HE and reform process 1990–2010

SA HE in the 1990–2010 period needs to be considered in terms of the significant reforms that indicated the shift from the apartheid era. As indicated in the last chapter, this timeframe will be elaborated through the individual case of the University of the Free State (UFS).

Nonetheless, a general analysis of SA HE in the 1990–2010 period considered two phases: 1) the transitional period from apartheid ran from 1990 to 1994, and 2) the 1994–2010 period that can be legitimately considered as the post-apartheid period within this study's selected time frame. The policy outline of this period was examined in the following discussion, and in Chapter V, the more specific case of the UFS was examined.

4.7.1 Transitional period for SA HE reform (1990–1994)

The shifts that started to signal the end of apartheid primarily revolved around local pressures to release political prisoners of the African national congress (ANC) and the international economic sanctions on South Africa. Savage (2000) mainly takes note of the negotiations between the ANC and the apartheid government since the mid-1980s as a means of ceasing the violence as having led the impetus for apartheid's demise. Levy (1999) on his part, notes that the sanctions had a little impact by way of economic effects on South Africa. However, their psychological impact on the governing party was pronounced.

Nonetheless, Savage (2000) and Graham (2012) note that the transition from apartheid was stepped up in October 1989, when F. W. de Klerk replaced P. W. Botha. President de Klerk released several prisoners unconditionally, which had been a longstanding demand of the African National Congress (ANC). This was followed by the unbanning of liberation movements and civil society organisations as well as the release of Nelson Mandela in February 1990. De Klerk's presidency from 1989–1994 was instrumental in repealing the laws on which apartheid had thrived such as Reservation of Separate Amenities Act, repealed in October 1990 and the Natives' Land Act, the Group Areas Act and the Population Registration Act all repealed in February 1991 (Clark & Worger, 2016).

These shifts in the South African socio-political context thus indicated the turnaround point for South Africa's educational sector, including SA HE. This process of preparing for a new

political order in SA HE is noted to have taken a decisive turn when in 1992 when the National Policy Investigation (NEPI), conducted numerous research studies and compiled a report for the National Education Crisis Committee (NECC), whose mandate was to research national education policy in the new context of emerging democratic order. The NECC had been borne of the apartheid resistance since 1985 as a civil society organisation that contested the apartheid educational policies before it had been banned and then unbanned in the new socio-political space. Underlying NEPI's propositions was the need to uplift disadvantaged communities through the improved distribution of educational resources through its principles on non-racism, non-sexism, democracy, a unitary system and redress, with a particular view on the Higher education (Odhav, 2009). Through the massive research, networking and consensus-building projects, NEPI's efforts demonstrated a readiness to overturn the apartheid era policies (Moja and Hayward, 2000).

South Africa had been excluded from global participation owing to the apartheid regime's policies of racial discrimination, so when the sanctions were lifted at the turn of 1990, SA HE was immediately plunged into the global HE playing field. Some of these global trends that SA HE immediately came face to face with at the turn of apartheid as Kraak (2001, pp.15) notes, were the drive towards massification that corresponded directly with the need for the expansion of access and learning in the South African context. Christie (2015) also attributes the pull towards SA HE massification to the neo-liberal leaning of the government's strategy towards re-entering as a participant in the global economy and that this invariably reflected the market-orientated strategy that SA HE acquired in the post-1990 period.

These activities in SA HE, therefore, prepared the transition from apartheid and invariably prepared the SA HE field for massive changes. After the 1994 democratic election and with

the resounding victory by the ANC, several policy shifts for SA HE were instituted, as outlined in the discussion that follows.

4.7.2 The SA HE legislative shift and reforms in the post-apartheid period (1994-2010)

When the ANC won the 1994 election, its statement regarding HE was that it was expected to contribute to reconstruction and development, to undertake initiatives to reform its institutional and system governance, to institute affirmative action measures, and commit to reforming HE financing. The National Commission on Higher Education (NCHE) was formed in 1995 after broad consultation and with roots in the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) of 1994 to coordinate reforms in SA HE (Odhav, 2009). The NCHE concentrated on the size and shape of the South African higher education landscape and embarked on a program for the Transformation of Higher Education in the Green paper (1995) followed by the white paper on higher education in 1997. The white paper sought to remodel the SA HE institutional landscape and for the student and staff profiles to gradually become a better reflection of the new demographic manifestations of South African society. The white paper focused on the structure, growth, governance and the funding of SA HE as priority areas.

The NCHE's outlined strategy was to implement a massified SA HE platform as a way to balance equity and development through participation, responsiveness and governance. Participation was to ensure the shift of SA HE from an elitist system that would also be responsive to the transition of South Africa from the context of racial discrimination and towards a democratic order that constitutionally upheld justice and equal opportunity. At the same time, the governance of SA HE was to be considered as a cooperative undertaking between the state, higher education institutions and other stakeholders- but with the state to play the steering and coordinating role (Reddy, 2001).

In 1997, The Higher Education Act was promulgated to reconstruct higher education, including its structures. The vision of the Act was to bring about a single coordinated system of HE to

respond to human and developmental needs nationally, and to promote values of an open and democratic society, for various freedoms and scholarship. Part of its major preoccupation was to seek redress for past discrimination and ensure representativeness and equal access, to provide optimal opportunities for learning, and to foster knowledge creation, to develop the potential of every student and employee, and to provide for national and local community need (Odhav, 2009).

This was followed by the creation of the Council on Higher Education (CHE) in May 1998 to address the significant challenges that had been identified in the first post-apartheid reforms for SA HE. These were: 1) effectiveness, in terms of the how relevant higher education was to the labour market; 2) efficiency, as a measure of quality and throughputs; and 3) equity, with a focus on the distribution of students and staff by race, gender and social class in different fields of learning and teaching. CHE was to advise the minister on all matters related to HE, undertake quality assurance and report annually to parliament on the state of HE. The specific manifestations of the CHE will be elaborated further in the close look at the UFS case.

The CHE was followed by the National Plan for Higher Education (NPHE) of 2001, which represented an attempt to operationalize the programme for transformation of higher education of the White Paper. The NPHE divided SA HE into three institutional types: 1) traditional universities; 2) Universities of technology (UoTs); and 3) comprehensive universities that combine attributes of UoTs and traditional universities. The significant areas of focus for the NPHE were to: 1) produce the graduates needed for the social and economic development of South Africa; 2) achieve equity in the South African Higher Education System; 3) achieve diversity in the South African Higher Education System; 4) sustain and promote research; and 5) restructure the entire institutional landscape of the South African higher education system. The NPHE was followed by the Report of a Working Group (Department of Education, 2002), which recommended the reduction of the size of SA HE from 36 to 23 institutions through a

number of mergers. This was followed by incorporations and mergers across the institutional types of traditional, university of technology and comprehensive universities.

The implications of institutional change in the context of the UFS in the 1990-2010 period were considered more closely in Chapter (V). It is imperative to note, however, that the formal basis of institutional change for SA HE remained prominent, as seen from the policy vantage point, from which reforms were directed. The state, therefore, emerged as a critical player in the SA HE field, whose socio-political evolutions had direct implications on its institutional change processes.

4.8 Chapter summary and emerging trajectories of institutional change in SA HE

In attempting to understand the trajectories of change in SA HE, this study acknowledged the need to engage with a broader historical context of education in South Africa. This chapter accomplished this task with a historical analysis of the foundations of SA HE, particularly those that were considered to have their roots in the earlier occurring primary and post-primary education structures that spread out from the Cape. As such, the chapter spanned through the founding premises of the first schooling systems that began at the Cape in 1652 and the dynamics around power and control. This background formed the basis for drawing inferences of the critical trajectories relating to religion and secularisation as well as the emergence of centralised authority in educational developments in South Africa. The connections between formal basic education and the first post-primary colleges were also established as having formed the basis on which SA HE could then emerge.

The transition was then made into the establishment of SA HE from 1873 when the first HE entity was created at the UCGH. The progression of higher education in South Africa was tracked, and a linear link was drawn from the trajectories of its roots in basic and secondary school education. Some of the critical trajectories that were identified included: the emerging

stratification based on race and class in the education systems, as well as the drive for identity representation that was held particularly along the nationalist sentiments of the Afrikaners. It was also noted that HE increasingly defaulted to imply university-level education, which progressed from single coordination and examining entity to several autonomous entities.

As such, SA HE education in this chapter was tracked in its historical contextual extension from the Cape and to Natal, the Transvaal and the Orange Free State through colleges and university colleges in a socio-political environment that was riddled by colonial, linguistic, nationalism and racial woes. The chapter also tracked the growing formalisation of the SA HE processes as a statutory entity and laid out the comprehensive policy frameworks on which it was formulated. One of the most overt policy phases was the apartheid period, where historical forms of separation culminated into policies with far-reaching implications on SA HE.

Attention was then drawn to the apartheid period and how its effects swept through the Higher education sector, with particular attention directed towards the status of university establishments until the impending end of apartheid in 1990. The chapter, therefore, accomplishes the task of identifying trajectories in academic studies and policy documents of SA HE that were important for driving change within that context.

CHAPTER V

5.0 A HISTORICAL ANALYSIS OF INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE AT UFS

5.1 Introduction and chapter overview

The overall aim of this study was to identify and analyse how institutional theories could help to understand SA HE change processes. In this particular chapter, this task follows from within the specific insights provided by the context of change within the University of the Free State (UFS)⁵ to respond to the subsidiary research question No. 3: *in emerging from its apartheid history, how did institutional change happen at the UFS?* This chapter fits within the abductive reasoning behind this study that locates the UFS within the historical analysis of SA HE as a case example that expounds on the observations and emerging theoretical propositions from Chapter IV.

This chapter mainly concentrates on the 1990–2010 period but also contextualises the UFS's historical experiences within the previously identified timelines that the trajectories of change in SA HE have been presented. This is considered as an enriching undertaking within the pragmatic approach of this study, where the additional case of the UFS in the historical analysis of SA HE is fitting to engage with how institutional change theories can enrich our understanding of HE institutional change.

The first part of this chapter introduces the UFS and presents an annotated historical context of the university alongside the previously identified phases of the changing contexts of SA HE. The chapter's entry point to this study is located within the earlier identified conceptual overlap between the institutional and organisational precepts of change within HE, whereby the UFS is considered as a practical case example within the institutional field of SA HE. With an

⁵ Generic references to the university will be made under the current name: University of the Free State (UFS). However, other names such as: Grey College (GC); Grey University College (GUC); University College of the Free State (UCOFS) and the University of the Orange Free State (UOFS) will be used when specific references are made to the periods that the University of the Free State or its earlier forms, were known as such.

exploration that highlights the kinds of institutional and organisational overlaps that exist between the entities of SA HE and the UFS, this chapter engages with the ambiguity in the way that institutional and organisational dynamics tend to overlap in HE. As such, it exemplifies how HE entities like the UFS interact with the socio-political dynamics at the state level, and offers clarification on the institutional/organisational debates that had been earlier raised in the literature review section of this study.

Concerning the UFS' emergence from its apartheid history, therefore, this chapter generates the institutional change tenets from within the historical analytical context of the university in order to draw inferences on how institutional change theorisation reflects within its post-1990 strategic approaches to overcoming the historical legacy of apartheid. The chapter uses the UFS Transformation plan (2007–2010) as a summative document of the university's priorities of its post-apartheid period. Therefore, the year of 2010 provides the cut-off point of this historical analysis, as it provides for a manageable historical premise since 1990, to analyse the dynamism of change at the UFS in the two decades of the university's emergence from apartheid.

5.2 Delimiting institutional change framing in the context of the UFS

It ought to be noted here that the overall institutional framing that this study engaged with considered the state and its socio-political imperatives as the meta-level drivers of institutional change in SA HE. In this case, considerations of SA HE institutional change were majorly defined within laws and policy frameworks that relate to the historical processes, particularly as they relate to the institutionalisation of universities in South Africa. The case example of the UFS therefore, as a micro-entity, not only presents an organisational dimension of HE but also equally warrants an acknowledgement of its own internal institutional change elements as elaborated in this chapter.

At the same time, it is important to underline this chapter with the disclaimer that the UFS case example is not intended as an overall representation of the educational establishments within SA HE. As noted in the previous chapter, the dualistic tendencies within SA HE imply that not all universities experienced its historical frame in the same way. The apartheid period demonstrated this variation more candidly by its provisions that ensured that different rules and policies were applied to different institutional entities across an exclusivity of racial, language, ethnicity and geographical separateness.

Studying the UFS case, which is a historically white and Afrikaans university is therefore not intended to yield generalizable ideas about institutional change within the establishments in SA HE. Instead, it provides a translation of the theoretical underpinnings of the UFS's experiences within the institutional circumstances of SA HE. It, therefore, provides for a case example of institutional change studies within a single university establishment, which can be used as a template for studies in other HE settings. By developing insights into the interplay between the external and internal historical institutional change elements of UFS's location within SA HE, a similar approach can be extrapolated and applied to the analyses of other HE university contexts, including alternate South African university contexts, in order to understand the varied institutional impacts of HE change over time.

5.3 Documentary sources for analysing the UFS institutional change framework

Various published and unpublished sources have been taken engaged within this chapter in order to merit for the historical analysis of the UFS and in drawing inferences of institutional change within a university context. As such, this chapter relied on UFS archival documents,⁶ particularly reports and minutes of the university council and senate meetings, institutional

⁶ The archives for contemporary affairs are housed in the Stef Coetzee building at the UFS. The archive were an additional source for historical records pertaining to the university.

reports and plans, as well as speeches and presentations by key university management actors. Other sources include the student newspaper called the *Irawa* and the university's yearbooks,⁷ which provided a contextual indication of the university's transition over time.

One essential resource that was utilised is the centenary publication of the University of the Free State: *From Grey to Gold: The first 100 years of the University of the Free State* (UFS, 2006). This publication provided one of the most comprehensive collections of the UFS' institutional memories for 100 years since its establishment as Grey University College in 1904. As a commemorative publication, the seeming overuse of this publication in this chapter may prompt credible scholarly concerns, especially the extent of bias and selectivity of the narratives presented therein would affect the overall outlook of the chapter. However, the historical analytical approach undertaken in this study took note of this possible shortcoming. It drew primarily from the fundamental aspects of the publication, such as historical timelines and the operational aspects of the university. It was also found to be the most credible historical consolidation of the institutional change layout of the UFS, especially in the glaring absence of alternative historical works about the university. It has thus been justified that the reliance on the UFS's centennial publication as a critical documentary source for this chapter effectively suits the pragmatic paradigm of this study, which allows space for flexibility in the use of resources that would be most relevant in responding to the research questions at hand.

These documentary sources provide for a wholesome frame of how the UFS was structured along with the changes in SA HE; taking note of the significant internal processes at the university. The internal documents have been helpful to draw linkages across the university stakeholder base of students, staff and the catchment communities in relation to the ongoing institutional processes over a historical period.

⁷ The year book is akin to the university's prospectus where all the university academic programs are outlined.

5.4 An annotated pre-1990 history of the University in the Free State

The purpose of this section is to engage with the historical context of the UFS in the period leading up to 1990, as a way to launch into the understanding of the building blocks within which the progression to the overt expressions for the imperatives for institutional change in the post-1990 period. This fits in with Thelen's (1999: 400) assertion that in order to understand how institutions change, one also needs to understand how they would have been constructed historically. It is for this purpose that this section delves into the historical construct of the UFS as a premise for contextualising its post-1990 process of institutional change.

The history of the UFS before 1990 can be divided into three different eras. The first period is identifiable in the 50 year period that lasted between the establishment of Grey College in 1855 and the eventual creation of the Grey University College (GUC) in 1904. The second period is identified within the changes in GUC since 1904, which was later renamed as the University College of the Free State (UCOFS) in 1935 until its incorporation as an autonomous University of the Orange Free State (UOFS) in 1949. The third historical period considers another 50 years from the university's incorporation in 1949 to 1990 period. These demarcations offer a meaningful way of analysing the pre-1990 historical context of the UFS as they coincide with significant phases of the socio-political context of South Africa, which in turn had implications on the SA HE layout. The three periods were thus analysed along with the socio-political aspect that relates to the historical evolution of the University of the Free State as detailed below.

5.4.1 Grey College and the nationalism question (1855–1904)

The founding of Grey College in 1855 was within the period of the earlier mentioned church-led expansion of secondary education that stretched over the period between 1848 and 1874 as noted by Behr & MacMillan (1966:205) and McKerron (1934: 87–90). Using this as the

starting point for the historical analysis of the UFS is helpful, as it helps to layout the deep institutional roots of the university within its earlier post-primary college history. Firstly, it is essential to note that Grey College was established within the first year of the conception of the independent Republic of the Orange Free State, following the expedition of the Voortrekker Boers to the North of the Cape (Behr, 1978). Grey College was not only the first, but also the highest educational establishment within the new republic, and at the time when the Dutch Reformed Church (DRC) was still closely coupled with educational processes, particularly for the *Voortrekker* who had left the Cape. The college's foundation followed the request of Sir George Grey⁸ to establish a theological school (*Kweekskool*) for the DRC. With a seed funding of a grant of £2500 that was hastily made available from the Cape, Grey College began its historical journey as a theological college in the Republic of the Orange Free State (UFS, 2006). This foundation of Grey College, with linkages to both the Cape Colony and the DRC, is significant to locate the intersecting ties between the church in the new republic and the colonial state at the Cape in matters of post-secondary education provision.

It is also significant to note that the founding of Grey College in 1855 coincided with the context of an emerging aura of Afrikaner nationalism that had quintessentially preceded the creation of the Republic of the Orange Free State in 1854. This context presents a significant inference into the origins of the nexus across theological, colonial and nationalism interests that seemed to persist in the UFS's historical institutional change frame.

One of the significant challenges in the initial years of Grey College lay in the funding shortages and the low uptake rates by the local parents, which slowed down the college's initial growth (Bryson, 2014). This situation is telling of the initial struggles that the college experienced, and points to the disinterest that surrounded the college's earlier years.

⁸ George Grey was the Governor of the Cape Colony and the High Commissioner of South Africa. At the time. The college was named after him.

However, Grey college received its first essential boost of steady leadership through the Dutch-born graduate of classical studies, Dr Johannes Brill, who went on to teach for 34 years since his appointment in March 1873 (Van der Bank, 1995). During his reign, the college experienced a relative spike in its growth in pupil enrolment and infrastructure. This growth was bolstered by the state support that Grey College begun to receive since 1882. Aside from improving the financial situation of the college, state support also meant that the students could partake of the higher level exams under the UCGH.⁹ This scenario sets the scene for understanding the eventual role of the state in shaping the stature of the eventual University (College) of the (Orange) Free State.

Dr Brill's influence extended beyond the jurisdiction of Grey college. In a 1975 lecture, he pioneered one of the significant language debates, where he argued that Afrikaans was neither merely a variation of Dutch nor a backward dialect. He thus brought the recognition of the Afrikaans language as a matter of educational contention from his early involvement with Grey College. This debate had nationalist implications as seen with the establishment of the *Genootskap van Regte Afrikaners* as an Afrikaans language lobby group that was established on 14th August 1875 in Paarl (Steyn, 2014: 430).

As such, the development of Afrikaans as a language within a largely Dutch-speaking Orange Free State white community can therefore be seen within its peculiarity, not only as a marker for group identity but also as a form of advocacy inspired by nationalism. This provides an additional framework to understand the context within which the eventual University of the Free State first emerged; as a context within which the cultural and nationalism attributes of Afrikaans were significant both for the university and its local environs. This line of argument is supported by M. T. Steyn, the last president of the republic of the UOFS, notable for his

⁹ Ibid.

advocacy for an independent university, where the locals would be educated on their own soil and in their own language, provided by their own people (UFS, 2006: 8–9).

These earlier perspectives in the formation of Grey College signalled some early language fissures wherein the emerging Afrikaans advocacy was countering English, which had become solidified as the functional language of tuition in the college as part of the requirements for partaking of the UCGH higher level examinations from 1882. Nonetheless, the enrolment within the UCGH examination umbrella meant that Grey College began to participate in HE processes at the time when it only served as a post-primary establishment. As such, this collaboration with the UCGH aroused the desire for a fuller, more localised and representative university establishment in the Orange Free State (OFS). The anticipation for a local university for instance featured in the sentiments of FW Reitz, the Chief Justice of the OFS, where he noted in his 1894 speech that:

*“The time for a Free State University has not yet arrived, but unless the Cape University in a true sence (sic) of the word be a South African one, we shall ultimately be obliged in the interest of **our independence**, and in order to **preserve nationality**, to also make separate provision in this respect.”*¹⁰ (Emphasis added)

Such sentiments not only highlighted the aspirations for localisation of in the OFS but also reflected the intertwinement between these aspirations of its independence and nationality cause. The critical aspect to take note here is that Grey college inspired the calls for a locally relevant university in the OFS; one that could challenge the domineering English tuition that was being provided in Grey College. There was an established expectation on the promise that Grey college presented in terms of advancing the independent Orange Free State.

From the creation of Grey College, one can already trace significant institutional processes that would eventually become relevant to UFS. Chief among these were the language and

¹⁰ Ibid. (p. 8)

nationalism aspirations of the UOFS. Also, the significant boost by key individuals in leadership, Dr Brill, in this case, as the Grey College rector, is an essential internal institutional element in relation to this study. It is noted that the socio-political context was fragile throughout the 1855–1904 period, with the sovereignty of the OFS at stake. In fact, after the South African war of 1899–1902, the OFS was subdued under Britain’s belligerent colonial authority. It is in this kind of context that the rise of the Grey University College needs to be understood; where Britain’s colonial context thwarted expectations for a locally relevant university within a sovereign OFS.

5.4.2 Grey University College and the pre-apartheid context (1904–1950)

From Grey College, which was the premier secondary education entity in the Orange Free State, then emerged Grey University College (GUC) in 1904 in the then Orange River colony. It ought to be clarified, though, that the emergence of GUC did not preclude the continued existence of Grey College. However, this study now shifts focus to the higher education establishment of GUC. It is also noted that even when the foundational premises of GUC have been outrightly linked to the foundations of Grey College in the preceding discussion, 1904 is often considered as the preferred starting point for analyses of the foundation of the University in the Free State (UFS, 2006: xix).

One of the most significant socio-political aspects that surrounded the emergence of GUC is its foundation within the immediate aftermath of the second South African War. This war had marked the end to the independent status of the Republic of the OFS, which had then become the Orange River colony of Britain. The foundation of GUC followed a 1903 conference where the Education departments in the four British controlled colonies opted to set up tertiary level educational establishments in regional campuses as the first step towards the eventual establishment of a single university of South Africa (UFS, 2006: 12). The resultant education

ordinance of 1903 allowed for the use of public funds to offer university-level subjects and thus, provided for the provision of tertiary education through the creation of the GUC on the grounds that had been occupied by Grey College, which was summarily relocated outside the city in the same year.¹¹ Therefore, whereas the longstanding dream for a university in the OFS had been finally realised in 1904, it did not match the kinds of aspirations that Reitz and Steyn had upheld in the pre-war period as noted earlier. As such, GUC was initiated as an auxiliary college of UNISA and was recognised as legally separate Grey College from Grey College with the passing of *Act No.5* of 1910.¹² The 1910 act defined Grey University College as an institution intended to provide “courses of instruction and training in social sciences and such applied sciences as would be approved by the Governor and with a council of 10 members as appointed by the Governor.”¹³ The implication of this is that institutional processes at the University College can be inferred to have been externally controlled, with GUC as a UNISA affiliate, and where its courses would be subject to the approval of the Governor.

i) Language and nationalism woes at the Grey University college

The British colonial preponderance was also reflected in the nature of tuition at GUC, which followed the same English language instruction pattern that had been earlier established in Grey College. The use of English as a medium of instruction is reported to have been received with mixed feelings: on the one hand, English instruction was seen as a form of forfeiture of another representative aspect of the autonomy of the mostly Dutch/Afrikaans speaking local population, while on the other hand, some pundits acknowledged the benefits of using English as a plausible route for academic success and effective participation in HE (UFS, 2006:5; 14). Another reason for the English language hegemony in the academic setting, as Bryson (2014)

¹¹ Ibid. (p.13)

¹² As outlined in the Orange River colony Higher Education Act of 1910

¹³ These details were included in the preamble of every year book (Jaar book) for the University College of the Free State that were examined by the researcher for the period between 1913 and 1945.

notes, was because there was a scarcity of professors with the ability to teach in Afrikaans, leaving English as the natural alternative.

Nonetheless, as it was noted earlier, the prospects for the establishment of a university in the OFS which had carried resonance with the furtherance of Afrikaner nationalism were put to a standstill with the creation of a colonially instigated GUC. This did not, however, stop a continued simmering of the nationalism quest, where a fervent campaign for the recognition of Afrikaans as a language of tuition in GUC continued. This campaign received its first semblance of triumph when the Afrikaans language was included as a curriculum subject to be taught to GUC students from 1919 (Steyn, 2004:440). This followed the directive of the Department of Education¹⁴ for the promotion of bilingual higher education, where both English and Dutch were to become the primary media of instruction at GUC (Du Plessis, 2006).

The partial success for the inclusion of Afrikaans on the curriculum set into motion the more effective campaign for mother-tongue instruction at the GUC, with the language advocacy led by lecturers, councillors and students alike. Amongst the most prominent language campaigners was DF Malherbe who was a professor of modern languages at the GUC and an ardent campaigner for the recognition of Afrikaans as a cultural language.¹⁵ Malherbe presented philological proof that Afrikaans was not only a different language but was also deserving to be used as a written language¹⁶ and as a legitimate form of cultural expression of the Afrikaans people (Strauss, 2010). At the GUC, Afrikaans soon replaced Dutch as the medium of instruction following the supplementary Act. No.8 of 1925, which redefined references to Dutch in the dual medium arrangement to also have implied the inclusion of Afrikaans (Steyn,

¹⁴ English and Dutch were declared as official languages of the South African Union in the National Convention held in Durban in October 1908

¹⁵ Prof. Malherbe had delivered a lecture in Paarl in 1906 asking the question: *Is Afrikaans a dialect?* Cited in Wallis, F. (2000). Nuusdagboek: feite en fratse oor 1000 jaar. *Kaapstad: Human & Rousseau.*

¹⁶ South African History on line: Daniël Francois Malherbe last accessed 28/04/2020 at <https://www.sahistory.org.za/people/daniel-francois-malherbe>

1993:231–233). This move is significant to note, as it marked the recognition of Afrikaans as a language of instruction that could replace Dutch, and was another triumph for the Afrikaans cultural movement. Therefore, it is helpful to recognise that GUC was embroidered into a reawakening of Afrikaner nationalism and the university college carried with it an inherent expectation of appealing to its local Afrikaans white population.

ii) *Political activism and the Grey University college*

This reawakening of the Afrikaner nationalism was aided by the establishment of the National Party (NP) in 1914 as a break-away of the South African Party. Within the ranks of the NP, nationalist organisations like the *Afrikaner Broederbond* (Afrikaner Brotherhood) emerged in order to cultivate the Afrikaner political and cultural recognition within the broader white South Africanism that had followed the creation of the South African union (Kotzé, 1990). On the students' front at GUC, these translated into the *Afrikaanse Studentebond* (ASB), which was created in 1917 to advocate for a full cultural and political recognition for Afrikaans. Later, in 1933, a more politically oriented *Afrikaanse Nasionale Studentebond* (ANSB) was created to represent the more specific Afrikaans nationalist mandate as opposed to the National Union of South African Students (NUSAS) whose foundation in 1924 had a broader student outlook.¹⁷ Other Afrikaans cultural adherents that were represented at GUC included the *Afrikaanse Nasionale Studentebond* (Afrikaans National Student League), the *Calvinistiese Studentebond* (Calvin Student League) and the *Internasionale Studiekring* (International Student Circle) (UFS, 2006: 141). The role of DF Malherbe, who served as the rector of GUC in 1917–18 and again in 1929 to 1934¹⁸ needs to be noted, considering his contribution to the language and cultural evolution at GUC in his 30-year stint at the university from 1910–1940. University

¹⁷ National Union of South African Students (NUSAS): South African History online:
<https://www.sahistory.org.za/article/national-union-south-african-students-nusas>

¹⁸ Ibid (pg 28 & 89)

leadership, especially the role of rectors, is thus considered as a crucial element of understanding institutional change processes within the UFS as will later be explored.

iii) Racial exclusion and the Grey University college

Besides the language dimension forming a significant part of the GUC's context of institutional contestations at the time, another aspect of racial exclusivity had been weaved into becoming the norm. Racial exclusion, which was concealed behind the cover of 'citizenship' as a constitutional privilege accorded to only the white population, meant that the non-white populations who had no claim to citizenship rights in the Orange River colony were also excluded from GUC as a public higher education entity (UFS, 2006:5). The restrictions had been constituted within chapter XXXIII of the 1891 *Oranjevrijstaat Wetboek* (Orange Free State Statute Book), which, for instance, prohibited Asians (apart from the Japanese, who were classified as white) from farming, trading, or owning property in the Orange Free State (Klotz, 1997). This legislation remained on the statute books until the passing of Act no. 53 of 1986: "*Matters Concerning Admission to and Residence in the Republic Amendment Act*" (Harris, 1999). The racial exclusivity of the scenario inhabited by the GUC is also vividly described by Netswera & Mathabe's (2006) explanation of the pre-apartheid educational marginalization of black South Africans, where 'black education' was separately catered for in the *Council of Education* formed in 1877.

Specific examples of concerted efforts towards racial exclusivity at GUC include the case of Amos Malthene, who as a black prospective student of Roman law, was turned away on 4 May 1923. Even when some exceptions were made, for instance in the case of Jacob Nahlepo, whose request to conduct his practical geology exams at the university college's lab was granted on 1st November 1933, there remained an informal institutional predisposition against racial mixing on the GUC. Nahlepo was neither allowed access to classrooms nor lodging facilities at the university college. Similarly, when a group of black students applied for part-time studies

to GUC in 1945, their application was turned down because it was argued that once such students would be granted acceptance to attend classes, they would invariably demand other student privileges as well (UFS, 2006: 262). GUC therefore remained exclusively open to white students and staff, even before apartheid, and this is a crucial institutional element to take note of for the inferences that this study is drawing from the history of the UFS.

For the UFS, therefore, the implications of this racial exclusivity can be read as another deep-seated institutional element, which existed long before apartheid formalised racial exclusion by the policy. As such, all the references and concerns that emerged in earlier discussions around the 'local' relevance for the university in the Orange Free State were in fact aspirations by the local white Afrikaaner farming communities. This inference lays a crucial point of departure in the contextualisation of the institutional processes within which GUC developed.

iv) From Grey University college to the University College of the Free State

The racial, language and nationalism dynamics are critical trajectories in the analysis of institutional change in GUC, which was later renamed University College of the Orange Free State (UCOFS) in 1935¹⁹ only a year after South Africa's independent status had been concretised by the 1934 status act (Lambert, 2005: 4). Here, events within South Africa's socio-political context remain relevant, as the 1934 status Act that resulted in membership to the British commonwealth, only helped the resurgence of nationalism sentiments. This inference is critical as it indicates the simmering context of nationalism pursuit for the Afrikaner Nation that had followed British colonial dominion. For the institutional change processes of the UCOFS to be put into proper perspective, therefore, this contested socio-political space within

¹⁹Grey University College was renamed to the University College of the Orange Free State in article No.6 of the Union parliament in 1935 (Jaar Boek, 1940). The popular contemporary Kowsies moniker dates back to this name where the students were referred to as 'COFS' and the Afrikaans translation of Kowsies still persists as a result.

the university college's local catchment area is essential to take note of, as it impacted directly on the institutional processes within the university college.

The process of demarcating the UCOFS as an exclusive social and cultural domain for the provision of educational opportunities for the Afrikaner people reached its peak after the bilingual language policy was approved in 1938. This move instigated a renewed vigour amongst students, whose demand for a more robust exclusivity of an Afrikaner cultural identity resulted into a student strike led by the Afrikaans cultural organisations in 1939 (UFS, 2006: 129-131). As a result, by 1943, UCOFS became primarily identified as an Afrikaans language institution in which "other languages could also be welcome."²⁰ A note needs to be made here that the Dutch Reformed Church remained instrumental, albeit not overtly, in the struggle for mother-tongue instruction and had engaged the university on premises of conditional support, on the basis that Afrikaans was to be recognised as a language of instruction.²¹

With the massive socio-political changes that saw to the ushering in of the National Party (NP) at the helm of the South African governance, the translation of these changes in the SA HE institutional landscape was pronounced. These changes were more explicit for the UCOFS which experienced a quick progression of changes of its own, owing to the overdue affirmation of the Afrikaner identity that the National party's election victory presented. This can be inferred in the education policy formulations that followed NP's victory, that were quintessentially a revival of the defunct principles of Christian National Education (CNE), whose content was expected to be scientific but founded on the Christian faith (Lavin, 1965).

It is, therefore, safe to infer that UCOFS stood as one of the flagship HE institutions for the conduct of the racially differentiated education provision as it had been conceived in the CNE manifesto. This was a reawakening of the nationality principle that had driven the creation and

²⁰ Ibid p. 155

²¹ Ibid.

defence of the Boer republics in the previous century (Hofmeyr, 1982). As such the ideology behind CNE justified a differentiated education system during the apartheid governance that followed the NP victory, where racial superiority was upheld by such notions that considered “Whites most especially those of the Boer nation as senior White trustee of the native...” (CNE, Article 15).²²

v) *Cultural uptake at the university college of the Free State*

So far in this study, it has been noted that the critical issues of contestation at GUC/UCOFS related directly to the racial, linguistic and the cultural identity within which a specific sense of belonging for the Afrikaner was seeking full expression. This inference relates to the number of cultural practices that were invariably linked to the nature of students and staff that attended the university college: an all-white and majorly Afrikaner constituency. Such practices that appealed to the specific constituency of the university college were for instance reflected in the student initiation activities, which, even when attempts were made to ban these students’ initiations from 1928, they persisted (UFS, 2006: 71–72; 139-140). As part of the cultural orientation activities, new students would be subjected to some, often humiliating, activities for them to earn their sense of belonging and for them to be accepted by the ‘senior’ students of the University College. Descriptions of how the new students were welcomed into the collegiate fold of the university are replete with accounts of psychological afflictions that formed the basis of the student’s culture of orientation at the University College.²³

These instances of internal cultural construction within the University College merits a deeper engagement but beyond the scope of this study. The cultural activities indicated a strong patriarchal orientation that was also reflected in the service orientation of the students who attended the University College and had a military battalion located within the university

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid (p.140-141)

premises. This patriarchal cultural orientation, however, remains an essential contribution in tracing the way that identity at the university college evolved, especially as a premise within the identity that the patriarchal Afrikaans farming community of the Free State formed part of the university's cultural setup (Suransky & Van der Merwe, 2016).

vi) *Summary of GUC and the UCOFS*

The period between 1904 and 1950 can thus be summarised in institutional terms as GUC/UCOFS having been mediated by a SA HE institutional frame that traversed through significant socio-political changes ranging from colonialism, the Union of South Africa and South Africa under the British Commonwealth. Part of the consequences of this external context on the institutional frame of the University College was that continuous discontent arose around its unrepresentativeness of the local Afrikaans culture. The fact that English was a language of instruction for most of this period was therefore met with stiff resistance. As such, the sustained rally for an Afrikaner cultural and language identity at the university college can be seen through this light of an unwavering Afrikaner nationalism. This understanding forms a considerable background within which the formation of the university in the Orange Free State can be located and understood, particularly concerning how its historical institutional change parameters can be further examined.

5.4.3 The Autonomous University of the Orange Free State and apartheid (1950–1990)

As noted earlier, the election victory of the National Party (NP) in 1948 created several significant ripples in the socio-political context within which the UOFS arose as an independent university in 1950. The timing could never have been better for the newly autonomous UOFS; the NP's outlook finally mirrored the previously held aspirations of an Afrikaner nation within the university. Indeed, the university's founding Act No.21, which was signed on 19th April 1949 was explicit about the university's position as an autonomous white, Afrikaans and

Christian university in the Orange Free State.²⁴ Whereas its independent status was only eventually ratified on 14th June 1951, the plans for the future of an independent University of the Orange Free State were already underway by 1950 (UFS, 2006: 163).

On the religious front, there was evidence that the university continued to toy with the idea of reinstating the conscience clause. The conscience clause was meant to be a form of religious test for the university employees and had been excluded when the university acquired its independent status. The ongoing demands for the institutionalisation of a conscience clause were once again thwarted in the 1960s because the university already had a Christian foundation. It was therefore considered that the UOFS did not need a test of religious allegiance by its staff, who were already operating within the structured religious components of the university (Beale, 1998; UFS, 2006: 217).

One of the significant boosts for the UOFS was the general interest that the apartheid government showed towards HE as reflected in the generous financial support that was extended to universities by the apartheid government (Beale, 1998). More specifically for the UOFS, the apartheid statutes that related to the demarcation of HE establishments along the lines of race and language in the 1950s simply played into its favour, following a long history of nurturing racial exclusivity and seeking Afrikaans language autonomy. Students at the UOFS were described as considerably apolitical during apartheid, and this was of significance to denote the relationship between the internal institutional processes at the university with the socio-political context of the time. Activities within the university, including those of student organisations like *Afrikaanse StudentBond* (ASB), were considered as “cultural participation”, rather than be seen as ‘political participation’ during the apartheid period. (UFS, 2006: 227). Even when it is argued that the overall stance of ASB was not accepted uncritically and that

²⁴ This was signed as the University Private Act of 1949

students were seeking broader experiences beyond what apartheid offered, the absence of records to indicate alternative student organisations and opposition to the status quo show that there was a relatively harmonised non-confrontational position of the student body towards the apartheid regime.

The UOFS's context during apartheid, therefore, exemplified significant institutional processes in which the University and the South African polity were in relative alignment. During this period, the UOFS stood out as an archetype of a national university in the way its processes were tied to the outlook of the apartheid state. Besides its seclusion as a white and Afrikaans university, it also mirrored the apartheid state's paternalistic position, as its internal culture was shaped by strict rules and regulations regarding even such mundane aspects as dress code, class attendance and length of hair. The university was also outfitted with a military regiment that accommodated both staff and students who had served in the military from the 1950s.²⁵ The UOFS affirmed its place in the context of South Africa as an institution that depicted a full commitment to the national cause as it embarked on the production of graduates who were aligned with apartheid's ideology. Due to the positioning of UOFS, in alignment with the goals of the South African governing regime, the university and its constituency were able to remain complacent despite the anti-apartheid social and political struggles that arose elsewhere in the country at the time. (UFS 2004: 255).

Nonetheless, some exceptions in the white-only premise of the UOFS are recorded within the apartheid period. For instance, for the first time, some black and coloured students were admitted in postgraduate studies by 1978 following the appointment of WL Mouton as rector. Mouton's reign as rector was significantly progressive as the university opened up in 1982 to admit another 30 black students, who were allowed to register for programs that were not

²⁵ Ibid. p.164

available at their ‘own’ universities following the apartheid policies that legislated that students would have to attend universities that aligned with their racial groups (UFS, 2006: 263–264; 255–256).

By the 1980s therefore, when the wave of Black Nationalism was spreading across the SA HE landscape, the UOFS was practically in a threatened position, and its default stance was to remain aligned with the NP government in the resistance against racial integration. Even when there were critical voices at the university dubbed as ‘progressive’ academics in the wake of Prime Minister Botha’s total onslaught against black nationalism, their attempts to steer the debate towards a non-racialized South Africa were silenced by being ladled as radicals under the influence of Marxism.²⁶ The UOFS, therefore, laid mainly in wait for the potential transformation that would arise after apartheid. In institutional terms, an inference can be made that there was little preparation for the possibilities for a university campus that would be accepting of a broader diversity than the UOFS prided itself in throughout the apartheid period. The homogeneity shared across the students and staff meant that the university remained primarily shielded from the actual racial contestations at the socio-political level.

At the same time, enrolment had risen throughout the apartheid period, from 1061 students in 1950 to 9372 students in 1990.²⁷ New faculties and buildings were also put in place throughout this four-decade period with unprecedented infrastructural growth at the university. It can thus be inferred that the apartheid years were beneficial to the UOFS’ aspirations as it was in the favourable position of nurturing, with state backing, an uninhibited identity as an Afrikaner, Christian and White university. However by 1990, when it became clear that a democratic dispensation was no longer unavoidable, the UOFS was plunged into a new institutional phase that was bound to involve as much de-institutionalisation as it was to institutionalise new ways

²⁶ Ibid, P. 307–308

²⁷ Ibid. (p. 267)

for the campus to accommodate diversities of students and staff that had not been envisioned before. This, therefore, makes the case of the UFS, particularly in the way it arose out of this past since 1990, as an exhilarating focus for this study's attempt at understanding institutional change processes in SA HE.

5.4.4 Summary on the 1873–1990 history of the UOFS.

Regardless of the foundational time-line that one would select as the point of departure in engaging with the historical institutional change premises of the University of the Orange Free State, it is a reasonable deduction to take note of the foundational overlap between Grey College and the eventual university college as a significant starting point. It has also been inferred from the historical analysis up to 1990 that the changes within GC/GUC/UCOFS/UOFS were often reflective of the changes and demands from South Africa's socio-political context. As such, the resistance to Anglicisation (in the colonial years of GUC and UCOFS) and the conformity with Afrikaanisation (in the apartheid years of the UOFS) can be analysed as having been dependant on the context in and around the university as well as the trajectories of the state.

As such, the range of institutional changes revolved primarily around identity and representativeness of the local interests of the markedly White, Christian and Afrikaans stakeholder base. As a result, forms of internal institutionalisation conformed to these identities as reflected in: ongoing protestations for the use of Afrikaans as the primary language of instruction in the pre-apartheid period; bickering over the religious component of the university in the 1960s and 70s about the conscience clause; and maintaining an exclusively white student and staff body, with minor exceptions in the late 1970s and 80s when some black postgraduate students were accepted at the university. These internal institutional processes of the University

of the Orange)Free State were nonetheless directly linked to the socio-political events in South Africa that in turn influenced the cause for Afrikaner nationalism across the historical period.

It is essential to consider therefore that the rise of the UOFS showed significant evidence of an interplay between the local (internal) Afrikaner interests and the state-level (external) pressures, whose sum effect consolidated the form and shape of the university before 1990. With the changes on the socio-political scene that were becoming apparent already in the late 1980s, the institutional change processes for SA HE meant that a new dawn for the UOFS had begun. Therefore, as noted in Chapter IV, while numerous forces were at play in the shaping of SA HE and while the experiences of the University of the Orange Free State had not been necessarily consistent with the experience in other South African higher education entities, the UOFS still provided a consolidated premise to consider the theoretical precepts of institutional change. Here, while many of the South African universities or indeed, higher education entities, may be said to have shared a similar set of overarching external institutional frameworks that were inherent in the higher education policy development. However, these policies were experienced differently owing to the racial, ethnic and language groups stratifications during apartheid. The way that individual institutions responded to these policy developments remained mostly context-dependent. The experience of the UOFS cannot, therefore, be taken as wholly representative of the SA HE, but offered a premise for drawing institutional change theorisation in line with the abductive reasoning and the pragmatic paradigm within which this study was set.

5.5 The emergence of the UFS from apartheid (1990–2010)

It needs to be clarified that the decision that was taken to interface with how institutional change happened at the UFS in its emergence from apartheid (1990–2010) was to enhance our understanding of how institutional theories of change can be seen through a particular university setting within SA HE. In the preceding section of this chapter, the institutional

change within the UFS vis a vis its embeddedness within the local Afrikaner aspirations was unpacked. These aspirations were further located in the local aspirations within South Africa's emergent socio-political context as a critical determinant of the SA HE institutional frame. One of the emerging vital inferences from this analysis is the importance that was attached to local identities in the representation of local concerns at the GUC/UCOFS/UOFS.

In the 1990–2010 period, the basis of tackling institutional change at the UFS was encapsulated by the significant shift in the socio-political context in South Africa following the transition to the end of apartheid (1990–1994) and the ushering in of the democratic dispensation after 1994. The significance of this change concerning the UFS is that it altered the racial and language exclusivities that had been previously held onto, more so in the half-century of apartheid rule. It is therefore of interest to this study to understand how institutional change happened at the UFS in response to these changes in the socio-political context.

The anticipated changes within the university became apparent when in June 1989, the Minister of Constitutional Development and Planning announced that the right to desegregate residences at tertiary institutions was at the discretion of their governing bodies.²⁸ This directive was effectively followed by a decision on 25th September 1989²⁹ by the executive committee of the university council of the UOFS to open up student residences to all races. By May 1990, one of the student hostels (Emily Hobhouse) was, in fact, open to all students but with a caveat to review the decision annually in order see if the developments met the demands of the time. Following this, all restrictions for admission to the UOFS were lifted, and the university was declared entirely open to students of all races on 24th August 1990, whilst acknowledging that the demand for hostel accommodation would have to be handled with great care (UFS, 2006:

²⁸ Online archives, last accessed on 05/05/2020:

http://sabctrc.saha.org.za/originals/finalreport/volume1/split/BMvolume1_s1ch13_pg22.pdf

²⁹ Archives UV008 DS G Japhta 08/27/01: Transformasie (1988/89 report (p. 2; c)

343). Within the 1990–1994 transitory period, marked by a new wave of socio-political changes in South Africa, the pace picked up with the release of Nelson Mandela from prison in 1990. This transitional phase was finalised by the first democratic elections in 1994, where several corresponding plans for the transformation of the UOFS were unfolding.

The entire 1990–2010 period offers a significant timeframe where a 20-year history of change in the South African socio-political context resulted in ripple effects in the SA HE institutional processes and the UFS. In this study, this period received specific attention as it marked the initial indications of a post-apartheid transformation agenda for SA HE in 1990 that was emphasised in the UFS’ transformation plan of 2007–2010. The UFS transformation plan was intended to sustain change, innovation, renewal and transformation as a consolidation of the ‘achievements’ of the period since 1990, according to Fourie (2010).³⁰ Some of the critical institutional premises that emerged in this period at the UFS included: staff rationalisation and equity measures; the UFS financial turnaround strategies; language policy revisions; and cultural diversity measures at the university. All these approaches affected both students and staff, and their effects were profoundly experienced in the classrooms and student residences.

The critical element here is that 2010 was meant to have been the culmination of the transformation plan for the UFS that was intended to consolidate the transformation of the University. This transformation plan was considered within the backdrop of the racial controversy at the students’ residence of Reitz that occurred in 2007 (but was only publicised in 2008 in a YouTube video) and provided a counter-narrative to the transformation efforts at the university. This momentous debacle that has come to be dubbed as the ‘Reitz Four’ incident involved a video recording of four white male students engaged in a protest of the racial

³⁰ Rector’s address: The UFS towards 2010: Sustaining change, innovation, renewal and transformation (Fourie, 2005)

integration of the university's student accommodation facilities. Deeper engagement with this incident is covered in chapter VI.

The student protests that followed the Reitz four incident rekindled a whole lot of reflections around race, culture, gender, student life and labour relations within the university in the post-apartheid period. By 2010 therefore, there had been a significant level of activity within the UOFS and the institutional and organisational change therein for one to pragmatically undertake a historical analysis of institutional change at the university within this time frame; twenty years into the commencement of post-apartheid reforms.

5.5.1 Confronting institutionalised identities at the UFS

As noted earlier, the institutional character of the UOFS had been primarily built around the exclusivity of a white and Afrikaans identity and within a Christian foundation. This university identity had been established for more than a century by 1994. Badat (2010: 11) in his commentary on the post-1990 period and its implications for South African universities pointed out the vital need for the creation of new institutional identities as a critical aspect in the creation of new institutional landscapes in South African Higher Education. His view was that this would be the best way to confront historically institutionalised apartheid inequities. Badat's point of view relates directly to the context of the UFS, which had built a strong institutional culture based on identities of white, Christian and Afrikaans. As such, it can be understood, as Badat suggests, that in order to confront institutional identity, the process of construction of new institutional cultures and deconstruction of old ones had to happen simultaneously.

The way that the SA HE transformational goals that were discussed by Badat (2009) in terms of the prioritisation of values, goals and strategies, offered a helpful way for reflecting on the UOFS context. This perspective was applied in line with the integral theory that this study advanced for higher education institutional change studies. As it was outlined in Chapter III,

the integral theory considers individuals' behaviours and intentions alongside the collective dimensions of social systems and culture.

Correspondingly, Badat considers transformation as: 1) the construction of new institutional and cultural formations; and 2) a deconstruction process in the light of the equity aspirations of the post-1990 policy expectations. A similar relationship between construction and deconstruction within an institutional field is analysed by Scott (2008)³¹, who insists on the acknowledgement of deinstitutionalisation processes as critical components of institutional change. He argues that this in contexts that may require that old beliefs and practices are not only replaced by constructing new ones but also be deconstructed in the process. In studying the institutional change processes in the UFS's emergence from apartheid therefore, both the construction and deconstruction aspects of the institutional identity were taken into consideration.

Nonetheless, what the ongoing historical analysis thus far indicates is that given the UOFS context as a historically white, Afrikaans university, it was to undertake a gigantic leap in its post-1990 period. This expectation was because the social-political context on which the progression of the university had been pegged up to this point, had fundamentally changed. With the unbanning of the liberation movements and the release of Mr Mandela, the socio-political dynamics in South Africa were decisively moving towards redefining public spaces as racially inclusive. As noted earlier, the UOFS had thrived on a non-inclusive institutionalised identity that was limited along the lines of race and language. The post-1990 period marked, for the first time, an era when the university was expected to proactively shift from a racially exclusive and unapologetically Afrikaner nationalist stance to one that opened its doors to students and staff of various racial profiles to conform with the new Socio-political

³¹ Scott, W.R. (2008), *Institutions and Organizations: Ideas and Interests*, 3rd ed. Sage Publications, Los Angeles, CA.

dispensation. Therefore, whereas understanding how institutional change happened at the UOFS in the post-1990 period is not intended as a template of SA HE institutional change processes, the UOFS context and how its circumstances of change climaxed in the post-1990 period, offered a frame to understand change through an institutional lens at the organisational level of the university.

Policy development was thus a crucial part of the universities institutionalisation and de-institutionalisation process. The first policy intervention that addressed the identity of the UFS was the amendment to the Act of 1949, which was actualised on 17 August 1999.³² In the amendment, the sovereign authority and leadership of God was maintained, and English was re-introduced as an additional language of instruction alongside Afrikaans as a medium of instruction (parallel medium). The Sesotho language, representing the most widely spoken language by the black communities of the Free State, was also proposed for further development as a language of instruction. In laying out the strategies of the language medium, the UOFS aligned itself with the South African constitution and allowed for the freedom of choice in terms of the preferred language of tuition between English/Afrikaans for the students. At the same time, the university declared that no one would be discriminated against based on any aspects that had already been outlined in chapter 2 (9:3) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa that states:

“The state may not unfairly discriminate directly or indirectly against anyone on one or more grounds, including race, gender, sex, pregnancy, marital status, ethnic or social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, conscience, belief, culture, language and birth.”³³

³² University amendment acts were provided for, following the National council of Higher Education (NCHE) investigation of all aspects of HE and policy recommendations to the ministry of Education. The University Act of 1997 provided the grounds for such an amendment. A letter addressed to Mr. Billyboy Ramahlela of the University’s Transformation office on 3rd March 1999 acknowledged the application to change the University’s Private Act, and provided ‘technical’ feedback.

³³ The constitution of the republic of South Africa as adopted on 8th May 1996, available at: <https://www.justice.gov.za/legislation/constitution/SACConstitution-web-eng.pdf>

Internally, the university pledged itself to the pursuit of excellence as a higher education institution. However, there was a conspicuous circumvention of the racial and language aspects of diversity as matters of contention through the use of such labels as ‘different language groups’ and ‘multiculturalism’ as the reference points for these diversities (UFS, 2006: 350–352).

Renaming also became another way of dismantling apartheid symbols at the UOFS. Having already renamed the Orange Free State province to Free State Province (dropping the ‘Orange’), it followed that the transformation committee proposed that the ‘Orange’ in the university’s name also be dropped.³⁴ It was on 23 September 1996 that the university council decided to omit the ‘Orange’ from the university’s name. However, such an omission had to be ratified by a parliamentary process and with the minister’s approval. This approval was only received in 2001. Therefore in 2001, the University of the Orange Free State officially became the *Universiteit van die Vrystaat/ University of the Free State/ Yunivesithi ya Freistata* (UFS)³⁵ in the corresponding languages of Afrikaans, English and Sesotho. These were the three functional languages within the environs of the Free State province, and in alignment with their recognition as national languages, the university’ name was meant to appear in a 3-language format in all formal correspondences.

Similarly, the University’s original anthem in Afrikaans was translated into English in 1996 to make it more representative of the expanded language diversity at the university. After that, the anthem was also to be played with alternating stanzas in English and Afrikaans at official University ceremonies. In line with this, the colouration of the University’s Coat of Arms was changed back to its cherry-red pre-apartheid colours. The orange colour that had been

³⁴ Ibid p.350

³⁵ References to the UFS maintained the ‘Orange’ or UOFS when discussing periods when it went by this name. It was in some cases parenthesised when there was an overlap in the name during the period under discussion.

previously adopted for the University's Coat of Arms was dropped because of its apartheid overtone.³⁶

Dismantling apartheid symbols was high on the agenda for the post-apartheid evolution of the university as an apparent attempt towards overcoming the identities that represented its past. However, a note is taken here that the institutional symbols also extended to the cultural dimension, to which no evidence was available to show if any decisive steps were being taken to engage with the university's institutional culture. Instead, the university concentrated on the physical attributes of transformation, and institutional change was thus considered more in optical terms.

5.5.2 Participatory forums and community committees in planning for institutional change

A key element in the U(O)FS' response framework to the task of embarking on post-apartheid transitions was the creation of representative forums and committees as sounding boards for institutional change. These were created alongside, but separate from, already existing university administrative structures. Their intermediary role focused on bridging the inherent gaps in the non-representative structures that existed at the university before 1990. These forums and committees were primarily tasked to explore the critical response of the U(O)FS in the context of the new social realities which the university as a public institution was expected to address. However, as these bodies mostly operated outside other already existing decision-making structures of the university, they took on more of an advisory role. Their limited authority in as far as decision making was concerned signalled their subordinate role in the power structures of the university. As such, they held little influence over institutional change processes but were nonetheless, a step into opening up the university to transcend the structures that had been institutionalised during apartheid.

³⁶ Ibid p.351

The looming changes within the South African socio-political landscape and its potential implications on higher education prompted the first of these university forums in the form of a think-tank. This think-tank was tasked to strategically reflect on how to plan for the anticipated changes from 7th-8th April 1989.³⁷ According to archival reports, there were up-to fifty broadly representative participants within this think-tank. The participants represented a range of internal and external UOFS stakeholders from within the university and its neighbourhood. Those from within UOFS included representatives of top management, senior academics, support staff and some members of the university council. The key issues that were raised at the think tank's first meeting concerned the anticipated problems within a diverse student population and how these problems should be addressed. The think tank also tackled the anticipated financial shortage in the new dispensation. For both topics, there was a need to plan in the context of the changes which would affect the university. The think-tank was the first entry point into the UOFS search for proactive strategies to the inevitability of a "less white, less Afrikaans, possibly less Christian, less western and possibly less orderly"³⁸ campus. Their key suggested intervention strategy emphasised the need to revise the essence and future role of the UOFS by reformulating its mission.

The same participatory strategy was carried over into the formation of a community committee by the university council on 27th September 1993 to make contact with the mostly black local community. The crucial issue under consideration for the community committee was to conduct a follow up of the meeting with Black educational leaders that had been held in 1990 regarding the need to smoothen admission access to the university. It was owing to the community committee engagements that a new program to support student access was formulated: the 'Need for Education Elevation and Development' (NEED). The NEED

³⁷ Archives UV008 DS G Japhta 08/27/01: Transformasie (1988/89 report on Think-Tank (p. 2; c)

³⁸ *ibid*

program was intended to bridge access for black students to the university if their matric results did not provide for their direct entry.³⁹

The community committee laid the groundwork for the establishment of a transformation committee. The transformation committee was then officially launched in May 1994 comprised of representatives of all levels at the university, community representatives and local politicians from the Free State province, with the rector as the chairperson. This committee was expected to complement the Senate and the Council, without undermining or interfering with these bodies. It is notable here that this committee was created to perform an advisory role with a critical task to advise the council on the required changes at the university. Ultimately, the committee ingeniously developed petitions and motions to alter the underlying structural impediments in the systemic arrangement of the university and its council. The committee also provided for a pool of suitable candidates for the university council and management.^{40, 41} The transformation committee continued to evolve and was later renamed as the Transformation Forum (TF), after that, as the Broad Transformation Forum (BTF), and eventually as the Transformation Plan Task Team (TPTT). Underlying the work of the committee, however, was the commitment towards the transformation of the university.

The committees, however, faced a challenge, as they found themselves on the outside of the core decision-making processes of the university. The archived reflections of Mr Billyboy Ramahlela for instance, cite an incident where a new university chancellor was appointed without consulting or even inviting the transformation committee to participate in any stage of the appointment process.⁴² This indicated the structural disjuncture between the public

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Council Minutes of 1995, indicate that three individuals were appointed from the transformation committee to serve on the university council.

⁴¹ UFS, 2016

⁴² Archived document authored by Mr. Billyboy Ramahlela on the role of transformation committee; available in the archives of contemporary affairs, UFS.

aspirations for transformation, within which the participation of the transformation committee was not appropriately incorporated. By implication, therefore, institutional processes of the university continued in a similar structural and decision-making pattern as they had before, albeit with additional structures acting alongside. The transformation committee, therefore, had no actual power to influence proceedings towards the transformative mandate for which they had been presumably created. It can therefore be seen that the transformation committee, provided an appropriate smokescreen for a participative approach in the transformative efforts at the University. At the same time, the institutional processes of planning and decision making continued as they had before.

It is noted here that the establishment of these transitional advisory/advocacy/watchdog platforms that were sanctioned by the university itself, gave the impression of its commitment to transformation. Nonetheless, the participatory forums were arguably instrumental in bringing the university managers to the attention of crucial reform imperatives. These forums advocated for reforms to the language medium, student admission and residence placement, staff equity, and the incorporation of community concerns.⁴³ The transformation committee was also instrumental in increasing new representation on the university council, in the adoption of a policy of affirmative action and the diffusion of student unrest at the UOFS. Through their transformation mandate, the forums were therefore instrumental in attempting to challenge the institutional culture at the UOFS, which was still primarily held intact within pre-1990 institutional structures.

⁴³ Archives: Transformation committee minutes indicate that three of its members had been appointed to the University council.

5.5.3 Transformation as the mantra for post-apartheid institutional change

The Reconstruction and Development Program (RDP)⁴⁴ set out a policy framework for integrated and coherent socio-economic progress in South Africa whose vision for a fundamental transformation of the country was aimed at producing a stable, participatory, non-racist and non-sexist democracy. It was owing to such commitment to ‘transformation’ that the post-1994 period at the U(O)FS considered its pursuit as both a process and a goal. It is noteworthy that the tag of ‘transformation’ as a process was a vital element of the efforts to define the process of institutional change that was being envisioned. Insights from the concept of ‘transformation’ as a descriptive label for the intervening entities in the institutional change processes of the university environment is the starting point for this study’s understanding of the UFS emergence from its apartheid past.

Transformation became the mantra of what came to indicate the progressive positions on the university’s change practices. These practices were characteristically reflected in the various visions and strategic plans laid out by each of the four successive rectors within the 1990–2010 period. Through the university’s vision statements, rectors’ speeches and annual addresses, as well as the university’s transformation reports (submitted to the Department of Education since 2003) were identified as critical sources for inferences on the post-1990 transformation agenda of the university. These included assessments of how the university progressed along with a set of indicators including community engagement, staff and student environment, research and intellectual cultures, funding models, the cultural as well as governance, management and leadership at the university. These criteria provided part of the framework within which institutional change was considered within the U(O)FS. The UFS transformation plan of 2007–2010 was held as the summative reference for transformation within the timeline of this study.

⁴⁴ RDP, 2004 accessed: <https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/governmentgazetteid16085.pdf>

The UFS transformation plan of 2007–2010 covers the entirety of the internal theorisation about post-apartheid transformation at the UFS. Transformation, according to this plan, was motivated by an observed discrepancy between the internal and external environment of the UFS. The adoptive transformative model was thus seeking to narrow the gap between the environmental needs and the internal operations of the UFS; where transformation was considered as an emergent process that would result from continuous correction. The transformation plan, therefore, considered that the institutional culture of the UFS depended on the mind-set of individuals. As such, the transformation required a complete change in strategy, structure, systems, processes, technology, work, culture and behaviour at the UFS. The transformation at the university was thus considered to require high levels of personal development as well as high levels of involvement but, with a likelihood of high levels of institutional discomfort. The UFS' transformation plan was based on the work of Eckel, Hill and Green (1998), for whom transformation was considered as an intentional and gradual process that alters the institutional culture by changing underlying assumptions and institutional behaviours and processes. From the UFS example and the university's reflection on transformation, which is considered as an institutional change process in this study, one infers the role of individuals as well as the structural components of institutions in institutional change. Whereas the evaluation of these goals for transformation at the UFS was not the primary focus of this study, they offered a theoretical standpoint to further the premises of institutional change at the UFS.

Nonetheless, a disclaimer is in order here. Whereas South African universities can all be said to have been undergoing transformation processes of different magnitudes after the apartheid period, the reference to the UFS in this study is not in any way intended as a benchmark to interpret the processes of other university contexts. It, however, ought to also be acknowledged that the overall progress of the SA HE context sought to have a unified HE system and the

mechanisms for doing so were introduced through the 1997 White Paper on the transformation of higher education. As such, the particular approach that was undertaken within this section considered the premise of the UFS historical institutionalisation processes in the 1990–2010 period. It considered the SA HE imperatives for change and the UFS responses, as shown in the table that follows. The table summarises the elements of transformation at the UFS⁴⁵ as they are juxtaposed along with the state-level directives as contained in feedback about the transformation process (transformation reports)⁴⁶ and how these corresponded with the SA HE level changes as outlined in Cloete et al. (2004).

Figure 4: Transformation and institutional change imperatives for post-apartheid UFS

SA HE POLICY INITIATIVES	CORRESPONDING UOFS/UFS INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT	UOFS/UFS TRANSFORMATION IMPERATIVES
1990–1994		
1. NECC and NEPI (1990–1992) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explored non-racism, non-sexism, democracy, a unitary system and redress in Education 2. RDP & ANC Education policy ⁴⁷ (1994) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HE to contribute to the reconstruction and development of SA • SAHE to reform its institutional and system governance • SAHE to institute affirmative action measures and formulate suitable policies 	1.1 Changing Demographics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exponential growth in the number of black and non-Afrikaans speaking students • Race Incidences of Racial conflict in residences begin to emerge. • Appointment of senior black managers 2.1 Changing Institutional identity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in the diversity of students and staff • UFS catchment community becomes more diversified • Multiculturalism as a measure for diversity 	1.1.1 Affirmative action <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setting up academic access program (NEED) 2.1.1 Access <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opening up university access and residences to all 2.1.2 Language policy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English used alongside Afrikaans (Parallel medium)

⁴⁵ Archive: These were contained in an Internal Transformation report back on transformation and included edit notes of the of the presenter, Mr. Billyboy Ramahlela

⁴⁶ Prof. Fourie in his 2005 opening speech outlined what he referred to as phases of transformation for the UFS. These have been combined with Mr. Ramahlela’s elements of transformation to create the table.

⁴⁷ Last accessed on 05/05/2020 at: http://www.africa.upenn.edu/Govern_Political/ANC_Education.html

SA HE POLICY INITIATIVES	CORRESPONDING UOFS/UFS INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT	UOFS/UFS TRANSFORMATION IMPERATIVES
1995– 1999		
<p>3. NCHE (1995)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • commissioned to investigate all aspects of HE and make policy recommendations • Developed framework for Transformation of HE (in 1996) <p>4. Green paper (1995) & White paper (1997)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A program for HE transformation • Remodel HE for staff profiles to reflect South African demographic • Concentrated on structure, growth, governance and HE funding as priority areas <p>5. The Higher Education Act (1997)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council for Higher Education (CHE) established (1998) to advise the minister on all matters related to HE, undertake quality assurance and report annually to parliament on the state of HE • Institutional planning guidelines with requirements for 3-year institutional plans 	<p>3.1 Change in Nature and character of UFS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interventions to improve Human relations, race relations and sense of belonging. <p>4.1 Changing financial situation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced donor and alumni support <p>5.1 Merging faculties and departments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investment in research • New physical resources 	<p>3.1.1 Amendment of UFS private Act (1999)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bi-lingual university (dual medium) • Change of university symbols <p>4.1.1 Emphasis on Multiculturalism</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multicultural committee • Multicultural events <p>4.1.2 Financial transformation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction of running costs • Outsourcing of services • The link between budgeting and strategic planning • Staff rationalisation and retrenchment <p>4.1.3 Management and leadership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusive and consultative management style • Transformation committees <p>5.1.1 Academic revitalisation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emphasis on academic entrepreneurship • Market-related courses • Adult education programs • Introduction of e-Learning

SA HE POLICY INITIATIVES	CORRESPONDING UOFS/UFS INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT	UOFS/UFS TRANSFORMATION IMPERATIVES
2000–2004		
<p>6. National Plan for Higher Education (2001)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restructure of HE institutional landscape (2002) • Change in size and shape of HE through restructuring and mergers of HE institutions • Reduction in council sizes (2002) • Appoint task teams • Change nomenclature of universities, Technicon and colleges. 	<p>6.1 Physical resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diversity consciousness I renaming of buildings • Campus physical resources development strategy • Consideration of people with disabilities in building designs <p>6.2 Incorporations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporation of vista and UNIN (Qwaqwa) campus 	<p>6.1.1 Community service policy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporation of community service learning into teaching and learning 2003/2004 <p>6.2.1 Restructuring</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • University council reduced to 29 members • Cultural diversity sensitivity training • Appointment of more blacks and women into senior management • 3-campus model
2005–2010		
<p>7. Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigations into University transformation • Report of the Ministerial Committee on 2 Transformation and Social Cohesion and the Elimination of Discrimination in Public Higher Education Institutions 	<p>7.1 Resumption of racial tensions on campus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reitz video • Transformation Plan Task Team (TPTT) <p>7.2 Refocus on Transformation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institutional culture, • Academic activities • Governance and Management 	<p>7.1.1 Residence integration policy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forced integration <p>7.2.1 Academic and Human project</p>

5.5.4 Role of Rectors in the 1990–2010 period

The trajectories of institutional change that arose at the university often changed in both momentum and direction with each new rector. Here, the roles of the different rectors as key actors in buffering the visions of the transformation processes and unpacking its meaning over

the 20 years of post-1990 UFS was considered instrumental in underlining the change parameters at the UFS. The rectors also occupied the office of the vice-chancellor and were thus charged with the day-to-day operational aspects of the university. As such, the rectors played a dual role in the post-1990 transformation processes, both as crucial members of the participatory transformation mediums as well as the university council. Moreover, these structures often appeared to hold incongruous approaches to the needs of transformation during this period. It is nonetheless acknowledged that the rector's contributions were never in isolation of the committees and management teams with which they served, as their role was built around these teams and structures. Nonetheless, their leadership remained instrumental in the way that the university's strategic purposes were decided on and accomplished.

A summary of the rectors' visions and focus areas for transformation is outlined below. Their approaches to transformation were considered to have been emblematic of the changes in the University's post-1990 period.

i) *Francois Retief and the multiculturalism approach to diversity (1989–1997)*

At the turn of 1990, with Francois Retief as the UOFS' 10th rector, transformation was considered to be an evolutionary process that was expected to result from inner convictions, internal deliberation and planning. Before Retief was appointed as the rector of the UOFS in 1988, he had previously served as the university's Dean of medicine from 1970 to 1978. He had also served as the rector/vice-chancellor of the Medical University of Southern Africa from 1978 to 1982. Immediately before his appointment, Retief had been the Director-general of the RSA Department of Health from 1983 to 1987.

To consider Retief as the midwife of a major rebirth of the UOFS would not, therefore, be far-fetched, as his medical background objectified the kind of role that he was to play eventually. His term of office is significant as it bridged from the old to the new era at the UOFS. This

period included the South African transition from apartheid to democracy between 1990 and 1994. The priorities for transformation at the UOFS during Francois' term of office was premised on the democratisation of management structures, admission of students from disadvantaged communities, revision and Africanization of curricula, community involvement, bridging courses (academic support) and affirmative action programs.⁴⁸

Multiculturalism was conceived as a critical response strategy to diversity and was in line with the "long term development plan for the UOFS" that had been fronted from 1987.⁴⁹ The particular understanding of multiculturalism that was eventually adopted was credited to Johann Moll, who was the coordinator of the cultural committee at the UOFS. He defined multiculturalism as a situation where people would gain knowledge and develop the necessary skills to feel at ease with people from other cultures.⁵⁰ The first interventions of the cultural committee was an *Indaba* (conference) on multiculturalism that was held on 16 July 1992 to discuss the kinds of approaches to be taken with the expected cultural diversity at the university.⁵¹

Consequently, it was envisioned that diversity on the campus would be engaged by providing space for cultural diversity through the multiculturalism approach. The so-called 'fruit salad approach'⁵² rather than a 'melting pot approach' was the favoured metaphoric representation of the university's multicultural approach. The 'fruit salad approach' implied that cultural co-existence and complementarity were to be promoted within the separate identities at the expense of combining the different parts into a single cultural whole. The approach, therefore, ran the risk of perpetuating stratified identities. What was crucially overlooked in this response

⁴⁸ Archives: Transformasie files

⁴⁹ Archives: Billyboy Ramahlele on multiculturalism

⁵⁰ Archives: Alna Fourie – Multi kulturele komitee 1998: UV 027

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² The 'fruit salad approach' implied that all the different cultures would co-exist together on campus but with the potential to manifest in a state of separateness.

strategy were the already underlying identity hegemonies that had been historically weaved into the University's institutional makeup.s

When Benito Khotseng who had been appointed as the first black council member at the UOFS in 1993 was later tasked to lead the university's multicultural strategy, his emphasis was on the interpersonal relationships among all levels and between all actors on campus. He also expressed urgency for the multicultural program to be drawn and implemented and for the enactment of a multicultural committee with the status of a rector's advisory committee.⁵³ Multiculturalism nonetheless formed a basis to seek broader engagement within the diversity at the university. It resulted into symbolic initiatives such as creating a *Kovsie credo* and the development of a document on the university's social contract, which all focused on enforcing a code of conduct at the individual level, and espoused a commitment to communal values. These values were to characterise a humane, nonracist and non-sexist environment at the university⁵⁴. The university community was also expected to express its full diversity, primarily through tolerance, mutual respect, and justice (UFS, 2006: 259)

Also, an affirmative action committee was established on 8 August 1994 by the university council and by 30 May 1995, this committee formed part of the advisory support to the rector.⁵⁵ The year 1995–1996 was also declared as the multicultural year for the UOFS in which affirmative action policies were drawn up and approved by senate and council. A national conference was also held from 16th to 18th April 1997 to examine the basic premises of cultural expression within the university context, as visualised within the South African polity. Prof. Bengu, the Minister of Education and the keynote speaker at the conference, used the occasion to challenge the 'unity within diversity' theme of the conference. He argued that there was a

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

need to take a different approach that would centre unity as the main factor that would then give meaning and shape to diversity. His argument was, in fact, reflective of the contradiction of the path that the university had taken that would invariably keep the perceived cultural differences as mechanisms for further separation under the guise of multiculturalism.

While considering multiculturalism as the central premise of Retief term in office, a dilemma was noted in the university's approach to its post-apartheid context. With the primary focus on the coexistence of interpersonal, cultural identities, this not only masked the thin line between the understanding of race and culture within the university context but also missed out on the early possibility of engaging with the dynamics of institutional culture and identity. Nonetheless, it is recognised that Retief had the difficult task of leading the UOFS's transition from apartheid to a new social-political order; a task that was bound to be challenging. Retief's term of office came to an end in 1996, and Stef Coetzee replaced him.

ii) Stef Coetzee and the revitalisation strategy (1996–2002)

Stef Coetzee was officially inaugurated as the UOFS's 11th rector on 1st April 1997. He was an economist who had obtained a DPhil in Development economics from the UOFS in 1980. Before he was appointed the rector and vice-chancellor at the UOFS, he had been a vice-rector at Potchefstroom and had served as the economic adviser of the premier of the North-West province. Given his economics background, it was not surprising that Coetzee's focus was on the financial shortages of the university and the move towards the 'transformation' of the student body. He took the reins at a time when the university's student numbers were growing at an exponential rate. It was also, unfortunately, a time when the university's resources were dwindling, owing to a reduction of funds from the donors and alumni.⁵⁶ Coetzee considered the prioritisation of political concerns in order to ensure confidence and cooperation both

⁵⁶ Archives: Billyboy Mr. Billyboy Ramahlela files

internally at the UOFS and externally with the state-level directives. This was significant, as the beginning of his term of office coincided with the passing of the Higher Education Act (1997).

Coetzee considered transformation as a process that required deep thought and driven by expertise and professionalism rather than by politics and minority interests. His key words for transformation were 'quality' and 'equity'. During his tenure, students strikes and discontent prompted him to offer reflections on the period between 1996 and 1998 where he stated that the university was deeply divided and that this period had been a 'traumatic time for UFS'.⁵⁷ Coetzee's strategy focused on revitalisation, where he acknowledged that since 'transformation' was inevitable, the role of higher education was to make provision for more students and facilitate easier accessibility. His academic revitalisation and entrepreneurial approach also sought to promote a professionally run university where students would be viewed as clients (UFS 2004: 355–356).

The students' demonstrations of 1997 prompted a new vision to emerge as: "to be top achievers in the New South Africa". However, by 2001, this vision had been summarily revised as: "To be a university of excellence, equity and innovation". This new vision was to fulfil the mission that was geared towards ensuring the practice of science, as in the creation, integration, application and passing on of knowledge through the financially sustainable promotion of 1) an academic culture; 2) critical scholarly thought; 3) relevant scientific education; 4) basic and applied research; 5) community service; and 6) the comprehensive development of studies within the academic culture (UFS, 2006: 352).

What is significant in this process was that while a lot of mileage was being achieved on paper, in practice, the university was riddled by constant student protests. Consequently, the students

⁵⁷ Archives: Lessons from the transformation of the UFS, Delivered at colloquium on transformation at the university of Stellenbosch. (15 November 2012)

took centre-stage of the transformation process through their threats of violence. The progression of events within the student residences became an important site for the way the university's multicultural aspirations were being actualised. There were attempts to have a 70/30 racial distribution of white and black students in the residences as the minimum acceptable mix, but this resulted in its own set of challenges. The earlier implemented multicultural approach meant that students were allowed the freedom of choice to reside wherever they felt would be a cultural fit for them. This cultural choice, however, turned out to have become shorthand for racial rather than cultural identities among the students. Eventually, there were 'purely black' and 'purely white' residences at the UOFS with students fuelling racial antagonisms from time to time. As a consequence, students decided to live in racially stratified residences, while the university management gave in to their whims out of fear for violence (Van der Merwe and Van Reenen, 2017 p. 98–102; Verschoor 2014).

Nonetheless, the University maintained a clear strategy of symbolic representation, with such efforts as the award of an honorary doctorate to former president Nelson Mandela as part of the university's demonstration of its transformation. This honour was indeed significant for the transformational outlook of the UOFS since it demonstrated a forward step from its apartheid past. As noted earlier, the UOFS had been archetypal of apartheid-era compliance to strict racial stratification and for it to honour one of the most prominent apartheid-era opposition symbols was an unmistakable mark of progress. In his acceptance speech, President Nelson Mandela applauded the UFS' transformation effort, noting that:

“What the University of the Free State has done to promote diversity, a multicultural environment and respect and appreciation of all traditions and backgrounds of the people; what you have achieved in the field of language is praiseworthy...”

Nelson Mandela, 2001 (cited in Coetzee, 2002)⁵⁸

⁵⁸ Archives: Lessons from the transformation of the UFS, Delivered at colloquium on transformation at the University of Stellenbosch (15 November 2012).

Under Coetzee, the university' strategic priorities were ordered as such:

1. The UFS as the university of preference within the emphasis on excellence, and quality
2. Equity and redress
3. The successful restructuring of higher education
4. Financial sustainability with an emphasis on increasing income. (UFS, 2006: 356)

However, his tenure in office was clouded by a failure to achieve a sense of shared space at the university, particularly between its white and black student and staff constituents. This points to a deeper issue than failure, as a lot of institutional groundwork was in progress. It ought to be noted that the apartheid-era institutional machinery, which was noted earlier as the kind that cannot be suddenly stopped and changed direction, was still in operation. It is helpful, therefore, to understand this period as a facet in the ongoing de-institutionalisation and re-institutionalisation process of the university and thus, an essential contribution to the way that future events would unfold.

Coetzee resigned on account of ill health, and Frederick Fourie succeeded him.

iii) Frederick Fourie and the Turnaround strategy (2003–2008)

Frederick Fourie was appointed as the 12th rector of the UFS in January 2003, having acted in the same capacity since September 2002. Like Stef Coetzee before him, he was an economist who had obtained his PhD from the University of Harvard in 1981. Fourie was also an alumnus of the UOFS, where he had obtained his Bachelor's degree and Masters in Economics. He had been the academic vice-rector of the UFS from 1999 to 2002 and was involved in the promotion of research, new tuition programs and faculty restructuring.

Fourie considered transformation, not as a one-off event, but as an ongoing process. The full meaning of transformation during this period was understood to extend beyond simple numbers in terms of race and gender (UFS, 2006: 362). Fourie's work was a considerable follow-up of

his predecessor's ideas of revitalisation, with whom he had served as vice-rector since 1999. His emphasis was on balancing the synergy between the university's excellence, equity and financial sustainability and he proposed the turnaround strategy in order to reinforce the academic component of the University and stimulate research as well as maintain the momentum that had been gathered (UFS, 2006: 356

Fourie outlined his vision for the university in his inaugural speech as "continuity and change" as well as "quality and equity" with the emphasis that the university was to play its traditional role as a place of critical inquiry. It was expected to create and transfer scholarly knowledge whilst contributing to society by remaining a 'good university' for 25–50 years to come. (UFS, 2006: 257). Perhaps then, expansion of the university through the SA HE merger policy in 2003 would not have come at a better time. The addition of Vista and Qwaqwa campuses to the Bloemfontein campus of the University of the Free State was a fitting metaphor of the expanded role of the university beyond its historical and geographical bound.

The Qwaqwa Campus had formerly been the University of Qwaqwa (UniQwa) and is situated 300 km from the Bloemfontein campus, in the Eastern part of the Free State province. UniQwa had been established in 1982 as a satellite campus of the University of the North. It had been one of the apartheid-era universities that were designated for black populations. Similarly, the South Campus of the University of the Free State (formerly a satellite of Vista University) had been established in 1981 as another apartheid-era university to cater to the urban black population in search of tertiary education. These two campuses had had different historical experiences from the Bloemfontein campus of the UFS. Adding them to the UFS meant that, in principle, the geographical definition of the university of the Free State had been permanently altered.

Van der Merwe and van Rensen (2014) argue that whereas the merger brought little change on the Bloemfontein campus itself, it had some implications for the Qwaqwa and South campuses. For the Bloemfontein campus of the UFS however, the mergers seemed to take away attention from the residence transformation processes. However, even when the merger process would have been expected to have had broader institutional implications on the UFS, the documentary and archival methods employed in this study proved insufficient in isolating these trends. This aspect was thus recommended for a future empirical study.

During Fourie's term, the multicultural conceptualisation of diversity at the university was revived. Some of the symbolic projects that emerged in 2004 were the university's centennial project to honour the legacy of King Moshoeshoe (of the Basutu) in the form of scholarship that popularised his traditional leadership attributes. As such, the university produced a program on South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) and Africa wide channels on King Moshoeshoe and his reconciliatory style of African leadership.⁵⁹ Also, the centennial publication of the history of the university that this study heavily drew from was launched during this period.

This multi-cultural revival, along with its fusion with the roles of the university was exhibited at the occasion of the inauguration of the Qwaqwa campus of the University. On this occasion, Fourie unveiled the Basotho blanket alongside his academic garb to indicate the union between the traditional role of a university as an academic institution with its close involvement in with the development of communities of South Africa and Africa (UFS, 2006). The university was expected to adapt to the changing demands and opportunities without compromising its intrinsic nature as a university.

⁵⁹ Ibid p.362.

However, in 2007 an aggressive integration residence policy halted Fourie's seemingly high-flying transformational achievements. The Reitz Four incident which resulted from this policy became a defining moment for Fourie's term of office and one in which the transformation bubble at the UFS was burst open. The Reitz event unfolded when four white student residents of Reitz decided to make a mock video of what integration would mean for student accommodation at the university. The students conscripted the participation of black residence cleaning staff in a series of mock orientation activities that would depict the way integration was to be conducted. The activities included athletics competitions in the open fields and an attempt to 'teach' the black workers (representing new black students) how to play rugby.

The climax of the mock activities was, however, the subject of much controversy when the video became public in 2008. The workers were then invited to a meal with the students at the end of the mock integration activities. However, the video implied that urine had been added to the food that was given to the workers. The black workers were then asked to consume the concocted meal with an outro with that translated as "this is the meaning of integration". This incident reignited concerns around respect, inequality and institutional culture in racial terms, not only at the UFS campus but, by extension, for the rest of the institutions of higher learning in post-apartheid South Africa. The incident became a public talking point for the failures of transformation in higher education. It brought into question, the kinds of trajectories that higher education transformation had taken in South African universities, and especially at the UFS. The fact that the video had won the top prize in the students' festival also indicated the general attitude of the students towards inter-racial (or multicultural, as it was preferred to be spoken of) mixing in campus residences.

Soudien (2010) considered the Reitz four incident as symbolic of the deeper systemic issues that South African HE was contending with, and recommended that there was a need to

undertake considerate forms of social criticism that are aware of the positions within the structures and narratives of South African social analyses. His approach encouraged an understanding of the different identities by historicising each one's subject pathways. Soudien's outlook brings to the fore the need to specifically look into wider encompassing theoretical approaches in understanding the changes and continuities in SA HE, considering the different racial pathways that had been historically pursued as part of the broader implications of apartheid.

Van der Merwe and Van Reenen (2017) also covered the events surrounding the video that brought to light the problematics of transformation as a national debate regarding race and integration within the post-apartheid university environment. They considered the Reitz Four incident as a representation of the persistent patterns that continue to underlie many South African transformation processes. Van der Merwe and Van Reenen then question why the UFS still retained the historical elements within its institutional practice that were contradictory to the character of the demographics and nature of the South African post-apartheid society. They recommended that the practices that do not contribute to building a knowledge community ought to be discarded and replaced with better alternatives. However, this view would be enriched even further with a deeper engagement with the machinations of institutional set-ups, particularly the complexities provided by the very nature of higher education institutions, more so in an already complex historical South African context. This considered the view that the challenge that the Reitz Four incident depicted was the one of not tackling institutional cultural practices as a priority in the transformation of the UFS.

Suransky and Van der Merwe (2016) in exploring the significance of institutional culture in the process of change consider the wake-up call that the Reitz Four video provided as a catalyst for change, not only at the UFS but across South African universities. From their analysis, based on interviews with the members of the university's management and student leaders who

dealt with the aftermath of the video's publicity in 2008, they note that the Reitz event strongly correlated with the notion of institutional culture as a 'contested social reality.' Their findings highlighted contestations around self-declared race-based identities and difference; shifting boundaries between private and public spaces; changing senses of ownership and belonging; as well as the power of masculinity and gender-based inequalities. Citing Jansen (2009) and Keet (2001), Suransky and Van der Merwe (2016) note that the Reitz Four incident was far from an isolated affair but was an indication of the faults within the institutional culture of universities. They then recommend that changing institutional cultures would require institutional-specific deliberations that would create an avenue for clarity around the notions of white privilege and black disadvantage.

Fourie resigned after the Reitz Four incident became public in 2008 and Prof Jonathan Jansen succeeded him.

iv) *Jonathan Jansen: The human and academic projects (2009 & 2010)*

Jonathan Jansen was not only the first black academic to rise to the top position at the UFS, but he was also the first to have neither been affiliated to the university as an alumnus nor served in any other prior staff capacity at the university. His education background was also more varied than the previous rectors, having obtained his BSc in Botany and Zoology from the University of the Western Cape and Honours in Education from UNISA, before completing an MSc in Curriculum at Cornell and a PhD in Education at Stanford University. Before he was appointed the Rector and Vice-Chancellor of the UFS, Jansen had served as the Dean of Education at the University of Pretoria for nine years.

In Jonathan Jansen's inaugural address, he expressed aspirations for the university to become a place that exemplifies the scholarship and the practice of reconciliation, forgiveness and social justice and one where scholars and students from around the world would descend on

the institution to study and understand the theory and practice of building community across the divides of race but also religion, gender, (dis)ability, national origins and, thanks to Athletics South Africa, sexual identity.

During this address, Jansen argued that the problem that had arisen with the Reitz Four incident was one of institutional culture and not necessarily one of the individual pathologies of the students involved. He proceeded to announce that the university was withdrawing all charges against the students, in the spirit of racial reconciliation and the need for healing. He noted that the university was to become a place that exemplified the scholarship and the practice of reconciliation, forgiveness and social justice and where scholars and students from around the world would descend on the institution to study and understand the theory and practice of building community across the divides of race, religion, gender, disability, national origins and, sexual identity. This was followed by the launch of the International Institute for Studies in Race, Reconciliation and Social Justice as part of the bridge between the humanising aspects of the university as well as its academic attributes. His vision for the university was thus summarised in two projects: the academic project and the human project.

In his take on transformation, he noted that the real problem with transformation was not merely the number of black faces among the staff and student of a former exclusively white university, but a challenge of knowledge. He located the problem of transformation in the kinds of 'knowledge' that black and white students come with into the university space and he called for curriculum reform that would support young people to become more compassionate.⁶⁰ Jansen had only been in office for a year in 2010. Jansen's extent of engaging with the transformation of the UFS in the period after 2010 fell outside of the scope for this study and is recommended for a further empirical study.

⁶⁰ Prof. Jonathan Jansen Inaugural speech, 19th October 2009

5.6 Implications of focus on diversity and multiculturalism on UFS institutional change imperatives

Many of the post-1990 changes reflected directly onto the student body as a broad stakeholder base, but one whose demographics did not always hold sufficient power to influence critical changes. Most significant of the spaces for change were the student residences, classrooms and the areas of student governance.⁶¹ In terms of the residences, precautions were initially taken as is seen in the initial post-1990 period, where only one hostel was opened initially in May 1990 to a multi-racial student body. Later, on 24 August 1990, the university had removed all restrictions to student admission, but remained watchful of the cultural differences in hostels and was to handle them with care(UFS, 2006).

Nonetheless, the handling of the issue of student diversity exhibited some of the most revealing challenges in the post-1990 period, and a multi-cultural approach was considered as a critical intervention to address diversity. Through the multi-culturalism approach, it was encouraged that students select their preferred residences in line with their preferred ‘cultural experiences’. At the same time, through the parallel language medium, the students also chose between English and Afrikaans for an academic experience in their preferred language of instruction. Through this free selection and consequent selective association, the residences soon became beacons of the kinds of race-based separations that the post-1990 period was trying to distance itself. Reforms around residence occupancy considered culture as the differentiating feature but what followed were monoracial spaces in the name of multiculturalism.

It is noted here that in the post-1990 period, multiculturalism was fronted as a means to redefine the race-based challenges of this period in terms of culture. When racial fragilities arose, they were masked as consequences of cultural differences rather than as conflicts of racialised

⁶¹ Archives: 1988:199 UV008 DSG Japtha

identities. The speed at which the black student numbers were growing was bound to have implications on matters such as representation, belonging and culture at the UFS. However, the University was slow to respond to these new dynamics.

The issues of representation owing to the racial and language diversities at the UFS arose for the first time in August 1994 when black students staged a sit-in protest in the administration building against the procedure and results of the Student Representative Council (SRC) elections. There was a call for a more representative SRC and a new electoral format was adopted to facilitate the first 'multicultural' SRC 1995, where the population of black students was already 36 per cent of the 9900 students. The voting format included non-traditional regulations around filling elective positions, where all students were required to vote for at least two candidates of a language group other than their own for their votes to count as valid. As a result, one black student (Grant Tsiatsima) and one English student (Andrew Soden) were elected to the SRC, despite the predominantly Afrikaans students' electorate (UFS, 2006).

Racial representation was also a significant aspect of apprehension within the staff and management structures of the university. In 1993, Benito Khotseng was appointed as the first black council member, along with Sheila Aronstam as an additional female appointee to the council in order to boost the minority representation of the council. This provided for an indication of readiness to include previously excluded and underrepresented demographics in the university's management. Benito Khotseng was later appointed as chief manager for strategic and student programs in 1995 (UFS, 2006).

It is noted here that race was not tackled as an explicit issue in the post-1990 period, even when the preceding apartheid period had been explicit about establishing the kinds of race-based delineations that the UFS came to embody. Race as a feature of the university identity was an important aspect to consider in the institutional change parameters of the UFS mostly since the

institutional identity of the university campus had been racially defined in terms of an exclusive white, majority Afrikaans demographic during the apartheid years. In order to deinstitutionalise this race-based identity, it was required that building a new one that recognised race in itself as a critical aspect to engage over, rather than as a proxy element inferred in cultural and language differences. This was, however, as the institutional premise of change has unveiled, bound to be an uphill task for the university, which was working with both an internal and external context that was only trying to transcend the effects of apartheid.

Nonetheless, this chapter sums up the aspect of culture as having been a misdiagnosis in the way that it was engaged with at the UFS in earlier post-apartheid change praxis; where the cultural aspects of the university were considered only in the sense of differentiated individual and group identities rather than as an institutional element. Whereas the significance of the institutional element of the university's culture was only finally recognised in the 2007–2010 transformation plan, it then had to be dealt with alongside a backlog of individualised/group cultural attributions that had been reinforced within the university space. For a majority of the student body at the UFS by 2010, there remained gaps in the nurturance of their sense of belonging due to the unchallenged institutional culture. This commitment to cultural and linguistic identities instead translated into racial stratification in the classrooms and residences. These elements, therefore, reinforced racialised identities, where the university's efforts towards transformation were in some cases seen as opposed to one or the other racial group. In some bizarre instances, different racial groups felt threatened by the same policies at the same time. Students found solace in segregating along the lines of race as a proxy to their cultural and language differences, as seen in the residences and classrooms, as discussed earlier in this chapter.

5.7 Locating UFS Institutional change imperatives in 1990–2010 period

In terms of the equilibrium status within the university, particularly around the language issue in the post-1990 period, it is essential to note that the university had become bilingual, with English as a language of instruction alongside Afrikaans. As a result, Language groups became the softer spot for the previously held racial stratifications of the university to be maintained, this time within the same campus. The classification within ‘language groups’ at the university meant that the classrooms, just like the residences, experienced racially-based separation, masked under individual choices for preferred language and cultural identities.⁶² Indeed, the motivation for the inclusion of English was to ensure that the university would not risk “losing it all”, which was expected to happen if compromises to transcend the exclusive use of Afrikaans had not been, as Fourie argued (UFS, p.348)

In October 2006, an institutional quality audit of the UFS was conducted by an audit panel of the Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC) of the Council on Higher Education (CHE). In the audit report, the panel expressly alerted the university to the problematics of its language policy and residence placement policy. It recommended that the UFS should review all policies related to student residences that allow for lack of racial integration (Van der Merwe & Van Reenen, 2017 p.55). In actuality, the report laid out eight commendations for the UFS on i) its partnership approach with respect to its three campuses and other national and regional institutions; ii) using the Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU) University Management Benchmarking Program in efforts to improve academic quality and management processes; iii) initiating support programs for underprepared students; iv) Library and Information Services’ contribution; v) strategic clusters responding to national and regional priorities; vi) the development of research capacity and investment; vii) development of black

⁶² Archives: transformation committee minutes

and female staff in particular; and viii) its commitment to community engagement (CHE 2008).⁶³

In contrast, nineteen aspects were considered as areas of concern according to the CHE, and some of the key aspects that relate to the institutional change parameters of the were extracted as follows: i) the need for an investigation of the language policy and transformation strategy and practices which undermine the goals of non-racism, non-sexism, multilingualism and multiculturalism; ii) as a matter of urgency, the need to review all policies related to student residences; iii) examine institutional culture and resistance to change; iv) the need for engagement with the academic and management risks contributing to the potential failure of its transformation agenda.

Another audit committee in 2008⁶⁴ found that the university's language policy facilitated racially separate classes and in a way, fostered a continued racial separation as a result. Parallel medium, by implication, meant that separate academic spaces continued to be cultivated and relayed the racial divisions at the university, now masked under language groups. Fourie had earlier noted that there existed two universities on the same campus: one black and another white, on account of the language disparities created in the classrooms and the cultural polarization in the residences.

Quite crucially, religion did not feature overtly as a contentious aspect in the post-1990 period of the university. Nonetheless, the conception of the university as a Christian education establishment remained mostly intact, as reemphasised in the 1999 UFS amendment act in which the sovereign authority and leadership of God over the UFS was proclaimed. The UFS also maintained an independent Dutch Reformed Church (DRC) student congregation. In 1994,

⁶³ CHE (Council on Higher Education) (2008). UFS Institutional Audit Report. Pretoria: CHE.

⁶⁴ Audit report of the University of the Free State: Report of the Higher Education quality committee to the university of the free State (March, 2008)

the congregation made national headlines when it ordained Gretha Heyman as the first female minister in the history of the church. The congregation numbers were notably in decline as with the Afrikaans students, who were the primary members of the church (*Kovsie Kerk*), vacated on-campus student residences in favour of city accommodation, where they joined other Dutch Reformed Church parishes. Religion nonetheless remained a substantial academic component of the UFS, where the faculty of theology expanded scholarship into other religions as well (UFS, 2006).

5.8 Chapter conclusion

Considering that this study progressed based on a theoretical understanding of institutional change as a layered process in HE, it, therefore, emerges that the premise of institutional change has been extrapolated at two levels. First, as noted in chapter (IV) State level processes HE institutional change mechanisms were defined by the socio-political playing field that is inherent in the laws, policies and funding mechanisms that directly impact on the SA HE system brought about inferences that are here presented as theoretical propositions of higher education institutional change:

- 1) *Institutional change in higher education as an evolutionary process that emerges from within the socio-political context, in which the evolution of a given polity has direct implications on the institutional demarcations for higher education's rules and practices.*
- 2) *Institutional change in Higher Education as a design-based perspective, where the playing field is shaped by a definitive policy framework for Higher Education.*

In the current chapter, we have noted that the UFS as a constituent entity of SA HE operates as a secondary institutional change field, whereas a decentralised Higher Education establishment, the UFS organises around both its internal and external institutional elements

that in turn has an impact on its institutional change premise. This gives rise to the third institutional change inference in this study as:

- 3) *Institutional change in Higher Education as an equilibrium perspective in which a balance is achieved in the way that a HE establishment relates to the requirements of its external institutional elements within the context of its bounded internal context.*

This inference is developed from noting the institutional change trajectories within the historical premise of the UFS that were held within the attributes to the practices, language and racial profiles and religious affiliations of the university. What this points to is the way that the location of the UFS could be framed as a contested site of belonging and cultural recognition; an aspect that points towards the constant (re)negotiation of its institutional culture and the ownership of its social spaces. As such, the historical shifts that were identified in this chapter have been discussed through a juxtaposition of how the external socio-political layer that mediated the institutional frame of SA HE as a whole had contextual implications for the institutional change elements of the UFS. In the 1990–2010 period that this chapter has primarily considered for analysis, this process of institutional change was defined in the UFS as a process of transformation; an intentional and gradual process that alters the institutional culture by changing underlying assumptions and institutional behaviours and processes.

By using the UFS as a case example, therefore, this chapter has contributed to the body of knowledge that engages with the theoretical precepts of institutional change in HE based on the context of South Africa that exhibits high levels of ongoing seismic changes, with enormous implications for its HE frame. The next chapter discusses the emergence of the institutional change propositions and offers conclusions and recommendations for further research.

CHAPTER VI

6.0 DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDIES

6.1 Introduction and chapter overview

This chapter discusses the research findings and engages with this study's contribution to the knowledge of institutional change in the way it applies to the field of higher education studies. The chapter draws theoretical propositions on institutional and organizational tangents in the HE field and lays claim towards the consideration of a layered theorisation premise for studying institutional change in the field. This chapter discusses and offers conclusions on the research aim: *To identify and analyse how institutional change theories help to understand SA HE change processes through a historical analysis of SA HE, and a case study of the UFS.*

This final chapter picks up from Chapter II, in which the conceptual layout of institutional change was explored in order to facilitate an understanding of the HE field and the corresponding organisational/institutional change debates that exist in the field. The chapter also presents broad summaries and discussions of the historical analyses that emerged from Chapter IV and V that relate to SA HE and the UFS, as located within the socio-political change premises of the South African context. As such, drawing from the literature review and the historical analysis of SA HE and the UFS conducted in this study, the critical discussion in this chapter offers an overall synopsis on the area of institutional change theorization and how its transposition onto the higher education context is indeed a valuable niche research undertaking.

6.2 Theorization and the basis of knowledge claims of this study

This study proceeded with an approach that is similar to Hammond's (2018) thesis that explains the theorization process as a premise of finding a perspective through which a problem should be viewed in a new or revised way. As such, this study started by noticing a gap in the way changes in HE is contextualized, from which an institutional change theorization premise was

taken up to address this gap. Just as Hammond indicates that the process of theorizing is about solving a puzzle within a given context, it was this knowledge claim that was upheld with this study, particularly in the way that an institutional change theorization has been transposed onto the HE field in this study. In essence, therefore, the process of theorizing was recognized in this study to offer the opportunity to make sense of previously disparate data by noticing and producing patterns. This was similar to Langley's (1999) concession regarding the need to conceptualize patterns in events as a vital aspect of the process of theorization.

The unique knowledge contribution of this study is to be found in the way that it stepped beyond the typical organizational premise of theorizing change, particularly within such a multifaceted context as that of the higher education field. The analyses of this study are suggestive of the need to depart from the limitations of organizational analyses for change in HE and to recognize the complexities of institutional interconnections within which the field operates. This study has thus provided the opportunity to stretch the understanding of the HE field across a network of institutional contexts in order to undergo what Van den Ven (1992) considers as the critical role of theorization, that enables one to permeate the logic behind simple and complex temporal progressions, alike.

6.3 The originality of the institutional change inferences in this study

Abduction, the form of reasoning that was adopted for this study as elaborated in Chapter III, was essential in affording the researcher license for making what was considered as reasonable inferences. As such abduction enabled the researcher to draw patterns from repeated observations that emerged from the historical analysis of this study and provided room for the re-contextualization of HE change from within the lens of institutional change theories. As such the originality of the inferences in this study is to be found in the reinterpretation of higher education change from the knowledge base of institutional change theories that were debated in the literature review in Chapter II. These inferences have been drawn from the integral

theoretical framework, from which reflections on the individual, cultural, organisational and structural components of institutional change were examined within the HE context of the UFS.

This reinterpretation and re-contextualization of HE change studies has also been the basis for the advancement of a layered approach to institutional change, which differs significantly from the way Thelen (1999; 2003; 2004) applies the concept of institutional layering. Whereas Thelen considers layering as an incremental process where new elements are introduced to existing institutions in order to change their structure and status, this study introduced a different angle to institutional layering, where it has also been recognised as an interconnection across institutional contexts of change. This study's layered institutional change approach is similar to the hint provided by Lindner's (2003) identified need to consider the reproduction and stabilisation of institutional settings as being located across different layers that affect successive institutional settings.

This study thus considered institutional layering in terms of how the changes in the interconnected institutional arrangement within which HE operates would have a demonstrable effect on the institutionalisation process of the entire field of HE and for individual entities like the UFS. This was denoted through the relationship shared across the UFS, the SA HE policy frame, and the overarching South African polity status quo at different times in this study. As such, this three-layered consideration of the HE institutional frame resulted in several inferences regarding Higher Education Institutional change. It provided the basis to respond to the 3-subsidary research questions (RQs) that this study set out to respond to as:

RQ1: What are the salient constituents of HE institutional change theories?

RQ2: Which trajectories can be identified in academic studies and policy documents of SA HE as important in driving change its change from 1873 to 2010?

RQ3: In emerging from its apartheid history, how did institutional change happen at the UFS between 1990 and 2010?

In the following discussions, these three research questions are answered from debates that arose in literature review of Chapter II (RQ1) as well as the findings from the historical analysis of SA HE in Chapter IV (RQ2) and the UFS in Chapter V (RQ3). The overall inferences of institutional change in terms of its institutional/organisational reinterpretation and the advancement of HE as a layered institutional framework are also discussed with regard to methodological layout in Chapter III. Also, significant theoretical propositions were advanced as the basis on which the salient constituents of HE institutional change in RQ1 were premised, followed by the findings from the historical analysis to respond to RQ2 and RQ3 appropriately.

6.4 The salient constituents of HE institutional change theories (RQ1)

What are the salient constituents of HE institutional change theories?

As mentioned earlier, the responses to RQ1 were drawn from insights that emerged in the literature review chapter of this study. The literature was interrogated for contentions and insights for the potential to apply institutional change theorisation to HE change studies. As such, this study has been able to initiate a transposition of the knowledge of institutional change theorization onto the HE frame, and thus stepped beyond the overly saturated organizational change framing of HE change studies. Nonetheless, one of the critical attributes of this study is to be found in its acknowledgement of the robust intersection between institutional and organizational spheres within the HE field. The study recognised that Higher Education establishments continually negotiate their positionality depending on their local organizational context on the one hand, as well as their interconnected institutional context, on the other hand. It is within this conundrum of institutional/organizational elements of the HE premise, where Hodgson (2006) and Streeck and Thelen (2005), for instance, consider organizations as special kinds of institutions.

In the same way, HE establishments like universities are considered to meet the criteria of an organizational/institutional overlap as suggested by Gumpert (2000) and Roland (2004). It is within this overlap, as well as the emphasis on drawing from the field of institutional change theories in order to enrich HE change studies that RQ1 and the salient constituents of HE institutional change were considered in this study. From the analyses to respond to RQ1, the theoretical propositions that emerged were backed by illustrations from the context of SA HE and the case example of the UFS. These findings underscored the relationships across the bounded organizational and interconnected institutional dimensions of HE as discussed below.

6.4.1 The organizational/institutional intersection as a salient constituent of HE institutional change theorization

While taking great care not to conflate the meanings of organizations and institutions as Stacey and Rittberger (2003) warn, it was inferred in this study that there was a necessity to accentuate the dual institutional/organisational identity of HE establishments. The literature indicates that whereas the bounded organisational change context of HE is oversaturated with research undertakings, the interconnected institutional change dimension hardly receives attention in HE change studies. As such, one of the vital conceptual conundrums that arose in the literature review was the extent to which institutional attributes can be levelled onto an understanding of HE change premises. This was resolved through the re-conceptualization of the HE field as a multi-layered, interconnected institutional field in which the different establishments are not only organizational players in this field but are also often become institutional playing fields in themselves, with various other players within. It is for a similar reason that, as argued by Greenwood and Hinings (1996), certain organisations can implement radical changes while others are not, even in the face of similar institutional pressures. This study, therefore, advances the argument that analyses of institutional change in HE establishments ought to go beyond merely examining internal institutional dynamics in the way that most organisational change

studies of HE tend to be framed. Instead, HE change also needs to be viewed as a relationship that cuts across different institutional contextual-layers, where each establishment's local and historical contextual circumstances provide for a helpful departure point for its response options to the broader institutional change imperatives.

In this study, it was understood that the UFS stood as an organisational establishment located within the SA HE institutional field; which was in turn located within the socio-political institutional context of the South African polity. At the same time, it was recognised that the UFS possess a specific structure of its own, which accords it an institutional character that would differentiate its internal context from other HE establishments. As such, the UFS constitutes within itself several other sub-components as individual/organizational agents, much in the same way that institutional setups depict. This dual character gives rise to the first theoretical proposition within which this institutional/organizational overlap amounts to a significant salient constituent of HE institutional change.

HE as a field that is comprised of an institutional/organizational overlap in which the establishments operate both within their organisational bounds with respect to their institutionalised interconnections at the same time.

Whilst acknowledging the organisational dimension of HE establishment; in this study, its premise of institutional change was the focus of this study. This premise is similar to Inayatullah's (2005) institutional change approach, which in this case, denotes to the process in which the ideas that govern institutions experience a shift in their rules and practices and leads to the alteration of an entire class of organisations. Through the UFS example, it was established that as an entity, it sits at the micro end of the kind of HE institutional change processes that this study has examined. The UFS' institutional elements were thus considered to be girded within the macro institutional elements of SA HE, which is, in turn, located within the socio-political context of the South African polity as a meta-institutional premise.

The resulting three-layered application of institutional change for HE studies reads into Ostrom (2005)'s framework of change where: 1) the micro level provides space for the application of operational rules that are used for day-to-day interactions; 2) the macro level, which offers guidelines for the kinds of acceptable operational rules; and 3) the meta-level, which in this study combines both the constitutional rules and the higher rules that determine constitutional rules. This was demonstrated by the SA HE context, where for instance, the apartheid policies had resulted into bifurcations within SA HE, that applied to different HE entities based on their designations as white/black; English/Afrikaans; or science/technology outfits.

The logical pattern that emerged from this study, therefore, demonstrated that evolution at the meta-institutional layer (as the case with the South African polity) opened up possibilities for institutional change within the macro-institutional layers of laws and policies (as demonstrated in the design of the SA HE space). This would, in turn, affect the dynamics at the micro-institutional layer, where the organizational players (the UFS in this case) seek to achieve an internal institutional balance in the face of such external institutional elements. As such, besides the organizational/institutional overlap as a salient constituent of HE institutional change, a second significant feature was found in the layering of institutional elements in HE as discussed below.

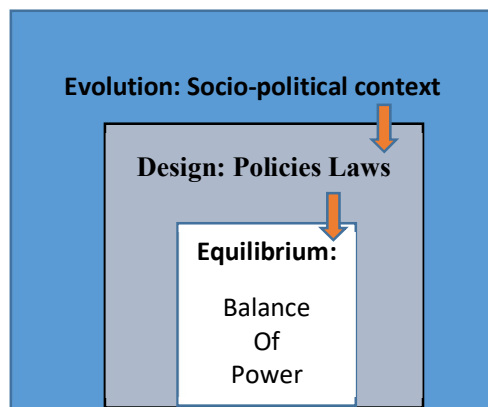
6.4.2 Advancing institutional layering as a salient constituent of HE institutional change

The layered institutional change provides an essential framework to locate the interconnections across contextual layers in the HE setting. It was, however, recognised that outside the scope covered in this study, additional possible institutional layers abound. On the one hand, beyond the socio-political layer that was considered as the outermost layer for this study, one can consider regional and global institutional layers. On the other hand, within the HE establishment itself like the UFS, the different departments and other operational units can

operate within the institutional space of the university. This shows that the scope of this study was only a matter of contextual pragmatism in order to facilitate the theorisation of HE institutional change more manageably.

In the three-layered institutional change approach used for this study; each layer was noted to have had a corresponding dominant institutional change perspective. The first perspective considered institutional change theorisation in terms of evolutionary processes, in which new institutional forms periodically emerge within the meta-institutional context. The second perspective that emerged in this study related to institutional change theories that are premised in the rules that originate from within purposefully designed processes. It was within this linear relationship between the evolutionary and design perspectives that a third perspective emerged; the equilibrium perspective that operates at the level of an individual HE establishment.

Figure 5: *Layered institutional change perspective*



In the discussion that follows, an exploration of how these perspectives emerged to advance layering as a salient constituent of HE institutional change is further explained, along with the theoretical propositions that arose from each of the layers.

i) The evolutionary perspective of institutional change in HE

The evolutionary approach in general institutional change theorisation encompasses a body of literature that expands the recognised biological application of the Darwinian evolution to the

understanding of gradual institutional change in socio-political systems. This study undertook the intriguing transposition, with the benefit of the abductive reasoning, to consider institutional evolution in terms of the change processes at the socio-political level (meta-layer) of the South African polity. The way that the evolutionary approach has been applied in this study relates to Lewis & Steinmo's (2012) indication of the move towards an expansive application of evolutionary reasoning beyond its biological application.

It is, however, significant to note here that the way the evolutionary approach unfolded in this study differs significantly from Kezar (2001), who applied it to the study of organisational change in HE. In Kezar's description of evolution, the concept is used to refer to how change emerges in a HE establishment as an organisational setting in response to external circumstances, institutional variables, and the external environment. As such, whereas the evolutionary perspective, according to Kezar, considers that organisations can only 'manage' the circumstances that are thrust upon them from their external environment, in this study, the evolutionary approach to institutional change was more dominant outside of the organisational settings of HE establishments. The evolutionary approach emerged more strongly for this study in the way that North (1990) expounds on the processes of institutional advancement. North considers evolution as the way that rules and norms operate, with implications on both stability and change in institutional setups. Roland (2004, 2008) makes an even closer connection to the way that the evolutionary perspective was eventually considered in this study by noting that evolutionary moments operate in political institutions where occasional bouts of large steps of change are bound to happen. This corresponded with the socio-political level of institutional change within which the evolutionary process of HE was considered in tandem with South Africa's socio-political context in this study.

As such, in agreement with Vanberg (1996), this study proposes that an evolutionary perspective is an effective way to explain how adaptiveness arises without prior planning, but

instead through a systematic process that relies on the evolutionary processes of variation and selection based on trial and error. A similar insight is provided by Lewis & Steinmo, who argue that because human beings possess advanced cognitive capacities and use ideas, framing, and communication effectively, they can shape the precise nature of institutional evolution within their respective contexts. Concerning the way higher education in South Africa has evolved, therefore, the socio-political context has been considered as the starting point in taking note of layering as a salient constituent of HE institutional change in this study. As such, the first proposition that supports the premise of considering layering as a salient constituent of HE institutional change is presented as:

a) Layered institutional change proposition (I):

Institutional change in higher education as an evolutionary process that emerges from within the socio-political context, in which the evolution of a given polity has direct implications on higher education's policies and practices.

This proposition provides support for the consideration of the socio-political layer as an essential starting point for the understanding of HE institutional change in the way that this study looked at the evolution of the South African polity over time. It was the position of this study that the South African socio-political landscape through its colonial, apartheid and democratic historical episodes along with the corresponding social impediments on issues like racial relations, religion and fundamental freedoms equally reflected upon an evolutionary process for HE institutional change over time. South African Higher Education institutions, and as noted in the particular case of the UFS, exhibited significant attributes that related directly to the overarching socio-political systems in place. The UFS, for instance, remained an exclusively white institution throughout most of its history. When it oscillated between English and Afrikaans as the principal language of instruction, this had mainly been owing to

the prerogative of the socio-political context. For instance, It was noted that before the apartheid period, the university colleges that eventually became the UOFS had been required to use English as a medium of instruction, despite their majorly Dutch/Afrikaans constituency. This was owing to earlier British colonial influence that had, in turn, dictated the anglicised trend of SA HE. It was also noted that during apartheid, the isolated policy applications of SA HE under the National party government ensured that the UOFS could use Afrikaans as the only medium of instruction.

The linear connections that this study explored, therefore, indicated that the nature of evolution within this meta-layer of South Africa had direct implications on the macro layer of SA HE as recognised in the design perspective that follows.

ii) The design perspective of institutional change in HE

As part of the further advancement of the layered institutional change premise as a salient constituent of HE institutional change, a pragmatic connection was drawn in this study, between the evolution of the South African polity and the corresponding rules and norms that govern the institutional context of SA HE. This was descriptively considered as the design perspective to HE institutional change and contextually understood to be the macro-layer within this study's framing. This layer encompassed the rule-based conception of institutional change, where institutions were considered as behavioural rules that guide and constrain behaviour during social interaction (Florensa, 2004).

The design perspective of institutional change was thus applied in this study based on the notion of 'institutions-as-rules' as promoted by North (1990), wherein institutions were seen as 'the rules of the game'. Whereas North's approach considered both 'formal' rules whose enforcement is from the standpoint of a centralised authority and 'informal' constraints held within norms and customs, the design perspective as a macro-institutional layer in this study

was explored mainly within its formal dimension since the HE institutional setting was decidedly formal according to this study' outlook. This was because, as Greif & Kingston (2011) similarly observe, formal rules as those that are created by a formally established process as opposed to informal norms that are not always readily responsive to deliberate design such as cultural changes. As such, the perspective of HE that was considered within the SA HE policy frameworks indicated formalised structures within which its change parameters operated. Therefore, from the interconnection between the design perspective of SA HE as a formal process, the second layered institutional change proposition as:

b) Layered institutional change proposition (II):

Institutional change in Higher Education as a design-based perspective, where the playing field is shaped by a formalised policy framework for Higher Education.

Chapter IV and V discussed the way that SA HE historically operated within legal guidelines and in which the state continually took on a steering role for HE policy formation. Significant changes to the framework of HE were preceded by statutory Acts that often defined both the functional and structural premises of the South African HE field. Legal ordinances facilitated the creation of university colleges, for instance, and their subsequent conversion into independent universities was a statutory process. At the same time, different legal provisions over time were used as the basis for defining the different players within the SA HE playing field to such intricate details as was seen in the racial, language and curriculum disparities across different HE establishments. As such, the design perspective further supports the premise of a layered institutional change framework as a salient constituent of higher education change analyses in the way it was found to apply to the policy changes in SA HE. This layered institutional change relationship was further exemplified at the micro-level of the UFS, as explained below.

iii) The equilibrium perspective of institutional change in HE

The two previously discussed institutional change perspectives of evolution and design in relation to HE culminate into the third perspective in support of the consideration of layering as a salient constituent to HE institutional change. As seen in this study, the evolution at the socio-political level was seen to have progressively resulted in changes in the SA HE policy frameworks as well. This third layer demonstrates the culmination of such changes as a form of equilibrium at the UFS as one of the players in the SA HE framework.

The way that the equilibrium perspective was applied in this study was reflective of Greif & Kingston's (2011) consideration of institutions-as-equilibria that encompasses actual and expected behaviour rather than the prescribed rules of behaviour. As such, institutional change as an equilibrium perspective was identified in this study to relate to the institutional culture of an entity; where, as the HE establishment of the UFS exemplified, it's constituents' actions and behaviours related directly to the underlying institutional culture. As such, the equilibrium perspective at the UFS exhibited a constant search for balance across several internal and external institutional actors and interests. Therefore, the interconnection between the design perspective of SA HE and the evolution of the South that culminates into the equilibrium perspective at the UFS presents the third proposition that supports the premise of layering as a salient constituent of HE institutional change.

c) Institutional change proposition (III):

Institutional change in Higher Education as a search for equilibrium in the way that a HE establishment relates to the requirements of its external institutional elements within the context of its bounded institutional culture.

A note is hereby made, and as similarly presented by Scartascini and Tommasi (2009), that multiple equilibria positions may exist within this equilibrium perspective over time. This

relates to Aoki's (2007) consideration that an institutional equilibrium position is a composite of common knowledge among agents.

Drawing from the UFS example, therefore, the understanding of stability/instability of an equilibrium position was positioned along the stances taken by different stakeholders within the university context on the one hand, and the overall disposition of the university that follows from the dominant institutional culture and how this aligns with the exogenous premises of SA HE institutional change. As such, the stability of an equilibrium position relates to the way that actors within a HE establishment can be located along with its dominant culture. The historical analysis of the UFS institutional equilibrium position was thus understood along with the oscillations of stability and instability towards equilibrium, where the equilibrium position resulted from an ongoing search for a balance of power across the internal stakeholders in the way that the institutional culture aligned with their own representations. This was also considered in line with the policy directions of SA HE as noted from this layered institutional change approach. Therefore, institutional change as an equilibrium perspective as located within the institutional culture was noted in this study to have been driven by forces that stood to benefit from changing the institutional culture, and conversely, opposed by forces that would stand to lose from it. From this study, it also emerged that an institutional equilibrium can either be stable or unstable. A stable equilibrium was considered for when the institutional culture aligns with the majority of the internal constituents as well as with the policy imperatives at the design level. On the other hand, an unstable equilibrium was considered to arise when the institutional culture is opposed to either the majority of the institution's constituency or the policy imperatives and would thus be under continuous pressure to change. The figure below draws from the historical analyses of the UFS to elaborate on the oscillations between stable and unstable equilibrium positions that emerged from this study.

Figure 6: *Historical location of stability/instability of UFS equilibrium*

PERIOD	EXOGENOUS INFLUENCES	ENDOGENOUS INTERESTS	STABLE/ UNSTABLE
1904–1950	English dominion amidst a suppression of Afrikaner Nationalism (until the 1948 National party election victory)	The demand for the recognition of the Afrikaans language and culture. The resistance to English tuition among the majorly Afrikaans speaking stakeholders at the university colleges was rife. The institutional culture was opposed by the university colleges’ majority constituents but kept in place by the SA HE policy imperatives	An unstable equilibrium (exogenous and endogenous interests are mostly incongruent)
1950–1990	Apartheid context promotes strict separation along with language and race across SA HE	Following the university’s independent status, language, racial and cultural identities allowed at the university aligned with the interests of the majority of UOFS stakeholders. The institutional culture was favoured by the majority constituents as well as by apartheid’s SA HE policy imperatives	A stable equilibrium (exogenous and endogenous interests are mostly congruent)
1990-1994	Transition	Transition	Transition
1994–2010	A non-racial socio-political context.	New stakeholders quickly become the majority, but the institutional culture remains unchanged. Both the majority stakeholders and the new democratically inspired SA HE policy imperatives were opposed to the existing institutional culture	An unstable equilibrium; (exogenous and endogenous interests are mostly incongruent)

6.4.3 Summary of salient constituents of HE institutional change theorisation

In response to RQ1 therefore, two salient constituents of HE institutional change were observed from the historical analysis of SA HE and the UFS: 1) the recognition of the overlap between the institutional and organisational dimensions within higher education establishments like the UFS; and 2) the recognition of a layered approach to institutional change that comprises of evolutionary, design and equilibrium perspectives. These layers have been mainly considered as constitutive of an important linear link that cuts across an interconnection of institutional layers in HE institutional change praxis.

As such, it is argued here that Higher Education establishments like the UFS do not operate in an organisational vacuum but also within an interconnected institutional frame. In this study, the HE institutional frame was demonstrated as a layered premise that cut across 1) the socio-political context (as the meta-layer) in which the evolutionary perspective of institutional change was operationalised; 2) the SA HE context (as the macro layer) in which the design perspective of institutional change was operationalised, and 3) the UFS institutional/organisational context (as the microlayer) in which the equilibrium perspective of institutional change was operationalised.

6.5 Trajectories that drove SA HE institutional change 1873 to 2010 (RQ2)

Which trajectories can be identified in academic studies and policy documents of SA HE as important in driving change its change from 1873 to 2010?

In response to RQ2, this study recognised that SA HE presents itself as a formal institutional structure whose trajectories of institutional change were denoted from the historical analysis in Chapter IV of this study. The timeframes within which the different socio-political phases of the South African polity were considered included its colonial, apartheid and democratic evolutions. The critical insight regarding the trajectories of SA HE institutional change was

that through the historical analyses conducted, the emerging trajectories were not so much considered as ‘path-dependent’ standpoints for SA HE, but rather as ‘paths of departure’. This was similar to the idea advanced by Ebbinghaus (2005), whose perspective that ‘path departure’ recognises the multiplicity of other forces at play in institutional change processes, was adopted in this study. This perspective aligned well with institutional layering as a salient component of HE institutional change, as it acknowledges the interconnections across institutional contexts. As such, the consideration of historical trajectories as paths of departure for SA HE demonstrated that whereas these historical trajectories were essential in understanding institutional change, they were not necessarily the building blocks of future institutional change imperatives. This was seen in the wide-ranging efforts towards detachment from previous practices in the pursuit to disengage SA HE from apartheid’s legacy, for instance.

It was also noted that trajectories in SA HE were often concretised through policy guidelines that often emerged within the formal institutional change processes that have been noted to have been at the core of the design perspective. As such, within the different socio-political evolutions of the South African polity, it was noted that the SA HE trajectories were identifiable with the policy frameworks that defined its context of institutional change. These trajectories are discussed further below within the historical demarcations for SA HE as outlined in this study.

6.5.1 SA HE Trajectories in the pre-1900 period of colonial formation

Part of this study’s historical analysis covered periods of educational development in South Africa, long before the establishment of a formal system of SA HE. As such, the colonially contested socio-political landscape in the pre-1900 indicates major trajectories for educational processes that were also considered relevant to the understanding of the eventual SA HE

institutional practice. The initial educational processes in South Africa were located within an expanding and disputed colonial setting, and the trajectories for HE were reflected in the influence of missionary-driven extension of education processes beyond the Cape, the religious affiliation of educational processes as well as the drive towards the centralised control of educational processes. Nonetheless, it was noted that the early SA HE trajectories had their foundation in the colonially expanding primary and secondary schooling systems in which the demographic characteristics of religion, language, race and nationalism began to take shape as critical markers. As it was noted from the historical analysis, the early educational establishments mostly originated from Christian church-led initiatives and within a cultural/political orientation that oscillated between the dominance of British colonialism and the pressure for Dutch (and later Afrikaner) cultural/political expression. Alongside these trajectories was the ongoing religious front for education provision, whereby even after the British assertiveness towards a secular, anglicised form of educational provision, Christian missionaries remained heavily vested in the education field, and with particular significance to the African population, who had progressively been side-lined by other mainstream colonial formal educational processes.

As such early education processes, and eventually SA HE, emerged within colonial contestations in which the British dominance resulted in the prevalence of British culture and language influence in early Education trajectories. As such, the first seeds of formalized SA HE processes first emerged as a collaborative undertaking between the South African College and the University of London in 1829 as a significant mark of the anglicised alignment of early SA HE. These circumstances indicate critical foundational trajectories for SA HE as:

i) SA HE Trajectory (1)

SA HE authority as located within the dominant power brokerage in the socio-political context. The British influence on cultural and language adaptations of

Higher Education processes at its establishment in 1873 set the initial tone for SA HE.

It was noted in this study that SA HE only took on a fully-fledged institutional character with the creation of the University of the Cape of Good Hope (UCGH), following the enactment of the university incorporation Act of 1873. It was here that another critical trajectory of central steering for SA HE was identified. The UCGH took over the coordination role for all post-secondary (higher) education processes and as such, pioneered the formal processes of SA HE as a centrally coordinated institutional setup. Formality, in this case, denotes to the reliance on statutory mechanisms for defining the SA HE. As such, another critical pre-1990 trajectory for SA HE can be stated within the formal and centrally coordinated institutional setup that began in 1873. It is thus indicated as a second trajectory as:

ii) SA HE Trajectory (2)

SA HE as a formal and centrally coordinated statutory institutional process, as demonstrated by its initiation through the 1873 university incorporation Act and the resulting central coordination of the University of Cape of Good Hope within the colonial infrastructure.

It was, therefore, noted that the period before 1900 was the formative stage for SA HE as an institutional process. This process was also recognised to have been deeply entrenched into the colonial socio-political context of the time and thus resulted into trajectories of power brokerage within SA HE and its emergence as a standard and centralised institutional setup.

6.5.2 SA HE trajectories in the 1900–1950 and the leap towards universities' autonomy

The centralisation and statutory trajectories were furthered through educational ordinances and the policy frame for SA HE in the 1900–1950 period. For instance, the South African Act of 1909 ensured that SA HE was brought entirely to the central oversight of the South African

Union government under the headship of the Minister of Education. SA HE was identified as an exclusive domain for all educational establishment that was centrally coordinated by the union government in contrast to primary and secondary school establishments that were administered by the provinces. As such, the definition of SA HE was expanded to include technical institutions, vocation institutions and teacher training colleges. The significance of the 1909 South African Act for SA HE was, however, in the expansion of the trajectory of central coordination for SA HE beyond the scope of the oversight role of UCGH.

The centralised, statutory trajectory of SA HE was further consolidated when the university Act of 1918 resulted in the creation of the University of South Africa (UNISA) to replace the UCGH. The UNISA maintained similar oversight attributes for university colleges through centralised examination processes as the UCGH before it, had. This central statutory trajectory of SA HE was further demonstrated by the 1922 Financial Relations Act No.5, where the powers of the Minister of Education over SA HE extended to such minuscule processes as the approval of degrees, diplomas or faculties at universities as well as the power to approve which establishments qualified to be considered as part of the SA HE enclave.

It was also noted in this study that financial incentives played a significant role in maintaining the centralising trajectory of SA HE. This was seen more vividly through the specifications of the 1925 Subsidies Act which defined the financial commitments of the Union government to incentivise SA HE. As such, another trajectory of SA HE was in relation to financial incentives was considered as:

iii) SA HE Trajectory (3)

SA HE as a subsidised institutional arrangement, where the central provision of financial incentives plays a role in recognition of central oversight for HE practice.

It was noted that this financial trajectory was further entrenched alongside the meaning of state oversight, which was backed with a commitment to regular financial incentives to higher education establishments.

Another trajectory that emerged within the 1990-1950 period was the recognition of the 'University' as a critical regulatory format for the standardisation of SA HE. This trajectory was seen through the 1928 proposals of the Van der Horst commission which sought for consideration of "higher education" as synonymous with "university-level" education. Therefore, the autonomous representation of SA HE was seen through the aspirations of university colleges towards becoming autonomous university entities within the SA HE institutional frame. This autonomy also went along with desired specificities in university spaces, especially regarding some of the critical demographic differentials particularly around race, language and religious affiliations.

As such, traditional universities sought autonomy as HE establishments with marked identity parameters as primarily English /Afrikaans and white. Standing out of this dichotomy was the Lovedale missionary institute at Fort Hare, which in addition to having been denied university college status before 1950, it had been the only that was considered as a South African native college to cater for the advanced education of non-white populations. Another trajectory from this period was noted as:

iv) SA HE Trajectory (4)

SA HE as a hegemonic university space, each one seeking to express a distinctive identity as seen in the alignment along with linguistic, racial and religious affiliations.

In summary, the 1900–1950 period was significant in advancing the trajectories from the period before and in establishing new trajectories. The new trajectories included the use of financial

subsidies as a significant incentive for a coordinated SA HE institutional frame as well as the trajectory on the hegemony of the universities within the SA HE space. The period also emphasised the racial, language and religious identities of universities, which were further concretised within the 1950–1990 period as discussed in more detail below.

6.5.3 SA HE trajectories in the 1950–1990 apartheid period

The National Party won the 1948 South African election and a new socio-political outlook was ushered in; one that had a decisively pro-Afrikaner. This nationalistic stance had historically simmered as an antithesis to British colonial dominion over South Africa. Following this, various institutional arrangements in the apartheid socio-political context were aligned along what was considered as an emancipatory Afrikaner nationalist ideology of separate development. In this apartheid-era period, South Africa was to be conceived within different national groupings narrowly based on inherent characteristics of race, ethnicity and culture. These national groupings were also to be conceptualised with each one managing its affairs within a geographical separation. The creation of the Native Affairs Department whose priority was to enforce segregation, political control, and differentiated education was also a key player the way that SA HE was to pan out.

The apartheid policy landscape provided for massive shifts in the trajectories of SA HE and ultimately divided it along racial and ethnic lines. SA HE policy frameworks within the apartheid period were designed to reflect the kind of segregation that was engrained in the apartheid laws, as discussed in earlier chapters. As seen earlier, proposals from the Eiselen Commission (1951), and the Holloway Commission (1953–54) provided for significant shifts in which the stratification of universities across ethnic and language lines was adopted, amidst new financing models for universities.

One of the most decisive policy directions that emerged for SA HE was the 1957 Separate University Bill, which was later enacted as the 1959 Extension of University Education Act and the Fort Hare Transfer Act. This Act furthered the trajectory of the feature of SA HE as a statutory creature, and also concretised the segregation of HE establishments based on language and race. The trajectory of subsidies as the means to incentivise SA HE central control was also furthered in this period.

The trajectory of demographic segregation that was noted earlier became even more pronounced during this period, where the SA HE landscape was segregated, and by law, with English and Afrikaans (white) universities on the one hand; and later, with universities to cater for the different ethnic groups in each of the apartheid demarcated native republics. As such, racial stratification remained an apparent part of the administration of SA HE, where separate geographical and racial profiles of HE establishments operated along with differentiated policy guidelines and mechanisms for oversight. All forms of the Africans' education were, however, part of the 'General Affairs' under the oversight of the government's Department of Education and Training (DET), as opposed to the 'own affairs' under which the other universities operated.

It is thus worthy to note that the apartheid period essentially concretised the statutory trajectory of SA HE, where HE entities operated as extensions of apartheid's segregation laws. As such, the critical trajectory to note within the 1950–1990 period for SA HE is the strict racial, language and geographical stratification. What emerged, in essence, were different dualistic expressions within SA HE of *white* and *non-white* HE establishments; and Afrikaans and English HE establishments; universities for science and Technikons for technology. The trajectory that emerges from this period can thus be expressed as:

v) *SA HE trajectory (5)*

The SA HE as a segregated space divided along the dualities of race, language, ethnicity and the essences of science (for universities) and technology (for Technikons) during the apartheid period.

What is significant to note here is that the apartheid context simply made use of the already established trajectories in SA HE as a statutory, centrally controlled, financially incentivised and autonomous institutional arrangement to wield its deeply segregated nationalist agenda. This agenda fronted the need to differentiate the essence of Higher Education, along with science and technological distinctions. It was therefore considered in this study that the apartheid period's legacy for SA HE was primarily within its radical racially inspired segregation in South Africa. In other words, the apartheid machinery utilised the already established trajectories in SA HE to drive its warped nationalist and segregation agenda onto universities and other educational establishments.

6.5.4 The SA HE trajectories in the 1990–2010 drive towards non-racial democracy

The fourth timeframe of this study thus ushered in with another leap in the socio-political landscape of South Africa, where apartheid politics of racial segregation were abandoned for a non-racial democracy. This period was significant in the SA HE frame as it not only involved the institutionalisation of new trajectories but also proactively sought to deinstitutionalise the apartheid-era racially inclined trajectories of segregation. In this period, the already established trajectories of the statutory status of SA HE was once again significant in mapping out the new direction of SA HE. Following the adoption of the new South African constitution in 1996 that fronted the ideas of democracy, equality, freedom and the right to higher education. This phase, therefore, resulted in numerous forms of reframing for SA HE, where equality was no longer precluded by racial, language or ethnic considerations.

The design of SA HE, therefore, took on a form that sought to change the previous segregative dualities in HE with initiatives like the National Education coordinating committee and the National education policy investigation (NEPI), which initiated the trajectory of seeking to rebuild new SA HE policy frameworks through HE policy consortiums. The resulting commitments included the need to undertake initiatives to reform SA HE institutional and system governance; to institute affirmative action measures; and work towards an improved SA HE financing model. The ongoing statutory trajectory for SA HE was once again invoked through the eventual adoption of the Higher Education Act (1997) in which a new framework for the transformation of HE was developed. Also, a goal-oriented funding policy framework for HE and a new academic policy was finalised in 2003, which allowed for the integration of SA HE Education through the recognition of nursing and agricultural colleges as part of HE. Initiatives for restructuring the institutional landscape of HE also came with directives for mergers and restructuring HE institutions. Key to these processes was the collaborative means within which HE change was conducted, and thus giving rise to another trajectory as:

vi) SA HE trajectory (6)

SA HE as a collaborative space built around new policy consortiums aimed at breaking the apartheid-era legacy of segregation.

This summative trajectory for the 1990-2010 period indicates the move to break away from apartheid's stratifications of the South African population along the lines of race, language and ethnicity which had also been adapted to SA HE. The trajectory of central and statutory control of SA HE's institutionalisation processes was heavily relied on in this period. What was significant, however, was that the post-1990 period was not only seeking to institutionalise new policy frameworks but also to deinstitutionalise apartheid-era legacies.

6.5.6. Summary of historical trajectories of SA HE

In the historical analysis of SA HE, the six trajectories that have been identified are significantly linked to the evolutions of the socio-political context across different historical periods. These trajectories were, in most cases used as building blocks for institutional processes in SA HE. However, it is also significant to note the effort to depart from previous patterns, particularly in the 1990-2010 period. It was also noted that some of the trajectories were the basis of different policy directions, as was seen with the centralised statutory control of SA HE. This trajectory yielded different directions for SA HE under apartheid and in the post-apartheid period.

The analyses of these trajectories, therefore, stood the test of this study to be considered as paths of departure for SA HE processes, rather than path dependant historical moments. As explained in the earlier discussion, by considering them as path departure points, the institutional change processes that sought a complete break from some historical trajectories as it was the case in the post-apartheid period, can be put into a clearer institutional change perspective. The historical trajectories with regards to the responses to RQ2 can thus be visualised in the summative figure that follows.

Figure 7: A summary of the historical trajectories of SA HE

TIME FRAME	SOCIO-POLITICAL & SA HE CONTEXT	SA HE TRAJECTORIES
<p><i>Pre 1900</i> Roots of SA HE</p>	<p>Colonial expansion Growing British Colonial Dominion over the Cape and expansion to other autonomous territories Origins of SA HE Expansion of basic and secondary education gives rise to the need for HE Statutory establishment of SA HE in 1873</p>	<p>Source of Authority for SAHE SA HE authority as located within the dominant power broker in the socio-political context as primarily seen by the British influence on cultural and language of Higher Education processes in the colonial period.</p> <p>Formalisation of SA HE SA HE as a formal and centrally coordinated institutional frame, as demonstrated by its initiation through the 1873 university incorporation Act and the resulting central coordination of the University of Cape of Good Hope.</p>
<p>1900–1950 Consolidation of SA HE</p>	<p>Transitions from Colonialism to Nationalism Shift from colonialism to the Union of South Africa (1910); National Party victory (1948)</p> <p>The transition from University colleges to autonomous universities University colleges strive for autonomous university status</p>	<p>Incentivised control of SA HE SA HE as a subsidised institutional arrangement, where the central provision of financial incentives plays a role in recognition of central oversight for HE practice.</p> <p>SA HE as an autonomous space SA HE as a space of autonomous universities, each with a desire to express identity distinctiveness as seen in terms of language and race.</p>
<p>1950–1990 SA HE co-opted into State crafted racial discrimination</p>	<p>Apartheid Afrikaner Nationalism built around racial segregation Racialized SA HE framework Legal entrenchment for demarcating the SA HE platform</p>	<p>Segregated and dualistic SA HE frame The SA HE as a segregated space divided along the dualities of race, language, ethnicity and the essences of science (for universities) and technology (for Technikons) during the apartheid period.</p>
<p><i>1990–2010</i> SA HE reform</p>	<p>Post-apartheid The shift towards Democratic governance and Non-racialism</p> <p>De-institutionalisation of SA HE <i>Transformation of SA HE</i></p>	<p>Collaborative and equitable SA HE space <i>SA HE as a collaborative space built around new policy consortiums aimed at breaking the dualities of segregation that had been established during apartheid.</i></p>

6.6 Institutional change at the UFS from 1990–2010 (RQ3)

In emerging from its apartheid history, how did institutional change happen at the UFS between 1990 and 2010?

It needs to be clarified that the choice to interface with how institutional change happened at the UFS in its emergence from apartheid (1990–2010) has been to enhance the understanding of how institutional theories of change can be seen through the micro-change perspective of a particular university setting within SA HE. As such, the operationalisation of institutional change theorisation within the micro context of a Higher Education establishment was considered through the third research question (RQ3) for this study.

As a point of departure, the historical analysis in Chapter V and the earlier discussions in this chapter indicate that the UFS institutional change premise revealed that it operated within an unstable equilibrium within the 1990–2010 period.

6.6.1 The unstable equilibrium position of the UFS 1990–2010

For the UFS, whose equilibrium position in the 1990–2010 period is noted to have tended towards instability, some of the aspects that emerged as important drivers for this position was the expected shift from a racial, language and cultural exclusivity of the university that had been pegged onto an Afrikaans orientation during the apartheid period.

Using the integral framework that was outlined in the methodology chapter, the different UFS Rectors' visions for the 1990–2010 period were utilised as indicators of the strategic direction of the university. It was considered that their values, beliefs and assumptions as drawn from their expressed visions for the university provided for the understanding of the driving force behind the institutional change initiatives at the university. It is also noted that the interventions at the UFS in the 1990–2010 period were directed towards responding to the changing

composition of the university that was increasingly growing in its populations of non-white and non-Afrikaans speaking students and staff.

On the part of the students, the experience of the diversity in the classrooms and student residences, as well as the financial difficulties experienced primarily by the newly incoming black student constituency, meant that there was continual dissatisfaction that periodically became overt in the demonstrations and protests that challenged the status quo. The student's body was glaringly divided between perceived beneficiaries of changing the status quo vis a vis perceived losers from the institutional change process, where both white and black student constituencies regarded each other in suspicion. As seen in Chapter V, therefore, the perceptions on the speed of institutional change (dubbed as transformation) at the UFS differed across the positionalities and identities of the stakeholders. This gives another interpretation to Roland's (2004) differentiation between fast-moving and slow-moving institutional change premises, wherein the case of the institutional change premises of the UFS, the speed of change was demonstrably a matter of positionality across the differing interests of the university's stakeholder population.

This state of affairs meant therefore that the equilibrium position of the university in the 1990–2010 period tended towards instability, primarily based on the incongruity across the interests and perceptions of the UFS stakeholders. These incongruities were markedly a testament to the institutional culture, that was increasingly seen as incongruent with the interest of the growing majority of the new stakeholders at the university. Nevertheless, given the diminishing financial capability of the university, there had always been a necessity to increase student numbers as one of the ways to increase the university's revenue base. This, however, quickly tipped the balance in the number of black students at the UFS and decidedly instituted them as the majorities at the university. The incongruity of the institutional culture in terms of the

beliefs, behaviours and ways of thinking within the university resulted in ongoing racially inclined power struggles at the university campus.

6.6.2 The identity-based oscillations of the equilibrium position at the UFS (1990–2010)

What also arose in Chapter V was the overwhelming oscillation of the equilibrium position of the UFS based on ascribed identities of the stakeholders, which were notably retained as part of the students' experiences under the guise of multiculturalism. The UFS, which had been an all-white, Afrikaans medium university during the apartheid period and had experienced a stable equilibrium during that period was confronted by the demands for non-racial and equitable access to the university across an increasingly diverse student population. As a result, it was noted that UFS management initially took on the multicultural approach, whose premise only allowed for racial stratifications to be fostered at the university.

Multiculturalism featured as the convenient scapegoat, whilst the structures of segregation were barely confronted. These segregated identities remained visible at the UFS for a while, where multiculturalism and the eventual freedom for students to choose their residences and languages of tuition resulted into racialized bifurcations of black and white residential spaces and lecture halls. This culminated in both concealed and overt protests across both the white and black students of which the 'Reitz Four' incident, discussed in Chapter V, was one of such blatant manifestations of the flawed approach to the university's transformation processes.

Besides, as part of the exogenous requirements for the changing UFS context, the university merged with two other previously disadvantaged universities in Vista campus, South of Bloemfontein as well as the university in Qwaqwa from 2003. This was part of the SA HE initiatives towards establishing mergers across HE entities, as noted in Chapter IV to level out the historical advantages and disadvantages across HE establishments. Whereas this geographical expansion in this tri-campus model introduces other institutional equilibrium

dynamics of race, and geographical spatiality to consider, these were not the specific focus of this study and would need a further study to consider the extent of institutional change imperatives that arose from these mergers in terms of the UFS's context of transformation.

6.6.3 Transformation as an institutional change imperative at the UFS

The initiatives at the UFS in the 1990–2010 period were generally labelled under the tag of '*transformation*' in order to legitimate the institutional change process. As noted earlier, the equilibrium position in the period from 1990–2010 at the UFS remained tilted toward an unstable equilibrium due to its primary hinge on the identities of race and language in the face of the changing demographics of the university. This was followed by concurrent processes of de-institutionalisation and institutionalisation, where university symbols were altered, and a parallel medium of instruction with English and Afrikaans were introduced. The university was also renamed: "The University of the Free State" from the "University of the Orange Free State" to conform with the renaming of the province to "Free State", and the university's anthem was re-constituted to ensure that both English and Afrikaans were represented within the same anthem. There was also a revision in the colouration of the university coat of arms in order to remove the apartheid colours that had been introduced when the university had become a recognisably 'national' university during apartheid.

Through participatory forums, there was the expectation to engage with the mostly black local community as a new university stakeholder. By 1994, the *community committee* was renamed as the *transformation committee* and sought to be broadly representative of key university stakeholders. This committee, which had the rector as the chairperson, adopted an advisory mandate to the council in the transformation endeavours of the university. As such, one of the vital transformative responses to the new SA HE institutional premise at the UFS was through the implementation of transitional/advisory/advocacy/watchdog platforms by the university

as a sign of its commitments towards change. These bodies, however, only provided for a limited space of broad participation while the institutional, cultural setup at university largely continued as it had done in the apartheid era. The participatory forums were nonetheless instrumental in the advocacy for language changes, expansion of student admission and residence placement, staff equity, and addressing community transformation concerns at the UFS. The transformation committee was also instrumental in nurturing new demographics for the representation of women and black members on the university council.

6.6.4 Transitioning from identity-based to value-based institutional equilibrium at UFS

The post-1990 period received a significant turnaround, particularly in the eventual efforts to steer away from the university from its previous nationalist outlook and embrace a professional/market approach in which the students were to be treated as clients in a professionally managed institution. Professionalism was broadly articulated during the term of Prof. Coetzee as rector, who provided a leeway to step beyond sentiments of Afrikaner nationalism that had been nurtured at the UOFS by embracing a market-oriented approach in the turnaround strategy for the university.

The university also sought the route of becoming relevant not only to the new South Africa but within the African continent as well. The implications of this were that the UFS was increasingly redefining itself outside of the historical confinement to the service of a homogenous Afrikaner demographic. Amongst some of the early commitments of the rectorate during Retief's term as rector was to prioritise the democratisation of management structures, admission of students from disadvantaged communities, the revision and Africanization of curricula, community involvement, bridging courses (academic support) and affirmative action programs. These can be read as efforts that were aimed at the university's efforts towards pronouncing itself to embrace a post-apartheid university environment. The university also

opened up to the admission of African students from outside of the country in order to bolster its African reach and continued to portray itself as an African university. As such, the UFS opened up to the global HE institutional participation as its tendency towards massification trends was further nurtured through the expansion of access and learning. The globalised neo-liberal leaning position can also be said to have been the spirit within which programs like the revitalisation strategy and the professional market-oriented approach of the UFS with students as clients may be located.

The emergence of the UFS in the post-apartheid period, therefore, lends itself to the theoretical premise of institutional change where its experiences of equilibrium indicated an incongruity between its stakeholders and the institutional culture. It, therefore, indicates a state of affairs where the informal institutional change processes within the university were not fast responding to the formal SA HE institutional imperatives, resulting into continuity in the same institutional culture at the university.

By 2010 various attempts had been made to change the value base of the university. These included the enactment of the social contract (*Kovsie Credo*) under Retief's and in Jansen's conception of the Human and Academic projects during their terms as rectors. In considering values as normative guiding principles which are inter-subjectively shared and to which changes in a society ought to adhere (Milchram et al., 2019), a more empirical institutional change study dedicated to the UFS' institutional culture would be necessary

6.6.5 Summary of the emergence of the UFS in its apartheid history

The UFS emerged out of its apartheid history by, first of all, establishing a multicultural premise that unfortunately only ensured that the apartheid segregation parameters of race and language dualities were replicated within the university campus. A number of symbolic interventions towards the establishment of a university environment that was to indicate a new

direction for the university did not always calm down the internal dissatisfaction towards the transformation process of the university. Nonetheless, the different rectors experimented with initiatives towards overcoming apartheid's legacy within the student and staff stakeholder base, albeit with marked racially inspired suspicions of perceived racial beneficiaries from the status quo. Therefore, a shift from the ascribed identities to values, and as such, from individual cultural orientations and towards an inclusive institutional culture would mark the next necessary step in the institutional change processes for the UFS' emergence from its apartheid history.

6.7 Conclusions

The overall aim of this study was to analyse how institutional change theories help to understand SA HE change processes through a historical analysis of SA HE, and a case study of the UFS. In the detailed theoretical and historical engagements of the study, it has been noted that the considerations of the institutional change dimensions of Higher education show valuable interconnections that extend beyond the HE field. Through the example of SA HE and the UFS, the following conclusions emerged from this study.

6.7.1 Conclusion (I): Higher Education institutional Change as a layered process

This study showed how HE institutional change could be considered as a layered process, which allows for the co-relation of different institutional change perspectives whilst analyzing the interconnectedness of institutional change across the layers. In this study, it emerged that working with institutional change in HE would benefit immensely from a layered approach that ties different institutional layers to each other, and holds their contextual contributions to the process of institutional change as an ongoing task. In this study, the interconnected relationship across the institutional change perspectives of evolution, design and equilibrium were linked to different layers, as a basis for understanding the process of institutional change

that individual HE institutions would go through. As such, institutional change in HE was recognized as processes that connect exogenous and endogenous layers, and where the formal institutional frameworks depend on the socio-political framework which in turn impacts on both formal and informal institutional change processes within individual HE establishments.

6.7.2 Conclusion (II): Higher Education establishments as agents and structures

The interplay between structures and actors (agency) in this study was assisted by the layered approach to institutional change understanding. In the HE institutional framework of this study, agency has been demonstrated by the organisational dimension of the UFS, which at the same time finds an institutional structural expression in its relationship with SA HE policy frame. As such, it was noted that a HE establishment like the UFS operates along a dual organisational/institutional character. On the one hand, the institutional premise of a HE establishment takes into account its connection to the other institutional layers. On the other hand, the organisational premise of a HE establishment is comprised of various internal and external stakeholders, with each seeking to establish its interests.

It was thus considered as a worthy conclusion in this study that when planning for institutional change in a HE establishment, it is essential to be equipped with the knowledge of its dual character and to identify how the different stakeholder groups and their interests may be stratified. Such stakeholders can range from university administrators, students, funding agencies, staff, alumni. It was also noted that the stakeholders do not always have uniform interests as it was seen in the example of the UFS where the student body was often overtly divided along of race.

6.7.2 Conclusion (III): Historical trajectories as paths of departure

Using a historical analytical engagement of SAHE and the UFS in this study presented the opportunity to explore the normative implications of historical processes on institutional

change processes in HE. However, far from considering historical trajectories as path dependant aspects in HE institutional change, this study advanced the consideration of such trajectories as paths of departure. This is because, whereas historical trajectories were considered necessary in institutional change processes, they were in some cases wholly abandoned for new trajectories. The most vivid demonstration of this was in the proactive efforts to deinstitutionalise the institutional processes that had been established in SA HE during apartheid, where, the apartheid trajectories of segregation became a path of departure from which dissimilar institutional processes were initiated in the post-apartheid SA HE context. In other words, it was concluded in this study that rather than considering historical trajectories as the dependants for future institutional processes (as path dependant approaches do), such trajectories would be more accurately identified paths of departure for further institutionalisation and deinstitutionalisation processes.

6.8 Limitations of the study

This study that set out to find out how institutional change theories can help understand HE institutional change had some limitations that have implications for the way that the findings and conclusions of the study can be interpreted.

First, as a theoretical study that transposed general applications of institutional change theorisation onto the HE context and by relying on case examples from SA HE and the UFS, this provoked a major research inquiry but from a limited scope. Nonetheless, besides the suitability of undertaking a SA HE study with the UFS example based on their dynamic and overt institutional change activity, these contexts were also accessible for an in-depth study and this made their consideration a justifiable concession for this study.

Secondly, in undertaking the study within the vibrant institutional change case examples of SA HE and the UFS, it was acknowledged that there were numerous internal and external aspects

of institutional change that would, in themselves, require a more elaborate engagement. On the one hand, the internal institutional elements of the UFS are far more complex than could be captured by a documentary study of the nature that this study undertook. As such, institutional aspects like those that relate to gender relations, pedagogy, academic and non-academic staff dynamics as well as inter and intradepartmental relations, have hardly been captured in this study. Besides, external elements such as the role of foreign pressure, particularly the influence of the international anti-apartheid movement and the influence of the South African based anti-apartheid struggle on institutional change processes across the three institutional layers have not been tackled in-depth. These three layers of the South African polity, the SAHE policy frame and even for the institutional establishment of the UFS all have major dynamics of their own. However, this study concentrated on their relationship across an interconnected institutional change framework for Higher education. Nonetheless, the abovementioned aspects should be acknowledged as necessary for each of the institutional levels, and it would therefore be interesting to conduct more specific and in-depth studies to track their influence on institutional change dynamics. This study prides itself to have set this possibility in motion.

Thirdly, the documentary nature of this study, particularly with regards to studying the institutional processes at the UFS, posed a limitation in terms of the ability to denote events beyond the official narratives provided in most documents. In the absence of any prior scholarly institutional change undertakings about the UFS other than institutional reports and presentations about the university, one of the key historical resources that this study relied on was the university's centennial publication. Whereas this publication provided helpful historical timelines and a layout of institutional events, it was not lost on the researcher that the publication was also in part, a marketing document for the university. This possible limitation was acknowledged, and this study was careful not to overstate the achievements of the UFS from these reports. The study maintained a critically balanced analysis based on the progression

of events and about both the stated and actual interventions over time. This study provides an opportune starting point for further studies about the UFS' institutional change processes to be examined.

Finally, the scope and breadth to denote institutional theories in HE through SA HE and the UFS is a limitation that would need more comprehensive and comparative studies in disparate contexts in order to make the scholarly contribution of this work more widely applicable. The UFS as a university establishment was also only a fraction of the representation of the global HE institutional landscape. As a primarily theoretical undertaking, this study's limited breadth and scope of application pose a limitation to any kind of generalisation. Nonetheless, the understanding of the role of institutional change theorisation in higher education studies was tremendously aided by the manageable scope that was relied on for this study.

6.9 Recommendations for further research

It is recommended that a further empirical study of institutional equilibrium within the UFS be undertaken as part of an ongoing understanding of the aspects that tip institutional change within its context. One of the recommended issues for consideration in such an empirical study would be the institutional change imperatives of the multi-campus model of the UFS since 2003. A more comprehensive study of institutional equilibriums in different HE establishments is also recommended in order to build a necessary reference toolbox for undertaking HE institutional change in varied contexts.

It is further recommended that a study that considers the UFS' institutional change context after 2010 is considered in order to be more up to date with the current trends. This would need to incorporate the 'must fall' movements that dominated the SA HE landscape that was led by student protests towards slow transformation processes and an increase in student fees.

It is also recommended that studies in other HE contexts be conducted to compare with the SA HE institutional change trajectories that were delivered in this study. This will provide a way for the further validation of the theoretical propositions in this study that also considered institutional change as a layered process.

Also, it is recommended that a further empirical study be conducted in order to build upon this study's findings of SA HE. Drawing from the theoretical propositions that this study has unveiled, a study that would employ interviews with key stakeholders would be a significant contribution to the research enterprise that this study initiated. This would also advance the premise of studying institutional change in HE studies.

This study also worked within the general premise of public HE institutions. With the rapid growth of private HE around the globe, along with the field's growing neoliberal and marketization inclinations, it is recommended that a study that compares private HE and Public HE establishments in the study of HE institutional change be undertaken.

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