

TIME TO TALK: LITERARY MAGAZINES IN THE PRETORIA-JOHANNESBURG REGION, 1956 TO 1978.

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INTRODUCTION

Between 1956 and 1978, in the region of Pretoria and Johannesburg, numbers of literary magazines were published, many devoted to poetry. It was during this period as well that university Departments of English were faced again and again with the question of whether to include attention to South African literature or not. Furthermore, this period of South Africa's history saw the rise and smashing of internal political resistance to the gathering and intensification of apartheid. And this history is reflected to an extent in the micro-histories of the literary magazines of this period.

My interests in exploring literary magazines from this period are literary, political and personal. The personal aspect is based upon knowing first-hand many of the people mentioned here, and I have read much of what they have written subsequently. The group with which I am least acquainted is that which formed around the magazine *Wurm*, but a core of which became involved in *Ophir* and *Izwi*. Of the editorial figures involved in this study, Nat Nakasa, Jack Cope, Ridley Beeton, Bill Maxwell-Mahon, Barney Simon and Guy Butler are no longer alive. Mike Kirkwood now lives in Britain, and Walter Saunders lives in France. Both are readily accessible.

This discussion refers in varying degrees of detail to *The Purple Renoster*, *Contrast*, *Unisa English Studies* (because of its attention to contemporary South African poetry), *New Coin Poetry*, *The Classic*, *Wurm*, *Ophir*, *Kol* and *Izwi*, plus the abruptly terminated *Donga* and its even more abruptly terminated successor, *Inspan*. The magazine *Staffrider* inaugurated a new era of literary engagement in 1978, and is not covered in this discussion. Omitted also at this stage from the period under discussion are *Sestiger*, edited by André Brink, and other, very 'little' magazines that served necessary purposes in their short lives. The shortest lived of all was probably *Wietie*, edited by Chris van Wyk, which ran to a single number. In addition, I have not paid any attention as yet to the two magazines that Sipho Sepamla edited simultaneously, *New Classic* and *S'ketch*. I hope that their turn for attention will come.

A further statement about the incompleteness of this study needs to be made. An enormous amount of information about these magazines is becoming available as those who were involved with them tell about their experiences and offer their insights. It is going to take time to gather and collate all this, and the current article is but the basis for discussion of what these magazines, individually and collectively, represented in their day and mean to us today. Offering what is here is a means of pushing the discussion forward, with contributions from others whose views have yet to be reflected.

The period in question was momentous in many ways, and it was memorably a time of finding how to live during the implacable imposition of systematic and manifold

oppression. A dominant image of the time was the prison. Most points of reference for many who were attentive to what was happening then led to or emanated from jails filled with political prisoners. Therefore, those who were making music, paintings and sculptures, writing poetry and short stories and teaching literature carried an intense charge of energy and focus for each other and for those around them. These magazines were necessary to us then and are important to us now.

Discovering how to read and to respond to one's own literature is as much a process of decolonisation as the recognition, by its own society, that local literature is worth serious attention. It apparently took D H Lawrence in 1923¹ to remind Americans that they had an indigenous literature worthy of exploration as a living literature rather than museum pieces. Departments of English at South African universities began in 1956 to discuss whether or not to include local literature in their courses.² On this and further occasions beyond 1978, they decided not to do so.

Tracing developments in cultural history through literary magazines means looking at and for changes, shifts of focus and intimations of what has been and is to come. The period explored in this paper contains the next wave of literary magazines in South Africa, about thirty years after those edited by Campbell, Plomer, Krige and others.³ In the 1960s, the decolonisation of African countries gathered momentum as former British colonies were granted independence. This process heightened the tensions between political opponents in South Africa, resulting in the killings of Sharpeville, as well as the Rivonia, African Resistance Movement and Bram Fischer trials. In amongst these high-profile events, the question of the status and meaning of local writing in English became a matter of particular concern, over and above the anxieties of those who founded the English Academy in 1961, the same year as South Africa's withdrawal from the Commonwealth. And even today, the questions of whose English and what English is far from resolved.

And though Afrikaner nationalism and its relentless adherence to the tenets of racial capital seemed triumphant during this period, a group of writers, known as *Die Sestigers*, brought a variant of modernism vigorously into South African literary culture and earned the ire of the cultural and political establishment. The following period, from about 1967 to 1978, had a different flavour altogether. After the ruthless rooting out and smashing of all forms of organised political opposition within the country to its policies by the government, cultural groups carried the burden of political opposition to the juggernaut state, followed by the rejection by young people of 'gutter education' in 1976, resulting in the killing of hundreds and hundreds of young people as well as the movement of thousands of youth into African countries for military training in order to overthrow the apartheid state.

It is within this cauldron of literary, linguistic and political issues that a selection of South African literary magazines is discussed in terms of what their nature and presence suggests of the issues being advanced and grappled with at the time.

UNIVERSITIES AND SOUTH AFRICAN POETRY IN ENGLISH

In contradistinction to the Departments of Afrikaans/Nederlands and those offering South African African languages, no indigenous literature, particularly in English, was offered at universities until the late 1970s or even later. In 1978, for example, at the AUETSA conference in Bloemfontein, on 'Teaching English Poetry in South Africa', Stephen Gray pointed out that "in England and America, there are several dozen academics, and several thousand students, who consider Southern African literature as some part of their normal daily activities."⁴ This cut little ice with those who had the power to reorient the syllabi of university Departments of English.

One university that did notice the existence of South African poetry in English in the 1960s was the University of South Africa. And the Bulletin published by the Department of English, named *Unisa English Studies* from 1965, did begin to carry both discussions and examples of South African poetry.⁵

In 1968, this Bulletin carried the series of eight radio talks on contemporary South African poets given by Professor Ridley Beeton, a follow-up to his 1966 series of radio broadcasts on the poetry of Pringle to the present. And in that same year (1966) members of the UNISA Department of English published an anthology of 21 South African poems, each with an evaluative essay.⁶

Ridley Beeton introduced his 1968 series thus:

[The present series] will try to convey something of the riches and disparities apparent [in the work of contemporary poets], ranging from the fairly conventional statements of older poets to the breathless, almost inarticulate cries of what may be regarded as the *avant-garde* group⁷

Beeton's deliberate efforts to introduce local poetry into South African cultural discourse were extended by the inclusion, in a series of five numbers of *Unisa English Studies*, of small collections of verse, without commentary.⁸ Unfortunately, of the 32 poems by the eighteen poets that were selected in this way for publication, only about five poems can be accounted poetry of any worth, thus undermining drastically the claims for local poetry to be regarded seriously. For example, the May 1969 issue opened its 'Anthology of Contemporary South African Poetry' with this piece by Oswald Mtshali:

God and me

Tell me no lie
a lie is black
blackier than me
and Satan's face.

Tell me the Truth
the Truth that is white
whiter even than
God's bearded face.

So, if God be

the Truth
and He is white,
am I a lie
just because
I am black.⁹

Now Mtshali had by this time published his poetry in *The Classic*, *The Purple Renoster*, *New Coin Poetry*, *Ophir* and probably elsewhere. His poems published there, though never poetry of a high order, were considerably less miserable than this specimen. What was being attempted by *Unisa English Studies* was the inclusion of an inoffensive work by a black poet into an otherwise white collection with as little *political* risk as possible.

Such cautiousness from within the fastnesses of a Broederbond-run university, within the headquarters of triumphant Afrikaner nationalism, can be partly understood, if not admired. But such sentimental, religiose and pity-seeking versification was offered as something worthwhile by the intellectual authority of a university literature department that exercised influence over a considerable number of people. Poetic weakness in local material was encouraged through the publication of other poor verse as well, such as this untitled piece by Katharine Leycester, which ends:

The dapper cock crows, stretching his neck,
His mate searches all the more closely.
Its peaceful here as I sit
Watching a small world busy itself.¹⁰

It is not only the selection of verse that created difficulties for the status, reputation and desired quality of local poetry production. And these examples provide a strong argument as to why quality is so very important in what is published and encouraged.

There is real doubt about the ability of some influential UNISA scholars of that era to discuss South African poetry appropriately. For example, the then editor of *Unisa English Studies*, Bill Maxwell-Mahon, reviewed the recently-published *The Penguin Book of South African Verse* (19868) and observed:

The African verse commences with primitive tribal songs and recitals from Bushmen and Hottentot lore. Many of those stone-age incantations are notable for the sense of harmony, verbal and emotional, that they reveal. They express a close relationship between primitive man and his environment and part of their charm lies in the frank and unsophisticated manner in which human functions are treated. *The Star Song of the Bushman Women* is typical of this uninhibited expression:

Does the lily flower open?
The daisy is the flower that opens.
And do you open?
The daisy is the flower that opens.¹¹

It would be instructional to note on how many grounds such comments disqualify this commentator from an adequate discussion of 'African verse'. This lovely example of local poetry has strong echoes in much European, British and American work, but the reviewer could not transfer his undoubted facility in those areas to South African poetry, especially to that by black South Africans.

Such inhibitedness – and it is more than individual – recurs when the 1970 issue of *Unisa English Studies* was devoted to poetry read at the 1969 English Academy conference in Grahamstown. In their Foreword, Ridley Beeton (as President of the English Academy) and Bill Maxwell-Mahon (as editor) found it necessary to say:

Our purpose has been simply to provide a record of what was read. We have not seen it as our task to delete from, or on any way comment on, the work that has reached us. The people represented here have all been acknowledged as writers of sincerity and standing by the fact of their invitation to Grahamstown.¹²

These academics and scholars are thoroughly cowed by a climate of intellectual, moral and political oppression that had been intensified systematically during the 1960s. Some features of that period that are important to mention are: detention without trial; the naming of 102 South Africans as ‘communists’, thereby silencing them; the proscription of 46 South African writers living abroad from being read in their country; the Terrorism Act, and strong forms of pressure to censor the self.

Given this, whose work was being referred to by Beeton and Maxwell-Mahon so trepidatiously? Well, they were: Guy Butler, Douglas Livingstone, Anne Welsh, Michael Macnamara, Perseus Adams, Sydney Clouts and Ruth Miller.¹³

At a special English Academy conference of 1969, ‘South African Writing in English and its place in the school and the university’, John Povey of the University of California at Los Angeles was present. He reported on this conference in the first issue of *Research in African Literatures*:

Each of the special papers had indicated that South Africa had a virile and absorbing literary history in each of the genres. After this had been clearly demonstrated, the professional academics - as if this had never been discussed – fell back onto the age-old position that such literature was not worthy of study and that the duty of English departments was to maintain the holy standards of excellence that could only come if attention was directed consistently and exclusively to the great classics of British literature.

Povey also added that many of the major contemporary South African “writers, La Guma, Mphahlele and Brutus, were not mentioned at all, as they were in exile”.¹⁴

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Guy Butler’s *A South African Book of Verse* (1959) set the tone in that era for many English-speaking whites about what local poetry was and should be. And it functioned as such a reference point until Cope and Krige’s anthology, *The Penguin Book of South African Verse* was published in 1968.

Writing under the pseudonym Libra (to reduce the frequency of his name in the magazine that he edited) in the fourth number of *The Purple Renoster*, Lionel Abrahams reviewed Butler’s anthology, saying:

From some (very respectable) points of view it must seem definitely the best collection South Africa could yield. But there are other points of view, and I suggest, in an essential way it is not good enough.¹⁵

What Abrahams identified in the collection was “a peculiar weariness of feeling” and, in addition, an inability on the part of poets to deal with what he called “race-oppression”. Abrahams asked why the strong emotions aroused by this topic did not lead poets to poetry as other strong emotions did:

Because [this particular emotion] is too particular and at the same time quite impersonal. It is both private and public in the wrong ways: for it is based upon one’s private agreement with certain temporary public opinions....¹⁶

The effect of the review by Abrahams is to suggest that neither anthologists nor poets then knew how to reflect public issues, especially ones dealing with race, and that scholars and critics, by extension did not know how to evaluate such work.

Lionel Abrahams later reviewed the first fourteen numbers of *New Coin Poetry*, this time under the pseudonym V S Dett. He said:

There is a general dearth of such elements as might disturb, anger or arouse the settled reader: there is so little note of passion, hardly a sound of the unsanctified voice that proclaims the agony, the terror, the anger, the mystery of being human animal alive; too little questioning of accepted values, meanings, customs, forms.¹⁷

Writing in 1989, David Bunyan acknowledged that *New Coin Poetry* “soon constituted – for better or worse – a kind of standard, or aunt Sally, depending on one’s viewpoint”. He added that “issues of *New Coin* towards the end of the ‘sixties and even into the early ‘seventies all too frequently betray a certain blandness”.¹⁸

New Coin Poetry emerged in January 1965. The erudite and perceptive academic and poet, Guy Butler, edited it with Ruth Harnett and the intention was to publish poetry of “achievement and promise”. How did such qualities become confused with the dullness and blandness that this poetry magazine offered as worthy and potent? Here is a further example of an influential and powerful institution giving precedence to the polite and the genteel over the vigorous and the emphatic. In Sheila Fugard’s view, “*Contrast* and *New Coin* [of 1975] shrink the horizons of poetry”.¹⁹

Speaking in 1986 on the same platform, Ken Owen the journalist and Peter Horn the scholar and poet, found themselves in agreement (to their mutual surprise) that self-censorship and self-inhibition ran deeper in white middle class society of the fifties and sixties than the controls that even a totalitarian state was able to impose. Owen pointed out that “the taboos and bigotries of the English establishment of [the fifties] were far more suffocating than the laws we suffer today”, and, “The taboos which applied on newspapers and in the society at large were provincial, complacent, racist and culturally arrogant”.²⁰

In his 1968 commentary on the first three numbers of *New Coin Poetry*, Peter Horn argued that the South African poetry plant had become a killer weed that, by its numbers of public practitioners, endangered more useful growth. And in contrast to varieties of this weed, such as the ‘Africana-Folklore-Nature-stance’, and the ‘beautiful-image-diarrhoea’, Horn lauded the poetry of Macnamara, Jensma and Saunders (all *Ophir*

poets), and praised Abrahams, Clouts, Livingstone and Charl Cilliers for being “competent poets who take the game seriously enough”.²¹

There is some evidence to suggest that most writers and scholars, in positions of influence and cultural authority in the 1960s, were deeply unsure, to the point of disability, of how to work with contemporary South African writing. And the decisions taken by university Departments of English at conferences in 1956, 1969, 1978 and even later not to include the serious and systematic study of local literature were further manifestations of that malaise. A study of what literature these university Departments of English were requiring their students to study, as well as the nature of the post graduate work that was then undertaken, plus what academics were publishing during this time, will help to complete the picture of the role of these institutions in the literary history of this country.

THE PURPLE RENOSTER AND THE CLASSIC

During the period, an astonishing range of magazines was available to writers. A selection (with date of first publication) is as follows: *The Purple Renoster* (1956), *Contrast* (1960), *The New African* (1962), *The Classic* (1963), *Sestiger* (1964), *New Coin Poetry* (1965), *Wurm* (1966), *Ophir* (1967), *Kol* (1968), *Bolt* (1969), *Izwi* (1971), *Snarl* (1974), *New Classic* (1975), *S’ketch* (1975), *Donga* (1976) and *Inspan* (1978). Some university-based magazines also published poetry.

Some other developments during this period are worthy of note, such as the foundation of three publishing houses in 1970 (Donker, Ravan and David Philip), the erection of the 1820 Settlers’ Monument in 1974, the introduction of SABC TV in 1975 and the foundation of the Market Theatre in 1976. All played a significant role in the cultural history of this country.

From the outset, the editor of *The Purple Renoster*, Lionel Abrahams, had no difficulties in selecting or discussing South African creative writing. His philosophy and method as editor are well captured in his account of himself and the *Renoster*, in which he grants much of the credit for his usually unerring selection of material to his mentor, Herman Charles Bosman.²² And in the volume compiled to celebrate his 70th birthday, my essay on this magazine pointed to the extraordinary achievement that it represents.²³ Through this magazine, Abrahams established a network of writers, painters, architects, dramatists and literary figures in the Johannesburg area, a high proportion of whom went on to become the editors of magazines, to publish collections of poetry, short stories and plays, to compile anthologies and to be active in education, political movements and churches, as journalists and reviewers and in other ways to provide validity and substance to South Africa’s indigenous cultural life.²⁴

Like most of the editors of literary magazines of that time, Abrahams was willing to publish work by unknown writers²⁵, but the fact that he was able to publish only twelve numbers in sixteen years meant that frequency was a problem. By contrast, *Izwi* published twenty numbers in four years! But perhaps the most valuable aspect of being a

member of the *Renoster* circle was the time and advice that the editor was prepared to give to contributors and those who sent in manuscripts/typescripts as well as the access it gave to people who were creatively engaged. This process has extended into the writing circle that Abrahams continues to lead today. What this element highlights is the importance of the editor-writer relationship that magazines can establish, and that it should not be overlooked when conducting research in this area of literary life.

Another notable and highly significant result of the editorial activities of Lionel Abrahams was his issuing with Robert Royston and Eva Bezwoda, under the imprint of Renoster Books, the first collection of poems, *Sounds of a Cowhide Drum*, by Oswald Mbuyiseni Mtshali in 1971. This turned out to be a publishing phenomenon, selling more copies than any South African poetry before that.²⁶ And when the first volume by Mongane Wally Serote, entitled *Yakal'inkomo*, appeared in the following year, the poetry terrain in South Africa was changed irrevocably. The dominant poetic voices were then black and they carried an authority and a sense of conviction that had not been heard in South Africa before.

The writer's circle that Abrahams established led eventually to the publication of a descendant of *The Purple Renoster*, called *Sesame*, which lasted from 1982 to 1991, producing fifteen numbers after the break-up of PEN (Johannesburg) in 1981 and the formation of the African Writers' Association immediately thereafter.²⁷

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In 1963, the year in which 102 South Africans, including Jack Cope, the editor of *Contrast*, were 'named' and thereby prohibited from preparing any material for publication, and everything written or said by them could not be repeated, published or possessed, the first contemporary, English-language, literary magazine with a black editor appeared on the scene. The editor was Nat Nakasa, backed by the drive of Nadine Gordimer, and the magazine was *The Classic*, named after a shebeen at the back of The Classic Laundry in central Johannesburg.²⁸

Here was the first highly public declaration of the literary interests of black writers, derived directly from the journalism of *Drum* magazine in the 1950s. But lest we become mesmerised by such a single perspective upon a complex era, there is need to recall the points made by Tim Couzens in 1974 poetry festival at the University of Cape Town. He reminded his audience of the need to incorporate into one's thinking about literary production by black South Africans of vernacular writing, broadcasting, the wide and deep field of oral literature as well as the many uses to which poetry is put other than publishing it in little magazines.²⁹

But here at last was a literary magazine with a black editor that intended "to seek African writing of merit".³⁰ The first number was a blockbuster, made up mainly of those established figures from *Drum* magazine and elsewhere from the 1950s: Can Themba, Lewis Nkosi, Richard Rive, Leslie Sehume, Julian Beinhart, Ezekiel Mphahlele, Andrew Motjuoadi, J M Brander, the editor and Casey Motsisi. The heavy bias towards

Johannesburg (which remained throughout) was only partly off-set by the dismal fact that Themba was in Swaziland, Mphahlele in Nigeria and Nkosi in London, all in self-imposed exile.

Despite the fact that *The Classic's* contributing constituency was drastically limited in 1966 by the banning of the works of forty-six South Africans living abroad, the twelve numbers between 1963 and 1971 reflected a range of lively and engaged cultural activity in Johannesburg of that time. It is important to indicate something of what was going on then.

After the arrival of Athol Fugard in Johannesburg in 1957, and the performance of 'King Kong' at the University of the Witwatersrand in 1959, black theatre divided into 'township theatre', 'town theatre' and 'Black Consciousness theatre', as defined by Robert Kavanagh³¹, and these were performed in sufficient quantities and with sufficient vitality to persuade David Coplan to refer to the "theatrical renaissance of the 1960s and 1970s".³² This was achieved under most difficult conditions as the separate amenities and so-called community development provisions of the Group Areas Act "outlawed multi-racial performance companies, required permits for blacks to perform in or attend shows in the white areas and for whites to do the same in the townships". Coplan quotes Fugard from 1968, who declared that "the legislation that governs the performing arts makes it impossible for an African and me to get together on the stage as we did five or six years ago ... It's an appalling deterioration".³³

The situation in the visual or plastic arts in the 1960s is equally interesting. Groups of artists – with their musician colleagues – were at work in Dorkay House studios (Esrom Legae and Ben Arnold), in Bill Ainslie's multiracial studio (Dumile Feni, Julian Motau, Wopko Jensma) and they all exhibited in Johannesburg and Pretoria galleries. Dumile Feni, for example, participated in the Transvaal Academy of Arts exhibitions of 1965 and 1966, the Republican Arts Festival of 1966, and he received a prize at the 1966 SA Breweries Competition. In 1967, Dumile had five works in the South African exhibit at the Sao Paulo Biennale, he exhibited a highly praised bust of Chief Luthuli in Pretoria, and he held a one-person show of his drawings at Gallery 101 in Jeppe Street, Johannesburg³⁴. His *African Guernica*, a graphic work from that exhibition that depicts the mental anguish then inflicted upon South Africans, as distinct from Picasso's focus upon the horrors of war in Spain (an observation made by Moji Mokone), is in the collection of the De Beers Centenary Art Gallery at the University of Fort Hare.³⁵

After Nat Nakasa's going into exile in 1965 so as to take up a Niemann Fellowship at Harvard University, Barney Simon took over as editor of *The Classic* for volume 1, number 4. His first editorial read:

Nat Nakasa has left S.A. on an exit permit and cannot return for as long as the present rules persist

These have been terrible times, insane times, when the simplest of human values have been confused, labelled and belittled, and many of those who sought to propagate them have been banned and imprisoned. People of all races and convictions have suffered terror and violence, from the outrage of the ninety days to the madness of the station explosion.³⁶

We are a long way now from the niceties of *Unisa English Studies* and *New Coin Poetry*. And a quick glance at the contents of this volume, edited by Simon, shows the following contributors: Dugmore Boetie, Chris Macgregor, Finn Phetoe, Nadine Gordimer, Bill Ainslie and interviews by Lewis Nkosi with Walter Allen, Amos Tutuola, Ulli Beier, Wole Soyinka, David Rubadiri and Joseph Kariuki. This is a different league of cultural activity from that then cultivated by the diffident arbiters of taste and style within university language and literature departments.

Of further note is *The Classic* volume 3, number 2 of 1969, edited by Nadine Gordimer and Audrey Cobden. It included work by Mbuyiseni Mtshali aged 29, Njabulo Ndebele aged 20, Mongane Serote aged 24 and Mafika Gwala aged 23 years. Here is the new generation about to make its mark on the South African cultural scene.

Neither *The Purple Renoster* nor *The Classic* can be regarded primarily as oppositional or 'alternative'. They were too arrogant and self-sufficient to define themselves in relation to the inhibited or the inadequate. They stood in their own clear light, radiantly themselves, no matter how worse for wear such exposure made them.

WURM

A reading of Phil du Plessis's account³⁷ of the primarily Afrikaans-language, literary magazine *Wurm*, which appeared between 1966 and 1970, indicates clearly what it was that the poets who effloresced then in the Pretoria region found themselves opposed to.

In the first instance, deliberately established educational, cultural, religious and political interests dominated Afrikaans literature. There was nothing new in that. And unlike South African writing in English, Afrikaans had been offered as a subject in universities since 1918.³⁸ The two most influential poets in Afrikaans at that time – D J Opperman and N P Van Wyk Louw – were professors at the universities of Stellenbosch and the Witwatersrand respectively. And what the University of Pretoria lacked in professorial poets it made up in heavyweight critics like A P Grové and cultural activists such as Elize Botha.

For Du Plessis, one of the main editors of *Wurm* and a student of medicine, the approach of universities (Pretoria being one of his main examples) to literature and culture provoked "the musty smell of religion, and the humanities carried the metallic taste of the absolute sciences".³⁹

The group that founded and supported *Wurm* were therefore responding in the usual avant-garde manner, reacting to the claustrophobic constraints of the establishment in their search for the new, the different and, above all, the experimental.⁴⁰

Such standard behaviour took on, though, some weird and local distortions.

To study Afrikaans at that time at university level, meant studying Nederlands (Dutch) as well. At first, uncritical glance, this is explained by the relative youth of Afrikaans as a

language. Thus the link with Nederlands gave students of Afrikaans access to pre-twentieth century European studies through a cognate language. However, there is another, disquieting aspect to this.

It was and has been until very recently a project of Afrikaner nationalism to suppress the real history of Afrikaans (and of its speakers) in favour of a Eurocentric account of events, to the extent of omitting entirely the black and religious origins of the language. Thus the language itself offered in schools, universities, the church and the media was a product of linguistic engineering supported by heavily biased historical accounts of the language's growth and development.⁴¹

One cannot expect medical students at an Afrikaans-language university in 1966 to have been aware of the degree to which they had been lied to about their origins and identity throughout their lives. But they should have been willing to think critically about the albocentric and Eurocentric versions of themselves in Africa that were given out by everyone at some level of authority. Lest this be understood as too harsh a judgement upon young students in the thrall of nationalism, this point is made to illustrate the degree to which it was necessary to go in order to begin to perceive the scale of the lying and distortion that was rampant in all South African educational institutions.

Because the writers behind the magazine could not or did not do so, *Wurm* sowed the seeds of its own destruction.

Calling himself P P Brits, David Botes published an essay, oddly titled 'Brief' [Letter] in the second issue of *Wurm* in which he outlined the current avant-garde traditions among Belgian poets.⁴² This elicited a strong response from a Flemish writer, Julien Weverburgh. His elucidation of the Flemish and Dutch avant-garde situation presupposed that there was a strong tradition of the avant-garde among Afrikaans writers in South Africa,⁴³ an impression he must have gained from the first two issues of *Wurm* and perhaps from meeting people like Botes.

These and other connections with the northern hemisphere opened up for *Wurm* a rich variety of material from Belgium and the Netherlands, as well as work from the United States of America, Britain, Greece and elsewhere. Issues of *Wurm* therefore contained literary material in Afrikaans, Flemish, Dutch, English (local and exotic) as well as numbers of translations (into Afrikaans, often by *Wurm* contributors) of work originally in French, German, American and Russian.

Analysis of the content of *Wurm* reveals a significant trend that developed during its 12 issues between 1966 and 1970. By issue number 7 (November 1967), from an overwhelming predominance of items in Afrikaans, there was now an equal number of contributions in both Afrikaans and English, plus four pieces from abroad. By issue number 9, there was an equal number of Afrikaans, English and exogenous contributions to the magazine. By April 1969 (issue number 11), the Afrikaans contributions had dwindled to five; there were twelve items in English and twenty-four from abroad. From internal evidence alone it appears that the initial constituency of *Wurm* lasted only until

mid 1968. Some of the original *Wurm* contributors reappeared in *Izwi* between 1971 and 1974, under the editorship of Phil du Plessis (who had moved from Pretoria to Johannesburg), Stephen Gray and Wilma Stockenström.

Regrettably, the reliance upon the European avant-garde to provide safe ways of exploring the experimental and the daring became a means of avoiding engagement with Africa. And that led to the demise of *Wurm* at issue number 12. The final message from the editors, in English, was: “The editors regret that this must be the final issue of WURM. The reason for this is twofold: financial and temporal. A new decade calls for new applications, elsewhere”.⁴⁴

Yes, these young, experimental writers wished to break from the stifling orthodoxies of the Afrikaner establishment. And they would never have obeyed that hysterical call by Dr Verwoerd, Prime Minister, at the fifth anniversary of the South African Republic in 1966, a month or two before the emergence of *Wurm*, to promote his idea of a “nation”.⁴⁵

But though the *Wurm* contributors (Du Plessis is emphatic that they were never a school of poetry⁴⁶) sought to distance themselves from certain, repressive aspects of Afrikaner culture, such as the banning of literary works or attacks upon the moral behaviour of writers, they chose to do so while firmly remaining members of that culture. And so the use of the avant-garde became a form of escapism. Not the legitimate escapism of those under severe oppression, but an escapism that refused to recognise the ruinous price that people had to pay for remaining members of an oppressive elite and the price that those who were not members of that elite had to pay. This is said with a sharp awareness of how damaging it often is for someone to abandon or be abandoned by a culture or society, especially if there are no networks of support available. The experience of Wopko Jensma is salutary.

Why did *Wurm* never publish work by black South African writers? The magazine *Ophir* – which began in 1967 and was a close relation of *Wurm*, at least to begin with – rapidly established a core of black contributors and readers, and so did the later *Izwi*, perhaps to a lesser extent. The sad conclusion seems to be that the *Wurm* people, when in Pretoria at least, were incapable of breaking out of the cultural mould in which they, their families, their education and their sense of personal safety had been cast. It was only through *Ophir* and *Izwi* that some of the *Wurm* writers could associate with colleagues from beyond their cultural ghetto, at least in print.⁴⁷

One figure who weaves through this account of literary magazines, is Wopko Jensma. He is one of the major links between *Wurm* and *Ophir*, and he can be regarded as a significant if not major dissident Afrikaner poet and artist. Then living in Botswana with his family, Jensma was under the impression until 1969 that if he returned to South Africa, where he was born and educated, he would be arrested for having contravened the Immorality Act because he had married a Swazi wife. He first published in *Wurm* in 1966⁴⁸ and contributed to six numbers in total, designing three covers and providing some graphic work as well. Jensma then became the most significant contributor to *Ophir* during its existence.

By 1967, when *Ophir* was founded, Peter Horn, Walter Saunders and Michael Macnamara were all contributors to *Wurm*, and Phil du Plessis, an editor of *Wurm*, was in on the early discussions concerning the founding of *Ophir*. Furthermore, the two magazines ran side by side during 1967 and 1968, with work by Du Plessis, Jensma, Horn, Macnamara and Saunders appearing in both during those two years.⁴⁹

OPHIR

The idea of another poetry magazine grew out of the perceived need in 1965 by UNISA academics for a means of circulating the ‘experimental’ poetry that several of the teaching staff were known to be writing. At first, Michael Macnamara, Ridley Beeton and Peter Horn circulated ideas, and the latter in particular urged that at least eight academic departments – all the languages plus Philosophy and Fine Art – should be involved and that, in addition to publishing modern, experimental poetry, the proposed magazine should include theory and critical commentary on such poetry.

At this point, Beeton withdrew from the project because he regarded the proposals as “too ambitious and, I think, will not find favour with the appropriate Publications committee [of the university]. What I originally had in mind ... was a modest leaflet of only a few sheets which would have developed in accordance with its reception”.⁵⁰

What happened next was that Macnamara, Horn, Saunders and Du Plessis got together and decided to launch a poetry magazine, independent of any institution as well as financially independent. And in addition to wanting a vehicle for ‘experimental’ poetry, there was the clear understanding that what they published should be very different from that usually carried by *New Coin Poetry* which, recalled Saunders thirty years later, “was insipid, a-political, ‘veld-and-vlei-verous’ and not meeting the needs of time and place”.⁵¹

It is interesting to note that at the outset, there were political differences between the four originators of the magazine. Early in 1967, Horn (then in Zululand) sent a draft ‘Statement of policy’ to the others for comment. Du Plessis apparently expressed his concern to Macnamara who then wrote to Horn commenting that

1. The wording should not lead people to mistake *Ophir* for a vehicle for anarchist propaganda.
2. The words ‘chaos’ and ‘social strife’ could be omitted.
3. He [Horn] should take care not to drive away talent where his intention is the opposite.
4. The section ‘... it is our intention to judge each poem submitted as far as possible on its own merits rather than on any preconceived notion of what a poem ought to be ...’ should stand.⁵²

After further interchanges, Horn was outvoted by the three in Pretoria and it was decided that no statement of policy would be included in the first number of *Ophir*, and instead there would be the anodyne, “OPHIR is produced by a small and independent group of writers for the publication of their own poetry and poetry which interests them”⁵³ which was dropped anyway after the second number.

A hand press was assembled by Horn in his Empangeni garage and this first number was printed laboriously. The felt had to be inked for every one of the 16 pages x 250 copies, the paper placed in position and the lid screwed down with carpenter's clamps. As Horn had to stand on the lid to achieve sufficient pressure, the lid soon split, and the editors decided to purchase a new, commercially manufactured press that arrived just in time to print the cover of the first *Ophir*.⁵⁴

In the absence of a policy and of controlling ideas, this number had a theme, the sea. Thus it began with a faded turquoise cover that, with its square shape, made it look like a cheap exercise book. On the cover, everything was printed in English and Afrikaans, and this relentless bilingualism (which today looks like satire) was fortunately dropped after the first four numbers. Had the magazine stayed like this, it would have been one of the most drab-looking journals in the history of South African literature. Published in Pretoria, with a Hebrew place-name ('whence fine gold was obtained') that was used in Masefield's 19th century poem, plus a maritime theme!

Saunders has no clear idea why it was decided to put out a bilingual journal, except that they included writers in Afrikaans in much the same way as they included "all sorts of people from outside South Africa. We were averse to suggestion of being parochially English, and even more to being parochially *English South African*."⁵⁵ A glance, I suspect, at *New Coin Poetry*.

The question of *Ophir*'s bilingualism and the linguistic issues raised by it needs detailed attention, which is not possible here. Suffice it to say for the moment, that it was a deliberate and, I suspect, protective policy. It offered 'dissident' writers in Afrikaans an outlet other than *Wurm*, and those writers who published in both appear to have submitted their more politically outspoken verse to *Ophir*. Wilhelm Knobel is a case in point. As a regular contributor to *Wurm*, he submitted to *Ophir* his elegy on the 'pass-bearers' who suffocated in a police van.⁵⁶

Another element in the decision to be a bilingual magazine is a matter of self-protection. It was only in 1969 that Horn wrote to Saunders, saying:

About Afrikaans poetry: after much thinking and many disappointments I agree with you on principle with the understanding that we print any really good Afrikaans poem when we get it, ie. We treat them just like any English poem. If we like it we print it, if there are none we like, we leave it.⁵⁷

In fact, the frequency of Afrikaans poems printed did decline, but the openness to Afrikaans verse meant that they were able to publish work by Nakedi (Mathews) Phosa⁵⁸ and Wopko Jensma.

The editors of *Ophir* turned Jensma into a weapon, as Horn's comments indicate:

I have read Wopko Jensma's Afrikaans stuff, disagree with you. This thing is bound to irk some people all the more because it make fun of certain Afrikaans stock phrases, and because it is *in Afrikaans* (lieve Oupa Voortrekker, Groot Vredevoers, DOOD WES TUIS BES, you simply can't do the same thing to their taboos in any other language, it would be an attack from the outside, from the horrible English, but this is a silent explosion from the inside, a stinging nettle rash on the own body. Ah, Beautiful.) No, we must print this.⁵⁹

Though ignored then and since by university-based literary commentators as an Afrikaans poet of any substance, Jensma's work in Afrikaans certainly amounts to much more than being a minor irritant.⁶⁰ But more of Jensma later.

The *Ophir* editors chose to lead with poetry by Michael Macnamara, a lecturer in Philosophy at UNISA who used to make his students read Russian novelists as philosophical texts. His work had been published in *New Coin Poetry* and in *Wurm* and in the latter, he found space in which to be particularly experimental and playful, delighting Sinclair Beiles (then living in Greece),⁶¹ and where he also seemed at ease in the company of the Flemish and Dutch avant-garde poetry.

In addition to Macnamara's freshness, wry intelligence and willingness to play with unusual forms and combinations, the radical element in his poetry is that he created South African poems in English that had no need to acknowledge that formidable past that so often tended to inhibit the knowing, colonial poet. His poetry appears to be (but is not) without a tradition, despite the many cultural references (mostly European) that stud his work. But most strikingly is that Macnamara's poetry is free from any cringing acknowledgement of something out there, elsewhere. His verse is free of obeisance, and his inventive, self-delighting poetry is of a rare kind:

EROICA

Slurring midnight taverns,
papa and pawky music teacher rouse
the boy for drill
as *wunderkind*.

He pulses polar moods.

Crystals of society intrigue a while,
foreshadow.

He hungers nuptials, leans
to innocent ladies,
is requited, yet
shuns contact.

What chasmic indiscretion crept?

Not till bode of torment,
depth:
a friend detects
a far off shepherd descant;
he,
of all,
not.

Creation is a mutant crucifix,
a single bar refashioned
thirteen times.

Innovation, utter-bound, erupts
 in titan stop-go scores:
 the chestnut Fifth
 is *Sacre du Printemps* to his milieu;
 a stunned Leseuer, hat handed,
 fumbles for his head.

Pain compounds with pain.

String rife, the Graf is hermit mute.

No line, and proxy nephew lapsed.
 Well opus-*kinder* then:
 no day without its stave.

Trumpet aids lie flat,
 quartets surmount
 the silent images.

A fist projects.⁶²

Macnamara published over 60 poems in *Ophir* and only three in *New Coin* and *Contrast* during the ten years of the magazine's existence. He also chaired the Pretoria branch of the Pasquino Society, committed to fighting censorship in the arts. In fact, though Macnamara's name does not appear as an editor on *Ophir's* masthead, he was an active and influential figure in its production. However, he did not use the magazine to push his own poetry: Horn and Saunders solicited it.

Ophir's major poet was undoubtedly Jensma, who brought the European avant-garde from *Wurm*, an African sensibility that no other white poet then had (so much so that Gwala assumed that Jensma was black, until he met him⁶³), wonderful graphic skills and formidable poetry in Afrikaans and English, and able to incorporate tones, registers and dialects across southern Africa. Sufficient has been written recently about Jensma to make possible only brief comments on his salient qualities which are best expressed through his poetry and graphic works.⁶⁴

His arrival in *Ophir* was emphatic:

BLUES 2

! batter a fences down
 enter, I coshed em down, an out
 cup my head in ya bloodbeat
 ! this fence aint no more
 baby-black ya eyes a croon
 i eat ya, a lashy streak, deep
 ? fence dont shadow me
 aint we nobodys business?
 nobody knows the trouble i see
 ? fence ya aint killin me
 days's a down an out, yea

zombies coon my creoletown
 ! fence, buzz off in a blue
 aint ya business daddy-o?wha
 ya aint fooling me no more
 ! batter a fences down⁶⁵

Thus page 1 of *Ophir 2*. This poem was the first of 66, plus a small collection of poems in English published separately in 1971. By this time, *Ophir* had developed a readership in universities, schools, and townships (as is possible to discern from the correspondence received by the editors) and Jensma was one reason why black poets sent their work to *Ophir* for publication.

Both Horn and Saunders sought work from black writers in Pretoria, Johannesburg and Durban. As early as 1966, Horn expressed the following view:

Our own reality has become the reality of a tiny minority, sectional and no longer universal. It is a completely unreal dream world in which our poems exist. I do not think that the renaissance, or should I say naissance (because as yet we had no great literature), will necessarily come from the African or the Coloured, it could come from the European too, but it will come from him who first steps across the artificial boundary lines, from him who for the first time will be truly South African, and not only sectional.⁶⁶

By number 6 (September 1968) Mtshali's work began to appear, followed by poems from Banoobhai, Buthelezi, Gwala, kaMnyayiza, Koza, Langa, Maseko, V Mtshali, Z Nkondo, Nthodi, Sepamla, Serote and Vilakazi. And from early on, *Ophir* also began to publish actively the work of poets from abroad, including Britain, Mocambique and Greece in translation, Canada, North America, Czechoslovakia, Belgium and New Zealand.⁶⁷

This yoking together of black South African poets and the origins of contributors from abroad serves to indicate the degree to which it was *Ophir's* white editorial policy to seek work from beyond the limits of their apartheid-designated confines. And it does provide an indication of the disposition and range that the magazine sought, making it different in content and kind from others in pursuit of its ends. That shift in the determination of taste and standards in South African poetry in English away from the authority of powerful institutions such as universities and cultural agencies (such as newspapers) to publishing houses, magazines and loose associations of individuals, was largely achieved during the period under discussion with the independent magazines, such as *The Purple Renoster*, *The Classic* and *Ophir* in particular, as vehicles for the new, the different and the recently voiced. That there were still constituencies that were silent and silenced, needs to be registered here as another area for investigation.

But to regard local Black writers and contributors to literary journals from other countries in the same way is also to underscore the degree to which black and white writers in South Africa were actually foreign to each other. They were *and* they were not. The problem here is not merely one of physical separation or of different 'life experiences'. There were no magazines actually controlled and edited by black literary or editorial people. All black participants in the literary realm in South Africa of that time did so as

contributors, and not in any sense as arbiters. And this remained the case until anthologies of writing, published through white-controlled but non-racially oriented publishing houses, such as Ravan Press, began to emerge. The earliest instances of this are the two anthologies edited by Mthobi Mutlootse (*Forced Landing*, 1980 and *Reconstruction*, 1981) and *The Return of the Amasi Bird, Black South African Poetry, 1891-1981*, edited by Tim Couzens and Essop Patel (1982), all published by Ravan.

In an (unpublished) essay on South African poetry in English, Peter Wilhelm commented on *Ophir*, up to number 12 (September 1970), arguing that the *Ophir* poets were poetic descendants of William Plomer (as distinct from Roy Campbell, the father of poets in *Contrast* and *New Coin*) and that “for the first time, in what seems like and probably is decades, [the *Ophir* poets are] writing poetry which is relevant, [which] is a grace”.

At the 1974 poetry festival at the University of Cape Town, the *Ophir* editors flogged a selection of work from its numbers, entitled *It's Gettin Late and other poems from Ophir*.⁶⁸ Much of the content was taken from *Ophir* 11, perhaps the strongest number that was produced. But despite the powers that I have attributed to *Ophir*, anthologists of local verse largely ignored the poems it published, except for the Couzens and Patel anthology, *The Return of the Amasi Bird* (1982), which drew heavily on *Ophir* for poetry by black writers. The Couzens/Patel collection also reprinted from *The Classic* what should be regarded as possibly the most exciting poem written by a South African in the sixties, ‘Africa, Music and Show Business’ by Dollar Brand (Abdullah Ibrahim)⁶⁹ and to which Jensma published a response: ‘A Twelve Tone for Dollar Brand’.⁷⁰

At that same conference in 1974, a further shift in the literary politics of South Africa was made when Mike Kirkwood presented his paper, ‘The Colonizer: a critique of South African cultural theory’, which in effect, was a critique of ‘Butlerism’.⁷¹

Chapman correctly identifies this as a defining moment in South Africa’s literary history, but describes this, in restricted space, as “Kirkwood advocates radical Marxist/Third-world populist analysis of SA literary culture”⁷² when it was really an introduction of colonial and post-colonial theory into the cultural discourse of this country, in this case as advocated by Mannoni and Memmi. However, it did signal the change that was to come when Ravan Press, under the stewardship of Mike Kirkwood, launched the magazine, *Staffrider* in 1978. And that begins another story that this article is in no position to tell.

Ophir completed its run of twenty-three issues in 1976 with a final, double issue, publishing for the last time many of its regular contributors and other, less established poets such as Alan Cook, whose ferociously fond poem, ‘Swansong of the 15F’, an elegy for the famous Karoo express, opened *Ophir*’s last spurt of steam. Walter Saunders exercised his editorial prerogative by closing *Ophir* with a three-movement poem, ‘the start of the journey’.

However, Walter Saunders had been approached in 1975 by Ad Donker, publisher, to edit “an annual of the best writers in English in southern Africa”⁷³, and he in turn asked

Lionel Abrahams to join him. Both Saunders and Abrahams supported the creation of an outlet for contemporary local writing because of the recent closure of *The Classic*, *The Purple Renoster* and *Izwi*, and “the need for new magazines to replace ones that had gone under”.⁷⁴

In contradistinction to *Penguin New Writing* (London, established 1940) and *New World Writing* (New York, established 1952), which were international in scope and had published work by a number of South Africans, *Quarry* was intended by Donker to publish short stories, poetry, drama and criticism by *established writers* [my italics] even though new talent would be welcome as well.⁷⁵ The first issue of *Quarry* appeared in 1976.

That decision to emphasise local, established writers is an interesting one, and bears out the sense obtained from reading literary magazines from this period that the time had come for a consolidation and affirmation of established literary developments over at least two decades. A history of publishing in South Africa will confirm that it was in the mid-seventies that local publishing, publishing local literature and not only maps, tourist brochures and wild-life stuff, played definite roles in providing means for local writing to achieve local and international significance.

Like the first issue of *The Classic*, that published stalwarts from the fifties in 1963, the first *Quarry* carried a heavy ballast of established names, including Bessie Head, Nadine Gordimer, Wopko Jensma, Barney Simon and David Goldblatt, as well as Jillian Becker, Christopher Hope, Siphon Sepamla, Stephen Gray, Lefifi Tladi, Ahmed Essop and Peter Wilhelm. This latter group would soon make themselves much better known through their subsequent publications. Despite the original intention to publish established writers, subsequent issues of *Quarry* – there were four in seven years – carried increasingly greater amounts of work by lesser known writers. By the final issue in 1983, over half the contributors had work in the annual for the first time.⁷⁶ As editor of this issue (Abrahams having withdrawn while on the editorial board of *The Bloody Horse*), Walter Saunders ended his final editorial this way:

My great regret is the inadequate representation of current black writing. This is not for want of asking. I have had a number of promises from black writers and no direct refusals on the ground of principle; but the fact remains that there has been little material response. Such reluctance was not part of the scene ten years ago in the days of *Bolt* and *Ophir*, nor even in 1976 when *Quarry* first appeared. It is an indication of the black mood of the time, as was the case early in 1981 when the Johannesburg branch of PEN rushed ignominiously into silence.⁷⁷

What Saunders refers to as ‘the black mood of the time’ is, of course, the ways in which black consciousness was manifesting itself in literary spheres. Subsequent to the dissolution of PEN Johannesburg, the exclusively black African Writers’ Association had been formed in 1981, and tensions between Freedom Charter-oriented writers and Africanists and/or black consciousness adherents were increasingly acute, in many cases over the question of collaboration with and co-operation between whites and blacks, in this case in literary and cultural activities.

This development represents, in turn, much greater assertiveness on behalf of their own interests by black writers, but also the sense that they would not ever come into their own domain unless they first achieved self-sufficiency before possible engagement with white colleagues at a later stage, a standard black consciousness position. Practical necessity and the sharp momentum of events proved that such a desire for separateness remained a minority commitment even as it influenced the rhetoric of many black South Africans who recognised the necessity for interaction with whites if not the value of moving beyond race or colour as a characteristic of significance.

KOL

Ten numbers of the Johannesburg-based literary magazine, *Kol*, appeared between 1 August 1968 and 10 December 1969. Its main sponsor appears to have been that enterprising bookseller, Marcus de Jong, whose shop in Melle Street, Braamfontein, Johannesburg always contained something that was unavailable anywhere else in South Africa.

Kol published exclusively in Afrikaans, and its heavyweight editorial team represented most of the regional, ‘sestiger’ writers: Chris Barnard, P G du Plessis, Louis Eksteen/Marthinus van Schoor, John Miles and Bartho Smit. Listed as assistants were Hennie Aucamp, A J Coetzee, Richard Daneel, Abraham H de Vries, Etienne le Roux, Johan Nel, Ian Raper, Anna Vorster and others.⁷⁸

Like the editorial boards of all other magazines, this one was excessively white and male.

Kol opened with some satire by Van Wyk Louw, an interchange between André Brink and Bartho Smit over what characterised the 1960s and what should characterise the 1970s, plus a challenge to the editors of *Kol* by Breyten Breytenbach.

In his essay, Brink said: “If the sixties was the decade of sex and symbols, then I would like to see that what we write in the seventies breaks through to the political and social in its widest terms.” (p 4) For Smit, the political and social dimensions to which Brink referred were nothing more than “the race question which already by the fifties had been ridden to death”. (p 6)

Such sparring was given sharper edge by Breytenbach’s challenge, ‘Blot, target or spot of mildew?’ in which he asked a series of questions of his South African colleagues. Writing from self-imposed exile in Paris, Breytenbach indicated that he was confident of his own answers to such questions and that other South Africans with whom he was in contact, such as Zeke Mphahlele, Lewis Nkosi, Alex la Guma, Dennis Brutus and others, really wanted to know where the editors of *Kol* actually located themselves in relation to the issues that his questions raised.⁷⁹

It is both interesting and ironic to note that it was Breytenbach, after his calamitous visit to South Africa in 1975 and his consequent nine-year jail term, who was a key figure in

the 1989 meeting between prominent Afrikaners from South Africa and the ANC at the Victoria Falls.

In effect, Breytenbach challenged his fellow writers to declare their responses to Nadine Gordimer, to the withdrawal of Athol Fugard's passport, to the actions of Bram Fischer, to the jailing of Nelson Mandela and other figures and events. To respond at all adequately, the editors would have had to move well beyond their conventional, even if edgily uncomfortable, mindsets into open and direct confrontation with the Afrikaner establishment. This Breytenbach knew, with deadly accuracy.

As could have been anticipated, the second number of *Kol* carried a number of responses to these challenges from those associated with the magazine. Their replies could not have satisfied Breytenbach as he never published anything further in it.⁸⁰

Kol itself appeared without any statement of intent, save the declaration that "it simply wished to offer space for a new Afrikaans literature from acknowledged as well as aspirant writers", and that, in addition, it intended to publish "commentary on issues in South African culture in its widest sense".⁸¹

An interesting development was the creation of a prize for 'political literature' (3, Oct/Nov 1968) which was awarded in the following year to Lina Spies for her poem, 'Widmung --- Breyten Breytenbach'. John Miles and Adam Small received honourable mentions for their submissions.⁸²

Why did *Kol* last only 17 months? No explanation for this was published, except for the final line at the end of the last number, No 10: "Hiermee het Kol sy kol gesien" – 'With this, Kol has seen its end'. (Some word play is lost in translation.) But internal evidence – mainly from the composition of each number – suggests that there was little or nothing to sustain it as a magazine. Issue 1 contained contributions from the editors, plus Breyten Breytenbach. The next issue had a new set of contributors. Then the next and the next (4) each had an almost entirely new set of contributors.

In other words, *Kol* never became more than a random collection of literary submissions, without focus, direction or apparent purpose. After issue 4, the selections published were even more varied and arbitrary-seeming than before, and John Miles emerged as the only figure to make consistent contributions to the magazine that he edited.

Two questions occur, neither of which can be answered here. Why did *Kol* set up in opposition or addition to *Wurm*? In number 4, the remark is made: "Ons voorhoede heet *Wurm*, ons voorbehoede Tydskrif vir Letterkunde" – 'Our vanguard is called *Wurm*, our protection/contraceptive is *Tydskrif vir Letterkunde*'.⁸³ This occurs in the regular, final section in each number, devoted to cryptic, ironic and dubious statements. There is also an indication in the same issue that the relentlessly experimental nature of *Wurm* had become something of a joke.⁸⁴

The other question is why it was possible for *Wurm*'s successor, *Izwi*, to last for twenty issues over four years (doubling the output and life of *Kol*) even though it too published a very wide range and a wide variety of writers, without an overt programme.

Evidence from the careers of *Wurm* in Pretoria and *Kol* in Johannesburg leads me to the view that something happened in Afrikaner culture at about the middle to the end of 1969, leading to a loss of confidence and focus just prior to the emergence of black poetic voices from the townships in 1971. This is a surmise and an intuitive leap that needs verification by means of careful, cultural research.

IZWI/STEM/VOICE

Published out of Crown Mines, Johannesburg, *Izwi* was edited by Phil du Plessis, Stephen Gray and Wilma Stockenström (later augmented by Wessel Pretorius, Sheila Roberts and Peter Wilhelm), and became the heir to *Wurm*. Not only did they share Du Plessis and Wilhelm (who pops up in relation to *Ophir*, *Donga*, *Inspan* and other magazines, including his own *Heresy* in 1979), in editorial capacities, but also the early numbers of *Izwi* carried the work of *Wurm* stalwarts like Jeanne Goosen, Marié Blomerus, Wopko Jensma, Casper Schmidt and Wessel Pretorius. Again, it was a bilingual magazine, with the ratio of Afrikaans to English about one-third to two-thirds. *Izwi* is also remarkable for the number of writers and poets it published (150) as well as for the artwork of its covers, inserts and fold-outs, cartoons and graphics by 50 artists.⁸⁵

There are two features of *Izwi* that call for comment here.

One feature is that no single writer or even group of writers dominated its pages. No writer, including the editors, contributed to more than eight of the twenty numbers. The result is that this magazine is a repository of a really large collection of writers in line with the declaration of the first editorial to provide an “informal venue for the publication of work by younger writers”.⁸⁶

Izwi was certainly more politically hip than *Wurm* was, remarking that its inexpensive format would mean that “Censorship or politically inspired confiscation will... ruin nobody's finances”.⁸⁷ That never happened, though many of the people associated with *Izwi* suffered exile, arrest, banning and persecution for their activities, literary and political. For example, Phil du Plessis was called in to the notorious John Vorster Square police headquarters in Johannesburg for interrogation by the Special Branch (of the police force, that is, the political police) and warned to dissociate himself from people like those linked to the magazine. As examples of what he was supposed to dissociate himself from, he was confronted with the first two issues of *Izwi* that he had co-edited.⁸⁸ The magazine also ran into political difficulties at the outset when Oswald Mtshali had to withdraw from being the editor “in control of contributions by black writers”, owing to “extra-literary pressure”.⁸⁹ Don Mattera was an early contributor until his banning, as was Jeremy Cronin until his imprisonment for seven years on charges of ‘terrorism’.

In addition to the *Wurm* group, the many contributors to other literary magazines appeared in the pages of *Izwi*: Robert Greig, Barney Simon, Wopko Jensma, Robert Berold, Sheila Fugard, Sheila Roberts, Sinclair Beiles, Douglas Livingstone plus Welma Odendaal, Njabulo Ndebele, Karel Schoeman, Mbulelo Mzamane and Lukas Malan.

This does not tell us that the pool of writers then was a small one as much as it suggests that there was in fact a great deal of literary-related activity going on, and that these productive people were sending material to many magazines at much the same time. This in turn suggests that there was development, consolidation, a process of selection and the interchange of energies with dramatists, musicians, artists and educationists. I think that Graham Pechey is correct when he characterises the cultural events of the 1970s, especially in poetry and theatre, as “a mass phenomenon of huge proportions, every bit as worthy of our awe as its culmination in the uprising of 1976”.⁹⁰ Though Pechey’s remark sounds like a deliberate politicisation of the period, he is probably correct in what he says. The magazines referred to in this discussion are the polite and white-dominated (as with publishing) end of a very wide spectrum of literary and cultural activity during the period in question. And the entire spectrum has yet to find its Newton to describe and narrate it.

The second notable element of *Izwi* is the large amount of space accorded to translations of poems. And this is also a question about one culture and its relations with others. *The Classic* devoted two issues early in its life to translations of French African writing (vol 2 no 2, 1966) and writing from Mocambique (vol 1 no 3, 1964). *The Classic*’s emphasis was upon African writing, not European. In addition to translations from a wide range of European languages into English and Afrikaans, *Izwi* included some translations from Shona and Owambo, and published Portuguese and Zulu poetry translated into English, printed as parallel texts. This seems a particularly appropriate policy in a multilingual country such as South Africa. *Izwi* 8 (February 1973), for example, a powerful issue devoted to translation, published German, Italian, Spanish, ancient Greek and Irish poems into Afrikaans, and Italian, modern Greek, Anglo-Saxon and French poetry into English. Once again, the matter of translations in South African literary history is an area for research.

DONGA AND INSPAN

In that momentous year in South African history, 1976, Welma Odendaal announced to the delegates at the Afrikaanse Skrywersgilde Annual conference in Broederstroom that a new literary magazine, called *Donga*, would be launched.

Writing about that magazine in 1980, Odendaal said that for many South African writers, magazines such as *New Coin*, *Bolt*, *Ophir* and *Purple Renoster* “smacked of exclusiveness: certainly none of them attempted to provide a forum for all writers of this country, regardless of culture or language”.⁹¹ Therefore, *Donga* was to be open to all writers, especially young writers:

...from the beginning [we] declared openly that we thought that established and much-publicized writers had had their time of it ...[and]...we secretly thought that they had made a hash of what they *did* have at their disposal: we did not want their sober, moderate views in *our* magazine.⁹²

At first glance, this is about as juvenile as it gets. Who is the ‘we’? According to Lionel Abrahams, *Donga* was co-edited by Peter Wilhelm (then the chair of the Writers and Artists Guild of South Africa) and members of the Afrikaanse Skrywersgilde.⁹³ Welma Odendaal describes the origins of the magazine as emerging from a proposal by herself and Rosa Keet to a group of young Afrikaans writers in the home of Willem van Rooyen, among whom were Wilma Stockenström (an ex-editor of *Izwi*), Johan de Jager, Piet Haasbroek, John Miles (ex-editor of *Kol*), Ampie Coetzee and Ernst Lindenberg.⁹⁴ Haasbroek was eventually asked to leave the editorial board of *Donga* after he had declared on national television that *Donga* was linked to the Afrikaanse Skrywersgilde, a body, said Odendaal in 1980, “which we had until then so openly opposed (and would continue to oppose)”. Having repudiated Haasbroek in *Donga* 3 (November 1976), Odendaal and Keet invited Peter Strauss from Natal and Mbulelo Mzamane, then in Botswana, to make up a four-person editorial board with them.⁹⁵

Donga’s career was a stormy one, running to eight issues before it was banned outright and forever under legislation that decreed that if three individual issues of a magazine were banned, then the magazine as a whole would be prohibited.

Issue 4 challenged conventional approaches to the teaching of literature, saying “to hell with Europe and Western culture”, asserting that educational institutions should teach African literature for Africans.⁹⁶ Nearly all of the 700 copies printed sold out. Seven months later this issue was banned, after two further issues of the magazine had appeared. The sixth issue (April 1977) announced the liaison between *Donga* and the black writers’ group Medupe, then led by Duma Ndlovu and Mthobi Mutloatse, an organisation banned in 1977 along with black-run newspapers and many cultural groups. Then in April 1978, after eight issues, *Donga* was finally prohibited⁹⁷ despite the care taken by the editors to preserve it as an outlet for “writers who were experiencing the increasing difficulty of having controversial political work printed in any form”.⁹⁸

In her review of *Donga* in the first issue of its successor, *Inspan*, Isabel Hofmeyr pointed out that in spite of the initial predominance of Afrikaans, the magazine “developed beyond this language barrier” and acted as “a vital and creative forum for a broad cross section of South African writing and criticism”.⁹⁹

She also noted that the issues that were banned (4, 7 and 8) were the ones that carried the most black contributions.¹⁰⁰ These issues had been banned for, among other factors, “inciting and inflammatory language”, “attacks upon the police and those who uphold law and order”, “representations of breaking the law against immorality [inter-racial sex]”, “the use of foul language”, and “improper or indecent descriptions of the sexual act”.¹⁰¹

Among the reasons for banning *Donga* outright was the Publications Control Board’s view that

The publishers of *Donga* are apparently willing to publish anything without alteration as long as it offers, according to them, a literary contribution. This means that material that is immoral, indecent, abhorrent, contemptible and offensive could well appear in the future – regardless of the Law ... It can be added that any literary merit which this magazine might possess – and the Committee is not deeply persuaded of such merit in this issue – does not counterbalance the undesirable elements which have been described above.¹⁰²

The Publications Control Board also responded to an assertion in *Donga* 7, about the ability of poetry to elude censorship, by saying that “black writers continue to produce undesirable material, and when it is declared undesirable [and hence prohibited] it has been distributed already”.¹⁰³ Hofmeyr remarked that from then on, poetry could no longer be regarded as a “safe medium”.¹⁰⁴ It never was, really.

Finally, it is worth noting Odendaal’s angry observation from 1980, after going through the *Donga* files at the National English Literary Museum in Grahamstown:

To the ones who had their work returned time and time again, to the ones who wrote and sent reams of lyrical lovesongs, odes to dead poets, praise poetry for ethnic leaders, and never received a reply from us, one can only say that we felt, in the words of the Brazilian poet Manuel Bandeira, “I don’t want to hear any more about lyricism that has nothing to do with liberation”.¹⁰⁵

It was with contributions originally sent to *Donga* that Odendaal and Hofmeyr “scraped together what resources we could and started a new literary magazine, *Inspan* [in 1978], in which attention was shifted to critical work”.¹⁰⁶

The name, as something of a joke, was taken from a white worker-oriented magazine of the 1940s that gloried “the newly ‘discovered’ tool, Afrikaner culture, with which to enforce Afrikaner nationalism”.¹⁰⁷ The first issue carried a deliberate introduction by Etienne Leroux, the well-respected novelist whose *Magersfontein, O Magersfontein!* had been banned in 1976. He was one of the very few established Afrikaner writers to support *Inspan*:

It is not at all strange that I, a non-political writer ... support Welma enthusiastically when she makes the point in her letter to me: “Perhaps this is why I believe there ought to be space as well for political writing; that we must accommodate points of view other than those of the so-called official literature. This is perhaps why I do it, to go on with another publication despite the risk”¹⁰⁸

The first issue of *Inspan* contained articles on freedom of speech, literature from the Biafran war, papers from AUETSA and Skrywersgilde conferences, a brief history of the black press with emphasis upon the recently banned *The World* newspaper, a discussion of ‘digger’ literature on the Rand in the late 19th century, literary criticism and African literature, rugby, and an interview with a black journalist. All very normal areas of interest in South Africa, one would think.

It also carried four short stories and work by twenty-three poets in Afrikaans and English. And it included reviews of an anthology of short stories in Afrikaans, the new *Staffrider* (banned), J M Coetzee’s novel *In the Heart of the Country*, the history of *Donga* (banned) and a satirical discussion of a purported twelve-volume work that had taken the reviewer three years to read!

What *Inspan* was quietly asserting was a certain kind of firm normality in the teeth of a society ruled by increasingly repressive authority. This was the end of B J Vorster's rule and the beginning of that by P W Botha. This magazine, proceeding essentially from an Afrikaner perspective, but one that had liberated itself from grotesque claims of language, culture and nationalism, asserted a quiet reality that challenged deeply the shrill and bogus moral strictures beloved of church, state and security apparatus. The terrain occupied by *Inspan* was that taken up earlier and in solitary fashion by Wopko Jensma.

It was in fact with two long poems in Afrikaans and one in English by Jensma that the second issue of *Inspan* opened. And this magazine represents, with an aching desire for confirmation, the need for an identity beyond race, language and culture in the terms that apartheid so insistently and crudely invoked.

This issue of *Inspan* contained a strong collection of material that covered articles on literature (a novel by Heaton Nicholls and Fugard's *Boesman and Lena*), a debate between Ampie Coetzee and one of his critics, a discussion of social history and literature, and an interview with the Benoni meat inspector and dramaturge Johan Blignaut. Of particular note is the letter from Elize Botha – of the Afrikaner cultural and political establishment – in reply to a letter from the editors of *Inspan*. She comments that there is room for *Inspan* among other magazines, particularly because it creates opportunity for writers from 'different groups' to work together, and for readers to get to know a wide spectrum of writers and critical positions.¹⁰⁹

Once again, there is this yearning for interchange beyond the narrow confines of the self as defined by raving ideologues.

In this issue, however there are few black contributors among the writers of the twelve short stories and the sixteen poets. Yes, Mutloatse (of Medupe) rubs printed shoulders with Jan Rabie, who rubs textual shoulders with Stephen Gray. But this had been happening in literary journals since the appearance of *The Purple Renoster* in 1956. The difference now was that the question of race had been superseded by other differences, differences that opened up much bigger questions about the self, culture and identity and the future political dispensation in South Africa.

The question was no longer the pursuit of an equal society, but the achievement of a just and liberated society, incorporating access to political power by all in South Africa. In a curious way, the situation had become that where *Wurm* began, before it imploded. Though *Wurm* had no political or social programme, it sought to use the European avant-garde in its quest to assert radical alternatives to the narrow and repressive society of which its editors were part. But it never envisaged real social or cultural change and its quest was to provide a mere avenue for alternative kinds of cultural thinking. This magazine eventually lost its South African constituency and hence its reason for being.

Inspan, on the other hand, was determined to create opportunity for political expression and was sent to the same oblivion by the state that *Donga* was consigned to. This time,

Isabel Hofmeyr was prosecuted, unsuccessfully, two years later (1980) for her role in preparing an undesirable publication, the second issue of *Inspan*.¹¹⁰

The arrival of P W Botha as head of state meant that from 1979 onwards, until his dislodgement by F W de Klerk in 1989, South Africa would go through ten years of turmoil, undergoing conflict that it had in fact already undergone. The spirit behind literary journals, student movements, teacher organisations, the churches and that most remarkable conglomeration of oppositional organisations, the United Democratic Front, all of whom were acting in place of the political parties and movements that were prohibited, were saying that there had to be a shift in power from the white elite to all the people of South Africa. Nothing else would suffice.

By 1983 (a large jump from 1978, the year of the final number of *Inspan*), black writers were no longer contributing to magazines like Lionel Abrahams's *Sesame* or to the annual publication, *Quarry*, that began in the year of *Ophir*'s closure, 1976, and folded in 1983, the last issue of which was edited by Walter Saunders. By then the political and literary terrain had changed immeasurably from that of 1967 and these kinds of publications could not feed into broader concerns of the writing or reading public.

The period under discussion in this article ends with noting the emergence of *Staffrider* in 1978¹¹¹, the re-emergence of PEN South Africa, and its disintegration in 1981.¹¹²

CONCLUSION

The journals reviewed in this paper demonstrate a number of shifts in the poetic centre of gravity in the Pretoria-Johannesburg region between the years 1956 and 1978.

A most powerful aspect of these shifts was the range of places where poets could publish in the confidence that their voices would not have to conform to notions of acceptability and respectability as prescribed by universities and cultural watchdogs.

In being so bold (it being too their reason for existence), literary magazines challenged taboos and other constraints upon the thinkable and the sayable. Even though the publications remained in white hands, for example, work by black poets became an increasingly forceful presence until the locus of attention shifted from Afrikaans and English South African writers to the productions of black African writers in South Africa.

The European avant-garde remained a tantalising basis upon which to experiment for many writers, but only a few could sustain the use of its resources effectively in an African context. Black poets seemed little interested in such experimentation except in finding means to express their understanding of experience in their own terms. Though modernism came into Afrikaans literature at the beginning of the sixties, it did not emerge in English literature until the late 1960s. And most South African writers were rigorously schooled in what were essentially pre-modern literary forms. *Ophir* (1967) might be regarded as a vehicle for the introduction of modernism into South African

poetry in English, and Serote's long poem, *No Baby Must Weep* (1974) is an early example of the sustained use of modernist techniques in local poetry.

Political writing in these magazines went through a number of transmutations. These ranged from satire, aimed at those wielding repressive power, to the use of the self as the subject of injustice and humiliation. Later came assertions of resistance rather than protest and then demands for the transfer of power from a corrupt minority to the outraged majority of citizens. And in this environment, poetry and other literary magazines did not only cease after their normally brief lives. Numbers were banned and stamped out as the intensity of the conflict within the country increased. Of course, certain magazines sailed serenely on. And other survived by means of highly unusual ways of evading the force of the law.

Now all this was part of the street: city, suburb and township. In no organised sense did departments of universities, Faculties of Arts or the Humanities, or the collective wisdom of senates play any part at all in the profound literary aspects of the cultural struggle being waged. Even those departments that taught local languages and literatures from course one to doctoral level played no discernible role in breaking out of the predetermined moulds into which their stances towards language and literature in society had been set. Gradually, Departments of English (many with undisguised reluctance) began to acknowledge the reality of South African literature in English. Precisely when and how this occurred in the twenty-one universities and multitudinous colleges is an account yet to be compiled.

But now young people do encounter local poetry by all South Africans as a normal part of their education. The revised Curriculum 2005 will expose young learners to many local and international forms of cultural expression, and to cultural practices of the past and the present, both marginal and mainstream, as an integral dimension to the general curriculum. And that will include many forms of literary production and expression in relation to other arts.

One further understanding that attention to literary magazines from the period in question has raised is how harmful and dangerous it is to place a label upon an era. There are those, for example, who give credence to the notion of the 'silent sixties'. This is a fundamentally inaccurate description, especially in the geographical area under discussion. Such a label also ignores cultural forms apart from the written and regards the period from the point of view of the dominant group at that time. Labels such as these colonise the past.

There is no doubt that the period covered by this paper is under-researched. There is a rich residue of material and information to be had, and students of South African literature should be encouraged to find it and explore it.

NOTES

1. D H Lawrence. 1923. Studies in Classic American Literature. New York: Thomas Seltzer.
2. See Michael Chapman. 1996. Southern African Literatures. London: Longman, p. 455.
3. Ridley Beeton. 'New Voices: Some Contemporary South African Poets and their Work.' Unisa English Studies 4, November 1968, pp. 71-72.
4. Stephen Gray. 'A Critical Approach to English South African Literature'. Paper delivered at the AUETSA Conference, 11 January 1975. Published in Inspan, vol 1 no 1 (1978) pp. 43-52.
5. Unisa English Studies 3, August 1967. Anniversary Issue, pp. 3-4. At this stage, the Bulletin had a circulation of some 4,500 students, fifty public and university libraries (local and overseas) plus an increasing circle of other readers.
6. Unisa English Studies 2, June 1968 to 4, November 1968.
Ridley Beeton. 'New Voices: Some Contemporary South African Poets and their Work'. Op. cit.
Ridley Beeton. 1966. 'From Cape to Zambezi: The Development of South African Poetry from Thomas Pringle to the Present Day.' Radio broadcast. SABC English Programme.
D R Beeton & W D Maxwell-Mahon. 1966. South African Poetry: A Critical Anthology. Pretoria: University of South Africa, C.65.
7. Unisa English Studies 2, June 1968, p. 24. Poets referred to were: Edith King, Cythna Letty, Ruth Miller, Adèle Naudé, Perseus Adams, Sydney Clouts, Lola Watter, Michael Macnamara, Helen Segal, Geoffrey Haresnape, Eva Bezwoda, A R D Dey, Walter Saunders, Margaret Allonby, Anne Welsh, Jill King, Cathal Lagan, Thelma Tyfield and Peter Horn, plus comments on some anthologies of verse and poetry magazines, including Wurm and Ophir.
8. Unisa English Studies 2, May 1969 to 2, June 1970.
9. Unisa English Studies 2, May 1969, p. 55.
10. Ibid., p. 63.
11. W D Maxwell-Mahon. 'Voices in the Wilderness: A Comment on South African Verse.' Unisa English Studies 2, May 1969, pp. 75-76. The reference is to Jack Cope & Uys Krige. 1968. The Penguin Book of South African Verse. Harmondsworth: Penguin. Also known as the 'Apartheid Book of S A Verse' subsequent to the contemporaneous review in the Sunday Times by Peter Rodda, because of the ways in which the poetry was divided up into racial and linguistic categories.
12. W D Maxwell-Mahon & Ridley Beeton. Foreword. Unisa English Studies vol VIII no 3, September 1970.
13. Could it have been Livingstone's "The proper Pursuit/for a Gentleman remains to master/the Art of Delaying his Orgasms" (Giovanni Jacopo Meditates), and/or Clouts's "English forest/of silver birchtrees/where sparrows tingle and nobody white/or black lies battered/to death for a policy./ or not as yet" (Wat die Hart van Vol Is), or could I have missed something?
14. John Povey. Report on the English Academy's special conference. Research in African Literatures vol 1 no 1, Spring 1970.
15. Lionel Abrahams (Libra). 'This Hurts Me More Than You.' The Purple Renoster 4, Summer 1960, p 30.
16. Ibid. p. 34.
17. Lionel Abrahams (V S Dett). 'New Coin Poetry (The First 14 Numbers) 1965-1968'. English Studies in Africa vol 12, 1969, p. 67.
18. David Bunyan (ed.) 1989. 25/25. Twenty Five Years of English South African Poetry: An Anthology Selected from New Coin Poetry 1965-1989. Grahamstown: ISEA, pp iii-iv.
19. Sheila Fugard. Letter to Walter Saunders (editor of Ophir), 17 August 1975.
20. Ken Owen. 'No English Future' In Francis Faller (ed.) Proceedings of the Silver Jubilee Conference of the English Academy of South Africa. University of the Witwatersrand, September 1986, p. 81.
Peter Horn. 'Freeing the Word: Struggles Against Linguistic Controls in Our Society'. In Faller op. cit. pp. 86-88.
21. Peter Horn. 'A Poet at Every Street Corner or Grow Onions Instead of Laurels.' Wurm 9, July 1968, p 121.
22. Lionel Abrahams. 'The Purple Renoster: An Adolescence.' English in Africa, vol 7 no 2, September 1980. This issue of English in Africa also covers accounts by their editors of the following literary magazines: Contrast, Staffrider, Voorslag, The Touleier, Donga, The Classic, New Classic, S'ketsh and The Bloody Horse.
23. Michael Gardiner. 'Lionel and the Renoster.' In G Friedman & R Blumenthal (eds.) 1998. Writer in

- Stone. Cape Town; David Philip, pp. 43-49.
24. Ibid., p. 44.
 25. "The Purple Renoster introduced to South African readers... Riva Rubin, Rose Moss, David Farrell, Gillain Becker, Eva Bezwoda, Robert Royston, Yvonne Burgess, Wally Serote, Arthur Nortje, Jeni Couzyn, Rose Zwi, Cecil Helman, Ahmed Essop and Sinclair Beiles." Abrahams. Op. cit. p. 46.
 26. See the account of this in Abrahams. 'The Purple Renoster: An Adolescence'.
 27. For commentary by Mike Kirkwood and Lionel Abrahams on this, see 'From Shakespeare House to the Laager: The Story of PEN (Johannesburg).' Sesame 3, Summer 1983/4, pp.5-19.
 28. Barney Simon. 'My Years with The Classic: A Note.' English in Africa vol 7 no 2, September 1980, p. 75.
 29. Tim Couzens. 'Black Poetry in Africa.' In P Wilhelm & J Polley (eds.) 1976. Poetry South Africa: Selected Papers from Poetry '74. Johannesburg: Donker, pp. 50-51.
 30. The Classic vol 1 no 1, 1963, p. 4.
 31. Robert 'Mshengu' Kavanagh. 1981. 'Introduction.' South African People's Plays. London: Verso, p. xiv.
 32. David Coplan. 1985. In Township Tonight! London: Longman, p. 203.
 33. Athol Fugard, in David Coplan. Op. cit., p. 209.
 34. Barney Simon. 'Dumile.' The Classic vol 2 no 4, 1968, pp. 40-43, plus photographs of Dumile and his work.
 35. Christina Jileko. 'The De Beers Centenary Art Gallery.' Optima vol 39 no 1, May 1993, pp. 34-41. See Walter Battiss. 'A New African Art in South Africa.' Optima vol 17 no 1, March 1967, pp. 18-30.
 36. Barney Simon. Editorial. The Classic vol 1 no 4, 1965.
 37. Phil du Plessis. 'Memoire tot Oriëntasie: origins requiem vir 'n dooie wurm.' Contrast 24, vol 6 no 4, October 1970, pp. 30-41.
 38. R Pheiffer. 'Die Taalbewegings en die Letterkunde voor 1900.' In E Lindenberg (ed.) 1980. Inleiding tot die Afrikaanse Letterkunde. Pretoria en Kaapstad: Academica, p. 26.
 39. Phil du Plessis. Op. cit., p. 31.
 40. Ibid.
 41. See Achmat Davids. 'The Role of Afrikaans in the History of the Cape Muslim Community.' In Hans du Plessis & Theo du Plessis (eds.) 1987. Afrikaans en Taalpolitiek. Kaapstad: HAUM, pp. 37-59.
 42. P P Brits. 'Brief.' Wurm 2, August 1966, pp. 36-40.
 43. J Weverbergh. 'Brief uit Vlaanderen aan de Zuidafrikaans Fila-Avant-Gardisten.' Wurm 3, September 1966, pp. 13-18. Peter Horn has a satirical essay on the avant-garde in the same number of Wurm, pp. 49-53.
 44. Wurm 12, February 1970. Peter Wilhelm, who joined the Wurm editorial board in 1968, in consequence of an article he wrote for News/Check on what he then regarded as the magazine's outdated aesthetic, argues today that "reliance on the tenets dating back to the Dadaists, et al, still strikes me as an aesthetic retreat". (E-mail to Gardiner, January 03, 2001).
 45. See the extract from Dr Verwoerd's speech quoted by W A de Klerk. 'Die Letterkunde van Behoud.' Wurm 9, July 1968, p.1. See too the comments on the antagonism between N P Van Wyk Louw and Dr Verwoerd over the issue of "the nation". Jack Cope. 1982. The Adversary Within: Dissident Writers in Afrikaans. Cape Town: David Philip. Cope's understanding of these issues is a limited one.
 46. Phil du Plessis. Op. cit. p. 36.
 47. Kol(1968) might be regarded as even more trapped in its own world as it did not really engage with black writers, and was an exclusively Afrikaans magazine.
 48. Wopko Jensma. '8 Koda's.' Wurm 2, August 1966, p. 22.
 49. See Wurm 5 to 10, ? 1967 to November 1968, and Ophir 1 to 7, May 1967 to December 1968.
 50. Ridley Beeton. Letter to Macnamara, 9 August 1965.
 51. Walter Saunders. Letter to Gardiner, 28 June 1998.
 52. Michael Macnamara. Letter to Horn, 26 January 1967.
 53. Rubric to Ophir 1, May 1967.
 54. The Star, 22 May 1967, Letters from Horn to Saunders, 5 February 1967, 17 February 1967, 3 May 1967.
 55. Walter Saunders. Letter to Gardiner, 19 December 1998.
 56. Wilhelm Knobel. 'Elegie vir 3 Pasdraers.' Ophir 11, April 1970, pp. 8-9.

57. Peter Horn. Letter to Saunders, 9 August 1969.
58. *Ophir* 18, November 1973, p.14.
59. Peter Horn. Letter to Saunders, 22 February 1966.
60. Michael Gardiner. "'Onder Ander": Wopko Jensma's Poetry in Afrikaans.' *English Studies in Africa*, vol 40 no 2, 1997, pp. 44-56.
61. Sinclair Beiles. Letter. *Wurm* 11, April 1969, p. 117. He refers to Macnamara's poem in *Wurm* 10, November 1968, p.56.
62. Michael Macnamara. 'Eroica.' *Ophir* 3, November 1967, pp. 4-5.
63. Mafika Gwala. 'Tracing the Steps.' *Matatu* 3/4 1988, p. 2.
64. Peter Horn. 1977. 'The Psychological Pauperization of Man in Our Society.' In L Abrahams & W Saunders (eds.) *Quarry '77*. Johannesburg: Donker, pp 111-121.
- Jacques Alvarez-Pereyre. 1984. *The Poetry of Commitment in South Africa*. London: Heinemann.
- Michael Chapman. 1984. *South African English Poetry: A Modern Perspective*. Jhb: Donker.
- Michael Gardiner. 1985. 'Funking the Jive: The Poetry of Wopko Jensma.' *The English Academy Review* 3, pp. 109-125.
- Michael Gardiner. 1987. 'Self and Circumstance: A Note on Wopko Jensma's Poetry.' *Theoria* 69, May, pp. 53-57.
- Michael Gardiner. 1990. 'The Real Substance of Nightmare: The Struggle of Poetry with History.' *New Contrast* 72, pp. 58-72.
- Phil du Plessis & Michael Gardiner. Exchange of letters. *New Contrast* 73, pp. 95-96.
- Michael Gardiner. 2000. 'Looking for Wopko Jensma.' *Mail & Guardian* March 10 to 16 2000.
65. Wopko Jensma. 'Blues 2.' *Ophir* 2, August 1967, p. 1.
66. Peter Horn. Letter to Saunders, 10 October 1966.
67. It is worth noting the extent to which *The Classic*, *Wurm*, *Ophir* and *Izwi* published poetry in languages other than English and Afrikaans, but how little appeared in local African languages.
68. W Saunders & P Horn (eds.) 1974. *It's Gettin Late*. Johannesburg; Ravan.
69. Dollar Brand. 'Africa, Music and Show Business.' *The Classic* vol 2 no 3, 1967, pp. 34-38.
70. Wopko Jensma. 1973. 'A Twelve Tone for Dollar Brand.' *Sing for Our Execution*. Johannesburg: Ravan, pp. 111-118.
71. Mike Kirkwood. 'The Colonizer: A Critique of South African Cultural Theory.' In P Wilhelm & J Polley. 1976. *Poetry South Africa: Selected Papers from Poetry '74*. Johannesburg: Donker, pp. 102-133.
72. Michael Chapman. Chronology. *Southern African Literatures*. London: Longman, p. 462.
73. Walter Saunders. 1976. Introduction. *Quarry '76: New South African Writing*. Johannesburg: Donker, p. 8.
74. Lionel Abrahams. *Ibid.*
75. Ad Donker. *Ibid.* p. 7.
76. Walter Saunders (ed). 1983. *Quarry '80-'82: New South African Writing*. Johannesburg: Donker. pp. 5-6.
77. Walter Saunders. *Ibid.* p.7.
78. *Kol* vol 1, no 1, August 1968. Rubric.
79. Breyten Breytenbach. 'Klad, Teiken of Skimmelvlek?' *Kol* 1, pp. 8-13.
80. *Kol* 2, responses to Breytenbach by Etienne le Roux, A J Coetzee and Adam Small.
81. *Kol* 1, p. 31.
82. *Kol* 7, May 1969, pp. 1-9.
83. *Kol* 4, November-December 1968, p. 32.
84. *Ibid.* p.31.
85. See the account of this magazine in Stephen Gray. 'Death of a Little Magazine.' *Contrast* 42, vol 11 no 2, April 1977, pp. 43-49.
86. *Izwi* vol 1 no 1 p.4.
87. *Ibid.*
88. Stephen Gray. *Op. cit.* p. 45.
89. *Ibid.* p.5.
90. Graham Pechey. "'Cultural Struggle" and the Narratives of South African Freedom.' In E Boehmer, L Chrisman & Kenneth Parker. 1994. *Altered State? Writing and South Africa*. Sydney: Dangaroo Press p. 32.

91. Welma Odendaal. 'Donga: One Angry Voice'. English in Africa vol 7 no 2, September 1980, p.68.
92. Ibid. p. 69.
93. Lionel Abrahams. 'From Shakespeare House to the Laager: The Story of PEN (Johannesburg)'. Sesame 3, Summer 1983/4, p. 5.
94. Welma Odendaal. Op. cit. p. 69.
95. Ibid. p. 71.
96. Ibid.
97. Ibid. pp. 71-2.
98. Ibid. p. 73.
99. Isabel Hofmeyr. 'Beyond the Barriers.' Inspan vol 1 no 1, (1978), p. 168.
100. Ibid.
101. Ibid. p. 70.
102. Ibid. pp 169-170.
103. Ibid. p. 170.
104. Ibid.
105. Welma Odendaal. Op. cit. p. 74.
106. Ibid.
107. Ibid.
108. Etienne Leroux. 'Voorwoord/Preface'. Inspan vol 1 no 1, p. 1.
109. Elize Botha. 'Brief Aan Inspan.' Inspan vol 1 no 2, October 1978, p. 74.
110. Welma Odendaal. Op. cit. p. 74.
111. Mike Kirkwood. 'Remembering Staffrider.' In Andries Oliphant & Ivan Vladislavia (eds). 1988. Ten Years of Staffrider 1978 – 1988. Johannesburg: Ravan, pp. 1–9. See also the interviews with Chris Van Wyk (pp. 165–170) and Njabulo Ndebele (pp. 341–346) in the same publication.
- 112 Lionel Abrahams. '>From Shakespeare house to the Laager: The Story of PEN (Johannesburg)'. Op. cit. pp. 5-19.

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