How and why the Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education became a secular institution

A personal analysis

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Samevatting

Hoe en waarom die Potchefstroomse Universiteit vir Christelike Hoër Onderwys 'n gesekulariseerde instelling geword het; 'n persoonlike analise

Hierdie artikel (die verwerkte teks van 'n lang lesing op 25/05/2013 by 'n konferensie van die International Association for the Promotion of Christian Higher Education te Grand Rapids, VSA gelewer) is die tweede in 'n reeks van vier. Die vorige bydrae was 'n agtergrondsskets oor internasionalisering binne die Afrika-konteks. Verder is besin oor wat 'n Christelike beoefening van die wetenskap inhou, asook wat 'n instelling (universiteit of kollege) vir Christelike hoër (tersiêre) onderwys behoort te beteken. As 'n oorgang tot hierdie artikel is ook vermeld – as waarskuwing vir ander soortgelyke Christelike instellings in Afrika en elders in die wêreld – dat dit belangrik is om in die huidige artikel na te gaan waarom en hoe die destydse Potchefstroomse Universiteit vir Christelike Hoër

Onderwys (PU vir CHO) geleidelik gesekulariseer geraak, sy "van" (vir Christelike Hoër Onderwys) prysgegee het en tans bloot as die Noord-Wes Universiteit bekend staan.

Die opset van hierdie artikel is soos volg: (1) Ter inleiding word kortliks gesê waarom die vraag hoe die PU vir CHO gesekulariseer is ook vir die res van die kontinent relevant is. (2) Verder word gestel dat wat hier oor die PU vir CHO geskryf word oor 'n instelling en (omstrede) sake handel en nie op individuele persone gemik is nie. (3) Dan volg iets oor die skrywer se eie akademiese pelgrimstog (waarin hy 'n breë koninkryksvisie op die lewe ontdek het) asook sy uitgangspunte met die doel om die daaropvolgende kritiek op die PU vir CHO vir die leser verstaanbaar te maak. (4) Vervolgens word aangetoon hoe verskillende Christelike lewensvisies 'n bepalende invloed op 'n mens se standpunt oor Christelike onderwys en wetenskap het. (5) Hierdie gedeelte word opgevolg met 'n verduideliking van die metode wat die skrywer gebruik het om die sekulêre gees van die tyd te probeer peil, naamlik 'n benadering vanuit die invloed van huidige, kragtige ideologieë. (6) Hoe hierdie verskillende dominante ideologieë ook ons Suid-Afrikaanse onderwysbestel, beïnvloed, word vervolgens aangetoon. (7) Nadat 'n lys van die belangrikste hedendaagse ideologieë, wat die proses van sekularisering aandryf, gegee is (8) beskryf die skrywer eers kortliks sy ervaring aan een oorsese en twee Suid-Afrikaanse universiteite. (9) Die res van die artikel verdeel die geskiedenis van die PU vir CHO (vanaf ongeveer 1974 tot hede) in hoofsaaklik drie periodes onder verskillende bestuurderspanne en toon aan hoe die proses van sekularisering geleidelik toegeneem en die Christelike oriëntasie van die PU vir CHO vernietig het.

1. Introduction: the wider relevance of this investigation

For various reasons prominent Western Christian-oriented institutions of the past were secularised. Every one of these histories is unique. What was unique about Potchefstroom's history that it can be of relevance to other, younger Christian educational institutions in Africa?

My brief answer is the following: (1) The PU was an institution on *African soil*. (2) It was not a fly-by-night but it had a *long history*. (3) It intended to offer – like the International Association for the Promotion of Christian Higher

Education (IAPCHE) – *integral* Christian scholarship and not simply a biblical "add-on" on top of secular scholarship. (4) For many years it existed – like many African universities – in isolation from the rest of the world, but was nevertheless also *influenced* from outside. (5) Similar to the way in which many African countries struggle with ethnicism and tribalism (cf. Turaki, 1997), Potchefstroom was also influenced by *white racism*. (5) If writers about traditional African culture are correct, certain of its characteristics (like its worldliness, anthropocentric and pragmatic tendencies – cf. Van der Walt, 2003:218-276) *make it susceptible* to very similar Western viewpoints. (6) My last motivation is that, apart from the PU, I *personally* do not have an extended, detailed experience of how a Christian institution may become secularised.

2. Not about persons but about issues and an institution

For the sake of preventing the danger of being totally misunderstood, the following remarks are important. Every story is a subjective story of one's own experience – others may relate the same history in a completely different way. Writing history (cf. Wells, 1989:5-8) is never neutral but influenced by one's own presuppositions and prejudices. There even is the risk of being judgemental and blaming others who have different opinions; of painting a black and white picture assuming that oneself – especially with the advantage of the hindsight of the last ten years – could have done a better job. A Xhosa proverb says that the Cape polecat (mongoose) is not aware of its own terrible smell!

2.1 Not *ad hominem* but *ad rem*

My aim is definitely not to "wash local dirty laundry" in front of an international audience. Telling the history of an institution, one cannot exclude the people who were involved. But the issue here is not about other *people*, but what happened to the *PU for CHE* because of different ideological powers. My critique on the PU will not be directed *ad hominem* but *ad rem*. Therefore, I will not even mention the names of specific leaders, but will write about different "periods" or "regimes" since the presidents of the previous PU were assisted by managerial teams. (To elicit some responses, the original paper, reworked in this series of articles, was prior to the IAPCHE conference in May 2013 also delivered on 20/02/2013 at a public colloquium of the School of Philosophy and the electronic text made available to all who so requested.)

On the one hand one should have sympathy with the leaders of the PU since they had to steer it through the difficult period of transition from apartheid to democracy (1994) and beyond. On the other hand I am convinced that what they have done was strongly influenced by non-Christian ideas. And (in the previous article) we have already indicated that ideological ideas are not impotent, but have visible, concrete implications. Christ already reminded us that each tree can be recognised by its own fruits (cf. Luke 6:43-45 and Matthew 7:15-20). From its fruits (implications) one can identify a hidden ideology and vice versa: knowing an ideology one can predict to some degree what its consequences will be.

2.2 Forgiveness?

You may ask: "But is the task of a Christian not to forgive and forget the past?" My reply is positive but does not exclude criticism. Let me answer you in the words of Volf (2011:110):

To forgive is to do two things at once: first it is to name a suffered wrong as wrong. To forgive isn't to deny or overlook the wrongdoing but rather to condemn it. No forgiveness without condemnation. But if condemnation is a necessary preparation for forgiveness, the heart of forgiveness is something else. So to forgive is, second, not to let the wrongdoing count against the wrongdoer. He deserves punishment, but he gets the opposite. He gets grace.

Volf also adds that forgiveness as a gift must be received in order to be truly given, but does not necessarily depend on the repentance of the wrongdoer. Forgiveness is not a reward for repentance, but as a gift it may help to receive it by repenting. Forgiveness first and then repentance!

2.3 Protest

You may also wonder how it was possible that the PU for CHE got secularised in such a short time. Was there no resistance? The attached bibliography therefore also includes sources (e.g. Van der Walt, 2010c:296-302) indicating that the secularisation of the Potchefstroom University (PU) was not simply accepted by everyone on campus. (Apart from many fruitless meetings, published works and also letters to management were available.) Till today many post mortems and in memoriae continue (cf. Froneman & Swanepoel, 2009 and Froneman, 2012).

3. A personal academic pilgrimage and final stance

Some detail from my own academic itinerary will explain my personal evaluation of what has occurred at the PU and is occurring worldwide today.

3.1 Hoping to become a minister of religion

My teachers at primary school told me I should become an engineer. I know my father would have preferred me to follow him as a farmer. My beloved grandfather wanted me to become a minister of religion. His suggestion finally convinced me. As a young man, I believed that the only way to be in the full-time service of God was to become a missionary.

3.1.1 The original meaning of being a church

In those early years I did not realise that I was the captive of a dangerous, dualistic worldview. When Paul in his letters addresses the "churches" in various places he was not speaking to a group of people who meet on Sundays at various places in Potchefstroom or Grand Rapids. Rather he addressed the *ecclesia*, a *community* of people who have been called out from the darkness of paganism to form a *new society*. This new society or community confessed with its mouth and believed with its heart that Jesus is Lord.

> *It is a community, therefore, that stoutly refuses its interests and activities to so-called spiritual matters, theological doctrine, or Sunday religion; on the contrary, it aims to subject all dimensions of practical, everyday life to the Kingdom rule of Jesus Christ, twenty four hours a day, seven days a week: Jesus is Lord! Jesus is Lord of all! (Van Dyk, 1986:60).*

3.1.2 Two derailments

Unfortunately very soon in the history of Christianity two regrettable developments occurred. First, a growing loss of the all-encompassing Kingdom vision and, secondly, the identification of God's kingdom with the institutionalised church. Van Dyk (1986:65) explains the second step as follows:

> *Essentially that means that the ecclesia, originally a society within a society, came to be bottled up in an institution [the church – bjvdw] among many other institutions, eventually leading to the identification of the relationship between the church and the world as a relationship between grace and nature.*

God in his grace liberated me from this two thousand years old captivity of Christianity to a totally unbiblical worldview.

3.1.3 Radical conversion

Since this radical new insight determined the rest of my life, let me put it as strongly as possible – even at the risk of being misunderstood. What I discovered was that salvation in Christ does not imply that we should become more spiritual, Christians or church members, preparing ourselves for heaven. It simply means that Christ (negatively) delivered us from sin to be (positively) genuinely human again. Exactly because God loved his creation so much, he sent our Redeemer (John 3:16) to this world so that we can be at home here again. And at the consummation we will not inhabit heaven, but a new creation (Rev. 21:1-5).

I therefore also reject all kinds of mystic tendencies, revived today. In all of them their adherents try to isolate themselves from the world outside (God's creation). One then concentrates on one's soul or inner life where one is supposed to have an intimate relationship with God (or a pseudo-god). No, one does not meet God's revelation *outside* this world but *in* it. The Bible is a *book* written in *human* language and God in Christ became *human* to show us how to live our entire life as real human beings.

3.2 Discovering a much wider vision

During my undergraduate studies at the PU, I was privileged that lecturers in a Reformational worldview and philosophy opened to me such a much wider perspective of not a thinned, idle, irrelevant faith, but a full, engaged and transforming faith; not only interested in personal issues (pornography, abortion, sexual behaviour, alcohol abuse or even evangelisation), but also in much broader, larger cultural tendencies and their implications. I realised that one should love and serve God not merely in church, but in his *worldwide* kingdom as well. I discovered that it was possible to serve God, not only with one's whole heart and soul, but also with one's whole *mind*! There is no dualism between a private devotion to God and our vocation to serve all his creatures with love.

When one reads God's fundamental and central commandment of love again with the following emphasis: "Love the Lord, your God with *all* your heart and with *all* your soul and with *all* your mind" (Matt. 22:37), it is very clear that for God half-heartedness in commitment and action are unacceptable.

In the Bible the word "heart" refers to one's innermost being or religious center, while "soul" indicates our entire life as living beings. Therefore our lives should be an *all-encompassing* love of God.

In the case of the academy we are specifically called to make our love for Him concrete by being professors in the original Latin meaning, viz., to openly declare, to present oneself willingly or to report, for example, for military service. In biblical terms: to be a witness. Keeping in mind Christ's words of both encouragement and warning our professing task in this God-denying secular world should be done boldly: "Whoever acknowledges me before men, I will acknowledge him before my Father in heaven. But whoever disowns me before men, I will disown him before my Father in heaven" (Matthew 10:32).

3.3 An encompassing cultural mandate

Stated in a different way, I was assisted by my lecturers in a Reformational philosophy to discover again God's encompassing cultural mandate at the very beginning of creation (Gen. 1:28 and 2:15), viz. to rule over and care for his *whole* creation. I furthermore realised that the so-called Great Commission (Matt. 28:16-20) was wrongly understood by many Christians, as meaning merely to proclaim the gospel through missionary/evangelistic work and to establish churches.

This "great commission", however, is simply a reformulation of the original cultural commission, but now in the new context of the Good News. This altered situation has arrived through the sacrificial death, resurrection and ascension of the Mediator, enabling us again (after Adam and Eve fell into sin) to fulfil the task God entrusted to human beings before the fall. Now Christ through his Spirit will be with us always and everywhere to the end of the ages.

Stated in yet another way: I discovered that not the church, but God's kingdom should be the focal point of one's entire life, the church merely being a servant of the kingdom. As one of my old friends once expressed it: "Nothing matters but God's kingdom. But because of His kingdom everything matters."

Thus academic work is part of our God-given task on earth. We should do it in obedience to his all-encompassing authority and we can rely on the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

3.4 Life is religion – not life plus religion

From a Biblical (religious) perspective Vander Stelt (2013) formulates the same idea in the following way:

For humans to be religious is not optional but essential. Being characteristic of being human it is not restricted to an earlier period, or phase in human history, or to something private in one's behaviour. Like the rudder of a ship in water, although invisible, religion indicates the ultimate direction in which humans live and move. It is as deep and broad as everyday life … It is not confined to what Christians or non-Christians do in their private and public prayers, meditations, confessions and spiritual retreats, worship events or all sorts of theological reflections …

Life *is* religion – not life *plus* religion!

Real, biblical tensions in the life of Christians are many. For example: Gods kingdom has arrived when Christ came, but it is not yet there; the kingdom of God is for this earth, but will come from heaven; we are saved and yet we sin. But none of these tensions are to be understood – as has happened throughout history of Christianity up to today – in terms of all kinds of unbiblical dualist notions like nature and grace, earth and heaven, body and soul, world and church, science and faith etc.

3.5 Christian scholarship

This explains why, after finishing my theological studies, I did not go into full-time ministry but became a Christian philosopher, the motto of my life being: seeking first the kingdom of God and obedience to him alone (Mat. 6:33) – including one's scholarship. Please note: My ideal was not only to do scholarly work *as a Christian*, but to develop integral *Christian scholarship*. Stated briefly: I was inspired to think and live in a "holistic" Christian way.

Doing this is not easy, but (because of all kinds of the above-mentioned dualisms like material-spiritual, nature-supernature, world-church, private-public etc.) requires daily conversion from and a struggle with the age-old Christian heritage of a "divided soul". To love and serve God together with other idols and ideologies remains a permanent temptation to all of us.

But the Bible (cf. 1 Kings 18:21) and Christ clearly warned us (Matthew 6:24): You cannot love and serve two masters – your academic life being no exception. You have to choose, since finally you will love and serve only one of them. (The choice between God and Mammon, the god of money is explicitly mentioned.)

An attitude amongst Christians of trying to serve two gods perhaps more easily results in secularising their lives than atheistic attacks from outside. (Readers who want to know more about my academic curriculum vitae may consult Bishop, 2010 as well as my own brief memoirs in Van der Walt, 2010a.)

You may now be inclined to ask "But exactly how should a committed Christian relate to our contemporary secular culture?" – the next main point.

4. The relation between Christian faith and its cultural environment

Before any meaningful discussion about Christian faith and education can take place, we should determine our own position on the age-old problem of the Christian's stance towards his/her surrounding culture. (Of course this problem can only be regarded as an issue when Christians are aware of the *difference* between what the sinful world regards as important and what their Lord expects from them.)

4.1 Approaches to the problem

Niebuhr (1951) distinguished the following approaches: (1) the Christian *against* culture; (2) the Christian *and* culture; (3) the Christian *above* culture; (4) the Christian and culture in a *paradoxical* relationship; (5) Christians should *transform* culture.

4.1.1 The danger of dualism

The first four approaches are dualistic in nature. Spykman (1992:67) explains:

Instead of moving wholeheartedly in one direction or the other, dualism allows for a divided allegiance. Instead of leading to single-mindedness, it draws a line through the world and opts for walking on both sides of it, though with uneven pace. Dualism gives the spiritual antithesis ontological status by defining some parts, aspects, sectors, activities or realms of life (the ministries of the church) as good and others (politics) as less than good or even evil … Some callings are higher and holier than others … theology is a more honourable than … philosophy or the other sciences; evangelism is more saintly than social work. Such dichotomies continue to slay their thousands.

A dialectical tension is inherent in all kinds of such dualisms. Kok (1998:94) thus correctly writes that the different types of a nature/supernature dualism are always *attempted* combinations, like trying to combine iron and clay. The *result* is always a forced mixture or artificial entwining of two mutually exclusive principles.

4.1.2   Not based on the Scriptures

The Bible itself does not teach such a (originally pagan) dualism. According to his Word God's grace is his kindness or favour towards a fallen creation. (This can therefore only be the case after Adam and Eve fell into disobedience.) Grace, therefore, does not stand above, alongside or against nature. The opposite of God's grace is his wrath. As from His side grace is the opposite of God's rightful anger, in the same way viewed from the human side, forgiven sins are the opposite of unconfessed and thus unforgiven transgressions against God's commandments.

4.1.3   Influence throughout Christianity

Research has indicated that even Calvin could not fully break through this dangerous dualism. We also know today that soon after the sixteenth century Reformation the situation worsened. Reformed thinking fell back into scholastic orthodoxy. Neither could the modifications of Kuyper and Bavinck (with their distinction between general and special grace) help them to get rid of this pernicious worldview (cf. Van der Walt, 2001:11-16).

Many Western Reformational thinkers from Europe, Canada and the USA, however, adopted Niebuhr's categorising of different Christian relationships toward social life/culture (cf. e.g. Wolterstorff, 1983:3 ff.). Bediako (1992, cf. also 2004) opted for the second (accommodation) model for African Christianity.

4.1.4   Implications for education

These four kinds of dualism determine one's theory of knowledge. It leads to the age-old dilemma (from the beginning of Christian theologising) of how one should view the relation between one's Christian faith in God's Word and human reason or scholarship ("reason" regarded as autonomous).

Do faith and reason stand *against* each other so that one has to choose for the one or the other? Should they be *reconciled* to each other or the one *integrated* with the other? If so, in which way? Does faith merely *add* something extra to rational thinking? Should they both be accepted in a *paradoxal or dialectical* relationship?

Or does our faith commitment has the priority and therefore determines everything we do, including our thinking? If this is the case (the fifth viewpoint distinguished by Niebuhr) then one is liberated from false dilemmas (positions 1 to 4) and may speak integrally about *faithful scholarship*.

The implications of these five possible strategies for Christian institutions of higher education are evident: (1) a Christian university should *separate* itself from the worldly scholarship. (2) It should *accommodate* to current scientific cultural tendencies. (3) Christian education merely implies *adding* something Christian to existing secular scholarship. (4) No definite choice is made. In spite of the acknowledged fact that the Christian approach and secular scholarship may clash, *both are true*. (5) This viewpoint rejects all four other strategies, its ideal being to *change*, *reform* or *transform* existing education (Cf. Zylstra, 1982:23-33 for more details.)

These five historic views on Christian scholarship (opposition, accommodation, dualism, paradox and reformation) are also discussed by Spykman (1991:1-5), while he adds four contemporary views, viz. that of the compartementalists, concordists, externalists and integralists (p. 6-10).

4.2 The world has changed

Since Niebuhr's classic of 1951 the world has become more secular and as far as religion is concerned pluralistic, Christianity losing its influence in the West. Some time ago Oruka (1990:15) indicated a similar phenomenon in Africa. He distinguished between the following tendencies: (1) the purely African traditional religion and culture; (2) a purely Christian or Muslim viewpoint; (3) a traditional-cum-Christianity or cum-Muslim; (4) a Western secular attitude; (5) a secularised traditional African and (6) the unspecified culture in transition of, for instance, the urbanised youth – the so-called "sheng culture".

4.3 New approaches needed

As a result of increasing secularisation Niebuhr's categorisation became difficult (cf. Stott & Coote, 1980) and criticised (cf. e.g. Maggay, 1994; Yoder, 1996; Carter, 2007; Carson, 2008 and Volf, 2011:xiv). Volf (2011:84 ff.), for instance, rejects the liberal approach of the Christian simply *accommodating* current cultures as well as the post-liberal stance of negatively *retreating* from or *abandoning* their surrounding culture. According to him religions and cultures may partly overlap, partly differ or be mutually contradictory.

Volf's proposal (p. 89-91) is not to try to escape or leave behind contemporary global culture, but to be publicly engaged by transforming it from within, to divert it by employing it for different ends. (Limited space prohibits a further investigation of his viewpoint.)

4.4 Christians with a different identity

Volf keeps reminding us that – in spite of all the failures of Christianity – the Gospel is always about difference. In essence it proclaims a new, good – a different – message to the whole world and our entire life. "If Christian identity matters, then difference must matter as well … get rid of the difference and what remains will be nothing" (Volf, 2011:95).

Let me add to Volf's challenge something very important for reformed evangelical Christians. We would all agree that the heart of reformation is the reformation of our hearts (real conversion). We should, however, equally emphasise the second secret of real reformation: the reformation of our norms. In no way can the love and service of our Lord, Jesus Christ, be separated from obeying all *his* commandments, centred in his fundamental law of love (cf. Deut. 6:5, Lev. 19:18, Matt. 22:37-40 and many other texts in the Bible).

In the following histories of three different universities (see below) ask yourself this basic question: Have they obeyed this most basic direction for all of life or have they fallen into the trap of ideologies?

At this stage one would like to know how, according to which method, one can analyse one's secular cultural environment – our next topic.

5. The nature of ideologies and the dominant ideologies today

As human beings we do not only interpret our personal life histories, but – in spite of the difficulties involved – we also have to understand what happened in the histories of institutions and even nations.

The history of the PU (up to 2004) is recorded in a number of books and articles (cf. Van Eeden, 2005 and 2006). Unfortunately they are more or less factual, so-called neutral accounts. But the facts of history simply do not speak for themselves. Historians speak for them from an interpretive framework of ideas they already hold. Different reformational thinkers have suggested different kinds of such frameworks to be employed.

5.1 Different reformational approaches to cultural analysis

Hart (1968:1-18) encourages Christians to evaluate the spirit of their surrounding culture, to reveal its direction, what deeply motivates it. Wells (1989:13) used a related worldview methodology. He analyses Western cultural history first with reference to clashing worldviews and, secondly according to crises within a particular worldview. A similar approach is adopted by Wilkens & Stanford (2009). Schuurman (2011) analyses Western culture from the perspective of ground motives or forces driving or directing it (cf. also Buijs & Paul, 2007).

Van der Hoeven (1974:14) regards academics, especially philosophies as the barometers of the spirit of a period in history. Philosophers are the first spokespersons for a new cultural power. Such cultural powers are irresistible, sweeping people along (cf. Van der Hoeven, 1980:23).

5.1.1 The ideological method

Many reformational thinkers from the past and the present thus prefer an ideological analysis. This was already done in the 19th century by Van Prinsterer (cf. Van Dyke, 1989 and Van Vliet, 2008). One can identify an ideology from its concrete implications – like a tree which can be recognised by its fruits.

From a deeply rooted Christian perspective others like Walter (1978) but especially Goudzwaard (e.g. 1984, 1994), Goudzwaard, Vander Vennen and Van Heemst (2008) and Keller (2009) employ the concept of idolatry and ideologies as categories of social-cultural analyses and critique. According to them human beings and the institutions they create can – with destructive results – be held captive by various

idols and (still young or emerging, half-grown, or already full-blown) ideologies. (The word "ideology" has different meanings for different schools of thought. It is used here not as a neutral concept, but in the sense of a distorted and misleading system of ideas or worldview, implying the biblical idea of idolatry.)

This article will mainly follow Goudzwaard's method. Ideologies are not only the distorted worldviews of individuals, exaggerating an aspect of reality (=isms). They are *forced upon society at large* by the captivated elite (e.g. political leaders and today especially business and other kinds of managers) because they act as pseudo-revelations (cf. Mekkes, 2010).

5.1.2 The chain-effect

I firmly believe if we do not serve God with our whole heart and mind – and do so according to his ordinations – we give room for all kinds of divinities (or idols) and accompanying worldviews (or ideologies). No human being can live without some final absolute. Mostly unconsciously, we begin to reflect the image of the false gods we serve, and we also create a twisted society (including a university, college, seminary) according to our own distorted image. We also follow the deceptive norms dictated by these ideologies.

5.2 The dangers of idolatry and ideologies

The Bible, however, proclaims only one true God. All the other so-called gods are called "idols" (from which the words "idolatry" and "ideologies" are derived). The Hebrew word for "idols" (*elihim*) basically means "nothingness" or "worthlessness". In actual fact they are fictions of our hearts and minds. And the norms they propose are empty, meaningless.

5.2.1 Enormous power and influence

In spite of this they can have enormous influence on the entire life of an individual, university and society at large. Van Riessen (1967 and 1974) correctly calls them powers, dominating our world. They do so by their blinding, hypnotising effect and the fact that they do not allow any critique. (They may therefore sometimes even be of a demonic nature.) But – very important – they have a deceptive nature. They cannot fulfil even one of their promises whatsoever. On the contrary, they lead to personal dehumanisation and finally to the decline and death of human institutions.

5.2.2 Reading the signs of our time

In many places (e.g. Luke 12:54-56) in God's Word we are therefore instructed to read the signs of our times and it also warns us that our struggle as Christians is not against flesh and blood, but against the powers of this world, the spiritual forces of evil (Eph. 6:12).

I can refer to quite a number of publications from the PU itself (cf. Van der Walt, 1984 and 1999) as well as from outside (cf. the previous references), warning against the dangers of ideologies.

Even a Christian worldview can deteriorate into an ideology as soon as it no longer listens to reality (God's creational revelation), but tries to force reality, human beings included, into its straightjacket. If this happens, as Christians we have to return to God's scriptural and incarnated revelation to correct our worldview and rescue it from the dangers of an ideology.

Before we have a look at the impact of ideologies on education, we should first be reminded about three limits to this kind of explanation of events: (1) it does not exclude personal responsibility; (2) ideologies are not the only factor determining everything; (3) ideologies may not ask total allegiance.

5.3 Not excluding personal responsibility

An ideological approach may lead to a deterministic perspective according to which history becomes something that is fixed from the moment it begins.

On the one hand human beings – especially those in authority and power – can become instruments of the spirit of the age. Borne by an ideological spirit, they are subject to its drift which they cannot easily resist. They may be hurried into doing things of which, if they could have seen its full implications, they would never have employed certain policies.

On the other hand the irresistibility of the march of ideologically inspired events does not abolish one's personal responsibility – no one is compelled to bow before the idols of his/her age. It is not a person's impotence to resist the direction of his age, but his readiness to cooperate that will be charged to a person's account. Ideologies are human constructs. Made by us, they can also be opposed by us and the kind of structures they created should be challenged and changed.

5.4 Ideologies are not the sole determining factor

It is not always, and perhaps never, the case that only wrong ideological principles are *intrinsic* to change. They can also be *coincidental* to the transformation of an institution. I am therefore not arguing for destructive ideological ideas as a *total causal or determining* explanation for what happened at the PU. Certain trees (ideas) bear specific fruits (results). Or stated differently: Ideas do have legs. But these ideas have walked a certain path at a specific time and place.

Therefore, many other factors codetermined the history of the PU, like the personal, social, economic, political and ecclesiastical factors of the time. However, to pay attention to these contextual factors would have required rather a book than an article or four. My ideological approach should therefore be regarded by the reader as one out of many other possible perspectives on the story told here.

5.5 No total allegiance asked

Different from an *integral* Christian religion and worldview, non-Christian religions, worldviews and ideologies not necessarily manifest themselves in a concentrated way, in other words requiring *total allegiance*. Two examples of this phenomenon of multiple religions participation are contemporary Western postmodernism as well as in the East and in Africa where different religious practices are not syncretistically integrated, but followed simultaneously.

The basic reason for this phenomenon may, according to Griffioen (2010), be that non-biblical religions, worldviews and ideologies – all substitutes for the integral biblical way of life – neither contain the necessary substance to quench the religious thirst of human beings, nor to develop into an all-round worldview. Today, grasping onto and being in the grip of different ideologies to attain the needed ultimate security every human being's needs can be quite common.

6. The impact of ideologies on education

Whether overtly (intentionally) or covertly (unintentionally) in every form and level of education ideologies and their values are embedded (cf. Lategan & Smit, 1999). Teachers and lecturers cannot avoid transmitting their own viewpoints by word and deed, example and behaviour.

6.1 Examples from the past and the present

Examples from my own country are the research of Ashley (1989) and Van Niekerk (2012). The first writer uncovered the hidden ideologies and their norms during the time of apartheid, viz. the Christian-national ideology, liberalism and socialism. Van Niekerk does the same with regard to post-apartheid education, identifying populism, utopianism and unionism as the main ideological motivators. (In the last article we will later return to the overemphasis on science and technology in the utopian ideology.)

For some time outcome-based education (OBE) was, for instance, regarded as the solution for all South Africa's educational problems. However, already since about 1999 (cf. Jansen & Christie, 1999) it was questioned. Venter (2006b:303) reveals the hidden ideological agenda behind OBE when he writes that

> … it accepts the practices of the "world of work" as its aims and methods, and its values are those of economism (whether socialist or capitalist). Tensions between education and technical training will therefore be resolved by giving priority to the technical.

Ideologically inspired political policies in South Africa are today replacing the one educational ideology with a next without considering its implications and without proper consultation and training. This has resulted in chaos and brought about many detrimental implications not only for both teachers and learners, but for our entire South African population.

6.2 Silencing critical voices

Keeping the *blinding*, *narcotic*, *hypnotic* character and the *deceptive* values of an ideology in mind, as well as the fact that a university ought to be a place of *critical* intellectual reflection and *normative* direction, one can realize the devastating impact of ideologies especially on colleges and universities.

7. Dominant contemporary ideologies

Already in 1984 Walsh & Middleton (p. 132) identified three gods of our Western culture (representing the feet, body and head of an unholy trinity), viz. scientism, technicism and economism. In their follow-up book they explain that scientism originated in the 16th and 17th century, technicism emerged in the 18th, and economism from the 19th century (cf. Middleton & Walsh, 1995:16, 17). None of these ideologies have, however, fulfilled the high expectations of the West (p. 143-144) but caused deep spiritual crises.

7.1 An intricate complex

Schuurman's (2011:2, 3) overall characterisation of Western culture is materialism, consisting of the interconnected complex of science, technology, economy and organisation (plus the management and bureaucracy that go with it). The engine driving the complex tangle of science, technology, economy and organisation is technical thinking, a technical worldview, putting its stamp on the current process of globalisation.

I am more inclined not to single out one ideological trend but rather to see our contemporary culture as a hodgepodge of all of them. Since belief in God and his ordinances were rejected, behind all these mutually reinforcing tendencies lies the desire for power and wealth, to dominate instead of to serve and care. That is the reason why the Bible often warns against the invisible deceptive powers surrounding us.

7.2 Absolute power

Power as such is not (as some Christians may think) evil. At creation God gave human beings the power to develop their own and the rest of creation's potentials. To fulfil any task or office one needs the necessary authority and power.

But, as was explained in the preceding article, no human being or social institution may ascribe to itself absolute but only limited power needed for a specific task. Only Christ has absolute authority and power (Mat. 28:18). In their desire for absolute power, contemporary ideologies are thus clearly acting as pseudo gods or idols.

As will still be indicated (cf. next article), this kind of brute power hunger is today closely associated with money materialism – ideologies may mutually strengthen each other. And what makes it worse is that these powers are not subjected to real normative evaluation, since ideologies have a closed, tunnel vision of life. Power for the sake of power – without any accountability – leads to power-nihilism.

Let me add an important note: I am not disregarding the beneficial elements resulting from science, technology, economy etc. – they are undeniable. I argue against their idolisation.

After explaining our own stance, we can now narrate the history of the PU for CHE. But, before I come to my narrative about the PU for CHE, first as background a little more about the remaining part of my subsequent personal academic pilgrimage before I joined the PU.

8. An international and two African experiences

After finishing my Th.B. (in Theology) and MA (in philosophy at the PU) I wanted to know more about an integral Christian approach to scholarship as it originated and was supported by the reformational philosophy in the Netherlands at the Free University (Vrije Universiteit or abbreviated as VU) in Amsterdam. For a D.Phil. degree I studied from June 1968 to July 1970 at its then still reformationally oriented Central Interfaculty of Philosophy, later being appointed as a student researcher in medieval philosophy.

8.1 The Free University (VU) secularised

Our stay in Europe provided necessary international experience. We lived in a different culture and could also see our own country and its policy of apartheid from a distance with different eyes.

But it was also a very discouraging two years since the other faculties – including theology – were rapidly secularising. (Cf. Van Deursen, 2005 and 2008 and Aalders, 2005.) It was also the time of student revolts. The very Christian character of the VU (established by Abraham Kuyper in 1880) was questioned.

The history of the VU is well documented in different volumes, e.g. Roelink, (1955 and 1979); Stellingwerff (1987a and 1987b); Van Os & Wieringa (1980), the already mentioned book by Van Deursen (2005) and, as far as philosophy at the VU is concerned, Woldring (2013). However, it should be noted that these histories are written from different perspectives. Woldring (2013) seems to have no problems with the secularisation of philosophy at the VU, while others like Van Deursen (2005) as well as Verhoogt, Griffioen and Fernhout (1997) clearly indicate how the VU gradually lost its Christian-reformational orientation.

While studying at the VU I could not imagine that this same sorrowful development would – in less than two decades – be repeated at my first *alma mater* (the PU). But two lessons were learned. Firstly, to study at a prominent international but not a fully committed Christian university can sometimes be risky. As a student one can easily (because of an accommodating attitude) loose the most precious thing in life: your faith in God and his Word. Secondly, it became evident that a Christian university is not necessarily secularised from *outside*, but may secularise *itself* from the *inside* – by its own managers and other staff.

8.2 The University of Fort Hare (UFH) secularised

In 1970 I accepted a position (as senior lecturer in philosophy) at the UFH. This institution in Alice in the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa was established in the nineteenth century by visionary Scottish Reformed missionaries. For many years it was the only tertiary educational institution in the southern part of Africa available to black Africans. It therefore trained many prominent South African leaders, like Desmond Tutu, Nelson Mandela, Robert Sebukwe, Oliver Tambo, Mangosuthu Buthelezi and Govan Mbeki, but also leaders outside South Africa, like Julius Nyerere, Kenneth Kaunda and Robert Mugabe. Its motto was *In lumine tuo videbimus lumen* (in Thy light we see light) derived from Psalm 36 verse 10.

Again: A great experience to be outside one's own, small, white, Western "ghetto" and to get to know the worldview and culture of black African (mainly Xhosa-speaking) students. But simultaneously another heart-rending story: The university of Fort Hare was turned into a politicised "bush" – or apartheid-university of the white governing National Party (NP). (Violent students' protests against this policy were experienced.) Very little consideration was shown for the UFH's original Christian character – even atheists were accepted as professors.

A new, different lesson was learned. The involvement of a political ideology in the affairs of an academic institution can be detrimental. Politicising can undermine and at the end destroy its character – even if the ideology is named "*Christian*-national".

8.3 The internationalisation and secularisation of the Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education (PU for CHE)

In July 1974 I accepted an invitation – again with high expectations – from the PU for CHE to become the director of its Institute for the Advancement of Calvinism, later on renamed as the Institute for Reformational Studies or IRS. (A brief history of this Institute from 1962-1999 is available in Van der Walt, 2008a:278-303.) Since I worked at the PU (also as professor in philosophy) until compulsory retirement at the age of 60 at the end of 1999 (and afterwards as part-time research fellow in philosophy till today) its secularisation will be my main story to share with you.

9. The main narrative (from 1974 until today)

As I have already mentioned, this account is not primarily about *leaders* but about the possible *ideas* which influenced them and the *institution* they managed. (At the same time it would be wrong to shift all blame onto impersonal ideologies or institutions, exonerating leaders from their personal responsibility.) I merely state that I served under the regime of four different presidents (called "rectors") of the PU, assisted by their senior managers. The first retired in 1977, the second in 1987 and the third in 1999, the fourth started his term in 2000. This chronology in four periods is helpful in order to distinguish between different ideological stances following each other. (I will not waste space to mention exactly when a specific step was taken or a policy implemented.)

9.1 The first period (1974-1977): the Christian-national ideal uncritically accepted

The first few years were rather peaceful – at least at the beginning – also for my work at the IRS. Since the NP-government subsidised the university there were not any financial problems. But there were of course strings attached: the university had to follow NP (apartheid) government policy – it was not a politically free university.

9.1.1 Christian-national (C-N) higher education

Also the idea of C-N education, inherited from the Netherlands, leading the institution more or less from its establishment in 1869, was "safe". In 1976 I wrote a critical article about this Christian-national ideology but it did not impress my rector at all. (An English version of this article was republished in Van der Walt, 1983:242-252 followed by a more extensive booklet in Afrikaans in 1995.)

The problematic character of C-N
I did so since (as already explained above) I could not reconcile myself to living with a divided heart. My fear was that, instead of the "Christian" reforming the "national" the reverse may also happen: the "national" contaminating and even eliminating the "Christian" element. How long would it be possible to keep the two poles in balance? And what would happen if the university was forced to choose for the one or the other? Would it only be a matter of time before reaching this point? (In his critique of the ideology of nationalism Goudzwaard, 1984:39-48 raised similar questions.)

An unsolveable paradox

Categorised according to the five different Christian models of relating to the world, (explained above) one may typify the C-N idea as an example of a paradoxical relationship. Spykman (1992:68) describes this kind of dualism in the following way when he writes:

> *In dualisms the divine norm is always either kept at a distance, a step removed from everyday living ("up-stairs") or it is identified with some aspect of life ("downstairs"), or it takes the form of a dual normativity which wavers dialectically between the two. Dualism is a deceptive attempt to reject life in the world (in part) while at the same time also accepting it (in part) ... Christian faith is often related only extrinsically to scholarship.*

He continues by saying that dualistic thinkers cannot attach a comprehensive meaning to the biblical revelation about creation, fall, redemption and consummation: "They disrupt the unity of creation. They legitimize the reality of sin in one or other realm of life. They limit the cosmic impact of the biblical message of redemption. They confine Christian witness to only certain sectors of life". (For the true biblical revelation about creation, fall, redemption and consummation cf. Bartholomew & Goheen, 2010.)

Clear indications

The study of Ashley (1989) revealed the following hidden ideological features in the C-N educational textbooks: The Afrikaner is believed to have a special relationship with God; South Africa belongs to the Afrikaners and therefore they should lead the country, while their legitimate authority is not questionable; white supremacy goes together with stereotyped beliefs that black people are inferior, etc.

A very basic question about C-N education has to be asked: Did it not disregard God's foundational command of love towards one's neighbour, irrespective of the colour of his/her skin, language or her/his culture in general?

9.1.2 Excessive growth

The PU was also growing. When I asked my rector whether growth could perhaps affect its character or identity, his opinion was that there should be no limits to the size of a Christian university. I was not convinced since the real issue was not primarily about numbers, but whether a university as a thinking *community* can survive when it grows so large that its members can hardly communicate. An *organisation* of many thousands of people is possible, not a real *community* of scholars. (Cf. also Hart, 1976:96.)

9.1.3 The cradle of IAPCHE

One should, however, never forget that under the leadership of this president of the PU the First International Conference of Reformed Institutions for Christian Higher Education was held in September 1975 – the birth of what was later to be known as IAPCHE (cf. Bingle *et al*., 1976). The whole story around this eventful meeting and its international repercussions is told elsewhere. (For something about its history cf. Van der Walt, 2001:184-198; 2005 and 2008b.) Important for my present account is to mention that after 1975 the ideology of apartheid (condoned by the Christian-national ideology) was not any longer to be taken for granted.

9.2 The second period (1978-1987): the meaning of Christian-national not so clear any more

Let me mention only three important events of this period.

9.2.1 Difficulty to maintain the national of C-N

The next leader of the university and his management had a difficult task to balance the see-saw of sacred-secular or Christian-national. On the one hand they felt that racism was wrong. (This rector even encouraged IRS-conferences and publications to speak out against it. Cf. Anon., 1995.) On the other hand they had to be careful not to lose the support of government, supporters, students and staff who were not easily to be convinced that apartheid was incompatible with the Christian faith.

This rector's motto for the PU was: "unconditionally Christian and unashamedly Afrikaans" (meaning the language of Afrikaans white people). This may be the reason why he had to reprimand some of the younger members of his staff for publishing (through the IRS) the internationally known *Koinonia Declaration* (1977), a document opposing apartheid and its biblical justification. (For a republished text of the declaration in Afrikaans and English, cf. Van der Walt & Venter, 1998:31-44.)

However, during this regime people of colour were for the first time accepted as undergraduate students, firstly extra-mural and later on campus. At a later stage they were also granted accommodation in the university hostels.

9.2.2 Rationalisation

Already at this time economic rationalisation was rearing its head. The PU's management decided to "rationalise" (=terminate) the service of a large number of staff by advancing without consultation their retirement date (which could be 60 or 65 years according to their own choice) to 60. Against reasonable labour practice during the ensuing years many committed staff members were robbed not only of five year's salary but also of a great chunk of their old age pension.

9.2.3 The Christian character interpreted anew

Nevertheless this leader of the PU was still committed to the idea of Christian scholarship and therefore arranged a special commission (on which I also served) to study, interpret and apply the surname of the PU (the "for Christian higher education"). The statutes of the University at that time merely vaguely referred to its "Christian-historical" character. (The term "Christian-historical" is of Dutch origin and was a well-known concept employed amongst reformed people when the PU was established. It has the same connotation as "Christian-national".)

A preliminary credo (about the task of a Christian university and Christian scholarship) was formulated by 1986 but was never even mentioned nor implemented during the next regime. (It was similar to the one published in Van der Walt, 1994:592-595.) Apart from this, many other publications, both from the IRS and the Department of Philosophy of Science, contained reflections on what a university should be (cf. Venter, 1987) and the meaning of Christian scholarship. (On my bookshelf I still have as examples the following: Van der Walt, 1989, 1990, 1992, 1993 and 2001.)

Perhaps the lesson to be learned is that, when establishing a Christian educational (or any other) institution, its basis should not only be clear, but also applied in practice. A beautiful biblical motto ("In thy light"), an inspiring emblem (a candelabrum, the symbol of light) or even an ecclesiastical confession of faith is not enough. (For the meaning of all these, cf. Van der Walt, 2000:569-575.)

9.3 The third period (1987-2000): a vacuum, inviting new secular ideologies through a process of internationalisation

Again only a few flashes from the history of this period.

9.3.1 Both the "Christian" and "national" dropped

From about 1987 – the last decade before the demise of apartheid – the pressure to change was increased. The time for looking at South Africa with double-focus lenses or trying to sit on two chairs simultaneously (C-N) was over. In principal a paradoxical relationship is untenable. But also because of the emerging new political dispensation under the ANC and the university's financial dependence on a new government, the leaders of the PU could no longer maintain the (Afrikaner) national element. Neither could they easily retain the surname of the University ("for CHE") since, as a Christian institution, the university in the past condoned apartheid, thereby losing its legitimacy amongst Christian ANC supporters. Finally the new South Africa also accepted a secular constitution.

9.3.2 Retaining the Afrikaner identity?

Our managers probably had to satisfy both the new ANC government, but also allocated key positions in management to maintain the white Afrikaner character of the PU as far as possible. In this process the Christian character of the PU was lost. (My own ideal was that after apartheid the PU should become a real African Christian university. Cf. Van der Walt, 1998 and 2000:546-568.)

9.3.3 No legal reasons for secularisation

However, according to an international expert on constitutional law (cf. Van der Vyver 2000:11) for two reasons it was not necessary for the PU to drop its CHE. Firstly, because it was a statutory body, and secondly since the PU was already in existence before the new South African Constitution (1996) was promulgated. In a previous article he (Van der Vyver, 1999:670) also explained that it was possible for the PU to retain its Christian identity since the new South African Constitution was not openly *hostile* to any religion (as is for example the case in the US and Canada) but religiously more *neutral*. For the struggle in the USA against a government unfriendly towards religion in the so-called public square (schooling included) one may wish to consult Skillen (1990 and 1992).

Structural pluralism and confessional pluralism (cf. McCarthy, Oppewal, Petersen and Spykman, 1981 and Van der Walt, 2010b:461-465) were thus possible ways to save the independence and Christian character of the PU. Why were these viable options not investigated? Because of a lack of a reformational social perspective?

My experience was that the leaders and many members of the teaching staff did not know what integral Christian education really entails. Visionary emptiness, a lack of the clear direction of a Christian worldview and its normative guidelines, however, invites all kinds of ideologies to fill the vacuum (cf. Matthew 12:45). The PU was influenced by a combination of various secular ideologies which at that time determined the general character of Western culture.

9.3.4 Internationalisation of the PU

In what follows I will list a few steps (not necessarily in chronological order) taken by the leadership to "transform" the old PU (later on merged with two other campuses). Keep your eyes open for possible ideological influences hidden behind these measures. Among the most important of these ideologies, still shaping our world of today internationally are: neo-capitalism (also called neo-liberalism), with its accompanying managerialism, social Darwinism, scientism going hand in hand with technicism, neo-pragmatist postmodernism, an unfounded trust in values and, lastly, wrong ideas about tolerance and indoctrination. In my view a potpourri of them all, mutually influencing each other, can be traced in management's effort to "internationalise" the PU.

We do not have the time to trace the deep and age-old historical roots of these spiritual currents, but today they have more or less merged into one muddy stream or tsunami overflowing the world. In various publications Venter (1996, 1999a, 1999b, 2002, 2006a, 2006b and 2006c) clarifies the origin and development of these philosophical-ideological spiritual trends of the past, shaping our contemporary Western culture and academic world.

9.3.5 Reasons for internationalisation

As explained already in the first article in this series, internationalisation can be attempted for various reasons, both correct and wrong. After many years of isolation in South Africa (due to the apartheid regime) it may have looked like a natural, legitimate step to make international contacts.

According to my personal judgment (supported by many private talks and meetings) this, however, was not the main reason. The decisive reason was a bankruptcy of ideas about the way forward. Additionally senior management expected not much advice from "primitive" black Africa.

Why then did they not seek advice from Western Christian colleges, like Calvin, Dordt, Redeemer, the Institute for Christian Studies, etc.? Their credo's and educational policies were available reading – all published in *Orientation; international circular of the PU*, no. 37, (cf. Anon, 1985). Were these Christian institutions considered lacking real international excellence? This was definitely not the case. Through the years many academics from these institutions lectured at the PU and produced publications of high standard.

Apart from general books on the history of Christian higher education in America, like Carpenter & Ships (1987) and Ringenberg (2000), the history of Dordt College is told in Haan (1992), by Hulst (2005), Kok (2004), Vanden Bosch (1990), that of Calvin College in Timmerman (1975) and of the Institute for Christian Studies in Vander Vennen (2008.)

9.3.6 *Looking for advice in the wrong place*

What then were the leaders of the Potchefstroom University to do? First members of the PU management looked for advice about the way ahead by visiting some overseas Roman Catholic universities. This was already doomed to failure since – because of their basic nature-grace dualism – no consistent Catholic can (apart from theology) be a proponent of Christian scholarship.

The final solution was to repair the strained relationship since 1975 between the Free University (in white, Western, "civilised" Europe) and the PU and ask the managers of the VU to show the way forward. (During this period a thick file, containing all the sometimes furious correspondence between the PU and the VU since 1975 was borrowed from me by a senior manager, strangely got "lost" and was never returned.) What a choice: Flirting with an institution which had already lost its Christian character (cf. inter alia Vander Hoeven, 1968 and later on in 1981) and had filled the vacuum with secular (left wing political) ideologies (cf. Van der Walt, 2010c:298-300 and especially Van Deursen, 2008). The Trojan horse was dragged within the walls of the PU!

An incomprehensible step? Perhaps not so surprising at all: No human being can live without believing in an absolute and its normative direction. When you have decided not to serve Christ also with your mind (in scholarship) it implies that even regular church members (Christians) will have to serve other gods in academic and public life in general.

9.3.7 *The role of the VU in the secularisation of the PU*

The chief manager of the VU's "College van Bestuur", drs. Harry Brinkman, was for several times invited to act as chief advisor in how to transform the PU for CHE. But Brinkman (1992) and his team had already decided to internationalise the VU to a prestigious university, comparable to other distinguished tertiary institutions. In future the to be appointed lecturers and professors should therefore not be appointed from VU-alumni (this was considered as inbreeding), but from outside the VU and the country. The foremost criterion measuring their excellence will be the number of the refereed international publications (cf. Woldring, 2013:213,501).

According to Van Deursen (2005:354, 365-376) Brinkman was an extremely authoritarian manager. Apart from that he was ignorant about and was clearly not in favour of integral Christian scholarship.

His viewpoint is clearly reflected in Brinkman (1992), with which he opened the academic year of 1992-1993 at the VU. (Woldring, 2013:503-505 provides a summary. I have read the whole booklet myself.) This manager had the following to announce: It will in future not be the *aim and basis* of the VU which will determine its character but its excellent *scholarly culture*. According to his postmodernist viewpoint all the "great narratives" – not only the Enlightenment, but also the reformed principles on which the VU was based – have become obsolete. What is left is only the different small, personal narratives or viewpoints of the individual students and staff of the VU. Furthermore, these small (insignificant) "stories" do not stand in a position of "either-or" (antithetical to each other) but in a complementary relationship of "and-and". Each lecturer will be free to proclaim his/her own story (worldview) – even those who reject the basis of the VU should not be censured.

Some reformational scholars voiced their protest (cf. Verhoogt *et al*., 1997) that in this way the VU has "betrayed" it's right to be a special (e.g. Christian) university to be replaced by relativist pluralism. But what Brinkman announced was what the VU since the nineties finally became and stayed till today.

The same man who played a key role in the secularisation of the VU (Brinkman) was also invited (later on with a team of "international experts") to audit the PU, injecting Western secular ideologies for the final annihilation of yet another Christian university, ten years older than the VU.

Perhaps the most surprising part of this lamentable development was that – while Brinkman *cum suis* played such a crucial role (welcomed by the management of the PU) in demolishing the Christian character of the PU – the same PU which in 1999 conferred to him an honorary doctorate!

10. The dominant ideologies of our time

It is important to describe more clearly the already mentioned prominent ideologies governing the twenty-first century to safeguard our Christian educational institutions against their detrimental impact. It is also of vital importance for our entire life as Christians to be aware of every one of these secular powers. In the next two articles we will therefore identify and analyse a number of them.

Bibliography

Note: Due to the fact that not much has been published elsewhere on the history told in this article, this bibliography is firstly, mainly confined to the publications of local (Potchefstroom) authors. (My apologies for including so many of my own publications: but this is my own story after all.) Secondly, I have tried to draw the attention of the reader also to sound Reformational sources outside Potchefstroom and South Africa.

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