

## GUEST EDITORIAL

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Dit is 'n voorreg om hierdie redaksionele bydrae tot *Responsa* se 50ste uitgawe te lewer. Beide van ons het tydens ons studentejare aan *Responsa* se aktiwiteite deelgeneem en ons het ook na ons toetreding tot die regsakademie as "raadgewers" van die redaksie gedien. Ons het dus oor die jare met *Responsa* saamgestap en beskou dit as 'n belangrike medium vir die prikkeling van navorsing in studentegeledere. Vir vele latere akademici was *Responsa* die eerste geleentheid vir die disseminasie van hul gedagtes. Trouens, die inhoudsopgawes van die afgelope 50 jaar lees soos 'n "who is who" van Suid-Afrikaanse regslieders: afgesien van akademici het ook meerdere vooraanstaande regters en regspraktisyns hul buiging op die bladsye van *Responsa* gemaak.

Much is made in post-apartheid constitutional law, and even more widely, of the metaphor of a bridge. This expression occurs famously in the "postamble" or "epilogue" of the interim Constitution of 1993, where we are told that it formed a bridge between a past of injustice, suffering, and exploitation, and a future of equality, dignity and freedom. Professor Etienne Mureinik of Wits then wrote an article (1994 *SAJHR* 31) about our first Bill of Rights in which he extended the bridge image, and everyone knows the extent to which this has been cited by the courts to justify their judgments.

Na ons mening, kan ook *Responsa* in meerdere opsigte as 'n soort brug gesien word: tussen die studente van twee fakulteite, wat soms politiek en in die benadering tot die reg ver van mekaar gestaan het; tussen die wêreld van die student en dié van ontwikkelende regsakademikus of praktisyn en tussen die akademie en die breër gemeenskap waarin dit opereer. In al hierdie opsigte het *Responsa* oor die laaste halfeeu 'n merkwaardige bydrae gelewer. Dit word weerspieël in vele verwysings na *Responsa*-bydraes in regshandboeke, gerapporteerde uitsprake en argumente voor die hof en die teenwoordigheid van *Responsa* in die versamelings van vooraanstaande internasionale regsbiblioteke.

This venerable institution accordingly deserves recognition and congratulations and we are happy to do so on behalf of our respective faculties.

Now the challenge for the journal seems to us to be threefold, in a rapidly developing context: to extend the bridge to other university law faculties (as has been the case in the past with contributions from the University of the Free State, the then University College of Rhodesia and even the University of Leiden) to involve their students as editors and contributors; to bridge the technical divide by also reviewing and perhaps embracing the electronic medium of publication, apart from registering a presence on social media; and to continue to work to close the gap between the law and the society in which it operates.

We wish the journal well in its next half-century.

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