VRYHEIDSPARK
AND OTHER
GOVERNMONUMENTALITIES
This is a special issue of *Image & Text* devoted to the theme ‘Vryheidspark and other governmonumentalities’

Guest edited by Ulrike Kistner

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Ulrike Kistner teaches in the Department of Philosophy at the University of Pretoria, Pretoria.
ulrike.kistner@up.ac.za

Annett Schulze is an associate member of the research group ‘Gender as Category of Knowledge’ at Humboldt University in Berlin, Germany.
annett.schulze.1@cms.hu-berlin.de

Johan Strijdom teaches in the Department of Religious Studies at the University of South Africa, Pretoria.
strijjm@unisa.ac.za

Cynthia Kros teaches in the School of the Arts, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg.
Cynthia.Kros@wits.ac.za

Sopelekae Maithufi teaches in the Department of English Studies at the University of South Africa, Pretoria.
maiths@unisa.ac.za

Charles Villet teaches in the Department of Philosophy of the School of Social Science, Monash South Africa, Johannesburg.
charles.villet@monash.edu

Natalie Swanepoel teaches in the Department of Anthropology and Archaeology at the University of South Africa, Pretoria.
swanenj@unisa.ac.za

Rolf Annas teaches in German Studies within the Department of Modern Foreign Languages at the University of Stellenbosch, Stellenbosch.
ra@sun.ac.za

Ivan Vladislavić is an independent writer and editor who, having been born and brought up in Pretoria, now lives in Johannesburg.

Amanda du Preez is an associate Professor in Visual Culture Studies in the Department of Visual Arts, University of Pretoria, Pretoria.

Vryheidspark and other governmonumentalities – walking and working through Pretoria, government capital

Ulrike Kistner

Approaching the city of Pretoria/Tshwane from the south, one is greeted by three monumental structures perched atop three hills surrounding Pretoria, from west to east: the Voortrekker Monument, Freedom Park, and the University of South Africa (UNISA), each one of them a dense conglomeration of symbols, emblems, and icons forged out of concrete, rock, earth and stone. Not far behind this formidable threesome follows another massive fortress marking the entrance to the city – Pretoria Central Prison.

How does one inhabit this weight of overdetermined meaning? How to penetrate the perpetuity, to contest what has been incontestably solidified, fortified against ‘outsiders’ of various categorisations, as against change? How to blow open what remains cast in stone – closed, mute, and immobile?

Let me start with a few observations on the structure providing a meeting point for the Walkshop ‘Vryheidspark and other governmonumentalities’ in September 2011, from which the articles in this Special Edition emerged. Incongruous with the currently advertised and advertorialised ‘virtual’ online distance learning mission with a planetary reach – from ‘proudly South African’ appointments through an ‘African university’ to ‘humanity’ as a whole – UNISA stands as a grandiloquent monument to the mute immutability of a previous political regime similarly seeking to eternalise itself. Thus does the present mission shake hands with the past vision.

Designed by architect Brian Sandrock in brutalist style,1 fortress UNISA is nearly the size of the Pentagon. Stretching across a length of nearly a kilometre, it leaves nothing to any stretch of the imagination. In the words of Daniel Herwitz (2003:148), its ‘endlessly interconnected corridors dwarf the human, the faculties lining the corridors appear like so many cells. It assertively imposes itself horizontally over the freeway as you drive toward it and under it, as if to say, “space is mine, you pass if you obey.”’ It gestures towards remaking the world, for all time to come – between the time of the completion of the first building in 1973 and that of the end of the last in the series in 1988,2 the time of apartheid under siege. But beyond that, it made sure to leave a legacy: ‘... the first building became the exemplar for the continual addition of new ones. The strict uniformity of the first and the last belies [any notion of transformation]’ (Mare 1996:272).3 It
seamlessly assimilates the monumentalism of the previous regime to the new traditions dreamt up by the adepts of the African Renaissance seated here.4

While falling short of ‘transformation’, we do yet notice certain appearances and noiseless disappearances: the removal of the busts of the stone-sculpted likenesses of the elders from their bases, to quieter, darker abodes behind staircases and dimly lit corners, and their replacement with emblems infused with the inspiration of self-styled prophet Credo Mutwa in a style dubbed ‘authentic fake’ (calabash, cows’ horns, the rays of sunrise); the happy coexistence of buildings named after Ossewa Brandwag notables and broeders (AJH van der Walt) and those named after heroes of a liberation movement (OR Tambo). The Theo van Wijk Building envelops the Miriam Makeba Auditorium and ZK Matthews Hall.

The latest element in the series of buildings still bearing the imprint of Sandrock’s design, emulates in architectural style and interior decor the ethnic souvenir art and inscriptions of former Bantustan puppet government architecture.5 The pride of the new Kgorong building, inaugurated at the end of 2010, is a venue called ‘The Cattle Bar’, aptly combining the literal and the figural of the present in the intersection between watering hole and feeding trough, while retaining a reference to the osse-span of a bygone age.

It speaks to the newly invented traditions which still bear the hallmarks of those now discredited, against which the new proudly asserts itself, evoking, as did its predecessors, ‘vertical authority and autochthonous origins, ... [in] connections [drawn] between the spirit of the nation and natural processes such as the movement of light and water’ (Bunn 1989:109).

Previous South African monumental designs had ‘come to be haunted by what was repressed to achieve their exclusiveness’ (Bunn 1989:109), failing in their efforts to evoke collective meanings, and therefore compulsively marshalling the African soil itself as warrant for their claims. The new recasting of Freedom as a themepark likewise poses as originary inscription on the Earth, as Annett Schulze demonstrates and Johan Strijdom critiques, as indigenism fostering new ethnic hierarchies and exclusions. Like its predecessors, the landscaping of Freedom Park harnesses rock, stone, earth, water, and flora, culminating in fortification-like structures resembling underground caverns, shyly protruding watchtowers, and bold signal posts transmitting secret codes from the top of Salvokop, to protect a newly found ‘memory’ now enshrined as the spirit of the Nation. At its base it enacts its claim to modernisation, featuring the national flagship project of the Gautrain moving at high speed through the newly created arcane landscape, accentuated at its terminus with the fragmented creations of fractious urban renewal documented by Cynthia Kros.

Unlike many of its predecessors, though, it gestures toward greater inclusiveness forged according to a script...
which would itself bear deciphering. Not entirely unlike its Voortrekker-monumental predecessor, Vryheidspark is explicitly designed (see Annett Schulze’s interview with Ramzie Abrahams) as a place of memory without a clearly defined historical national referent. It inscribes a metamorphosis of commemoration – a ‘passage from the historical to the remembered and the remembered to the commemorative’, opening a gap between national history and national memory (Nora [1992] 1998:626, 632), between history and heritage. Thus, at the same time as imaginary commemoration assumes cultural form in newly instituted lieux de mémoire, the previous institutions of national pedagogy – the traditional monuments, the museums (in Pretoria, the Natural History Museum and the Cultural History Museum) and the curricula of the academic study of history – are disintegrating, becoming defunct, falling into disrepair. ’... the rise of the memorial [nation] has paralleled the acceleration of the transition from a form of historical consciousness to a form of social consciousness ...’ (Nora [1992] 1998:634-635), embedding the idea of the nation in a performativity of memorialisation.

In the process, the idea of the nation undergoes a transformation in two directions. Firstly, we are now seeing ‘resurgent popular nationalisms, both African and Afrikaner, in which historical geographies of colonialism and imperialism are insistently being inserted into the present through struggles over the meaning of the nation and liberation’ (Hart 2008:693). The stagings and mutual up-stagings of these popular nationalisms are being brought to the fore in the articles on ‘running on the outskirts’ and ‘rugbymentality’ by Sope Maithufi and Charles Villet, respectively.

Secondly, and in tandem with popular nationalism, we are seeing a transformation of the idea of the nation comparable to that described by Michel Foucault as ‘the governmentatisation of the state’. The notion of ‘governmentality’ captures the displacement of formal/juridical power to informal techniques of government (see Lemke 2000:11). On the one hand, this displacement involves a delegation of tasks of governance from nation-state to supranational levels; on the other hand, it gives way to sub-political forms of agency (see Lemke 2000:11). While the staunchly nationalist monuments and monumental architecture of the past proclaim their inspiration drawn from models elsewhere, as illustrated in the article of Rolf Annas, some of them showcasing the so-called International Style, this was still pegged to the local geniuses of the Pretoria School, and held together by the frame of nationalist-ideological precepts. The new nation, by contrast, seems eclectically dispersed in Freedom Park, as Annett Schulze shows. Aspects of the design, building and landscaping of the latest monumental addition have been parcelled out to numerous heritage consultants, cultural entrepreneurs, Council officials, architectural firms, policy advisers, and construction companies (from which conglomeration academic historians were the first to take flight).

Transnational monumentality does not seem far off, where nationalist visions could be handed over wholesale, on a commission basis, to agencies tendering to monumentalise such intuitions, in an entirely different nexus – that of an evacuated Comintern imagiNation trained on precepts of socialism in one country, and culturalist-spatial answers to ‘the national question’ (as demonstrated by Angie Baecker in her Walkshop presentation – see Baecker 2010; also Vladislavić 1996: 13-38), now in search of new embodiments.

While several hills overlooking central Pretoria boast forts, memorials, and monuments of different eras dedicated to different causes, some of them now approaching oblivion; while, in the city centre, monumental
Edifices now alienated from their initially envisaged purpose are vying for the attention of a public that has eluded them; and while vast expanses towards the east have been cleared for sprawling consumer palaces – gaping empty spaces in the city centre bear testimony to the disjunction between memorialisation and the experience of civic exclusion and social dislocation that has foiled the emergence of a public sphere. Latter-day places and practices of memorialisation have no way to relate to this absence.

Rendering this absence palpable involves a counter-memory – a task to which only few writers, artists, and non-historicist historians have responded, along paths and detours without predetermined destinations, without prescribed commemorative gestures (as indicated in Ivan Vladislavić’s reflections inspired by Micha Ullman’s memorial Bibliothek, in ‘The Cold Storage Club’).

This, then, is the way in which I would propose undertaking this task: working through the dense over-determined meanings, moving through the mute immutabilities, contesting what is cast in concrete, rock, and stone through what its cracks and clearings attest to. In other words, I would propose, with Michel de Certeau (1984:93), becoming practitioners of the city ‘below the threshold at which their [monumental] visibility begins’, and thus ‘escaping the imaginary totalisations produced by the eye’. Such a practice of the city and its surrounds emerges from Sope Maithufi’s tracking of road-running around the city along tracks stencilled out by entrepreneurs seeking to perpetuate a militaristic social imaginary underscoring a previous political dispensation. A similarly antagonistic dynamic is registered in Charles Villet’s account of not-quite carnivalesque rugbymentality playing itself out at Loftus Versfeld Stadium, where erstwhile identifications are agonistically staged, and up-staged by a new commerce of images, and by a ‘nation’ jostling for its balls.

Walking the city, transposing places into spaces, as de Certeau suggests, opens the view on ‘a migrational city’ slipping into and out of the grids of the planned cityscape captured in the purportedly stable signifiers of the grid of the street plan, that local authority (see de Certeau 1984:99, 106). In Pretoria/Tshwane, such fixity has become unstable with the re-inscription of the changed street names of Natalie Swanepoel’s description.

In a way that the pages of this journal can reflect only in a reduced dimension, walking the city of Pretoria/Tshwane wary of repeating, could open a path of remembering and working-through.
Notes

1 The corporatist nature of UNISA’s governing structure is suggested for its architectural incarnations in the 1970s and early 1980s: '[Sandrock] inspired confidence in his clients, especially those relatively anonymous corporate bodies of universities and boards, with ... efficient management of projects and boards’ (Fisher 1998:234).

2 ‘[Sandrock] believed in controlled expansion which must carefully follow a master plan. Long before the first building saw the light of day he had already prepared a master-site development programme for a systematic progression of buildings to be constructed from west to east on the campus. All the buildings had to blend in with the landscape.

The firm Brian Sandrock was responsible for the design of the following buildings on the Unisa Muckleneuk Campus:


The Administration Building (Oliver Tambo Building) (official opening 1980). His design of the Administration Building was to break away forever from the conventional cell offices concept and was to introduce to Unisa the advantages of open-landscaped offices. Brian Sandrock always considered the Administration Building to be the focal point of the campus. Therefore it is fitting that his bronze bust was placed on the second floor of this building.


AJH van der Walt Building (official opening 1983).


3 Indeed, its claim to perpetuity seems vindicated in the words of its latest acolytes. ‘Welcoming guests to the event [opening the Kgorong Building as ‘the crowning glory’], Professor Mandla Makhanya, … [at the time, November 2010] Vice Chancellor designate, said that the university formed part of a triangle formed by Freedom Park, the Union Buildings, and Unisa. “Where other landmarks may have engendered fear, or alienation, Unisa … has always engendered and symbolised hope.” He termed this trio a triangle of vision, a vision that spoke to the future. The Kgorong Building features as “the centre, the heart, a point of convergence, and the social core”’ (Focus. Staff Newsletter, Nov/Dec 2010:1).

4 As the UNISA staff newsletter Focus (Nov/Dec 2010:2) enlightens its readers,

In a traditional African setting, kgorong has two meanings:

It is an entrance to a property. In a traditional setting, a compound is fenced off by means of logs of wood, shrubs and thorns. To enter the property, one needs to use the designated entrance called a kgoro.

It is a meeting place for the community where members of the community are called together to discuss matters that affect the entire community. This meeting place is generally situated close to the king or induna’s compound. The concept of lekgotla or imbizo, often used today for meetings, is linked to the concept of kgorong, as it is there that the lekgotla or imbizo meet.
Architect Marco Zietsman translates this Africanising vision into the slightly more sanguine, slightly more universal ideals of ‘knowledge flows’ – of the creation of a dynamic centre core in the building from which all knowledge will flow, while the horizontal and vertical open spaces capitalise on expressing circulation and movement to facilitate visual connections and communication between the occupants, thus interlinking inside and outside. (Focus. Staff Newsletter, Nov/Dec 2010:2)

5 ... [E]thnic references were deployed in the design of apartheid buildings in the 1970s – in the homeland capital of Mmabatho, for instance. ... the homeland dictator, Lucas Mangope, ... ‘issued a directive indicating that the plan of the capital should reflect local Tswana architectural forms’, said the architects, ‘a modern government centre is being developed that will reflect the strength, tradition and essential humanism of the Bophuthatswana nation.’ What was offered, in the end, was a mise en scène of democracy: the Mangope dictatorship was able to stage its operations in buildings around Government Square, a circular space ‘reminiscent of a Kgotla, the central meeting space of the traditional Tswana village’ (Bunn 1998:117).

However, this ‘is not to say that there was a one-way traffic of ideas or that architects simply imposed a language of tribal difference on reluctant participants’. (Bunn 1998:116). Indeed, as David Bunn (1998:116) elaborates, some aspects of apartheid ethnicisation have become elements of self-attribution of groups making claims on resources in the name of ‘origin’, ‘indigeneity’, and ‘tradition’:

one of the most powerful influences on architecture and development planning today is the alliance between certain forms of archaeology and ethnography in the service of African communities who see the need to define themselves – or advertise themselves – as distinct ‘tribes’ with fixed boundaries, traditions, and ancient ruins. ... The global tourist economy has massively accelerated the rate at which marketable indigenous cultures are transformed into Hollywood versions of themselves. Under these conditions, it is hardly surprising that it is now not always easy to distinguish between monument and tourist destination.

6 Foucault developed the notion of governmentality within the context of a genealogy of the modern state (Lecture 5 April 1978) in two lecture series at the Collège de France – one in 1978 entitled ‘Sécurité, territoire et population’, and one in 1979, entitled ‘La naissance de la biopolitique’.

7 The most palpable model being that of the Völkerschlachtsdenkmal in Leipzig, inaugurated on the centenary of the defeat of Napoleon at Leipzig in 1813.

8 See de Certeau’s (1984:117) distinction between space (espace) and place (lieu):

A place (lieu) is the order ... in accord with which elements are distributed in relationships of coexistence. It thus excludes the possibility of two things being in the same location (place). The law of the “proper” rules in the place the elements taken into consideration are beside one another, each situated in its own “proper” and distinct location, a location it defines. A place is thus an instantaneous configuration of positions. It implies an indication of stability.

A space exists when one takes into consideration vectors of direction, velocities, and time variables. Thus space is composed of
intersections of mobile elements. It is ... actuated by the ensemble of movements deployed within it. Space occurs as the effect produced by the operations that orient it, situate it, temporalise it, and make it function in a polyvalent unity of conflictual programs or contractual proximities. ... In contradistinction to the place, it has thus none of the univocity or stability of a “proper”.

In short, space is a practiced place. Thus, the street geometrically defined by urban planning is transformed into a space by walkers.

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Abstract

The South African Department of Arts and Culture initiated several legacy and heritage projects post-apartheid, referring to the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission – one of those being Freedom Park. By materialising governmentality within a monument, a certain notion of belonging is constructed: a sense of belonging to a national community which is valorised by sacrificial death and naturalised culture, embodied in the architecture of the created public space. The built environment and the guided tours both point to a performativity of spirituality: ‘cleansing and healing-ceremonies’ are part of a policy which tries to reconcile memories through strategic commemoration practices. With reference to Foucault’s idea of ‘heterotopia’, I will argue that Freedom Park can be read as both an illusory space and at the same time a perfect arrangement of select societal structures as compensation for former injustices.

Key words: governmentality; national belonging; death; freedom; heterotopia; spirituality
mission is ‘to provide a pioneering and empowering heritage destination in order to mobilise for reconciliation and nation building in our country; to reflect upon our past, improving our present and building our future as a united nation; and to contribute continentally and internationally to the formation of better human understanding among nations and peoples’ (Freedom Park [sa]:a).

Freedom Park attempts to tell a story spanning 3.6 billion years, a history marked by eight major conflicts as defined by the Park management, apartheid being one of them.

I will focus on the following two questions: How is national belonging constructed in Freedom Park? And how can a nation-state monument like Freedom Park be linked to Foucault’s thoughts on heterotopia as illusion and at the same time, as I suggest, compensation for the inequalities and gaps between rich and poor outside the Park?

Freedom Park management wants to ‘decolonise the minds’ by ‘emancipating the African voice’. Its architecture tries to embody a perfect arrangement of significant visual and textual references to specific former political claims. It is an official place of nationalised commemoration and therefore its historiography tells not only of past power relations, but also of present conflicts in nationalism-building processes – themselves being classified, racialised, gendered, invented, and dangerous ‘... in the sense that they all represent relations to political power and to technologies of violence’ (McClintock 1991:104).

Decolonising the mind: naturalising national belonging

The Park is divided into two main parts: /hapo1 – an ‘interactive exhibition space’ and an expansive garden, a ‘Garden of Remembrance’ (Serote 2006), consisting of several elements. One of the tour guides (tour of 23 March 2009) explains how these elements are linked together:

Here at Freedom Park we have three main elements. S’khumbuto is the heritage element. These are the Sanctuary, the Eternal Flame, the Amphitheatre, the Wall of Names and the Gallery of Leaders. The spiritual element is Isivivane... And the third element is the cultural one which is represented by Moshate. Mveledzo, the spiral path, links all elements.

In an interview, Jeremy Rose (2009:13f), an architect of the firm Mashabane & Rose, explains the process of arriving at a design for the Park:

And probably the most powerful moment in this design process was when I went to have a look at a traditional healer’s house and his healing garden where people would go and see this traditional healer and talk to him and they would get advice about marriage or pains or something, AIDS, or a dispute in the community, whatever. ... Integrated. ... since this is for ... a whole approach.... And then there were these stones, these big boulders in a circle and you could sit on the one. And he would sit on the other one. And he talks to you amongst, in this garden. So, we thought ... it would make a nice idea for a building that you could make. Treat ... the boulders as buildings and the garden as Freedom Park, the landscape. So it became a healing garden with these boulder-like buildings. And that was the concept.

Jeremy Rose discusses his meeting with Credo Mutwa, a traditional healer. Mutwa calls himself a Sangoma, High Sanusi. The design of the built park landscape cites Credo Mutwa’s healing garden in Kuruman in the Northern Cape. But looking at the decision-making process, it is more than just a copy of this privately owned garden by Credo Mutwa. Rose (2009:13) adds
that the Park’s management wanted Freedom Park to be different from Western ideas of museums:

... they’re trying to reinvent a new concept of telling South African stories and exhibit space with archival research happening and exhibits been developed, so they don’t want to be seen going to Western tradition. They want to make it their own. So it comes out of, it’s a new way of doing something which is thoroughly African. And they are always concerned by that.

Management chose narrations of practices imagined as ‘thoroughly African, as practiced by people defined as belonging to Africa. The Park’s key concept is “emancipating the African voice”’ (Abrahams 2009:5f, 17). In the legacy project designed to foster nation-building with the aim of re-instituting social cohesion, ‘nation’ as ‘empty signifier’ seems to stand for ‘African nation’. This assumption is corroborated by the key objectives which can be read on the website: ‘Contribute to social cohesion by positioning Freedom Park as a symbol of national identity in 70% of identified target groups’ (Freedom Park [sa]:b).

But how does the Park’s management define ‘the African voice’? And how is ‘African’ in ‘African voice’ designated? The Park management’s approach to defining the concept is twofold: firstly, establishing an intellectual platform which presents an ‘African reality’ (see Kriger 2009:9); and secondly, the Park’s management pursues an integrative approach in presenting specific ‘consciousness of’ an ‘African reality’. Ramzie Abrahams (2009:6), manager of the Department of Heritage and Knowledge, explains the meaning of consciousness: ‘a consciousness that people have whether you’re black or white or coloured or Indian or whatever. This reality is that consciousness which you should have, ... Integrating history, culture and spirituality.’

Both perspectives emphasise a kind of ‘consciousness’ that can be learnt, in effect an educational approach. But the definition also requires that the target audience be spiritual or at least acknowledge spirituality as an integral pre-condition for membership of this group: those who do not subscribe to some form of spirituality are excluded. The physical reality of the monument incorporates an ideological force – the one of spiritualised nationalism – which is related to the political affiliations of the Park’s management.

There is also a difference in the conceptualisation of the triad within the ‘African voice’: Whereas the tour guide speaks of heritage, spiritual and cultural elements, Ramzie Abrahams talks of history rather than heritage. Heritage seems to be a synonym for history and vice versa. Ciraj Rassool (2004:177f, 502) explains the shift from history to heritage-based knowledge in South African nation-building processes. He states that, traditionally, universities have claimed to be the production sites of historical knowledge. After the official end of apartheid, the production of historical knowledge was referred to individual memory, which signifies heritage. The contestation centred on the presupposition that history was ‘objective’ and memory not. But Rassool (2004:272) also shows how history and heritage can be interchangeable in this specific nation-building context of legacy projects centered on the construction of heroic memory. Rassool (2004:291) terms these projects ‘hegemonic’:

Many of these constructions occurred “from above” as part of the engineering of a new nation in accord with new identifiable discursive frameworks and also involved processes of heritage commercialisation and image branding.

Moreover, Rassool (2004:51), referring to Nora’s ‘lieux de mémoire’, states that these national sites of memory ‘seek to create ties of belonging for national subjects’.
In this sense, heritage legacy sites instantiate two kinds of valorisation: memories become valuable both nationally-cultural and economically. The corresponding narratives are constructions with a particular aim: through the narration a national community shall be evoked which belongs loyally to the nation-state.

But ‘the united nation’ itself harbours and perpetuates various identity categories. Ramzie Abrahams’ specification of ‘Black’, ‘Indian’ and so forth, or the tour guides’ use of the third grammatical person ‘they’ when referring to ‘African techniques’ like ‘Cleansing and Healing’, work to effectively perpetuate the categorisations operative under apartheid. Adducing these categories in this way entails a naturalisation complicit with certain colonial and apartheid discourses. This is in conflict with an analysis of difference as a historical construct shaped by power and rule.

Nationalising strategies: linking ‘the African voice’ to the corporeal of the space

The call for developing a sense of belonging to the post-apartheid nation takes shape in the sculpted landscape, the bodily experience of the space and the demands of the Park’s management and the tour guides.

The centrepiece of Freedom Park is a garden without walls. The environment was built with stones, trees and plants considered to be African, and materials like copper, taken from geographical places around the country’s nine provinces. The naturalised material does not refer to the whole continent but to the South African nation-state. Tour guides acting as interpreters of symbols and producers of knowledge explain that the landscape speaks with an African voice through its indigenous materials. The guides explain that the trees and the stones, especially those to be found at the spiritual place Isivivane, stem from South African territory. In Freedom Park, a process of naturalisation is engineered not only through what the eyes are made to see, but also through the voice-over rendered by the tour guides. The oral text is designed to give Freedom Park a certain authenticity. This authenticity is supported by the architectural citation of historical structures like the stone ruins of Great Zimbabwe. The work that went into creating this artificial place disappears and is essentialised, taking on a historical aura.

The monument itself – its physical structure – embodies the naturalised figure of the nation. It tells of ‘life’ over a time period of 3.6 billion years, and legitimises the new power over the land by tracing origins. In one of the publications (Freedom Park [sa]:10), mtDNA is adduced to corroborate the narrative:

Recent Research shows that the Khoi-san have the largest genetic diversity in mtDNA of all human populations. Y chromosome data also indicates [sic] that they were some of the first lineages to branch from the main human family tree. …. The distinct characteristics of all human varieties … all have beginnings in the physiology of the Khoisan people.

The search for origins is a so-called scientific one – a genetic search for material-biological essence. The discourse of ‘indigeneity’ leaves its mark in Freedom Park, too. How controversial the historiographies of biogenetically construed populations are, for example, those of the San, has not come up for discussion in the Park until now.

Cleansing and healing: intersecting spiritual practices

One site in the Park in particular, that named Isivivane, indicates how spirituality intersects with nationalism and governmentality.
Isivivane, one of the key elements in Freedom Park, is designated as ‘[a] resting place for the spirits of those who died in the struggles for humanity and freedom’. It consists of a Legkotla space and Lesaka. Lesaka is a stone circle made up of eleven boulders, nine of these representing past conflicts or events occurring in one of the provinces, one representing the South African government and one standing for the international community. There is no stone representing Africa as a continent. The voice-over of the tour guide explaining the arrangement invokes national belonging.

A cloud of mist rises from the midst of the stone circle, symbolising the spirits of those who died for humanity and freedom. The built environment of Isivivane addresses three questions essential to management as formulated by Ramzie Abrahams (2009:1): ‘... how do we deal with issues of distortions, with subjugation, with the redress not in the normal way it is done? How do we deal ... with the violence of our past? What is it that we must do to bring closure to that violence?’

The answer to these questions was to conduct Cleansing and Healing ceremonies ‘... as basically a means of dealing with loss. And when you deal with loss, you bring closure. If you deal with it, in whichever way it’s been dealt with, ... then only you can close’ (Abrahams 2009:2).

Throughout all negotiations with the past, the Park is governed by the desire to bring closure through inclusive spiritual practices.

The invocation of spirituality relies on two presuppositions: First, people have to believe – either in the performed rituals, or in the leaders performing them in the space that provides their reference. Second, they have to believe in the transcendence of death, in Isivivane signified by the stone circle.

‘Cleansing and healing rituals’ aim to reconcile in order to build the nation. The divisions of the state, the nine provinces, and the eleven official languages of the South African nation-state plus some languages spoken by communities marked as indigenous, provide references to the political aspects of governing the nation-state.

Spiritual government is enacted in other ways. Bodily gestures of respect are enjoined by the requirements of washing hands or taking off shoes in approaching the stone circle. The space and its aura were sacralised by ‘[r]eligious leaders from various faiths [who] imbued Isivivane with a deep sense of spirituality by performing a number of sacred ceremonies and rituals that laid to rest the spirits of our fallen heroes and heroines’ (Freedom Park [sa]:c).

This form of government is also enacted by the tour guides. During two of my Park visits, a tour guide asked me to cover my hair. He explained that I was a woman and in African culture, women show respect to their ancestors by covering their heads. The male visitors were asked to take off their headpieces for the same reason. When asking about this rule, I was told:

I think it’s whoever was just trying to be creative. (She laughs.) ... I think the men normally to show respect they normally take off their hats,

Unifying the nation through death

And the route the Trust took in dealing with loss ... was from spiritual perspective... another word that we can use for “cleansing and healing” is death management. How do people in various faiths or belief systems deal with death? How do they manage death ... of a loved one? (Abrahams 2009:2).
when they go to certain places but the women you can either cover or you don’t. But at Freedom Park it is civil one. It’s no rule. It’s just that from times people will try to combine their own belief systems or what they know to what they think is appropriate (Mufamadi 2009:19f).

She also explained that it depends on the socialised habits within the communities, concluding: ‘So as far as I’m concerned, in Freedom Park, you are not forced to cover your hair as a woman. But the shoes, we don’t compromise’ (Mufamadi 2009:21).

This incident and the interview passages show how intersecting social dimensions are produced and reproduced in interactions. The male, ‘black’, ‘spiritual’ job-holder, the tour guide, has the power – and probably the duty – to define rules, in this case racialised, gendered, and homogenising ones (in both directions: ‘African culture’ and ‘women’/‘men’). The surroundings and the practices that they enjoin produce a space of hierarchical relationships: The authorial voice-over from Park guides does not allow visitors to ascribe their own meanings. For the last three years, nobody has been allowed to officially visit the Park independently. A tour guide is obligatory. The Park’s management justifies this rule by saying the Park is not yet completed. Even as a researcher, it was difficult to get permission to move around in the Park on my own. I was always followed by security guards.

Jane Mufamadi (2009:3) explains the definition of spirituality chosen for the Park, and the way it works:

We deliberately chose spirituality and not religion because spirituality, it binds all of us. That is what we strive towards through religion. ... the emphasis is on spirituality to say: Even as we’re different in terms of our religious belief systems, ... most of the values within spirituality, they’re striving for the same thing: We must be sympathetic. We must respect others. ... I mean if you look at those things, you see those commonalities. So that is why we’re emphasising spirituality. And through that we are hoping that it will bring about reconciliation which is what we’re trying to highlight.

The function of spirituality is to ‘bind us all’; it is used in the Park to establish a sense of national unity. Memorialising the dead as a path to salvation is not for the other world but for the present one. The Park is a heterochronic matrix: present and past are intersecting. At the ‘cross/ing’, the individual is being led to national collectivity.

But the narrow limits of this approach give rise to another contradiction: So in telling the story of earth, we are not focusing on the scientific but we’re focusing on the spiritual stories or stories that are told within belief systems about how the earth originated and where it comes from or the universe for that matter. ... And coming back to the principles of ... emancipating the African voice ... we will therefore focus on the African story of creation. Because there is an African story of creation and ... once again, it’s a story that is [sic] been suppressed ... . And when people hear they say: “Ag, you know, folklore”. But if you would say the same of the Bible as example, of Hindu ... (Abrahams 2009:6f).

Establishing new myths is not an act of redress but of reproducing hegemonic structures: The space speaks to and of the political project of forging a sense of belonging to the current nation-state, taking up imaginations of the African Renaissance project. The narrative in Freedom Park aims to give effect to two constructions: that of spiritualised knowledge and ‘African identity’. One comes into either through redress of loss suffered in the past.

19 | Image © Text
In summary, the naturalised icons, such as stones (in the Wall of Names and the Gallery of Leaders), fire (the Eternal Flame) or water in Lesaka, signify sacrifice for freedom and humanity. Nature is associated with the nation-state; the nation-state appears natural. The nation-state is the fetish and telos within Freedom Park.

Conflicts about loss and remembrance

As long as the dead are spirits without names who died for freedom and humanity, everyone can associate – in his or her own definition of freedom and humanity – certain figures with these two values. But as soon as concrete names are chosen, written on the Wall of Names, or selected as leaders representing social groups within the nation-state in the Gallery of Leaders, conflict becomes visible. Put differently: The more concrete the name of the loss, the more obvious are the fractions that appear as divisions of the constructed national body.

Ramzie Abrahams (2009:5) explains the decision to exclude certain names, based on the putative difference between inclusiveness and integration:

... we’re going to get a lot of criticism. But we will stand firm in the phase of criticism. ... I mean if you talk about the inclusion of the ex-SADF names on the Wall, it’s based on the principle of emancipating the African voice. If we look at the Gallery of Leaders, ... where we’ve identified 24 leaders to be included in there. Once again there was a public outcry that we are not including Afrikaner leaders. But it is simply that we are basing it on the principle of emancipating the African voice.

Ramzie Abrahams does not only speak about the conflict between racialised groups. Indirectly, he also points to a gap. Only three women figures are represented: a queen, a communist, and the leader of the ANC-women’s league. I asked Lauren Marx (2009:14) about this selection:

What we’ve tried to do is we’ve tried to be as representative as possible in terms of gender. But unfortunately, I think we might have not failed in that respect but one has also to take into consideration there were very few female leaders throughout the history of the world. So we have representation of the women but it’s very, very little compared to men. Just simply because of the politics of the day ... .

Dead-ends: governemonumental heterotopia

In his paper ‘Of other spaces’, Foucault (1967:3) defines heterotopias as

... real places – places that do exist and that are formed in the very founding of society – which are something like counter-sites, a kind of effectively enacted utopia in which the real sites, all the other real sites that can be found within the culture, are simultaneously represented, contested, and inverted.

Freedom Park as a legacy project represents the organisational structure of a nation-state hailing its citizens. The term ‘citizen’ implies equality. But looking at the social life of these citizens brings the inequalities to the fore. The social surrounds of Freedom Park cast a shadow over the values that it espouses – values of freedom and humanity – when spiritual time is over.

Foucault (1967:6) talks about an ‘either-or,’ when he defines the functions of heterotopias:
Either their role is to create a space of illusion that exposes every real space, all the sites inside of which human life is partitioned, as still more illusory ... Or else, on the contrary, their role is to create a space that is other, another real space, as perfect, as meticulous, as well arranged as ours is messy, ill constructed, and jumbled. This latter type would be the heterotopia, not of illusion, but of compensation ...

Space and atmosphere are constituted through architecture, social goods and human beings ‘in their situated spatial ordering’ (Löw 2008:25). Materialised governmentality is linked to heterotopian space: A relational concept of space makes Freedom Park not a case of ‘neither-nor,’ but one of ‘both-and’: Depending on the personal experience or political attitude of visitors, elements of the Park, or the Park as a whole, can be read as illusion. Others may perceive a space of ‘perfect arrangement’ within the Park, reflecting their own worldview.

In Freedom Park, freedom itself is an illusion: One cannot move free of fear under the supervision of uniformed armed security guards. Their presence recalls everyday life in South Africa with its security guards and gadgets in shopping malls, at workplaces and in the ‘gated communities’ enclosing those who can afford it.

Getting to Freedom Park, one cannot escape a second reality check: Those living around Salvokop are poor, and while the Park itself aspires to market-oriented liberty, the immediate environs speak of its opposite, namely impoverishment. While questions of class are not considered within the Park, they are posed by its social environment.

Another heterotopia can be juxtaposed to Freedom Park: Pretoria Central Prison, a neighbour of the Park, is one of the biggest prisons of the nation-state South Africa. During the apartheid regime, many detainees were killed in Pretoria Central Prison. Today, individual prisoners reporting experiences of torture at the hands of warders⁶ attest to a crisis that calls into question the extent to which the ideals of freedom and humanity are honoured in this limited democracy. As a monument to a new nation-state, Freedom Park incorporates measures to compensate for inequalities and ruptures within the narrative of freedom and humanity. That is why tour guides refer to the University of South Africa (UNISA), to the Union Buildings, and to the Voortrekker Monument as signifiers of a past which seems to have been overcome. But they will probably not name Pretoria Central Prison as a site adjoining Freedom Park.

Freedom Park is a perfect arrangement of selective commemoration and knowledge production based on the creation of a derealised illusory space. Highlighting ruptures and contradictions, and throwing the ‘nation’ as a hegemonic structure into crisis, would be an opportunity to create an open, participatory and emancipatory space. It would be an opportunity to displace an illusory utopia based on nationalism, governmentality and docility.

In this paper, I have shown how Freedom Park’s management has materialised nationalism by using different technologies of power, naturalising constructed identitarian and racialising categories. Freedom Park does not only speak of post-apartheid empowerment and democracy, but also of the discursive and social exclusions of the new nation-state.
Notes

1 The // indicates a click sound in the Khoi-Khoi language.


3 MtDNA signifies mitochondrial deoxyribonucleic acid, which has assumed an important role in genetic ancestry tracing, indicating migration and diffusion from the African continent.


5 SADF stands for South African Defence Force, the apartheid state’s army.


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Problems with indigeneity: Fragmentation, discrimination and exclusion in post-colonial African states

Johan Strijdom

Abstract

Taking indigeneity and hybridity as opposite theoretical paradigms in the study of religion, this article problematises political discourses and practices that propagate the former view. The post-colonial resurgence of indigeneity is first contextualised with reference to anthropological studies of its political uses in Botswana and Cameroon, and then problematised with reference to its foregrounding in Freedom Park. It is argued that this tendency poses the danger of social fragmentation, discrimination and exclusion in post-colonial African contexts, which is precisely what the South African Constitution and National Policy on Religion and Education intend to prevent.

Key words: Indigeneity; ethnicity; discrimination; exclusion; Freedom Park; Religion Education; South Africa

Indigeneity, taken as the essentialist claim of ethnic belonging and ethnic entitlement to a particular territory on the basis of ‘having been there first’, may serve diverse functions depending on the historical context in each case. Who ascribes indigeneity, in whose interest is the claim made, within which political and economic context is it performed? In Africa, for example, the notion was used by colonisers to contain and keep natives/indigènes in an inferior place; in post-colonial states it has amongst other things been used by political elites in their struggles for power. If the first use was morally problematic, the second may not be least so.

I will first illustrate the problem of indigeneity with reference to two anthropological studies of its political instrumentalisation in post-colonial Africa. These case studies will provide a minimal framework within which we may then understand the emphasis on indigeneity by the post-apartheid South African state. I will finally problematise its prioritisation by the government in Freedom Park from the perspective of the National Policy on Religion and Education.

In an article on ‘Colonialism’, David Chidester (2000), Professor in the comparative study of religions at the University of Cape Town, outlines two opposite approaches in the post-colonial study of religion. On the one hand are indigenists who aim to recover and
cultivate the pure, pre-colonial essence of their traditions. On the other hand are those who view cultures and religions as hybrid constructs that are in flux owing to continuous encounters between people. Although the indigenist paradigm is clearly inadequate for not dealing with the reality of historical change and contingency, Chidester nevertheless defends its legitimacy when it is used as a strategy to recover beliefs and practices that had been suppressed under colonialism and apartheid.

The paradigm of indigeneity in my view not only lacks historical sensitivity, but may also – I will further argue – be morally and politically much more problematic than Chidester would admit in his essay. As examples of indigeneity, Chidester (2000:433) juxtaposes Africanists and Hindutva nationalists, without considering the tragic consequences of the latter's rigid identity politics that should surely warn us to be cautious about the former as well. In positing a homogenous pre-colonial Hindu identity as the only criterion of belonging to the post-colonial nation-state of India, the Hindu right has caused deep divisions and bears primary responsibility for the massacres of members from the Muslim minority in India (cf. Strijdom 2009). In post-colonial Africa the genocidal potential of essentialist ethnic classifications is, of course, evident from ascription of rigid identities to Hutu, as the really indigenous, and Tutsi, as the Hamitic myth would have it, as foreign invaders from the north (cf. de la Cadena & Starn 2007:20).

I turn to two recent anthropological studies for a minimal framework of the political functions of indigeneity in post-colonial African states. One focuses on indigeneity in contemporary Botswana; the other investigates its role in Cameroon, but broadens the scope by including not only other African states, but European states as well, emphasising the tendency of indigeneity to fragment, discriminate and exclude. This framework will provide the context to understand and problematise the prioritisation of indigeneity by the post-apartheid South African government as evidenced in Freedom Park.

First case study: Indigeneity in Botswana

In an essay ““Ever-diminishing circles”: The paradoxes of belonging in Botswana’, Francis Nyamnjoh (2007) argues that although essentialist constructs of ethnic identity are contradicted by the reality of change, migrations and mixtures, one needs to emphasise that such reified notions have been instrumentalised by colonial and post-colonial state apparatuses resulting in ethnic hierarchies and exclusions.

Under colonialism and apartheid ethnic identities were constructed and classified, often with disregard of local histories, and imposed not only for purposes of indirect rule, but also to justify a civilising mission to ‘primitive natives’. In post-colonial African states, tensions among ethnic groups about purity, belonging and entitlements have been ongoing, as he demonstrates in the case of the resurgence of indigeneity in Botswana since the mid-1980s.

Although the nation-state of Botswana guarantees citizenship to all indigenous groups within its territory and has tried to unite all its citizens by means of a national anthem, a sport stadium and other public structures, it has not been able to resolve resurgent ethnic divisions, hierarchies and tensions. Owing to their privileged position under British colonialism (as administrators and converts), the Tswana have become the most prominent group, as is reflected in the name of the modern state itself. This position has been
contested by the minority BaKalanga’s educated elite, themselves products of colonial privileging, who demand greater recognition and representation in government structures due to their having been in the area before the Tswana. The response from certain Tswana circles, however, is a stereotyping of BaKalanga as darker-skinned Makwerekwere (‘total outsiders’) who originate from Zimbabwe and further north and are therefore not authentic citizens of Botswana.

Ironically, the Khoesan (Bushman) minority who can legitimately claim to have been there prior to all other ethnic groups have been relegated to the lowest end of the hierarchy and are the least represented in government structures. They are looked down upon by all these groups as hunter-gatherers who have failed to establish agricultural villages as a condition for entitlement to land. Nyamnjoh (2007:311) aptly summarises the point:

> Although legal provisions might promise civic citizenship to all in principle, in practice inequalities prevail among individuals and groups, especially along rigid lines of politically constructed indigeneity. Being indigenous thus becomes a matter of degree and power relations, thereby making some less Batswana than others, even as they are armed with the same ... Identity Card and inspired or protected in principle by the same constitution.

Nyamnjoh, however, continues to show that even the constitution, mentioning only the eight major Tswana ‘tribes’, was accused by minorities of a ‘rigid hierarchy of indigeneity’ that discriminates between rather than protects the equality of all citizens. A commission was appointed to investigate, but their recommendations met with resistance from the Tswana majority who wanted to retain their dominant position in the national House of Chiefs. A redraft introduced additional members from districts with minority ethnic groups, but still privileged the Tswana. It was adopted by parliament, but most minority ethnic groups rejected it as an entrenchment of Tswana domination.

Against such rigid, hierarchical and exclusionary concepts of indigeneity, such ‘ever-diminishing circles’, Nyamnjoh (2007:323) insists on a more fluid view of indigeneity, by which he means a cosmopolitan vision that would acknowledge the reality of historical change, value diverse and mixed group identities, and be inclusive of and hospitable to ‘outsiders’. ‘The emphasis’, he concludes, ‘should be on the freedom of individuals and communities to negotiate inclusion, opt out and opt in with flexibility of belonging in consonance with their realities as straddlers of a kaleidoscope of identity margins’ (Nyamnjoh 2007:325).

Second case study: Indigeneity in Cameroon and elsewhere

In his book *The perils of belonging: Autochthony, citizenship, and exclusion in Africa and Europe*, Peter Geschiere (2009) argues that the political construct and instrumentalisation of rigid ethnic identities tend to lead to increasing fragmentation, exclusion and violent conflict. Although he focuses on Cameroon, where he has done fieldwork for more than 30 years, he compares autochthonous discourses and practices in Cameroon with examples from elsewhere in Africa and in Europe. He thus analyses the destructive effect of indigenism not only in the Ivory Coast with Gbagbo’s disastrous *Opération Nationale d’Identification*, in the Eastern DRC and in South Africa’s xenophobic outbursts, but also in the Netherlands, Flanders, France, and even in ancient Athens as the cradle of the discourse.
As for post-colonial Cameroon, he distinguishes between the role of ethnic belonging during the dictatorship of the 1960s-1980s and its role after the introduction of multiparty elections in the 1990s.

After the Second World War, Francophone Cameroon, under leadership of Ahmadou Ahidjo (from the Muslim North), called for a unification with Anglophone Cameroon in the struggle for independence. Although a northern group within British Cameroon voted to become part of the Nigerian federation, the southern sector decided to join Ahidjo and formed a unified federation in 1961. Independent Cameroon quickly settled into a dictatorship under Ahidjo. Citizens were exhorted to unite behind the president and to enact their loyalty in stiff national ceremonies enforced from above. Expressing local ethnic loyalties was banned and traitors were to be denounced. When Ahidjo unexpectedly stepped down in 1982, he appointed Paul Biya, a Beti from the Christian South, as his successor. Biya continued the suppression of dissidents until 1990, when due to international political and economic pressure (particularly from development organisations like the World Bank and IMF) multiparty elections were introduced.

Under this new dispensation Biya, however, found new strategies to stay in power, one of them being the use of autochthonous discourse and policies to divide the opposition. Three main parties emerged, each with its own regional and associated ethnic strongholds:

• Biya’s party in the Centre, South and East Provinces (with the Beti ethnic group as majority)
• the opposition led by John Fru Ndi in the Anglophone North-West and South-West provinces as well as in the Francophone West Province (with the Bamileke as the main ethnic group)
• the main party in the Muslim north (associated primarily with the Fulbe).

These regions do not form homogenous blocks, but are internally deeply divided, which Biya exploited in his favour by supporting specific ethnic groups. In the north, Biya supported the Kirdi who never converted to Islam and sought liberation from the Fulbe. In the western part, there was a divide not only between Anglo- and Francophones, but also amongst Anglophones themselves caused by northern highlanders migrating to the richer south-western coastal and forest areas for job opportunities. Biya’s government exploited these tensions by siding with the coastal minority of Bakweri and Douala, who claimed autochthony and complained about being swamped by Bamileke migrants from the Anglophone North-West and Bamileke from the Francophone West. Participating in funerary rituals in one’s village of origin became the ultimate test of belonging, of deciding who autochthons were and who allochthons were, contributing to suspicion, fragmentation and conflict.

Like Nyamnjoh, Geschiere would consider as crucial alternative the cultivation of a historical sensitivity open to change and a cosmopolitan attitude that values diversity and mixtures. He concludes:

This drastic exclusionary tendency and this quest for purity make autochthony discourse problematic in Africa as well as in other parts of the globe. Already in the classical Athenian example this implied a view in which staying in place is the norm and migration the exception. All the more important to emphasise that migration is as old as human society and that autochthony’s ‘Otherless universe’ is therefore an impossibility. There may be considerable wisdom in Kwame Appiah’s plea for a combination of cosmopolitanism and identity, or, to put it more concretely, in his idea that we need common stories, in order to live together but that these stories must address diversity and allow for conversation across differences (Geschiere 2009:224).
Third case study: Indigeneity in post-apartheid South Africa

If these two anthropological studies have convincingly shown just how problematic the political instrumentalisation of indigenous identities in post-colonial Botswana and Cameroon (and elsewhere) have become, we should ask about the political function of indigeneity in post-apartheid South Africa and whether we should be attentive to its potentially dangerous consequences here as well.

In his article ‘Indigenous authorities and the post-colonial state: the domestication of indigeneity and African nationalism in South Africa’, Federico Settler (2010) argues that, although the post-apartheid state has introduced legislation to limit the powers of traditional leaders, it has also drawn on indigenous symbols in its creation of a new African nationalism.

As elsewhere in sub-Saharan Africa, indigeneity in South Africa was constructed in an essentialist way and used by the colonial and apartheid state to rule through traditional leaders and by means of a bifurcate legal system – one applicable to white settler citizens and another of customary law for black natives.

Given this history of racial division and colonial use of traditional leaders, the ANC tended to be critical of the role of traditional leaders and defended the protection of individual rights for a long time, but in their 1988 guidelines for a post-apartheid constitution proposed that ‘the institution of hereditary rulers and chiefs shall be transformed to serve the interest of the people as a whole’ (Settler 2010:55). Their stance changed, however, with the arrival of multiparty elections in 1994, when the ANC realised that they needed the support of traditional authorities in rural constituencies.

What followed was a number of legal provisions that acknowledged the legitimacy, but limited the power of indigenous leaders culturally and politically. Culturally they were to guard traditional customs, which were ideally not to transgress the fundamental values of non-discrimination in the Constitution, and politically their power was limited to their rural locations, but always subject to the authority of the state. With the establishment of the Commission for the Promotion and Protection of Cultural, Religious and Linguistic Rights after 2002, the Council for Traditional Leaders lost its earlier function as primary advisors to government on indigenous matters, but is still crucially consulted by the Commission. In response to the restriction of their power, indigenous leaders have been cultivating alliances with transnational groups for the protection of indigenous rights.

Settler (2010:60) argues that in spite of the post-apartheid state’s anxiety about and legal domestication of the power of indigenous authorities, it has nevertheless instrumentalised the ‘sacred link to primordially African origins’ that the institution provides them with in order to ‘produce its own brand of African nationalism’. He finds this position already reflected in Nelson Mandela’s 1997 speech at the inauguration of the Council of Traditional Leaders, when he exhorted them ‘to assert the Africanness of our new democracy’ and to ‘promote and assist continuing research so that we know who we really are’ (in Settler 2010:60).

Settler (2010:61) concludes:

In the context of South Africa, indigenous authorities have demonstrated how, through the production of narratives of the sacred, both the state and indigenous communities have drawn on resources of legitimation from manufactured notions of Africa(ness), be it colonial, apartheid or contemporary nativist. These narratives of
the sacred emerge from the periphery of the post-colonial state, where the indigenous is reconfigured in such ways as to infect nationalist narratives and embed themselves firmly within South Africa’s post-apartheid democracy.

The foregrounding of indigeneity at Freedom Park

It is within this political context, as exemplified by the case studies above, that the prominence of indigenous symbols at Freedom Park should be understood and problematised. I will develop my argument in dialogue with Chidester again.

In a chapter on ‘Heritage’ in *Wild religion: Tracing the sacred in South Africa*, Chidester (2012:91-111) locates the pedagogical function of Freedom Park in relation to the *National Policy on Religion and Education* (2003). Freedom Park, as a governmental construct, functions as an extended classroom to the broader public, he says. It is clear to me, however, that there is a real tension, even contradiction, between the national policy’s promotion of multireligion education in public schools and the state’s prioritisation of indigenous religion at Freedom Park.

In his historical survey of the conceptualisation and design of Freedom Park, Jonathan Noble (2011:213-217) argues that it was Mbeki’s fashioning of Afrocentric ideals around the turn of the millennium that inspired the emphasis on indigeneity at Freedom Park. He admits that this caused an ethical tension with the objective of building and reconciling a multicultural society into a unified nation (i.e., I will add, with the original rationale of the TRC to negotiate a compromise between the racially divided black majority and white minority). When the poet and indigenous healer, Wally Serote, took over as CEO of Freedom Park in 2004, the final stage was set for showcasing authentic African indigenous knowledge and religion. Although international submissions for Freedom Park were invited and received, those that were not considered to be authentically African, were dismissed by the adjudicating panel. Eventually it was decided that the complex would include three main sections:

- at the centre a shrine (known by the isiZulu term *Isivivane*), consisting of stones from South Africa’s provinces around an area that symbolise the final burial site (*lesaka* in seTswana) of ancestral spirits who died in the struggle for human freedom. Before entering this most sacred circular area in the complex, with mist being emitted from the floor of the *lesaka* to create a sense of aura, visitors are expected to remove their shoes.

- a memorial (using the siSwati word *Sikhumbuto*), consisting of a wall with the names of fallen heroes in this struggle (admittedly a Western form of memorialisation), a sanctuary with a hall of heroes, a gathering space for public events (‘amphitheatre’) and a stylised sculpture of stainless steel poles symbolising reeds from African indigenous creation mythology.

- a museum (the *//hapo after the San word for ‘dream!’*) tracing the history of South Africa since primordial times. Faced with the problem that the museum is a Western colonial construct, the Africanist intellectuals had to think hard to come up with an authentically African indigenous design. A delegation visited the sacred healing garden of the Zulu sangoma Credo Mutwa in Kuruman in the Northern Cape, were advised by him about the primacy of rocks in African indigenous creation mythology, and resolved that the museum would be constructed in the form of seven connected boulders around an Indigenous Knowledge Systems garden.
Noble (2011:252) concludes:

The crucial point here is to note how the discourses that produced Freedom Park have wished to determine the essence of things. The Park has wished to promote the authenticity of indigenous forms to document and thereby to fix – through commissioned research – the significance of indigenous myths and practices, and ultimately to use this material as a motivation for the design of the Park.

The National Policy on Religion and Education

How does this ambitious governmental construct of Freedom Park relate to the National Policy on Religion and Education? (2003). In what sense does Freedom Park as extended public classroom in my view crucially deviate from the policy on religion education in public schools?

The National Policy on Religion and Education (2003) came about after lengthy negotiations between religious stakeholders, scholars of religion and the post-apartheid government. The result was an alternative to the apartheid state’s promotion of Christianity in public schools. Instead, a new inclusive policy was promulgated, based on progressive human rights values enshrined in the constitution, which guarantees the equal treatment of all religions by the state and before the law. The policy explicitly distinguishes between religious instruction which is the responsibility of the home and religious institutions on the one hand and religion education as the teaching about religions as task of the public school on the other. Teaching and learning about religious diversity, without promoting any one religion, became part of the compulsory subject field of Life Orientation. The intention has been to cultivate democratic citizens with sufficient knowledge of and respect for different religions to live responsibly in a multicultural world.

Chidester (2012:95-96, 109-110, 199-200) correctly observes that this policy has been rejected by Christian fundamentalists, who desire to maintain the assumed purity of their religion. Thus, for example, the ACDP and Irmhild Horn, a Professor in primary education at the University of South Africa, hold that the policy is based on a secular humanism that would not only relativise and undermine Bible-based Christianity as the sole truth by introducing children to different religions, but would also – in Horn’s argument – expose children to and even let them participate in the dangerous beliefs and practices of indigenous African religion that centres on ancestral spirits, magic and eventually Satanism. These conservative Christians similarly oppose Freedom Park, since its foregrounding of African indigenous practices and beliefs is considered to be in conflict with the Christian truth in the Bible.

The concern raised by secular critics against the tendency of monuments like Freedom Park to create uniformity and conceal diversity and bury debate should, in Chidester’s (2012:107-108) view, be taken more seriously than the opposition from Christian conservatives. What we witness according to these critics is the manufacturing of a new public consensus by means of propagandistic monuments. What we need instead, according to them, is more critical thinking about diversity and complexity. Chidester (2012:108) finally admits that Freedom Park as public pedagogy is complicit in creating such unacceptable uniformity, and suggests that religion education will need ‘to resist these pressures for artificial uniformity’ by being ‘more like the heritage project of the Sunday Times, decentralised and dispersed, than like the national heritage fixed in time and space at Freedom Park’. The Sunday Times initiative of 2007 is exemplary for not having manufactured a single
national narrative (the struggle for freedom at Freedom Park), but for promoting critical thinking by commissioning and sponsoring diverse memorials and multiple narratives in local histories.

What Chidester unfortunately fails to recognise, is precisely the conflict that I have tried to understand and problematise here: the directive of the policy not to promote any specific religion in public schools on the one hand and the prioritisation of African indigenous religion at Freedom Park on the other hand. It is the constitutional responsibility of the state to create a space in which all religions and cultures can flourish but without promoting any one, that the governmental construct of Freedom Park has contradicted in its foregrounding of African indigeneity.

I started this article by showing the consequences that the political instrumentalisation of indigenous identities in post-colonial Botswana and Cameroon has had, especially since the advent of multiparty elections in the 1990s: the potential to fragment, to create hierarchies and to exclude. I asked whether this should serve as a warning for South Africans. My answer should be clear. In the case of Freedom Park as an initiative of the post-apartheid state, the foregrounding of African indigenous religion has not respected the diversity and changing nature of South Africa's cultures and religions. It is therefore a failed state attempt to bring about multicultural understanding, equality, reconciliation and peace. One’s best hope would be that citizens educated about the constitutional responsibility of the state not to promote one religion or culture at the expense of any other would enter the public debate and put pressure on government to consider the dangers of essentialist discourses and governmental propaganda of indigeneity within a multicultural and multireligious society.

Notes

1 Both the United Nations (1986) and the International Labour Organization (1989) define ‘indigenous’ in terms of place and time, specifically the claim by a group to have distinctive cultural continuity with ancestors who had lived in a particular area before Western colonial intervention (cf Dove 2006:192). Niezen (2003:3) argues that the term became prevalent only since the 1980s, when indigenism became a global movement with the United Nations’ active promotion of the rights of indigenous peoples.

2 This article focuses on uses of indigeneity in post-colonial African power politics. The commodification of indigenous and ethnic identities is explored by Comaroff and Comaroff (2009) and the role of indigenous peoples in environmental politics is analysed by Dove (2006), but these aspects of indigeneity are not explored in this article.

3 Pelican (2009) similarly argues that indigenous and autochthonous discourses in post-colonial Cameroon have had political consequences that the United Nations has not foreseen in its propagation of indigenous rights.

4 Noble (2011:224) notes that international jurors on the 2003 panel tended to prefer designs that express universality, whereas the South African jurors supported submissions that were considered authentically African indigenous. At this first round, the jury failed to agree and no winner was announced.
References


Abstract

The paper uses the Gautrain as a device to link several works of public art and the new memorial at Freedom Park, interrogating their authorship, kinship, functions and aesthetic impact. The gigantic size of these works, their attempts to make portentous statements and to hail a defined public, suggest that they might belong to a new ‘monumentalism’. The paper advances an argument for why there may be a return to monumentalism, noting the several Herculean labours works of public art are required to perform in the context of urban regeneration and the summoning of a history that is free of conflict and troubling suggestions of heterogeneity. The principal artist whose works are examined in the paper, Marco Cianfanelli, is part of a network that has explicitly committed itself to emancipating ‘public’ places from their exclusive and coercive apartheid past. Cianfanelli himself has expressed the hope that his works in the public sphere will encourage spectators to think critically about their environments. But, since some of his works appear bogged down in a blatantly mercenary project for so-called urban regeneration and his Freedom Park work contributes to what is described in this paper as a highly romanticised version of African history, his optimism may be unwarranted.

Key words: Urban being; Running Man; Cianfanelli; Freedom Park; Pretoria/Tshwane; monuments

Introduction

This is a hard paper for me to write. There are artists in my family and I work in a school of arts. I certainly don’t want to say things that could be construed as wanting to put artists out of an already precarious business or that sound unappreciative of the value that public art adds to urban landscapes. I think it is a pity that artists like those I discuss below seem sometimes to be forced into compromises to allow their work to sell the ‘vibrancy’ of retail centres or – perhaps and this is a riskier argument – to make work that sells what is a very beautiful ‘chimera’ of national and continental history, but a chimera nonetheless.

I begin with a chance sighting of a work that turned out to be by a well-known local artist, Marco Cianfanelli in The Fields Centre in Hatfield, Pretoria. Through my attempt to get to know his Urban Being (Figure 1) on one side of the centre and his sculpture of a man running entitled Into the Fields on the other, I was led to think about kindred public art, notably William Kentridge and Gerhard Marx’s Fire Walker in downtown Johannesburg, similarly recruited to the cause of urban regeneration. These installations are all of ‘colossal’ proportions as if their superhuman scale could allow them to speak of the ‘elemental’ (Yampolsky 1995:94). My ruminations on whether or not, in terms of size and aspiration, they might be classified as monuments, as well as the fact that Cianfanelli is also
responsible for the new memorial structure at Freedom Park have caused me to interrogate what may well be a new monumentalism.

In the course of the paper, I move back and forth between discussions of various works of public art and the memorial at Freedom Park. Inspired by the observations of Paul Virilio (1984) on how our perceptions are altered, framed or conditioned by contemporary cinematography and by the views we glimpse from the windows of high-speed trains or jet planes, I record my impressions of objects thrown together by the time-space compression effected by the Gautrain on the route from Johannesburg to Hatfield, Pretoria. As voyeur-voyageur (Virilio 1984), I am afforded the opportunity of comparing structures from perspectives that are not available to the pedestrian spectator or to the motorist who must keep her eyes fixed on the highway (Figure 2). Habituated to the notion of ‘replay’ (Virilio 1984), I am in a position to consider the effects of variable lighting and backdrops even on the Voortrekker Monument, apparently so well entrenched in the iconography of the old monumentalism.

In the sections of the paper in which I discuss public art I ask, drawing on the work of de Certeau et al, what

Figure 1: M Cianfanelli, Urban Being on traffic island. Photograph by William Mabin.

Figure 2: Gautrain. Photograph by Linda Mabin.
is meant in this instance, by ‘public’ – how much of the ‘public’ are the works capable of, or desirous of embracing? Given that the works I discuss are part of urban regeneration schemes for the cities of Pretoria and Johannesburg respectively, I consider what the work is that the art is required to do and how it may vary or be constrained by different settings or, alternatively how it may seek to constrain the users of the so-called public spaces.

With regard to the Freedom Park memorial, I argue that it has been assigned the Herculean task of manufacturing a new history that is, perhaps by necessity, atemporal in order to enable it to transcend our current versions of South African history inextricably rooted, as they are, in particular moments of conflict. Lastly, I ask what the probable effects are of certain kinds of public art and of the memorial. In the case of the latter, my analysis is led by Foucault’s (2000) reading of Nietzsche’s call for ‘effective’ history in place of what I am imagining Nietzsche/Foucault would dismiss as ‘chimera.’

**Return of the monument?**

Not very long ago at the University of the Witwatersrand we were studying ways in which the artist Kevin Brand had reworked that most resilient icon of all – Sam Nzima’s photograph of Mbuyisa Makhubu carrying the dying Hector Pieterson in his arms as he runs from the conflagration with Hector’s sister Antoinette Pieterson (Sithole) wailing in anguish at his side. Brand has redone the picture in other kinds of media in settings that are remote from Soweto in order to encourage viewers to ask about what is not shown or known about the 1976 uprising. His picking at the threads of the minutiae prompted one of my students to ask me if I thought there would be a return to the monumental. Brand, in one instance, by fitting a long shadow flung backwards from Mbuyisa’s heels in a picture he made for the exterior wall of the museum in Dakar for the 1998 Biennale, seemed to be insisting on nuance and complexity at variance with the iconic familiarity of the Nzima image. The author of the essay we were studying argues that Brand’s (1998) addition provided a form of relief to an image that she visualises as having been ‘flattened’ by years of often indiscriminate recycling (Simbao 2008:145). She describes it as resonating with Roland Barthes’ preference for the text ‘with a shadow’ over cleaner, more straightforward texts. Citing Barthes, Simbao (2008:144) writes:

> There are those who want a text without a shadow … but this is to want a text without fecundity, without productivity, a sterile text … the text needs its shadow … subversion must produce its own chiaroscuro.

It was in the course of our discussion of this picture and the Barthes quotation in particular that the student remarked that he thought the pendulum might soon swing the other way so that we might see a return to the ‘monument’. I took him to mean something massive made of durable material rather than Brand’s duct tape, and which, if it casts a shadow does so only to magnify its own grandeur. Monuments are not, of course, as simple as this. The period after 1945 witnessed what is often described as a crisis in representation because the ‘symbolic language’ (Carrier 2005:20) available could not convey the horror of the Holocaust. Monuments thereafter sometimes attempted to cultivate a much smaller scale intimacy with their spectators or even to speak against monumentalism (Young 1992). In 1927 Robert Musil had already famously portrayed monuments as becoming invisible through familiarity (cited in Carrier 2005) and Pierre Nora (1986) was later to argue that paradoxically monuments allow for forgetting. In identifying monuments as a genre, despite
all these caveats, Carrier makes three points, among others, that I think are worth bearing in mind and are, in some measure, germane to all the works I discuss below. Monuments strive to provide ‘focal points of collective identity’; are the bearers of putative ‘historical tradition,’ and mark a ‘symbolic possession of urban spaces’ (Carrier 2005:17).

However, despite the range of their scale nowadays, the automatic semantic association with ‘monument’ is still with the colossal and the student’s remark put me in mind of two pieces of recent public art – Cianfanelli’s Urban Being and Kentridge and Marx’s Fire Walker, both of which are gigantic. It was their physical size that initially prompted me to wonder if the monumental is making its return via public art and that, if this is the case, what the implications are. Later I began to consider other aspects of monumentalism that resonate with Carrier’s points alluded to above. Carrier (2005:20), giving an account of the impact of the 1945 crisis of representation through the eyes of some of the principal scholars who have written about it, also emphasises the shattering of orthodox aesthetic traditions and gestures towards the taxing work that had to be done in an attempt to ‘reconstruct coherent memory cultures.’ This is an extremely evocative phrase and one that is pertinent to the South African case where ‘historical discontinuity’ (Carrier 2005:20) is obviously one of the primary challenges for any representation of the past.

It struck me that it was no accident that I had used the word ‘galvanise’ in the abstract I submitted for the conference at which the present paper was aired in draft form. Not only did ‘galvanise’ have connotations of the kind of material favoured by this new breed of public art, but it also seemed to be suggestive of how artists and their patrons might view the magnitude of the effort that it takes to halt the erosion of parts of the city.

In a fanciful moment I saw Urban Being and Fire Walker exercising tremendous holding power over patches of soil exhausted by years of frenetic human activity that was on the point of shifting and breaking up.

I was reminded of David Bunn’s (2008) imagery of the city’s skin (in the case of Johannesburg) refusing or being unable to register its subterranean turmoil, most obviously a reference to the agonising labour in the mines that gave birth to the city. Bunn and some of his co-authors in the volume on the so-called ‘Elusive Metropolis’ create the impression of a city living dangerously close to the edge, if for no other reason than it is built on shifting ground, rendered unstable by the sinking of extraordinarily deep mine shafts. There is a suggestion that Johannesburg is callously – or defensively – disposed to amnesia and does not willingly remember its history and so, it seemed to me that the two sculptures might also be striving to contain the increasingly rapid disintegration of certain types of urban memory (see Dodd 2011a and Carrier on ‘memory cultures’ above). It occurred to me that, whereas Urban Being and Fire Walker are undoubtedly the progeny of particular artists with some common semiotic tactics, the form they take may be as compelled by the friable nature of the contemporary landscape – both urban and mnemonic - as it is by the genius of their creators. Under those circumstances, can there be any way of accommodating the visual equivalent of the kinds of subtle and therefore generative text that appealed to Barthes? Here I imagine some form of public sculpture that is genuinely open to several interpretations and is capable of prompting radical revisions of the city’s past.

Urban Being – September 2011

You glimpse him first as you make your way from the Hatfield Gautrain station beyond Walton’s stationery.
shop along an avenue of desiccated jacaranda trees, looking like an overgrown traveller pausing before he goes to check in at the City Lodge to his right (Figure 3). But surely, you say to yourself, they don’t have beds to accommodate his unyielding twelve-metre frame? *Urban Being*, he is called, by sculptor Marco Cianfanelli, a Wits Fine Arts graduate who has since made a name for himself, recently featuring as one of a handful of artists of Italian descent from South Africa at the most recent Venice Biennale. His exhibition for the Biennale had its premiere here in Pretoria at the nearby Art Museum in June 2011.

*Urban Being* has no lightness despite his name, which inevitably conjures an association with Milan Kundera’s *Unbearable lightness of being*. It is strange that he has none of the dynamism of the man running ‘into the fields’ on the south side of the shopping centre by the same artist or of the ethereal spirituality of the reed fence that reaches effortlessly into the sky reddening over Salvokop on the return Gautrain journey, making you catch your breath despite your cynicism, which was also created by Cianfanelli.

*Urban Being* seems to have to muster all his energy for being and for compacting the city over several centuries in the form of little people who roam over his body in a style that is reminiscent of, but not as graceful as Clive van den Berg’s *Commuter* at the Chris Hani-Baragwanath taxi rank in Soweto. *Urban Being*, like some of Cianfanelli’s other work – like the man running into – but it seems more as if he is...
running out of – ‘the fields’ which, perhaps he has not noticed, have been transmuted into a shopping centre carrying only the whiff of an anglicised memory of the open veld – is made up of layers. In this work the metaphor is heavy and repetitive, whereas it works much better in Cianfanelli’s other sculptures (see for example, his work displayed in Turbine Hall discussed below). Here, presumably, it refers us to the epochs and the processes that are laid down like cast iron sediment to make this being that is not strictly a man but a vast composite of city life that we are only able to apprehend as a man. From certain vantage points his human likeness is broken up into complex abstraction (Figure 4). In this we recognise that he has kin in other places including William Kentridge and Gerhard Marx’s Fire Walker in Johannesburg. It is hardly surprising because Cianfanelli works with other well-known artists through the Goodman Gallery and the Trinity Session, the latter being an ‘art production team’ directed by Stephen Hobbs and Marcus Neustetter, which focuses on urban regeneration and public art – and there must be many mutual influences and what are popularly known as synergies (Vansa 2011; see Bunn 2008 on the Trinity Session).

Fire Walker, made of laser cut steel plates, almost rivalling Urban Being in height, can only be seen as a gogo carrying a brazier packed with lit coals for cooking on her head from one place that evidently favours the pedestrian’s perspective. For car drivers going over the Queen Elizabeth bridge she is quickly lost and dissolved into incoherent fragments, which to some critics has given her a disturbing, ghostly quality that suggests to them that certain kinds of black women are still not welcome in the city (Matsipa 2011) and for others confirms the genius of Kentridge and Marx in confounding the tradition of the staid, immovable urban monument (Dodd 2011a). Marx has explained the metaphor of the different planes that make up Fire Walker – or which cause her to disintegrate – as ‘comments on the nature of living in Johannesburg – ruptured, colliding, unstable, but also, once settled, open to the possibility of new and unexpected formations’
(Barstow 2011:30; Bunn 2008; and the work of Ivan Vladislavic, particularly 2004). Johannesburg has come to own what Alex Dodd (2011a:21), also writing about *Fire Walker*, refers to as its ‘marginal and contingent nature,’ which can be simultaneously exasperating, terrifying and exhilarating. But, what of Pretoria? Has *Urban Being* strayed into the wrong city? Did he fall asleep on Gautrain and miss the mellow, locally-inflected electronic voice asking him to ‘please’ leave the train and only wake up once it had turned around and come back to Hatfield, leaving him no option but to see if there was a place for him at the local City Lodge? (Figure 5).

Mabin (2011) points out that the capital city in general has to make certain decisions about how to represent the nation and its place in the world and that it generally does so through its public buildings and monuments. Mabin (2011) wonderfully evokes the history of Pretoria’s struggles to convince even itself of its capital city worthiness. In his account we have a sense of Pretoria constantly looking over its shoulder at its troublesome neighbour who, especially at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, fraternised with the wrong sorts and was always better at drawing attention to itself than was the much more modest and unassuming city to the north of it. Over the course of its history, Pretoria (where does Pretoria end and Tshwane begin, Mabin asks) has had, through various turns of events and the arrival of other contenders on the scene, to concede some of its prestige and power as capital city.

The Union Buildings (1910-1912) managed to endow Pretoria with some semblance of imperial capital citizenship with Herbert Baker’s ingenious concessions to indigenous material nevertheless rooting it in Africa (Bunn 1998; Mabin 2011). But even by 1994, ‘at the dawn of democracy,’ Pretoria ‘remained a rather eclectic collection of private and public buildings and spaces, almost as though it had been waiting for a new direction to reorganise and re-present its capitalness’ (Mabin 2011:19). Even now Mabin (2011:21 after Sonne) observes that its ‘political iconography’ is ‘in flux.’

There is of course one notable exception. A few decades after Baker’s Union Buildings had been finished the Voortrekker Monument embodying the triumph of resurgent Afrikaner nationalism settled itself down in a position to survey it was all shortly to command (Mabin 2011). Despite the fact that Albert Grundlingh (2009) has dismissed its significance for all but a handful of eccentric right-wingers, it still unfailingly makes its presence felt. Against the pale September evening sky the Monument looks neither monolithic nor anachronistic, as it is often portrayed (e.g., Noble 2011). The Gautrain drive-by makes it seem more likely that its architect Gerhard Moerdijk did derive his inspiration from an odd shaped hill at Mapungubwe near where he had a farm, as one version has it, than from a relatively new-fangled monument built in the early twentieth century in Leipzig as Elizabeth Delmont argued (1993) (Figure 6). Viewed fleetingly in the dying light of the day, the Voortrekker Monument looks almost organic with only a slight tracery of man-made embellishment falling across its façade in a gentle arc. If the ‘basic language of public sculpture is the silhouette’, as Gerhard Marx (Barstow 2011:29) maintains, speaking most forcefully when it is thrown up against the sky like George Harrison holding up his new found nugget of gold, exposing his bony ribcage to motorists on the R24 at Bruma and the angel atop the War Memorial in the grounds of the Museum of Military History in Saxonwold, then the Voortrekker Monument is executing a virtuoso performance. Cianfanelli has effectively set himself up to compete with its spectacular effect.
It is useful, at this point, to return to Carrier’s typology of the monument genre (see above), which attempts to perform various symbolic functions in terms of summoning a community and of persuading it to unite around recognisable ‘historical traditions’. Cianfanelli maintains that it is important to incorporate what a review of his work calls ‘an emissary from the past’ in making ‘place’ speak to the ‘intellectual and emotional desires for location’. These are envisaged as the starting point for the ‘construction of self’ followed by the much more elaborate constructions of ‘community’ and ‘nation’ (Dodd 2011b). I would argue that Cianfanelli (and other authors of Freedom Park), as well understanding the need to compete with the aesthetic impact of the Voortrekker Monument, recognises the need to match its historical credentials – the powerful narrative it encapsulates of a pioneering people who forged ahead against incredible adversity to achieve nationhood. The quandary is how to cater to desires that are so dis-located and dispersed that they need a literal re-embodiment of the past to persuade them that they belong together. His brief is not essentially different from that of the Voortrekker Monument’s designers confronted with divided ‘Afrikanerdom’ in the early twentieth century, but it is probably a good deal more demanding. Perhaps the very magnitude of the task necessarily limits both the aesthetic and the narrative repertoire.

Cianfanelli is clearly open to the desirability of a Barthes text with productive chiaroscuro. Ten years ago when he had just completed his first major public art project for SA Eagle, one of the big short-term insurance companies in South Africa, in Johannesburg’s Hollard Street, Cianfanelli asserted that his sculpture was ‘intended to affirm the urban context with all its contradictions’ (cited in Ticknor 2002). Not all the critics were convinced. Michael Smith made some quite cutting observations about the SA Eagle work, dismissing it as ‘urban romanticism’ (Smith 2005), while allowing that Cianfanelli’s work subsequently achieved a much greater degree of ‘elegance’ and ‘complexity’. Judging by his use of antithesis, by ‘urban romanticism’ Smith means facile, disconnected from the gritty realities of the city and, in this case, dumbly extolling the virtues of finance capital rather than expressing subjectivity and a revolt against the aesthetics and values of industrialisation that characterised Romanticism proper.

I wonder if Urban Being, for all his colossal size and what I take to be belaboured metaphor, falls into the category of urban romanticism, either as Smith means it or in its more orthodox sense. From a little distance, some of the small figures dispersed over Urban Being’s frame can be seen as miniature silhouettes offset against snippets of blue sky as if, after all, there is a place for individuality in the vast urban machine (see Dodd 2011b) (Figure 7). They are the most charming aspects of a piece that is otherwise strikingly immobile and are suggestive of Romanticism in its historical sense, denoting the subversive art and literary movement that developed in response to the pitiless, impersonal forces of the Industrial Revolution.
But the little figures on Urban Being don’t put up much of a fight. It takes a leisured spectator to notice them, quite unlike the human figures Cianfanelli has made dramatising their moments of anguish, joy and workaday life along the index of the gold price that stands in the foyer of Anglo-Gold Ashanti’s Turbine Hall in Johannesburg (Figure 8). The overall impression of Urban Being is of overwhelming solidity, lack of flexibility and a ponderous dependence on the spectator to allow for his multi-dimensionality to become evident. It is as if Urban Being is immobilised by his setting. One is tempted to conclude, probably unjustly, that Being might be able to take the same kind of assertive stride forward as Fire Walker if he were standing somewhere in Johannesburg instead of in a suburban shopping centre in Pretoria which is, according to Mabin’s (2011) portrayal, still waiting after all these years to assume its inheritance as ‘a grand capital’. The truth is that Urban Being has been assigned a very difficult mission. Returning to Carrier’s typology of monuments,
we might observe that *Urban Being* is supposed to be doing several jobs, including encouraging the development of new forms of collective identity through prompting a recognition in the passers-by of the commonality of their experiences of urbanisation. He is supposed to call attention to himself and to the potential of the commercial quarter in which he stands and to the incipient greatness of the city both as generic form and as this singular one – Pretoria/Tshwane.

**Into The Fields – September 2011**

The new monuments like *Fire Walker* and *Urban Being* are not named as monuments but they are, as we are seeing, allocated the same responsibilities. One of these includes repossessing urban spaces (see Carrier’s 2005 typology above) thought to be on the edge of irreversible decay and vulnerable to the depredations of the undesirable public – not the urbane one that *Urban Being* is supposed to hail. It is worth thinking about the ‘ghosts in the city’ who figure in the title of a chapter written by colleagues collaborating with de Certeau (1998) on the second volume of *The practice of everyday life*. What form do these ghosts take in our cities? Perhaps we could include the card-players interviewed by Zen Marie and Jonathan Cane (Marie & Cane 2011) within reach of *Fire Walker* who don’t even recognise her as having a human form but who are themselves (perhaps) ‘everyday artists’ whose art is made through their daily practices and ways of speaking. They are reduced to being as insubstantial as ‘ghosts’ tracing out ‘unknown memories’ because they are drowned out by the official recognition manifest in the contemporary art that has been erected in their neighbourhood (de Certeau et al 1998:141). De Certeau et al (1998:142) are not immune to the dangers of romanticising the everyday but they have a lovely line about awakening ‘the stories that sleep in the streets.’ After walking the streets of Burger’s Park close to the Pretoria (as opposed to the Hatfield) Gau-train station, a densely populated flatland in the south east of Downtown Pretoria where Tshwane’s programme for urban regeneration does not yet seem to have penetrated, one suspects that it takes a great deal of regulatory power to keep stories that reference unorthodox histories quiet and the unruly ‘ghosts’ who tell them in check (Figure 9).

I turn now to a discussion of Cianfanelli’s sculpture on the other side of The Fields, south of the Hatfield Gau-train station approach, which is patently more animated than *Urban Being* and has also been more explicitly linked to the objectives of urban regeneration in the publicity literature. My discussion aims to explore the admittedly rather limited ambitions for urban regeneration as they are expressed by some of the principal players here and to gesture towards some of the social and cultural consequences of an approach which expediently allies the City’s spatial planning programme with poorly concealed commercial profit-making motives.
Cianfanelli’s man ‘running into the fields’, according to Jeffrey Wapnick, ‘captures the animation of the precinct’s streets and spaces’ (Premiumproperties 2011). Wapnick is managing director of the Johannesburg Stock Exchange listed, Premium Properties that owns assets in the region of R2 billion and holds a portfolio of properties in the Pretoria and Johannesburg CBDs, Hatfield and Silverton. ‘The Fields,’ Wapnick asserts, has as its ‘key outcome, urban renewal.’ He avers (and one assumes it is true for the development to have gone ahead) that ‘we worked to ensure that it would support the City of Tshwane’s Metropolitan Spatial Development Framework’ and runs on fluently: ‘In addition to creating a vibrant space within the development, The Fields maximises the synergies to the surrounding areas, facilities and public transport routes, ensuring that the development is both connected and relevant.’ Of the role of public art he intones: ‘It’s critical to have pride in our environment and culture and art plays a pivotal role in a complete society ... the sculpture adds to the urban context by reflecting the youthful, bustling energy of the growing node. It is another way that The Fields can give to the community and create a sense of place’ (Marketingconcepts 2011) (Figure 10).

It feels wasteful to use the beautiful prose of Certeau et al (1998) when they describe urban ‘renovation’ strategies as a kind of peremptory ‘medicalisation’ for commenting on what is really just a redevelopment scheme. Nevertheless, they did have property moguls in mind as one of the potential beneficiaries of urban renovation. They note how the ‘nursing power’ that is expressed through urban renovation ‘takes responsibility for the health of the social body and thus for its mental, biological, or urban illnesses ... the affected urban parts are placed under supervision, taken away from inhabitants, and entrusted to preservation, real-
Before pursuing Cianfanelli’s idea about the capacity of art to act on the world, I pause to think about the work that monuments did in the course of the last century and a bit in the ‘west’. To recapitulate somewhat crudely – before the middle of the twentieth century they were supposed to assuage grief through offering an immaterial kind of immortality and declaring that suffering was necessary for the survival of the nation-state. Then, after the Second World War, they tried to atone for unspeakable wickedness, to prevent its recurrence and to issue more subdued calls for improved versions of the nation to stand together.

Urban Being and Into the Fields are supposed to be calling on the citizens of a city that is judged to be in need of restoration and reinvigoration and to cause them to be more deliberative about their role in it. The two pieces, as far as I can see, have caught the post-Second World War monumental agenda with its more critical and self-improving objectives but are they, in any way, able to realise it? It is clear that this is what Cianfanelli intends.

But the sterile environment of The Fields and its immediate vicinity appears to suffer from what some scholars have called ‘Starbuckisation’ with its string of chain eateries making one wonder if Urban Being and Into the Fields stand the remotest chance of attracting even a second look from the passers by, never mind about inducing them to think critically or creatively. It might be that this judgment is too harsh because it was made on an afternoon that the Blue Bulls were losing to the Sharks in a rugby match at nearby Loftus Versfeld (the proximity of which is also, according to sa propertynews an important predictor for The Fields’ likelihood of success). Most residents and patrons were probably more predisposed to have rugby than philosophical conundrums on their minds. But there is little evidence to suggest that the developers are interested in awakening anything other than the most basic consumer desires for cell phone technology, fast food

Public art has been one of the rejuvenating ingredients that has invariably been injected into selected ‘nodes’ at least since the early 2000s when Richard Florida (2002) released his supposedly earth-shattering revelations about the economically beneficial impact of the presence of the so-called ‘creative class’ on the city. As Chiara Tornaghi concluded from a study of projects in Newcastle Upon Tyne and Gateshead in the UK, the extent of the ‘publicness’ of public art may vary enormously from being imposed on the ‘community’ to being the outcome of a genuinely consultative process (undated PDF). The Trinity Session (see above), in consciously setting itself against the coercive and exclusive ‘public’ spaces promulgated by the apartheid regime, expresses a broad and diverse notion of the public and tries to imagine the ‘public domain’ as one of ‘exchange’ (Vansa 2011). Cianfanelli himself has been described as desiring to ‘prompt a sense of complexity’ in the minds of the spectators of his art (Dodd 2011b).

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and alcohol. The Development Framework imagines an environment that is amenable to the transient and relatively affluent pedestrian delivered to the precinct by Gautrain and its associated public transport network, presumably with little time to stop and stare (HatfieldUrbanDevelopmentFramework 2009). A publicity brochure for The Fields, clearly addressed to the massive student influx through the gates of the nearby University of Pretoria, also anticipated by the Framework Document’s authors, exhorts its readers to ‘live with passion’. The ‘passion’ is visually and textually exemplified in at least five different ways, none of which contains the slightest reference to study or cultural pursuits (City Property) (Figure 11).

This discussion of Into the Fields has added to the earlier stock of metaphors about erosion (see above in relation to Fire Walker). The metaphors gesture towards major kinds of therapeutic intervention perceived as necessary to avoid wholesale disintegration. There certainly seems to be scope for artists within the broad brief created, but the constraints cannot be ignored. Returning briefly to Urban Being, one might ask how an artist could ever hope to make what is at once a large and portentous statement about urbanity and a more subtle series of comments on its innumerable subjective experiences – already a formidable task in itself – in a precinct that is really concerned to keep the public moving along attractively cultivated routes of material consumption. I have argued above that Urban Being has been assigned many of the tasks usually associated with monuments but that the odds against him being able to accomplish them are high.

Freedom Park – Timeless

Cianfanelli seems to have retained his optimism about what public art is capable of. For the last part of this paper I want to move away from retail and back into the field of formal monumental art, to Freedom Park, in fact, where Cinafanelli’s reed fence on the crest of the hill – the Sikhumbuto (memorial) is perhaps the most spectacular piece in a setting that has decided against spectacle. In South Africa there has been a debate for some time about how monuments can develop an indigenous aesthetic that acknowledges African memorial practices and is not seen to be indebted to European traditions (Figure 12).

Jon Noble (2011) has given us a detailed account of what he conceives of as a struggle to find an appropriate architectural language in which to express the
ideas (perhaps we should say ideology) most closely associated with the person of Thabo Mbeki when he was President of South Africa. Under the loose rubric of the ‘African Renaissance’ these ideas stressed the importance of recognising that Africa is the common birthplace of all humankind and that Africa has given rise to philosophies, ‘cosmologies’ and systems of knowledge that owe nothing to the West – or at least which preceded western systems by many thousands of years. It is essential to recognise Africa and its wisdom as ancient so as to establish incontestably both their vulnerability and integrity. The connection was clearly articulated by Wally Serote when he became CEO of Freedom Park in 2004 and cited ‘African history and heritage as bearers of our traditions and values’ (Noble 2011:216).

Such a position relies on us subscribing to the postulate that what is old is good, presumably having stood the test of time, and that ‘history and heritage’ have borne their freight of traditions and values down to the present without mishap. Stated baldly like this exposes these statements immediately as fallacies. It is unlikely that ‘traditions’ and ‘values’ would remain intact over centuries. More on this follows below but let us observe here that seasoned architects GAPP, MMA and Mashabane Rose Associates acting as the Office of Collaborative Architects won the tender to design Freedom Park in 2004 (Noble 2011:220). These parties had already had a great deal of practice in finding a language to express the oppressive and debilitating impact of apartheid and for mourning its victims, commemorating the heroism of martyrs made by the Struggle and even telling stories of ancient Africa (see Bremner 2010 for detailed discussion). Perhaps it was not a very great leap, after all, for the architects to translate Mbeki’s African Renaissance or Serote’s injunction that ‘the’ African creation story (show) a ‘sympathetic dialogue with the national environment’ into the ‘fluid, organic, rounded forms’ that Noble (2011:246-247) tells us became characteristic of Freedom Park.

What we may remark on here is that through its rhetorical iterations and an increasingly monopolistic architectural language, African knowledge has come to mean something that is not defined in temporal terms at all – except that its origins are supposedly located in the realm of long ago. One of the consequences is that there are no hard edges either architecturally speaking or in terms of the history represented. In the discussion papers for Freedom Park there was some concern with what were understood to be the distortions of South African historiography but the notion prevailed that they are susceptible to being rounded out rather than confronted and perhaps expunged (see Noble 2011:215). I take this to mean that interpretative dissonance was avoided, which, considering the combative nature of South African historiography, is quite a feat.

Ben Highmore (2006), in highlighting the ‘resistance’ to modernity that caught the attention of de Certeau and his colleagues (see above) has cautioned us against
thinking that their work is a ‘nostalgia for something that has passed’. On the contrary, what de Certeau argues for is a ‘willingness to listen to different temporalities that exist together in the present’ (Highmore 2006:114). In fact, at one point in the chapter that I cited earlier, de Certeau et al talk about the city as a ‘stage for a war of narratives’. This makes the absence of temporality in Freedom Park’s dominant narrative – so close to a city that has surely had its fair share of narrative and real wars – even more striking. But, of course, Freedom Park was scripted to tell ‘the story of the struggle of humanity to survive in his/her environment and to live harmoniously with fellow human-kind’ (quoted from Conceptual Framework, Noble 2011:215), with the stress falling on the latter part of the objective.

The drive to go as far back as we can at Freedom Park – to the three and a half billion years ago or more when the geology at Barberton was formed – is intended to transport us back to something that was pure, essential, elemental and, as Foucault (2000:372) writing about Nietzsche’s theories of history would observe it may very well cause us to feel ‘solemn.’ But what we are being shown, I would argue, is an illusion and our solemnity is wrung from us by sleight of hand. For, as Foucault (2000:372), bringing out aspects of Nietzsche’s work, observes: ‘what is found at the historical beginning of things is not the inviolable identity of their origin’. It is wrong to believe that ‘things are most precious and essential at the moment of birth.’ How can we overlook multiple forms of heterogeneity, conflict, struggle to the death and unpredictable evolutionary paths that have been accomplished mostly through mutation and accident? (Foucault 2000:373)

But the mythology surrounding our birth as a people creates such a lovely ‘chimera’ (Foucault 2000:373) that we might be expected to object to any attempt at its destruction. Why would we want everything to be ripped away from the ‘self’ and to be left with no sense of security or stability? (Foucault 2000:380) Do we really want to trade the serenity of Freedom Park including Cianfanelli’s soaring metal reeds that reach out to embrace the infinity of the sky for ‘effective history’? The Nietzschean notion of ‘effective history’, I think, means to purge the discipline of history of some of its disingenuous practices, including the pretense of objectivity assumed by many historians and the attribution of transcendent meaning to historical events and of predestined and homogeneous identities to groups of people. We are warned in no uncertain terms that ‘effective history’ ‘will uproot … traditional foundations and relentlessly disrupt its pretended continuity’. And, in the face of such radical disruption, if we allow ‘effective history’ to do its work, we will consequently be deprived of a millennial ending (Foucault 2000:380).

Foucault (2000:380-382) interprets the ‘task’ of ‘effective history’ as becoming a ‘curative science’, revealing injustice and the inequities of power and knowledge through a radical, surgical ‘cutting’ away of the metaphysical pretensions of ‘traditional’ history. In our time, I take ‘effective history’ to mean one that allows us no illusions, no fantasies, no placebo alternatives to a world wracked by capitalist greed and recession. It is not easy to resolve the dilemma with which we are faced – do we cling to an illusory history that gives us false comfort and, which, in the end, may well cheat us of a happy ending or do we try to pursue the more honest ‘effective history’? The sacrifices we are required to make if we choose the latter seem too hard. But perhaps we should turn to Mark Gevisser’s (2007) analysis of Mbeki’s African Renaissance, which, I argue, carries with it an implicit warning. Gevisser characterises Mbeki’s ‘Africanness’ as the product of a lonely exile and his generalisation of his own longing to ‘go home’,
which Mbeki never entirely accomplished. Mbeki, in Gevisser’s portrayal also never quite overcame the wounds to his self-esteem inflicted by his European exile. According to his critics, Mbeki never could face up to the real problems in South Africa either like ‘grinding poverty’, vast social inequalities and the HIV/AIDS scourge (Gevisser 2007:325). We are led to suspect that the ‘dream deferred’ of Langston Hughes’ poem, which Gevisser takes as the title for his Mbeki biography, runs a real risk of turning into the festering sore that the poet dreads. Gevisser’s account encourages us to think that Mbeki’s African Renaissance acted as a balm for his own hurt, with which many Africans could identify. But how long will the ‘chimera’ of origin substitute for the resolution of deep longings, ongoing humiliations and a determined reckoning with the mechanisms of domination and appropriation? (Foucault 2000:378)

**Conclusion**

The public art at The Fields is monumental in that it tries to interpellate a public that ought to recognise itself or some part of itself in the sculptures’ metaphorical references. But its potential to do so is limited by its enforced complicity in an environment that is strikingly prosaic and governed by a notion of art as prophylactic. It is hard, even on the site of a development like The Fields to regret the presence of public art. But I have argued that it is almost inevitably immobilised by a setting that is heavily invested in passive consumerism. Not only that, the public art may conceivably, although probably unwittingly, be helping to regulate public spaces that are ‘public’ only in a restricted sense produced by an expedient alliance between the City of Tshwane and a private developer.

The artist-architectural network/s to which this paper alludes, also extends into the formal monumental realm at Freedom Park. The **voyeur-voyageur** is afforded a series of juxtapositions and intercutting of images that make her conscious of the world as representation (Virilio 1984). Passing the Voortrekker Monument and Freedom Park in quick succession on the Gautrain offers a surprisingly affecting view of the first and a stark view of an embodiment of the new(ish) architectural ‘lexicon’ of the second. There is something a little wistful about the slight beauty of the Freedom Park memorial – something that is at once hauntingly fragile and worryingly insubstantial. I have argued (following Noble’s lead) that it represents a particular interpretation of African philosophy and ways of thinking about the world, distinguished by their apparent timelessness and mutability. The result is often aesthetically stunning – as it needs to be to compete with the Voortrekker Monument across the valley. But what are the long-term effects of allowing ourselves to be lulled by a mythologised history of origins and an extremely tenuous, teleological story about how we have gone about creating the conditions for harmonious social development? Should we be working instead on other kinds of text altogether – with shadowy profundity, teasing ambiguity and the inbuilt possibility for productive subversion?

**Notes**

1 This paper was first presented to the Tshwane ‘Vryheidspark’ Walkshop, Unisa, September 2011. Thanks to the participants, to Linda and Alan Mabin for identifying **Urban Being** and for editing help and inspiration and to Georges Pfruender for the Virilio reference, sound advice and encouragement.

2 The Fields is bounded by Hilda Street to the east, Burnett Street to the south, Festival Street to the west and the railway line to the north. It comprises a few hundred residential units, 4,000 metres of retail space and 800 parking bays (Privateprojects 2011).
They have to their credit: the Apartheid Museum in Johannesburg, the Hector Pieterson Museum in Soweto, the Robben Island Museum, the Maropeng Cradle of Humankind Museum near Johannesburg, Mandela Square and, more recently, the Liliesleaf Museum in Johannesburg and the Nelson Mandela House Museum in Soweto.

References


Running on the outskirts: Outpacing the City of Pretoria and its monumental commandments

Sope Maithufi

Abstract

This article considers subtexts in two trail runs, the trajectories of which highlight the city of Pretoria against the Voortrekker Monument and the Union Buildings, nationalist heritage sites that are built on kopjes. This article proposes that, while the utilization of this milieu is deliberate and strategic, the reclamation of this city in Afrikaner nationalist terms wells up, but also loses authority in the codings of these country runs. It suggests that this failure may be related to the eulogisation of the alleged heroism of the South African Defense Force soldiers during the ‘Border Wars’ (1969-1989), most of which downplay the violations perpetrated against black South Africans. The resulting porosity defines the city beyond the racial and national paradigms. Introducing perspectives that render the city permeable, this article probes continuity between heritage and the city.

Key words: City; country runner; heterotopias; memory; museum; tracker

On your marks!

Standing on the Northern exterior of the Voortrekker Monument on Monument Hill and casting the eye about 4km north east (Figure 1), the spectator connects the Monument with the Union Buildings erected on Meintjies Kop. Between these monumental structures but slightly to the west, the city of Pretoria appears safely nestled. To the west on Salvokop rests Freedom Park, constructed in 1999, about half a century after the official commencement of Afrikaner nationalist rule in 1948. If the viewer associates the new dispensation with cleansing from colonial atrocities, s/he also learns that its memorial setting – the Freedom Park which is built on a lower altitude – does not make possible an aerial view of the city. S/he might consider this relatively low altitude to be symbolic of the marginal impact defining the city in the new dispensation. This is notwithstanding the site’s invocations of non-racial democracy and healing at the level of the nation and black self-reclamation (to be discussed later).

This visual outline of the spatial and historical topography of the city seems to resonate in the routes of the ‘Dinamika Springbok Vasbyt’ and ‘The Value Logistics Ou Voetpad’ (henceforth referred to as ‘Die Ou Voetpad’) mountain races. The organisers of these events, the Voortrekker Monument Athletics and the Tshwane University of Technology’s Marathon Clubs respectively,
seem to attribute political capital to the spatial layout of these sites of heritage. Both are Gauteng North (GN) teams operating under the aegis of Athletics South Africa (ASA), a national council that assures the quality of South African road running. However, each race’s coding reveals the distinctive ideology or political inclination of the relevant local road running club.

A common thread runs across these trail runs, all attesting to the vision of one person, Leon Bezuidenhout, the chairperson of these teams at respective times; a nostalgic recall of Afrikaner male heroism as shown allegedly during the Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902), The Battle of Delville Wood (1916) and the Angolan and the Namibian Wars (1966-1989). Both athletic events are distinguishable by at least three key features. These concern the fact that (1) the races are set within either the proximity of the Voortrekker Monument and the Union Buildings, or make them visible from a distance; (2) implicitly invoke these sites’ elevated positions to highlight the city of Pretoria; and (3) appear to propose that trail running on the outskirts is a metaphor of authority over the city.

While the first is a synchronic enunciation of the triumph of Afrikaner nationalism, the second is iconic of the narratives that extol the reclamation of the city at the turn of the twentieth century by the pioneering Afrikaner nationalists. The third also elaborates on these themes, evoking further narratives eulogising apartheid’s violent extension of dominion over Southern Africa between the late 1960s and early 1990s. These country trails construct and organise moments in the broader narrative of the Afrikaner nationalists’ expansion into the Southern African interior.

It is therefore interesting to note that these commemorations translate ‘walking’ effortlessly into ‘running’ and thereby link up with the ‘Koevoet’ narratives (see, e.g., Hooper 1988; Kamongo & Bezuidenhout 2011; Stiff 1999). This is a genre that documents how, aided by black people who trotted ahead of the apartheid battalions in pursuit of the People’s Liberation Army of Namibia (PLAN) and of its later consolidated South West African People’s Organisation (SWAPO), apartheid soldiers allegedly fought courageously to protect its sovereignty across Southern Africa. In the narratives of this genre, political domination appears as an entanglement in which blacks are complicit, in which the destabilisation of Southern Africa between the twentieth and twenty-first centuries appears devoid of white racism and in which its histories of Africa are uncritically celebrated.

Staging these trail runs within and between these sites of heritage entails creating ‘metaphor[s] of landscape embodiment’ (Bunn 2006:357). These are physical locations that people cite or invoke in ‘contest[s] … over national memory and national identity’ (Bunn 2006:357). However, thronging these scenes of inheritance about
seven decades after the Anglo-Boer War, takes us into scholarship on heritage that considers the museum as a ‘social technology’, re-casting existing narratives with novel emblems and in new methodologies (Kratz & Karp 2006:2). ‘[Going] outside the museum, or the museum outside’ (Bunn 2006:358), therefore, makes possible ‘new forms of civic self-fashioning’ (Bennet in Bunn 2006:358). Seen diachronically, it may be concluded that the ‘museum space’ is ‘never singular’ (Bunn 2006:358), because, as a host of ‘protean mandates’ (Kratz 2006:1), it gives rise to ‘a series of real or imaginary articulated zones’ or because it ‘may be appropriated for a variety of other purposes … external to the museum’ (Bunn 2006:358). Corinne Kratz and Ciraj Rassool (2006:349) use the term, ‘remapping’, in order to describe these re-populating or re-conceptualisations of museums, spaces and narrations.

The image of a trail runner that ‘remap[s]’ (Kratz & Rassool 2006:349) the significance accorded to the Voortrekker Monument and the Union Buildings in the city in an Afrikaner nationalist renaissance, is provocative. It constructs a ‘heterotopia’ as a set of ‘counter sites, a kind of effectively enacted utopia in which the real sites … are simultaneously represented, contested and inverted’ (Kratz & Rassool 2006:349). This history-textured portrait recalls Michel de Certeau’s (1984) analysis of how the ‘walker’ disrupts the ‘official’ identity of the city.

Pertinent to De Certeau’s (1984:97, 100) thesis is how the ‘pedestrian’ who traverses the city, or what he calls a ‘constructed order’, in ‘unofficial’, ‘anonymous’ and ‘everyday’ ways, enunciates ‘rationalities that belong to no one’ (De Certeau 1984: Dedication page). This article is concerned with three key metaphors that De Certeau uses interchangeably in elaborating the ways in which the walker defies bureaucracy. In the first instance, De Certeau (1984:100) argues that ‘passers-by offers [sic] a series of turns (tours) and de-tours that can be compared to “turns of phrases” or “stylistic figures”’. Secondly, De Certeau (1984:101) compares ‘walking’ to a ‘long poem … [that] manipulates spatial organizations’, ‘creat[ing] shadows and ambiguities within them’, ‘insert[ing] its multitudinous references and citations into them’ and revealing itself as a product of ‘successive encounters and occasions that constantly alter it’. He explains this process in terms of the words, ‘synecdoche’ and ‘asyndeton’ (De Certeau 1984:101). The first introduces an idea that broadens the semantic reach of a concept – perhaps quite in the way of a Thesaurus – while the second refers to ‘the suppression of linking words such as conjunctions and adverbs, either within a sentence or between sentences’ (De Certeau 1984:101). Finally, he notes that the ‘masses … make some parts of the city disappear and exaggerate others, distorting it, fragmenting it, and diverting it from its immobile order’ (De Certeau 1984:102).

Extending the implications of ‘walking in the city’ to ‘trail running’, we have to take off at the outskirts. This exercise highlights ‘a set of relations that delineates sites which are irreducible to one another and absolutely not superimposable on one another’ (Foucault 1986:23). First, by virtue of the setting of these museums, trail running recalls the heroic exploits of Afrikaner nationalist history at the turn of the twentieth century. Second, as demonstrated below, the chivalry demonstrated in these events’ commemoration of the Border wars also evokes the memory of the ‘tracker’, the black man who was hired or interpellated to identify the ‘spoors’ of the so-called ‘insurgents’ in preparation for an ambush (Kamongo & Bezuidenhout 2011: 119; see also Hooper 1988:16). The section tasked with the recruitment of trackers was called ““Koevoet” (“Crowbar”), an elite South African Police anti-terrorist unit” (Kamongo & Bezuidenhout 2011). Thus, black
participation in these country trails may, in contrast to what they mean to the respective athletics clubs, be seen to be opening up spaces for histories audible in intimations of confession and ritual cleansing on behalf of the ‘tracker’. Also implied in this intervention is the assumption that trail running, which involves a comparatively rapid movement of the body, confirms these events’ constructs of Afrikaner nationalist memory highlighting racial violence. Running is thus a ‘tactic’ or ‘art of the weak’, as it makes polysemic the ‘strategy’ (De Certeau 1984:37) that these teams utilise to memorialise Afrikaner nationalism.

In considering these heterotopias, the view on the city from elevated country settings is significant. These elements dramatise the different histories of the subjugation of population groups of Southern Africa since the turn of the twentieth century. The appearance of the black African athlete in mountain running renders black alterities visible, enunciating difference through and within a nexus of multiple desires and interests that exceed the dialectical opposition between apartheid nationalism and its institutionalised or hegemonic counterparts. Here, black heterotopias surface in tension and schism with resurgent Afrikaner nationalism over how to reclaim the city. Significant in these contestatory reclamations is the relationship between trail running and walking.

In full steam: Museum on a trail run

According to the 2005 version of the Dinamika race advert, walking was instrumental in the Afrikaner’s resumption of control of the city of Pretoria from the
British during the battle of Pretoria. The Afrikaners were reportedly residing in the ‘Moot area’ (in the current (2012) North Eastern suburbs of Pretoria of Weavind Park, Waverley, Rietondale and Capital Park) after losing control over the city. During this apparently brief reign, the British had made the Daspoortrand (Figure 2) the only official access point into Pretoria, much to the chagrin of the Afrikaners. Undermining this official entry, they reportedly then beat footpaths in the wilderness over the Witwatersberg into the city, assisted by the Irish soldiers enlisted or hired in the fight against the British.

According to the initiator of this race, Leon Bezuidenhout (31 August 2011), the war was trans-national, as the Afrikaners assumed sovereignty assisted by groups which had no direct connection with the Afrikaners’ power struggle with the British. This is also why, echoing his perspective about this war, the invitation to the ‘Dinamika Vasbyt’ race, an event that memorialises the Anglo-Boer War, solicits patronage by drawing attention to the ‘unofficial’ and seemingly ‘a-political’ elements that were ostensibly central to this history. These defined the city, paradoxically, through the spaces that were peripheral to it and also portrayed the journey into the city from the margin as a metaphor of power over British dominion. We have an elaboration in this extract from this race’s advert:

Long before motorized transport was invented the only way to cross the Witwatersberg to Pretoria was to lead your horse over the Daspoortrand footpath. The race follows part of the old footpath. During the Anglo Boer War the British built a blockhouse on the footpath to protect it and to control access to Pretoria. Why not come and experience the footpath for yourself? … The logo and the lead “car” of the race is a typical 1860 Boer on his horse [Figure 3]. Irish soldiers are around with their pipes and drums– at the start and later in the neck at the mountain. (www.trailrunning.co.za/events_detail.php?id=505&&type=current)

In Bezuidenhout’s aerial representation of the course of the ‘Dinamika Vasbyt’ race (Figure 2), the power and strategic significance that he ostensibly attributes to eyesight appears through hyperbole, once again deliberately excising blackness from the trajectory of the mountain race and from the history of Pretoria, at least during the first three decades of the twentieth century. Taken from the air, the photograph has a touch of the omnipresence and the panoptic, interpelling the reader into a ‘disciple’ of the ‘officialisé’ deployed to construct and reclaim the city in the terms that appear neither disputable nor controversial. The map may be considered in the same way in which the spectator who is standing outside the Voortrekker Monument is made to survey and define the city without being observed or questioned.

In this map, the signs, ‘Ou Voetpad Trial [sic]’, ‘Kwagga camp’, ‘Blockhouses no. 4’ and ‘Blockhouses no. 7’, hint
at the Battle for Pretoria between the Afrikaners and
the British at the turn of the twentieth century. Through
the site marked as ‘Old Bantule Road’, the map ironi-
cally takes the reader from the focus on the Anglo-Boer
War forward to the history of racial oppression that
began after the promulgation of the 1913 Land Act,
a composite set of legislations that confined Africans
to 13 per cent of the land mass of South Africa and gave
Whites 87 per cent. This map’s epistemic violence is
also evident in the obliteration of the history of Lady
Selbourne, a multi-racial community that resided in
Pretoria West from 1905 to 1973, when its people
were forcefully relocated to Atteridgeville and other
neighbouring Pretoria black townships following the
Group Areas Amendment Act of 1956. The same conclu-
sion may be drawn from the fact that this map does not
inscribe Marabastad, a thriving slum of small-scale
economic activity currently (2012) populated by mer-
chants of African, Oriental and Asiatic descent. In con-
trast to the triumphalism of the Voortrekker Monument
Athletics Club, therefore, this trail highlights the dif-
ferent heterotopias of brutality against Black Africans
in allusions that reverberate across the twentieth cen-
tury history of South Africa.

Through its echo of the Anglo-Boer War narrative cen-
tral to which is the eulogy of how the Afrikaners re-
gained control of Pretoria by beating footpaths over
the mountain – detouring away from the British-
garrisoned Daaspoortrand – ‘Die Ou Voetpad’ race
appears in stark contrast to the ‘Dinamika Springbok Vas-
byt’ race. This trail run, organised by the Voortrekker

Figure 4: Cannon: Photograph of an enactment of the soldiers disconnecting a war cannon,
reminiscent of the Anglo-Boer War (Image provided by L Bezuidenhout, e-mail 2011).
Monument Athletics Club, deftly weaves an Afrikaner nationalist memory in allusions that criss-cross the histories of the Anglo-Boer, the First World War and the Border Wars in terms that are unashamedly scornful of South Africa’s post-1994 non-racial democracy. Notwithstanding this key focus, this race’s racially based exclusions are undermined by the portrait of the black athlete who, except on few occasions, leads the race from the beginning to the end, mockingly reminding us of the ‘the lead “car” of the race [or] a typical 1860 Boer on his horse’ of ‘Die Ou Voetpad’ country run.

The 2006 version of the ‘Dinamika Springbok Vasbyt’ race commenced at the Northern exterior of the Voortrekker Monument. It quickly descended north out of the Monument Hill on which the Museum is built and then meandered for about 5km, emerging on the Southern foot of Salvokop on which Freedom Park is established. From this foot, the run ascended in a maze of about 5.5km within this Park and then backtracked to the starting line. By contrast, the 2011 edition of this contest, held on 18 July, Nelson Mandela’s birthday, did not proceed to Freedom Park. Pertinent to this event, therefore, is an attempt to expand Afrikaner nationalism in terms that symbolically encroach upon the present/future non-racial democracy.

These two versions of the ‘Dinamika Springbok Vasbyt’ trail runs commenced with the displays of brazen masculinity described by Bezuidenhout (2011) as ‘the army [doing] their thing’. It involves a simulation of a war episode in which the army disconnects a cannon – reminiscent of those used during the Anglo-Boer War scenes – just before crossing an overflowing river, and then re-assembling it after the crossing (Figure 4). Next, a procession of decommissioned South African war planes flew past from the south to the north (Figure 5). Then, ‘the biggest bang in the sport, a real 6-pounder cannon’ (2007 advert of the ‘Ou Voetpad’ Mountain race) (Figure 6) followed, making ‘athletes’ ‘run for cover’ first and not ‘for a place’ (Bezuidenhout 2011).

The histories being celebrated – all pertaining to male heroes – are enunciated in the engravings of several
medals awarded to those athletes who complete the race within the stipulated time. For instance, the 2006 race medal (Figure 7), is imprinted with the ‘The 2nd Battalion Leinster Regiment’ logo. Another medal, ‘SPRINGBOK 1906-2006’ (Figure 8), conferred to the runners upon completing the 2006 version of this race, celebrates the centurion of the emblem of the ‘Springbok’. The ‘Springbok’ centurion medal featuring the words that introduce ‘Nancy, the Free State Springbok, the mascot of the South African Scottish Regiment at Delville Wood, 1916’, invokes a quest for lost innocence, which also resonates in the 2011 medal, ‘Topper Medalje’, and in another medal of unknown date. Both articulate nostalgia through the eulogies of Topper van der Spuy and of ‘Sergeant Michiel ‘Vingers” Kruger’ (Figure 9), respectively. Kruger and Van der Spuy as well as the (in)famous ‘Puma’ receive eulogies in oral and print media. Snyman and company, in particular, appear to enliven the violent history of the conquest of black Africa.

However, because the Pretoria black trail runner is not expected to understand the epistemic violence apparently innocently wielded by these clubs to reclaim the city, s/he is cast in the role of the ‘tracker’. As already noted in the synopsis of the primary literature above, the ‘tracker’ was the skilled black man recruited into police and armed forces under apartheid in order to identify the footprints and locate the so-called insurgents during the war in Southern Angola and formerly so-called South West Africa between the 1960s and late 1980s. The information gathered by the tracker about the black fighters would be used to strategise and to carry out ambushes.

The allusion to the tracker dissimulates the racially divisive and military context of his role. It also smoothes over a transition whereby the tracker, honoured with medals imprinted with portraits of Afrikaner heroes,
allegedly continued to glory in his role in this history of brutality, especially by becoming employed as a guard in post-apartheid privatised security firms (Kamongo & Bezuidenhout 2011:221, 223, 226).

Black runners being cast in the image and role of trackers conjure up a narrative of betrayal. For, in contrast to the mercenaries who return to their native countries to resume lives as fully-fledged citizens after wars, the ‘trackers’ posed a unique predicament in post-1994 South Africa. As former enemies, for this is the notoriety that they had earned by virtue of having sided with the apartheid regime, it seems that the ‘trackers’ could not be successfully integrated into the new South African army and became marginalised by the new post-apartheid governments. This seems borne out by the fact that the post-apartheid regime confirmed the settlement of the ‘tracker’ communities of Khoi and San descent in the semi-arid area of Schmidtsdrift, constituting them as an ethnic group in conflict with black nationalist orientations of the ANC.

The alleged intransigence of the ‘tracker’ appears to resonate in the dedication page of Kamongo and Bezuidenhout’s *Shadows in the sand*: ‘Dedicated as a monument to those in the Namibian bush war without any memorial – the 128 black Namibian Koevoet policemen who died in action or from wounds’. The cover page (Figure 10) is a glossy photograph of black soldiers, relaxing, apparently, but also coldly oblivious to the body of a scantily clad black man lying lifelessly on the ground behind them. The setting seems to be a clearing in the bush. At least two representations of the Casspir and of a military truck can be discerned. Pinned to the left short sleeve of one black soldier’s shirt is a piece of black cloth, ostensibly a sign of mourning. However, his presence here may suggest that he has repressed his sense of grief, preferring to exact vengeance by participating in this war that may have claimed the life of his next of kin. This irony is certainly lost to Bezuidenhout (interview August 2011), the architect of these trail runs, who notes that these country runs have no bias against blacks.

It seems that, having been interpellated into a ‘tracker’, the black athlete of the 2006 version of the ‘Dinamika Springbok Vasbyt’ race, in particular, was conveniently positioned on the second half of the course which took the runners into the premises of Freedom Park, to plead for penance on behalf of all those black people who were abused by the Koevoet. For it may be argued...
that integral to this site is an attempt to ritually cleanse South African visitors to the site of the traumata wrought by colonial and apartheid regimes.

The Park comprises seven sections, designed to create a sense of how to become a ‘nation’, and celebrating ‘our shared heritage as brothers and sisters of our diverse nation’. Key to this site of constructed memory and narrative is ‘Isivivane’ (Figure 11). It is defined as ‘lesaka [kraal]’, because it is meant to evoke ‘the burial ground where the spirits of those who died in the struggles for humanity and freedom have been laid to rest’. Made out of ‘boulders’, donated by each of the newly demarcated nine provinces, ‘lesaka’ harbours the centre which is ‘shrouded in mist’ (Figure 12), ‘emphasis[ing] cleansing and purity’. The trail runs’ interpellation of the black athlete into a ‘tracker’ – suggesting that this subjectivity lives on in the form of a black African athlete – subtly proposes a form of therapy that reveals the post-1994 narratives of the ‘new’ South Africa as non-reflexive rhetoric.

Notes

1 This Monument was inaugurated in 1949, immediately after the promulgation of apartheid, by DF Malan in order to celebrate the Afrikaner group who migrated from the Cape Colony to the South African interior in the middle of the nineteenth century.

2 The construction of the Union Buildings was begun in 1910 and concluded in 1913 in memory of the founding of the Union of South Africa. This happened following the amalgamation of the four Boer provinces; Transvaal, Orange Free State, Natal and Cape.

3 ‘This piece of Pretoria’s 150 year history is being celebrated by the Tshwane University of Technology’s Marathon Club and the South African Irish Regiment Band. A traditional Mountain Race over 10 Miles is taking place on Saturday, 16 July 2005. A special Pretoria 150 Year medal will be issued to all finishers and the first 10 athletes to reach the Blockhouse line will receive a special shield. The Ou Voetpad Mountain 10 Miler will be one of 2005’s special events on the Running Calendar’ (2005 ‘Ou Voetpad’ Mountain race advertising flyer).
Described as a ‘giant’ by Kamongo (2011:62), the ‘puma’ was a war helicopter used by the Afrikaners mainly in the battles against the ‘insurgents’ in Southern Angola and Mozambique. Throughout Kamongo’s narrative, the ‘Puma’ characteristically rescues him and the Afrikaner army especially when beleaguered by SWAPO or the Angolan soldiers. On 6 September 1979, a South African Puma carrying 17 passengers was apparently shot down in Mapai, Mozambique, killing all passengers. In 2009 April 11, a search was launched for the remains of the casualties and the aircraft. A memorial in honour of the departed was then conducted on discovering the site (see, for instance, www.ourstory.com/thread.html?t=370994).

By contrast, Stiff (1999:62) introduces David Protter, one of these Afrikaner soldiers who participated in the Border wars, as a ‘young man marked by psychopathic tendencies’. This probably accounts for why these characters, as opposed to the ‘Voor-trekkers’ such as De la Rey, are more intriguing to the enterprises that memorialise Afrikaner nationalism during and after apartheid.

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Loftus as Afrikaner heterotopia: The life world of rugbymentality

Charles Villet

Abstract

The aim of this article is to explore the nature of contemporary Afrikaner identity philosophically through the topos of Loftus and the game, the spectacle, and the experience of rugby. I suggest that Loftus Versfeld stadium in Pretoria is a heterotopia for many Afrikaners. The concept of heterotopia, as suggested by Foucault, represents a place where the ideas of utopia and dystopia exist alongside each other. An analysis of Loftus as heterotopia offers a number of novel insights about the place (both physical and mental) that the stadium represents. Loftus acts as a mirror to the lifeworld of Afrikaners, termed here as so-called ‘rugbymentality’: Loftus reveals that Afrikaners have moved economically beyond apartheid, but that their political voice has become almost insignificant. Loftus represents the expression of this economic advancement with simultaneous political regression. The result is an invented tradition and postcolonial nostalgia that reveal what it means to be an Afrikaner. Loftus and rugbymentality function as the attempt by Afrikaners either to insulate themselves (laertrek) from post-apartheid South Africa, or to become part of the cultural mosaic of South Africa, which could both be expressed through achieving excellence in rugby.

Key words: Afrikaners; Blue Bulls; Foucault; heterotopia; Loftus Versfeld Stadium; rugby

Introduction

Pretoria has been at the centre of governmentality in South Africa during the apartheid era and after. The privilege of this governmentality has shifted from Afrikanerdom to the current ANC-government. The spaces within which Afrikaners have power changed since 1994 and they have been disenfranchised within the political sphere but still remain an economically affluent group. Many sites of significance for Afrikanerdom remain in Pretoria and are found virtually within the shadow of the Union Building where the government resides: Affies (the famous secondary schools for boys and girls), Tukkies (the University of Pretoria) and the Loftus Versfeld rugby stadium with the Pretoria East Dutch Reformed Church (Nederduits Gereformeerde Kerk) just across the road. This is probably the most significant Afrikaner neighbourhood in the country. Here one finds in close proximity three of the ‘encircling influences’ identified by Jansen (2009:70-79), which facilitate the transmission of knowledge across Afrikaner generations, namely school, church and rugby.

The role of rugby as a source of knowledge for the identity of Afrikaners is what is at issue in this article, and one of the most prominent rugby symbols in the country is Loftus.

Loftus (Figure 1) is a landmark in Pretoria and a monument to rugby and Afrikanerdom. It might only have been a coincidence, but the establishment of the Northern
Transvaal Rugby Union (now the Blue Bulls Company) in 1938 took place in the same year that the centenary of the Great Trek was celebrated with much fanfare by Afrikaners across the whole country. Loftus came to be the home of the so-called Blue Bulls right from the start, albeit in different reincarnations as each of the pavilions were rebuilt over the years. In a sense it is one of few contemporary public spaces where Afrikaners are still in power. The symbols of the Blue Bulls and the Springboks are an integral part of the daily life of many Afrikaners and their culture. The Bulls and the Boks bring to mind the image of big, burly Afrikaner men (Figure 2) who are not to be messed with. These rugby players have become prime role models for many Afrikaners. According to Grundlingh (1995c:118), rugby has contributed to the ‘common consciousness’ of Afrikaners since the early days of apartheid. Rugby plays a central role in the knowledge and history of self that Afrikaners develop as a group, what Gaffney and Bale (2004:35) call the ‘construction of collective history’. Loftus is a stadium where this takes place and the lifeworld of Loftus provides Afrikaners with a sense of belonging to a group. One could (following Gaffney & Bale 2004:34-35) even say that Loftus is almost a ‘sacred place’ that carries a sense of ‘religiosity’ for some Afrikaners and that a visit to Loftus is a kind of ‘pilgrimage’ for fans. Many sport stadia across the globe carry these meanings in the lives of fans because sport is the culture of the masses – although there are interesting variations in intensity and character (Black & Nauright 1998:1).

In this article I turn to the ‘intensity’ of rugby in the lives of Afrikaners because it carries more weight in their culture than simply being the proverbial opium of the masses. The main concern in this article is to look at the spectators of Loftus and conceptualise an attitude of so-called ‘rugbymentality’. This mentality...
provides a certain experience for many Afrikaners of their life world. This article will investigate rugbymentality through the Foucauldian lens of ‘heterotopia’, which would help to put into perspective the significance of rugby and Loftus in the lives of Afrikaners.

What is rugbymentality?

The idea of ‘rugbymentality’ brings to mind Foucault’s idea of governmentality. For Foucault (2002a:219-220), the idea of governmentality has to do with a complex form of power which could be more broadly understood as power of an administrative and bureaucratic kind which is exercised through the government. This form of power concerns the control of three important aspects: A target population, the key knowledge of political economy, and apparatuses of security. Afrikaners had control of each of these aspects during the apartheid era: The target population of black South Africans, the key knowledge of Christian nationalism as guiding principle for governance, and the apparatuses of the police and the armed forces keeping the target population in place. Governmentality was thus the privilege of Afrikaners to wield, but there has been an obvious shift for Afrikaners away from governmentality after apartheid. The question is: through what form of knowledge or mentality do they now assert their knowledge? My answer would be that at a substantial proportion of Afrikaners form their identities through so-called rugbymentality. Rugby and arts festivals are the two encircling influences that, according to Jansen (2009:73-75, 77-78), have probably grown most in importance in the post-apartheid era as forms of knowledge that help Afrikaners to forge identities.

‘Rugbymentality’ is obviously a play on words – on ‘governmentality’. This play is quite deliberate because it demonstrates a shift in the position of power that Afrikaners experienced, from the space of the government during apartheid to the narrow place of the rugby field in the twenty-first century. Their say in the civil service has become negligible (Giliomee 2009:701), but on the rugby field, they are still in power. For example, in the group of thirty players that were chosen to represent South Africa at the 2011 World Cup, nineteen were white and Afrikaans-speaking. That constituted almost two-thirds of the team, even though Afrikaners only make up 6 per cent of the population of the country (Giliomee 2009:700). Rugby is an integral and central aspect in the cultural landscape of Afrikaners and the numbers simply serve to demonstrate how important rugby is in their cultural-associational lives.

Rugbymentality concerns the relation of many Afrikaners towards their country; whether they feel pride in this respect or not depends heavily on the success of their rugby teams. The general function of sport around the globe as a source of national pride and nationalism is exemplified in Afrikaner society (Booth 1999:182). At this point, an important qualification needs to be made in order to be fair to the wider array of identities available to Afrikaners. Rugbymentality as conceptualised here concerns a well-known public image of Afrikaners that appears on television every Saturday. This public image is representative of a large portion of Afrikaners, but not all of them. The point is that many do subscribe to this image and Loftus is the symbolic focus of this group. Rugbymentality refers to the role and function of rugby in the cultural lives of the Afrikaner public.

Who are these Afrikaners? I would argue that they are a mixture of two groups within Afrikaner ranks during apartheid identified by Krog (2007:30-32), namely the rising middle class and the passive followers of ideology and institution: They are affluent undiscerning consumers whose life world has been largely depoliticised in
the pursuit of economic goals (Rossouw 2007:90). They are also driven by an unconscious desire to escape the post-apartheid ‘nervous condition’ (a term used by Fanon 1967:17) that is the crisis of Afrikaner identity. This article analyses the form that this consumerism takes in the Afrikaner guise beyond apartheid, centred on Loftus and rugby.

**Rugbymentality and the heterotopia of Loftus**

In the text entitled ‘Of other spaces’, Michel Foucault (1986:22-27) elaborates on the idea of heterotopia. This strange notion carries two meanings: Firstly, heterotopia could be a space where the normal and accepted logic and rules of a society are allowed to be suspended. In other words, things can be done in heterotopia that are not allowed or accepted in ‘decent society’. Secondly, the heterotopia can be defined as a designated space within or outside of society that functions as a kind of mirror to the state of affairs within society, be it as a mirror of perfection or imperfection (Foucault 1986:24, 27). In this way, heterotopia consists of contradictory spaces that are either (or both) utopian or dystopian in kind. The point is that heterotopia consists of strong contradictions between what society should, or should not, be like and what society is actually like.

Why rely on the Foucauldian concept of heterotopia in looking at Loftus? Certain other concepts could also be quite helpful, such as the anthropological concept of ‘liminality’ or the more generalised idea of ‘nostalgia’; indeed, the idea of the heterotopia relates to both. Liminality refers to ‘in-between situations and conditions that are characterized by the dislocation of established structures, the reversal of hierarchies, and uncertainty regarding the continuity of tradition and future outcomes’ (Horvath *et al* 2009:3-4). As will be seen, heterotopia carries a similar meaning and demonstrates each of these aspects in some way. However, heterotopia is different in one important aspect which exactly concerns the function of nostalgia: heterotopia reveals how the disruption caused by liminality in each of the above ways is countered by nostalgia itself. In other words, the disruption caused by societal change in post-apartheid South Africa to Afrikaner identity is countered by Afrikaners in turning to cultural nostalgia in a number of ways. Viewing Loftus as heterotopia will bring this dynamic to the fore. Heterotopia is a kind of heuristic device through which one can come to understand the power dynamics within a specific context, in this case the postcolonial context of South Africa and the ways in which it influences Afrikaner identity.

The main advantage of using the concept of heterotopia is that it brings to light the intricate dynamics involved in societal and identity formation. Current Afrikaner identity is constructed partly on the basis of what Foucault calls ‘pastoral power’. This kind of power is distributed in a more diffuse manner in society although it is still attached to institutions of some sort, for example Christianity and the Church, but also the state (Foucault 2002b:333-334). Pastoral power provides the opportunity for individual identity formation through the appropriation of knowledge which is disseminated in society by institutions (in the strict or loose sense of the word). There is an ambivalence involved here, what Foucault (2002b:336) calls a ‘double bind’ which involves ‘the simultaneous individualization and totalization of modern power structures’. The problem is to explain how we actively and freely form our identities (within bounds) by way of the knowledge at our disposal without passively subjecting ourselves to these institutions (Foucault 2002b:336). The discussion of rugbymentality aims to demonstrate how pastoral power is at work in both ways in the lives of
Afrikaners through the ‘institution’ of Loftus, whether in an active manner (i.e., creatively) or passively, where their identities are simply formed by outside influences.

As with all kinds of mentalities, there is a physical space that is symbolically representative of rugbymentality, namely the Loftus Versfeld Stadium in Pretoria. Loftus is the prime symbol of rugbymentality and probably the place in the country that most visibly represents the public image of Afrikaner-identity in post-apartheid South Africa. Jansen (2009:73-74) provides an apt description of the significance of the stadium for Afrikaners:

When one enters the almost all-white, almost all-Afrikaans rugby stadium called Loftus Versfeld, it becomes immediately clear that this game is much more than rugby. It is an event of tremendous social and cultural significance for the Afrikaner. It is, of course, at base a sport, and so the normal travails and joys of losing and winning are the same as with sports everywhere. But there is something more, for this is the sport in which power, nationalism and masculinity are projected and entrenched in Afrikanerdom.

Jansen points to the link between rugby and the self-image of Afrikaners and the weight that the sport carries in their culture. Loftus, and the rugbymentality that it engenders, function as an important mirror to
Afrikaners. Loftus represents a complex postcolonial invented tradition that reveals what it means to be an Afrikaner. Certain kinds of games (i.e., types of sport) attract a specific kind of audience and these ‘games discipline instincts and institutionalize them’ (Callois in Esposito 1995:114). If we regard rugby from this vantage point, then an analysis of Loftus as an institution of rugby will tell us a lot about how this game shapes, and is shaped by, Afrikaner identity and culture.

Loftus Versfeld rugby stadium itself is the place that represents Afrikaner identity – that is, an actual geographic site – but also a space that can tell us about Afrikaners. Space concerns the multiple symbolic meanings and experiences of a place, which can be diffuse and differ from the perspective of one individual to the next. Loftus is both the physical place that it is, and the mental and experiential space that it represents, namely rugbymentality. Heterotopia concerns this relation between place and space. In the discussion of Loftus (as physical space) and rugbymentality (as mental space), creative use will be made of the principles of heterotopia outlined by Foucault.

Loftus as a space of crisis and deviance

Foucault (1986:24) asserts that all cultures and societies consist of either (or both) of two types of heterotopia, namely a heterotopia of crisis and a heterotopia of deviance. *Heterotopia of crisis* is a space where ‘there are privileged or sacred or forbidden places, reserved for individuals who are, in relation to society and the human environment in which they live, in a state of crisis’ (Foucault 1986:24). *Heterotopia of deviance* is a space ‘where individuals whose behavior is deviant in relation to the required mean or norm are placed’ (Foucault 1986:25).

In what sense is Loftus a *heterotopia of crisis*? I would suggest that the shift from the Union Building to Loftus as the symbol of Afrikanerdom is a symbolic demonstration of an identity that has been in crisis for quite some time. Afrikaners are still in the process of rethinking their identity, which was inextricably bound up with apartheid. Krog (2009:126) describes the disruption caused by the end of this social and political order:

Afrikaners found their way of life forcefully splintered by a gradually self-asserting black majority, and the majority of Afrikaans-speakers turned out to not be white and started claiming the majority space in their language. So Afrikaners, who have so easily appropriated the land and the continent, found themselves in a new kind of post-colonial dynamic and are still reeling and deeply resentful about the incoherence of their lives.

The end of apartheid threw the identity of Afrikaners into turmoil and turned their world upside down: Apartheid was an attempt by Afrikaners to create a ‘coherent’ society although it was already ‘incoherent’ as African cultures were disrupted by colonialism. Afrikaners simply lived in a ‘completely closed coherent world’ (Krog 2009:126), which was itself disrupted and exposed with the end of apartheid. The collapse of Afrikaner nationalism left a massive symbolic gap (Rossouw 2007:90) and rugby has helped to deal with this situation. Rugby has become an integral part of the identity of many and represents a link to an otherwise disgraced past. The continuity that rugby represents between the past and the present provides a rich source of heroes for Afrikaners (Figure 3), heroes that are untainted by their political past. These heroes are not admired only by Afrikaners, but also by the general South African public. The expression of power by Afrikaners takes place on the rugby field despite the political disenfranchisement off the field. This expression is quite effective, for the reverence
for the Springboks is second only to the All Blacks, famous for the Haka war cry (a Maori challenge to battle) that they perform before every match. For Afrikaners in the latter half of the twentieth century, the rivalry with New Zealand significantly took the place of the British, because of the dominance of international rugby by the All Blacks (Black & Nauright 1998:77).

The importance of rugby in the lives of Afrikaners is not limited to the present: Rugby began to displace traditional forms of culture (volksfeeste) in the 1970s during a time when South African sport teams in general were boycotted as a result of political sanctions (Grundlingh 1995b:100-101). The boycott of South African rugby teams during apartheid made a deep impression on Afrikaners in terms of the isolation that they felt from the rest of the world. This mixture of rugby and politics did not end with apartheid. There is still a strong political side to rugby; surrounding the sport are also debates about the role of Afrikaners in the country, for instance the debate about the Springbok and the question as to whether this symbol should disappear owing to its association with apartheid. The Springbok has proven to be a symbol that Afrikaners fight to keep within the public domain. The Springbok is symbolic of their identity crisis and the battle for the Springbok is also one of the battles for the identity of Afrikaners and the last bit of public power that they have. Rugby represents a significant expression of public power for Afrikaners and it has filled the vacuum left in the wake of the disappearance of the myths of apartheid, providing new myths that offer themselves to mediating the identity of Afrikaners. This might sound like an overstatement of the importance of rugby but some go as far as saying that ‘the demise of the Springbok could draw a line under the once dominant influence of Africa’s last white tribe’ (Evans 2008). Issues of identity, community and myth are often intertwined.
with sport (Foster 2010:254). The myth of rugby contributes to the reinvention of Afrikaner identity.

In what sense is Loftus a heterotopia of deviance? I would argue that the deviance of Loftus lies with the violent nature of rugby, which neatly ties in with the metaphor of sport as war. Sport could be considered as a substitute for war; World Cups in sport attest to this function of sport, where one finds an ‘orgy of chauvinism and mime-show of war between nations’ (Coetzee 2001:351), in his description of the 1995 World Cup in South Africa). The ‘sports field and battlefield are linked as locations for the demonstration of legitimate patriotic aggression’ (Mangan 2006), and the aggression on the rugby field no doubt fulfils this role. The violence on the field is the focus of the spectator and usually remains on the field, although it can sometimes spill over into the stands if some become a bit ‘warm onder die kraag’ (hot under the collar).

This role is not openly fulfilled by the players on the field but, from a psychoanalytic point of view, it is the role that they fulfil in the eyes of many spectators. Rugby provides Afrikaners with a kind of psychological compensation for their political problems off the field. The languishing political voice of Afrikaners is canalised into the sport and their rugby heroes project an image of power back to them, thus providing Afrikaners with a sense of empowerment (what Grundlingh 1995c:118) calls their ‘ethnic self-esteem’) despite a low political self-esteem. It represents a kind of catharsis for Afrikaners, where success on the rugby field can compensate for their political woes. This helps rugby fans ‘to regulate potentially harmful emotions’ (Lambert 2010:219) and find the opportunity to vent their political frustrations in a ‘healthy’ (albeit subconscious) manner. This can be done at Loftus in a manner ‘that could not be expressed in other social contexts without a degree of embarrassment or offence’ (Lambert 2010: 223). The key here is that the rugby stadium (namely Loftus) provides a space for this psychological function, and a place where a certain type of aggression and behaviour is legitimate. This reveals an important function of heterotopia as a space within or outside of society where the accepted logic and rules of society are allowed to be suspended. In other words, things can be done in heterotopia (namely Loftus) that are not otherwise allowed or accepted in ‘decent society’, for example open patriotic aggression, public drunkenness and its related misconduct.

The symbolic meanings of Loftus

According to Foucault (1986:25), ‘a society, as its history unfolds, can make an existing heterotopia function in a very different fashion’; ‘each heterotopia has a precise and determined function within society and the same heterotopia can, according to the synchrony of the culture in which it occurs, have one function or another.’ In this respect, Loftus is a heterotopia because the stadium itself, although seen as a symbol of Afrikanerdom, also carries other functions apart from Afrikanerdom or rugby. The stadium has been used for the purposes of soccer during the 2010 World Cup and is also home to the soccer team of Mamelodi Sundowns. In the former instance, the stadium interestingly became a space where people from all around the world congregated to watch soccer matches. The stadium was also used for some of the religious gatherings that Angus Buchan recently organised around the country, which filled stadiums (and Loftus) up to the brim. In this instance, the majority of Buchan’s audience were probably Afrikaners, but they came to Loftus for religious reasons. This reveals the importance of both rugby and Christianity in the lives of Afrikaners. To complete the list of its functions, the stadium has also been a venue for rock concerts over the years.
Rugby has another significant role in the lives of Afrikaners: Sometimes it does provide a way for them to reach out to other population groups, or at least to share in a sense of what it means to be South African in the midst of the national glory provided by the Boks or Bulls winning a big competition. The most distinct examples of these are the two World Cups, with President Mandela (in 1995) and President Mbeki (in 2007) visibly present when the Boks lifted the trophy. In May 2010, the Bulls played the semi-final and final matches of the Super 14 competition in Orlando Stadium (Figure 4) because Loftus Versfeld had already been handed over to FIFA for the Soccer World Cup. President Zuma was present at the final in which the Bulls beat the Capetonian Stormers, their compatriots and archrivals, and the event displaced the heterotopia of Loftus to Soweto. These events were fleeting but incisive symbolic events which revealed that some Afrikaners aligned themselves with a sense of a broader national identity.

**Loftus as space of exotic tradition**

Heterotopia concerns the notion of *incompatible spaces*, that is, the capacity to juxtapose ‘in a single real place several spaces, several sites that are in themselves incompatible’ (Foucault 1986:25). Loftus is a heterotopia in this sense: within its off-field culture one finds a strange mixture of the traditional and the ‘exotic’. The traditional can be seen in the integral role that Afrikaans music plays at Loftus: The song *Liefling* (Beloved) by Gé Korsten once dominated the music played at the stadium and Steve Hofmeyr’s *Die Bloubul* (The Blue Bull) is considered the ‘national song’ (*nasionale lied*) of the Blue Bulls (Van der Berg & Burger 2008:148). The exotic can be seen in the strong element of Texan culture resonating in the entertainment surrounding the rugby field. The metaphor of the Bulls make Pretoria seem like Dallas: The horns, the offroad 4x4 *bakkies*
(Figure 4), the braais (barbeques) covered with all manner of meat and the open demonstration of Christian faith in interviews with the players after the match. The dancing girls, the Bulls Babes (Figure 5), at one point wore cowgirl outfits and matching cowboy hats. This last example demonstrates how the role of women remains subordinate to that of men: The women provide entertainment next to the field and a furtive sexual distraction to the display of aggression on the field, where the men in charge are the ‘male actors who create and sustain the nation by military and constitutional or political struggles [now rugby struggles] from which women by definition are excluded’ (Gaitskell et al in Grundlingh 1995c:126). Rugby reinforces gender relations in Afrikaans society (Gaitskell et al in Grundlingh 1995c:126), whether through tradition or through the exotic.

The reason for the ‘American exotic’ is probably two-fold: Firstly, an affinity that Afrikaners feel towards the frontier mentality and nostalgia of the American mid-West; and secondly, the advent of professionalism in 1995 and the accompanying commercialisation (and thus Americanisation) of rugby (which had already been underway since the mid-1980s, according to Grundlingh 1995a:19). Sport teams have become brands within the consumerist culture and the Bulls brand is sold as a mixture of the traditional (Afrikaans) and the exotic (American). The traditional element in the Bulls brand sets it apart from most sport brands in the world and makes it part of a smaller group of brands whose fans invest some kind of regional or nationalist sentiments in the team. Other examples are Bayern Munich and FC Barcelona: many Bavarians and Catalonians have the same secessionist sentiments harboured by some Afrikaners, aspiring to separate themselves from the nation-state and to form their own homeland (volkstaat). The ideal of the volkstaat (such as the picture painted by Roodt (2006:378-385)) gestures toward a future heterotopia that would exist in the midst of a dystopian South African society.

**Loftus as museum and monument**

Heterotopia is frequently linked to slices in time, where ‘the heterotopia begins to function at full capacity when men arrive at a sort of absolute break with their traditional time’ (Foucault 1986:26). Loftus is a heterotopia because time seems to stand still there. This gives it the feel of a (noisy) museum or a monument; at Loftus, one is in the same space where so many past events of glory took place in memoriam (in this sense, many rugby and sports stadia could be considered heterotopic). Figure 1 shows an archive photo of this ‘museum’ taken during the Currie Cup final in 1991. The stadium has remained much the same, although
the Eastern pavilion (from which the photo is taken) has since been rebuilt with the addition of an upper deck. Afrikaners have a ‘historical experience’ (see Gaffney & Bale 2004:34) at a stadium event when they watch rugby at Loftus. The stadium provides Afrikaners with a sense of historical continuity, a connection to memorable events in the past that can be celebrated even though they took place in the time of apartheid. The architecture of Loftus as stadium can be read as a historical text where ‘the collective energies, dreams and aspirations of large segments of the [Afrikaner] population are posited and deposited in the stadium’ (Gaffney & Bale 2004:35).

Loftus as rugby stadium becomes a kind of parallel reality during the rugby match: during the 80 minutes of the game (the slice of time that Foucault refers to), reality fades as the spectators escape into the parallel reality. In the slice of time that is the rugby match, it is not only the rugby stadium where this experience is felt. Rugby (and most sport) lends itself to the medium and format of television. Indeed, spectators watching the match at the stadium constitute a small proportion of those who watch it on television. The match can be watched live on television, whether it is played in the same city or halfway around the world. A recording of the game can be watched again and again on television (or on a computer or cellular phone screen). The slice of time that is the rugby match (or highlights thereof) becomes an iconic event on television, whether in real time or in memoriam. If it were not for television, then sport (and rugby) would not exert the attraction...
that it enjoys in modern culture (and for that matter in Afrikaans culture).

Concluding remarks: Loftus as mirror

I would like to bring this paper to a close in relating Loftus to the final principles of Foucault's heterotopia. Heterotopia, with its 'relation to all the space that remains' (Foucault 1986:27), serves as a kind of mirror exposing different contradictions within society. On the one hand, heterotopia creates an imaginary space that exposes the illusions of every real space in society (Foucault 1986:27). On the other hand, the role of heterotopia can be the creation of a space radically other to the communal space of daily life. What insights do Loftus and rugbymentality offer when viewed as a mirror, but also as imaginary space, of Afrikaners?

The first insight concerns specific ideological shifts. The consumerist nature of current Afrikaner culture expressed through 'rugbymentality' confirms the shift in the ideology of Afrikaners that Rossouw (2007:89-90) identifies: From the ideology of republicanism in the nineteenth century (that motivated the Great Trek and the Anglo-Boer War), to the ideology of nationalism in the twentieth century (which formed the bedrock of apartheid), and now (since the 1970s) the ideology of consumerist capitalism. Economic ideals now take precedence over political ideals in the lives of Afrikaners (Rossouw 2007:3). The integral function of rugby within Afrikaner culture is no coincidence. Rugby, like any sport, is part and parcel of the development of modern culture since the Industrial Revolution. Rugby has been present in all three of the above phases since it was imported here from the British Isles in the late nineteenth century. One can imagine that for Afrikaners at that time, beating the English at their own game provided a way of dealing with the scars wrought by English domination; much of this sentiment was carried over into the twentieth century, when rugby 'matches against the British Lions were significant opportunities for Afrikaners to teach die Engelse [the English] a lesson' (Black & Nauright 1998:77).

The second insight concerns the manner in which Loftus as heterotopia can either open or close the world of Afrikaners to others and also open or close the world to Afrikaners themselves. Heterotopia encompasses ‘a system of opening and closing that both isolates [it] and makes [it] penetrable’ (Foucault 1986:26). This means that the heterotopic site can at the same time be freely accessible to everyone (in theory) but also inaccessible to some. This relates to Loftus as exclusive and inclusive space: Loftus as place and brand is accessible to anyone and everyone (Figure 6 shows fans of different groups). Becoming a Bulls fan is simple because in essence anyone could be a Bull and yet, being an Afrikaner is a far more complex and exclusive affair. As a cultural symbol Loftus is part of an attempt by some Afrikaners to retroactively insulate (laertrek) themselves from the social and political realities of South Africa, whilst others see Loftus inclusively, as a way to become part of the cultural mosaic of the country.

Rugbymentality can function as a form of self-imposed exclusion for some Afrikaners. Rugbymentality reveals an interesting variation on the Foucauldian heterotopia: heterotopia is not just a physical place but also a specific experience of the world. In other words, rugbymentality leads many Afrikaners to experience the places that they daily inhabit in ways different from those of their fellow citizens, whether black or poor. The disempowerment of Afrikaners within the political sphere and the social realities of post-Apartheid South Africa have led to a sense of alienation, and rugbymentality
is a way of dealing with this. Loftus provides a physical space within which this mentality, and a sense of power, can be expressed. The rugby match at Loftus provides many Afrikaners with a kind of festival which is ‘confined to the limits of a reality of which it is a negation’ (Bataille 1991:215-216). The game is an escape from a reality they would like to deny and yet the game overflows into reality, whilst reality also has a direct impact on the game itself.

Rugby mentality can also function as the struggle for inclusion on the part of Afrikaners. The struggle of the Springboks to win the World Cup and be the best in the world is more significant than being just a sporting pursuit. The status of the Springboks as world champions ‘demonstrate[s] that the Afrikaner could beat the best the world could offer’ (Grundlingh 1995c: 118). The success of the South African team at the world championship acts as kind of mirror to Afrikaners and demonstrates to them how worthy their contribution is to the country. If the Springboks are the world champions, then Afrikaners share in the pride of being South African. This pursuit is therefore also the struggle of Afrikaners for their own recognition as politically and culturally relevant within the wider South African community. Loftus can be a way for Afrikaners to reinvent themselves as citizens of post-apartheid South Africa making an important and essential contribution to South African society and rethinking what it means to be an Afrikaner. It is after all significant that Afrikaners call themselves Afrika(ners); with the emergence of this name came the realisation that they belong to Africa and live according to its rhythm (Krog 2009:123). In a sense they did not fully become a ‘tribe’ of Africa because of their role in the institutionalisation of apartheid which, in common parlance, is considered a form of colonialism. Only beyond apartheid can they envisage themselves as the white tribe of Africa with the claim of belonging to this place that is South Africa.

Notes

1 A word of thanks to fellow participants for their advice and feedback on an earlier version of this article that was presented at the Walkshop on ‘Vryheidspark and other Governmonumentalities’ at the University of South Africa (UNISA) in Pretoria in September 2011. I further owe a number of ideas to fellow participants at a research seminar that I also presented at UNISA, this time at the Department of Philosophy, Practical and Systematic Theology in April 2012. A number of ideas in this article were also inspired by conversations with Pieter Duvenage and Sampie Terreblanche. I found their thoughts and comments to be insightful and of great help. I am indebted to an anonymous referee for valuable feedback that helped to make this article substantially stronger. I also thank Gallo Images for their kind permission to reproduce the images in this publication.

2 The Northern Transvaal Rugby Union broke away from the Johannesburg-based Transvaal Rugby Football Union with its establishment in 1938 (see Van Den Berg & Burger 2008:11-13). During the period after South Africa became a Union within the British Commonwealth in 1910 through the apartheid era until the mid-1990s, most rugby unions in South Africa were named in some way after the four provinces of the country, Transvaal being one of them. At the end of 1994 after the first free general elections, the country was redivided into nine provinces. The rugby unions of Northern Transvaal and Transvaal both fell in the new province of Gauteng, which mainly consists of the greater metropolitan areas of Pretoria and Johannesburg. Both unions opted to move away from renaming themselves after the province and instead chose the more brand friendly names of the Blue Bulls and Golden Lions respectively.
This does not discount the fact that, according to a recent BMI survey, the majority of Bulls supporters are apparently black (see McGregor 2011:159). In an interview Barend van Graan, the current CEO of the Blue Bulls Company, explained that one must take into account that the mostly white spectators seen at the stadium represent only a small fraction of the greater fan base watching matches on television. Although a much higher proportion of white people are rugby fans, the majority black population means that even a small proportion of black fans at some point start to outnumber the white fans.

According to Gilliomee (2009:xiii), there were around 2.6 million people identifying as Afrikaners in South Africa in 1980. The current estimate is that there are around 3 million people identifying as Afrikaners in South Africa (www.unpo.org), hence 6% of an estimated population of around 50 million, and even as many as 600 000 residing elsewhere in the world (official figures for the diaspora are hard to ascertain; figures given here are derived from the Wikipedia entry on ‘Afrikaners’). These figures apply if one views Afrikaners as ethnically white, that is, the exclusive definition of Afrikaners, which makes them part of the greater ‘white’ population of around 4.6 million (SA Survey 2010/12:1). If one follows the inclusive definition, that is Afrikaners as first language Afrikaans speakers, the figure would be considerably higher – amounting to probably at least twice, if not thrice, the figure given above for ethnically ‘white’ Afrikaners. The inclusive figure includes the majority of the Coloured population, of almost 4.5 million (SA Survey 2010/12:1), and numerous black Afrikaans speakers. Both of these definitions of Afrikaners are problematic for different reasons: The exclusive definition could lead to an oversight of the socio-economic problems that beset certain Coloured and African communities in grouping them together with their affluent white Afrikaans-speaking counterparts.

The Super Rugby competition (formerly Super 10, Super 12 and Super 14) is an international competition in which 5 regional teams each from South Africa, New Zealand and Australia compete from February to August. The competition has been running since 1993 and could be compared to the UEFA Champions League (in soccer) or the Heineken Cup (in rugby) in Europe. The Bulls have recently won three Super 14 titles in 2007, 2009 and 2010.

The Currie Cup is the national provincial rugby competition in South Africa. The competition has been running since 1889 and the Blue Bulls (formerly Northern Transvaal until 1996) have won the Cup 23 times, most recently in 2009. Only one team, the Bulls’ archrivals Western Province from Cape Town, has won more titles with 31 wins (superSport.com). Bulls supporters will be quick to point out that 17 of these titles were won before the Northern Transvaal Rugby Union was established in 1938. During the Apartheid years especially, this rivalry between Northern Transvaal and Western Province replaced competitive international rugby. The resulting isolation led to a deep-seated provincialism that still exists today.
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Abstract

Place name changes are an ongoing process and a contentious and politicised issue in twenty-first-century South Africa, where the changes are often implemented as a form of redress and/or nation-building. This paper examines the practice of name-changing as it relates to street names in South Africa, with a special focus on Pretoria (Tshwane). Whereas street name changes may be used as a political statement, I offer an alternative pathway inspired by Karen Till’s (2012) concept of the ‘wounded city.’ In particular, I address the question of whether or not the heritage value of street names is taken sufficiently into account when changes are implemented considering that street names act as containers of meaning; monuments to the intangible; and as visible reminders of a contested history that should not necessarily be obliterated from our townscapes.

Key words: South Africa; Pretoria; street names; name changes; townscape; heritage

Introduction

Perhaps one of the most evocative displays in the District Six Museum in Cape Town are the long banners of street signs suspended from the ceiling above the map of the District covering the floor. When former residents visit the museum they are encouraged to mark the places where they lived on the large map on the floor, the street names evoking memories of place and of the inhabitants’ lives there before the forced removals (Christie 2009:38). The most astonishing aspect of this portion of the exhibit, however, is how these street signs even came to be at the museum. As recounted by Martin Hall (2000:172):

This display ... represents all the ambiguities and contradictions in the violence of apartheid in its own particular history. Long assumed destroyed with the rest of the District’s architectural fabric, the street signs had in fact been secretly collected and stored by one of the white demolition
workers employed by the state. Seeking relief from the burden of his history this man presented himself and his collection to the Museum shortly after it was opened, as an act of personal reparation.

Now the street signs hang in the Museum as monuments to a bygone era. The street sign exhibit in the District Museum illustrates, perhaps better than any other example, the important role that street names, and even their physical manifestation in the form of signs, play in shaping the lived experience of those who occupy a townscape. Street names, while essential for our physical orientation in space, also speak to emotional connections and to place memory that goes beyond the functional aspects of their use as locational markers. In short, they are an important part of any city’s ‘emotional geography’ (Kearney & Bradley 2009:79).

In this paper I examine the issue of street name changes in the city of Pretoria against the background of the contested terrain of name changes in South Africa generally. I explore street name changes from practical, social and political perspectives and emphasise that, if street names are to be regarded as an important aspect of monumentalisation, existing street names should also be regarded as monuments and thus subjected to an integrated heritage approach when the case is made for changing them. Last, I draw on Till’s (2012) concept of the ‘wounded city’ to advocate an alternative approach to street name and other changes in the city.

Name changes as redress in post-apartheid South Africa

One of the recommendations made in the final report of the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) was that the re-naming or restoration of names, particularly indigenous language names to places on the landscape, was an act of symbolic reparation and restitution that could be made to victims of apartheid and colonialism (Du Plessis 2009:215). The redress that this affords rests in part on the authority that is inherent in the power to name and thus to emplace the worldview or interests of one group on the landscape over that of others (Orgeret 2010:310). Renaming or the restoration of properly inscribed names to parts of this landscape is thus seen as a way to rectify the alienation from the land that widespread dispossession imposes; it introduces a new conversation to the landscape (Du Plessis 2009:216).

As is to be expected at any time of political change (Azaryahu 2011; Bodnar 2009), place name changes have proceeded apace across the country, some such as Pietersburg to Polokwane, Warmbad to BelaBela, and Nylstroom to Modimolle, happening fairly quickly and smoothly. Others such as Louis Trichardt to Makhado and back again (Thotse 2010) and that of Pretoria to Tshwane (Swanepoel 2009) proved more contentious, being the subject of widespread protests (in the newspapers and on the street), political disputes and successful legal action (Swanepoel 2009:100).

Even in cases where the name changes are contested, the names in question may be used interchangeably, not least because they were usually in existence long before the decision was made to change the official designation. Such parallel naming systems are the norm rather than the exception in multilingual countries such as South Africa. Such parallel names may be translated versions of the existing name, may refer back to a pre-colonial name for the locality, or may be neologisms (Jenkins 2007:86). What is at stake in most place-name disputes is thus the question of which name should be officially recognised and ‘performed’ (and
thus legitimated) in a variety of contexts such as on signposts, road and weather maps and so on (Hansen 2001:3; Swanepoel 2009:96). Street names, in contrast, are usually characterised by only one name (see below).

Broadly, street names can be regarded as being important in three respects. As locative devices, as instilling a sense of belonging on a personal level (in the form of the personal address), and as a form of commemorative marker that helps to shape a communal conversation on a town-, city- or country-wide scale.

Street names as locative devices

Names on any given landscape, rural or urban, are ubiquitous. Mountains, streams, rivers, farms, towns, streets, buildings, squares – everything is named and, more often than not, these names are officially designated and widely known amongst people who live in the vicinity. While these days some of us may simply be able to type the GPS co-ordinates into an electronic device, for thousands of years ordinary people have used names, usually in the form of an address or geographical marker, to navigate space and to identify place (Coetzee & Cooper 2007:450).

As noted above, whereas place names may be known by parallel names, streets usually only have one name. This is so mainly for practical reasons – as outlined in the South African National Standards for addresses, an address (in this case a street address) should allow for the ‘unambiguous specification of a point of service delivery’, in that it identifies the exact point at which a service can be provided. Such services entail not only mail delivery but also water and electricity, as well as address verification for banking and other legal reasons (Coetzee & Cooper 2007:449). Large-scale street name changes, however, can cause disorientation for those navigating the space if all changes are implemented at the same time. Thus, when the eThekwini municipality forged ahead with over 100 street name changes in Durban in 2008, they retained both the old and new street name signs for a certain length of time so as to facilitate navigation. Many of the new signs were vandalised in protest (Orgeret 2010:299; also see Tolsi 2008).

Street names instil a sense of belonging

As demonstrated by the case of the District Six Museum, street names also instil a sense of belonging. The address of an individual can be regarded as an extension of personal identity, particularly in countries such as South Africa where proof of residential address is required for many of the activities that citizens do every day, such as banking. The streetscape that people move through every day inspires an associative process through which people attach either positive or negative associations to place and street names (Guyot & Seethal 2007:3; Swanepoel 2009:99). Possibly one does not even have to have physically moved through the streets oneself: I have never been to Durban yet I still feel a pang of loss to hear that ‘Musgrave Road’ – which featured on the South African Monopoly® board when I was growing up – has been changed.

Street names as memorials

Although Swart (2008:112) has argued that street name changes do not meet with the same resistance encountered at changes to more formal memorials such as monuments, because they are not ‘charged with the sacred’ and ‘appear mundane and meaningless’, it is clear from the South African context that the
participants in street name change disputes are fully aware of the ideological load that streetscapes carry. Numerous scholars (Bodnar 2009; Swart 2008; Till 2012:7; Yeoh 1996) writing on street names and other monuments have noted that street names can be used to reflect and promote a particular view of history and thus can be used to reinforce the political status quo (Swart 2008:112; Yeoh 1996:298). Swart (2008:112) also notes that they play a role in introducing those values and ideas into ‘the spheres of social communication’ or, as Bodnar (2009:121) states, ‘instructing people of the locality about a particular set of values, political order or cultural expression.’ In this way, street names, like all symbols, relate the concrete to the abstract. Thus the act of naming is also a commemorative act, a form of monumentalisation physically manifested by signs.

It is for this reason that the vandalism of signboards has become an important means for people to display their distrust/dislike of the new government by defacing the names that signify the change (Swanepoel 2009:96; Tolsi 2008). For example, in July 2011, six men were arrested placing the name ‘Clive Derby-Lewis Street’ (the name of Chris Hani’s assassin) over that of ‘Nelson Mandela Boulevard’ on a sign in Pretoria (Magome 2011a), and many of the new street name signs in Durban have been vandalised or stolen (Orgeret 2010:299). The vandalism of ‘Tshwane’ and other road signs was an important aspect of the rejection of the proposed Pretoria/Tshwane name change (Swanepoel 2009:96).

Street name changes in Pretoria

The proposal for large-scale street name changes in Pretoria was first presented towards the end of 2007, with the public consultation process continuing into 2008 and 2009. The ANC-dominated city council proposed that the names of at least 28 streets in downtown Pretoria and other areas should be changed. The reasons provided for this by the speaker of the Council, Khorombi Dau, varied from the need to ‘create a new African capital reflecting a shared heritage, identity and destiny’ to ‘given the history of the past and how some of the streets were named, it is imperative to change some offensive names which still reflect a colonial and apartheid past.’ Dau went on to say that the new names would be those of individuals ‘who had contributed to the liberation struggle, the struggle for gender equality and cultural activists’ (Mail & Guardian 2008b).

The streets identified for renaming are reflected in Table 1. Some of the names such as Pretorius, Prinsloo, Proes, Skinner, Van der Walt, Vermeulen and Walker were important figures in the founding and early settlement of the town (Preller 1938:58-59, 73-74; Punt 1955: 260-265). Others, such as Esselen and Mears date to Paul Kruger’s time as president of the South African Republic (ZAR) (Andrews 1999).

The proposed street names changes elicited an immediate and hostile response from a variety of civil organisations and political parties. The Freedom Front +, for example, described it as ‘an act of aggression against the Afrikaner community of Pretoria’ (Mail & Guardian 2008b) and complained about a lack of consultation. An estimated 47 civil institutions eventually came together under the umbrella of Action Pretoria Street Names in order to oppose the changes. While some of these institutions were no doubt motivated by concerns over Afrikaner heritage and culture, others were no doubt more motivated by their political opposition to the ANC and, perhaps, the apparent high-handed way in which it had been decided which street names
should be changed, as it seems that public participation was only called for once the streets had already been identified.

The scale and process of public participation in connection with name changes is a contentious issue generally – in Pretoria, Durban and elsewhere (Kriel 2009:31). Albeit based on a small sample (n=29), Njomane’s (2009) study indicates that while individuals may differ about the proposed place name change of Pretoria to Tshwane and the proposed street names, many people feel that there has been inadequate public consultation and information provided about the process. For many of Njomane’s respondents, the decisions seem to have come out of nowhere as they first became aware of proposed changes when the announcement appeared in the newspaper (Njomane 2009:57).

When public consultation was instituted in Pretoria, it was not overly successful. The years 2008 and 2009 saw a series of public consultation meetings that were often characterised by acrimonious exchanges, once or twice even resulting in fisticuffs between Pretoria residents of differing races (Magome 2011b:1; Mail & Guardian 2008a). In addition to the issue of Afrikaner heritage, many of the objections to proposed name changes were also financial. It was estimated that the changing of 27 street names, many of them extremely long streets, would directly affect over 27,000 businesses and residents with an estimated cumulative price tag of over R800 million (Beyers 2008). Such costs accrued from the processes associated with new street name boards, title deed registration for new addresses, administrative charges, municipal service and rates accounts, changes to maps and GPS systems, postal and street guides, the advertising of new names and consultation costs. This is not to mention the costs that individual businesses would be likely to incur through having to change their stationery and other details (Beyers 2008).

Table 1: Street names identified for possible renaming in 2005/2006 (Kriel 2009:44).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Streets set out in the 1859 survey by A F Du Toit in today's CBD (Meiring 1955:150).</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[St] Andries Street</td>
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<td>Church Street</td>
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<tr>
<td>[Jacob] Maré Street</td>
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<td>Pretorius Street</td>
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<td>Prinsloo Street</td>
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<td>Proes Street</td>
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<td>Schoeman Street</td>
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<td>Schubart Street</td>
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<td>Skinner Street</td>
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<td>Vermeulen Street</td>
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<td>Van der Walt Street</td>
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<tr>
<th>Downtown [CBD] streets not named in the 1859 survey (Meiring 1955:150)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paul Kruger Street</td>
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<td>Potgieter Street</td>
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<td>Mitchell Street</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Other</th>
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<tr>
<td>Beatrix Street</td>
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<tr>
<td>Charles Street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DF Malan Drive</td>
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<tr>
<td>Duncan Street</td>
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<tr>
<td>Esselen Street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hans Strijdom Drive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hendrik Verwoord Drive</td>
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<tr>
<td>General Louis Botha Drive</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mears Street</td>
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<tr>
<td>Michael Brink Street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queen Wilhelmina Drive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voortrekkers Road</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walker Street</td>
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<tr>
<td>Zambesi Drive</td>
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The acrimony that characterised this process was no doubt fed by the long on-going dispute about the city's name, which led to both sides making rather hyperbolic and confrontational statements. If one looks at the streets that were identified as having ‘offensive’ names as they represented a colonial and apartheid past, an undifferentiated approach on the part of the city council becomes evident. While some of the names, such as Hendrik Verwoerd, are clearly linked to apartheid and would probably have been easy to change, other names relating to the early history and establishment of the city appear to have been designated offensive merely because they relate to the time period of Pretoria’s founding. Many of them in fact are the original names that appear on the first map drawn up by the surveyor, AF du Toit in 1859, as indicated in Table 1 (Meiring 1955:150).

On the other hand, the claim by parties such as the Freedom Front + that the street names were wholly an act of aggression aimed at the Afrikaner population of Pretoria, is equally overblown in the sense that many of the names are not more than 60 or 70 years old, that is, they themselves were the results of streets being renamed (Andrews 1999). For example:

- Queen Wilhelmina Ave – named in 1947, previously Plantation Road.
- DF Malan - previously called Lorentz street – probably re-named post-1940.
- Jacob Maré – previously Maré Street, then Paul Maré, then Jacob Maré.
- Paul Kruger Street – previously called Market Street, renamed in 1938.
- Hendrik Verwoerd Drive – previously 9th Avenue, renamed in 1987.
- Voortrekker Road – renamed in 1952 as part of the Van Riebeeck tercentenary celebrations.

Street name changes are thus an existing part of Pretoria's townscape. In fact, Preller (1938:72) lamented in Old Pretoria in 1938 that several historical street names had been changed, and complained that ‘it seems needless also to translate old names, such as Kerk or Mark streets.’

In the final months of 2011, the mayor of Pretoria – Kgosietsos Ramokgopa – vowed that the name changes of both the city (Pretoria to Tshwane) and of at least 21 streets would go ahead and would be finalised by the end of 2012 (Magome 2011b:1; see postscript). While Pretoria’s streetscape, as reflected in its street names can certainly be described as non-representative, the newly proposed name changes are no less politically motivated. Looking at a present-day street plan, it is clear that the streets identified for renaming were in many cases singled out less for their ‘offensive’ nature than for the reason that they form the major arterial roads into and out of the city as well as the core of the CBD (Mail & Guardian 2008b). By renaming such streets, the ruling ANC party can further legitimise its rule by valorising the period of anti-apartheid struggle (Bodnar 2009:117), the scale ensuring that the impact of the changed names is concomitantly greater (Thotse 2010:181). Such streets include: Church Street; Pretorius Street; Schoeman Street; Zambesi Drive; Skinner Street; and Van der Walt Street. During a ceremony at Freedom Park, the mayor stated that ‘the municipality would build statues of liberation heroes that would be bigger than the statues now seen in the city’ (Magome 2011b:1).

Based on the process in Durban, it is more than likely that the list of those individuals who will be honoured will be dominated by the names of ANC members and thus ANC struggle icons (Marschall 2010:58).

As the case of the Durban street name changes demonstrates, the current process in most ANC-controlled municipal councils is open to abuse. Many of the decisions
have been made in council without adequate public participation. In addition, name changes are being used to highlight the ANC's role in the struggle. As a result, not all suggested name changes are motivated by the consideration of redress, but rather by one of political one-upmanship – as evidenced by the attempt to change the name of KwaMashu’s (Kwazulu-Natal) Princess Magogo Stadium, to that of Dumisani Makhaye, an ANC politician (Kriel 2009:32). It was rumoured that many of Durban’s new street names originated with the ANC’s head office in Johannesburg (Orgeret 2010:307).

The question remains: what is the way forward for the city of Pretoria and its inhabitants? Street names determine the dominant text of townscape; and Pretoria’s street names, particularly in the CBD and its two oldest suburbs, Arcadia and Sunnyside, clearly indicate a claim that the city was founded and built by a group of white men. But we all know that history is more ‘messy’ than that. Those men had families – mothers, wives and daughters – where is their contribution reflected? From its earliest establishment, Pretoria also had a black population initially composed of live-in servants, but from 1867 onwards, also of people residing at the Schoolplaats Mission (Friedman 1994:7) and later, Marabastad (Junod 1955:76-78) and Lady Selborne (Kgori-Masondo 2008). Those who lived in Pretoria when it was first founded, no doubt interacted with the black communities and leaders in the vicinity who would have had an impact on the community. How should we make their historical presence visible in the city’s townscape or, for that matter, in its history books?

In the remaining pages I present what I would view as an alternative pathway that the inhabitants of Pretoria could take as the name-changing process goes forward. First, it should be acknowledged that Pretoria is, in Till’s (2012:6) term, a ‘wounded city’ and second, street-name changes should be made on a case-by-case basis that is rooted in an understanding of the history and heritage of the city as a whole.

**Pretoria as a ‘Wounded City’**

Writing about cities such as Cape Town (South Africa) and Bogatá (Columbia), Till (2012:6) defines ‘wounded cities’ as densely settled locales that have been harmed and structured by particular histories of physical destruction, displacement and individual and social trauma resulting from state-perpetrated violence ... these forms of violence often work over a period of many years – often decades – and continue to structure current social and spatial relations ...

By these measures – state-perpetrated violence, physical displacement, and social trauma that continue to shape social and spatial relations – Pretoria, like many cities in South Africa, can be characterised as a ‘wounded city.’ The mixed communities of Marabastad and Lady Selborne were subject to forced removals and segregation (Friedman 1994; Kgori-Masondo 2008), which removed many of Pretoria’s non-white inhabitants from close proximity to the city’s CBD area, and thus work and shopping opportunities. In addition they would have lost their sense of connectedness to areas that they and their families may have inhabited for some generations (Kgori-Masondo 2008:ii). This severing of connectedness was also signalled in street name changes. Thus in the Lady Selborne area, which became the white suburb of Suiderberg, street names such as Mokone, Mbatla and Maraba were re-named Belmont, Bergendal and Sonnapas (Kgori-Masondo 2008:149).

In addition, since the end of apartheid, a series of social, economic and demographic processes have seen a pattern of what might be described as ‘white flight’
from the central areas of the city to, particularly, the eastern suburbs of Pretoria (Lanegran 2000:275; Popke & Ballard 2004:102), reinforcing existing divisions and illustrating the ever-growing gap between the rich and the poor in South Africa. Despite their withdrawal from many of these spaces, many white South Africans express overt emotional ties to the symbols of this history and past, such as that evinced in historical street names. Marschall (2010:1) has observed that this may be the case even if there is no specific identification with these symbols other than the fact that it expresses a combination of ‘anxieties over disempowerment and alienation’ (also see Tunbridge 1984:176).

Till (2012:5) motivates the concept of the ‘wounded city’ by reference to a notion of redress: once its inhabitants and administrators understand that their city has been damaged, more attention may be paid both to an ongoing sense of injury, and active measures to publicly address it. Thus, rather than memorialisation that ‘attempt[s] to close off public discussion’, the inhabitants might strive for memorialising efforts that ‘keep open the process of historical reflection through dialogue, changing landscape forms and community capacity-building’ (Till 2012:7). This is what Freedom Park is ostensibly designed to do on a national scale; yet visits to the monument are so hedged around with ‘explanation’ on the part of the guides that there is little if any opportunity for historical reflection and dialogue with the past. If Freedom Park is part of the national conversation, what about the conversation at city-level? At present, there are relatively few events that work to bring Pretoria residents from different walks of life together to ‘celebrate the city.’

South Africa has an exceedingly complex and conflictual history, which tends to be obscured in a black-and-white polarising political rhetoric, presenting ‘your’ history and ‘my’ history, rather than ‘our history.’ Perhaps it is this polarisation that led to the decision of the Tshwane Metro Council to declare that they would not participate in the celebrations of the 150th-anniversary of the city’s founding (in November 2005), declaring that the celebrations were racially divisive and that ‘it would rather celebrate the fifth anniversary of the City of Tshwane in December’ (Iol 2005; also see Jenkins 2007:158). Street name changes thus form one part of an attempt to re-write the history of the city.

For myself, I have come to think of street names and their display as the visible manifestations of what Peires (2008:64) has termed the ‘scars of history’: ‘History exists independently of the historian, the scars of history are visible in the present because the present is the consequence of the past ...

To carry the metaphor further, it is worth noting that scars on the body represent wounds that have healed and the mark of the scar serves as a reminder of an experience that may once have been painful but now forms part of your life experience. While changing street names may satisfy a perceived need to ‘re-make’ the city in another image, the practice of changing such names does not, in the end, erase that history. Rather than attempting to erase it, I would argue, street names should be used strategically to bring to the fore hidden aspects of the city’s history so that the landscape speaks to a shared, rather than a divided past. This is in line with the process advocated by then president Kgalema Motlanthe who called for a more ‘organic, consultative process’ to name changes that would ‘build bridges between different sectors of the population’ (Mail & Guardian 2008c).
Street names as heritage

How can you have the longest street in this city named Church Street when you have the likes of Solomon Mahlangu and Ting-Ting Masango that you can name these streets after? (Mayor Kgosiensonto Ramokgopa quoted in Magoma 2011b:1)

This is how many of South Africa’s towns grew in the areas north of the Orange River in the nineteenth century: first there came the ‘church place’ where families gathered for nagmaal (communion); then there came the church; which was followed by the trader in his wagon and, later, his store; after him, came the town (Preller 1938:50-51). That is how Pretoria grew from a collection of farmsteads to the city that it is today. There is no church on Church Square today, but the square and the street (Church) that leads from either side of it, are a reminder of the founding of the city.

By South African standards, Pretoria is an old city, which is why heritage values should be respected in the renaming process and why, in some cases, historic aspects of the town’s streetscape should be retained. This need not be counter-productive to making the city’s landscape more representative. For example, the city council might take a policy decision to retain the names in the CBD area that appear in the 1859 map and to change the names of streets that do not appear on that map, such as Bosman, Paul Kruger, Mitchell and Potgieter Streets. Crucially, these streets should not be re-named after struggle icons but after historical individuals who were present in the first few decades of Pretoria’s existence and who played an important role in the city. Other streets adjacent to this core area could also be re-named in this fashion. Beyond this, streets could be named after some of the important anti-apartheid figures who deserve to be remembered in our collective consciousness, in consultation with residents.

I would argue that an approach that brings to light the role of black and female actors in early Pretoria allows us room to reclaim the city in a new way. Of particular concern is the exclusion of female figures from much post-apartheid memorialisation (Miller 2011:297). Indeed, in Durban, the changes of over 100 street names included the names of only fifteen memorable women (Orgeret 2010:310). In Pretoria, new street names should be drawn from a time period co-terminous with the historical actors then present in the townscape. Through public consultation and information campaigns, the citizenry of Pretoria can begin to chart a more inclusive history of the city.

As for other streets that may be named after more recent figures, at the very least these should be of local significance to the city. This was an oft-expressed concern in Durban, where local historians felt sidelined (Kriel 2009:31; Orgeret 2010:313).

Conclusion

All monuments dating to a specific time and place are installed with specific objectives by their designers. Yet in a heterogeneous society such as South Africa, it is not likely that all those who view such monuments will attach the same meaning to them (Tunbridge 1984:171). Add to this the passage of time, and the perception of monuments and memorial markers will greatly vary (Marschall 2010:9).

Large-scale street name changes showcasing names divorced from local contexts, will only serve to date the cityscape in time. As Bodnar (2009:122) notes with reference to Eastern Europe: ‘what was once an official version of the past ... [strikes today’s reader] ... as a relic of a dated political agenda.’ While name changes that are related to a broader political change will undoubtedly
always be, to some extent, politically and ideologically motivated, and thus contested (Marschall 2010:7), they are often a necessary part of transformation and transitional justice (Swart 2008:106). This does not mean, however, that they shouldn’t also be meaningful within the specificities of their context.

Postscript

This paper was written towards the end of 2011 when the street name changes in Pretoria were still being debated. By the time it is published, the street name changes will have been effected following a decision taken by the Tshwane Metro Council on 29 March 2012. Of the 11 streets in the CBD originally identified for renaming, 10 have now been changed. This means that only 6 of the 20 street names originally indicated on the 1859 survey map survive. Twenty-seven street names in total have been changed, primarily to the names of ANC, PAC, APLA and other struggle veterans and anti-apartheid activists. Six women are honoured. Only three names relate to individuals who lived at the end of the nineteenth/beginning of the twentieth century, only one of whom was a local chief. The decision over the changes was, as is to be expected, accompanied by political bickering and verbal exchanges between the representatives of the political parties on the Metro Council and threats to challenge the decision in court (Hlahla 2012:1).

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Remembering my European past: Observations and reflections on places of memory in South Africa

Rolf Annas

Abstract

I invite you to join me on a tour of monuments and places of memory in South Africa. Based on personal experiences, observations and reflections, the paper takes you from Cape Town with its statue of Jan van Riebeeck to the Voortrekker Monument and Freedom Park in Pretoria, with a brief detour to the German Settler’s Monument in East London. On the one hand, we ask whether monuments and memorials that commemorate European influence in South Africa are still relevant today. On the other hand, we take a critical look at new monuments such as Freedom Park in Pretoria, which provides new perspectives on South African heritage.

Key words: German; heritage; memorials; monuments; remembering; South Africa.

I have very vivid memories of my childhood days in Cape Town. I grew up speaking German. My birth was announced in a German newspaper. I went to a German school, a German Lutheran church, and most of my friends were German, or, more correctly, German-speaking. We celebrated Christmas the German way and sang German carols. Over weekends we often went on outings with my German grandparents, uncles and aunts and cousins. My favorite place was Rhodes Memorial on the slopes of Table Mountain above UCT. My parents told me they were engaged there; we would often drive up to the colossal granite structure on a Sunday morning and then I would climb onto the backs of huge bronze lions and enjoy the view over the Cape flats with the Boland Mountains in the background. When I was five years old my parents bought their first house, an old derelict place on the slopes of Table Mountain but with a stunning view of the mountain, the city and the bay. I remember that Coloured people had lived in the house before us. They had to move. Although our house is not in District Six and is now dwarfed by enormous three-story mansions, the museum in the city reminds me of what happened when I was small.

When I was about ten, I joined the German boy scouts. We went on hikes and camps wearing a khaki uniform with a blue neck scarf held together by a clasp of zebra skin. One Saturday afternoon we were given the task
to discover and document all the memorials in the Cape Town city centre. I remember the controversial statue of Jan Smuts that used to be at the top of Adderley Street, regarded as ‘possibly the finest monument this country can boast of’ [Eric Loubser] to ‘outrageous’, a ‘baboon on a rock’ and ‘it resembles Tarzan’ [Louise Smuts, granddaughter] (Joubert & Berndt 2009:38).

A little unobtrusive stone monument in the lower part of Adderley Street impressed me because of the sad story it told: It is a bronze sailing ship commemorating the death of Royal Navy officer and explorer Robert Falcon Scott who perished on his way back home from the South Pole after having discovered that his Norwegian rival Amundsen had reached this southern most place four weeks before him. It was vandalised not for its bronze but perhaps for political reasons in June 1948 when the National Party came to power. It stands halfway between two huge statues: the memorial across from the railway station commemorating the fallen soldiers of the great wars and the Jan van Riebeeck statue just below the fountain. Later on, Jan was joined by his wife Maria and, to maintain symmetry, he had to be moved to make place for her. On 6 April for a number of years, I think I was about 12 or 13, when van Riebeeck day was still a public holiday, I would wear my German Lederhosen and join groups of children from various European countries at the foot of the statue, dance a German folk dance, followed by Scottish sword dances, and Dutch girls in their klompe. Then we would listen to speeches from politicians and community leaders who praised the various European immigrants for their contribution to South Africa. Then wreaths were laid at the feet of Jan van Riebeeck, as the founder of European civilisation at the Cape.

Now, 40 years later, Van Riebeeck Day has been forgotten, school children in national dress no longer dance at his feet and strategically planted trees might soon obstruct his view of the City of Cape Town. What
Figure 2: Memorial to Robert Falcon Scott, Adderley Street, Cape Town. Photograph by the author.
has happened to the myth? Why was South African’s European heritage ever commemorated? Why, in the first place, were the Germans and their language ever important in South Africa? There is even a memorial to German settlers in East London!

These are some of the questions I have asked myself, and I will start with Jan van Riebeeck and his monument.

As an employee of the VOC [Dutch East India Company], van Riebeeck was recalled as head of a trading station in Tongking [Vietnam] as it was discovered that he was conducting trade for his own account. In today’s language, he was a corrupt official who had been redeployed rather than sacked from the company which, according to OF Mentzel, employed men that were ‘as a rule down at heel and practically destitute’ and sent to the ‘vaevuur van die slegtes’ (the purgatory of bad ones) (Schoeman 2004:50).

Not only the man, but also his statue has a doubtful history. The plaque reads: ‘This statue was presented to the City of Cape Town by Cecil John Rhodes and unveiled by the then mayor Mr Thomas Ball on 18th May 1899.’ One may ask why, shortly before the outbreak of the Anglo-Boer War, the very British Rhodes whose dream it was to build a railway line from the Cape to Cairo over British territory, would want to donate a statue of the epitome of Afrikaner heritage to the people of Cape Town ‘until we learn that he was reliant on the vote of the Cape Dutch-speaking whites to keep him in power as Prime Minister of the Cape Colony.’ He even wanted only his name to appear on the pedestal and ‘specifically stipulated that the sculptor’s name was not to be acknowledged on his work’ (Joubert & Berndt 2009:34).

Jan van Riebeeck was, however, not left standing alone. To commemorate the tercentenary of his arrival at the Cape in 1652, the Portuguese government donated a statue of Batholomeu Dias, whereas the ‘people of the Netherlands’ sent a statue of an Riebeeck’s wife Maria de la Queillerie as a gift to the South African nation, thereby expounding the view of the Voortrekkers as the harbinger of culture and civilisation to the country. The couple face Table Mountain, in the direction where van Riebeeck as if ‘laying claim to the land’, as Joubert and Berndt (2009:34) comment in a workbook on public sculptures for high school learners. Dias, the explorer faces west, towards the Cape Town International Convention Centre and the Atlantic Ocean from whence he and all other Europeans that followed came.

This monument, as well as the three Cape Town statues, is reminiscent of the European influence in the Cape, but during apartheid, it was mainly van Riebeeck who was used as for propaganda purposes. His image appeared on South African coins and bank notes; the day of his arrival at the Cape was declared a public holiday, and in school history books he was often referred to as the founder of the nation. Thus there were (and still are today) calls by government critics to remove his statue, as Keith Gottschalk (1985) expressed in his ‘Ode to the Statue of Jan van Riebeeck’

And you Jan?
Branch manager of a multinational corporation? Imperialist!
You, convicted of corruption: Umkhonto knows all about statues like you.
So I’m telling you statue
One of these days
We’re going to donner you!.

But the statue was not ‘melted down and reshaped into useful objects like door knockers and railings’, the plinth not ‘crushed into gravel and scattered on to the paths in our public parks’ (Vladislavč 1996:19), there
Figure 3: Statue of Jan van Riebeeck, Adderley Street, Cape Town. Photograph by the author.
was no ‘uncanny’ collapse as with JG Strijdom in Pretoria (Hook 2005), and there was no ‘Goodbye, Lenin’ as in East Germany after the wall came down, where most of the statues reminiscent of the former German Democratic Republic were removed from public spaces. The Cape Town Municipality has, however, planted a number of trees very close to Jan van Riebeeck, a lane of thorn trees as part of a memorial to Portuguese explorer Vasco da Gama as well as a few palms that might soon make the statue hard to find.

Nevertheless, with Jan van Riebeeck’s doubtful past and recent claims that the images used to portray him and his wife are actually those of other persons whose portraits were displayed in the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam, a deconstructed view of the statue could be a monument to the corrupt politician.

During apartheid times, the statue of Jan van Riebeeck had monument status, as no memorial to the early Dutch settlers exists at the Cape. There are, however, others which commemorate European migration to South Africa, the nearest one being the French Huguenot Memorial in Franschhoek with its religious imagery of the trinity in the three arches, the Bible in the right hand of the female figure, and the sun of righteousness with the cross pointing towards the heavens. Interestingly the date of inauguration was 17 April 1948, one month before the National Party came to power.

The other two monuments to European settlers are in the Eastern Cape. The most famous and largest with conference halls and exhibition spaces is the 1820 British Settlers’ Monument in Grahamstown, which was inaugurated on 13 July 1974 after the South African parliament had voted R100 000 towards the project. It is famous as the main venue of the annual Grahamstown Arts Festival. The other one, by far the smallest of the three, and to which I have already briefly referred is the German Settlers’ Monument in East London. It was unveiled on Settler’s Day in 1960 to commemorate the centenary of the arrival of German settlers in British Kaffraria between 1857 and 1858. This monument, claimed to be the only one of its kind in the world, was commissioned by descendants of the settlers, sculpted by Lippy Lipshitz and built with financial aid from the former West German government. Situated along the Esplanade within meters of the sea, it portrays a man, a woman and a child with a doll, all holding one another from behind and gazing out onto the Indian Ocean. Behind them, on a concrete retaining wall that breaks the slope of Naval Hill, are five bronze friezes by German sculptor Bodo Kampmann depicting various stages of the immigrants’ life, the farewell, the voyage to South Africa, building a home, ploughing the new land and the family looking into the future.
These were some thoughts on my childhood recollections of monuments and memorials in the Cape that had a bearing on my German background. By the time I turned 18, I was in Pretoria, where I spent many hours marching on a parade ground in Voortrekkerhoogte, with a view of the Voortrekker Monument in the distance. I was sent here to do my National Service and had never experienced a monument of this size, dedicated to a cause, and not a person. The Great Trek I only knew from my school history books, but now I saw how the spirit of Jan van Riebeeck had been brought up to this hill above the capital, embalmed in a new meaning with mystical symbolism, enshrined by ox wagons, Voortrekker heroes and memories of an epic battle with divine intervention.

Foreign visitors were often brought to the monument and it was used as a backdrop for photo shoots. The fifteenth anniversary of the arrival in South Africa of 83 German orphans who were adopted by prominent Afrikaner families was celebrated here on 6 April 1963, Van Riebeeck Day. It seemed appropriate to take the photograph at this site, because for those who were responsible for bringing the orphans to South Africa, the German blood in the Afrikaner, dating back to the arrival of the early Dutch settlers, was of great importance (van der Merwe 2010), and studies were undertaken which attempted to prove the German roots of the Afrikaner (Hoge 1945; Schmidt-Pretoria 1938).

When Jan van Riebeeck arrived at the Cape in 1652, those with him and those who arrived after him were mostly employees of the Dutch East India Company, a job which was very high risk, because, on average, ten per cent of the crew and passengers would perish on the journey, and subsequently, the VOC recruited its staff from far beyond the boundaries of the Netherlands. Hoge (1945:156) and Schoeman (2004:174) maintain that up to 15,000 of the sailors and soldiers that settled at the Cape between 1650 and 1800 were Germans who were simply given a new identity on their arrival in Cape Town. As the VOC during its rule at the Cape only allowed only Dutch as official language, it was general practice to translate or transfer all names of new arrivals into Dutch. Afrikaans author Karel Schoeman, in search of his German founding father, mentions the names of some sailors who were on board with him on the Meijenburg when it docked in Cape Town in 1724. The Englishman Jonathan Wright became ‘Johannes Riet’, the Scotsman James Thomson became ‘Jacob Thomasz’ and the Germans Arnoldus Kreutzmann and Carl Christoph Rauchfuss were renamed ‘Ary Crysman’ and ‘Carel Christoffel Rykvoet’ respectively (Schoeman 2004:13).

More than 200 years later a similar phenomenon occurred when German war orphans were brought to South Africa and given Afrikaans names upon arrival. A group of Germanophile Afrikaners, who wanted to thank Germany for the assistance it had given them after the Anglo Boer War, regarded it as their dear duty to assist Germany in its time of need with all available resources [‘ihre teure Pflicht …, dem notbedrängten Deutschland mit allen zur Verfügung stehenden Mitteln Beistand zu leisten’] (de Lange 1970:81). The Deutsch-Afrikanische Hilfsausschuss (DAHA) together with the Vroue-noodleningskomitee [VNLK] between 1945 and 1957 collected more than £250 000 amongst Afrikaners to alleviate suffering in Germany and they sent thousands of food packages, clothing, and blankets to Germany with the greeting ‘van die Boerevolk van Suid-Afrika’ (Slater 2005:31-32). Amongst the members of these two organisations, there were a few ingenious people who set out to bring 10 000 German war orphans to South Africa in order to assist Germany locally and at the same time re-inject the Afrikanervolk with fresh German blood (Slater 2005:32). For this purpose, prominent Afrikaners with the help of the three
large reformed churches in the country founded the ‘Dietse Kinderfonds’ [DKF]. This association finally managed to bring 83 German orphans to South Africa, who arrived by ship in Cape Town in September 1948. The history of the DKF was compiled and published in 1970 by one of these children, Eike de Lange, who taught German at the University of South Africa and was for many years a member of the Association for German Studies [SAGV].

On the fortieth anniversary of their arrival, Werner van der Merwe published a history of the German orphans under the title ‘Vir ‘n blanke Volk’ (‘For a white nation’), in which he researched what happened to the children, how many tried to find their real parents and some discovered that they were in fact not war orphans as van der Merwe (1998) pointed out. He tries to give a critical account of the whole adoption process but does not mention that many of the children were adopted by members of the Broederbond who received preferential treatment during the selection process. Van der Merwe, himself one of these 83 children, was only born after the war in February 1946 as Werner Schellack, and then took on the surname of his adoptive parents. The most famous German orphan at the time was Hermine Sönnichsen who became Marié-Anna [Marietjie] Malan (van der Merwe 1998:104) while two men became famous in later life, Lothar Neethling, the notorious policeman known as Doctor Death and the opera singer Professor Werner Nel.

They posed outside the monument, but inside there is no sign of the European heritage which was celebrated at the foot of Jan van Riebeeck. Here one just sees ‘Ons vir jou Suid-Afrika’ in Afrikaans, with images on white Italian marble of neatly dressed Voortrekkers fighting black tribes, around the cenotaph flags of all the Boer Republics, in the Cape there were the British, the Germans, the French and the Dutch, in Pretoria there is just one nation. Like with the German war orphans, the European heritage has been absorbed into something new, after all throughout the time of apartheid Germans were regarded as favoured immigrants because they were regarded as easily assimilable.

On a visit to Pretoria in September 2011, I entered the Monument for the first time. Andrew Crampton (2001: 235) in his paper on the Voortrekker Monument, the birth of apartheid and beyond, provides some background to the eternal flame I saw inside:

The arrival of the flame of civilisation and the ox wagon from the 1938 Trek re-enactment were greeted in similar fashion. The Pretoria News (1949:5) reported that the flame “had been lit eleven years before beside van Riebeeck’s statue in Cape Town, and had been carried by runners across the Cape, the Free State and the Transvaal” for the laying of the foundation stone. Since then, the flame had been “guarded by Pretoria University, and was now going to its final home in the monument. ... It signifies that civilisation has conquered barbarism and the journey to nationhood is complete.”
In her thesis on the deconstruction of museums and memorials in pre- and post-apartheid South Africa, Meents (2009:86) expounds this myth of the ‘flame of civilization’ by referring to Delmont (1992) who had written: ‘The flame was supposedly lit by the sun’s rays at the foot of van Riebeeck’s statue in Cape Town. This gave the monument some sort of magic power almost like a relic making the invisible visible.’ The monument seems to have lost most of its religious dimension. Nowadays there is not just a monument, the visit offers a whole cultural experience with a heritage centre, an exhibition depicting ‘Afrikaners in the 20th Century; pioneers, beacons and bridges – post card flashes from the past’, not just the flame of civilisation, but also an eternal flame in honor of the unknown soldier outside the monument where a wall of remembrance was erected to commemorate members of the former SADF who died in active service between 1961 and 1994.

It is indeed unfortunate that, for political reasons, this wall was not accommodated within the newly erected Freedom Park. It would have been a sign of reconciliation if the names of those who died fighting on the SANDF side, many of whom had little choice about becoming soldiers, could have been included. A separate monument, a separate cultural space could very easily become a source of new nationalism or for those who ‘want an eternal resting place in a tranquil, safe and culturally friendly environment’, where ‘culturally friendly’ could mean white, Afrikaans, conservative.6

Fortunately, South African politicians have recently taken note that the Voortrekker Monument must be regarded as a part of the country’s heritage and that the Afrikaner’s struggle for freedom can be seen within a bigger picture of obtaining freedom for all South Africans. Subsequently, on 16 March 2012, the Voortrekker Monument became the first Afrikaans monument

Figure 6: The symbolic trek of 1938. Ox wagons departing from Jan van Riebeeck statue, Cape Town. Photograph by Cay from ‘Die Groot Trek’. Commemorative issue of Die Huisgenoot, December 1938.
in the country to be declared a national heritage site. At the declaration ceremony, Minister of Arts and Culture Paul Mashatile said this was done ‘to tell the South African story and tell it in its entirety.’

An interesting perspective on the Voortrekker Monument and the way it made its way into popular culture can be seen in Pieter Dirk Uys’ ‘Boerassic Park’ set out at his ‘Evita se Perron’ in Darling: Replicas of the monument, tapestries, brass trays, salt and pepper pots and playing cards. It was thus no surprise that the image of the Voortrekker Monument was used to feature Dina the ‘inheemse blom van die maand’ in the first edition of the Afrikaans men’s magazine Loslyf (see Peffer 2009:229-231). At present, the only image of monument available in its gift shop is a paperweight and a larger version, cut in half, to serve as book ends.

In the design of the Monument itself, there is a strong link to German heroic architecture of the nineteenth century. The influence of the Völkerschlachtdenkmal in Leipzig on Moerdijk’s architectural design has been widely discussed (Delmont 1992; Crampton 2001; Grundlingh 2001). Probably Europe’s biggest memorial to the dead, this 91m high Battle of the Nations Monument is one of the more than 100,000 war memorials in the country. It was erected in memory of the thousands who died when the forces of Napoleon were crushed by a combined army of Russian, Prussian, Austrian and Swedish forces. The monument, which is presently being restored for its centenary celebrations and the 200 year commemoration of the battle of the nations, was built and funded by the citizens of Leipzig without any state aid (Poser 2008:7). It is thus a monument of the people, which is run by the people of the

Figure 7: Boerassic Park, Darling. A collage of images compiled by the author.
Figure 8: Guards of the dead surrounding the crypt of the Battle of the Nations Monument, Leipzig. Photograph by the author.
city, unlike the Voortrekker Monument and the Freedom Park, which were built almost entirely with state funds.

Ironically, the Saxons were defeated in this epic battle as they fought on the side of Napoleon. This is reflected in the composition of the monument. It is not a celebration of victory, as with the Voortrekkers, but a place of memory to death and defeat where half a million soldiers battled with one another for four days in the villages and on the fields outside the walls of Leipzig, resulting in the death of approximately 110,000 people. Many tens of thousands died later as a result of injuries and disease (Poser 2008:4).

The interior is an enormous crypt in which 16 sombre warriors form a deathwatch, their heads bowed in mourning with eight six-metre high death masks behind them. Entering this huge space beneath a 68-metre high dome into which 324 almost life size riders have been chiselled, is a moving experience, enhanced by the cold air and the music reminiscent of a requiem playing in the background. It has the feeling of a mausoleum and has also been used by various governments in recent German history as a political symbol: In the Weimar Republic it became a symbol of nationalist undemocratic alternative to the new republic, during the Nazi era it became the symbol of a ‘Volksgemeinschaft’ and during DDR times it became a symbol of German-Russian friendship (Poser 2008:20-22).

The image of the mausoleum, however, does not go well with the original ideals for which the Voortrekker Monument was erected. According to Meents (2009:1), who refers to Derrida and Barthes in her deconstruction of this monument: ‘Seen from another perspective … even these outdated monuments can retain contemporary relevance?’

Just as the Völkerschlachtdenkmal has now become a place of memory for historical differences that have since been overcome and a sign of nationalisms that are no longer important (Poser 2008:22), the Voortrekker Monument needs to be filled with new meaning. The importance of this is also emphasised by Rigney (2008:346):

To bring remembrance to a conclusion is de facto already to forget. While putting down a monument may seem like a way of ensuring long-term memory, it may in fact turn out to mark the beginning of amnesia unless the monument in question is continuously invested with new meaning (Kosellek).

But what can this relevance be, advertising the site for its stunning views of the city, as the Battle of the Nations Monument also does, with a lift to take older tourists to the top, building a mountain bike track, a garden of remembrance, a tea room, using it as a venue for concerts?

At the opening ceremony of the Voortrekker Monument, one year before his death, Jan Smuts (1949:6) argued that the monument should be ‘a symbol not only of the past, but also of our reconciliation and ever lasting peace, and our pledge also in our colour relations to continue to strive after the just, the good, and the beautiful.’

Now, it seems, this place, this symbol of reconciliation, has been taken over, by a monument on another hill overlooking Pretoria. The Vryheidspark is indeed an interesting sight and a very unusual experience for the visitor. According to the SouthAfrica.info website, the Freedom Park is the ‘product of the government’s efforts to create and foster a new national consciousness of the common legacy that binds South Africans, the park addresses gaps, distortions and biases to provide new perspectives on South Africa’s heritage.’
Whereas the Voortrekker Monument has a heritage centre, the Freedom Park is heritage with its own eternal flame. It claims to be our South African unbiased, undistorted, with the entire gaps filled heritage. The visitor sees lots of water that evaporates faster than it can be added in the hot Tshwane sun, carved on glossy rock walls thousands of names of struggle heroes each one verified and approved by a select committee, further down symbolic rocks originating from all corners of the country whose origins and meaning can only be explained by a knowledgeable guide. No room for freedom of interpretation. Here, where water vapour escapes from cracks in the earth, shoes must be removed before stepping on the hallowed grounds. However, across the valley, on the other hill, the visitor sees South Africa’s largest university, UNISA. Here heritage, there science, knowledge and history, here myth, there evidence. Let the two hills remain apart, separated by the new Gautrain railway line and the highway to Johannesburg. The visitor to Freedom Park should enjoy the view from the one to the other and realise that:

Heritage should not be confused with history. History seeks to convince by truth, and succumbs to falsehood. Heritage exaggerates and omits, candidly invents and frankly forgets, and thrives on ignorance and error. Time and hindsight alter history, too. But historians’ revisions must conform to accepted tenets of evidence. Heritage is more flexibly amended. Historians ignore at professional peril the whole corpus of past knowledge that heritage can airily transgress.

Heritage uses historical traces and tells historical tales. But these tales and traces are stitched into fables closed
to critical scrutiny. Heritage is immune to criticism because it is not erudition but catechism – not checkable fact but credulous allegiance (Lowenthal 1998:7).

When I was small, I celebrated my European past on 6 April, now this should be done on 24 September. But I could never again dance at the feet of van Riebeeck in my lederhosen, not just because they are too small now. Official festivities are no longer for me. I no longer play this ‘heritage game’ (Herwitz 2011:236). Instead, I look at monuments and memorials with a smile on my face. I take note that on 16 December 2011 Freedom Park and the Voortrekker Monument were officially linked by a road. I have observed that the German Settler’s Monument in East London has now been incorporated into a new place of memory. On the right, the German family still gazes over the Indian Ocean, behind them, further to the left a wall of remembrance to struggle heroes has been erected as if to say, you have pushed us a way, but we are back now. Towering above all on a high concrete pedestal is a beautiful bronze monument, donated by an Italian sculptor and the people of an Italian town, multicultural man, who not only stands higher than the Germans, but also looks far beyond the ocean up from whence his help may come. He transcends the question of origin, of heritage. But despite a dedication by Nelson Mandela, multicultural man is endangered; the fragile bronze structure with pigeons floating in the wind is fenced off and locked up at night. Otherwise he may face the same fate as the bronze plaques of the German settlers.9

Figure 9b: Isivivane at Freedom Park with UNISA in the distance. Photograph by the author.
Figure 10: Symbol of multiculturalism with German Settler's Monument in the background, East London. Photograph by the author.
Notes

1 On 16 January 1912, Scott and his party reached the South Pole, only to find a Norwegian flag and a note from Amundsen stating that his party had reached the Pole on 14 December 1911. On 29 March 1912, Scott made his last entry in his diary. ‘We shall stick it out to the end, but we are getting weaker, of course, and the end cannot be far. It seems a pity, but I do not think I can write anymore.’ It is supposed that he may have remained alive for one or two days more after that, alongside the bodies of Wilson and Bowers (http://www.royal-naval-museum.org/info_sheets_robert_scott.htm).

2 ‘The two portraits which appeared on banknotes and coins, postage stamps, in books and was cast into bronze, was that of Bartholomeus Vermuyder and Catharina Kettingh (who did not even know each other). The portraits were painted by Dirck Graey and are displayed in the Amsterdam Rijks Museum’ (http://cape-slavery-heritage.iblog.co.za/).

3 On 6 April 2012, on the 360th anniversary of Jan van Riebeeck’s arrival at the Cape, a group of Khoisan people wrapped the statue in black bags and claimed that it should be taken to the Apartheid museum.

4 Title of the German film by Wolfgang Becker (2003) which reflects the changes experienced by East Germans after the fall of the Berlin Wall.

5 During their visit to Germany, a delegation which included the Boer generals Christiaan de Wet, Koos de la Rey and Louis Botha, received £10,000 from the German people for victims of the war (Slater 2005:30).

6 This quote is from a brochure on the Voortrekker Monument.

7 This is quoted from http://www.timeslive.co.za/local/2012/03/16/voortrekker-monument-now-a-heritage-site.

8 This is quoted from Crampton (2001:240).

9 The five bronze reliefs by German artist Bodo Kampmann show various stages of the settlers’ lives: leaving home, travelling to South Africa, their arrival, their work and their optimistic future. The plaques were stolen by vandals in January 2006 and have not been replaced.

References

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The Cold Storage Club

Ivan Vladislavić

Only amateurs collect books in order to read them. The professionals wrap their investments in archival plastic and put them away in the safe. Idea: a syndicate of pros, old friends and rivals, buy a defunct meat-processing plant and use its refrigeration rooms to store their books. Reconstruct the minutes of the Cold Storage Club (2005).

On 10 May 1933, the day of the book-burning in Berlin, it poured with rain. It is tempting to read this chance event as divine disapproval, but worse conflagrations have passed without the heavens shedding a tear. In any event, the wood that stood ready to fuel the fire on Opernplatz was damp and had to be doused with petrol before it would catch.

The condemned books were brought to the Square in a pompous Nazi procession. It included a brass band and mounted policemen, torch-bearing students in Sturmabteilung uniform, and three trucks loaded with books purged from libraries and other institutions. When they reached the Square, the marchers tossed their torches on to the pyre, symbolically merging and intensifying the purifying flames of their judgement. To start the proceedings, selected books representing the various categories of literature deemed alien or against the German spirit were introduced by name over a PA system before being consigned to the flames. Then the crowd joined in, passing the rest of the books along a human chain from the trucks, or lobbing them into the bonfire from a distance. Bonfire: bone fire. For the burning of heretics. Goebbels made a speech in which he railed against the erroneous and the subhuman. The proceedings were broadcast on the radio.

When the spectacle was over, the flames were doused by the fire brigade. Some quick-witted wheeler-dealers raked a few charred books out of the ashes and in the following days sold them on the streets as souvenirs. Micha Ullman’s memorial to the book-burning on Bebelplatz, as Opernplatz is now known, is called Bibliothek. It is a subterranean room that you can look into through a glazed hatch in the cobbles. The room is cold and white, and lined with empty shelves. You cannot see the whole of it through the hatch, and moving around from one vantage point to another, as many people feel compelled to do, merely brings more white shelving into view. At least this confirms an obvious fact: there are no books.

Look up from the edge of this dead space and you will see the façade of the law library at Humboldt University, and through its tall, arched windows, shelves filled with books of every size and colour. That human clutter, no less than the empty shelves, lets you feel the heat of the fire on your face. You scarcely need the quotation from Heine on the plaque nearby to remind you that where they burn books, in the end they burn people.

Bibliothek is luminous on a winter’s night. I was drawn to it by a column of light rising from the ground. Dirty snow on the edge of the hatch, trampled into
icy typography by the soles of boots and trainers, made the white room underground seem even colder. While I stood there shivering, two women approached, a local acting as a tour guide and her visitor from out of town (or so I gathered). They peered down into the void.

‘There’s nothing there,’ said the visitor. ‘It’s a monument,’ her friend explained. ‘It cost 500 000 Deutschmarks?’ ‘Yes.’ ‘For nothing?’ ‘The shelves are empty,’ the guide said impatiently, ‘use your imagination!’ There is room for 20 000 books, as many as the Nazis reduced to ashes.

I retreated to a coffee shop on Unter den Linden to warm my feet and look at my guidebook. I learned that more than 300 authors were blacklisted by the Nazis – Jews, socialists, pacifists, troublesome journalists, freethinking scientists. Some of the prohibitions were picky: for instance, in the case of Erich Kästner, Emil und die Detektive was expressly excluded. I had read this charming book in my German class at school; what came back to me now was the fact that its boy hero had painted a moustache on a statue.

Nearly a hundred book-burnings took place across Germany in 1933.

There were other sights to see, but Bibliothek gaped in my memory: I could not go home without seeing it again. I returned to the Square. Although it had begun to snow, the hatch was clear. Perhaps the heat from
the lights had melted the snow or a previous visitor had wiped it away.

Once again, as I looked down at the empty shelves, I heard company approaching, a dozen sightseers stubbornly following their itinerary despite the bitter weather. Spaniards, I thought, or Spanish-speakers anyway, talking in loud, musical voices and jostling one another as they made their way over the slippery cobbles. The leader pretended that he was going to stand on the hatch – which he might have done quite safely – and then leapt over it like a mischievous schoolboy. His charges gathered around the square of light.

‘What is it? What is it?’
‘Is it a crypt?’ This from a woman in a coat with a fur-lined hood that made me think of a capuchin monkey.
‘Ah!’ they exclaimed together. ‘It’s a tomb! A tomb!’
And while the guide was still explaining, they began drifting away towards the opera house, satisfied that the mystery had been resolved.

Ullman is an artist of the absent. His public sculptures – monuments is too grand a term – tend to be small, unobtrusive things, sometimes underfoot, often overlookable. His memorial to Graf von Stauffenberg, the man who led the failed plot to assassinate Hitler in July 1944, is on a street corner in the middle of Stuttgart. It is no more than a little well carved into a flagstone, a hollow the size of a cup that is sometimes full of water, and many people step over it every day. A few strides away, a plaque bearing Von Stauffenberg’s name is attached to the wall of a building above the water mains and manholes, near a blue city signpost that says Wasser Nr 3065.

One afternoon, I was loitering on the corner, trying to understand why I found this small thing so compelling. The hollow was brimming with water and a shark’s fin of green bottle-glass glinted in the bottom. A man stopped to read the plaque. Afterwards, he turned and gazed at the chestnut avenue on Schlossplatz. Then he gave a scarcely perceptible shrug, a movement of the mind rather than the shoulders, and walked off along Stauffenbergstrasse.

Notebook, Jun. 2007

I took the idea for ‘The Cold Storage Club’, the one about the bibliophiles who buy a disused meat factory, from a story told to me in confidence by a friend who loves books. Do I have the right to use it? Whenever I try to gather my thoughts about this, they go off at a tangent. How much resistance does the path of least resistance offer?

And how can absence be represented without lapsing into banality? Libeskind’s Jewish Museum in Berlin seeks to embody absence (a paradoxical task) in the empty spaces of the ‘Holocaust Tower’ and the ‘Memory Void’. When I visited the museum, the former was truly empty, while the latter housed Menashe Kadishman’s installation Shalechet (Fallen Leaves), an immense drift of iron disks shaped like screaming faces. Some schoolchildren, relishing the invitation to walk on the leaves, stomped up and down and made an infernal racket, which suited this elaborate building better than reverent silence. The museum requires an apparatus of architectural models and floorplans to explain its workings. Consult the plan showing how the ‘Axis of Holocaust’ intersects with the ‘Axis of Exile’ and you will find a red dot: YOU ARE HERE.

Near the Memory Void, I found Ullman’s minimalist works on paper Stuhl I–IV. The images were barely there on the surface: four shadowy impressions of chairs, absences registered by scatterings of red-brown
sand, as if someone had carried the solid objects from a room that had not been dusted for years. This ghostly furniture made me homesick.

Not all of Ullman’s small memorials are sombre. When he was commissioned to make a public sculpture in Bad Oeynhausen, a spa town on the Weser renowned for its healing waters, he made a spoon and set it into a paving stone. Those of us who have read Life and Times of Michael K know that a great deal of faith may be placed in the bowl of a spoon. But the town’s citizens were not all convinced: they mounted a campaign to have Löffel replaced with something more conspicuous and dignified. Enter the Friends of the Spoon – Die Freunde des Löffels – who sold soup to raise money for the sculpture’s preservation.

Ullman spoke about Löffel in a lecture he gave on his work. What I remember most from his talk, aside from the spoon, is how often he used the word ‘vielleicht’. Perhaps.

In April 1999, a NATO jet fired a rocket into a convoy of Albanian refugees near the village of Meja and killed 60 civilians. At first, NATO tried to shift the blame to the Serbs, but after a few days they admitted responsibility. One of their jet pilots, ordered to fly at high altitude to avoid enemy fire, had mistakenly identified the convoy as a military one and attacked it. A fortnight later, Serb militias would massacre more than 300 people in Meja.

Goran Tomasević’s photograph of the shattered convoy was published in the Independent on 15 April. It was in colour and covered nearly half the front page.

A red tractor and flatbed trailer slant across the background. The tractor looks well used, its tyres are worn; the trailer is piled with goods under tarpaulins, blankets, perhaps a mattress. A twisted piece of metal is lodged behind the steering wheel and buckled over the engine cowling. The silence in the picture comes from that stalled engine. Life has stopped dead here. Nothing will ever go forward again.

On the road, in front of the tractor, lie two bloodied bodies. I think they are both women, although blood and printer’s ink have blurred their features. One of them wears a red shawl sodden with gore and her left arm is twisted across her body. The face of the other is a smear of blood. Her mouth is open and her eyes are closed. All around them: stones. Near the rear wheel of the tractor: a shoe. There is always an empty shoe in a scene like this. (If hats are an index of character, shoes are emblems of circumstance.)

The living creature in the photograph is a boy, an ‘ethnic Albanian boy’ according to the caption. He takes up the foreground, with the sole of his dusty shoe touching the frame at the bottom, the top of his blond head nearly touching the frame at the top, and his body dividing the photo in two. He is wearing creased brown pants and a green sweater with long sleeves. He comes from a poor home; the bottoms of the pants are rolled three or four times, the cuffs of the sweater cover his hands.
In his right hand he is holding a black object. At first, I thought it might be a Bible with a bookmark dangling from it, but perhaps it is a leather pouch with a zipper tab, something like a shaving kit. What would a child want with a shaving kit? Perhaps it belonged to his father. He has something in his raised left hand too, a white plastic bag from a supermarket, nearly transparent. He grips the bag in the middle and the tattered loops of the handles flop down. Is it food? The dark stains on his fingers and the plastic may be blood or only ink.

The collar of the boy’s sweater is pulled to one side and his skinny neck sticks out of it naked and exposed. He looks to the right, in the same direction as the round headlight of the tractor, the way the convoy was going. I wonder what he sees there in the future. He is flinching, fending something off with his left arm, holding out the packet as if he does not want it to touch his body. There are lines around his mouth and under his eyes that do not belong on the face of a child. His boyish blond fringe has become an anachronism.

When I bought this newspaper at the foreign press stand in Stuttgart’s Hauptbahnhof, I noticed that some of the other papers carried enlargements of the bodies and other aspects of the photo. Those details would answer some of my questions about these people. But would it bring them any closer to me?

The report accompanying the picture says: ‘The Reuters photographer filmed blood-stained bodies lying on a road near abandoned tractors. Pillows and blankets were scattered around as well as human remains.’ I understand why people fleeing their homes reach for blankets and pillows. But they have no need for them now, laid out on the front page of my newspaper with their heads on the stony ground.

After Hitler came to power in 1933, he established a memorial in Munich to the casualties of the failed Beer Hall Putsch. The site chosen was the Feldherrnhalle on Odeonsplatz, where some of the plotters had been shot dead by police ten years earlier. This arched gallery, modelled on the Loggia dei Lanzi which adjoins the Uffizi in Florence, was built in the 1840s by Ludwig I to honour the Bavarian Army. Hitler had the loggia tricked out with Nazi paraphernalia, including an altar-like memorial tablet surmounted by a swastika and eagle, rows of flags and wreaths, and a huge torch.
permanent guard of honour was mounted there and all who passed it were required to give the Nazi salute. A photograph from the period shows twenty or thirty citizens in hats and coats, dutifully saluting as they pass soldiers with shouldered rifles. Who knows what was in their heads, whether they were proud or ashamed or simply glad not to be arrested.

One way of avoiding the obligatory salute was to nip down Viscardigasse, which runs behind the Feldherrnhalle. The alley acquired the nickname Drückeberger-gasse – ‘Shirkers’ Alley’ – which it retains today. In 1995, Bruno Wank made an artwork in Viscardigasse in memory of those who shirked their duties to the Nazi state. It is called Arguments. He removed some of the cobbles and replaced them with bronze casts, tracing a tapering line along the alley, a path with a lazy swerve in it like an elongated ‘S’, never more than three or four cobbles wide. This hint of divergence from the high road commemorates the small, oblique acts of resistance to power that people make in their everyday lives.

When I went down Viscardigasse on the advice of my friend Dominik, who is a neighbour of Bruno’s, when I turned into Shirkers’ Alley with the weight of my own history as a white South African on my shoulders, I found nothing to show the presence of an artwork. In relation to this work, Thomas Köllhofer writes, you are not a viewer but a pedestrian. As you pass down the alley, the bronze cobbles, buffed by thousands of footsteps like your own, exert a subtle force on your movement. You feel yourself tugged to one side, as if a ghost has taken your elbow and is steering you off course. Suddenly you are walking on the bias, whether you know it or not, remembering through the soles of your shoes.
Lindsay Bremner’s volume of essays on Johannesburg’s transformation after the demise of apartheid received the prestigious Jane Jacobs Urban Communication Book Award in 2011. The award – named in honour of the late social activist and author of *The death and life of great American cities* (1961) – is made annually by the New York based Urban Communication Foundation and aims to recognise outstanding books that exhibit excellence in addressing issues of urban communication. It is not difficult to surmise why *Writing the city into being* received the award for it contains an impressive collection of reflections both intellectually and visually on the city of Johannesburg. Currently employed as Director of Architectural Research at the University of Westminster, London, Bremner used to be the Chair of Architecture at the University of the Witwatersrand. As an acclaimed architect this volume is by no means Bremner’s first attempt to tackle the enigmatic topic of the city of Johannesburg and she has previously published, amongst others, *Johannesburg: one city colliding worlds* (2004) and chapters in *Johannesburg – the elusive metropolis* (2008), *Desire lines: space, memory and identity in the post-apartheid city* (2007), *Under siege: four African cities. Freetown, Johannesburg, Kinshasa, Lagos* (2002), and *blank___architecture apartheid and after* (1998). Her projects and designs...
have been exhibited widely such as the Sans Souci rebuilding project in Kliptown, Soweto (2007), as well as contributions to the Rotterdam and Venice Architecture Biennales in 2005 and 2006 respectively.

This volume can in some ways be viewed as the culmination of all Bremner’s previous endeavours. It consists of three distinct sections, the first being a theoretical expose entitled, Proposal: writing the city into being wherein Bremner posits her broader philosophical and reflective ideas about experiencing the city. This is followed by four photographic essays and the volume concludes with ten essays on Johannesburg that have been unpublished or previously published elsewhere, spanning the period from 1998 to 2008.

After reading the first section one cannot but marvel at Bremner’s ability to sensibly draw together an extensive array of literature from different disciplines and inventively applying them to her unpacking of walking, writing and listening to the city as a live entity or what she terms ‘a mode of city-making’ (p. 1). She seamlessly incorporates strategies from current philosophies (Blanchot’s language theories, Deleuze and Guattari’s idea of smooth spaces), to urban theorists (De Certeau, Lefebvre, and AbdouMaliq Simone) and cultural theories (Mbembe and Nuttall). Clearly, her thinking about the city is an intellectually engaging affair as well as a concretely embodied experience, as she insists that writing the city is also to create the city or a she phrases it ‘a way of writing the contemporary city into being and a mode of self-writing’ (p. 3). Furthermore, Bremner is acutely aware in her analysis that ‘[t]he city of Johannesburg ... is a multilayered landscape of intersecting, overlapping, and conflicting geographies, place and identities’ (p. 172). This means that the author is particularly attuned to the evasive nature of the city that ‘never reveals itself all at once’ (p. 1) that she is attempting to write and walk into being.

In the photo essays the notions of ‘writing the city’, ‘smooth space’, ‘immaterial architecture’ and ‘terror’ are captured in full colour. Bremner shows a keen observant eye here for the themes that she identified earlier in Proposal: writing the city into being are expanded on through visual presence.

Finally, the collection of Essays: Johannesburg 1998 – 2008 spans an array of themes such as strangeness, dirt, skin, boundaries, desire, fear, transition, catastrophe, criminality, memory and public life. In the essay ‘Bounded spaces: democratic anxieties in post-apartheid Johannesburg’, she for instance attempts to provide a sociological interpretation as to the nature and reasons for the violence that still plagues Johannesburg, and most other bigger cities in contemporary South Africa. She suggests that it can be attributed in part to the lack of a sense of being that young black men particularly experience while still being locked outside the white man’s world. She notes that ‘their crime is an attempt at inner reparation’ (p. 201). Clearly, the search for a meaningful existence and to make sense of a problematic past provide some answers to the violent crimes but one cannot but wonder, almost twenty years into democracy, whether a more comprehensive and multifaceted explanation is not called for at this juncture? Perhaps Bremner’s next volume would move towards such an investigation.
The publication of Ofra Amihay and Lauren Walsh’s edited volume, *The future of text and image*, is a sure indication that the study of the relationship between the textual and the visual has grown into an independent academic discipline. With a foreword by WJT Mitchell and an afterword by Marianne Hirsch, whose contributions to the founding discourse in this field are well-known, this timely book brings together essays from scholars who investigate literary and visual conjunctures in diverse forms and contexts. The editors explain that the book aims to ‘shed light not only on the future of text and image as an independent discipline’ but also to present ideas about the destiny of the ‘role and place’ of that discipline in various scholarly fields, informed by the ways in which new technological forms and practices have and may influence this relationship in the future (p. viii). In line with this aim, the contributors represent a diversity of intellectual fields including literary studies, cultural studies, art history, media studies, graphic design/communication design and digital studies, amongst others.

Although complex arguments are posed in each chapter, reading the book is certainly not an arduous task.
Perhaps this is because the editors have organised their volume into four sections, with the essays in each linking appropriately to each other. In fact it was hard to put the book down, or to attempt a speedy ‘light’ read, as the visual and written texts examined in each chapter stimulated my curiosity, sending me in search of the original text/work or phenomenon discussed. The inclusion of four pages of colour prints tucked away in the centre of the volume no doubt added to its pleasurable reading.

Investigating the ‘intermedial conjunctures’ (p. viii) that play with and against the traditional roles of the visual and verbal, the essays in the book present ‘explorations of the incorporation of visual elements into different literary forms, of visual writing modes, and of textuality and literariness of images’ (p. viii). Topics under discussion include an interesting selection of memories, novels, poetry, collage books, the PostSecret phenomenon, blogs, digital poetry, photography, painting, typography and comics.

Mitchell, whose seminal text dealing with the relationship between text and image, *Picture theory* (1994) is referred to by many of the contributors, sets the stage for the subsequent essays by fleshing out the complex matter of the rupture, relation and synthesis of the textual and the visual in the foreword. By using the letter ‘X’ to visually explain this relationship, Mitchell negotiates the possible ways in which the two concepts differ, suggesting two fundamental ingredients in this relationship. On the one hand images and texts can be distinguished from each other on the basis of the senses (seeing versus hearing), whilst on the other, their difference is also seated in the complicated ‘nature of signs and meaning’ (p. 2). This is because whilst words are ‘arbitrary, conventional symbols’, images are representations ‘by virtue of likeness and similitude’ (p. 2, original emphasis). Thus, an examination of the relation of image to text must also deal with the relationship between signs and the senses which comes down to an investigation of semiotics – the theory of signs – and aesthetics – the theory of the senses.

Each of the chapters in the volume deals with this complex relationship. Permeated with the difficulties inherent in articulating trauma in both visual and verbal modes, Part I: *Text and image in autobiography* brings together three essays which deal with trauma, memory and secrets in diverse literary forms.

In ‘Portrait of a secret: J.R. Ackerley and Alison Bechdel’, Molly Pulda initiates the discussion on the dialectical relation between text and image by interrogating what the graphic memoir (autobiography in the medium of comics) in particular contributes to narrative studies. Drawing throughout on Barthean analyses of photographs, the author asks: what dynamic meanings are evoked through the combination of text and image in this context? In order to negotiate these questions, Pulda compares two memoirs of similar subject – a father’s sexual secrets revealed and related by the respective queer authors. Both narratives are infused with ‘the themes of death, secrecy and heredity’ (p. 20) as the authors, through a process of ‘postmemorial imagination’ (p. 17) document their ‘effort[s] to identify’ (p. 33) with their deceased homosexual fathers through both word and image.

Continuing the theme of secrets, in the essay entitled, the next essay, by Tanya Rodrigue, proposes that the PostSecret art project, begun in 2004 by Frank Warren and which has subsequently grown into a cultural phenomenon, is a means by which trauma can be
represented by individuals in ways that challenge and resist normative epistemological frameworks that ‘perpetuate master narratives’ (p. 41). Rodrigue convincingly argues that since literary genres such as autobiography and memoir are shaped by their predetermined structures which force ‘the writer to mold his/her experience into these identity scripts’, such narratives tend to ‘embody a false, generic identity that is socially accepted and expected’ (p. 46). Thus, imagetext, defined by Mitchell (p. 43) as ‘the inextricable connection of non-discursive language to discursive language’, of which PostSecret in its digital form is an example, is shown to be a productive way in which to ‘(re)construct’ (p. 39) and ‘engage in dialogue for the purposes of understanding trauma’ (p. 40).

In their contribution entitled, ‘Difficult articulations: comic autobiography, trauma, and disability’, Dale Jacobs and Jay Dolmage examine how comics, which draw on linguistic, visual, gestural, spatial, audio and multimodal systems of signs, work to represent and recount traumatic experiences which are at the same time ‘ineffable and individuated, yet also over-determined’ (p.70). As a graphic memoir of medical trauma, their discussion is focussed particularly on the ways in which David Smalls Stitches (2009) subverts normative resolutions to the representation of disabled bodies.

In Part II, two essays are brought together under the theme, Text and image in the novel. Lauren Walsh, author of ‘The Madeleine revisualised: Proustian memory and Sebaldian visuality’, analyses the status of memory in ‘an image-oriented, post-Holocaust world’ (p. 94) by examining Sebald’s textual sketching, rather than photographic representation of the involuntary memories of his protagonist in Austerlitz (2001). In her analysis of ‘photo-textual memories’ (p. 94) Walsh seeks to explore ‘the tension between visual recollection and verbal representation’ and ultimately to question whether or not ‘imagination is allowable in the remembering of the Holocaust’ (p.95).

In ‘Immigwriting: photographs as migratory aesthetics in the Modern Hebrew novel’, Ofra Amihay delves into the ‘imagetext turn’ in the Hebrew novel, by analysing the ways in which the visual is re-embraced in the imaginative construction of the ‘New Jew’. Rorit Matalon’s Zeh im hapanim eleynu 1998 (published in English as The one facing us 1998) serves as basis for an exploration of the pivotal role played by the photograph in constructing ‘the postcolonial cultural idea of the beyond’ (p. 134) and which also links more generally with ‘issues of memory and immigration in the twentieth century’ (p. 134) particularly in terms of perceptions of such concepts as ‘home’ and ‘roots’ as portable, and bounded up with the ‘juxtaposition between necessity and nostalgia’ (p.139).

Part III deals not only with the relationship between image and text but also the understanding of the text as an image in poetry. The three chapters in this part deal with the photo-text, the multisensory nature of text, and experimental poetry in the historical avant-garde as well as in the digital age. In ‘Out of site: photography, writing and displacement in Leslie Scalapino’s “The Tango”’, Marcus Bremmer, drawing on Michel Foucault and Roland Barthes, examines not only the connections between the photographs and the phrases in the artist/poet’s work but also the relationship between the photo-text and the reader/viewer through the category of ‘hetero-positionality’ (p. 195). In Chapter 8, Eduardo Ledesma, once again brings subjectivity into greater focus in his analysis of the fusion of ‘verbal and visual meaning in experimental poetry’ (p. 231).
Focussing particularly on Spanish and Catalan texts, the author argues that affective responses are triggered in the reader/viewer who is an active and co-operative subject. In the same way, in ‘Orientation, encounter and synaesthesia in Paul Celan and Yoko Tawada’, Gizen Arslan contends that orthographic symbols – ‘individual character[s] or punctuation’ (p. 200) used in writing systems – are multisensory elements which evoke affective responses in the reader/viewer. In all three chapters, the materiality and multisensory nature of words and images in relation to the subject are fore-grounded.

In Part IV, three essays that deal with the relationship between text and image in works of art are tied together. In Elise Takehana’s contribution, William Burroughs’ experimental writing – also known as ‘cut-up’ – is examined alongside Robert Rauschenberg’s silk-screens and inoperable machines. ‘Avoiding categorization, order, and conclusions’ (p. 296), through their media both artists exposed the unstable nature of selfhood in the context of the modern urban state of distraction, thereby bringing the subject to inquisitiveness and an attitude of constant questioning, rather than seeking to produce answers. In this way, argues Takehana, both artists are forerunners of the critical investigation of the influence of digital media on literature, art and subjectivity.

In the second chapter in this section, Cara Takakjian shows that although Futurism (with its celebration of chaotic modern urban life) is mostly regarded as a movement intent on destruction and rupture, particularly in terms of the relationship between the artist, the artwork and the public, it also paradoxically created ‘a sense of cohesion and participation’ (p. 310) in the reader/viewer’s response to these works. Focussing specifically on Filippo Tommaso Marinetti’s approach to art, made evident in his parole in libertà – words in freedom – and his manifestos, Takakjian argues that, although the artist constantly attempted to eliminate the subject through his art, the audience is at the same time a necessary component of the fulfilment of these works which are directed at the sensorially embodied reader/viewer.

In the final chapter, ‘Heterochronic visions: imag(in)ing the present’, Heike Polster once more draws the subject into the conversation. She examines the ways in which temporality is visualised in the still, singular images of Canadian photographic artist, Scott McFarland and German painter Jan Peter Tripp, through the lens of heterochronicity, a representational mode employed by writers and visual artists in an attempt to represent temporality. In heterochronic forms of visual expression, in which time is the main topic and of which Tripp’s paintings are an excellent example, subjects are made aware of the present moment. Once again, as is the case throughout the entire book, the written text and visual image are seamlessly brought in close proximity to each other as each author unravels his/her arguments.

Overall the editors have successfully compiled a fascinating anthology of perspectives dealing with the slippery categories of text and image in literary and visual forms of expression. The book would no doubt appeal to readers of this journal, Image & Text, according to whose title the relation between text and image is evidently inverted. Stimulating dialogue between text and image, the book calls into question not only which term precedes the other, but also what Mitchell refers to as the ‘unrepresentable space’ (p. 1) between one concept and the other. What meanings are assigned to the following (some perhaps appropriately unpronounceable) configurations of terms and signs which appear throughout the volume: text and image, image and text, image-text, image/text, imagetext, image & text, image X text? In her afterword, Marianne Hirsch suggests that the awkward and uncertain relationship between these terms is symptomatic of the unpredictable future of the relation between the two. What may be needed at this uncertain time, Hirsh argues, is ‘a method of combined looking/reading that produces a close encounter, of the third kind’ that is ‘inherently both hybrid and divided’ (p. 346) and also relational, connecting and contrapuntal (p.347). Clearly, the relationship between text and image is far from settled and will no doubt provide the ground for much interesting debate in the future.
Image & Text has been published annually since 1992 (primarily as a journal for design) and was accredited by the South African Department of Higher Education and Training in 1997. Since 2011, it has been repositioned as a multi- and interdisciplinary journal that orbits around the nexus of visual culture. The aim of the journal is to draw perspectives from a broad field of interests and subjects: visual anthropology, material culture, visual arts, design culture, visualising sciences and technologies, art history, philosophy, fashion, media and film studies, architecture, literary studies, tourism studies, new media and cyber theory, and so forth. The grounding provided by visual culture studies as a comparative and enabling premise for all these approaches, subjects, interests, fields and theories is located in the global South, not only geographically but also critically.

The editors invite papers that address or intersect with the visual from any of the fields mentioned above. One of the aims is to showcase new and young academic voices, as well as more established voices.

- Authors may wish to discuss the scope or applicability of their articles prior to submission and are encouraged to contact the Editor in this regard.
- All manuscripts received are first read by members of the editorial committee, who may recommend changes before submitting the manuscript for peer review, or reject manuscripts outright that are deemed inappropriate or not up to standard.
- Manuscripts are sent for refereeing to at least two subject specialists in a double blind refereeing process. The referees are chosen from other tertiary institutions or fields of expertise as appropriate. The comments and recommendations of the referees are conveyed to authors as necessary, and they may re-submit manuscripts once changes, if necessary, have been effected. If articles are rejected by both referees, authors are not encouraged to re-submit. Authors may provide the names of one or more potential referees for consideration by the editorial board but this does not guarantee that they will be used. All authors are subject to the same rigorous review process.
- Only material deemed to be of a suitably high standard is published.
- Articles may be submitted in English or in Afrikaans.

Contributors should please ensure that their submissions satisfy the following editorial requirements:

- A declaration must be submitted wherein the author states that the article submitted is based on original research. The author must furthermore stipulate that the article has not been submitted elsewhere for consideration or has not already been published elsewhere under another title (an example is available on the journal website www.imageandtext.up.ac.za).
- All articles must have a cover sheet that provides the following details:
  - Title of the article
  - name of author/s
  - affiliations and contact details of all author/s
• designation of author/s and date of submission

• Articles must be presented in the following sequence:
  • title of article
  • name of author/s
  • 200 word abstract and six keywords
  • main text
  • endnotes
  • references
  • images and captions

• Manuscripts must be typed in A4 format in Times New Roman or Arial 11-point font size, 1.5 line spacing with generous left and right margins, left aligned only.

• All pages must be numbered and the Harvard Reference System must be used throughout (an example is available on the journal website www.imageandtext.up.ac.za).

• Length of articles must be approximately 5000 – 7000 words (including references).

• Please use endnotes rather than footnotes.

• The house style of Image & Text uses single quotation marks for direct quotes and double quotation marks to draw attention to a concept or word.

• Digital images must be of a quality suitable for reproduction and printing and should be 300dpi in jpg or tiff format. Do not embed images in the text but indicate their placement in the text.

• Text and images must be submitted in separate files.

• Authors are responsible for obtaining copyright and reproduction clearance for all visual or other material submitted. A copyright agreement form must be signed and submitted to the journal Editor (an example is available on the journal website www.imageandtext.up.ac.za).

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image.text@up.ac.za

Correspondence may also be addressed to:
The Editor
Image & Text
Department of Visual Arts
University of Pretoria
Private Bag X20
Hatfield
South Africa 0028

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This journal is an e-publication and is available through Sabinet online and on the journal website www.imageandtext.up.ac.za. For any enquiries in this regard, please contact the Department of Visual Arts at +27 12 4202353 or email image.text@up.ac.za
Jeanne van Eeden (Editor)

Jeanne van Eeden has been teaching art history and visual culture in the Department of Visual Arts at the University of Pretoria since 1990 and became Professor and Head of the Department in 2008. She obtained a DPhil in Communication from the University of South Africa on the South African theme park, The Lost City, in 1999. She is the co-editor of the book *South African visual culture* (2005) and has contributed chapters to British, German, American and South African books and is a National Research Foundation rated researcher. She was assistant editor of *Image & Text* from 1992 to 2011 and also serves on the editorial board of the South African academic journal *de Arte*. She has published on topics related to gender, post-colonialism and cultural representation; entertainment landscapes; South African tourism images; and social spatialisation in South African visual culture.

Amanda du Preez (Assistant Editor)

Amanda du Preez is Associate Professor in the Department of Visual Arts at the University of Pretoria, where she teaches Visual Culture Studies. She obtained a DPhil in English from the University of South Africa on the topic of cyberfeminism and embodiment in 2003. She has co-edited *South African visual culture* (2005), is the editor of *Taking a hard look: gender and visual culture* (2009) and has authored *Gendered bodies and new technologies* in 2009. She is the assistant editor of the South African academic journal *de Arte*. She serves on the Advisory Board of the Institute for Gender and Women’s Studies (UP) and serves on the Governing Board of the International Association for Visual Culture. She has published widely on topics mainly pertaining to gender, embodiment and the sublime.

Fatima Cassim

Fatima Cassim holds a Masters degree in Information Design and she currently heads the Information Design division at the Department of Visual Arts at the University of Pretoria. She teaches both practical and theoretical Information Design related subjects at undergraduate level and also provides research supervision to postgraduate students. In addition, she serves as an adjudicator on a number of national and international design competitions and awards schemes. Fatima’s research focuses on the culture of design in the current creative economy and the strategic role of design within this changing environment. In particular, she is interested in the nature and application of design thinking and the possible impact it may have on design education. When she is not being an academic, she tries to exercise creative muscle by running around the globe.

Benita de Robillard

Benita de Robillard is a lecturer in the Wits School of Arts, Johannesburg. She teaches courses informed by interdisciplinary critical and cultural theories, which think about
the complex and ramified relationships between bodies, technologies and diverse aesthetic modalities. She supervises postgraduate work focused on bodies, cultures and sexualities, which is rooted in interdisciplinary and queer ways of thinking. Her current research project explores some of the nomadic meshings of sexualities, socialities and politics in the post-apartheid milieu. These explorations are located within an emerging critical system constituted through the intersections of feminist, queer and cripqueer theories with critical animal studies and somatechnics.

Ashraf Jamal
Ashraf Jamal teaches film studies at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology and has taught at the universities of the Eastern Mediterranean, Malaya, Stellenbosch, Natal, Rhodes and Cape Town. He studied in the UK, Canada, USA, and South Africa. Jamal combines world literature and cinema, media studies and visual culture, ethnography, and the performing arts under the rubric of cultural and postcolonial studies. Jamal is the co-author of *Art in South Africa: the future present* (David Philip 1997) and the author of *Predicaments of culture in South Africa* (Unisa-Brill 2005). His literary-critical study *Littorally speaking* is forthcoming with Rodopi (2012). He is also author of a novel, *Love themes for the wilderness* (Random House-Kwela 1997), a novella, *A million years ago in the nineties* (Brevitas 2003), and a collection of short fiction, *The shades* (Brevitas 2002), winner of the Sanlam Prize for the title story.

Mugendi M’Rithaa
Mugendi M’Rithaa is an industrial designer, educator and researcher who presently lectures at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology. He holds postgraduate qualifications in Industrial Design, Higher Education, and Universal Design. He is passionate about various expressions of socially (responsive and) responsible design, including Participatory Design; Universal Design; and Design for Sustainability. He has a special interest in design for development on the African continent and is associated with a number of international networks focusing on design within industrially developing/majority world contexts. He is currently serving a second term on the executive board of the International Council of Societies of Industrial Design.

Rory du Plessis (Editorial Assistant)
Rory du Plessis is a full-time lecturer in Visual Culture Studies at the Department of Visual Arts, University of Pretoria. He completed his BA (Visual Studies) (cum laude), BA (Hons) Visual Studies (cum laude) and MPhil (Philosophy and Ethics of Mental Health) (cum laude) at the University of Pretoria. Previously, he has worked as the National Co-ordinator for the Southern African Sexual Health Association (SASHA) as well as a researcher at the Institute for Women and Gender Studies, University of Pretoria. His research interests pertain to the representation of sexuality in South African popular media as well as the history and philosophy of mental illness.
Rory Bester
Rory Bester teaches art history at the University of the Witwatersrand and is also a critic (Mail & Guardian, Camera Austria, Nka: Journal of Contemporary African Art), curator and documentary filmmaker. Bester’s catalogue essays on contemporary artists have been commissioned by BildMuseet (Umeå), Christie’s (London), DaimlerChrysler (Berlin), Documenta XI (Kassel), Johannesburg Art Gallery (Johannesburg), Museum Villa Stuck (Munich), National Gallery of Victoria (Melbourne), Rencontres d’Arles (Arles), South African National Gallery (Cape Town), SMAC Gallery (Stellenbosch), Stevenson Gallery (Cape Town), Studio Museum Harlem (New York) and White Box (New York). He edited Figure/Ground: reflections on the South African Reserve Bank Art Collection (2007) and Ephraim Ngatane: a setting apart (2009). He has curated and co-curated exhibitions such as: Democracy’s Images: Photography and Visual Art after Apartheid (Bildmuseet and international tour), Kwere Kwere / Journeys into Strangeness (Castle of Good Hope and international tour), The Field’s Edge: Agency, Body and the African Lens (University of South Florida Contemporary Art Museum), and prospect / Johannesburg (Gammel Holtegard).

Elfriede Dreyer
Born in Pretoria, Elfriede Dreyer was educated in South Africa and the Netherlands. She is Associate Professor of Visual Arts at the University of Pretoria and is the owner and curator of Fried Contemporary Art Gallery & Studio in Pretoria. In diversified way as a visual arts theorist, curator, writer and artist, she is engaged with utopia/dystopia discourses, technologisation and African modernities. In 2001 she received the D Litt et Phil in Art History from the University of South Africa with a thesis entitled Dystopia and artifice in late twentieth-century visual culture. Recent curatorial projects include Designs of self, Designs of nature, Designs of living and Designs of time (2011), History (2011), Dystopia (2008 - 2010), Bodies in transition (2010), Cities in transition (2010), Games people play (2010), Collateral (2010), Little deaths (2007) and Reconciliation (2005).

Deirdre Byrne
Deirdre Byrne is a Professor of English Studies in the Department of English at the University of South Africa, Pretoria. Her research interests are gender, feminist literary theory and criticism, and speculative fiction (science fiction, fantasy and any creative use of the usual conventions of realistic narrative). Recently she has worked on the liminal status of national and cultural identities.

Steven Dubin
in the American museum (1999); and Mounting Queen Victoria: curating social change (2009). Professor Dubin’s awards include the Fulbright-Hays Research Fellowship to South Africa, Fulbright Senior Specialist award to Iceland, Chancellor’s Award/Excellence in Scholarship and Creative Activities, The Lady Davis Visiting Professorship at Hebrew University (Jerusalem), and writing residencies at Bellagio (Italy), The Ragdale Foundation (Illinois), and The Ucross Foundation (Wyoming). He has written and lectured widely on censorship, controversial art, museums, and popular culture, and is a frequent contributor to publications such as Art in America and Art South Africa. He has been working and travelling throughout Southern Africa for the past eleven years.

**Paul Duncum**

Paul Duncum is Professor of Art Education, School of Art and Design, University of Illinois, Champaign Urbana, USA. A former graphic designer and art and design high school teacher, he obtained his doctorate from The Flinders University of South Australia and taught at several Australian universities prior to his present position. He is widely published in art education journals in the areas of his research and teaching, which include children’s drawings, images of children, popular culture, visual culture and art education. His work is principally informed by Cultural Studies. He is a life member of Art Education, Australia and a member of the Council for Policy Studies in Art Education. He is the editor of the 2006 NAEA publication Visual culture in the art class: case studies, and a leading advocate of the visual culture movement within art education.

**Pieter Fourie**

Pieter J Fourie is a professor in Communication Science at the University of South Africa. He is the author of a number of books on media studies, the editor of the accredited journal Communicatio: South African Journal for Communication Theory and Research, a former president of the South African Communication Association, and a National Research Foundation rated researcher. He serves on a number of national and international editorial boards and scientific committees. He has published various accredited research articles, contributions to books, and conference papers on topics ranging from media semiotics and pictorial communication to normative media theory and philosophy, media and society, and the political economy of the media. He was awarded the South African Academy of Science and Arts’ Stals Prize for his contribution to the development of Communication Science in South Africa.

**Ian Glenn**

Ian Glenn is Professor of Media Studies and Director of the Centre for Film and Media Studies at the University of Cape Town. After studies in English at the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal and York in England, he did an MA and PhD at the University of Pennsylvania, with a dissertation on mystical experience in the poetry of TS Eliot and Wallace Stevens. He joined UCT as a lecturer in English and was head of English before moving to the new Centre for Film and Media Studies. He has published widely on African and South African literature and on South African media. He has a particular interest in the French traveller and ornithologist Francois Le Vaillant and his multi-media portrayals of his travels. He is currently working on a French edition of Le Vaillant and on curating an international exhibition on Le Vaillant.
Amy Kirschke

Amy Kirschke is a Professor of Art History at University of North Carolina Wilmington, where she specialises in modern art, the art of the African Diaspora and African contemporary art. Her current research includes West African contemporary art, in particular the African biennial and the art of Ghana. Kirschke is the author of Aaron Douglas: art, race and the Harlem Renaissance (1995, University Press of Mississippi) and Art in crisis: WEB Du Bois and the art of African American identity and memory (2007, Indiana University Press) which was awarded the 2007 SECAC Award for Excellence in Scholarly Research and Publication. She has contributed chapters to books in the field of African American art/Harlem Renaissance, including Temples for tomorrow, African diasporas in the old and new worlds, Cary Wintz's Harlem speaks, The souls of black folk one hundred years later and Women of color: taking their rightful place in leadership (2009.) She is editing a volume on Women Artists of the Harlem Renaissance, (University Press of Mississippi, 2012) and a volume on the 100th Anniversary of The Crisis Magazine (University of Missouri Press, 2012)

Annette Kuhn

Annette Kuhn is Senior Professi- rial Fellow in Film Studies at Queen Mary University of London and a longstanding co-editor of the journal Screen. She has published widely in the areas of cultural theory, visual culture, film history and cultural memory, with authored books including Family secrets: acts of memory and imagination (1995 and 2002); An everyday magic: cinema and cultural memory (2002); Ratcatcher (2008); and (with Guy Westwell) The Oxford Dictionary of Film Studies (2012).

Jacques Lange

Jacques Lange is partner and creative director at Blueprint Design, publisher and editor of DESIGN> and www.designmagazine.co, and part-time lecturer in Information Design and Visual Communication at the University of Pretoria. Throughout his career Jacques has actively engaged in design practice, profession management, education, research, design promotion, policy advocacy and design journalism. His professional output has earned him many industry awards and his work has been featured in numerous international publications and exhibitions. He is an experienced industry juror, widely published author and speaker on design issues internationally. He is a past president of the International Council of Communication Design (Icograda, 2007-2009), founding co-chair of the International Design Alliance (IDA, 2005-2007), and advisor to various governmental institutions and NGOs. His research interests include the creative economy, talent mobility and creative diaspora, design policy, profession management, and contemporary design from lesser-known regions. Jacques is also one of the founders of Image & Text.

Jenni Lauwrens

Jenni Lauwrens teaches in the Visual Studies division in the Department of Visual Arts at the University of Pretoria. She teaches from first year to Masters level students in the subjects, art history, visual communication, research methodologies and key texts in visual culture. Jenni has published in local and international publications on the relationship between visual culture studies and art history. Her research interests include the aims and protocols of visual culture studies and art history, art education, art historiography, spectatorship, embodiment, phenomenology, neuro-art history, neuro-aesthetics and
practices of seeing. She is currently working on a PhD on the historical and theoretical implications of the viewer’s particular forms of embodiment.

Victor Margolin

Victor Margolin is Professor Emeritus of Design History at the University of Illinois, Chicago. He is a founding editor and now co-editor of the academic design journal Design Issues. Professor Margolin has published widely on diverse design topics and lectured at conferences, universities, and art schools in many parts of the world. Books that he has written, edited, or co-edited include Propaganda: the art of persuasion, WW II, The struggle for utopia: Rodchenko, Lissitzky, Moholy-Nagy, 1917-1936, Design discourse, Discovering design, The idea of design, The politics of the artificial: essays on design and design studies, and Culture is everywhere: the Museum of Corn-temporary Art. He is currently working on a world history of design.

Nicholas Mirzoeff

Nicholas Mirzoeff is a Professor of Media, Culture and Communication at New York University, New York. After more than a decade of writing about and teaching visual culture, most recently at SUNY Stonybrook, Mirzoeff decided to join the Department of Art and Art Professions in order to create a cross-departmental and cross-disciplinary visual culture program. The new program in visual culture also signals the primacy of the visual image, he believes, which affects our lives to a greater and greater extent each day. Mirzoeff’s recent book, Watching Babylon: The war in Iraq and global visual culture, enlarges upon this intriguing notion. His first book, Silent poetry: deafness, sign and visual culture in modern France, was about sign language and its relationship to painting. Mirzoeff is also the author of An introduction to visual culture.

Sylvester Okwunodu Ogbechie

Sylvester Okwunodu Ogbechie (PhD Northwestern University) is Associate Professor of Art History at the University of California Santa Barbara and a specialist in classical, modern and contemporary African and African Diaspora Art history and visual cultures. He is the author of Ben Enwonwu: the making of an African modernist (University of Rochester Press, 2008: winner of the 2009 Herskovits Prize of the African Studies Association), and Making history: African collectors and the canon of African art (Milan: 5 Continents, 2011). Ogbechie was the 2010 Getty Consortium Professor and Fellow of the Getty Research Institute and a 2007 TEDGlobal Fellow. He is the director of Aachron Knowledge Systems, and founder and editor of Critical Interventions: Journal of African Art History and Visual Culture. Ogbechie also serves as a curator and consultant to many major international museums on the subject of African and contemporary art. His research is widely published and he has presented lectures at major universities and museums in the USA, Europe, Africa and Asia. (Photograph by Rod Rolle)

Georges Pfruender

Georges Pfruender is a Swiss national who has spent a significant amount of time living abroad in Africa, Asia, America and the Middle East. He received his Master of Fine Arts from San Francisco Art Institute in 1991. While continuing to produce his own body of work, for the past decade he had also been Director of the Fine Arts University Ecole Cantonale d’Art du Valais, Switzerland, President of the Swiss National Board of Art and...
Design. Vice President of the Swiss UNESCO Commiss-
ion, and since 2009, Head of the School of Arts at the
University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. As artist and
researcher he has participated in conferences, panels
and residency programs in Europe, USA, South Africa,
Venezuela, and Taiwan, and is presently involved in
projects engaging artists in migrant communities of the
inner city of Johannesburg. At the Wits School of Arts
he has been responsible for the coordination of arts
programs at undergraduate and postgraduate levels
(MFA, PhD) concerning the disciplines of music, drama,
fine arts, film and TV, digital arts and cultural theories.

Annette Pritchard

Annette Pritchard is Professor of
Critical Tourism Studies and Di-
rector of the Welsh Centre for
Tourism Research at Cardiff Met-
ropolitan University. Annette has
a long-standing interest in the relationships between
places, representations and identities and she has pub-
lished 15 books and over 40 papers on these connec-
tivities. Much of her work is driven by a commitment
to transformative research and she is one of the origina-
tors of the hopeful tourism agenda and co-chair of the
biannual Critical Tourism Studies Conference Series.
Annette was formerly Convenor of the Leisure Studies
editorial board and her current editorial responsibil-
ities include serving as joint Research Notes Editor of the
Annals of Tourism Research. She is also an advisory
board member of the Copenhagen Business School’s
Creative Industries Research Centre and a regular in-
vited speaker at events and conferences.

Marian Sauthoff

Prof Marian Sauthoff is currently
Executive Dean of the Faculty of
Arts, Design and Architecture at
the University of Johannesburg.
Prior to this, she was the head
of the Department of Visual Arts and also chaired the
School of Arts at the University of Pretoria. She com-
pleted her master’s (cum laude) and doctoral degrees
through the University of Pretoria. Prof Sauthoff is
the founding editor of the accredited journal Image
& Text: A Journal for Design, which she edited from
1992 to 2010. She has also served on the editorial board
and as guest editor of a number of international jour-
nals. She has published extensively in her field of expe-
tise and regularly acts as a peer referee for articles and
conference papers. She has served as a member of advis-
ory boards to industry and government and as an adju-
dicator for national and international design awards.
Her career includes design consultancy and a period
as a senior researcher at the Chamber of Mines.

Annie van de Oever

Annie van den Oever is Extraordi-
nary Professor for Film and Visual
Media at the Faculty of Humani-
ties, University of the Free State,
South Africa. She is also director
of the Film Archive and director of the Master in Film
Studies at the Department of Arts, Culture and Media,
Faculty of Arts, University of Groningen, The Nether-
lands. She is an editor of several academic journals and
book series in her field, among them: board member of
Film and Media, Amsterdam University Press (since 2003);
series editor of The key debates: mutations and appro-
priations in European film studies, with Ian Christie (Birk-
beck College, London), and Dominique Chateau (Paris I,
Sorbonne Panthéon); chief editor of the new educa-
tional books series for Film and Media studies (since
2011), and Editor-in-Chief of the European Journal for
Media Studies NECSus (since 2011). Her last two books
are Ostrannenie and Sensitizing the viewers, both pub-
lished at Amsterdam University Press.
VRYHEIDSPARK AND OTHER GOVERNMENTALITIES